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THE PROTECTION OF CHURCH BELLS.

The question of the safety of the church bells themselves is now giving concern in some quarters in connection with their use as a warning in the event of air-borne invasion. Ringers know full well the danger which may arise of cracking a bell if 'clocking' is resorted to as an easy way of getting it sounded. But there are others who are not so wise in this matter. Recently, for instance, in a memorandum issued in the diocese of St. Albans on 'The War and Church Property,' it was stated, in connection with the use of bells for warning purposes, that 'access to the belfry must be available day and night to the responsible official of the L.D.V.,' and that 'ringing by rope attached to wheel is probably not necessary or desirable: chiming by rope attached to clapper should suffice.'

Leaving aside the doubtful right of the responsible L.D.V. official to ring a bell for the purpose mentioned, unless he has the authority of the chief of police or a commissioned officer of H.M. Forces (as prescribed by the Order), the suggestion that the bells should preferably be chimed by a rope attached to the clapper is only another example of the ignorance about bells which often exists in high places. True, some modification of this advice has since appeared in the diocesan 'Leaflet,' published albeit some weeks after the original memorandum. This, however, was not until Dr. F. C. Eeles, secretary of the Central Council for the Care of Churches, had called attention to the danger to bells 'from unskilful handling of bell clappers.' But the fact remains that an official memorandum went out recommending the use of 'clocked' bells, it having been assumed, as the 'Leaflet' pointed out, that 'in every parish some experienced person would see to the rope being properly affixed to the lower extremity of the clapper of each bell before leaving it to be chimed, . . . and would 'warn any unskilled person that when a blow is struck the tension on the rope must be immediately released.' It is extraordinary how readily people who have only a slight knowledge will give advice. In this case, of course, it was well intentioned but woefully misguided.

If the bells throughout the land were clocked and much used by inexperienced hands there would quickly be a sorry tale of damage to some of the most valuable property of the church. In matters of this kind, one would have thought the best advice would be obtained, yet it often happens in the case of bells that the people most competent to help are forgotten or ignored. It would have been better if, instead of making excuses, the instruction given in the memorandum as to clocking the bells had been entirely withdrawn. A bell should be

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swung by the rope from the wheel and not clanged by tying the rope to the clapper. There may be a degree less danger if the chiming by the latter means is done by an experienced person, but if an experienced ringer is available he will not need to 'clock' the bell; he will be able to sound it by the proper means. If he is not available, then the inexperienced substitute should at least be taught how to do it. All this, however, brings us back once more to the fact that there is still absolutely no organisation coming from headquarters as to the ringing of this alarm or any intimation of the action to be taken upon it. In some cases local arrangements have been made to have a bell sounded, but of the various plans which have come to our notice all must result in inevitable delays and loss of time, and when at length the bells are sounded no one knows what is to happen. The police and military will be well aware of any landing before the bells are rung; the public are still in the dark as to the part they are to play.

But the question of the protection of church bells is the theme of this article, and there is one other point in connection with it to which we must come; it is the Central Council's suggestion to the War Office that permission should be given to remove the ropes from any bells of historical interest to avoid risk of damage. The War Office reply, which we published last week, gets us just nowhere: 'Providing sufficient bells remain to give the warning, there would appear to be no reason why the ropes should not be removed from these particular bells.' In this case the Central Council can surely say, 'Thank you for nothing.' No church authorities in their senses would leave bells of historical interest—those cast prior to the year 1700, as the Central Council suggest—to be knocked about by a lot of inexperienced rope pullers, and they would do what has been done in many cases where there are only modern bells, take off the ropes and leave only one to be jangled. But where there is only one bell, and that bell of archaeological value, the War Office has not moved a jot. For all the good the Central Council has been able to do in this matter they might have saved themselves the trouble. What the Council could well do is to issue a warning to the diocesan authorities against the danger of 'clocking' bells, and ask that the warning shall be passed on to all church authorities. It would, we hope, have better results.

BERTRAM PREWETT.

KILLED ON ACTIVE SERVICE, AUGUST 31st, 1918.

The Great War of 1914-1918 took a great toll of ringers, but none of them held quite so prominent a position in the Exercise as did Bertram Prewett, who was killed not very long before victory was gained. He was born on October 12th, 1878, and so was in the very prime of his life when he fell on the field of honour.

He rang his first peal in 1898, and soon afterwards became one of the very talented band which had been formed under the auspices of the Middlesex County Association, with William Pye at its head. He took part in many famous peals, including the 18,027 Stedman Caters at Loughborough in 1909, and the 15,264 Bristol Surprise Major at Hornchurch in 1912. Among his other peals were the first of Cambridge Maximus ever rung, the first Bristol Surprise Major, and Cambridge Royal in London, the first Superlative Major in Wales, and the first Cambridge Major in Ireland. He rang the tenors at St. Patrick's, Dublin, St. Giles', Cripplegate, and St. Sepulchre's, Holborn, to peals, and the last two especially were by no means easy jobs. Altogether his peals numbered nearly a thousand, and his friends confidently expected that he would in the end make a record, for he was several years younger than William Pye.

Had he lived, he probably would now have ranked as the greatest active ringer, for he was a conductor and a handbell ringer of outstanding ability. It is impossible to assess what the Exercise lost by his death, but it was very great.

THE DEATH OF MR. JOHN HOLMAN.

OLDEST MEMBER OF THE SHEFFIELD COMPANY.

It was with the deepest regret that we had last week to announce the death of Mr. John Holman, of 15, Elm Lane, Sheffield, the oldest member of the Sheffield Cathedral Company. He passed away after only a short illness on the 16th inst., at the age of 75 years.

Mr. Holman was suddenly taken ill on the 13th inst., when his doctor ordered his removal to hospital for an immediate operation, from which, however, he never recovered.

The funeral service took place at his home privately, and the interment at Shiregreen Cemetery, on the 20th inst. A large number of family mourners and intimate friends attended the burial service, including Mr. S. F. Palmer (hon. treasurer of the Yorkshire Association and secretary of the Sheffield Cathedral Company), Mr. W. Biggin (Norton), representing the Midland Counties Association, Messrs. W. R. Harrison, G. Holmes, W. Burgar (St. Marie's R.C.), and John Thorpe and Ernest Thorpe (Sheffield Cathedral).

A number of ringers in Sheffield and the district sent their regrets at being unable to attend owing to pressure of war work.

Mr. Holman had been connected with the firm of Messrs. W. Jessop and Sons, Ltd., for approximately fifty years, and representatives were present from the manager and from various sections of the establishment, and also from the A.E.U.

Originally a native of Lincoln, Mr. Holman went to Sheffield from Bath on his marriage in 1890, when he joined the then Parish Church company. With the exception of a period of two years (1903 and 1904), when his work again took him to Bath, he remained a regular member of the society up to the time of his death.

Beginning his ringing career at Lincoln, Mr. Holman scored his first peal (Grandsire Triples) at Colerne, Wiltshire, in 1888. It was conducted by the late James Hinton, with whom Mr. Holman formed a close friendship.

Afterwards, five further peals were rung in Bath and Bristol, including his first of Treble Bob and Grandsire Major, but it was not until he came to Sheffield that he was able to indulge in ringing on the higher numbers and in advanced methods.

Always a keen ringer and good striker, Mr. Holman took every opportunity to indulge in his only hobby, and quickly became well known amongst the prominent ringers of the day. His favourite holiday was to join one of the ringing tours, which enabled him to share in many noted performances throughout the country.

Altogether he had rung 310 peals in 100 towers in 24 counties and under 15 different associations in England, Scotland and Wales. His last peal was one of Little Bob Maximus at Surfleet, Lincs, in August, 1939.

Mr. Holman was most regular in his Sunday service ringing, and his 'brother strings' will greatly miss him when ringing takes place again. He was also keen on attending the annual dinners of the Yorkshire Association, the Bristol United Guilds, and the Ancient Society of College Youths, he having been a member of the last-named society for 51 years.

Of a genial disposition, he made many friends amongst ringers throughout the country, all of which will deplore his sudden departure from their midst.

Mr. Holman is survived by his widow and two sons. It was only on August 4th last that Mr. and Mrs. Holman celebrated their golden wedding, when congratulations were received from all parts of the country.

LIST OF PEALS.

The following is the list of Mr. Holman's peals:—

Bob Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Bob Maximus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Grandsire Triples	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13
Grandsire Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Grandsire Caters	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Grandsire Cinques	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Forward Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Kent Treble Bob Minor	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Kent Treble Bob Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	30
Kent Treble Bob Royal	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13
Kent Treble Bob Maximus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Oxford Treble Bob Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Oxford Treble Bob Royal	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Oxford Treble Bob Maximus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Double Norwich Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	21
Double Norwich Caters	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Little Bob Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Little Bob Maximus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Stedman Triples	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	21
Stedman Caters	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	25
Stedman Cinques	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	26
Superlative Surprise Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	30
Rutland Surprise Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Bristol Surprise Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Pudsey Surprise Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
London Surprise Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17

(Continued in next column.)

WARWICKSHIRE GUILD.

DEDICATION OF PEAL TABLETS AT RUGBY.

The meeting held at Rugby on August 17th was made the occasion for dedicating two peal tablets in the belfry of St. Andrew's Church. One of the tablets records a peal of Stedman Triples rung in 1919, in which the late Mr. Albert Bramall (for over 40 years a ringer at St. Andrew's) took part. The other tablet records a peal of Cambridge Surprise Major rung in 1937, in which Leslie Bramall, son of Albert Bramall, was one of the ringers. The tablets were designed and executed by Mr. C. H. Webb, of Coventry, whose excellent workmanship is so well known in many Midland belfries.

The short service of dedication was conducted by the president of the Guild (Ven. R. Brook, M.A., Archdeacon of Coventry). In the course of a short address the Archdeacon deplored the silence of the bells, and hoped it might be possible to get them going again. At the same time, he urged the members to carry on and stick together by holding similar meetings to the one in which they were taking part that day.

Upwards of twenty members and friends were present, and at the conclusion of the service, a move was made to the Church Hall nearby, where a comfortable room was available for handbell ringing. Four Rugby members rang a good course of Grandsire Triples: Mrs. W. Vann 1-2, W. Vann 3-4, W. Betley 5-6, J. B. Fenton 7-8. Tunes were rung by Messrs. C. H. Webb, F. Stone, P. Stone, A. H. Beamish and Mrs. D. E. Beamish.

Various methods were rung single and double-handed, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

During an interval in the ringing, Mr. C. H. Webb voiced the thanks of the Guild to the local band for their arrangements, and also to the Ven. Archdeacon Brook for taking the service. He said he was sure that all present would like Mr. James George to know, when he read the report of the meeting in 'The Ringing World,' how pleased they were to hear of his wonderful progress, and that he was not forgotten at that meeting.

Since the meeting it has been announced that the Archdeacon of Coventry has been appointed to the Bishopric of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich. This is the third episcopal appointment from Rugby since 1927, and the members of the Guild warmly congratulate their president on his appointment.

SPEED IN RINGING.

A COMPARISON BETWEEN TWO FAMOUS TOWERS.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I was pleased to see your note on quick ringing, and should like to endorse your condemnation of it.

I always think the footnote, 'Quickest peal on the bells,' is in the nature of an apology, and not a matter for pride. One, therefore, wonders why such a footnote is appended. And, moreover, it takes a better band to ring a well-struck slow peal than a quick one.

There is a proper 'beat' for all rings—when they sound at their best, so why clip in and spoil the rhythm? The reasons for difference in time between peals on two rings are, as you say, 'elusive and incalculable.' Take, for example, St. Mary-le-Tower, Ipswich, and St. Peter Mancroft, Norwich. Mancroft tenor—all on—is at least half a ton heavier than the other, and yet, over a long period of years, there is practically no difference in the time taken for peals, whether of Caters, Royal, Cinques or Maximus, and for a dig at one of your own reasons, may I remind you that at Mancroft there is a longer draught, a bigger belfry and circle of ropes, and higher boxes for the big bells! The curious thing in these two towers is this—and I find all who have rung peals at both will agree—at Ipswich the bells seem to be travelling much faster, and the ringer striking much closer than at Mancroft. And yet the clock says 'No!'

Many different ringers have rung the tenors at these churches, but the tale is always the same. The late William Pye rang his first peal of Maximus at Norwich. This was in 1899, and time 3.48. Two months later at Ipswich in 3.59, and again in Norwich in 1901 in 3.55. In each of these Mr. Pye rang the tenor, all were 5,040's, and all were with first-class men on the 11th—Frederick Day, John Cheesman and Ernest Pye—and both rings on plain bearings.

Since Mancroft were hung on ball bearings, the Maximus peals have been rung in quicker time, but if I am to ring one of the small bells and hold up over the big ones, then give me plain bearings!—Yours truly,

CHAS. E. BORRETT.

MR. J. HOLMAN'S PEALS.

(Continued from previous column.)

Cambridge Surprise Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Cambridge Surprise Royal	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Cambridge Surprise Maximus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Norfolk Surprise Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
New Cambridge Surprise	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
New Cambridge Surprise Royal	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Yorkshire Surprise Major	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	22
Yorkshire Surprise Royal	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1

Total 310

THE NORWICH SCHOLARS.

MELCHIOR VERSUS CRANE.

Edward Crane and the Coslany band set themselves two tasks. One was to ring their own peal at St. Michael's; the other was to prove that their opponents' peal had not been properly rung.

The old English custom was that when a man wanted to convince the public that he was speaking the truth, he either offered to back his words with a wager, or went and swore an oath before a magistrate.

Then, as now, men said the thing that was not, in varying degrees from slight exaggeration to downright lying, and, provided there was something to be gained by it, it was no great matter. But when a man laid a wager he stood to lose his money, and when he took an oath he was risking his welfare in the next world. And even though there were men who, like Macbeth, for some advantage 'but here upon this bank and shoal of time' were quite prepared to 'jump the life to come,' there were temporal and mundane penalties attached to false swearing.

There was, therefore, no way in which the Mancroft peal could be more discredited than by taking an oath about it. So Thomas Crane went before a magistrate and formally swore that he had counted the changes and that 4,860 were rung and no more. The time, he said, was three hours and a half and not three hours and forty minutes.

The Mancroft party, on their side, were prepared to swear, and John Webster also went before a magistrate and took an oath. Webster had not been in the peal band, but had been present in the belfry as referee.

The two cases were not alike. Thomas Crane could take his oath with a clear conscience, for he, good simple soul, had counted the strokes of the tenor, and did not see why he should have made a mistake. Webster was in a different case. He was an honest and truthful man and was quite prepared to swear that the peal was fairly and truly rung. But that did not satisfy the opposition. They challenged him to swear to the exact literal truth of the advertisement of October 31st that there was 'never a bell out of course nor changes alike.' Naturally he hesitated. There have been very few peals rung of which that could be said to be strictly and literally true. One missed dodge—one little trip in the slow—is enough to invalidate the claim. And the Mancroft peal had not been faultless. There had been some poor striking and a few blunders. The sixth, too, was going badly, so much so that Webster had had to relieve John Foster.

Naturally, the Coslany men made the most of these things, and they cross-examined Webster severely. When they 'put him upon his oath,' he 'said cunningly that it was not the peal they rang, but it was the peal upon his paper he would swear was true.'

'We asked him how many times their 5 fore bells struck together in one part of their peal. He owned five times. Then how could this peal be rung without bells out of course?'

Webster was then asked why his party had advertised but eight men when he himself was fain to relieve the sixth man. This was something of a poser, and his answer was more ingenious than convincing. 'Oh,' he said, 'we did not count the tenor man,' which provoked the quick retort, 'Then why was he in the News?' All this was very damaging to the Mancroft party, but the

Coslany men in their eagerness to discredit their opponents' performance, forgot that it was a game that two could play at, and when their turn came their peal could be subjected to a like scrutiny.

Thomas Melchior was a bonny fighter, and he could hit back hard. He had a pretty wit, and could write an effective letter. He was a born controversialist, who thoroughly enjoyed the fray, and could give and take hard knocks without losing his temper or saying anything that really hurt or rankled and so make a final reconciliation impossible.

He was quite satisfied himself that his peal was true as a composition and had been fairly rung. He was justly scornful of Thomas Crane's method of checking it by counting the strokes of the tenor, and he very properly pointed out that it was no test at all.

'I will acquaint the world with his accurate proceedings. First he placed himself in a public-house where people were often coming in and going out, by and by in a yard, and oftentimes walking backwards and forwards, telling the strokes of the tenor; which is the method he took to prove the truth of our performance, as he himself confessed before the justice. Now I appeal to the world whether or no this man could be a proper judge of it. He also asserted that we rung but three hours and a half, and likewise that we rung 180 changes short; notwithstanding that we rung 3 hours and 40 minutes, not only by Mr. William Riches' watch, but by many others in St. Peter's of Mancroft in Norwich; and that the peal contained 5,040 changes John Webster (whom they supposed to be the prompter) will firmly declare.'

And then, acting on the principle that to attack is the best defence, he carried the war into the enemy's country, and offered a wager of 'two to one, as far as ten guineas go, that Edward Crane's peal (if it be the same they oftentimes endeavoured to ring at St. Michael's of Coslany) is not proper Stedman Triples.' 'But,' he added, 'to challenge them to ring is beneath us; for we know that if we perform our parts to truth we may be sworn out of it. Therefore we leave them as false, malicious, brethren, not thinking it worth while to answer their base, scurrilous, and scandalous calumnies for the future.'

The last was merely rhetoric, for he was enjoying the fight too much to retire from it.

Melchior's advertisement provoked a rejoinder from Edward Crane. He flatly denied that his brother was walking about while he was counting the strokes of the tenor. 'Mr. Will Aburn does here justify that he was in a room of his, and that there was nobody with him all the time of their ringing but two of his company, till he had proved the truth of their peal.'

Crane gave his version of what had happened before the magistrate, and then took up Melchior's challenge on the composition of Stedman. 'Mr. Melchior was pleased to say that the peal we rung at St. Michael's of Coslany is not Stedman. I am sorry that he should show his ignorance to both city and county. I will appeal to any Man of his Art whether or no they ever knew the 6th and 7th bells were turned half the one way and half the other as theirs now do. I will tell him he never pricked a peal upon seven bells with only two Doubles; if he had he would have known how the great bells should come home at their proper places; and not have taken to

himself a peal of five bells and fled to Stedman for assistance; because the peal of five bells will work many ways, and so will Grandsire on five bells, as well as Stedman. Then, I pray, let any man that is a judge in this art tell me why Stedman on seven bells should not work as Grandsire on seven bells, and bring their great bells home at their quarter, half, three-quarter and whole peal's end? And so do other peals on 5, 6, 7 and 8. But, alas! Mr. Melchior, if you desire to keep your credit, you must go into St. Gregory's churchyard and call up John Garthorn to do the work for you. Pray be not affronted because I tell you the truth.'

Whether Thomas Crane spoke the truth when he said he had shut himself up in a quiet room all the time he was checking the Mancroft peal, or whether Melchior was right when he said he was walking about in a busy place where people were passing to and fro, is no matter. I am inclined to believe Crane. Melchior could have known nothing about it personally. Mr. Aburn was the landlord of the tavern, and as such friendly with both parties. He was ready to testify to Crane's version, and later on, when Melchior called on him, he agreed to pretty well what he was asked to.

Crane's evidence, of course, was really contemptible, but, so far as the general public went, it was the most effective weapon in the Coslany party's armory. And so Melchior published a fancy portrait of Thomas and his counting that must have made even that somewhat dull-witted gentleman squirm. It is not good for a man's vanity, after he has been posing as an authority, to be turned into a figure of fun. When Thomas Crane and

Rice Green came, said Aburn, they first sat in the yard and listened to the ringing, but finding it too cold (it was, we remember, at the end of October) they went into a room. Presently the landlord looked in and found only one man there. 'Doubtless they had no discourse,' remarks Melchior, 'for honest Tom was so brisk in telling the strokes of the tenor that he could hardly spare time to tell Rice Green go and be damned because he would stay no longer. Tom, methinks, has an excellent memory and ears as long as an ass, that he could not be put out of his reckoning by any noise the people made going in and out. This indeed seems to me wonderful, for I have often mistook in telling twelve strokes of the clock by some interruption or other. But Tom was earnest in proving what he knew nothing of, for whenever the landlord came in to see what he wanted, he clinched his fist, shut his hard mouth, and grinned at him; all this could not put infallible Tom out, but he went on telling the strokes of the tenor for three hours and a half. Methinks this infallible man ought to be knighted for this grand exploit. I would almost envy his great skill in proving peals.'

Melchior went on to repeat the claim that he and his band had rung 5,040 changes and not two bells out of course, 'and John Webster remarked every bob that I called, and will take oath that I called every bob, neither more nor less, yet honest Tom, by his unerring rule of telling the strokes of the tenor, has sworn that we wanted nine score changes.' Likewise this Honest Man told John Webster that he never spoke a word in his life but he would swear to the truth of it. Let this be allowed him,' added Melchior sarcastically.

(Continued on page 416.)

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BELFRY GOSSIP.

At the meeting of the College Youths at the Coffee Pot, on Tuesday, September 10th (which, by the way will be held at 7 p.m. instead of 8), the question of holding Saturday instead of Tuesday meetings is to be discussed.

Congratulations to Mr. R. T. Woodley on his eighty-first birthday, which occurred yesterday. Mr. Woodley is one of the oldest members of the Society of College Youths, and was the hon. secretary before the late W. T. Cockerill.

Last Monday was the 222nd anniversary of the ringing of the first true peal of Grandsire Triples by the Norwich Scholars, as described in the recent articles in our pages.

John Holt called one of his peals of Double Bob Major at St. John's, Hillingdon, on August 26th, 1751, with a band of the Union Scholars.

On the same date, in 1776, the College Youths rang 10,640 changes of Bob Major at St. Mary's, Mortlake. James Worster called the bobs.

One of the early long peals of Treble Bob Major was rung at Otley, in Yorkshire, on August 27th, 1814. The composition, by Shipway, was the longest that at the time had been worked out. Two men, Joseph Tebbs and J. Inman, rang the tenor between them, and the conductor sat in the belfry and called from manuscript.

The noble ring of twelve bells at York Minster was dedicated on August 29th, 1926.

A notable record was set up at Guildford on August 31st, 1912, when 19,738 changes of Stedman Caters were rung on handbells in nine hours and thirty-two minutes. Mr. A. H. Pulling rang 3-4 and conducted, and the other ringers were A. F. Shepherd 1-2, W. Shepherd 3-4, J. Hunt 7-8, and F. Blondell 9-10.

The first 10-bell peal in Scotland, Grandsire Caters, was rung at St. Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh, on August 31st, 1886.

MR. JAMES GEORGE.

We are very pleased to hear from Mr. George that he is progressing very satisfactorily, and is able to get about on crutches.

BALL BEARINGS AND RINGING SPEED.

To the Editor.

Sir,—The dynamical theory of the motion of a bell is not easy, but some information can be obtained by considering the much simpler problem when the clapper is tied. As the mass of the clapper is so much smaller than that of the bell, little error will be introduced by this assumption.

Suppose, for the sake of comparison, that as the bell leaves the vertical position it is given just sufficient speed to bring it to the balance again. Then, other things being the same, it is clear that the greater the friction of the bearings the greater must be both the initial speed and also the speed through the whole revolution, or the bell would not have sufficient energy to overcome the increased friction. The time of a complete revolution will thus be smaller.

As the use of ball bearings is presumably to reduce friction, it seems that they will slow down the speed of ringing.

The Royal Technical College,
Glasgow.

R. O. STREET.

RINGING IN BOURNEMOUTH.

LOCAL RINGERS AMALGAMATE FOR HANDBELL PRACTICE.

The ringers in Bournemouth and district did not have to turn suddenly to handbells when the church bells were silenced by the ban, for practice in St. Peter's Hall has been a weekly feature since the outbreak of hostilities curtailed tower bell practice. However, the ban has given an impetus to the 'double-handed' branch of the Exercise, and those who had not previously taken handbells too seriously are fortunate in having the help and guidance of such an accomplished enthusiast as Mr. Fred Townsend, from Poole. Prior to the war, he and 'his boys' held a weekly practice for handbells as well as for the tower bells, and those who have heard them can testify to the quality of their ringing. Now 'the boys' are 'somewhere in England,' Fred goes along on Tuesday evenings to St. Peter's Hall, Bournemouth, where the remains of St. Peter's and St. John's bands foregather for handbells.

The Vicar of St. Peter's (Canon H. R. Burrows) has, as usual, shown sympathetic interest and given practical assistance by providing the necessary accommodation for practice. Mr. F. S. Wilson, who has lately come to reside in the district, became identified with St. Peter's just before the 'silence,' and has proved of great value in bringing about the progress so far achieved. Touches of Grandsire Triples are now possible, whilst individual members are progressing from 7-8, 1-2, 3-4 and 5-6, in addition to courses of Caters, Stedman Triples, Plain Bob Major, and, the other evening, one of Oxford Bob Triples.

A hearty invitation is extended to all members of H.M. Forces who may be in the district and interested enough to make their way to St. Peter's Hall on Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m.

CRIPPLEGATE CHURCH DAMAGED.

RESULT OF AIR RAID ON LONDON.

Another Vicissitude in Long History.

It has been revealed that the city church damaged by a bomb during the raid on London on Saturday night was St. Giles', Cripplegate, in which Oliver Cromwell was married and John Milton was buried.



ST. GILES', CRIPPLEGATE.

[From a photo by F. E. Dawe.]

The statue of Milton outside the church was thrown from its pedestal, but was not badly damaged.

The bomb, in addition to blowing off the front door of the church, wrecked the north-west wall and dislodged a high sandbag wall in front of one of the stained-glass windows, which was shattered. Little damage was done inside the building, except by fragments of glass, which chipped some of the memorials on the walls.

The bomb fell by the weakest part of the building, and the Vicar, the Rev. E. G. Turner, has stated that it will be weeks, possibly months, before the ordinary church services can be resumed.

The original St. Giles' Church dated from 1090, but nothing remains of that structure except, perhaps, part of the basement of the tower. In 1357 the church was rebuilt. It was largely destroyed by fire in 1545. The present building, which succeeded it, is of the perpendicular Gothic style. It survived the Great Fire of London in 1666, and the big Cripplegate fire of 1897.

During the last war the church had another escape when a German bomb dropped close to it and the wall was slightly damaged.

The church is a valuable repository of Elizabethan and Jacobean

monuments, and its small churchyard encloses an angle bastion of the Roman wall of London.

Cripplegate Church has been famous for its bells from quite early times. In 1552 there were 'fivve belles greate and small,' and by 1726 they had been increased to ten. Three peals were accomplished on this ring. Two of them were Grandsire Caters, one by the College Youths in 1726 and one by the City Scholars in 1732. The other was Bob Royal by the Eastern Scholars in 1752.

In 1772, Pack and Chapman recast the whole ring, and in 1792 the two trebles were added by John Briant, of Hertford.

The first peal on the twelve was one of Grandsire Cinques by the College Youths on February 2nd, 1799, and the second, after a break of 45 years, was Stedman Cinques in 1844 by the Cumberlands, who followed it by two peals of Treble Twelve in 1747 and 1748, and another of Stedman Cinques in 1750.

In 1751 the College Youths rang the then record peal of Stedman Cinques, 7,528 changes, in 5 hours and 24 minutes. John Cox was the composer and conductor.

Later peals on the bells include a 'John' peal of Stedman Cinques by the Waterloo Society in 1912, and the only peal in the City of London for the jubilee of King George V.

RAID ITEMS.

The residence of the Master of the Guildford Diocesan Guild (Major J. H. B. Hesse) was damaged a few days ago by a bomb dropped during an enemy air raid.

Mr. Jack Thomas, Messrs. Mears and Stainbank's bell hanger, had a narrow escape last Saturday. He was in a churchyard in —shire when machine-gun bullets fired from a German plane began to zip round him. He dived for the protection of a big tree and saved his skin whole.

MORE CONFUSION.**BELLS RUNG IN ERROR.**

An official statement has been issued denying the rumours, current in a Midland town on Sunday night, that parachutists had been dropped.

The explanation given by the police is that a report was received from a woman that a parachute had been dropped. A motor patrol was sent immediately to search the district, but no trace of a parachute could be found.

Later it was reported that church bells were ringing, and it was found that members of the Home Guard had called out the verger of a church and requested him to ring the bells. This was caused by an orderly in charge of a post misconstruing a message, and conveying a wrong impression to the officer in charge.

THE BAN ON CHURCH BELLS.

Sentence of three months' imprisonment was passed at Burton-on-Trent on Michael Dooley, an Irishman, for ringing local church bells. It was stated that alarm was caused, and the matron of an institution locked all the doors. When charged, he said, 'I was trying to see how loud it would ring.'

The Bishop of Bradford, Dr. Blunt, has directed that at an induction, when the customary bellringing item in the ceremony is reached, the verger shall place the bell rope in the hand of the new incumbent, who will take hold of it and then let it go.

AIR-RAID STOPS PRACTICE.

Because of the air-raids, the proposed 'tied' tower bell practice that was to have been held at St. Peter's, Tunbridge Wells, the other day, was abandoned. When the train that brought four ringers from Brasted to 'the Wells' arrived long after scheduled time, an air raid was in progress. The 'all-clear' was sounded soon afterwards, but it was too late to start fixing the clappers, so the visitors joined with three of the local band in ringing handbells in the belfry.

It was a very weary party that finally arrived back at Brasted at midnight. They had missed the last bus from Tunbridge Wells, almost missed the train to Sevenoaks, and missed the last bus from Sevenoaks, which necessitated a four-mile walk. In addition, one member had previously missed his tea, in the hope of being able to ring tower bells.

The next of these practices will be held to-morrow (Saturday) afternoon, and any ringers who find themselves in the vicinity will be heartily welcomed.

RINGER NOW A PRISONER OF WAR.

Private Herbert Pasmore, son of the late Mr. H. R. Pasmore and nephew of Mr. W. H. Pasmore, has been posted as missing since May 21st, but news has now been received that he is a prisoner of war in Germany.

CARRYING ON.

GUILDFORD GUILD MEET DURING AIR-RAID WARNING.

Appeal for Restoration of Chertsey Bells.

An air-raid warning was sounded just before members of the Chertsey District of the Guildford Diocesan Guild attended service at a meeting at Horsell on Saturday, and the 'All clear' did not go until, an hour later, they were enjoying tea on the Vicarage lawn. At the same time a largely attended fete was being held in a field adjoining, in connection with a local fund to pay for a Hurricane engine. It is typical of the spirit with which the British public is facing the air-raid menace that very few people left the fete to take cover. Neither were the ringers in the least bit perturbed. Everyone just 'carried on,' except that one of the local men, having obeyed official instructions and remained indoors, arrived late for tea.

The ringers' meeting brought together a gathering of twenty, and they passed a thoroughly pleasant time. The early arrivals amused themselves with handbells in the belfry, and the Vicar (the Rev. F. A. Woodard) afterwards conducted the Guild's service. A slight but notable addition was made to one of the prayers: 'Grant, O Lord, that whosoever shall be called by the sound of the bells "in times of peace" to Thine House of Prayer,' etc. Under the silence now imposed on church bells, churchgoers are losing a spiritual as well as merely an aural reminder of the occasion.

The Vicar gave a short address, at the outset of which he welcomed the visitors to the church and parish, and said how glad he was to see that even in times like these some of them were able to meet. He hoped the day was not far distant when they would once more be able to ring the church bells. The subject of his address was a call to everyone to love God with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their mind and with all their strength. They, as church bellringers, were of necessity Christian believers, and what they did in life depended very much on what they believed.

HELP FOR HURRICANE FUND.

Except that the visitors had to bring their own sugar, they were the guests of the Vicar and Mrs. Woodard, and had tea on the lawn to the sounds of revelry in the field adjoining.

There was little business to transact afterwards, but it was decided to write a letter of sympathy to Mrs. Sleet, of Ottershaw, wife of Mr. David Sleet, a member of the district, who is now a prisoner of war in Germany.

Mr. Morley read an extract from a local paper, in which a correspondent urged that something should be done to raise the £100 or so necessary to put Chertsey bells in order, so that they may be ready to ring for victory and peace.

It was stated by Mr. Hessey, of Chertsey, that a few subscriptions had been received towards the restoration, and he undertook to inquire what was officially being done in connection with the scheme, which was to have been put in hand just before war broke out.

It was announced that other meetings are to be arranged later.

Thanks were accorded to the Vicar for permitting the meeting to be held and for conducting the service, also to him and Mrs. Woodard for their kind hospitality.

It was suggested that as the members were getting their tea for nothing, a collection should be made for the parish Hurricane fund. This was promptly acted upon, and when the Vicar announced that the collection amounted to 16s. 6d., it was further suggested that it should be raised to £1. Ultimately the pound became 22s. 6d.

Two things prevented handbell ringing on the lawn. One was fear of the law, the other the impossibility of competing with the loud speakers and the band next door. So a return was made to the tower, and valiant efforts were made with Grand sire and Stedman Triples. The ringing did not reach a high standard, but it was good practice.

Horsell has an early English tower upon which a good deal of money was spent a few years ago, not only in rehanging the six bells, but in removing from the exterior of the structure a layer of unwanted plaster, in order to expose the original building.

The story of the present bells is summarised in ten words on the fifth: 'Robert Catlin cast and hung us all anno domini 1741.' All the bells bear his name or initials; the third adds, 'Prosperity to the parish of Horsell,' the fourth 'Health and prosperity to all our benefactors.' The tenor bears the names of the churchwardens, Henry Roake and William Collyer, and there have been Roakes and Collyers in the parish ever since.

But Horsell had bells long before 1741. The inventory made in the reign of Edward VI. records: Item iij belles in the steeple the best bie extymacion xiiijc, the second xijc, the third xc. Item j sauncc bell. Item ij sackring belles.

The bells at Chertsey include one, the fifth, which tradition says was the original bell in the incident on which the poem, 'Curfew shall not ring to-night,' was based. At any rate, it is of special antiquarian interest. It is believed to have been brought from Chertsey Abbey at the dissolution, and is inscribed in capitals, 'Ora Mente Pia Pro Nobis Virgo Maria.' The seventh is another old bell, cast by Robert Mot, first of the Whitechapel bellfounders, in 1588.

ARCHDEACONRY OF STAFFORD SOCIETY.

ANNUAL MEETING AT WOLVERHAMPTON.

The annual meeting of the Society for the Archdeaconry of Stafford took place at the George Hotel, Wolverhampton, on Saturday last.

Mr. Isaac Evans was unanimously voted to the chair.

Apologies for absence were received from the President, the Ven. the Archdeacon of Stafford (the Rev. Canon R. L. Hodson), and from the Ringing Master (Mr. B. G. Key), who is on active service. The report and statement of accounts were read and confirmed, and it was decided that the report should not be printed this year. Mr. H. Howell, of Walsall, was appointed Ringing Master in the place of Mr. B. G. Key, who retires at the end of three years' useful service. Mr. F. Broiherton, of St. Peter's, Wolverhampton, was appointed auditor. The other officials were re-elected en bloc.

The following resolution was unanimously passed: 'That this meeting of members warmly supports the urge that the ban on Sunday service ringing should be lifted.'

It was agreed that when the ban on ringing is removed, and peals are again allowed to be rung, members of H.M. Forces temporarily stationed within the Archdeaconry shall be exempt from paying subscriptions. Three new members were enrolled.

The next meeting was provisionally fixed to be held at Walsall in April. In consequence of the difficulty in transport during the winter months, it was decided not to have a meeting in January.

Votes of thanks to the officers for the past year's work, and to the chairman for so ably conducting the business, concluded a successful meeting.

Handbells were then brought into use. Besides a variety of methods rung double-handed, the St. Peter's handbell quartette rendered some selections which were well received.

THE COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

There have been only two quarterly meetings held during the period under review, and they were at Brewwood, in September, when the members were entertained to tea by the generosity of a few kind friends, and at Willenhall, in April of this year. Although held under war conditions, both were well attended. The annual meeting had to be postponed on account of war activities.

At our last annual meeting it was agreed to have an annual dinner. Arrangements were being made for one to take place in the late autumn of last year, but the international upheaval prevented it. However, when the present hostilities cease we may look forward to the time when it will be possible to have one.

Several of our members have been enrolled in H.M. Forces, but a complete list is not yet to hand.

The number of peals rung is small, only eleven being achieved. Considering there were only two clear months after the last annual meeting up to the time of war breaking out, this total is quite moderate. The list is as follows:—

Grand sire Doubles	...	...	...	...	...	2
Grand sire Triples	...	...	...	...	...	2
Stedman Cinques	...	...	...	...	...	1
Minor (three methods)	...	...	...	...	...	1
Plain Bob Minor (one on handbells)	...	...	...	...	...	3
Plain Bob Major	...	...	...	...	...	2
Total	...	...	...	...	...	11

One of this total is noteworthy, viz., a peal of Stedman Cinques, rung at Walsall, half-muffled, to the memory of the late Thomas J. Elton, who for 38 years was ringer, towerkeeper and chorister at St. Matthew's, Walsall. Mr. Elton had been instrumental in building up a band who succeeded in ringing a peal of Stedman Cinques by a local company of Sunday service ringers. The deceased had held the office of Ringing Master for two separate periods, and represented St. Matthew's band on the committee for this society for a great number of years. Also, he was at one time one of the society's representatives at the Central Council.

The committee also regret to record the loss, through death, of additional members: Horace Sadler, of Wombourn; Robert P. Knight, of Salisbury; and Herbert Sheppard, of Dudley.

THE NORWICH SCHOLARS.

(Continued from page 413.)

He then expressed his sorrow for 'poor Ned Crane, finding him void of all knowledge of Stedman Triples,' and he asked, 'If the peal we pricked and rung be not proper Stedman's Triples, why does he not accept the wager two to one we proffered in our last?' Which seems a reasonable demand, only we remember that Crane had previously offered a similar wager, and Melchior had not taken it up. We rather wonder whether these offers of wagers were really meant to be taken seriously. They sound a bit like the familiar, 'I'll bet you what you like,' that such and such.

GLOUCESTER & BRISTOL DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.**BRISTOL CITY BRANCH TO 'CARRY ON.'**

St. Matthew's, Bristol, was the venue of the first meeting of the City Branch of the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association since the ban on bellringing came into force. Early comers set the ball rolling with some handbell ringing just after 3.30 p.m., and one thoughtful member from the neighbouring branch kindly brought along the peal identical to that of the new Liverpool Cathedral ring.

A short service was conducted by the Vicar, after which members proceeded to tea in the Parish Hall, twenty members being present.

The business meeting followed, Mr. Harris (chairman) presiding. A discussion on 'Should the branch continue to hold future meetings?' brought various opinions to light. Mr. W. H. Thomas urged the branch to continue holding its quarterly meetings. Supporting this, Mr. W. Knight said that ringers should endeavour to keep in touch with one another as much as possible. The chairman went even further, and recommended that monthly meetings be held in the usual way. It was ultimately decided that meetings would be held at monthly intervals in an attempt to keep activities going.

A new idea was then introduced, when Mr. Lambie proposed that someone should be asked to give a lecture on any interesting topic connected with ringing. Mr. Bryant, in seconding this proposal, added that it would be very beneficial to the majority if an experienced ringer were asked to give a talk on a particular book, such as a publication of Grandsire Triples or Stedman Triples. A little dose of theory, he went on, would do ringers the world of good, because even those who read these books on different standard methods did not always understand the meaning it was meant to convey.

Members then entered into a general discussion regarding 'The authorities and the associations,' the result of which showed that no definite and efficient system had been arranged in connection with the sounding of air invasion warnings, and that different ringers had received different instructions. Others had no knowledge whatsoever about arrangements which may have been made regarding their own towers; some, again, were to receive orders from the Vicar of the church when a signal became necessary, and, finally, other ringers were going to be informed by the authorities direct.

In summing up the position, Mr. Guise proposed that the secretary should write a letter to the authorities, offering them the services of the branch in providing competent ringers to be at their service in any emergency. Mr. F. Leakor, in seconding, said that several peals of bells were still 'up' in the city, and that no permission could be obtained from any source to lower them.

In conclusion, the secretary (Mr. A. M. Tyler) drew attention to the activities of 'The Ringing World,' and made a special request to those ringing members who did not take the paper to do so, even if it were only for the duration of the war, as 'every little helps' to keep in existence the paper that is really vital to the art of ringing to-day.

Handbell practice followed, and after everyone had been satisfied in this direction the meeting terminated.

KEEPING PUBLIC INTEREST ALIVE.**A CLAPPERLESS 720 OF MINOR.***To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—In order that the general public shall not get the idea that the ban on ringing church bells has brought about the natural death of ringing, may I suggest that we all be a little more communicative with our local Press, which will at these times be pleased to get any little articles relative to church bells and ringing?

I consider we are missing one of our greatest opportunities of bringing ringing before the general public by remaining like our bells, 'silent.' Let the public know that we are carrying on, in spite of (as at my tower) constantly losing one more member into the Services of the Crown. Teach, even if only on one clapperless bell. Using (in an eight-bell tower) 2.3.4.5.6 and 7 without clappers for practice in Minor methods is very interesting, while teaching youngsters to hunt by ropesight is also more pleasure than torture. I am enclosing a local press report of a 720 of Bob Minor rung on Tuesday last on 'silent' bells.

Residents in a parish do not realise (as they hear no sound of bells) that it is possible still to carry on, and if we want their support when we do ring again, we must let them know that we have warranted it by putting in the foundation. Let us all do as you are doing, 'carry on,' however difficult the conditions.

GEORGE GILBERT.

Ferdale, Stomp Road,
Burnham, Bucks.

[Mr. Gilbert has certainly done his best to keep the public of Burnham and district interested. A number of articles on bells and bellringing have been given prominence in two local newspapers.—Ed., 'R.W.']

CHECKING A PEAL OUTSIDE THE TOWER.**WHAT FAMOUS RINGERS HAVE DONE.**

Last week Mr. James Hunt told us of Henry W. Haley and his ability to tell a mistake in ringing when he was listening outside the tower. A correspondent reminds of other instances of this gift.

Snowdon relates that about 1820 a long peal of Treble Bob Major, over 14,000 changes, was attempted at St. Lawrence's, Pudsey, in Yorkshire, and during the ringing two of the band, Smallpage and Mortimer, of Leeds, who were ringing the 3rd and 5th, shifted. The conductor, J. Hewitt, of Wakefield, did not notice it, but Joseph Tebbs, who was outside, did, and sent word to Hewitt and told him so. Hewitt waited until he came to one of his observation places and stopped the bells after they had rung about six hours.

There is a tale that John Cox was once listening outside to a peal rung by a rival band, and when they came out of the tower, well pleased with themselves for having scored a peal, he greeted them with the remark, 'Better luck next time!' Something had gone wrong, either with the ringing or the calling, and the conductor had faked the peal, thinking that no one but himself would know about it. But if William Cooter may be believed, Cox at times was not above doing such things himself.

When William Pye called the record peal of London Surprise, 14,112 changes, at King's Norton in 1903, Mr. Harry Withers took down the calling as it was rung.

Some years ago an attempt for Holt's Original was arranged at St. Margaret's, Westminster, and Mr. James E. Davis was to have called it, but at the last minute he could not stand in, and another well-known conductor was substituted. Mr. Davis arrived outside the tower after the bells had been ringing for some time. He listened, picked up the calling, and presently said that a bob had been missed. And so it was, for the bells soon afterwards stopped.

The day after the Central Council meeting at Shrewsbury a party went to Coalbrookdale and rung a peal of Stedman Caters. An hour or two after they had left Shrewsbury, three or four others followed to hear the finish of the peal, and among them were Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher. Walking up from the station, they heard the bells ringing, and Mrs. Fletcher began to note things, and presently she said, 'A course end is just coming up, and it will be so and so.' She followed the ringing, and presently the calling of the last part of the peal and the turning course were worked out, and the forecast proved correct. She also said who was ringing one or two of the bells, and proved right there, too.

To be able to check change ringing outside the tower is a special gift which is not possessed by many ringers, even good ones, but no doubt readers know of other instances besides those mentioned.

The earliest case on record, Thomas Crane's attempt to check the first peal of Stedman Triples by counting the strokes of the tenor, is described on another page.

WILLIAM COOTER'S FEAT.*To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—Mr. James Hunt's note in your current issue, recording an example of the keen ear of the late Mr. Henry W. Haley, is very interesting. The late Mr. William Cooter furnished a similar example, and as the story appeared in print nearly 52 years ago, many of our younger ringers may not have heard it. Perhaps, sir, you may think it worth reprinting.

Mr. Cooter's portrait and memoir appeared in the Christmas number of 'Bell News,' 1888. This is the story told in the memoir:—

'A sketch of Mr. Cooter's ringing career, no matter how incomplete, ought not to be without the following remarkable circumstance, which our readers may depend upon as being absolutely authentic in every particular.

'Some years ago—we forget the date, but it is immaterial—our friend had one day reached his place of business just after the dinner hour was over, when he was waited upon by the late Mr. John Cox. Mr. Cox stated that he had that evening to call a peal of Stedman Caters at Horsleydown, but owing to another engagement he could not stay till the finish. He proposed to commence calling the peal, and wished Mr. Cooter to come up and, taking the rope out of his hand, finish it. At the time, Mr. Cox handed to him the figures of the peal—a level 5,000.

'Mr. Cooter consented. His business being over in the evening, he wended his way to the church. Taking stock from the outside how far the peal had progressed, he ascended, and the ringing chamber being entered by a trap door, immediately under the rope of the 6th. Having knocked at this trap door, the ringer of that bell—Cox himself—stepped one side, and Mr. Cooter entered.

'Divesting himself of coat and waistcoat, he took the rope out of Cox's hands, the latter disappearing through the trap door as soon as possible. That peal Mr. Cooter finished without a hitch, the good striking being unimpaired, and we think this episode is unique in the annals of ringing. Unfortunately, the composition turned out upon examination to be false, and thus has never been recorded.'

Many years ago I recalled this to the late Mr. Matthew Wood, and his comment was, 'Yes, I know it to be true, and not a word passed between Cox and Cooter when they changed over on the rope.'

CHAS. E. BORRETT.

THE ANGELUS.

THE HISTORY OF ITS OBSERVANCE.

The semi-liturgical uses of bells in the Middle Ages grew up gradually and without any general regulation, consequently we have little or no information concerning them. But of the Angelus some particulars have come down to us, though they are rather conflicting.

A distinction should be made between the recital of the Ave Maria as a general form of religious devotion and the particular devotion known as the Angelus. Urban II., the Pope who preached the first Crusade (1096-1100), is said to have directed that three times a day a bell should be sounded in order that the faithful might recite the Ave Maria and by that prayer beseech God for the recovery of the Holy Land. The custom fell into disuse and was revived by order of Pope Gregory IX. (1227-1241).

The modern Continental observance is usually said to have been begun by Pope John XXII., who directed that the Angelic Salutation should be recited every evening in honour of the incarnation of Christ. The Council of Sens, 1347, decreed that the ordinance made by Pope John for the saying of three Ave Marias at the time or hour of curfew should be inviolably observed; and the statutes of Simon Bishop of Nantes ordain that the parish priests shall at the customary time cause bells to be rung in their churches for the curfew, and shall instruct their parishioners at each ringing to say on bended knee the words of salutation Ave Maria, and thereby they gained ten days of indulgence.

In 1369 the Synod of Beziere ordained that henceforth at dawn of day three strokes should be struck with the clapper on the larger bell, 'and let everyone hearing it whatever his station of life say three times Paternoster and Ave Maria.'

The mid-day observance was introduced by Pope Calixtus III. (1455-1458). 'He gave orders that God should be supplicated every day and that a bell should be rung about noon to give the people notice that they should join in prayer for the Christians against the Turks.'

Finally the full observance three times a day at morning, noon and night was ordered by King Louis of France in 1472, in order, it is said, to gain assistance against his enemies.

The modern devotion may, therefore, be said to be French in its origin and development, though it was adopted to some extent by other parts of Christendom.

Writers usually assume that the Angelus bell was generally rung in England before the Reformation, but I am greatly inclined to doubt if it were so. Of course, the 'Hail Mary' was used here as elsewhere as a form of devotion, and there were various directions for its use, as when Archbishop Arundel, towards the end of the 14th century, ordered one Paternoster and five Ave Marias to be said at dawn. In the diocese of Salisbury and elsewhere a bell was tolled three times, either before or after divine service, and was called the Ave or Pardon bell. This obviously was a summons to a devotion, and evidently a call to the recital of the 'Hail Mary.' It is said to have been called a pardon bell because of the indulgences which were attached to the devotion.

In 1538 Nicholas Shaxton, Bishop of Salisbury, issued a set of injunctions to his diocese which contained the following: Item, that the Pardon or Ave Bell, which of long time hath been used to be tolled three times after or before divine service, be not henceforth in any part of my diocese any more tolled.

This clearly, though somewhat similar, was not the same as the present day Angelus or the French use, for the times of ringing were different, and apparently it was tolled only on Sundays and such holy days on which there was a full service. And evidently it was not regarded as a Catholic use, but as a local custom which was within the province of the diocesan to regulate; for though Shaxton was one of the early reformers and was actively engaged in reducing the many superstitious habits and beliefs which had grown up in connection with the use of images and relics and in public worship, as yet there had been no changes in the official doctrine of the Church, and he would hardly have ventured on his own authority to have forbidden it if it had really been considered a Catholic custom.

The bell was rung in other parts of England besides the diocese of Salisbury, and until quite recent times it survived in many places, though its original meaning had long since been forgotten. This survival was sometimes called the 'pudding' bell, obviously a corruption of pardon bell.

Several detailed instructions for the ringing of bells in parish churches still survive from the century just before the Reformation. The curfew is mentioned and the service ringing, but never the Angelus. Nor do the injunctions which were issued later to forbid 'superstitious' ringing say anything about the Angelus.

As I pointed out above, the 'Hail Mary' was recited in England, as elsewhere, as an act of devotion, and some form of the Angelus

(Continued in next column.)

FAMOUS RINGER OF PAST DAYS.

MATT. WOOD, OF BETHNAL GREEN.

Last Tuesday was the twenty-eighth anniversary of the death of one of the most outstanding personages of the London Exercise in the nineteenth century. Matthew A. Wood came of an old ringing family, his grandfather and great-uncle being notable members of the Society of Cumberland Youths in its early days.

Matthew Wood was born on September 22nd, 1826, at Bethnal Green. When he was a boy of three years old his father removed to Church Row, hard by St. Matthew's Church. Here he lived all his life, and here he died.



MATTHEW A. WOOD.

In early life Wood followed the trade of a weaver, which was, and for long had been, the staple trade of the district; but industrial changes and the development of power looms in the towns of the north killed the weaving of the London suburbs, and Wood was glad to accept an opening in the hop trade offered him through Edward Lansdell, a Kent ringer who was employed in the Bermondsey hop market.

Matthew Wood's father was the steeplekeeper at St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green, and this introduced him in early life to the belfry. His instructor was John Cox, and a fellow learner was

William Cooter, with whom he was associated throughout his ringing career. He succeeded his father as steeplekeeper at Bethnal Green very early, and held the post for nearly 70 years. During that time he won the regard and esteem of Dr. Winnington Ingram, formerly Bishop of London, who was at one time Vicar of St. Matthew's, and who recalled his memory when speaking at the notable tercentenary dinner of the Society of College Youths.

Matthew Wood's first peal was one of Grandsire Triples at St. Giles-in-the-Fields on February 18th, 1846, for the St. James' Society, and during a ringing career of more than 60 years he took part in 380 peals, a large number in those days. Some of them were rung with the Cumberlands and the St. James' Society, the others with the College Youths. They included the first peal of Superlative Surprise Major in London, and more than one long length, such as the 7,524 of Stedman Cinques in 1851, the 8,580 in the same method in 1861, and the 15,848 of Kent Treble Bob Major in 1868. These were all record lengths at the times.

Matthew Wood was one of the men who rang in the first peals of Stedman Triples, Caters and Cinques. He was also one of the four who rang the first silent peal of Stedman Triples in hand. There are many people still living who recollect Wood, and they remember him as a skilful ringer, a first-class heavy bell man, and one who was not only a good striker himself, but who did not tolerate bad striking or slovenly ringing in others.

THE ANGELUS.

(Continued from previous column.)

may have been used in places, especially in monastic houses, but we must remember that the custom became general in France just at the time when French influence was very much less felt in England than had been the case for many centuries. England had lost all her Continental possessions except Calais, and was mainly preoccupied by domestic affairs, the dynastic disputes, and the Wars of the Roses. We may see the effect of this in contemporary church architecture. For many years the churches of England had been built in much the same style as in Northern France, but while the French used the Flamboyant style, the English developed the totally different and strongly national Perpendicular style.

Whence then, it may be asked, came the custom of ringing a bell at certain set hours, which, until comparatively recent times, was common all over the country? We are usually told that these were survivals of the Angelus bell, which continued to be rung long after the meaning had been forgotten, and after other and secular reasons had been associated with it. The real explanation is that these were not bells originally rung for religious uses which in time became secularised, but they were from the first and all along secular uses which were also for a comparatively short time associated with religious uses. The curfew was not, as it has been called, the 'last angelus.' It was the secular evening bell, rung as such long before there was such a custom as reciting the Angelus at eventide, and it remained the evening bell long after the recital of the Angelus had ceased in England. So, too, the early morning bell and the mid-day bell were secular uses.

In any case, between the beginning of the Angelus as a popular devotion in France and the Reformation in England there was little more than half a century, which is far too short a time to establish a traditional custom.

J. A. TROLLOPE.

NOTICES.

THE CHARGE FOR NOTICES of Meetings inserted under this heading is at the rate of 3d. per line (average 8 words) per insertion, with the minimum charge of 1/6.

NOTICES must be received NOT LATER THAN MONDAY.

'The Ringing World' can be sent direct by post from the Editorial Office for 4s. per quarter.

All communications should be sent to THE EDITORIAL OFFICE OF 'THE RINGING WORLD,' LOWER PYRFORD ROAD, WOKING, SURREY.

KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Lewisham District.—The quarterly meeting will be held at St. Mary's, Woolwich, on Saturday, August 31st. Handbells available from 3 p.m. at the Rectory, Rectory Place. Service at 5 p.m. Business meeting and social evening later. Half-fares will be paid according to rule.—A. G. Hill, Hon. Dis. Sec., 24, Stanmore Road, Belvedere, Kent.

MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.—Burton District.—The district invites members of the Derby and Loughborough Districts to join them at Cole Orton for a social meeting on Saturday, August 31st. Service at 4 p.m., followed by tea and meeting. It is hoped to arrange for either Rectory or Hall grounds to be open after tea.—J. W. Cotton, Overseal, Burton-on-Trent.

LEEDS AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.—The next meeting will be held at Calverley on Saturday, August 31st. Handbells in the schools. Business meeting 6.30 p.m. Special attention to learners. All ringers invited.—H. Lofthouse, Hon. Sec., 8, Wortley Road, Leeds 12.

SHROPSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—Meeting at Shrewsbury on Saturday, August 31st. Assemble at St. Chad's at 3 p.m. Programme according to circumstances.—W. A. Farmer, 14, Swan Hill, Shrewsbury.

WINCHESTER AND PORTSMOUTH DIOCESAN GUILD.—Winchester District.—The quarterly meeting proposed to be held at Wonston on September 7th, is reluctantly cancelled.—W. G. Goodchild, Hon. Dis. Sec., 139, Stanmore Lane, Winchester.

ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS (Est. 1637).—The next meeting will be held at the Coffee Pot, E.C., on Tuesday, September 10th, at 7 p.m. Handbells after the business.—A. B. Peck, Hon. Sec.

WORCESTERSHIRE AND DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION.—Western Branch.—A meeting will be held at Claines on Saturday, September 14th. Service in church 4.15 p.m., followed by business meeting. Tea will be provided if possible. Send numbers by Tuesday, September 10th at latest.—E. F. Cubberley, Branch Hon. Sec., Park Cottages, Kempsey, near Worcester.

APARTMENTS.

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HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION

HANDBELLS AND SILENT TOWER BELLS AT ST. PETER'S, ST. ALBANS.

Although numbers were small, a quite enjoyable meeting was held on Saturday, August 17th, at St. Peter's, St. Albans.

Members and visitors were present from St. Albans Cathedral, St. Peter's, Redbourn, Harpenden and a visitor from Ealing. Mr. C. Taylor, of the Watford District, turned up with a nice peal of handbells, these being rung in addition to the peal belonging to the tower.

At the kind invitation of Mrs. Fergusson, a most enjoyable tea in ideal weather conditions was partaken of on the lawn at Hall Place Gardens, and afterwards the formal business of the meeting was quickly disposed of. The place of the next meeting was discussed, and the arrangements were left in the hands of the hon. secretary.

Ringling in various Triples, Major and Caters methods gave good practice to some who previously had had little opportunity in handbell ringing. Two members of H.M. Forces were present and expressed their pleasure at the help they were given.

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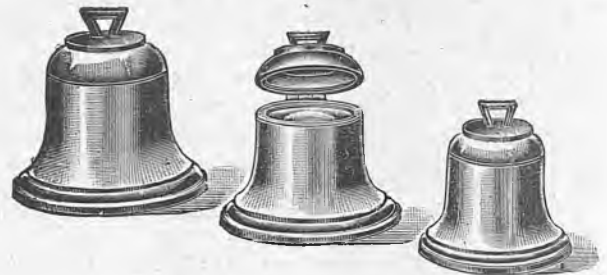
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