

## NOTICES OF BOOKS.

THE CHURCH BELLS OF NORFOLK: When, Where, and by Whom they were Made, with the Inscriptions on all the Bells in the County. By John L'Estrange. Illustrated. (Norwich: Miller and Leavins.)

REMARKABLY well got up, and bearing on every page the evidences of great care having been bestowed upon the work. Some account is given of nearly 2000 bells, distributed amongst 700 churches—a fact in itself full of the deepest interest, but suggestive of no little labour to the collector. We regret to learn that not more than one bell in six now remaining is of a date prior to the time of Elizabeth. One cause of this is the fact that formerly a few heavy bells were placed in a belfry, but modern Change-ringing demanding a larger number of bells, it has too often happened that instead of adding more bells the metal has been recast so as to produce a larger number, but of lighter peal. The spoliation of Church property in the middle of the sixteenth century, too, deprived the Church of many ancient and valuable bells; and another circumstance mentioned by Mr. L'Estrange in his Introduction appears to have produced the loss of perhaps as many. He tells, that 'as the churches fell into decay in the rural districts, where the parishioners were unable or unwilling to bear the entire charge of the repairs, they petitioned the Bishop to grant them his license, or faculty, to empower them to reduce the fabrics; in one case to demolish an aisle, sometimes two; in another, to desecrate a chapel or pull down a porch; and in others, to shorten the tower or take down the spire. And instances are on record in which the total destruction of a church was authorised.'

This indicates a sad state of feeling, whether we contemplate people, parson, or prelate, at a period, too, when the gross population of England was rapidly increasing. We may thank God that better feelings now prevail.

Mr. L'Estrange gives us a very interesting account of the ancient inscriptions on bells; and he says, too, 'There can be no doubt, I think, that all our old church bells were solemnly blessed by the Bishop, and had a name conferred upon them before being placed in the church towers.'

We find here, also, a complete and instructive account of Bell-Foundries, whether in Norfolk or other parts of England. It appears that the earliest bell-foundry in Norfolk was at Lynn, as early as 1299. Then there was in after years a foundry at Norwich, and a foundry at Thetford, and another at Dereham, and another at Downham.

After these interesting subjects we have a full account of the bells in all the churches in Norfolk, with their inscriptions and weight, accompanied by many remarks and anecdotes.

Amongst the bells the following appear to be some of the largest:—

Lynn, St. Margaret, 8; tenor C, 30 cwt.; diameter,  $55\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Lester and Pack of London, 1766.

Norwich Cathedral, 5 and clock-bell; tenor F sharp; diameter, 42 inches.

Norwich, St. Andrew, 10; tenor E, 18 cwt; diameter,  $44\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Norwich, St. Lawrence, 6; tenor E; diameter, 44 inches.

Thetford, St. Peter with St. Andrew, 8; tenor F, 19 cwt.

Yarmouth (Great), St. Nicolas, 10; Tenor D, 30 cwt.; diameter, 57 inches.

We think that the Campanologist, Archæologist, and Churchman, will agree with us in regarding Mr. L'Estrange's work with great satisfaction. If anything would add to its completeness it would be the addition of an index of the many subjects and anecdotes contained in the book. It is curious to note that a distinction is drawn between 'food' and 'luxuries,' for so we venture to interpret such items as occur in the list of expenses, 1619, at Pulham Market, at the erection of bells there.

'It. (*item*) to mary haylles for Dymonts Dyet when the bells were taken down, iij<sup>s</sup>.

'It. to mary haylles for John Brends Dyet when the bells were hanged, and for bere and cakes, iiij<sup>s</sup>. viij<sup>d</sup>.

'It. for bere and bred when the bells were drawn up into the steepell, xij<sup>d</sup>.'

But who will tell us the nature of the savoury dish described?—

'It. payd unto Egremvnt for John Brends horsemēt when ye bells were hanged, ij<sup>s</sup>.'

Does this indicate that John Brend, over and above his 'Dyet,' actually had a special dish of horse-flesh for his own delectation; or rather, that John Brend having travelled on horseback, his horse was committed to the care of 'Egremvnt,' even as he himself was entertained by good Mary Haylles?

We long to see the bells of our churches used *exclusively* for Church purposes, and to this end nothing will help so much as causing them to be rung and chimed *in ecclesie conspectu* as of old. The study of Mr. L'Estrange's book is sure to tend to the promotion of so desirable a result.

THE BELLS OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PETER, EXON. By Henry Thomas Ellacombe, M.A., F.S.A. (Exeter: W. Pollard.)—The Rector of Clyst St. George, a veteran campanologist, has here collected together the accounts he has published, from time to time, in the *Transactions* of the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society, respecting our Cathedral bells. His compilation forms an interesting little history, both as relates to the bells themselves and the regulations for their use. His authorities are fabric-rolls, registers, and other ancient documents, and he presents them with that rigid attention to accuracy of detail which distinguishes all his researches. The Exeter bells, he tells us, are, as a ring of ten, the heaviest in metal, and grandest in tone, in the whole world. The date of the earliest record referring to them is 1284. Great Peter weighs 125 cwt., and was the gift of Bishop Courtenay in 1484. The next in size is the Grandisson, the weight of which is estimated at 67 cwt. 1 qr. 18 lbs. Mr. Ellacombe does not consider it possible to trace out the history of the whole of the original bells, nor how they were broken or destroyed; but he has been successful in discovering the name of the founder of the bells set up in Bishop Quivil's time, and the earliest of his craft known in the kingdom. Roger de Ropeforde, his son William, and his grandson Robert, carried on a bell-foundry at Paignton, at the close of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth centuries, and were employed by Quivil in 1284 to make the four bells in the north tower, and to repair the organs and the horologe. Bishop Grandisson's directions for sounding the bells are well worth repeating, if only for the purpose of giving full publicity to the inhibition of long ringing at funerals, which the good Bishop forbade for the all-sufficient reasons—'that they do no good to the departed, are an annoyance to the living, and injurious to the fabrick and the bells.' Mr. Ellacombe prints *in extenso* the long-looked-for record of the Cathedral bells which was taken by Edward the Sixth's Commission in 1552, and which was missing from the Augmentation Office. A copy of this return was found by Mr. Stuart Moore among the City archives. Under the Articles of Instruction issued by this Commission, all the bells but three were to be removed, these precious confiscators ruling that all that were necessary were the great Grandisson bell to toll to the sermon, the clock-bell, and one to ring to daily prayer. The Dean and Chapter of the day do not seem to have been in a hurry to carry out the recommendation, and as Edward VI. died a few months later, on the accession of Queen Mary the bells were probably allowed to remain as they were. One of the bells was called Oldham's Bell, after the Bishop of that name. No bell is so called now, but as that bell was tolled about 9 o'clock, Mr. Ellacombe conjectures that it was probably the one at present known as 'Old Nine o'Clock.' Interesting information is given about the casting and re-casting of the bells, and the men who did the work. Engravings, too, appear of the initials and ornamental designs on the bells, and of the head of Archbishop Laud on the Grandisson. Mr. Ellacombe thinks that nothing has been done to the bells for more than two centuries, and that, on that account, they are not in the order which is necessary for proper ringing. At present there are no wheels attached to Great Peter, and the curfew and other tollings are pulsed by means of a heavy hammer striking on the outside. In this way it is tolled every morning for matins 15 minutes, and then doubled ten minutes, after which the ringer walks away to the south tower and rings out the treble of the ten for five minutes, till Peter strikes the hour. The curfew is tolled every evening after the clock strikes eight; the number of blows is regulated by the number of the days in the month, and after a pause, eight blows are struck. For the other services the following is the use—the 6th bell is struck four blows a-minute for five minutes, and after that it is struck quickly for one minute, then the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th, each in succession one minute, after which the whole ten are pulsed in succession, or chimed five minutes till Peter strikes the hour;—which seems to be in accordance with the directions in Bishop Oldham's Statutes. A copy of the Cathedral Statutes, dated 1670, makes mention of the circumstance that the bell-ringer, Josias More, lived in a chamber and lodgings over the north porch, and recites the table of fees he was entitled to receive. Two of the items speak of the fees payable 'For every one that is chested in St. Peter's church-yard,' and 'For every person's buryall unchested.' It appears, therefore, that it was not uncommon in those days for bodies to be buried without coffins. In the contents at the head of the last chapter of Genesis it is said of Joseph, 'He dieth, and is *chested*;' and in the text we read, 'They embalmed him, and he was put in a *coffin* in Egypt.'—*Exeter and Plymouth Gazette, Dec. 4, 1874.*

THE CHURCH BELLS OF SOMERSET, TO WHICH IS ADDED AN OLLA PODRIDA OF BELL MATTERS OF GENERAL INTEREST. By the Rev. Henry Thomas Ellacombe, M. A., F. S. A. (Exeter: William Pollard, 1875.)—The Rev. H. T. Ellacombe, F.S.A.—to whose researches and indefatigable industry all lovers of bells and students of campanology are so much indebted—has given us another volume of considerable interest. The possessors of his great *tome* on *The Bells of the Church* might well have thought that its venerable author had, with its issue, exhausted his subject. This, however, Mr. Ellacombe now shows was not the case; neither has his enthusiasm for bells and bell-ringing, in all their multifarious forms and associations, abated. The present volume opens, by way of introduction, with a short paper upon the ancient bells in the parish churches of Somerset. They are classified according to their different founders, or, where that is impossible, according to the founders' marks, initial crosses, &c., found upon them. Their legends also receive careful attention. We have next the 'Inscriptions on the Bells,' with, in most cases, their diameters, and so their approximate weights. The founders' marks, &c., found upon them are beautifully engraved, are upwards

of a hundred in number, and occupy fourteen plates. This portion of the work will, no doubt, be the most acceptable to our Somersetshire friends; but probably the concluding *olla podrida* of bell matters of general interest will be most welcomed by the bell student and by the general reader. It contains many items which cannot fail to elucidate the ancient use of church bells—as, for instance, the 'Ringing Rules in the Tenth Century, by St. Dunstan,' and the 'Ringing Rules of Lanfranc.' The paragraphs upon 'Bells and Ringing in America' will interest many; whilst the remarks upon 'Church Bell-hanging and the Vibration of Bell Towers' are valuable to all interested in such matters. The author gives (p. 107) a wood engraving of a very beautiful ancient sacring bell at Rheims (*circa* 1250), and remarks that M. Didron of Paris has reproduced it with a different handle. Mr. Ellacombe may care to know that we have now upon our table a *fac-simile* of this bell, handle included, exactly according with his engraving. We may remark that the highly ornate letter C engraved on page 118 is not unfrequently found placed upside down to do duty for a D, in conjunction with the letter H of an equally ornate character—the two being used apparently as the initials of some founder at present unknown. This discovery of the letter as an initial to a bell inscription, as pointed out by Mr. Ellacombe, is, we think, a 'find' to bell-hunters. Mr. Ellacombe's previous works upon bells are too well known and appreciated to need any recommendation. This volume is no unworthy addition to them. It is not, however, by his printed works only that the author is known to all campanists. His courteous and ready help given to all younger students, and the encouragement he gives them in the prosecution of their work, are so well known that there is probably no one interested in church bells who has not, on one or many occasions, availed himself of his extensive and practical knowledge.

## Hubbard's Art of Ringing.

DURING the last twenty-two years Mr. Hubbard's well-known work has gone through four editions, the last of which has just been laid before the public. Previous to the appearance of this edition, the former one probably formed the most complete selection of peals ever published, but in the new edition the number of them has been very greatly increased, and for variety and excellence the collection is quite unequalled.

Commencing with hints on the rudiments of ringing, and explanations of technical terms, Mr. Hubbard then proceeds with the different systems and their variations, giving a plain lead of each; then, after further explanations of the in and out of course of the changes and other matters connected with composition and peal-ringing, the main feature of the book is arrived at, namely, touches and peals on each of the methods previously referred to. In all these systems the peals presented have each of them special features. The simplicity of their composition, their musical qualities, or the extent of their changes, are all matters which seem to have guided Mr. Hubbard in his choice. Of course, as may naturally be supposed, in a work from the hands of such an able composer, to a large number of the peals the well-known initials 'H. H.' are appended; at the same time Mr. Hubbard will not be found to have presented a peal of his own when he could produce a better composition on a similar plan by another author.

A very complete and harmonious collection of treble bob peals is given, and it may be mentioned that this is the first ringing publication in which a larger peal than Reeve's 8448 of Treble Bob Major has appeared. Perhaps nothing shows more the great advance within the last few years in the art of composition than do the further peals. From 1787 to 1869 Reeves' peal held its place as the extent obtained with the tenors together; we have here, however, several peals of greater length, viz. two of 8554 by Mr. John Thorp, of Ashton-under-Lyne, to whom very great credit for the opening out of these longer lengths is due; and then there is a peal of 8864 by the same author, while in the appendix Mr. W. Harrison's peal of 8896 is to be found. Besides these are several lengths by Mr. J. Lockwood, of Leeds, which, although obtained by a slight deviation from the proper method, are decidedly curious as showing to what a great extent the changes will run true without parting the tenors, as by bringing up 2436857 by a single, at the first lead end the peal then runs 9088 further changes by means of ordinary bobs only. A strange thing is noticeable in these peals by Mr. Harrison and Lockwood. In perfect ignorance of each other's endeavours, they have both been working on exactly the same plan, as is evident by comparing Lockwood's 8640 with Harrison's 8896, when it will be seen that, although almost identical, the latter has just been able to hit the happy idea as to where he could get another course in, these peals having only 28 and 29 courses respectively.

While Mr. Hubbard presents his readers with the latest compositions, he also lays before them some of the very earliest; several peals long forgotten by the ringing world, are now reproduced. These productions are from a MS. book of the notable Benjamin Annable, of which we shall one day present our readers with a full description. From this book Mr. Hubbard has reproduced the following peals,—a peal of Bob Triples on Annable's well-known plan, a simpler peal than any of those in two halves yet published, a new 5040 of Bob Major, another of London Court Bob (produced in later years by another author), a very simple 5076 of Grandsire Caters, rung by the College Youths at Fulham in 1746, a 5016 of Plain Bob Cinques, and another of Double Bob Maximus, rung by College Youths at Southwark in 1739.

Having given these rather lengthy particulars of the contents of the book, and having in no wise exhausted its noticeable features, we cannot do better than advise our readers to make a personal investigation of the work. Mr. Hubbard is now an old man, and through illness has long been incapacitated from work, and it is to be hoped that the publication of this edition will, in some measure, alleviate him from the disadvantages he consequently labours under; and, therefore, those who are wishful to show their appreciation of a life devoted to the advancement of change-ringing cannot do better than send a P.O.O. for 3s. 2d. to Mr. Jasper W. Snowdon, Ilkley, near Leeds, who having interested himself in this matter will be glad to forward them a copy of the work, post free.

In commending this work of merit, we regret to see he has reproduced such an un-English title as *Campanologia*.

## THE CHURCH BELLS OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

**THE CHURCH BELLS OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE:** their Inscriptions, Traditions, and peculiar Uses. By Thomas North, F.S.A. With Illustrations. (Leicester: Samuel Clarke, 1878.)—Mr. North, whose fulness of knowledge leaves nothing to be desired, has most admirably accomplished the second part of his large task of chronicling the Campanology of the diocese of Peterborough. The present goodly volume on the Northamptonshire bells is a most welcome companion to his previous work on those of Leicestershire; nor do we care how speedily it will be followed by the tome in which those of Rutlandshire are to be recorded. The diocese will then be able to boast of an adequate account of its church bells; and we wish all our dioceses were as likely to be so well supplied.

In the introductory sketch there is an interesting account of church bells in general. Their first use in the Christian Church does not occur until the fifth century. The tradition is duly noticed which attributes to Paulinus, Bishop of Nola in Campania, the first use of bells in the service of the Church. From this fact the terms *nola* and *campana* are derived. In England Bede speaks of a bell to summon the nuns of Whitby to prayer; and he also mentions the passing bell. The earliest dated English bell is that of the church at Cloughton, in Lancashire. The earliest dated bell in Northamptonshire is that of Cold Ashby, dated 1317; the next earliest date being that of Denford, 1581. The use of bells in the interim was so wide-spread that England became known as the 'ringing island;' and foreigners often remarked upon this peculiarity of our country. The impression which they made may be seen from the expressions of admiration with which at a well-known undulation in Chaucer's *Pilgrim Way to the Shrine of St. Thomas*, where the Cathedral first comes into view, Erasmus and his companions listened to the wonderful booming of the Canterbury bells. The huge bells of the monastic establishments, with their deep, solemn notes, tolled as well the hours of the day as the summoning of worshippers to their devotions. John Mair, the Scotch Historian (1469—c. 1550), in his book *De Historia Gentis Scotorum*, says that there was a vast number of bells of the finest tone in England, the country abounding with the materials for bells, which were made with a soft and ingenious modulation. His testimony is remarkable: 'Not a village of forty houses you see without five bells of the sweetest tones . . . . While I was studying at Cambridge, upon the great festivals I spent very many nights without sleep, listening to the melody of the bells. The University stands upon a river, and the sound is sweeter from the modulation of the water. There are no bells in England thought superior to those of Osency Abbey.' The Reformation made great changes. The 'one-bell' regulation of the Protector Somerset deprived the greater part of the country of its best and most hallowed music—music which had entwined itself into the joys and sorrows of countless families, and had excited holy thoughts in the

— 'walk together to the Kirk

With a goodly company.'

Bells, as old Latimer said, were, besides, often better preachers than the preachers themselves. In other ways alterations were introduced. The figures of saints and angels, which formerly covered the bells, were discarded, and English words were used instead, first in reverent, and afterwards too often in frivolous and inelegant rhymes. Thus on two bells at Arthingforth are,—

'Ihesvs be ovr spid. 1598.'

'Feare God and obeai the Qwene. 1589.'

Here is a pithy sentence from Passenham,—

'+A+trusty+frende+is+harde+to+fynde+1585.'

'Most true it is, and pity 'tis 'tis true.' More appropriate is this from Chipston,—

'Give God the praies. 1589.'

At Lowick the first bell exhorts the people to 'Cum cum and prea.' At Hemmington the loyal parishioners are called upon to 'Obe the Prince.' At All Saints, Northampton, there is a series of rhyming inscriptions which show the taste of the last century in such matters. Dismembered of the founders' names they read thus:—

1. I mean to make it understood, though I'm little yet I'm good.
2. If you have a judicious ear you'll own my voice is sweet and clear.
3. Whilst thus we join in cheerful sound may love and loyalty abound.
4. Though much against us may be said, to speak for ourselves we're not afraid.
5. Ye people all who hear us ring,  
Be faithful to your God and King.
6. Such wondrous power to Music's given, it elevates the soul to heaven.
7. To honour both of God and King our voices shall in consort ring.
8. In wedlock's bands all ye who join, with hands your hearts unite; so shall our tuneful tongues combine to laud the nuptial rite.

Mr. North rightly devotes considerable space and attention to the bell 'uses' peculiar to Northamptonshire. The tolling of the passing bell, which was not objectionable to many of the Puritans, must often have been a grievous trouble to the individual who was liable to be roused up at untimely hours in order to notify the flight of a departing spirit. In the churchwardens' accounts of Peterborough in 1572 there is this entry:—'It'm, To Scarlet (the sexton) beyng a poore olde man and rysyng oft in the nyghte to tolle the belle for sicke persons the wether beyng grevous, and in consideration of his good service, towards a gowne to kepe hym warme, viijs.' This was the famous old gravedigger who put in earth the bodies of Henry's queen, Katherine, and of Mary Queen of Scots. There are also instances of the winding bell, when the corpse was put into the shroud, the burial peal, the invitation bell, the sanctus bell, the priest's bell or ting-tang, the sacring bell, the hand-bells, the early morning bell, and the curfew. Shrove Tuesday was in pre-Reformation times a season of general confession, and as Lent was then more strictly observed than now, the housewives used up the lard and dripping in the making of pancakes. The pancake-bell was a welcome sound to the young folk. In several parishes they are allowed to amuse themselves with 'sweet bells jangled harsh and out of tune.' At Sudborough and elsewhere this is the privilege of the women. There were, of course, peals at Christmas and on New-year's Eve; at Lent and Good Friday. Easter and dedication peals are heard in many parishes. In some churches a sacrament bell is still used. There are peals for the banns for the wedding; and at Rushden it was formerly customary to ring a peal at daybreak to awaken the new-married bride from her nuptial slumbers. There were bells at seed-sowing, harvest, gleaning, fires, and markets. At Warkton the bell used to ring to let the people know when the baker's oven was heated and ready for use. Oak-apple Day and Plough Sunday were also ushered in by merry peals. At Moulton there was a mote-bell, to assemble the people 'when any casualties shall chaunce.'

There are, of course, traditionary stories connected with 'the linked sweetness long drawn out' of many bells. Thus at Brigstock is a bell inscribed, 'John Burton gave me worship to God in Trinitie, 1647;' and the story connected with it is that the donor, a

'Village Hampden, that with dauntless breast  
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,'

defeated Sir John Zouch in a case relating to the right of common. Sir John threatened to ruin him if he persisted in his claim; but Burton retorted that he would leave a cow which, being pulled by the tail, would low three times a-day and be heard all over the common, when Sir John and his heirs would have nothing to do there. The 'cow' was the bell; but it now only lows once a day. This Burton is said to have married a 'Lancashire witch,' who was a rich tanner's daughter. So at Whiston: there the church was built by Anthony Catesby, his wife Isabel, and his son John; and there is a legend that its erection so exhausted his pecuniary resources that to supply the bells he had to sell a flock of sheep. When he first heard the pleasant voices floating over the valley to his dwelling he said to his wife, 'Hark! do you hear my lambs bleating?' The same traditionary story is told of Zitholf of St. Alban's, as Mr. North points out. This is, however, no reason why we should not believe a pleasant tale of two good men. At Culworth the fact of a man being killed by a bell upon Easter Tuesday in 1694 was traditionally preserved 169 years.

Northamptonshire can boast of quaint Thomas Fuller as one of her worthies. It was at Aldwinckle St. Peter's that he first saw the light, his father being rector of the church. There the gleaning-bell was rung at seven in the harvest; and the death-bell and funeral bell were duly heard. In those early days Fuller may often have listened to the belfry music from the churches in the valley of the Nene. 'It was in Northamptonshire,' says Mr. North, 'that he penned the following—"Music is sweetest near or over rivers, where the echo thereof is best rebounded by the water;" and he adds the exquisite moral that, "Praise for pensiveness, thanks for tears, and blessing God over the floods of affliction, makes the most melodious music in the ear of Heaven."'

The philosophy of Campanology is briefly but emphatically condensed in the admonitory verse, dated 1624, on the fourth bell at Cranford St. Andrew,—

'Cvm cano bvsta mori, cvm pvlpita vivere disce.'

The volume is excellently printed, and is liberally provided with illustrations from rubbings of bells and other sources. Mr. North has marshalled his materials in a way which leaves nothing to be desired.

## SNOWDON'S 'TREATISE ON TREBLE BOB.'

A TREATISE ON TREBLE BOB. Part II. By Jasper W. Snowdon.—We have received a copy of the Second Part of Mr. Snowdon's *Treatise on Treble Bob*, which consists of a collection of peals in this method, on six, eight, ten, and twelve bells. To say that this is the most perfect work yet published concerning this method would give but a faint idea of its completeness. Indeed, it would not in any way be fair to compare any of the previous works which have dealt with the various methods of change-ringing with one which treats exclusively with one method: in such a case we cannot look for anything but an exhaustive work; and in this case, fortunately, we have the desired result.

While in Part I. several explanations were given, such as that of the 'In and out of course of the changes,' &c., which applied generally to the science of composition, Part II. deals exclusively with the various classes and plans of peals in the simple Treble Bob variations of Oxford and Kent. In Part I. Mr. Snowdon explained the mode of the proof and composition of Treble Bob peals, and strongly insisted on the laws which should regulate the 'morality' of composition. Part II. will now enable any composer to compare and test the originality of his efforts in a way which has previously been absolutely impossible. Any description of the manner in which the peals are classified or arranged, or the different plans on which they are composed, would take up more space than we can afford in these columns; and, as we hope that the work itself will soon be in the hands of all those of our readers who are interested in such matters, we will merely give a short description of its contents. Chapter 1 contains peals of Minor, with nine, twelve, and fifteen bobs; Chapter 2, nearly 800 full peals of Major on all the different plans yet known; Chapter 3, 177 peals of Royal; and Chapter 4, 62 peals of Maximus. Besides these peals, certain ways by which some of them may be altered or curtailed are given, and thus the total number of peals of 5000 changes and upwards in the collection, is brought up to more than 1100. It was hardly to be expected that in dealing, however carefully, with the number of peals from which this collection has been compiled, that a false one or two would not manage to creep in; and while two, which are noticed in the list of corrections, have been detected since the sheets containing them were printed, there is the one lately alluded to and corrected by Mr. Dains in these columns, and we publish to-day a letter pointing to another which is in error. The last chapter gives a list of the names of the different composers whose peals appear in the collection.

We must offer our most hearty congratulations, not only to Mr. Snowdon for the successful issue to which he has now brought his *Treatise on Treble Bob*, but also to the 'Exercise' generally upon this addition to bell-ringing

# 'ROPE-SIGHT: an INTRODUCTION to CHANGE-RINGING.'

By Jasper Whitfield Snowdon.

MR. SNOWDON has written a book that is very much wanted. In the present state of Change-ringing it is not an uncommon thing to find a band of men who want to learn the mysteries of Change-ringing, and who yet do not know how to set about it. A clergyman sometimes finds himself in charge of a ring of bells, and he naturally wants to make the best of them, as of all other appliances in his parish. He finds a set of round-ringers, who pull and catch the ropes with cart-horse strength, and then say that ringing is harder than mowing, and, of course, requires more beer. His ring of bells gives him a fine field for benefiting the more thoughtful and refined of his youthful parishioners. But how can he do it? This book undertakes to show him.

Mr. Snowdon is peculiarly fitted for the post of teacher of such a party. An accomplished ringer himself, such as few can expect to equal and none to excel, he has, nevertheless, not rung from childhood. He has been in this dilemma himself. He cannot say he rang a 5000 before he was fifteen; and he would not have written so good a book if he could: for he would have forgotten his early difficulties, and so got into the peculiar phraseology of ringing that it would have become his natural language. He would have forgotten that these phrases are pretty sure to be read the wrong way by a beginner; especially a beginner without a teacher. The omission of a comma causes hours of thought, which a man, who is not a man of leisure, cannot give. Dodge in 3 4 up is pretty sure to be read dodge in thirty-four up; in and out at 2 is sure to be read in at 2 and out at 2.

Now this book avoids these things and explains these difficulties. It only undertakes to teach Plain Bob; and this system is the foundation of all ringing. Treble Bob, the Surprise peals, are all superstructures built upon Plain Bob. Mr. Snowdon thinks, and rightly, that if a man can ring Plain Bob well, he can easily go on to other systems without much further instruction; and that he will be in a position to understand at once what is said in any book about them.

But for any system what this book professes mainly to teach is essential, namely, the management of a bell and the power of reading the ropes. The former is a matter of practice, as the preface says; but even that may be much curtailed if Mr. Snowdon's teaching be followed. But reading the ropes is like reading a book. When a child learns to read it spells out the letters, and is confused by the words, especially if the words be hard and the print small. So a novice, entering a tower, sees nothing but confusion: the ropes seem all to come together, especially if the bells are rung quickly. But a good reader reads words, not letters: and yet he sees at a glance, by the look of a word, whether it is misspelt. And so a ringer sees at once who is leading, who is behind, which is dodging with which; and he can stand behind any ringer and follow his bell right through the peal. Now the more carefully a young ringer attends to the directions of this book the sooner will he learn to read the ropes. If he neglects them he will still learn by practice: but he is like a person learning to read without an instructor, or who is careless of instruction. He will do it in time, but in a long time.

Mr. Snowdon adopts the plan of commencing with three bells. It would have been better if he had followed Mr. Troyte's plan, and begun with two. Then he adds a fourth, then a fifth, and so on. At first there cannot be too few bells, nor can they be rung too slowly. It teaches the beginners to keep their bells up, and they can see the ropes more clearly when they go slowly; and the addition of an extra rope is a very serious addition to the family, especially when it is about the sixth.

The author's remarks about teaching another how to deal with a bell for the first time are especially valuable. The writer of this article took the book into a belfry and did exactly according to the directions. He taught three persons successively to set a bell at hand and backstroke, so that he could sit down and watch them, without danger to themselves or the machinery. This was done in 2½ hours, and none of them had ever rung a bell before, or hardly touched one.

Books on ringing are generally to be obtained of the author or from a bell-founder, and are frequently out of print. This book is no exception to the first part of his statement. It must be obtained of the author, or of Messrs. Warner the bell-founders, at 1s., and postage. Of course a saving to the buyer is effected by this means. There is no twenty-five per cent, or thirteen copies for twelve as a bookseller's profit. But on the other hand the clergyman aforesaid would go to his bookseller, who would go to his catalogues, and tell him that there was no such book as *Rope-Sight*, and even when convinced of the fact would not get it except as a favour to a regular customer.

# REVIEWS.

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CHANGE-RINGING DISENTANGLED. (Second Edition.) In the early numbers of *Church Bells*, under the above title, a series of articles by the Rev. Woolmore Wigram were published, in which all the necessary instructions in the elementary branches of this art were given. These articles, slightly extended, were afterwards issued in a separate form and thus, 'Wigram's book' became known as a standard text book for beginners. This first edition was dated 1871; the second edition (Bell & Sons, London, 1880) has now been placed before the public. It would be strange if, after the lapse of these years, the author had not some very material alterations to make in revising his original work for the second edition. The alterations made consist both in extensive curtailments and additions to certain of the subjects dealt with in the first edition. In his first publication, Mr. Wigram, besides giving all the necessary preliminary explanations which were continued up to three and four-bell ringing, gave on five bells both the Grandsire and Stedman methods, and on six bells explained the Plain Bob, Treble Bob, Oxford Bob, and Court Bob methods. These explanations, however, were not continued beyond six bells, and the book concluded with notes and memoranda on raising and ceasing in peal, the care of the belfry, bells, &c. The new edition commences with the necessary preliminary explanations with regard to bells in rest, in

motion, and the way in which they are rung. These matters are followed by explanations of hunting, place-making, and dodging. After this the necessary rules for pricking and ringing changes on three and four bells are given; on the latter number, both Plain and Reverse Bob are explained. On five bells, Mr. Wigram explains at length only the Grandsire method, and for variety gives such rules as will enable Grandsire ringers to proceed with 'Antelope,' 'Cambridge Delight,' and 'St. Dunstan's Doubles.' On six bells the explanation is confined to Plain Bob only; on all numbers, however, full explanations, not only with regard to the rules for ringing the method, but also with regard to pricking and conducting touches and peals are given. Having curtailed the work by adhering almost entirely to the two methods of Plain Bob and Grandsire on five and six bells, the second edition is extended by carrying these explanations forward to Grandsire Triples and Bob Major, in which methods, explanations with regard to the way in which peals are printed, &c. are given, besides all the information concerning ringing and conducting these methods. The part of the work devoted to practical ringing concludes with a chapter on raising and ceasing in peal. The last, and certainly not the least interesting pages of the book are devoted to miscellaneous matters, such as rules for ringing societies, the church tower, which includes remarks on the bell-frame, the windows and floor of the belfry, the position of the ringing-chamber, the circle of ropes, the ropes, &c. These chapters are not only of interest to ringers, but should be read by *every* clergyman whose church-tower possesses a ring of bells. The second edition, which is printed in clearer type, and got up altogether in a better and more handy form than the first edition, is again dedicated to the Rev. H. T. Ellacombe in recognition of his life-long endeavours to promote the welfare of ringing and ringers in regard to their close connexion with the services of the church.

ROPE-SIGHT. By Jasper W. Snowdon. Second Edition. (London : Wells Gardner, Darton, & Co. Price 1s. 6d.)—We hasten to welcome a Second Edition of *Rope Sight*. When the first edition appeared we expressed our opinion that it met a want, inasmuch as it undertook to teach the way of managing a bell, and then the easiest system of change-ringing to those who could find no efficient teacher. And our remarks have been justified by the result. In about four months the whole of the first edition was sold off. We regard this as a hopeful sign, not merely as vindicating the *raison d'être* of the book, but as showing that change-ringing is attracting attention from those who formerly despised it; the reading, thinking, and therefore the educated and scientific classes—those who get their knowledge from books rather than from teachers. Mr. Snowdon has re-written his book, and added a good deal to the earlier chapters. But the main additions are with regard to seven and eight bells, where he has added several new touches and peals, and a chapter on conducting and calling round. The book now contains all that is necessary about the practical part of the Bob system up to eight bells. But, as we before stated, the most valuable part of the book is the earlier part, which teaches what is implied in the title *Rope Sight*—that is, the management of a bell and the reading the ropes.

With regard to the management of a bell Mr. Snowdon says :—‘ In teaching . . . I adjust the rope at backstroke, according to the height of the pupil ; and, having shown him how to hold the end for setting at backstroke, pull the bell off at handstroke, and allow him to manage her at backstroke. By ringing in this way for a few minutes, the power of feeling the bell on to the balance at backstroke will be acquired. I then take the end of the rope into my own hands, and, managing the bell myself at backstroke, thus allow the pupil to acquire the power of controlling her at handstroke when his hands are not encumbered by also having the rope-end to hold. *In this case, however, I take care at first to also seize the rope at handstroke, either above or below the pupil's hands, so that I can prevent the bell being thrown over, should he altogether miss the sally.* After a few turns at both these exercises the pupil can then be allowed to manage the bell at each end.’

Most persons who have ever taught a beginner will be thankful for these remarks. But even some of them are unnecessary. The sentence in Italics (the Italics are our own) might be omitted ; and the doing what is there recommended is very difficult. The catching of four hands at the sally, two of them acting wildly and putting the other two out, is very likely to result in the sally being missed altogether. The fact is, if one experienced ringer manages one stroke of a bell no injury can come to the machinery from a novice's management of the other. If the novice pulls off from backstroke with cart-horse power, the teacher catches the sally which he is managing, and prevents the bell from bumping the stay ; he then, knowing the pull of the bell, pulls it off again with just such force that, if the novice were to let go of the end of the rope altogether, the bell would gently rise and set itself. If the novice is managing the sally stroke it is still easier for the teacher to neutralise the pupil's mistakes, because he has not then the danger of missing the sally, but has the adjusted rope's end always in his hand. If, then, the pupil pulls off the sally wildly, it only makes an extra strain on the teacher's hand at the other end. He therefore, as before, prevents the bell from bumping, and returns it with such gentleness and precision that, should the pupil miss the sally altogether, the bell will gently rise and set itself, as at the other stroke.

We have endeavoured to carry forward Mr. Snowdon's teaching on the first difficulty a young change-ringer has to encounter—a difficulty which, like the Slough of Despond, turns many Pliables back. But it will be seen that on this, as upon most other points, change-ringers, whether teachers or taught, have reason to be thankful for the remarks in Mr. Snowdon's excellent book.

THE CHURCH BELLS OF RUTLAND.—Their inscriptions, traditions, and peculiar uses. By Thomas North, F.S.A. (with Illustrations). Leicester, Samuel Clarke, 1880.

The present volume forms the concluding portion of the Campanological History of the Diocese of Peterborough and is characterised by the same noteworthy features that distinguish Mr. North's previous issues relating to Leicester and Northampton. Painstaking investigation, judicious illustration from extraneous sources, happy blending and adaptation of existing materials, are everywhere apparent in these pages; which are rendered still further interesting by the excellent engravings and general 'get-up' of the book, which is in itself a very admirable representative of modern and elegant typography. We are happy to know that Mr. North, who has made this subject peculiarly his own, and is *facile princeps* as a chronicler of church bells, is engaged on the great County of Lincoln and, if a little less immediately, on that of Bedford. A paper on the bells of the former county was read from his pen at the meeting in Lincoln last August of the British Archæological Institute, and our perusal of it justifies us in hoping that the publication of the Lincolnshire Tome may be at no very remote period.

To ourselves, the present account of the Rutlandshire Church Bells is specially interesting, as having years ago gone over all the ground now so ably described by Mr. North. The introductory portion is almost identical in the three volumes. Necessarily so from the early history of church bells being so limited and fragmentary—and till of late the subject so generally ignored 'that the towers themselves are oftentimes the best libraries and the bells the best books available' respecting it.

The county being so small (containing only 52 churches), we find far fewer specimens of early and mediæval inscriptions. But we note, '+ AVE: REX: GENTIS: ANGLORUM:' at Ayston, referring, probably, our author tells us, to Henry VI., 'who was all but canonized,' to Edward, King and Martyr, or to Edward the Confessor. Whereas at Teign we find the singular inscription, 'In Noie Ihs Maria,' followed by the crowned heads so frequently found elsewhere; at Tixover, 'Sancta Fides ora pro nobis,' a rare dedication; at Preston, 'God Save our Queene Elizabeth;' while South Luffenham and Seaton respectively help us to two founders' names somewhat buried in obscurity: 'Hew Watts made me 1563,' and, 'Ryecharde Benetlye Bell Foundder,' whose date is recoverable from his handiwork at Passenham, Northamptonshire, inscribed, '+ A Trusty + Frende + is + harde + to + Fynde + 1585.' Specially at Whitwell we note, '+ In: Honore: Sancti Eivdii' (*sic*, for Egidii), a dedication to St. Giles, of which Mr. North only knows two other instances, and at Wing, '+ S. Taddee' (St. Jude *sc.*); and at Ketton, the hitherto unique inscription, 'Me Me I merely will sing 1598,' in company with the more usual, 'I sweetly tolling men do call to taste on meat that feeds the soule 1598,' and, 'Sarve the Lorde 1601.' Lastly at Whissendive, 'My roaringe sounde doth warning geve that men cannot heare always lyve 1609.' The peculiar uses follow those very much of Leicestershire and Northamptonshire. The thrice three strokes on the tenor bell for a man and thrice two for a woman previous to the death-knell on it, are the prevailing custom of Rutland (p. 91). In some parishes a distinction in the number of tolls is made in the case of children. At Leigh and Brannstowe (occasionally) the age of the deceased is tolled out after the knell. Whereas the custom of chiming all the bells at funerals is now becoming obsolete, still lingering however at Whitwell and (occasionally) the case at Wing. Elsewhere it is remembered as of recent date. An *invitation* bell is tolled at Exton and Manton. There is only one ancient sanctus bell remaining in the county—that at Reston, inscribed, 'S. Mari\*.' The daily bells at 5 a.m. and 8 a.m. are still rung in a few places. The curfew sounds at Oakham, Langham, &c., the pancake bell on Shrove Tuesday, also the gleaning bell at many places at 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. The banns bell after a first publication at Pickworth. The mote or meeting bell at Bisbrook and Oakham. Whilst at Morcote we find Gunpowder Plot discovered is still commemorated on Nov. 5th, by joyous peals.

Thus much for 'Peculiar Uses.' Anent 'Peculiar Notions' we observe, p. 122, that the bell being cracked at Bisbrook, it was carefully repaired with *putty*, and *painted*! But this treatment did *not* result in an effectual cure. The bells generally are in a good state of preservation. At Ketton, however, the ring of five cannot be rung for fear of injury to the beautiful and lofty spire. There appear to be about twelve bells cracked or broken among the rings of the fifty-two churches; to this number our own knowledge leads us to add four more such bells. The heaviest bell in the county is at Uppingham School Chapel, but the three bells there are in so confined a space as to preclude their being properly rung. Which we, with Mr. North, regret. We transcribe *verbatim* the following from under Greetham, and trust so shameful a state of things may not much longer exist, the body of the church having been restored twenty years ago. Page 133 (the italics are ours):—

'These bells are in a sad condition; the treble is struck by a rope being attached to the clapper; the second lies mouth upwards in the north window of the belfry, its crown off and a gaping crack up its side; the third is dismounted and resting on two planks in its pit, it is cracked and the canons broken; and the fourth bell stands on the lower frame, its crown and other large portions gone. *The 2nd and 3rd bells have been in their present condition for upwards of 40 years!* Birds' dung lies some inches thick on the bell frames. On Sunday, the only available bell is knocked at 8 a.m., again for service, and also after service.'

We believe in Devonshire and Cornwall such a state of things may be found existing, but nowhere nearer home, to *our* knowledge at least. In conclusion we beg to tender our sincere thanks to Mr. North for the admirable volume before us. May many like it follow from his pen.

## Mr. Snowdon's Standard Methods.

STANDARD METHODS IN THE ART OF CHANGE-RINGING. By Jasper W. Snowdon. (London: Wells Gardner, Darton, & Co.)

To continue the instructions given in *Rope-Sight*, Mr. Snowdon has now written a book called STANDARD METHODS, in which full instructions and all necessary rules connected with the practical ringing of all the best-known methods are given. Besides these explanations, a plain course of each of the methods is also given in full; in these courses a red line is lithographed over the path of the treble and a blue line over that of the second bell. A diagram or 'chart' of the duty of a bell and the relation of its work to that of the treble is thus formed, and the study of the work each bell has to perform during a course of the method is rendered exceedingly simple. These 'charts' are bound up in a separate cover from the letterpress, so that reference can be made to them, when reading the descriptions and rules, without turning over from one part of the book to another part.

The term 'Standard Methods' Mr. Snowdon applies more especially to the four systems of Plain Bob, Grandsire, Treble Bob, and Stedman. The first of these having been fully explained in *Rope-Sight*, a summary of the necessary rules is only given; but the other three systems, including both Oxford and Kent Treble Bob, are dealt with at considerable length. A selection of methods which the author considers to be the most popular on the different numbers of bells from five to eight are then given. These 'extra' methods, as they may be termed, consist, on five bells, of New Doubles, St. Simon's, and Stedman's Slow-course Doubles. The Plain methods on six bells are Yorkshire Court, College Single, Double Court, Double Oxford, Double Stedman's Slow Course, and Double Bob. The Treble Bob methods on six bells are Violet, New London Pleasure, Woodbine, Duke of York, Imperial, London Scholars' Pleasure, London Treble Bob, City Delight, College Exercise, and Westminster, Cambridge, Superlative, and London Surprise. On eight bells the Plain methods comprise Yorkshire Court, Double London Court, Double Norwich Court, and Double Oxford. In the Treble Bob methods on this number of bells we have Superlative, Cambridge, and London Surprise. In each of the methods selected instructions and examples of the different calls used are given, and, to render the book more complete when in the hands of six-bell ringers, a peal of each of the five and six-bell methods is given. In conclusion we may add, that the book may be ordered through any bookseller, or obtained (post-free, 2s. 6d.) from Mr. J. W. Snowdon, Old Bank Chambers, Leeds.

## BOOKS ON CHANGE-RINGING.

At the present time Change-ringing seems to be receiving a good deal of attention from the clergy and others, who not only can appreciate and understand a written explanation, but also recognise the value of 'reading up' a subject. I therefore submit to those interested in this art a description of certain books that I have written in connexion with the subject.

Until a very few years ago the only books published on Change-ringing gave very little information on the practical part of the art, and on account of the brevity of the style adopted, it was only to those who were in some degree already acquainted with the more advanced branches that any of these books were of much utility. In my books I have therefore given much more lengthy explanations of the matters on which they treat than have hitherto been published, and although I have, in the following pages, given such notices as will explain their contents, I herewith append a brief statement showing the object of each work.

**ROPE-SIGHT: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ART OF CHANGE-RINGING.**—For their earliest instructions beginners have hitherto been almost entirely dependent on men who, however able as ringers, have not been in any way qualified to impart to others either their practical knowledge or any other information of which they might be possessed. The object of this book is, therefore, to enable beginners to teach themselves and others to ring changes according to the simplest method by which they can be produced. In the first chapters all the elementary technical terms are explained and hints on the practical management of a bell are given. Proceeding to the actual ringing of changes, all such information as can possibly be imparted in a written explanation, with such hints as experience of a beginner's usual difficulties has pointed out, is given. In this way much of the necessary knowledge may be acquired that has hitherto only been obtainable by oral instruction, or been the result of repeated attempts on the bells. By a careful study of the contents of this book a learner is therefore previously prepared, so that he may gain the most advantage from the least amount of actual practice.

**STANDARD METHODS IN THE ART OF CHANGE-RINGING.**—When any one has acquired the faculty of rope-sight, this book will then be found extremely useful in the study of any other of the best-known methods by which changes are rung. The object of *Standard Methods* is to provide a collection of simple rules by which the study of any method will be simplified. The peculiarity of the explanations is that they are based on the study of diagrams, which are produced by lithographed lines of different colours running over the figures in the full plain course of each method which is given. The four Standard Methods of Plain Bob, Grandsire, Treble Bob, Stedman's Principle, and a variety of other methods, are fully explained. *Standard Methods* is, therefore, not only adapted for the use of all beginners, but will also be found useful to any ringer who wishes to learn or look up any of the methods contained therein.

**A TREATISE ON TREBLE BOB. PART I.**—This book does not treat of the practical art of Change-ringing, but contains a large amount of information with regard to the science of composing and proving peals, which has never been previously published. Although in some parts the explanations are particularly directed to the Treble Bob method, a large amount of the information contained in this book applies to the proof of peals in any method. The chapter on the 'In and Out-of-Course of the Changes' is one which must be thoroughly studied by any one who wishes to compose a true peal or to prove the truth of one in any method. Any one not already possessing a copy of this work should secure one, as it is very improbable that another containing the same amount of information will ever be issued at the same price, as, when sold through the ordinary trade channels, this book is issued at a price that does not quite cover the expense of printing the same.

**A TREATISE ON TREBLE BOB. PART II.**—This book contains the largest collection of Treble Bob peals that has ever been got together, and although only interesting to Treble Bob ringers, is one which it is improbable will ever be reprinted at the same price. A further detailed description of the contents will be found at a subsequent page.

Concerning the four above-mentioned books, it may be said that *Rope-Sight* should be in the hands of every beginner; *Standard Methods* in the possession of every ringer; Part I. of the *Treatise on Treble Bob* in the hands of every one who aspires to prove or compose a peal, and is not already thoroughly qualified to do so; and that Part II. is absolutely necessary to every Treble Bob composer or conductor who wishes to test the originality of any composition.

JASPER W. SNOWDON.

## THE CHURCH BELLS OF LINCOLNSHIRE.

THE CHURCH BELLS OF LINCOLNSHIRE. By Thomas North, F. S. A. (Leicester, 1882. 4to. 780 pp.)—Mr. North is well known to archæologists by his previous volumes on Church Bells namely, those of Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, and Rutland, as well as by his *Chronicle of St. Martin's, Leicester*, and other publications. It was a most enterprising thing for this veteran campanologist to undertake the great county of Lincoln, second only to Yorkshire in extent, and containing, it appears, no less than 2034 church bells. Almost all of these bear inscriptions; and 'the fair proportion of 353, or about 17½ per cent, may be said to have been cast before the year 1600.' The inscriptions and founders' marks or other devices on these older bells are always curious and interesting; but Mr. North, as in his former volumes, has given us all that he could obtain, ancient or modern; that is to say, practically, all there are. In this arduous undertaking he has had handed over to him, by way of a beginning, the collections of some earlier labourers in the same field, who from various causes have discontinued their researches. The rest of the local information has been gained by sending circulars to the clergy. By this means he has been enabled to obtain, not only the inscriptions on the bells, but a large mass of information respecting local usages and traditions, to which he has devoted more than 100 pages. The best general idea of the book will perhaps be gained from its table of contents, which is as follows:—

'Church Bells (with special reference to those in Lincolnshire), 1-40. The Church Bells of Lincolnshire, 41-49. The Lincolnshire Bell-founders, 50-67. Other Founders of Lincolnshire Bells, 68-146. Peculiar Uses of the Lincolnshire Bells, 147-262. Latin Inscriptions on Lincolnshire Bells, 263-274. A Table of Diameters of Bells, with the approximate weights, 275. The Inscriptions on the Church Bells of Lincolnshire, with the Diameter at the mouth of each Bell, from which its approximate weight may be ascertained. To which are added extracts, where procurable, from the Commissioners' Returns, *temp.* Edw. VI., and from the Parochial and other Records, together with Local Traditions, Notices of Donors, &c. &c., 277-764. Index, 767-780.'

The first chapter covers much of the same ground as the corresponding portion of former volumes, but will be full of interest to those who do not possess them. In the second, the most remarkable of the inscriptions are brought together. Two of these are especially beautiful, and, so far as we know, unique; viz., one at Thornton Curtis,—

'O Deus absque pare, fac nos tibi dulce sonare.'

And one at Alkborough,—

'Jesu, for yi modir sake, save al ye sauls that me gart make. Amen.'

In the latter, 'gart make' is the old English equivalent of the mediæval Latin '*fecerunt fieri.*' At Laceby is a reference to a local *cultus*, of which nothing else is known,—

'Mary of Hawardby of us have mercy.'

We read in Peacock's *Church Furniture* that not only were roods with the figures of St. Mary and St. John burned, but 'other such-like idols.' At Belton, in the Isle of Acholme, was 'an idol of all halowes.' So, probably, at Hawerby, there was some image of Our Lady, in connexion with which she was invoked. The common inscription, 'Jesus be our speed,' was probably a sort of ejaculatory prayer used by the founders in connexion with the difficult and critical task of casting a bell. It would of course be impossible within the limits of this article to dwell on many of the curious inscriptions recorded. In the next chapter we are told all that is known of Lincolnshire bell-founders, among the most remarkable of whom was James Harrison of Barrow, who, in conjunction with his brother John, invented the chronometer. His grandson, James Harrison, had the last Lincolnshire foundry, which was at Barton. He cast his bells in cellars, and in the dead of night, lest any undesirable sound, such as the braying of an ass, or the crowing of a cock, should be communicated to the metal as it set. At least so Barton folk said. He died in 1835.

In the next chapter we learn that founders from all parts of the kingdom have cast bells for Lincolnshire. Then comes the chapter on 'Peculiar Uses,' already referred to, a perfect mine of information concerning the folk-lore of bells. Next we have the Latin inscriptions all together, with literal translations; and lastly, the various parishes alphabetically arranged, with the inscriptions on the bells, and anything else about them that could be ascertained, as dimensions, passages relating to them in churchwardens' accounts, peculiar uses, &c.

This goodly tome is very rich in excellent woodcut illustrations and lithographic plates. Many of the founders' marks and letters are well known to those who have paid attention to the archæology of bells; but many again are quite new, and probably peculiar to Lincolnshire. Some of these, however, may yet be found in Notts and Yorkshire. When we say that Mr. North has given us no less than 194 figures, besides some plates, it will at once be seen what a wealth of illustration he has afforded, and how great and valuable a contribution he has made to that particular department of ecclesiology which, as Mr. Ellacombe and others have done, he has made so thoroughly his own.

THE CHURCH BELLS OF BEDFORDSHIRE, &c. By Thomas North, F.S.A. (London: Elliot Stock. 1883.)—We have here another of Mr. North's painstaking and handsome issues on the subject which he has made peculiarly his own by the excellent and accurate character of the volumes already published by him. Time was when the interesting details attaching to ancient church bells were either altogether ignored, or regarded almost with contempt. But a departure here also in a better direction seems to indicate that the fabrics and furniture of the ancient 'Houses of God in the land' are worthy of all the care and attention that not merely an antiquarian enthusiast, but an earnest and loving Churchman, would feel moved to devote to the temples of the Lord.

Mr. North tells us that the ancient bells of Bedfordshire are slightly below the average observable in other counties. Several of those remaining, however, are of considerable interest, not merely by reason of the stamps and devices which are carefully reproduced in the engravings again given us, but also from the epigraphs they bear; *e.g.* at Cople, the 4th is inscribed, '*Fydelis Mesuris Nomen Campana Mykaelys*,' an inscription so far unique, and somewhat difficult to render. Perhaps 'True in its measures, the bell sounds the name of Michael' may be its equivalent. Or again, at Clifton, on the 6th and 7th respectively, 'But the(i)r consert in Mewsik,' and 'Doth ples (please) well our eare, 1590;' evidently two lines of a jingling rhyme, which the other bells, recast (not recorded, however) in 1831 and 1867, further carried on.

The peculiar uses are generally similar to those of other counties. The bells have rather too often apparently been allowed to fall into decay and neglect: *e.g.* Eaton Bray, where a fair ring of five has for years been silent; Dunstable, where the four larger bells of the eight are cracked; Chalgrave and Clapham, where one cause or another prevents their proper use. Readers of Southey will be glad to know, perhaps, that 'Bunyan's bell' at Elstow still remains; at p. 151 we read, 'Well, the *bell* is here, and the *beam* is here, and the *tower*, but the rugged, wistful *face* is gone. Here, nevertheless, his memory abides still, and many a fancy summons him up into a bodily presence again, and to many a listener the musical and melancholy peal has an added pathos from the fact that it still includes John Bunyan's bell.' Same page, at Eversholt, we find a very musical ring, with the beauty of which tradition says Handel was so charmed, when driving in their neighbourhood and they were ringing, that he ordered his coachman to stop for several minutes, in order that he might listen more attentively to them and enjoy the music more thoroughly. We are glad to note (p. 115) that efforts are now on foot to revive the ringers' art by the establishment of a Bedfordshire Association of Change-ringers; and not only thereby to encourage the cultivation of scientific change-ringing, but to promote belfry reform.

We are gratified to know that other volumes on several counties are more or less in progress from Mr. North's pen, and shall look forward to his further issues with much pleasurable anticipation.

THE CHURCH BELLS OF HERTFORDSHIRE. By the late Thomas North, F.S.A. Completed and edited by J. C. L. Stahlshmidt. (Elliot Stock.)—From the preface it appears that Mr. North died when a large portion of the text was written and nearly the whole of the material was in hand. Mr. Stahlshmidt's work has been mainly to edit, with the exception of the chronological account of the bells of Hertfordshire, which is entirely from his pen. Valuable assistance appears to have been given by Rev. W. J. Webber Jones, who supplied the necessary information for 72 out of the 186 churches of Hertfordshire.

Mr. Stahlshmidt's contribution, the chronological account (Part I.), is the most interesting and valuable to the general reader; but in handling books of this kind it must always be remembered that their chief value is to posterity. What we can see for ourselves our Norths and Stahlshmidts record with the greatest painstaking and accuracy, and it is thus we and our times and our works live again in ages yet unborn. These gentlemen have done their work with such scrupulous and conscientious care that it will be to future campanologists what the treatises they quote on every page have been to them—all this and more. A book of sober facts, from which romance is for the most part excluded, must necessarily be dry as a budget speech, and our authors have not the magical skill which has placed this venerable metaphor on the retired list.

There are in Herts three rings of ten bells at Bishop's Stortford, Hertford (All Saints'), and St. Albans (St. Peter's) and sixteen rings of eight bells, the best, apparently, being at St. Alban's Cathedral, Baldock, Hatfield, Hemel Hempstead, Hitchin, Rickmansworth, Sawbridgeworth, Tring, Ware, and Watford. To this selection of bells must be added those of Bennington, if only on account of the famous bell-ringing squire, Leonard Proctor, and those of Pelham Furneaux (though they be but six), and Hertford (St. Andrew's), described by Mr. Proctor as out of tune, but noteworthy (both rings) owing to their connexion with the work of Rev. Woolmer Wigram, general Secretary to the Herts County Association of Change-ringers, to whose efforts Hertfordshire is indebted for the revival of change-ringing in the eastern portion of the county, the fine rings of West Herts being as yet confined to illustrations of 'the churchyard bob,' though tables in sundry belfries tell of the glories of the past. Mr. Stahlshmidt tells us there are thirty-one bells in Herts of pre-Reformation standing, and of these nine, inscribed in Lombardic lettering, may be safely reckoned as earlier in date than the year 1400. Bells with a history of 500 years have an irresistible attraction, and we must hastily compress into a few lines what the interesting book before us has to say about them. We begin with the second bell at Little Berkhamsted, with its inscription, 'Ave Maria,' and its peculiar initial cross, of which a sketch is given on p. 8. (The sketches throughout are evidently done with the greatest pains and care, and 'regardless of expense.') The third bell at Ardeley and the single one at Letchworth come next. The cross and lettering are well known. The fourth bell among the ancient ones is the treble at Clothall, with its mysterious legend, 'CA'IT.ME.IOANNES,' probably *Calefecit me Johannes*—John made me. The next three are the second at Hexton, the fourth at Westmill, and the third at Wyddial, all bearing the same initial cross. Among the figures on the Wyddial bell are the busts of Edward III. and his Queen, Philippa. The last two are the second at Little Hormead and the fifth at Kimpton. There is also a very interesting pre-Reformation bell at Bushey. The compilers of this work have placed all lovers of bells in Herts, and they are not a few, under the greatest obligation. If Mr. Haweis, in his *Music and Morals*, tells us truly of the perils of campanology, they must have collected their valuable facts at the risk even of life.

HANDBELL RINGING. By C. W. Fletcher. (Curwen & Sons. 2s. 6d.)

—Mr. Fletcher gives us a really good book on handbell ringing, and we hail its issue with pleasure. In a matter of first importance he has been most careful; we allude to the very full explanation which he gives of the elements and initiatory stages of the art. He has not shirked the *drudgery* of the business. True knowledge of any subject must always involve drudgery on the part of both teacher and pupil, and here the teacher has well performed his part. In one way we strongly think the author has given himself a vast deal of unnecessary trouble, and needlessly increased the size of the book. He has devoted page after page to the tonic sol-fa notation. And while we are finding fault we will mention his insertion of what he denominates 'chimes.' By this he seems to mean change-ringing. It would have been far better to have left this subject alone altogether. It is far more difficult of achievement than are tunes; and, moreover, when an outsider, such as Mr. Fletcher seems to be, ventures into the arena, he inevitably comes to grief. But these blemishes do not touch the main features of the work. We can therefore conclude by heartily recommending every aspirant to tune-ringing to invest in a copy. The investment we are certain will prove a most profitable one.

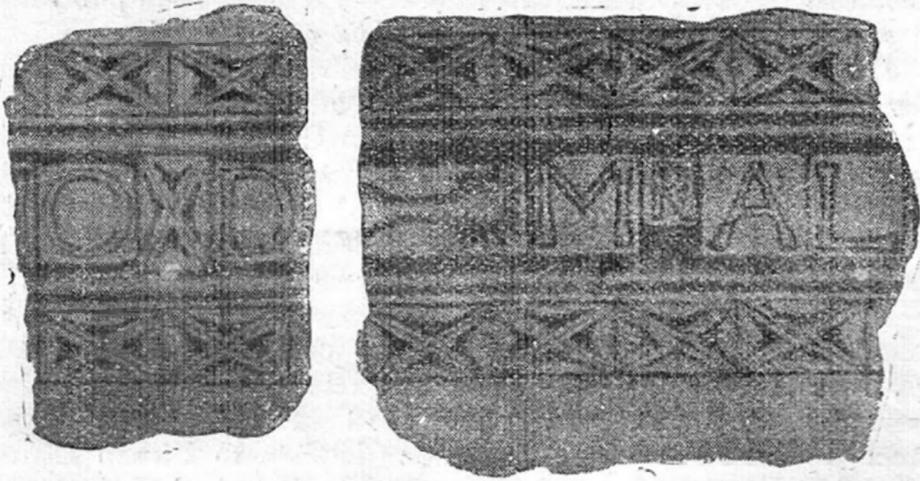
THE RINGER'S GUIDE TO THE CHURCH BELLS OF DEVON. By Charles Pearson, M.A. (Bell & Sons; and Eland, Exeter.)—This book of 138 pages we have perused with interest, and, we may add, with much pleasure also. We only regret that the space at our disposal will not allow us to review it at the length which it deserves. It really contains much more information, and that of a very useful kind, than its title suggests. This will be clearly perceived by the mere mention of some of the items in the Table of Contents, such for instance as: 'The origin and history of bells; the inscriptions upon ancient bells; gradual increase in the number of bells in a ring; progress of bell-ringing in spite of opposition; inscriptions typical of various centuries; the shape of bells; method of hanging and ringing bells; bell-founders; technical terms; bell-ringing as a pastime; belfry management and rules; a list of the church bells of Devon,' &c. The writer gives in the preface a list of authors whom he has consulted. His range of reading has been wide, the result of which is that he has produced a most handy and readable book. It does not lay claim to be a guide to those advanced in the subjects of which it treats, but it will be a most useful work for all change-ringers or bell archæologists to have by them in readiness to present or lend to any friend who shows a possibility of bias in favour of any of the branches of bell-lore. It will form a most excellent volume to set inquirers or beginners on the right road. There are but very few passages—and those never more than a line or two in length—that we have marked for adverse criticism. The writer is scarcely correct in saying that bell-ringing reached its highest pitch in the eighteenth century. Though, doubtless, its pitch was then high, and was succeeded by a great decadence, yet there can be no question that it is far higher now than ever it was. On p. 26 there are some statements with regard to the weight of bells that are open to question. The old founders did distinctly *not* make bells lighter than they should be. An arbitrary and self-opinionated modern writer has succeeded in forcing a standard of his own creation in certain quarters, with the result that bells have been cast of such thickness that the result can only be described as abominable. The writer's remarks on p. 61 would lead his readers to suppose that the peal of 13,054 was rung at Appleton; it was rung at Cheltenham. To one other statement on this page we most strongly demur. Methods *cannot* be adapted to odd or even bells promiscuously. Odd-bell methods for odd bells and even for even, NEVER *vice versâ*. With these trifling exceptions the book is throughout most excellent, and we very heartily wish it the success which it so well deserves.

# Church Bells of Middlesex.

WE are glad to announce that a work on the *Church Bells of London and Middlesex* is at last in course of compilation. The authors are Mr. E. J. Wells, secretary of St. Paul's Ecclesiological Society; Mr. H. B. Walters, F.S.A., of the British Museum; and Mr. F. C. Eeles, author of the recently published *Church Bells of Kincardineshire*. It will embrace a full description of all bells in churches of earlier foundation than the beginning of this century, with short notices of those of more modern churches. Inscriptions, dimensions, and ringing customs will be given in the case of the older churches, and there will be a short introductory sketch of the founders whose work is to be met with in the county. The book will be fully illustrated with specimens of lettering, initial crosses, founders' marks, and ornaments. Although it is unusual to find many ancient and interesting bells in populous districts, the neighbourhood of the metropolis yields quite enough to make the book one of great importance to the archæologist. From the ringer's point of view, the county is of exceptional importance as it contains many of our most famous peals, the history of which cannot fail to interest the majority of our ringers. Moreover, Middlesex is the birth-county of change-ringing, and the history of such societies as the College Youths and the Cumberland Youths will receive due attention. The publication of this book will fill up a long-neglected gap in the slowly growing survey of our English bells. About half the English counties have been investigated and the results published, and we are pleased to see that the metropolitan county is receiving attention at last, and we hope the book will meet with the success which it deserves.

## Bells in Scotland.\*

To those—and there are some—who profess to be incredulous as to the existence of any church bells north of the Tweed worthy of the attention of the antiquary and ecclesiologist, this carefully compiled and admirably arranged little volume from



LETTERING AND ORNAMENTS AT PORTLETHEN.

the pen of Mr. F. C. Eeles will be something of a surprise. For not only will they learn that Scotland can hold its own as a famous bell country, but that a single county is rich in these valuable relics of bygone days. The author is by no means unconscious of the prevailing ignorance regarding Scotch bells. In his preface he says that, as so little is known about them, he has prefixed an introduction, which treats on the matter at some length. Turning instinctively to this we find him claiming, with great truth and force, that 'bell-founding is an art in the truest sense of the term,' and generously bearing testimony, with the true catholicity of art, which is indifferent to geographical areas, to the due appreciation in England of the antiquarian and artistic value of bells. 'Many ecclesiologists,' he writes, 'have made them a special study, and have given us exhaustive accounts of those in several of the English counties.' Besides its historical and educational use, such work has often been the means of averting the destruction of valuable property, and of perpetuating the memory of many specimens of bell-founding which, for one reason or another, have been destroyed.'

The 'reason' we believe for such destruction in the vast majority of cases has been simple ignorance of the unique value of church bells. 'Their history, uses, and artistic merits,' are still too little regarded, and it is at once the office of such a volume as *The Church and other Bells of Kincardineshire* to show the unthinking the value of the treasures of which they are ignorant—in short, to educate them—and to place within reach of all bell enthusiasts fresh stores of information concerning the art.

There is a great deal in this introduction which is equally interesting to the votaries of the art, and to those who are only acquainted with it, so to speak, 'by sight.' There is much in the pursuit of the art, it must be admitted, which a burning enthusiasm is required to overcome. Bells are not, for instance, except very

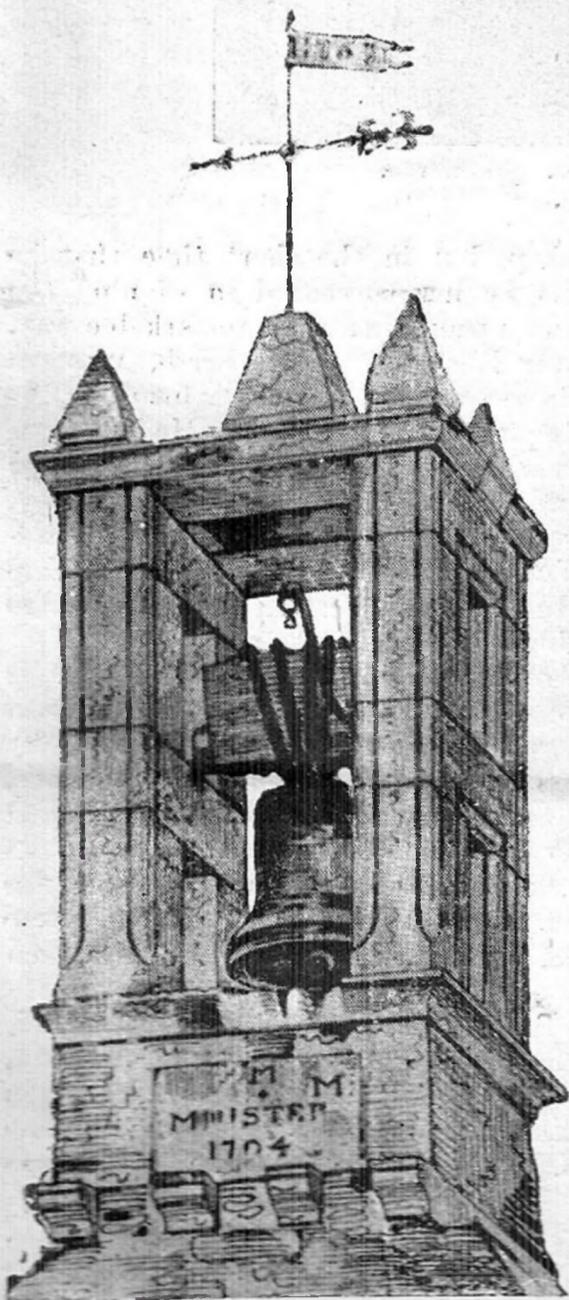
rarely, so placed as to be convenient for examination. There is climbing, and when at last the bells are reached, neither they nor their surroundings are usually of a very, or even of a moderately, cleanly character. The pervading darkness is accentuated rather than dispelled by some artificial illuminant which may be a lantern, or taper, or match. If you want to examine the interior of a bell you may have to lie flat upon your back upon very dirty planks, and wriggle your head through a space of a few inches under its mouth. And when all this has been done, and you once more emerge into daylight, grimy and for the moment dazzled, you may painfully realise that all your labour has been in vain, for the bells may have had no antiquarian or historical interest whatever. But against such trials and such disappointments there are the delights of discovering some really precious bell, of gloating over its outline, of identifying some famous bygone founder, of taking a rubbing of a unique lettering. These are the joys which repay the enthusiast, such as we are sure Mr. Eeles must be. Mediæval, Dutch Renaissance, eighteenth-century Scotch bells, and bells which cannot be classified, have all rewarded his patient and laborious investigations.

The volume, which contains a number of excellent and valuable illustrations, is a welcome and important addition to the literature on the bells in different counties which has been so far published, and we shall look forward to Mr. Eeles' researches filling some of the gaps yet existing. It is surprising how much has still to be done in this direction. The edition of the *Church Bells of Kincardineshire* is only a small one, and the price is so moderate that there is no doubt the volume will be quickly out of print, and no further edition may be issued. Bell-lovers had therefore better lose no time in obtaining a copy. We may add that we have secured a few copies for our readers, for which orders may be sent to our publisher.

Our illustrations represent two typical eighteenth century Scotch belfries, and the lettering and ornaments of a bell at Portlethen, by Albert Gely of old Aberdeen, 1702.



BELFRY AT FETTERESSO.



BELFRY AT NIGG.

\* *The Church and other Bells of Kincardineshire*. By F. C. Eeles. (Aberdeen: W. Jolly & Sons. London: Elliot Stock. 5s. net.)

MOULTON CHURCH AND ITS BELLS, by Sydney Madge (Elliot Stock. 7s. 6d. net), is a very carefully written history of this parish and its bells. The author was evidently in love with his subject, and has devoted much pains in learning all that there was to be known in regard to it. After briefly telling the story of the village and parish, he goes on to narrate the history of the church from the time of the seventeenth-century edifice down to our own day, and then follows a chapter on the tower and bells, which is of very special interest to campanologists. A great variety of useful, curious, and interesting information has been gathered together and included in the book, of which the value is considerably enhanced by a complete summary of Northamptonshire bells and a comprehensive bibliography on bells.

THE CHURCH BELLS OF HOLDERNESS. By Godfrey Richard Park. (London: Andrews & Co. 3s. 6d.)—Mr. Park divides his book into two chapters, the first being devoted to the general subject of church bells, and the second to the inscriptions on the church bells in Holderness. The book, which is one that should be added to the library of all bell-lovers, contains much useful information. Mr. Park is evidently a bell-enthusiast. We wish that there were more of them.



THE CHURCH BELLS OF HUNTINGDONSHIRE.—This volume completes the last of the different divisions of the diocese of Ely, the bells of Suffolk, Cambs, and Beds having already each had their historian. The present work has been compiled by the Rev. T. M. N. Owen, rector of Woodwalton, who has spared no pains in obtaining particulars of the founders as well as of their work. The memory of the church bells of our childhood's home is carried often to the distant homes of the southern main, to the vast prairies of the North American continent, to the heart of Central Africa, to every spot reached by the roving Englishman; their history is often but little known. Some of the bells carry us back many centuries; one bears the Cromwell name, and others the quaintest of inscriptions, generally with point, however. The author has told us of the different customs of ringers in different places; of the Pancake, Gleaning, and other bells; and an excellent index enables the reader to turn at once to any founder, while the names of parishes are alphabetically arranged. The work contains more than sixty engravings of founders' marks, and is excellently got up by Messrs. Jarrold & Sons, of Norwich. Price, royal 4to., two guineas; 8vo., 15s. 6d.