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**UNIVERSITY RINGING SOCIETIES.**

When peace comes again and we return once more to our belfries, the task of reconstruction naturally will fall on the shoulders of the men who were the leaders of the Exercise before the war began; the leaders in the narrower spheres of the individual belfries as well as the leaders of associations and the Central Council. We do not doubt they will prove equal to the task, or that they will receive adequate support from the rank and file. But they will have many difficulties to face and not the least will be to find recruits to fill vacancies and replace the wastage of the war years.

The problem of recruits is in normal times a serious one. The number of young people who are attracted to the belfries, and having been attracted, are suitable for making good ringers, is a small one, and usually barely suffices to replace loss by death, or removal, or failure of interest. Perhaps the only thing that really keeps the ropes manned is the fact that a good ringer's career is usually a long one; once he is sealed of the tribe he remains faithful as long as health and strength permit.

These things being so in normal times, they are sure to be much accentuated by present conditions, and anything which can help us to meet them is bound to be welcomed by everyone who values the future of our art. Many of our readers, as well as ourselves, have, we know, watched with interest and sympathetic appreciation the work which has been going on for some time in youthful circles, and not least in the ringing societies of the two great Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. We look to them—and we look with confidence—to play an important part in the life and work of the Exercise of the future.

The actual number of ringers who have come to us from Oxford and Cambridge has not been large, but they have exercised an influence altogether out of proportion to their number, and they have helped in no small degree to make the Exercise what it is. It would indeed be possible to argue that change ringing is a child of the Universities, that it was invented there, and without them it would not have existed at all. Certainly during the early days all the leading ringers were University men or were directly influenced by University men. Cambridge gave us the first methods we know of. Oxford gave us the first printed book on the art.

For long change ringing died out at the two Universities, but it is significant that the time when, after a period of stagnation and decay, the art began to revive,

(Continued on page 166.)

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was the time when the Oxford and Cambridge Societies were founded. How much we owe to those bodies can be realised somewhat when we remember the names of the men they have given to the Exercise. C. D. P. Davies, A. B. Carpenter, J. S. Pritchett, Canon Colebridge, F. E. Robinson and others from Oxford. A. H. F. Boughey, H. L. James, E. B. James, W. C. Pearson, C. W. O. Jenkyn, B. H. T. Drake, H. T. S. Richardson, E. H. Lewis, W. H. J. Hooton, and many more from Cambridge—these have all left their mark on the Exercise, and it would not have been what it is without them.

In the nature of things a University society must be subject to variations of fortune. The members are continually leaving, but as they leave, they go into the country and spread a good influence. There are not many of them, but a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. That is why the present activity at Oxford and Cambridge is such a hopeful sign and holds such good promise for the future.

## HANDBELL PEALS.

GREAT BADDOW, ESSEX.  
THE ESSEX ASSOCIATION.

On Sunday, March 29, 1942, in Two Hours and Twenty-Six Minutes,

AT 3, BELL STREET,

**A PEAL OF GRANDSIRE TRIPLES, 5040 CHANGES;**

PARKER'S TWELVE-PART.

HIRZELL EDWARDS	... .. 1-2	ARTHUR H. EVERETT	... .. 5-6
ARNOLD BRUNTON	... .. 3-4	GEORGE GREEN	... .. 7-8

Conducted by GEORGE GREEN.

RADLEY, BERKSHIRE.

THE OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.  
(OXFORD CITY AND DISTRICT BRANCH.)

On Wednesday, April 1, 1942, in One Hour and Forty-Three Minutes,

AT THE SCHOOL HOUSE,

**A PEAL OF BOB MINOR, 5040 CHANGES;**

Seven different callings. Tenor size 14 in D.

MISS ROSALIND M. WRONG	1-2	MISS MARIE R. CROSS	... 3-4
WILLIAM L. B. LEESE	...	...	5-6

Conducted by MISS MARIE R. CROSS.  
Witness—Mrs. A. Cross.

Rung with the bells half-muffled in memory of Francis E. Taylor, of St. Ebbe's, Oxford, who was buried in Oxford during the afternoon. The first three 720's were rung 'silent.'

## HOLT'S ORIGINAL NON-CONDUCTED.

On Saturday, March 11th, 1887, Holt's Original was rung non-conducted on handbells for the first time by four members of the Ancient Society of College Youths. To celebrate the 55th anniversary of this performance, Mr. J. C. Mitchell, who was one of the band, invited a small party of ringers to his residence on Saturday, March 14th. Those present were Mr. W. H. L. Buckingham, who also took part in the 1887 peal, Messrs. E. C. S. Turner, W. Williams, J. Thomas and D. G. Clift, who again rang this composition non-conducted in November last, and Mr. C. W. Roberts, who acted as umpire on this occasion. Apologies for absence were received from Mr. J. S. Goldsmith, who was prevented from attending by illness, and sent his best wishes for a successful gathering, Mr. A. A. Hughes, and Mr. C. H. Kippin, who had to attend an important meeting.

After the guests had been received by Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell, a fine peal of handbells, kindly brought by Mr. J. Thomas, were brought into use. After a short touch of Grandsire Triples, rung non-conducted, by Messrs. Turner, Williams, Thomas and Clift, various touches of Grandsire and Stedman Triples were rung, in which Mr. Mitchell took part, and, despite the fact that he now gets very little practice, he acquitted himself well.

Supper was then served and a splendid repast was greatly enjoyed by all. During the meal Mr. Mitchell gave some interesting reminiscences of his early ringing days at St. Albans, and described how he and his friends used to get up at an early hour in the morning to practise handbell ringing.

After supper, more handbell ringing was indulged in. Touches of Grandsire and Stedman Caters and a plain course each of Bob Royal and Cambridge Surprise Major were brought round.

Home-going time came far too soon, and, after thanking Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell for a splendid evening, the guests left for their various destinations.

## A JOINT MEETING IN YORKSHIRE. WESTERN DIVISION AND LEEDS AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.

### Nominations and Elections.

The Western Division of the Yorkshire Association held a very successful joint meeting with the Leeds and District Society at Upper Armley on Saturday, March 28th, when members attended from 15 towers. Owing to the continued ban on the ringing of tower bells, activities were confined mainly to handbells, and these were early in evidence, but in addition there was an interesting talk on the proof of compositions, given by Mr. W. Barton, the Yorkshire Association's peals secretary.

Upwards of 24 members sat down to tea, served by the local company, and this was followed by the two business meetings—the Leeds and District nomination meeting and the annual district meeting of the Western Division of the Yorkshire Association.

At the Leeds and District meeting the nomination of officers for the coming year resulted as follows: President, Mr. F. J. Harvey; vice-presidents, Messrs. W. H. Schior, S. Barron and T. W. Strangeway; Ringing Master, Mr. L. Drake; secretary and treasurer, Mr. H. Lofthouse. The president's remark that if the secretary and treasurer kept office, no one need worry about the others, was amply justified. The names will go forward for election at the April meeting, which will be held at the Leeds Parish Church, if the usual permission is granted.

### MR. P. J. JOHNSON RE-ELECTED VICE-PRESIDENT.

For the Western Division of the Yorkshire Association it was also election time. This year the vice-president and three committee members were due to retire. Mr. P. J. Johnson occupied the chair, and was unanimously elected for a further term of three years. In view of the very difficult conditions which had been in force for the past twelve months, it was decided that the three retiring members be elected on bloc as follows: H. Armitage, Kirkburton (who also has a seat on the General Committee), Miss L. K. Bowling, of Headingley, and Mr. L. Drake, of Burley.

When considering the venue for the summer meeting it was stated that an invitation had been received to hold this at Queensbury, where, although they could not guarantee not to provide the usual show, they would do their best to arrange a good ramble.

A vote of thanks to the local company for the arrangements made was proposed by Mr. William Ambler and supported by Mr. W. Barton. In putting this to the meeting, Mr. Johnson mentioned several of the names usually associated with Armley, and said he was pleased to see that Mr. Joseph Thackray was still taking such an interest. The name of Thackray was always associated with Armley, and whenever the association visited there they always received a welcome.

A circular from the representatives of the Central Council was read and the contents fully approved.

After the meeting the members were fortunate in having an address by Mr. Barton on the subject of 'Proof of Composition.' This was most interesting, and the way in which Mr. Barton reeled off hundreds of course ends, etc., without even the slightest reference to notes, amazed his hearers.

Afterwards members enjoyed further touches on handbells or attempted the perils of snooker.

During the day the following towers were represented: Almond-bury, Armley, Batley, Bradford Cathedral, Bramley, Drighlington, Halifax, Headingley (St. Chad's and St. Michael's), Kirkburton, Huddersfield, Idle, Liversedge, Ossett, Pudsey and Queensbury.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF PROOF.

In the course of his talk, Mr. Barton dealt with the importance of truth in peal ringing and the need for proving compositions before the peals were rung.

The subject, he said, was not an easy one to tackle even before an audience of ringers. It was not a subject that lent itself to entertainment, and it would tax the ingenuity of even a fluent speaker to weave an entertaining story round a mass of figures. He admired the optimism of their secretary when he read his statement in the notice of the meeting that he (Mr. Barton) would give 'an interesting talk' on proof of compositions. He would do his best to uphold this optimism and confidence and make the talk as interesting as he could.

'There is no doubt that proof is a very important thing in change ringing,' continued Mr. Barton. 'Without it we should not know whether the peals we ring are true or not. There may be something in the old saying about ignorance being bliss, but I think we all prefer to know that the peals we ring are true; we have a satisfaction in certainty that we should not have in doubt.'

'To my mind, there is no reason why all ringers should not have some knowledge of proof: it is not essential, but I think that it is desirable. I know that there are many ringers who are not interested in this branch of our art, they are content to leave it to other people. Well, for them it is a matter of choice; but with a conductor there should be no choice. I maintain, and I wish to stress it most strongly, that all conductors should be able to prove the peals they call or, alternatively, should have some means whereby the truth of a composition can be verified before it is used. After all, why ring a peal

(Continued in next column.)

## A NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

THE OTHER 37,500.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—When I read the last paragraph in Mr. Harrison's letter on 'A National Association' I wondered whether he would have written it if he had been at Whitechapel the week before when the debt we owe to Mr. Goldsmith was discussed.

We were told that the circulation of 'The Ringing World' was approximately 2,500 per week. I have no doubt that this number would be loyally support a National Association, and pay their shilling per year subscription if it ever came into existence, but I wonder if the remaining 37,500 of those he mentions would be any more willing to pay their shilling per year than they are to support the life blood of the Exercise, 'The Ringing World.'

E. BARNETT.

Crayford.

### NEED FOR INDIVIDUALITY.

Dear Sir,—Mr. Colin Harrison has put up a very strong argument for the formation of a National Association, but there are one or two thoughts of mine against this project I should like to put forward.

If we can read correctly the 'writing on the wall' in these days of much talk concerning post-war reorganisation of this and that, is it not possible we shall be heartily sick of 'collectivity' and 'nationalisation' in our essential services without voluntarily surrendering our Arts and Exercises to such a system. I personally fear the suppression of individuality in anything, especially in such a thing as our Exercise.

Shall we be well advised to disband our diocesan guilds? Unless the National Association is very careful to emphasise that the church bellringer is primarily a church worker I fear it may be exploited in favour of the sport side of the Exercise.

I hope this letter will not lead readers to suppose I am a 'stick in the mud' or a 'diehard.' On the contrary, I am always ready to try something new if it means progress.

ARTHUR V. DAVIS.

116, Alma Road, Bournemouth.

### MR. W. KEEBLE'S BIRTHDAY.

Specially arranged to celebrate the 64th birthday of Mr. William Keeble, 1,264 Bob Major, composed and conducted by him, was rung on handbells on Sunday, March 29th, at Severalls Hospital, Colchester, in 42 mins.: G. M. Rashbrook 1-2, W. Keeble 3-4, W. Chalk 5-6, A. R. Andrews (first quarter-peal 'in hand') 7-8. It was also a birthday compliment to F. L. Bumpstead, V. Kerridge and G. M. Rashbrook, members of St. Peter's company, Colchester.

In this quarter-peal there were no bobs made at Wrong and only 4-5-6 in 5-6 throughout, and no prizes given for solving the puzzle. Believed to be the first quarter-peal rung in a hospital.

### MR. W. BARTON'S ADDRESS.

(Continued from previous column.)

first and prove it afterwards when it can just as easily be proved before it is rung?

'The conductor owes it to those who take part in a peal with him that the composition is checked before he calls it, unless he knows that it is true; the rest of the band have to trust him, but that is no reason why the conductor should always trust the composer. Please remember that no matter how famous or skilful a composer may be, it is not a sufficient guarantee that a composition is true simply because it bears his name. As the Editor stated in the leader in this week's "Ringing World," "the cleverest man is not immune from mistakes," we all make mistakes and composers are only human like the rest of us. To support this view I ask you to glance at the table of false peals which is now a permanent feature of our annual reports. You will find there the names of many of the most able composers, yet they have all stumbled. We must not, however, misjudge them because of that; we must remember with gratitude the many good and true peals they have given to us.

'Only a few days ago I came across a peal of Treble Bob Major by James Lockwood, who was a leading authority on Treble Bob. This peal is hopelessly false and, strange to say, it was conducted by no less a person than Jasper Snowdon himself. It could be claimed that any peal bearing the names of these two great men should be true, but, unfortunately, we never know when the unexpected is going to happen. It is partly because of this possibility that I am here to-night to show you the rudiments of proof, and I hope that my talk will be of interest and benefit to all of you.'

Mr. Barton was provided with a blackboard and, after explaining the theory of in and out-of-course rows and their analogy to even and odd numbers, went on to show the proof of Bob Major, first explaining how a lead and then a course were bound to be true in themselves. From that he passed on to the effect of bobs and explained why a peal should be split up into natural courses and how it is done. Then followed an explanation of the peculiarity of bobs 'Before' and their liability to produce falseness; after that a couple of short touches were proved as an illustration. He then analysed part of a peal of Bob Major which he knew was false, and closed by explaining how the same system of proof could be adapted to Double Norwich or any other plain method.

## LONDON BELL TOWERS.

(Continued from page 148.)

### TWO CALAMITIES AND THE RESULTS.

In the years 1665 and 1666 London suffered two of the most notable calamities that any great city has ever undergone. In the closing days of 1664 two men, said to be Frenchmen, died of the plague in Drury Lane. An attempt was made to keep the matter secret and for several weeks there was no great alarm among the people. But the number of burials at St. Giles'-in-the-Fields and St. Andrew's, Holborn, began to mount up steadily, then St. Bride's parish was infected and St. James', Clerkenwell, and by the end of May the pest had reached the City.

The summer weather was curiously hot and dry, and all through it the pestilence raged with increasing violence, till business was at a standstill, the markets and haunts of men were deserted, and grass grew in the streets. All day long death bells were tolling from London's hundred steeples, and besides there were 'the poor that cannot be taken notice of through the greatness of the number,' and 'the Quakers and others that will not have any bells rung for them.'

The effect on the ringing Exercise must have been great. De Foe has drawn a wonderful and graphic picture of a city altogether given over to horror and despair, but he wrote fifty years after the event and his account, based on the memories of living men, is yet largely the product of his own creative mind. Samuel Pepys is a safer, though far more prosaic, guide, and we can see from his diary that though the trouble weighed on the minds of men, yet for the most part they had other things to think of as well, and as far as they could, they attended to their work and enjoyed their pleasures.

So we may assume that the ringing societies met for a time in the belfries. But the west end of the town, in Holborn and St. Bride's parish, where the more important companies had their headquarters, was just the district where the pest was at first most virulent. We can trace its effect in the list of the members of the Society of College Youths, for though they did not omit to elect a Master for each of these troublous years, there are no separate lists of new members who joined then.

We may perhaps attribute to the plague the lapse of the important Society of Esquire Youths, which had started with such brilliant prospects a few years before, and it is pretty certain that other and lesser companies suffered dissolution.

As the pestilence grew, many who could do so, left the infected city, and it is a fair supposition that this was the time and the cause of Fabian Stedman leaving London and returning to Cambridge.

Before London had once more settled to its normal life, while the traces of the infection still lingered here and there among the houses, and the memory of its horror was still fresh in the minds of the citizens, the great fire broke out which swept away for ever the old city with its churches and buildings.

Early on Sunday morning, September 2nd, 1666, it broke out in a house in Pudding Lane, Thames Street, near the foot of London Bridge. The district was a crowded one, the streets and lanes narrow, the houses built of wooden frames with warehouses filled with oil, pitch, tar, wine, brandy and such inflammable things.

In a very short time a large area was on fire, and a stiff wind was blowing and carrying it into the heart of the City. Such a sight as was not seen again until that other Sunday at the end of the year 1940. For four or five days the fire raged fiercely and then was stayed by the blowing up of houses. 'From the Tower by Thames side to the Temple Church, and from the north-east gate of the city wall to Holborn bridge' the ruin was complete. An area of 436 acres lay in ashes. Besides the great cathedral, eighty-nine parish churches, four City gates, the Royal Exchange, Sion College, Whittington's alms houses, hospitals, schools, prisons, and over thirteen thousand dwelling houses were destroyed. To-day we may walk through London and see a not dissimilar sight, but then the destruction was in one continuous area, now it is more widely scattered. The three important churches, All Hallows, Barking, St. Giles', Cripplegate, and the Temple Church, which marked the extreme limits of the earlier fire and just escaped, are all to-day in ruins.

So great a disaster must have brought ruin to thousands, yet there was no loss of life, and beyond the confusion and bewilderment inseparable from such an event, no panic. As in our own days, London showed at its best; and before the embers had cooled, the work of rebuilding, if only temporarily, had begun.

There were schemes for rebuilding on new plans, but the number of private owners was large and the task of reconciling their claims would have been immense; and while the schemes were being considered the citizens went back to their burnt houses and built anew on the old foundations. To-day there is talk of new planning and we wonder what will come of it.

The problem of rebuilding the churches at such a time was an immense one, but it was tackled and solved in an admirable manner. However they may have been preoccupied by their own private affairs, the churchwardens and parish officials did not neglect their public duties. As the fire spread, the plate and books of each church were removed to places of safety and none seems to have been lost. Only at St. Paul's the diocesan archives were thought to be safe within the strong walls of the crypt of St. Faith's, but the vaulting of the church collapsed and crashed through the floor of the building and all within was destroyed. To-day much valuable material is stored in the crypt, and among it the property of the Society of College Youths, but the conditions are not the same.

As the church steeples were burnt out the bells fell to the ground and nearly all were broken or melted, but a few escaped and one at least, at St. Stephen's, Walbrook, has gone through the later ordeal as well, and still hangs in the steeple.

As soon as possible workmen were set to search among the ruins for lead and bell metal, which was collected and either handed over to a responsible person to hold in trust for the parish or was sold. As happened after the recent disasters, there was some looting of broken metal. The parish of St. Christopher Stocks 'paid the Porters for carrying ye Thieves to Bridewell, 2-6.'; and to 'Gules for discovery some stollne lead, 2-0.' The bells that were left were entrusted to the care of a Mr. Aylesworth, and for carrying them to him and for a padlock and staple to secure them, ten shillings and sixpence was paid.

Thirty-five churches were not rebuilt, the parishes being united to neighbouring ones, although it was very characteristic of the Englishman's insistence on individual rights that each parish retained its administrative identity and name and appointed its own churchwardens.

When St. Leonard's, Eastcheap, was united with St. Benet's, Gracechurch Street, the parishioners of the latter liked the company of the former so little that they decided that not only should they be charged a double fee when the great bell was used for a funeral, but the money must be paid in advance.

Here and there in the City a tiny railed in space still marks the graveyard of one of thirty-five destroyed churches, for though the sites of the churches were built on, the burial grounds were left vacant. A small garden within the precincts of the Bank of England until recently marked the site of the church of St. Christopher Stocks.

It is usual to speak of the burnt churches as having been destroyed, but in many instances, perhaps in the majority, total destruction did not take place. The buildings were gutted and all the woodwork burnt. The lead was melted, and the bells, organs, and fittings ruined. But the walls and stone work still stood, though sadly scarred by the fire, and restoration in the modern sense would have been possible. But in the seventeenth century it was not thought necessary or worth while to attempt to reproduce the buildings as they had been before the disaster. As in the Perpendicular period, the new churches were designed in the latest and current style; and it is well that it was so. The spirit which had produced Gothic architecture had long passed, and even

if it had been possible to reproduce the details of the old churches (which it was not, for there were no drawings and, of course, no photographs) the results would have been but lifeless copies.

Nevertheless, the old foundations, and to some extent the old walls, especially of the towers, were preserved, but adapted to an entirely new architectural design.

The problem which faced the people was essentially different from that of the present time. Now, if the destroyed churches are restored, it will be largely because of their value as architectural and artistic buildings. Then it was because they were needed for the every day purposes of divine service, and in many cases the parishes took it as an opportunity of having hand-somer and more convenient churches.

#### LAPPED HANDBELL RINGING.

AUTHOR OF 'SILVER LEY' SETTLES A DOUBT.

*To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—In answer to my old friend Mr. R. W. Stannard's query re Halesworth (Suffolk) company of ringers, it's quite true that we have done a great amount of table, cushion or lapped handbell ringing at Christmas time when out on our rounds during the past 55 years, and still use this method frequently for Sunday services in church, as we keep the handbells going for this purpose, as well as at concerts, socials, etc., in addition to what we are able to do 'retained in hand,' although our company is much depleted at the present time owing to the war.

We could quite easily have filled the description of the Christmas bellringers in 'Silver Ley,' but here are the facts of the case. The author of 'Silver Ley,' Adrian Bell, is at present residing within seven miles of Halesworth, so I sent him copies of 'The Ringing World' for March 20th and 27th, in which the lapped ringing was mentioned, and he was much interested. He kindly informed me that Stradishall, near Clare, in Suffolk, was the company of ringers he had in mind. There are five bells at this church. He has also promised to visit us in the near future, so we may possibly get him to ring the two tenors behind to a course of Lapped Bob Royal, etc. F. C. LAMBERT.  
Thorofare, Halesworth, Suffolk.

# John Taylor & Co.

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### BELFRY GOSSIP.

Henry Dajns died on April 6th, 1916, at the age of 78, and on April 7th, 1896, his close friend and colleague, George Newson, died.

The full extent of Bob Major, 40,320 changes, was rung at Leeds in Kent on April 7th and 8th, 1761. There were, of course, relays of ringers, and the performance was not generally accepted by other bands.

The then record length of Bristol Surprise Major, 12,160 changes, was rung at Knebworth in Hertfordshire on April 8th, 1912. Mr. George Price was the conductor.

The first peal in Australia, Grandsire Triples, was rung at Sydney on April 9th, 1890.

Sixty years ago to-day the first peal of Stedman Cinques in Yorkshire was rung at Sheffield.

James W. Washbrook called 13,265 Grandsire Caters at Appleton on April 11th, 1888, and Sunday next is the 33rd anniversary of the famous long peal of Stedman Caters, 18,027 changes, at Loughborough.

### BARNSELY AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.

WENTWORTH REVISITED AFTER 13 YEARS.

The March meeting of the Barnsley and District Society was held at Wentworth on Saturday week, when members attended from Eastwood, Felkirk, Handsworth, Rotherham Parish Church and Wath. The ringers assembled in the Parish Room at about 3 p.m., where they found the Vicar, the Rev. H. J. Barnard, waiting to welcome them and to offer them the use of the room and comfort of a nice fire, which was very welcome, as the weather was rather cold. Handbells were brought into use until 4.30 p.m., when the business meeting was held, with the Vicar presiding.

The business was of the usual routine character, and one pleasing feature was the election of the Rev. H. J. Barnard as an hon. member. The Vicar said he felt that as he had one of the best rings of bells in the district, he would like to become an honorary member of the society, and he was elected unanimously.

A vote of thanks was passed to the Vicar for the use of the room and for presiding, and for all he had done to help to make the meeting a success.

The Chairman, in reply said how pleased he was to meet the ringers. That was the first time he had had the opportunity, but he hoped it would not be long before they came again.

He then invited the party to the Vicarage dining room to have a homely cup of tea and a chat, which added comfort to the hospitality he had already shown.

The Parish Room was then once more visited. This time the ringers were accompanied by the Vicar and his young twin daughters, both of whom are very promising pianists, and they showed great interest in the handbells and handbell ringing.

The Wentworth handbells have laid idle for a long time. There are 17 in all and were found to be a good set. A light octave was selected and these the young ladies proudly carried home to the Vicarage to practise on. It is hoped they will do as well with the handbells as they have on the piano.

Further practice was put in until about 7 p.m. in Minor, Triples and Major methods, and a course of Bob Royal was also rung.

This was the first time the society had visited Wentworth for nearly 13 years and it was a very happy gathering.

It was decided to hold the next meeting at Barnsley on Saturday, April 18th.

### THE COLLEGE YOUTHS.

At the meeting of the Ancient Society of College Youths on March 28th there were present, in addition to the Master (Mr. E. G. Fenn), the hon. secretary (Mr. A. B. Peck) and the hon. treasurer (Mr. A. A. Hughes), the following members: Messrs. E. A. Young, H. Miles, R. F. Deal, C. Roberts, C. Kippin, J. Shepherd, J. A. Trollope, H. Hoskins, F. Newman, C. Potheary, R. Stannard and J. Prior. Mr. C. T. Coles was a welcome visitor.

Mr. Peck read a letter from Dr. Bertram Simpson in reply to the congratulations sent him by the society on his appointment to the See of Southwark. The Bishop wrote:—

My dear Mr. Peck,—Thank you for your letter of March 10th and for kindly conveying the good wishes of the Ancient Society of College Youths on my appointment to Southwark. It seems a long time since those days at Stepney when you used to come and ring peals and paid me back so generously by those magnificent suppers at the London Tavern. I hope the day is not far distant when you will again be able to function at the bell ropes, but I am afraid I shall have no call on your kind hospitality then. All my good wishes for the society and yourself. Yours sincerely, Bertram Southwark.

Mr. F. F. Dawe returned thanks to the society for the good wishes sent to him on the occasion of his 80th birthday; and a letter was read from Mr. Worboys from the Middle East sending greetings and telling of some of his experiences.

The Master mentioned that he had received from Mr. Duffield news of Mr. G. R. Pyc, whose health is not very satisfactory. The hon. secretary was requested to write to Mr. Pyc and convey the best wishes of the society.

## THE RINGERS' CONFERENCE.

### DISCUSSION ON AFTER WAR RECONSTRUCTION.

The discussion on Mr. Price's motion to appoint a committee is continued.

Mr. P. A. CORBY (Retford): I am strongly in sympathy with Messrs. Price and Bunce in their desire for the rapid and successful rehabilitation of ringing after the war, but I oppose their motion for the formation of a committee because I think that many people, and ringers in particular, have an unwonted passion for committees which even an unbroken series of failures seems unable to quench.

We seem to find it necessary to consider in committee all kinds of matters, from the question of flies landing on their feet on ceilings to the desirability of standing on one's head in Oxford Street for the improvement of one's figure, and to my mind there is no reason at all why many of these matters should not be discussed by the world at large, bringing to bear on the common problems the widest possible field of intelligence and experience available, except, of course, that one feels hardhearted in denying committee members a day out at someone else's expense.

And what of the Standing Committee of the Central Council? How can any committee appointed by the Ringers' Conference be other than a duplication of that august body, which, be it said, is an elected group and can claim more justly to represent the whole company of ringers than any panel appointed by the limited audience of the Ringers' Conference.

In any case, surely, ringers are notoriously reluctant to accept dictation in any form. I have no doubt that the committee would receive a hearty vote of thanks for its endeavours, and everyone would promptly go away and do as they pleased.

#### WHY NOT ALL TAKE PART?

You, Mr. Chairman, do not state definitely whether you require your committee to meet in the flesh or whether they are merely to submit their proposals to their chairman by post, although I infer that the latter is intended. That being the case, why may not all of us write to the chairman of the proposed committee airing our views? He could equally well compose a report from the opinions of George Giles, of Paddington Green, as from those of the Brass Hats.

Perhaps Mr. Price can tell us what else the committee can do but arrive at pious resolutions. Of course, their deliberations might result in an instruction from the Archbishop of Canterbury that all clergy are to give permission for peals and meetings ad lib, but I am afraid an unprecedented crop of chronic invalids and troublesome shopkeepers might be the consequence.

In short, Mr. Chairman, why not allow every Tom, Dick and Harriet (we must not forget the ladies) to put forward in the Ringers' Conference their own views on the future so that we can all see all the ideas and adopt those which appeal to us without having to rely upon the judgment, however sound, of a select group. What matters can a rehabilitation committee hope to discuss which could not be thrashed out freely and openly in the columns of 'The Ringing World,' be it the care and protection of bells and towers from decay or air raid damage, or the relations of ringers and clergy, or ringers and the public, or the replacing of bells damaged in the blitz.

No, when this war is over we shall still rely on the friendly relations of local ringers with local clergy, of neighbouring tower with neighbouring tower, of the local district with the parent association, of learner with instructor, of young ringers with old. There will still be petty squabbles, Joe Brown still won't come to the tower when Tom Smith is there, the experts (so-called) will still refuse to ring Grandsire Triples with the not-so-good. There can be no stock national remedy for local troubles, but the fact will still remain that where real enthusiasm exists difficulties will be met and overcome, chronic invalids will recover mysteriously, the co-operation of the clergy will be enlisted, recruits will be forthcoming. No national committee can provide a substitute for this enthusiasm, and without it ringing will die.

#### THE ONE AND ONLY WAY.

In my opinion, we are being shown weak by weak the one and only way in which post-war rehabilitation will take place: every copy of 'The Ringing World' brings fresh evidence of it. The service Mr. J. E. Spice and his colleagues are rendering to the Exercise is incalculable, and to them I offer my heartiest congratulations for showing us the only effective policy for the future. That Mr. Spice comes from a family well known and respected in Kentish ringing circles is a good omen, for I know, even from my short experience, that one may find in the hop county more enthusiasm than even a world war can exclude.

Mr. C. A. LEVETT (Hastings): Some good may come from the discussion on Mr. Price's motion and the forming of a committee, but there is no magic formula waiting to be discovered that will set ringing going again after the war. Too many, who have the opportunity, are sitting back with their spirit broken by the ban. The only way to guard against the future is to see that things don't die now. Get the boys into the towers ringing 'dummy.' Get out the handbells. I am one who thinks that single-handed ringing should be encouraged to-day. See that things don't die, then the resurrection will not be wanted.

Mr. C. M. MEYER (London, S.W.): In my opinion, the whole future of ringing depends on the advancement of the 'technical' education of ringers of all grades, learners, average ringers, conductors, in-

structors and composers. Could not the 'brains' of the Exercise be banded together into an educational examining body somewhat on the lines of the professional institutions and preferably under the auspices of the Central Council. There could be grades of membership to suit all classes, both practical and theoretical, with the award of certificates. A central 'tower' in each area could be made the practical school and properly graded instruction given. Theoretical instruction could be either by correspondence or by lectures perhaps in the parish hall of the 'central' tower. With these opportunities the advancement of a recruit or average ringer would depend only upon his or her capabilities and not upon the skill or otherwise of the local band. I should like the committee to consider the practicability of this.

Mr. K. ARTHURS (Ruislip): I must admit that I find myself in agreement with Mr. Harris. To appoint such a committee as proposed by Mr. Price would, as I see it, usurp the functions of the Central Council. Furthermore, if prevailing conditions prevent the Standing Committee of the Council from deliberating even by post, how much better could the committee in question confer?

The Council, as an established and representative body, is the best means of pooling and formulating schemes for the rehabilitation of ringing in the post-war era. As the Rev. M. Melville suggests, ringers could table their views at association meetings, and, via the Central Council representatives, these could be forwarded to the Council, who would collate them, edit them and then publish them. It would help bring about a new lease of life for the Council!

The idea of a public relations officer is, I think, the best yet put forward. In pre-war days I acted in such a capacity, but in rather a small way, for my own ringers' guild. Each month I used to requisition either a column or a paragraph of the parish magazine, wherein I published reports of guild meetings, performances—with explanations of technical terms—and, in fact, all doings of the local ringers. In this way I was able to make the parishioners appreciate the work of the Guild. By a prior announcement of some special ringing day I could often appease would-be resentful persons, who came to realise the purpose of these occasions. In short, I endeavoured to educate the parish into the ringer's point of view. I think there are great possibilities for the development of this idea in the future, and if undertaken by the Council and the associations alike, I think we can be assured of some success.

#### PUBLIC IGNORANCE.

Miss HILDA SNOWDEN (Halstead, Essex): I entirely agree with Mr. Cullen on the complete ignorance of the public on ringing in general, and the same can be also said of the majority of clergy. I would like to suggest that the archdeacons be approached and the seriousness of this matter brought before them. The archdeacons could then bring it before the clergy when they deliver their charges. Mr. Cullen's idea of a pamphlet is good, but I would go farther and suggest that it should include a short explanation on 'how to listen.' Quite a number of people think that change ringing is a 'jumble' and prefer to listen to tune ringing on chiming apparatus. The general public could also be enlightened if demonstrations could be arranged. On the whole, as Mr. Cullen says, if an effort is made to interest the general public, I think the problem of rehabilitating ringing after the war will not be so serious, but I will stress that the first and foremost question is making the clergy realise and getting their full and active support. I say active because so many support only in words and not actions.

Mr. E. J. THOMAS (Carmarthen): I also think that Mr. Cullen's suggestion for a public relations officer is good, but at the same time we ourselves should take on the role of missionaries and get converts to our art and craft. Recently I have been lecturing before the Toc H local branch and the Rotary Club, and I have been amazed at the interest shown in the subject. The general comment was that they did not know that there was so much in bells. Perhaps members of the Conference will say that we cannot lecture. Well, I thought that once, but once you start you will 'get there.' Arising out of the Rotary lecture I received a request from two members that they would like to see some church bells and methods of ringing.

#### AN AMENDMENT.

Mr. C. H. KIPPIN (Beddington): I wholeheartedly support the original motion, but I do not think it goes quite far enough, hence the amendment to which the chairman referred. If this committee is set up, and I hope it will be, the possibilities of a National Association should be thoroughly explored by the committee. I submit that although members might not at present favour such an association, they should not rule out the consideration by the committee of the National Association in all its aspects. I therefore beg to move the amendment on the reference to the committee, namely, to add to the motion the words, 'Special consideration to be given to the idea of forming a National Association with this object in view.'

Mr. F. W. HOUSDEN: I beg to second the amendment.

Mr. C. T. COLES (Walthamstow): With reference to this amendment, I feel that something is going wrong. If passed it will throw upon the unfortunate committee the whole problem of considering the formation of a National Association, without knowing if members of the Exercise are in favour of such a project. Surely the first and most important thing to do is to ascertain if ringers are in favour, and the best way to find this out would be, I suggest, by resolution  
(Continued on next page.)

**BOLSOVER RINGERS' LOSS.****DEATH AFTER AN ACCIDENT.**

We regret to announce the death of Mr. Charles Mason, of Bolsover, Derbyshire, who died in Chesterfield Hospital on Saturday, March 28th, after an accident the same day in the local colliery.

Mr. Mason had been connected with Bolsover belfry for over 30 years and has been steeplekeeper for the whole of that time. In addition, he had been a chorister for 35 years and had served the church he loved so well in many other ways. He will be a great loss to the Bolsover band.

He had rung about 95 peals, made up of Bob Major 4, Double Norwich Major 22, Kent Treble Bob 11, Superlative Surprise 20, Norfolk Surprise 12, Rutland Surprise 2, Pudsey Surprise 4, Belgrave Surprise 1, Yorkshire Surprise 12, Cambridge Surprise 4, New Cambridge Surprise 3.

The deceased served in the last war for four years in France as a farter and rose to be staff-sergeant.

He was laid to rest on April 1st and was borne to his resting place by members of the Ambulance Brigade, in which he had served for 35 years.

**ISLE OF WIGHT RINGER'S DEATH.**

The death occurred on Saturday, March 21st, at Northwood Hospital, Middlesex, of Mr. Henry Jennings, of Ryde, Isle of Wight.

The deceased, who was 74 years of age, had been a bellringer on the island for about 50 years and as a boy had been a chorister at All Saints', Ryde, where later he learned to handle a bell.

He took an active part in the promotion of change ringing on the island and had served the Winchester Guild as a district secretary.

Only a few weeks ago Mr. Jennings wrote to 'The Ringing World' withdrawing a peal of Grandsire Triples which he conducted at Ryde 45 years ago.

The funeral service at All Saints' Church was conducted by the Rev. F. H. Rolph. The mourners were Mrs. W. Herbert (daughter), Mr. W. Jennings (brother), Messrs. W. Herbert and R. Gale (sons-in-law), Mr. L. Jennings (nephew) and Mrs. Hardy (niece). The I.W. District of the Winchester and Portsmouth Diocesan Guild was represented by Messrs. W. Scott (Newport), H. Phillips (Godshill), and A. and P. Long and B. J. Snow. Dr. Williamson (chairman of the district) and Mr. W. Upton were unable to attend.

**FELKIRK RINGER MISSING.****FOUGHT WITH H.M.S. 'EXETER.'**

Petty Officer Thomas Cook, a member of the Yorkshire Association and Barnsley District Society, who was serving on H.M.S. 'Exeter,' has been officially reported missing since the naval engagement in the Far East. He was a member of the Felkirk company. Although he had not rung any peals, he was formerly regular in attendance for Sunday service ringing.

**A HERTFORDSHIRE COINCIDENCE.****FIFTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF A FIRST PEAL.**

Mr. Alfred Barnes, of Stockport, calls attention to the coincidence that the annual meeting of the Hertfordshire Association, which is to be held at St. Albans to-morrow (April 11th), takes place on the 55th anniversary of the first peal of Bob Triples by the association, which was rung on Easter Monday, 1887, at St. Albans Cathedral by the Cathedral Society. It was the first peal of Bob Triples by all the band and was rung in 3 hours 12 minutes.

It was recorded (as was usual in those earlier days) under the auspices of three societies, namely, the Ancient Society of College Youths and the Herts and Essex Associations.

Although rung 55 years ago, half the band are still in the land of the living, namely, Messrs. J. C. Mitchell, G. W. Cartmel, W. H. L. Buckingham and A. Barnes, and they will, we imagine, receive the congratulations of the association to-morrow. Mr. Cartmel is now the doyen of association secretaries. Messrs. Mitchell and Buckingham are the two survivors of the band of College Youths who a few weeks before had rung Holt's Original 'silent' for the first time on handbells.

**THE RINGERS' CONFERENCE.**

(Continued from previous page.)

and not by amendment to another motion which is obviously intended for something else. It is rather surprising, seeing that many ringers have written to 'The Ringing World' about a National Association, that a resolution on the subject has not been tabled. Indeed, it says little for their enthusiasm that they have not taken advantage of the Conference to do so. And yet at a district meeting of the Surrey Association, according to your report, motion (b) was severely criticised, and it was suggested that ringers should be urged to vote against the motion in its present form. Would it not be much fairer if ringers were left to make up their minds whether or not to support this or any other motion after the discussion on the motion has taken place. Otherwise the discussion will be farcical and the whole object of the Conference nullified.

**DEATH OF MR. T. R. HENSHER.****MEMBER OF A RECORD PEAL BAND.**

We regret to record the death of Mr. Thomas Robert Hensher, of Finedon, Northants, who died at the age of 68 years on March 11th. By his death Finedon and district loses a distinct personality, and his passing has aroused much regret in the district. He had been ill for some time, but his end was rather sudden. A son and two daughters are left in bereavement.

He was for many years licensee of the Prince of Wales in Finedon and was at one time secretary of the Wellingborough and District Licensed Victuallers' Association.

He retired from business a few months ago. He was a very fine ringer and had rendered valuable service to the Peterborough Diocesan Guild as well as in other Midland ringing circles. He had for many years been one of the members of the Finedon Parish Church company and had rung about 193 peals, the most notable of which was the record length of 17,104 Double Norwich Court Bob Major at South Wigston on December 27th, 1904. This peal was composed and conducted by the late Mr. W. Willson and was rung in 10 hours 35 mins.

In length this peal displaced the record of the 17,024 Double Norwich, rung at Kidlington in 11 hours 12 minutes in 1899.

Mr. Hensher also took part in an 11,008 of Double Norwich Court Bob Major in 1904.

In 1890 he joined the Raunds, Wellingborough and District Society, the forerunner of the Peterborough Diocesan Guild, and was also a member of 13 other associations.

The first part of the funeral service was held at Finedon Parish Church, where, as at the later interment in the cemetery, the Rev. H. B. Adams (curate) officiated. At the former service ringers from the Peterborough Diocesan Guild rang a course of Grandsire Triples, the ringers being Messrs. A. Bigley, W. Perkins, J. Mawby (Irthingborough) and B. J. Saddington (Burton Latimer). As the body was taken into the church the organist, Mr. Hirst Cuttall, played 'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and at the close 'O rest in the Lord.'

In addition to the family mourners numerous organisations with which deceased had been connected were represented. There were many beautiful wreaths.

**DEATH OF MR. FRANCIS E. TAYLOR.****LOSS TO OXFORD RINGING.**

The sudden death of Mr. Francis E. Taylor came as a great shock to the ringers of Oxford. Although very quiet and unassuming, he was a personality to be counted on in ringing circles in and around the University City. Those who had to organise ringing always relied upon him to be there when needed and had no fear that he would let them down at the last minute. His death will mean a big gap when ringing has to be reorganised after the war.

'Frankie' Taylor was a very fine ringer and striker. Besides being a regular service ringer at St. Ebbe's, he was one of the most regular of the Christ Church Cathedral band. He had been Master of the Oxford Society and was a member of the Oxford Guild.

A fine conductor, he had many peals to his credit, ranging from Grandsire to Surprise methods. He took part in two silent peals, one of Stedman and the other of Cambridge. Among his compositions was a record length of Double Norwich.

The funeral took place at St. Sepulchre's, Walton Street, Oxford, on April 1st. Among those present were Mr. V. Bennett (representing the Oxford Society), Mr. H. Miles and Mr. W. L. B. Leese (Oxford University Society), Miss Cross (Oxford Diocesan Guild) and members of St. Ebbe's tower.

A half-muffled memorial handbell peal of Minor was rung by members of the City and District Branch of the Oxford Diocesan Guild.

**HANDBELL RINGING AT BOURNEMOUTH.**

Bournemouth handbell ringers enjoyed an unusually successful evening when they met for the usual weekly practice on Tuesday, March 17th. A 720 of Plain Bob Minor was brought round in 19 minutes by Herbert Mitchell 1-2, Mrs. F. J. Marshallsay 3-4, Arthur V. Davis (conductor) 5-6. This is the first 720 of Minor scored by the party on handbells. Next a quarter-peal of Grandsire Triples was rung in 44 minutes by Miss I. Chick (first quarter of Triples) 1-2, Mrs. F. J. Marshallsay 3-4, Arthur V. Davis (conductor) 5-6, Miss F. Childs 7-8. This was a quarter-peal from Parker's Twelve-part (7th observation). Miss Childs subsequently had the satisfaction of ringing the longest 'touch' of Doubles she has attempted on two working bells when she rang 1-2 to 720 of Grandsire Doubles called by Mrs. Marshallsay.

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**ELEMENTARY COMPOSITION.**

**FOR THE AVERAGE READER.**

We have now seen how, by beginning with the plain course and using Q Sets, we can build up a composition. Each time we make a bob it entails the making of two others on the same three bells, and each time we add two full Natural Courses.

We gave an example in which we first joined together seven courses and then added two more. We set the example down showing the course-ends and the bobs in the way which is familiar to ringers.

23456	W.	M.	R.	23456	W.	M.	R.
52436	—			52436	—		
35426	—			35426	—		
43652	—	—		64352	—	—	—
63254	—	—		36452	—	—	
42356	—	—		43652	—	—	
34256	—	—		63254	—	—	
23456	—	—		42356	—	—	
				34256	—	—	
				23456	—	—	

The first of these is made up of seven complete Natural Courses, the other of nine.

But now there is a point which must be made quite clear. The figures given are the course-ends of the touch, and if 1, 7 and 8 are added in their home positions, we shall have the actual rows which occur at each 112th change when the three fixed bells (the treble and the two tenors) have all completed the full work of the plain course and are ready to begin it over again. The 112 changes between these rows we look upon and call a course.

But we said that every Natural Course has its own particular course-end, which we use as its signature and which shows the rows which occur within the Natural Course. If, however, we were to prick the changes of one of the above touches we should find that not one of the course-ends as written down represents the 112 rows which precede it. For instance, in the 112 rows which precede the row 16435278 there is not a single row which belongs to the Natural Course 64352. Why should this be?

Well, we must remember that change ringing is not a thing that once upon a time was invented by some clever man with all its rules and terms set down with logical precision. It grew up here a little and there a little, and as it developed, ringers found words and ways of expressing things, without thinking much about them. So we often get words with slightly different meanings according to the circumstances in which they are used. Most people who talk about sunrise and sunset would object if you told them that their use of the words implies that the sun goes round the earth.

We can quite easily understand why ringers call certain changes course-ends. When we are ringing it

would seem almost absurd to call any other changes by the name, or these changes by any other name. But when we study composition we can just as easily see that the row in which the treble and the two tenors are in their home positions is really the beginning of the course. The changes that depend on it are those that follow, not necessarily those that went before.

Again, when we were joining up Natural Courses we found that, though some of the joins were made at the course-ends, others were made at the Wrong leads, and others at the Middle leads. Some of the Natural Courses in the composition did not begin and end with the course-end, but began at the Wrong and ended at the Wrong; others began at the Middle and ended at the Middle. And in some cases after a Natural Course was begun other Natural Courses were added before the end of the first was reached.

Natural Courses must therefore be considered as essentially different things from the courses usually shown in the figures of a composition. Yet they are so very important things that another way of setting down a composition has been devised, and this is by far the best way when we want to study the composition as a composition, or to prove it.

We are confining ourselves for the minute to Bob Major and to the use of bobs at the Wrong, Middle and Home. Now these three positions divide the Natural Course into three positions. The first is from the Home to the Wrong and consists of one lead; the second is from the Wrong to the Middle and consists of five leads; the third is from the Middle to the Home and consists of one lead.

When we set our composition down, instead of doing so by the course-ends, as we did just now, we write out the natural course-ends of each of the three portions of the course. Thus the first of the two above examples would appear as follows:—

Home.	Wrong.	Middle.	W.	M.	R.
23456	52436	52436	—		
52436	35426	35426	—		
35426	23456	43652	—	—	
43652	43652	63254	—	—	
63254	63254	23456	—	—	
42356	42356	42356	—	—	
34256	34256	34256	—	—	

From this table it is quite easy to see what Natural Courses are used, where they begin and end, and if they are split into pieces where the pieces come.

We have put the Home column first which is really its correct position, but it is usual to put it last in imitation of the positions of the dashes indicating the bobs in the traditional way of giving peals and compositions.

Which way we use does not much matter, provided we recognise that the bob at Home belongs to the course that follows, not to the one that went before.

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## BIG BEN.

### HOW IT WAS CRACKED.

Mr. A. Relfe, of Lamberhurst, has sent us the following extracts which he has copied from 'The Illustrated London News' of 1859. They will be read with interest.

October 8th.—The great bell of Westminster has met with the fate of its predecessor. Just as the difficulties of the task of getting into working order the great clock, with its ponderous adjuncts—Big Ben, alias Great Stephen, and the four quarter-bells—had been overcome, and before the novelty of the sound of the great bell 'swinging slow with sullen roar' has died away, we are called on to record its ruin.

On Saturday afternoon it was discovered that the bell was cracked, and a third attempt to provide a bell worthy of the Palace of Westminster will have to be made.

October 15th.—The presence of the crack (says 'The Times') was ascertained curiously enough, and from the very mode of its discovery, the extent of the mischief was played beyond a doubt. Last Friday, as our readers may remember, was a wild and stormy day. The wind was rough in any place, but round the summit of the lofty clock tower it rushed and whistled, driving the clouds of sleet through the gilded apertures of the bell chamber till the rain trickled down in little streams from Ben and his four assistants. In the afternoon Mr. Hart, one of the gentlemen connected with the works of the clock tower, was in the belfry when the hour struck. Looking at the moment towards Big Ben, he was at once surprised to perceive a minute row of bubbles spring from the wet bell's side with each stroke of the hammer. An instant's investigation was sufficient to show that these bubbles arose from the vibration of the air in the minute cracks we have already mentioned, and which the air and water had partly filled. Both cracks are within about 2ft. of each other, and both are on the opposite side of the bell to that where the ponderous hammer falls. One is about 15in. long, the second nearly 2ft. Both extend from the bow to the lip. Neither have gone through the substance of the bell, and are only just visible to the scrutiny on the outside. Yet from the observations which have been made, and the reason there is to believe that the cracks have rather increased than diminished, it may be taken as certain that both fissures will soon make their way through the metal; so that, as we have said, the hours of Big Ben the Second are few indeed. The instant that this most unpleasant discovery was made Mr. Denison communicated with Mr. Fitzroy, informing that gentleman of the fact, and requesting that the Board of Trade would at once investigate the matter. As a preliminary step thereto the striking has been at once discontinued and the present state of the bell examined. Mr. Denison writes an indignant letter to 'The Times' defending himself, and alleging that flaws had been discovered in the casting, though they had been so ingeniously stuffed and varnished as to escape detection. Messrs. Mears deny this statement and threaten Mr. Denison with an action at law.

A correspondent makes the following suggestion: Drill a hole at the extreme end of the crack, and run a whip-saw from the rim of the bell along the course of the fracture, and Big Ben will be himself again. I have tried this plan with perfect success. The reason a cracked bell sounds like no other earthly music is owing to the surface grating and hitting against each other with every vibration passing through them, and thus breaking and destroying the continuity of the wave. The key or pitch will not suffer, and the bell itself be rendered less likely to break or crack again, as the tension of its particles will be to this extent at least liberated. I am convinced the timbre or quality of tone will not be lessened, and, as the expense will be a mere trifle, it will be worth trying, if only as an experiment not likely again to offer on so large a scale.

December 17th.—The cause of Mears v. Denison was entered for trial for the sittings after Michaelmas Term in London, and would have been tried by Lord Chief Justice Cockburn and a special jury. The cause was withdrawn yesterday week, Mr. Denison having abandoned his defence. The plaintiff will therefore take a judgment by default.

Mr. Denison, who designed the clock and bells, was afterwards known as Sir Edmund Beckett and still later as Lord Grimthorpe.

## BOB MAXIMUS ON HANDBELLS.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—In congratulating the band at Ekington on their peal of Bob Maximus recorded last week, I am no doubt expressing the sentiments of scores of ringers.

With that part of the footnote (which they very wisely qualified), 'The first ever by an entirely local band,' may I say that on March 7th, 1937, at Crayford, C. A. Hopper, E. A. Barnett, T. Groombridge, jun., D. M. Sharp, G. V. Murphy and A. Hopper rang John Reeves' peal of Bob Maximus in hand, and these were all members of the local band.

The previous day, with the addition of Miss Redpath and myself, we also rang a local peal of Cambridge in the tower.

Crayford.

E. BARNETT.

## NOTICES.

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NOTICES must be received NOT LATER THAN MONDAY.

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

ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS. — The next meeting will be held on Saturday, April 11th, at the Bell Foundry, Whitechapel Road, E.1, at 3 p.m. —A. B. Peck, Hon. Sec., 1, Eversfield Road, Reigate.

NORWICH DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION. — The annual general meeting for the election of officers will be held at Norwich on Saturday, April 11th. St. Giles' bells and handbells in St. Peter Mancroft belfry from 2.30 p.m. Service, St. Peter Mancroft, 4.30. Tea in the County Restaurant, Davey Place, 5.15. Business meeting 5.45.—Rev. A. G. G. Thurlow, Gen. Sec., 52, The Close, Norwich.

SOCIETY OF ROYAL CUMBERLAND YOUTHS AND THE MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION. —North and West District.—A combined meeting will be held at St. John's, Waterloo Road, S.E.1, Saturday, April 11th, at 3 p.m. Service at 4 and tea at 4.45 p.m. Handbells available before service and after tea.—T. J. Lock and G. W. Steere, Hon. Secs.

HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION. — The ANNUAL MEETING will be held at ST. ALBANS on Saturday, April 11th. Service in the Cathedral 4 p.m., with address. Preacher: Canon Thorpe, Vicar of Watford. Tea at Waterend Barn 5.15 p.m. St. Peter's tower open at 2.30 p.m. for silent ringing and handbells.—G. W. Cartmel, Hon. Sec., Duffield, St. Albans.

MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION. — The general annual meeting will be at Leicester, Saturday, April 11th. Bells (silent) at Cathedral (12) and St. Margaret's (8) during afternoon. Committee meet 4 p.m. Tea, 5 p.m., at Church House, by Cathedral. General meeting follows tea. In the evening a social will be held at the Victoria Hotel, near Midland Station, 7 p.m. till 10.30 p.m.—Ernest Morris, Gen. Hon. Sec., 24, Coventry Street, Leicester.

ST. MARTIN'S GUILD FOR THE DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM (Established 1755). — Quarterly meeting will be held at Aston Parish Church, on Saturday, April 11th. Service in church at 4 p.m. Tea at 5 p.m. in the Schoolroom, followed by business meeting and handbell ringing.—T. H. Reeves, Hon. Sec., 136, Newton Road, Birmingham.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION AND LONDON DIOCESAN GUILD.—North and East District.—The district annual meeting will be held at Southgate on Saturday, April 18th, at 3.30 p.m. Service 5 p.m., followed by tea at Walker Hall, The Green, for those who notify me by Wednesday previous. Please bring your own sugar. Handbells available for ringing. — T. J. Lock, Hon. Dis. Sec., 57, Holloways Lane, North Mimms, Herts.

**ESSEX ASSOCIATION.** — Northern Division. — A meeting of this division will be held at Earl's Colne on Saturday, April 18th. Handbells from 2.30 p.m. Service at 4.30 p.m. Tea will be provided only for those sending in their names by Wednesday, April 15th, to Mr. F. Ridgwell, Queen's Road, Earl's Colne, Essex. An opportunity to meet old friends; please come and make this a real success.—Hilda G. Snowden, Hon. Dis. Sec.

**GUILDFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.**—Meetings at Guildford on Saturday, April 18th. Executive Committee meet at S. Nicolas' Vestry at 3 p.m. Service at S. Nicolas' 4 p.m. Tea at Ayers' Cafe (next S. Nicolas' Church) 5 p.m., followed by the annual general meetings of both the Guildford District and the Guild. Please send me numbers for tea by April 14th.—G. L. Grover, Hon. Sec., East Clandon, near Guildford.

**BOURNEMOUTH.**—A meeting will be held in St. Peter's Hall, Hinton Road, Bournemouth, on April 18th. Handbells available from 2.30 p.m. Tea at 4.15 p.m., followed by a short social programme and handbells. All ringers in the district especially welcomed.—Arthur V. Davis, 116, Alma Road, Bournemouth.

**BATH AND WELLS DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.** —Chew Deanery.—A quarterly meeting will be held at Yatton on Saturday, April 18th. Bells available (with silent apparatus) 3 o'clock. Divine service 4.30 p.m. Tea at 5 o'clock, with business meeting to follow. — Percy G. Yeo, Hon. Sec., Long Ashton.

**LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.** — East Lanes District.—A rally and meeting of ringers will be held at St. James' Church, Accrington, on Saturday, April 18th, from 3 p.m. Tower bell ringing on the six silent bells, Grandire Doubles to London Surprise; handbells, Minor to Royal. Come and have a lesson in double-handed ringing. Help your brother ringers, help yourself and help 'The Ringing World' by coming to the rally.—C. Sharples, Hon. Sec.

**SOCIETY FOR THE ARCHDEACONRY OF STAFFORD.**—A meeting will be held at Walsall on Saturday, April 18th. St. Matthew's belfry will be open from 3 p.m. for handbell ringing. Service in church at 4.45, with an address by the Vicar. Cups of tea will be provided in the Institute at 5.30. Please bring your own eatables.—H. Knight, Hon. Sec., 15, Rugby Street, Wolverhampton.

**WARWICKSHIRE GUILD.** — The annual meeting will be held at the Griff Colliery Institute, Heath End Road, Nuneaton (adjoining Cricket Ground) on Saturday, April 18th. Tea will be provided at a moderate charge at 5 o'clock. Business meeting to follow. It is hoped that there will be a good attendance.—D. E. Beamish, Gen. Hon. Sec., 21, Gipsy Lane, Nuneaton.

**MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.** — Burton and Derby Districts.—A joint meeting of the above districts will be held at Ticknall on Saturday, April 18th. Handbells available at 3 p.m. Tea and business meeting in Welfare Hall at 4.45. Cups of tea will only be provided. Members must take their own sugar and eatables. Silent tower bell ringing afterwards. Will members please give the meeting every support.—Wm. Lancaster and J. W. Cotton, Hon. Secs.

**SUFFOLK GUILD.**—The annual meeting will be held at St. Mary-le-Tower, Ipswich, on Saturday, April 18th, at 3 p.m.—H. G. Herbert, Hon. Sec., 61, Acton Lane, Sudbury.

**SURREY ASSOCIATION.** — The annual general meeting will be held at Croydon on April 25th. Bells of St. John's available for dumb ringing from 3 p.m., also handbells. Service 4.30 p.m. Tea at Parish Hall, Silverdale Road, followed by meeting. Please notify Mr. D. Cooper, 5, Harrison's Rise, Croydon, for tea by Tuesday, 21st inst. All nominations and notices of motion should reach me by April 11th.—E. G. Talbot, Hon. Sec., 53, Birchwood Avenue, Wallington, Surrey.

**EAST GRINSTEAD AND DISTRICT GUILD.** — The annual meeting will be held in the Rectory, Hartfield, on Saturday, April 25th. Handbells and six silent tower bells from 2.30 p.m. Please notify Mr. A. Ryman, Perry Hill Cottages, Hartfield, Tunbridge Wells, by Wednesday, April 22nd, for tea. Please try and support this meeting with your personal appearance. Failing that, don't forget to send along that subscription.—C. A. Bassett, Hon. Sec.

**OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.** — E. Berks and S. Bucks Branch. — The annual meeting will be held at Cookham on Saturday, April 25th. Tower bells (silent) and handbells at 3 p.m. Service 4 p.m. Tea 5 p.m. at the King's Head (1s. 6d.). Names MUST be sent. — A. D. Barker, Cambridge, Wexham, Slough.

**WORCESTERSHIRE AND DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION.**—Northern Branch. — Meeting, Kidderminster (D.V.), Saturday, April 25th, 3 p.m. Tea 5.15 p.m. Ten bells (silent). Usual evening arrangements. — B. C. Ashford, Sec., Bowling Green Road, Stourbridge.

**MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION AND LONDON DIOCESAN GUILD.**—South and West District. —The annual district meeting will be held at Cranford (Church of St. John) on Saturday, April 25th. The Memorial Hall will be available for handbell ringing and social intercourse from 3 to 7 p.m. Committee meeting 3.45 p.m. Service 4.30 p.m., followed by tea (1s.) and meeting. Names must be sent to Mr. W. H. Coles, 61, Hayes End Drive, Hayes End, Middlesex, not later than April 22nd. Church about 15 minutes walk from Berkeley Hotel, Bath Road, Hounslow. Hall three minutes' walk. Bus services, 81, 91, 98 and 222. Stations Hounslow East and Central. An urgent appeal is made for subscriptions, many of which are badly in arrear.—J. E. Lewis Cockey, Hon. Dis. Sec., 1, Listoke, Edgehill Road, Ealing, W.13. Phone Perivale 5320.

**LINCOLN DIOCESAN GUILD.**—The annual meeting will be held at Lincoln on Saturday, April 25th. Further particulars next week.—S. W. Stokes, Hon. Sec.

#### WANTED.

Copy of an edition, of L'Estrange's 'Church Bells of Norfolk.'—Write, stating price, to Box B, 'The Ringing World' Office, Lower Pyrford Road, Woking, Surrey.

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