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THE CHOICE OF SURPRISE METHODS

The roots of our art were planted so far back in the centuries that it is hardly realised by the majority of present-day ringers that Surprise Major ringing has become a common practice only within living memory. Yet so it is. We are reminded of the fact by the mention elsewhere of the anniversary of the birth of William Wakley, the man who was leader of the band at Burton-on-Trent in the eighties which put Surprise ringing on a new plane. Before those days, there had been solitary peals rung in various parts of the country, but it was at Burton-on-Trent that Surprise ringing first gained a permanent hold upon the Exercise. Up to that time, and even for a while afterwards, Surprise methods were regarded as 'crank' productions by those who looked askance at anything outside the standard methods, but Wakley and his band, who were followed by Washbrook and his Oxford Guild company, with the St. Peter's, Brighton, ringers close after them, showed that Surprise ringing was no freak and that the methods—Superlative, Cambridge and London—had no terrors for those bold enough to tackle them. Thereafter the practice of Surprise methods spread to different parts of the country, and there was quite a keen rivalry between certain well-known bands. Although from lack of material little was done to break away from the old methods, the Burton ringers were again the first to take the initiative with New Cumberland.

What has followed since in the development of Surprise ringing has happened with increasing velocity. All over the country local companies which could muster Surprise bands grew up. New methods were sought and rung, until to-day well over a hundred of them have been placed on the records in peal performances, and there is waiting to be published a 'Collection' which will provide hundreds more. The volume contains but a selection from a much larger number of methods that have been worked out in detail, but the extent of the Surprise Major methods, good, bad and indifferent, is nearly two hundred million—to be exact, according to one of the leading mathematicians of the Exercise, 188,655,880. This is a staggering total, leaving more than ample scope for those ringers who take methods in their stride and are for ever seeking pastures new. It is a good thing that the Central Council have an expert committee to sift the grain from the chaff. In the Collection that is awaiting a more appropriate time to make its appearance, every care has been taken to give what is considered the best of the various types of method, and the selection should be wide enough to satisfy the most ambitious ringer.

(Continued on page 74.)

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That there is now a wide interest in the Surprise methods as a class cannot be denied. There are other and equally difficult methods to be found in other classes, but Surprise ringing seems to have an attraction of its own. On the foundation laid by the pioneers of fifty or sixty years ago others have built and reaped the benefit. Last century a Surprise peal was something to be proud of and to talk about; it came only after careful study and painstaking practice. Modern Surprise ringing is no less praiseworthy, but does not offer a tithe of the difficulties that appeared to present themselves to the ringers of a generation ago. It has been the same, of course, through the ages; the simpler methods in the early days offered difficulties which seemed to evaporate with the years. Leaving aside the complications added by 'splicing,' scores of Surprise methods were being rung before the war, many of them just once and then forgotten.

There is this difference in the way in which such methods were rung in the early period, and the manner in which they have been rung in later times. Wakley and those who came in the immediately succeeding years tackled a method with the intention of remembering it; most of the new methods rung in the last fifteen or twenty years have been 'crammed' for the purpose of ringing a peal or two and then cast aside. And yet there are few ringers even to-day who, when approaching the three old methods which have formed the basis of Surprise ringing, have not mastered them with sufficient thoroughness to remember them for the rest of their lives. A few ringers there are who carry one or two other methods in their heads, methods which have grown in popularity like Bristol and Yorkshire, but this cannot be said of any large number.

There is, we feel, a good deal to be said for the plea recently made in these columns that a selection of the best of the Surprise methods should be popularised. Perhaps, in course of time, when ringing is resumed and bands are once more built up, encouragement will be given on these lines, and the ringer of the future will have a repertoire of a dozen or more Surprise Major methods to which he can turn as readily as he does now to Superlative or Cambridge. These methods have stood the test of time; it may be because when Surprise ringing began there was nothing else to practise, and they became ingrained, as it were, in the ringer's method make-up. Be that as it may, whatever else comes to take their place or supplement them, it will have to be able to stand the same test. Let its merits be what they may on paper, it is the trial in the tower that counts, and while we may look for guidance from those best able to advise us, ringers will make their own choice ultimately. But the progress of the art can be served if the best that is available can be laid bare to choose from, with a frank exposition of the merits and demerits of what is given us.

BILLINGSHURST, SUSSEX.—On Monday, January 27th, at Nye-wood, Station Road, 720 Bob Minor: Harold Wood 1-2, Pte. E. Rapley (conductor) 3-4, Cecil Longhurst 5-6.

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HANDBELL PEALS.

ENFIELD, MIDDLESEX.
THE MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION AND LONDON
DIOCESAN GUILD.

On Friday, January 31, 1941, in Two Hours and Five Minutes,
At 24, SUFFOLK ROAD,

A PEAL OF BOB MINOR, 5040 CHANGES;

Seven 720's each called differently.

Mrs. J. THOMAS 1-2 | JOHN THOMAS 3-4
* HAROLD HOWSON 5-6

Conducted by JOHN THOMAS.

* First peal.

HIGHWEEK, DEVON.
THE DEVONSHIRE GUILD.

On Monday, February 3, 1941, in Two Hours and Fourteen Minutes,
At PERRY FARM,

A PEAL OF DOUBLES, 5040 CHANGES;

Being one six-score each of St. Dunstan's, Dream, Morning Star, College Pleasure, College Doubles, London Doubles, Primrose, April Day and Old Doubles, four six-scores of Bob Doubles and 29 of Grand-sire Doubles (10 callings).

JAMES E. LILLEY 1-2 | CHARLES R. LILLEY 3-4
HENRY G. LEWIS... .. 5-6

Conducted by CHARLES R. LILLEY.

The conductor has now rung a peal on every day in the year.

BUSHEY, HERTS.
THE HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

On Wednesday, February 5, 1940, in One Hour and Fifty-One Minutes,
At 50, RUDOLPH ROAD,

A PEAL OF BOB MINOR, 5040 CHANGES;

Seven 720's, with seven different callings. Tenor size 15 in C.

* LEONARD LUCK 1-2 | CHRIS. W. WOOLLEY 3-4
EDWIN JENNINGS 5-6

Conducted by C. W. WOOLLEY.

Witness: Mrs. Jennings.

* First peal of Minor on handbells.

GUILDFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.

FARNHAM DISTRICT MAINTAINS FINANCIAL POSITION.

The Farnham District of the Guildford Diocesan Guild will not hold an annual meeting this year, but a report and balance sheet has been issued to the members. Financially the district has maintained its position despite the war. Subscriptions amounted to £13, of which £6 10s. was remitted to the general treasurer. The expenditure was £6 4s. 5d. and the balance in hand is £13 12s. 1d., against £13 6s. 6d. at the end of the previous year.

The report, presented by Miss E. C. Southby, the acting hon. secretary, says:—

Apart from the annual general meeting, the district has had no activity during the past year, although two attempts were made to arrange meetings. Hawley had various reasons why a meeting could not be held there, and at Crondall arrangements were cancelled the day before the fixed date, owing to a military circular being received by the Vicar to the effect that bells should cease to be rung.

Combined practices were held at Seale, Bentley and Frensham during the earlier part of the year with very satisfactory results.

The membership has not dropped very much below average, however, and now stands at 125, twenty-two less than last year. We have 105 ringing members and 20 honorary members. Expenses have not been high, and the balance in hand of £13 13s. 1d. is an increase of only 6s. 7d. in 1939. This comparatively small increased balance is due to the fact that we have lost 22 members—a good number of whom have joined the fighting forces.

Tower contributions to the Benevolent, Cathedral Bells and Sanctus Bell Funds amount to £1 7s. They are as follows: Aldershot, Sanctus Bell £1; Frensham, Cathedral Bells 3s. 6d., and Benevolent Fund 3s. 6d. I shall be pleased to receive any amount, however small, for the above funds.

Two of our oldest and most loyal members, Mr. H. Prior, of Farnham, and Mr. George Andrews, of Ash, have passed to their rest. They were most staunch supporters at district and other Guild meetings. We have lost by death two of our lady supporters, Mrs. Dimes, wife of the captain of the Crondall band, and Mrs. Rowsell, wife of the Vicar of Aldershot, and mother of a young Aldershot ringer. We offer our deepest sympathy to relatives left in bereavement.

Handbell practices have been held regularly each week under arrangements made by Mr. W. H. Viggers, of 37, Highfield Gardens, Aldershot, who will be very pleased to hear from any ringers interested in this branch of the art.

FAMOUS NORWICH RINGERS.

By CHARLES E. BORRETT.

1.—ROBERT CHESNUTT.

Robert Chesnutt, an old Norwich ringer, may be recalled by some as the conductor of the Double Norwich Maximus rung in 1817, which stood as the 'first and only' until the Ipswich men broke the ice again 79 years later.

He also conducted a 6,272 Oxford Treble Bob Major, with 6th's place bobs, in 1813, a 5,040 Double Norwich Major in 1815 at St. Giles' and St. Michael's, Norwich, respectively, and the first on the bells at Helmingham, Suffolk, a 5,376 of Oxford Treble Bob Major, in 1816. This, in all probability, is not a complete list, but no more have come under my notice.

Chesnutt was a hairdresser, and married Mary Brown at St. Gregory's Church, Norwich, on March 27th, 1799. He was buried at St. Giles' in May, 1821, in his 53rd year, and four others of his family were buried in the same churchyard between the years 1797 and 1839. One of the latter, John, an older brother, was also a hairdresser, and a wig maker to the Stock Company at the Theatre Royal. He also appeared on the boards occasionally. He was described as 'the very best representative of the Apothecary in "Romeo and Juliet," and the Friar in "The Duenna" that ever graced a stage.' I do not think this John was a ringer, for his duties would give him little leisure in the evenings.

The obituary notice in the 'Norfolk Chronicle' of the ringer Robert is a very striking one, and portrays him as a most lovable man and one worth his weight in gold in any band of ringers:—

'On Friday morning, May the 18th, 1821, the muffled bell of St. Peter's, Mancroft, announced the mournful tidings of the death of Mr. Robert Chesnutt in the 53rd year of his age. He was a useful member of St. Peter's Ringers, of which he might with propriety be termed "the leader of the band," as it was principally owing to his judicious instructions the company arrived to that degree of science, and we may say, perfection, for which they are so justly and eminently entitled. As it frequently happens that amongst the sons of harmony the most grating discord will prevail, yet by his mild and persuasive manner he could restore friendship and promote a reconciliation amongst the most violent and contentious spirits, so that 'he made even his enemies to be at peace with him.' In every sense of the word he was a lover of harmony and endeared every heart in his favour.'

Another newspaper says he was 'well known for his skill as a ringer and not less respected for quiet, inoffensive and obliging manners in the intercourse of life.'

These notices show that his leadership was not always in fair weather, and I have a notion that amongst the 'most violent and contentious spirits' would usually be found the composer and tenor ringer of the peal of Court Twelve—Samuel Thurston!

2.—ELIJAH MASON.

This name will convey little to the average reader of this paper, but, nevertheless, Elijah Mason was an able and accomplished ringer and a very versatile man.

He took part in some great and historical peals, and though the total was small, the variety, for the days in which he lived, was unmatched outside Norwich. I do not suppose it is a complete list, but I have come across the following:—

- 1822.—5,120 Oxford Treble Bob Major, at Kenninghall.
- 1823.—6,400 Oxford Treble Bob Major, at Hingham.
- 1824.—8,448 Oxford Treble Bob Major, at St. Michael's, Norwich.
- 1824.—5,040 Grand-sire Triples, at St. Andrew's, Norwich.
- 1827.—5,120 Oxford Treble Bob Major, on handbells.
- 1827.—5,376 Double Norwich Court Bob Major, at St. Giles', Norwich.
- 1831.—6,160 Double Norwich Court Bob Major, at St. Michael's, Norwich.

1832.—6,000 Double Oxford Bob Major, at St. Giles', Norwich.

1835.—5,376 Superlative Surprise Major, at St. Giles', Norwich.

1835.—5,280 London Surprise Major, at St. Andrew's, Norwich.

1844.—7,126 Stedman Cinques, at St. Peter's, Norwich.

It may be noted that the Double Norwich in 1831 and Stedman Cinques in 1844 were record lengths at the time, the Double Oxford and London Surprise were the first ever rung, and the Superlative the second one rung in the method. The handbell peal in 1827 he conducted, ringing the treble. It was arranged 'to oblige Elijah Mason, who wished to call a peal, and was not a double-handed ringer.' He joined the Cumberlands in 1820.

Besides his ringing skill he must have possessed great character and spirit, and this is well pointed out in the following extract from a memoir I have recently come across:—

'Elijah Mason was a linen weaver and a native of North Lopham, near Diss, in the south of Norfolk. He came to Norwich twice a year to sell his goods, and eventually settled in the city and became a small manufacturer of paramattas and bombazines. These he took to London in spring and autumn to sell to wholesalers. About 1842 he became bankrupt through the failure of a London firm, and was only able to pay 2s. 3d. in the £.

'He then took to making telescopes and microscopes, and travelled the country with them—his sole means of livelihood during the last two or three years of his life. He was a Chartist, and a very gentlemanly man. He died at Worcester on January 3rd, 1845, and was about 47 years of age.'

THE CAMBRIDGE YOUTHS.

A DISTINGUISHED EIGHTEENTH CENTURY SOCIETY.

By J. ARMIGER TROLLOPE.

No place is more associated with the rise and early development of change ringing than Cambridge; it shares with Oxford and London the distinction of being the places at which we know the earliest 'peals' were composed and first practised. In one of these places, perhaps simultaneously in all three, the Sixes first appeared soon after the death of Queen Elizabeth, and they were followed by the 'Twenty and the Twenty-four, with several other Changes. But,' says Richard Duckworth, 'Cambridge Forty-eight, for many years, was the greatest Peal that was rang or invented.'

It was a five-bell method in which one bell led for a number of changes and another lay behind, while the three middle bells rang the Six. Neither the treble nor the second ever went behind; and the fourth and fifth never went to the lead.

All through the seventeenth century change ringing was practised at the University. Many of the ringers went on to the Inns of Court, and they formed a steady supply of recruits to the College Youths and the other leading London societies.

Compared with Oxford, Cambridge never had many bells. Great St. Mary's from the first was the principal tower, the University church, and the place where most of the ringing was done. In 1478 the present building was begun on the site of an older church, and in 1519 it was finished; but the tower was not completed until 1608. In 1595 there were four bells, which were increased to five in 1611, and to eight in 1667, the year in which the Tinnallogia was completed.

Holy Trinity had four pre-Reformation bells, St. Andrew's had five, St. Edward-the-Confessor six in 1669, and the mixed lot at St. Benedict's were increased from five to six in 1663.

The ring of six at St. Benet's is of especial interest to ringers, for it was there that, in 1931, the memorial to Fabian Stedman was placed. The scheme, promoted and carried through by the Editor of 'The Ringing World,' and supported by the whole Exercise, consisted of a thorough restoration and rehangng of the bells, and the strengthening of the ancient Saxon tower to hold them. The amount raised was between £500 and £600.

St. Benet's was chosen as the place of the memorial because it is the church which traditionally has been most associated with Fabian Stedman, and no better or more fitting memorial could have been found. It was here that, according to Parnell, the College Youths first rang the Principle, and the tale is likely enough except for the date he gives.

I find it difficult, however, to believe that Stedman's own ringing was at St. Benet's more than at any other church in the town. It was quite contrary to the usual custom of the time for a band to be confined to one tower, and since the belfry at St. Benet's was then a dark inconvenient place reached by a ladder, while St. Mary's was the most important tower and had eight bells, it is surely more than probable that Stedman's ringing was chiefly at the latter tower and not at the former.

The definite statement, however, has been made that Stedman was parish clerk at St. Benet's. If it were so, that would, of course, give him a special connection with

the belfry, but I do not think the statement is correct. The only evidence for it is in a book called 'Memorials of Cambridge,' by C. H. Cooper, published in 1880. The passage reads, 'Fabian Stedman, clerk of this parish about 1650, invented the art of change-ringing. Stedman's Principle, Stedman Slow Course, Stedman Triples and Stedman Caters are well known, as also is the Cambridge Surprise. His Campanalogia, or the Art of Ringing improved, was published 12mo. 1677.'



THE SAXON TOWER OF ST. BENET'S, CAMBRIDGE.

'About 1650' is very vague, and shows that Cooper was not relying on any contemporary evidence he had discovered, but upon some other writer, and I suspect that his only authority was Ellacombe, and Ellacombe misunderstood.

The legend that Stedman was the inventor of change ringing and the Father of the Art was widely believed in for many years, but has now been shown to be untenable. Change ringing was practised before he was born, and there were other clever composers who preceded him or were his contemporaries. We know the names and we have some of the work of three of them. Robert Roan, the composer of Grandsire Doubles and the standard 720 of Bob Minor, and John Tendring, the composer of several five-bell methods, were members of the Society of College Youths. Samuel Scattergood was a Cambridge University man, and afterwards a clergyman and preacher of some considerable note. He was a composer of five-bell methods, and, although none of them is now rung, they are interesting stages in the development of the art.

In the early years of the eighteenth century change ringing ceased to be a popular sport at the two Universities, and at Cambridge all that was left was a tradition, supported by some ancient and fragmentary manuscripts, of a society which dated from the time of Queen Elizabeth and consisted chiefly of undergraduates.

In 1724, the year which marks the beginnings of important activity in the Society of College Youths, there was a renaissance of the art in Cambridge, and on August 3rd the Society of Cambridge Youths was established. It was symptomatic of the changing social status of the leading members of the Exercise that it was composed of townsmen and not of University men, though, like the leading London societies, it included a sprinkling of them during the century.

The new company showed their skill by ringing at St. Mary's on November 5th a peal of Grandsire Triples. Two men, Henry Mulliner and William Anderson, the ringers of the treble and the seventh, were gentlemen. The others were Thomas Scare, a cabinet maker, Hewes Carter, a watchmaker, John Tuck, a bricklayer, John White, verger of Trinity College, Robert Barber, and Thomas Cornwall, a sawyer. Anderson was the leading man in the company and probably the bob caller. What composition they rang is doubtful, but most likely it was Doleman's false peal.

Another man who did not take part in this performance, but who afterwards became the most distinguished member of the society, was Charles Mason. He was born at Prees, in Shropshire, in 1699, the son of Charles Mason. He went to school at Wem, and at the age of 19 entered Trinity College as a pensioner. He matriculated in 1718, was scholar in 1720, and he graduated B.A. in 1723 and M.A. in 1726.

In 1727 the College Youths visited Cambridge. They took their best company, and, according to their wont, spent a day or two ringing at the various towers. Their main performance and the central object of their visit was a peal of Grandsire Caters, 5,040 changes on the new ring of ten which had just been supplied by the White-chapel foundry to Great St. Mary's. The peal was rung on May 25th, and the band was made up of William Woodruff, John Ward, John Hardham, the famous tobaccoist, Samuel Jeacock, James Richardson, John Dearmore, William Laughton, Peter Merrygarts, Benjamin Annable and Matthew East. Annable called the bobs.

The band, and especially Annable, left a good impression behind them when they went home, and Charles Mason and Henry Mulliner joined the Society of College Youths.

Nine years later the Cambridge Youths rang another five-thousand of Grandsire Triples, with Charles Mason at the seventh. It was described as a 'true' peal (the other was a 'complete' peal), and I suspect that Mason, who took a great interest in composition, had found out that the first peal was false, and had substituted this time Vicar's six-part bob and single composition, which we know from his manuscripts he had proved. He probably was the conductor.

J. A.
TROLLOPE'S
'COLLEGE YOUTHS'
A History of the Society
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BELFRY GOSSIP.

We referred last week to the fact that Mr. G. P. Elphick collected the information for the article on Bell Cages by personal inspection. In the course of the last five years, we learn, he has visited 347 Sussex churches in his research work dealing with bells and cages.

Handbell practices are held every Tuesday and Friday at 18, Manchester Road, Reading, at 7.30 p.m., and any ringers interested in handbell ringing will be made welcome.

On February 12th, 1821, 14,016 changes of Kent Treble Bob were rung in the old Church of St. Mary's, Oldham. The peal was by William Eversfield and was at the time the longest either composed or rung.

The Birmingham men rang the first peal of Kent Treble Bob Caters at Aston on February 13th, 1848.

To-day is the anniversary of two long peals of Grandsire Cinques. The College Youths rang 7,018 changes at St. Michael's, Cornhill, in 1731, and the Painswick men rang 13,001 changes in 1920. The latter still stands as the record length in the method, as the 17,000 afterwards rung in the same tower unfortunately turned out to be false.

Joseph Tebbs, of Leeds, a noted composer of the early nineteenth century and the author of a very meritorious peal of Stedman Triples, died on February 14th, 1836, aged 68.

A peal of Grandsire Major, 9,999 changes, was rung at Oldham on February 15th, 1825.

John Holt called a peal of the now obsolete method, Double London Court Bob Major, at St. Margaret's, Westminster, on February 16th, 1752.

On the same day of the month four long peals were rung—14,224 Bob Major at Aston in 1789, 6,000 Oxford Treble Bob Royal at Cambridge in 1790, 8,448 Oxford Treble Bob Major by the Cumberlands on the bells of All Hallows', Barking, recently destroyed in an air raid, in 1818, and 8,448 Stedman Cinques at Painswick in 1858.

The only peal of Imperial the Third Major ever rung away from Norwich was accomplished on February 17th, 1800, at the village of Soham, in Cambridge, where there was a very skilful band largely made up of one family of the name of Tebbit.

Christ Church, Spitalfields, with its ring of twelve bells, was destroyed by fire on February 17th, 1836, as related in a recent article in 'The Ringing World,' and on the same date in 1856 the Birmingham men rang a peal of Stedman Major.

Fifty years ago to-day eight peals were rung. They were Grandsire Triples 1, Bob Major 2, Royal 1, Stedman Triples 1, Caters 2, and Violet Major 1. The last was one of William Sottanstell's methods and was rung at Liversedge in Yorkshire. The Grandsire Triples was at Wombourn, Staffordshire, and the ringer of the fourth was Benjamin Gough, of whose recent death we have just received notice.

BELLS ON GRAMOPHONE RECORDS.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—In reply to your request, His Master's Voice Company have the following records of change ringing:—

C.2098.—St. Margaret's, Westminster, London: Stedman Caters and Grandsire Caters.

B.4090.—St. Margaret's, Westminster: Easter music with bells and choir and organ.

B.3120.—St. Margaret's, Westminster: Wedding music with bells and choir and organ.

B.2691.—York Minster bells: Changes on the peal of 12 bells (introducing 'Great Peter,' the 10½ ton tenor). York Minster Society of Change Ringers.

Novelty records.—B.2853: Nightingales and Church Bells. B.3345: On same lines with choir and organ.

EDWARD J. THOMAS.

Similar information is also supplied by Mr. F. W. Woodman, of Boreham.

'MOANING MINNIE' STOPS A PEAL.

On Monday evening, February 3rd, in the choir vestry of St. Margaret's, Leicester, six members of the Midland Counties Association went for a peal of Stedman Cinques. All went smoothly and the striking was very good. The turning course came and went, and the band were just settling down to the 'home-at-hand' position when !!xx!! off went 'Moaning Minnie' with her dismal wail—after 1 hour 50 minutes' excellent ringing. As the policemen of the band were on siren duty, stand was called, and so ended what would have been a good peal. The band were Alfred Ballard 1-2, Harold J. Poole 3-4, Percy Harrison 5-6, Ernest Morris 7-8, Fred J. Wilson 9-10, Josiah Morris 11-12. Umpire: G. Stedman Morris.

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WHAT IS A GOOD SURPRISE METHOD?**MERITS AND DEFECTS.***To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—I am interested in this correspondence, having listened to quite a number of new Surprise methods being rung. I think one essential of a good method, which your correspondents seem to have missed, is that coursing pairs of bells should remain at the back together for a reasonable time, so that the musical effect produced can be appreciated. The greatest defect of London is that no pair stays longer than a dodge and a half at any time, and generally not even for a single dodge. The whole movement is much too rapid. I would suggest, too, that in Royal and Maximus methods the tenors should come together behind elsewhere than just at the course-end; the back bells ought to come home more often than once in a quarter of an hour.

Mr. Harvey's system of assessing methods is commendable, but I think his likes and dislikes require amending in certain particulars. The tenors in any row should not be counted as separated unless three or more bells come between them. If Mr. Harvey will do this he will find that the figure for Bedford is 30, which is good; he will also obtain the figure 60 for Cambridge. If the method is to contain second's place at the lead-end, which he seems to desire, and the places are all made right, rows with the tenors separated by two bells are bound to occur. It seems hardly fair on any method to stipulate that it shall contain a certain internal place, and then penalise it for containing certain rows which such a place inevitably produces. And if we are going to object to parting of the tenors, then we must put a black mark against Superlative for containing the Queen's change in the plain course.

I have heard quite a number of ringers condemn methods for containing contiguous places; yet the majority can only have heard such places in Treble Bob. I have always considered these a very pleasing feature, especially when they occur in 5-6; and the more so when one or both bells concerned remain in 5-6 and make further places.

It was surely decided some years ago that the whole pulls during which the treble leads or lies do not constitute cross-sections; but, whatever the opinion about that point, it is a mistake to insist that internal places in these rows will always make for improvement. In plain methods, Double Norwich is a better method than Double Oxford, or those two mixtures which have one or other place. In Surprise, Cambridge and Superlative are certainly improved by having second's and seventh's; but put these places into Bristol and a very inferior method results.

In assessing Bedford, Mr. Harvey misses what seems to me a very strong recommendation, that is, that it is a method on the 'lengthening lead' plan. That is one of the great features of Bristol, and about the only redeeming one of Treble Bob. I should add about 50 points, but Mr. Harvey deducts five because the method has not second's, a place, incidentally, which would bring it round at the first lead-end.

The idea that snaps on the front and so-called 'backhanders' (dreadful word!), which are merely leads at back and hand, should constitute a defect is surely out of date. It originated, I believe, in the book 'Surprise Methods,' by the Rev. C. D. P. Davies. The author, on his own admission, strongly disliked all ever-bell methods of ringing, and many of his views on the subject are not acceptable. Possibly it was considered that a lead which commenced at back could not be struck correctly; but we cannot blame a method for the shortcomings of the ringers, and such an idea would certainly not be accepted now. Bristol, which has a rich mixture of snaps, leads right and wrong, and forward and backward ringing, is one of the finest—if not the finest—of methods in any class.

Finally, although the subject is one of interest, I doubt if any method, however good, will ever take its place as a standard method along with the well-known four. One of the great drawbacks to Surprise ringing—the lack of touches short enough for service or practice ringing—has now been overcome by the introduction of spliced. The old idea that a method required years of practice to learn properly is fast disappearing, and I believe that in the future we shall see many more methods rung to peals as more ringers realise how really easy it is to learn new ones; but I cannot see any of these new methods, however good, taking the place of the established four.

C. W. WOOLLEY.

Bushey.

REVERSAL.*To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—Mr. Bankes James says that when he reverses Grandsire he makes the hunt go in front of the treble. Surely what he gets is neither Reverse Grandsire nor ordinary Grandsire, though it may be a legitimate variation. When it was rung it was, I believe, called 'New' Grandsire.

WINNERSH, BERKS.—On Saturday, February 8th, at The Briars, Westfields Road, a quarter-peal of Doubles in three methods—360 Reverse Canterbury, 480 Plain Bob, 420 Grandsire (eight different callings): Mrs. B. C. Castle 1-2, B. C. Castle (conductor) 3-4, T. Davies 5-6. First quarter-peal by ringers of 1-2 and 5-6, and first 'in hand' by the conductor. The result of a weekly practice since September.

BELLS FOR NEW CATHEDRAL.**RING OF TEN FROM CITY CHURCH OFFERED TO GUILDFORD.**

It has been announced that the bells of All Hallows', Lombard Street, London, which were taken down before the church was demolished, have been offered as a gift for the new Guildford Cathedral.

The building of the Cathedral is still progressing, but the completion of the tower may be delayed for a long time. If the bells are accepted they will, therefore, be hung 'dead' in the upper part of the building for the time being.

The architect's plans for the Cathedral include the provision of a ring of ten, but it is hardly likely that the peal from All Hallows' will eventually satisfy the dignity of the new Cathedral, acceptable though they may be as a temporary measure.

If these bells find a place at Guildford it will be their third home. They were originally cast for the Church of St. Dionis Backchurch, which stood in Fenchurch Street at the corner of Lime Street. They replaced an earlier ring of six installed on the rebuilding of the church after the great fire. Richard Phelps, of Whitechapel, cast them in 1727, and in 1732 recast the treble, which had been broken. In 1750, the fourth and fifth, having also been cracked, were cast by Thomas Lester.

The first peal on the bells was rung on October 10th, 1729, by the College Youths. It was a peal of Grandsire Caters, which Benjamin Annable conducted from the treble. Seven years later the Eastern Scholars rang there a peal of 6,210 Grandsire Caters. John Holt also called a peal of Grandsire Caters there while he was a member of the College Youths. The first recorded peal of Royal on the bells was 5,040 Double Bob by the same society in 1766, and the first peal of Treble Bob Royal on them was rung by the ancient Society of College Youths in 1785.

There is no other record of a peal on the bells until, in 1850, the Cumberlands rang 5,079 Stedman Caters and the College Youths rang a similar length in the same method in 1852.

When, early in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, an Act for Union of Benefices was passed to enable certain city churches to be pulled down and the money from the sale of sites devoted to building new churches in the populous suburbs, St. Dionis' was one of the first to go, but the Order in Council stipulated that the bells were to be presented to the church of the united parishes.

Thus it was that the bells of St. Dionis' went to All Hallows', Lombard Street. Now, in turn, All Hallows' has come by the same fate. The church has been pulled down and its fittings, including the very fine carved woodwork, has been transferred to a new church at Twickenham, bearing the same dedication. The tower has been built of the stone from the tower in Lombard Street, but the bells had to be refused because of a condition made in the purchase of the site that no bells should be placed in the church.

Before the tower in the city was demolished, the bells were removed to the Whitechapel Foundry, where they still are.

A HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS AGO.**LONDON AND NORWICH RIVALRY.**

Here is an extract from 'The Norfolk Chronicle' of June 6th, 1789: 'A company of ringers from the Metropolis arrived in Norwich at the beginning of this week on a visit to Messieurs the St. Peter's ringers. It has been reported that the strangers came with a view to contest the claim to superiority in their art with the Norwichians, but this report has been strenuously contradicted by a correspondent, who asserts that the sole inducement of the Londoners for making the journey was to enjoy the pleasure of ringing so unrivalled and much admired peal of bells as that of St. Peter's.'

'However, be that as it may, it seems that a fracas took place between the rival sons of the clapper, and the strangers departed in disgust. Our correspondent appears to be shocked at the impolite treatment of our rustics to their town brethren, and that the harmony of their bells should be contrasted by such discordant behaviour. In vindication of the treatment of the Londoners, our correspondent requested us to insert the following paragraph from "The London General Advertiser" of October 8th, 1788—

'Monday last the Society of College Youths rang on the peal of twelve bells at the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields a true and complete peal of 6,204 Stedman Principle in 4 hours and 47 minutes, being the greatest number of changes of that Peal ever rung in England. This very curious and intricate composition was invented in the last century, but was by the connoisseurs of the present day deemed impracticable to be achieved until these darling sons of distinction have by this in addition to many other performances shewn to their contemporaries that industry and resolution united will ever get through the most arduous task.'

READING.—On January 24th, at 18, Manchester Road, 1,266 Grand-sire Triples: Gunner Harold V. Frost, R.A. 1-2, Pte. Rowland Biggs, Royal Berkshires 3-4, Albert Diserens (conductor) 5-6, Thomas N. Lanaghan 7-8. On January 28th, 1,260 Grandsire Triples: Stanley C. Davis 1-2, Rowland Biggs 3-4, Albert Diserens (conductor) 5-6, Peter Kearvell 7-8. This was Mr. Peter Kearvell's first quarter-peal.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE BELL-CAGE. WOOD FRAMES THROUGH THE CENTURIES

By G. P. ELPHICK.

(Continued from page 65.)

The next step in the development of the bell frame came when men had mastered the principles of the king-post roof truss. When they found that by straining the king or centre post into tension, the braces or principal rafters were thrown into compression, this had the effect

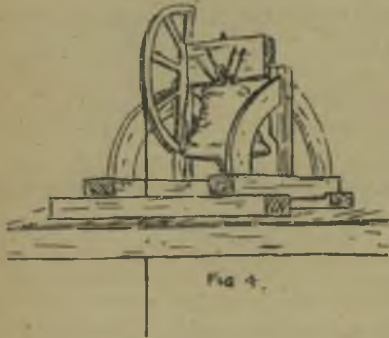


Fig. 4.

of moving the load from the centre of the beam to its ends; enabling the size and weight of the beam to be reduced.

The earliest type where these trusses are used to carry bells is shown in *Fig. 4*. There is a cage of this type at Tarring Neville. This

cage for three shows one great advantage over the earlier types. The cage sills are supported at their ends by plates, these being fixed to the beams forming the floor on which they rest. The centre posts are similar to the heads of the Cold Waltham cage, the whole truss being fastened together with draw-bore pins. The date of the tower is about 1220 A.D.; no doubt that is also the date of the cage.

There is another example of this type, rather more primitive in construction, at Southease, containing a bell cast about 1280 A.D. It is a cage for two and the tie beams of the spire are used for the sills of the trusses. The centre-post of the spire taking the place of the central truss has the braces let in either side; a most unusual method of dispensing with a truss.

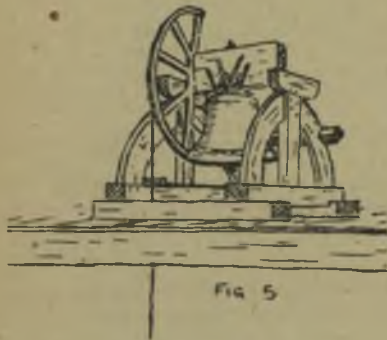


Fig. 5.

It will be noticed that the braces in the first example are of circular sweep. The early carpenters wanted to direct the horizontal thrust of the swinging bell into a vertical thrust at the ends of the sills. They apparently thought that it would travel round the brace. This is not so; although the conception of directing forces by curved pieces of timber continued well into the middle of the seventeenth century. It was also found that the brasses housed into endgrain were more difficult to fasten in place than if they were housed into the long grain; so the next step was to add a short head (*Fig. 5*).

The cage for three at Birdham is a good example of this type. The tower is fourteenth century and one of the bells it contains was cast between 1320-30 A.D. There seems no reason to doubt that this is also the age of the cage. The advantages of the head have already been

pointed out. The other great improvement was brace ties; corresponding to the purlin on a roof truss. These horizontal timbers are cogged and pinned to the braces to prevent lateral movement of the trusses. It did not prove sufficient in this case, for struts were built into the walls to wedge the end trusses. Alas! men knew of that bad habit many years ago, and still continue to wedge rickety cages against the walls of a tower. The braces are housed into the heads; a joint that proved unsatisfactory because the grain across the centre-post shrank more than that of the head.

It is interesting to notice that here the original half wheels are over six feet in diameter for a bell weighing about three and a half cwt., a testimony to the quality of the bearings in those early days; one trembles at the thought of the wheel required for a tenor of a ton in weight.



Fig. 6.

The next step was to lower the braces, generally between two and four inches from the head (*Fig. 6*). An example of this is at Chalvington. The next problem to solve was to prevent the head from working loose. This was done by two small struts (*Fig. 7*) between the heads and the braces. These struts later became the jack braces of the eighteenth century cages. The cages up to the present type have an average height of four feet three inches.

As the cages became more elaborate, so man's ambition soared. He hung his bells high off the floor and as high in the spire as he could. In some cases, he nearly lost his sense of proportion to the degree that some of our late Victorian architects, who became bell-hangers, did.

West Wittering is an example of the next type. It is five feet ten inches high. Two improvements are noticeable. The sill is cambered to place the centre-post in greater tension, and the brace ties are strutted from the sills and braced; in fact the whole cage is rather complex (*Fig. 7*).

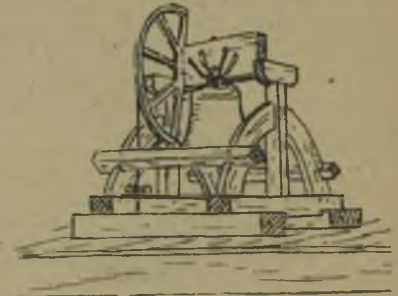


Fig. 7.

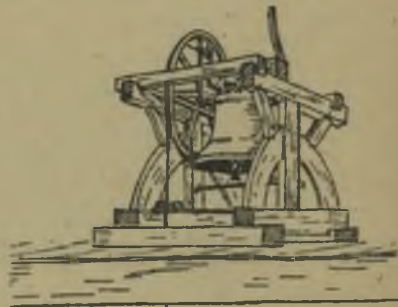


Fig. 8.

(To be continued.)

MR. C. R. LILLEY'S ACHIEVEMENT.

A PEAL ON EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR.

By ringing a handbell peal of Doubles on February 3rd, Mr. Charles R. Lilley has joined the select number of those who have scored a peal on every day in the year, including February 29th and Christmas Day.

Mr. Lilley was born on April 8th, 1874, at Candlesby, Lincolnshire, where his father was for many years a churchwarden. He inherited his love of ringing, however, from his great-grandfather, William Fant, of Freiston, and still possesses his ancestor's ringing books. Mr. Lilley learnt to ring in Lincolnshire and his first peal was in 12 methods of Doubles at Wrangle in 1894. He rang his first peal as conductor on August 7th, 1897, at Bennington, Lincs, where he called seven 720's of Bob Minor. In 1897 he moved to Bedford, where he was associated with Mr. Charles Clarke, who, as Mr. Lilley describes it, put the finishing touches on him. About this time the bells at St. Paul's, Bedford, were made into ten, and he took part in some of the first peals on this augmented ring, including the first peals of Kent Treble Bob Royal and Bob Royal, as well as Superlative Major for the Beds Association. Afterwards Mr. Lilley moved to various places, including Oxfordshire, where he took part in the famous 17,024 of Double Norwich Major, rung at Kidlington in 11 hours 12 minutes on May 22nd, 1899, conducted by James Washbrook.



MR. C. R. LILLEY.

He went to Shrewsbury in 1913, where he conducted the first peal of Stedman Triples in the town at St. Alkmund's and was afterwards appointed Ringing Master and Towerkeeper at St. Chad's. The bells there were then in bad order, and Mr. Lilley urged their restoration, which was eventually carried out by Messrs. Taylor and Co., who recast the bells into what Mr. Lilley considers the finest twelve in England. He conducted a number of first peals on these bells, including Grandsire and Stedman Cinques and Plain and Treble Bob Maximus, and was possibly the first ringer to conduct peals in the four standard methods on twelve bells in his own tower. In this tower he brought along a young band until they could ring Cambridge, and he also served for some years as a sidesman in the church. On one occasion at Wem in Shropshire he conducted a peal of Grandsire Triples, ringing the fifth in the first half and the seventh to the second half. The seventh was going badly and the change over was made to relieve the man who had started on her.

After he went to Devon Mr. Lilley devoted much time to teaching, and among other performances has called the first peal of Oxford Treble Bob Major in the West, the first peal of Triples at Truro Cathedral and the first peal of Double Norwich Major by resident Devonshire ringers.

Mr. Lilley represented the Shropshire Association on the Central Council from 1924 to 1926, and has been chairman of the Exeter Branch of the Devon Guild.

NORTH STAFFS ASSOCIATION.

A meeting of the North Staffordshire and District Association was held at Longton on February 1st, when the following towers were represented: Stoke, Hanley, Leek, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Burslem, Uttoxeter and Longton. Ringing, on handbells, of touches of Grandsire Triples and Bob Minor were well struck. The seven bells without clappers also were set going and the following methods were practised before and after tea: Stedman Triples, Grandsire Triples and Doubles and Bob Minor were rung, and rounds for the young members.

Fourteen members were present at tea, and the Rector (the Rev. T. H. Brooks) gave the visitors a hearty welcome.

Mr. A. Thompson, of Newcastle, proposed a vote of thanks to the Rector for his welcome and the use of bells and also to the ringers for the splendid tea they had provided.—Mr. N. Sargeant, of Hanley, seconded.

As the association had a few days earlier lost one of its old members, Mr. J. Pointon, of Brown Edge, the members stood in silence for one minute as a mark of respect.

Although the attendance was not large, the members spent a happy afternoon and evening.

WILLIAM WAKLEY, OF BURTON-ON-TRENT

AND HIS BAND.

Last Wednesday was the eighty-eighth anniversary of the birth of William Wakley, a man who holds an honoured position in the story of change ringing, for he was the captain of the earliest band who were method ringers in the modern sense of the term.

By birth he was a Devon man, but in 1874 he went to Burton-on-Trent, where he lived until his death in April, 1906. Burton is well known as the town of breweries, and there Michael Thomas Bass, the head of the world-famous firm, built and endowed a church, not sparing for expense. The building was designed by Lord Grimthorpe, a man of extraordinary intellectual powers, who not only made an immense fortune as a lawyer, but proved himself no mean expert in other things, such as clockmaking, church building and bell designing.

The views he held were very pronounced and not always altogether sound. At St. Paul's, Burton-on-Trent, he had a free hand, and those who remember the eight bells Taylor's hung there from his designs have some idea of what he thought bells should be like.

These were the bells on which William Wakley and his men performed their great feats, for great feats they were, though the level of method ringing has been raised so much since.

The first memorable thing they did was to make Double Norwich Court Bob a standard method. It is hard to realise that before the Burton men rang their first peal in 1882, only 16 peals had been rung in the method by other bands than the Norwich Scholars; harder still to realise that two of the men who rang in the 1882 peal, Mr. Joseph Griffin and Mr. John Jaggard, are still alive and hale and hearty. The Burton men then went on to the Surprise Major methods, and in turn Superlative, Cambridge and London became standard methods instead of being very occasionally rung by selected companies, because Wakley and his band showed the Exercise that the thing could be done. Theirs was the eighth peal of Superlative, the second true peal of Cambridge and the fourth peal of London. They did not, like the older companies, ring one peal, and then drop the method. They rang many and so set a new standard for the Exercise.

One other method, New Cumberland Surprise Major, which they rang for the first time, was by Henry Earle Bulwer. It has many merits, and is well worth the attention of any first-class modern band.

It is difficult perhaps to say why it should be so, but the fact that one man or one band has done a thing makes it much easier for others to do the same. There is nothing very much nowadays in ringing a peal of Cambridge or of Superlative. Once, and not so long ago, both were really difficult methods. The fact that they have become the common property of the average skilled ringer is entirely due to the example set by the Burton men fifty or sixty years ago.

ERIN DOUBLES.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—In reply to your correspondent, I forward an extent which I obtained some two years ago, and which may be of some interest to him.

There are two calls both having the effect of a single (i.e., to turn the course of the rows), which I have named 'Bob' and 'Single' to avoid confusion. As will be seen, there are 20 variations of this extent.

May I express my appreciation of your splendid efforts to keep 'The Ringing World' as interesting as ever, and I feel sure that the whole Exercise is grateful to you for your work to maintain interest in these difficult times.

C. KENNETH LEWIS.

An extent by the first and last rows of the sixes.

12345	15243	Continued	34512
21435 +	51423 +	35214 +	43152 +
24153	54132	32541	41325
	B		B
42513 +	45132 -	23451 +	14325 -
45231	41523	24315	13452
B		B	
54231 -	14253 -	42315 -	31542 -
52413	12435	43251	35124
		S	
25143 -	21345 -	34521 -	35142 +
21534	23154	35412	31524
B		S	
12534 +	32514 -	35421 +	13254 +
15243	35241	34512	12345
	S		
	35214 +		

Twenty variations may be obtained by starting from each of the twenty sixes.

For the benefit of those who do not know Erin, here is the method and the Bobs and Singles shown:—

12345	12345	12345
21435	21435	21435
12453	12453	12453
14235	14235	14235
41253	41253	41253
42135	42135	42135
24153	24153	24153
	B	S
42513	42153	24135

THE STANDARD METHODS.

AND SOMETHING ABOUT THE SURPRISE MAJOR BOOK.

We often hear and read about the Standard Methods, and sometimes the question is asked, What are these Standard Methods? What is it that particularly distinguishes them, and why should they be confined to a small and limited number?

The answer given in the latest textbook to be printed is that 'so far as eight-bell ringing goes, the standard methods are those which a competent and well-equipped ringer may at any time need when he goes to a ringing meeting or into a strange belfry.'

This may serve as a good general definition, but it still leaves open the question why there should be this particular group, and it may be worth our while to spend a few minutes looking at the subject.

The standard methods include one or two which have been practised ever since the art was, and which, we need not doubt, will always be practised; but the group as a whole has changed, though slowly, from time to time, and will continue to change. In the eighteenth century the standard methods were Plain Bob, on all even numbers as well as on seven, Grandsire on all odd numbers, Double Bob, and Oxford Treble Bob. Soon after 1800 Stedman and Kent Treble Bob were added, but Double Bob was dropped. The great revival of ringing toward the end of the century added Double Norwich, and the three Surprise Methods—Cambridge Superlative and London—all of which had been known for long, but had not been taken into general use. Early in the present century Bristol Surprise took its place among the number.

To-day the group is not quite the same. Oxford Treble Bob, for so many years the most popular of all Major methods, has become almost obsolete and is seldom ever rung even in its last home, the Eastern Counties. Bob Triples has fallen under the ban of the Central Council and is not now considered 'regular.' On the other hand there are one or two which may fairly be called standard methods. Little Bob is frequently rung and probably has come to stay. Rutland Surprise, perhaps, and Yorkshire Surprise, certainly, must be included in the group, and there are a few others which seem as if they are likely to join the select circle.

But no one can say definitely. This is a case where the prophets are usually confounded by the event. Duffield, which was to have revolutionised ten and twelve-bell ringing, and which was introduced to the Exercise by one of the very best textbooks we possess, has proved a complete failure; Double Oxford Major, which is given by nearly every book on ringing, is seldom practised; Albion Treble Bob, 'the most even and regular of any Treble Bob method,' is not looked at; and Norfolk Surprise, which five and twenty years ago began to be extensively practised, is now forgotten. On the other hand Cambridge, which to the experts of forty or fifty years ago was almost everything a method should not be, has become the most popular of all Surprise methods, supplanting Superlative, which to those same experts was the queen of Major methods.

Between the two great wars, and due, we believe, largely to the change in men's outlook caused by those great events, there was a notable advance in many matters connected with change ringing, and very notably in the number of new methods which were rung. A large

proportion of them were Surprise Major methods, and to meet the demand for such the new book on Surprise Major was prepared, and would have been published by now had the times been normal. To the compilation of that book a very large amount of care, thought and experience was devoted and particularly in making the selection of methods. The number is large, though it is but a tiny fraction of the total possible number. It does not include all, or anything like all, the methods that are fit for ringing, though perhaps as a representative collection it may hold its own against any adverse criticism.

Bands wanting new methods to ring will still, no doubt, seek what they require outside its pages, and, no doubt, they will find what they require. At the same time, the very large number given leaves the Exercise in doubt as to what methods, if any, are most worthy of being practised and of being received into the select group of the standard methods. This is the point recently raised by Mr. James Harvey. Can it be satisfactorily met?

It may be worth while to describe how the selection was made. After a very large amount of investigation, extending over many years, into the general laws of method construction, a collection of several thousands of Surprise Major methods was worked out, and to it were added not only the many methods which at times had been published in the ringing papers, but also the much larger number produced by well-known composers which existed in manuscript.

From them a preliminary selection was made consisting of over eight hundred methods. These were arranged in proper order, their false course ends worked out, and a skeleton course of each drawn.

The size of the final selection was settled roughly by the space available in the printed book, which in its turn was settled by the cost of printing. It was decided to give 150 methods in full, and to add directions by which some hundreds more could be obtained by more or less mechanical means from the 150 given.

Then the various classes of methods were examined and a due proportion allotted to each, such a number to the easiest, such a number to the most difficult, and so on. As each method was passed in review its claims were decided, first by its skeleton course, then by the way it brought coursing bells together on the leads and at the back and then by the number and nature of its false course ends.

Some considerable thought was given as to the best order in which to arrange the methods. There were several alternative ways, and all of them with their advantages. It would have been an excellent thing to have started with the simplest and easiest, to have followed them by those of increasing difficulty, and so work up to the most complex of all. It would have been a good thing to have adopted the plan used in the Minor Methods collection, in which a knowledge of the place making enables a person to find any particular method with the minimum of trouble. The plan actually adopted groups together all those methods which have peal compositions in common. It was the only way in which satisfactory cross references could be made between the leads of the methods and the full selection of suitable peals which is given elsewhere in the book.

The result, however, is that easy and difficult methods are mixed without any order, and the reader has largely

(Continued on next page.)

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.

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

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.

LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.—Rochdale Branch.—Next meeting will be held at Todmorden on Saturday, February 15th. Handbells available at 47, Cambridge Street, from 3 p.m. Meeting at 6.30 p.m.—Ivan Kay, Hon. Sec.

ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS.—The next meeting will be held on Saturday, February 15th. Members will meet at Holborn Viaduct Station Buffet at 2.30 p.m. By kind invitation of Mr. H. Langdon, the business meeting with handbell ringing will take place at 15, Farringdon Avenue, E.C.4, at 3 p.m.—A. B. Peck, Hon. Sec., Branksome, Eversfield Road, Reigate.

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD.—Kettering Branch.—The branch annual meeting will be held at Kettering on Saturday, February 15th. Service 4.15 p.m. Tea and meeting to follow. Please notify me if you require tea.—H. Baxter, 21, Charles Street, Rothwell.

GUILDFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.—Leatherhead District.—The annual district meeting will be held at Leatherhead on Saturday, February 15th. Service 3.30 in Parish Church. Tea at the Duke's Head at 4.30, followed by the usual business meeting. Handbells available for the rest of the evening.—A. H. Smith, Hon. Sec.

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD.—Daventry Branch.—The annual meeting will be held at the Abbey Buildings, Daventry, on Saturday, February 15th. Chair to be taken at 5.30 p.m. Will members kindly make an effort to attend?—W. C. Moore, 5, Williams Terrace, Daventry, Northants.

HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Next meeting at Bushey, Guides' Studio, Falconer Road, on Saturday, February 22nd. Meeting time 3.45. Excellent

THE STANDARD METHODS.

(Continued from previous page.)

to find out for himself what sort of thing any particular method will prove in actual practice.

The difficulty is partially met by marking a certain number of the simplest by one star and a few of the most difficult by two stars, those of intermediate difficulty being left unmarked. The point, however, raised by Mr. Harvey cannot be said to have been met, and it is not quite easy to see how it can be within the limits imposed by the cost of the published book. But the point is certainly worthy of further consideration.

Let us see, if we can, what exactly we do want in a method worthy to rank as a standard method, and let us examine the claims of a few candidates for the honour. If our investigations give any satisfactory results, perhaps space may be found for them in the Surprise Major book before it finally goes to the printer.

opportunity to practise method ringing on handbells. Comfortable room, social chat. Tea arranged. All interested in the hobby of change ringing are welcome.—C. H. Horton, 53, Aldenham Road, Bushey.

EAST GRINSTEAD AND DISTRICT GUILD.—The annual meeting will be held in the Church Room, Hartfield, on Saturday, February 22nd, at 3 p.m. Business meeting at 3.30. No arrangements for tea. Come along and meet old friends and have a social afternoon together. Handbells available.—C. A. Bassett, Assist. Sec., 3, Pendrill Place, Wadhurst, Tunbridge Wells.

LINCOLN DIOCESAN GUILD.—Elloe Deaneries Branch.—The annual meeting will be held at Spalding on Saturday, February 22nd. Service 3.30. Tea 4.30 at the Lincoln Arms Hotel (near High Bridge), followed by meeting and social evening. Bring your wives and sweethearts. Those requiring tea must let me know before February 18th.—W. A. Richardson, Hon. Sec., Glenside, Pinchbeck, Spalding, Lincs.

DEVON GUILD.—Exeter Branch.—The annual meeting will be held on Saturday, February 22nd, at Deller's Cafe, High Street, Exeter. Tea 4.30, free to members. Business meeting to follow. Will those requiring tea please notify me by February 19th?—W. H. Howe, Hon. Sec., 8, Courtenay Road, Exeter.

LEEDS AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.—The next meeting will be held at Liversedge on Saturday, Feb. 22nd. Handbells from 3 p.m., in the Old Oak Inn, Bradford Road. Business meeting 4.30 p.m. A good muster is requested.—H. Lofthouse, Hon. Sec., 8, Wortley Road, Leeds, 12.

ST. MARTIN'S GUILD FOR THE DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM (Established 1755).—The 53rd annual Henry Johnson Commemoration will be held at the Imperial Hotel, Temple Street, Birmingham, on Saturday, March 1st. Owing to prevailing conditions this will be a luncheon to commence at 1.30 p.m. prompt, Vice-President Councillor A. Paddon Smith in the chair. Tickets will be issued to fully paid-up members at 1s. each; to other members and friends at 5s. 6d. each. All applications for tickets must be received by Saturday, February 22nd. Apply T. H. Reeves, Hon. Sec., 136, Newton Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham, 11.

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.—North Bucks Branch.—A quarterly meeting will be held at Hanslope on Saturday, March 1st. Handbells 3 p.m. Service 3.30, followed by tea and meeting. Will those requiring tea please notify me by Monday, February 24th? A good attendance desired.—R. H. Howson, Hon. Sec., 19, Greenfield Road, Newport Pagnell, Bletchley.

ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—Northern Division.—A meeting of this division will be held at Bocking on Saturday, March 1st. Six 'silent' bells available from 2 p.m. Service at 4 p.m., followed by tea and business meeting. Handbells also available. It is necessary to elect two members for the general committee, so members please make an effort to be present. Please see that we have a better attendance than at the annual meeting. Names for tea should be sent no later than Wednesday, February 26th, to Hilda G. Snowden, Hon. Dis. Sec., 3, Bell Vue, Heddingham Road, Halstead, Essex.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.—The address of Mr. C. H. Kippin, Hon. Treasurer of the Surrey Association, is now 17a, The Broadway, Beddington, Croydon.

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