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FRIDAY, MARCH 27th, 1942.

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MISTAKES.

In his report on the false peals he had found in the records of the Yorkshire Association, Mr. William Barton called attention to the fact that they were not merely the work of obscure and inexperienced men, but included productions of such people as William Harrison, William Sottanstell, J. F. Penning, Henry Johnson, Charles H. Hattersley, Tom Lockwood, Arthur Craven, John Thorp, Arthur Knights and Henry Law James, men whose names stand deservedly in the front rank of composers, and to whom the Exercise owes no small part of its store of compositions. We might go further and say that it is difficult to call to mind any one active and leading composer of the past who was not at one time or another responsible for a false peal.

What are the morals to be drawn from these facts? The first and obvious one is that associations should take steps to prove the peals rung under their auspices, and how this can best be done will no doubt be revealed in the debates of the coming conference. The second is that conductors should take the little trouble necessary to be able to prove the peals in at least the simpler methods, and so obviate the disappointment that comes to them and their bands when they find after ringing a good five-thousand that the composition is false. The third is that we must recognise the fact that no man, however eminent, however clever, and however skilful, is immune from mistakes. Even with the most capable and the most careful there comes at times some little snag that is overlooked, some little fault that is not perceived, or some little trap that catches unawares. Sometimes it is due to the carelessness that besets even the most careful; and sometimes to the ignorance that belongs to even the most learned. For no man is infallible, not even the youngest.

What shall we say then? Shall we quote these faults and failings to show that these men, who have passed as such great and outstanding authorities, were, after all, no better than the rest of us? We should be fools if we did. They made mistakes. Of course they made mistakes. But the man who never made a mistake never made anything else. We all make mistakes; and we only show wisdom when we turn our mistakes to advantage. We must judge men as a whole with their good qualities and their successes as well as their failings, and it is because their successes so much outweighed their failures that we rank these men among the great composers and benefactors of the Exercise.

(Continued on page 146.)

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Success is not everything. When the end aimed at is an easy or a low one success may be a very poor thing. It is often better to aim high and fail, than to aim low and succeed. Here we have one of the best features in our art of change ringing. Whether on its practical side or its theoretical it sets men high standards and difficult tasks. It calls for the best a man has to give. And if the man responds to the appeal and does his best, though he may make mistakes and experience failure, he has yet succeeded.

HANDBELL PEALS.

ENFIELD, MIDDLESEX.

THE MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION AND LONDON
DIOCESAN GUILD.

On Sunday, March 15, 1942, in Two Hours and Forty-Five Minutes,

AT 45, WALSHINGHAM ROAD,

A PEAL OF KENT TREBLE BOB ROYAL, 6040 CHANGES;

Tenor size 16½.

MRS. J. THOMAS	1-2	JOHN E. SPICE	5-6
JOHN THOMAS	3-4	MRS. G. W. FLETCHER ...	7-8
		ERNEST C. S. TURNER ...	9-10

Composed by J. REEVES. Conducted by ERNEST C. S. TURNER.

* First peal of Treble Bob Royal on handbells.

BUSHEY, HERTFORDSHIRE.

THE HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

On Wednesday, March 18, 1942, in Two Hours and Twelve Minutes,

AT 50, RUDOLPH ROAD,

A PEAL OF OXFORD TREBLE BOB MAJOR, 5056 CHANGES;

Tenor size 15.

*EDWIN JENNINGS	1-2	†HAROLD G. CASHMORE ...	5-6
EDWIN A. BARNETT	3-4	ERNEST C. S. TURNER ...	7-8

Composed by A. KNIGHTS. Conducted by HAROLD G. CASHMORE.
* First peal of Oxford Treble Bob on handbells. † First peal of Oxford Treble Bob.

CLAYGATE, SURREY.

THE SURREY ASSOCIATION.

On Saturday, March 21, 1942, in Two Hours and Twenty-One Minutes,

AT 173, COVERTS ROAD,

A PEAL OF BOB MINOR, 5040 CHANGES;

Seven different extents.

GEORGE W. MASSEY	1-2	EDGAR R. RAPLEY	3-4
		CECIL R. LONGHURST	5-6

Conducted by EDGAR R. RAPLEY.

Witness—Mrs. Massey.

IPSWICH, SUFFOLK.

THE SUFFOLK GUILD.

(ST. MARY-LE-TOWER SOCIETY.)

On Sunday, March 22, 1942, in Two Hours and Eighteen Minutes,

IN THE BELFRY OF THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY-LE-TOWER,

A PEAL OF KENT TREBLE BOB MAJOR, 5040 CHANGES;

GEORGE A. FLEMING	1-2	CHARLES J. SEDGLEY	5-6
HOBART E. SMITH	3-4	WILLIAM J. G. BROWN ...	7-8

Composed by DANIEL PRENTICE. Conducted by CHARLES J. SEDGLEY

Witness—William P. Garrett.

RADLEY, BERKSHIRE.

THE OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.

(OXFORD CITY AND DISTRICT BRANCH.)

On Sunday, March 22, 1942, in One Hour and Fifty-One Minutes,

AT THE SCHOOL HOUSE,

A PEAL OF BOB MINOR, 5040 CHANGES;

Seven different callings.

Tenor size 14 in D.

*WILLIAM C. PORTER	1-2	WILLIAM L. B. LEESE ...	3-4
		MISS MARIE R. CROSS ...	5-6

Conducted by MISS MARIE R. CROSS.

* First peal of Minor 'in hand.'

THE BELLS OF LONDON.

(Continued from page 137.)

EARLY RINGS AND THEIR TUNING.

We have practically no information as to the number of bells in the parish churches earlier than the fifteenth century, nor how soon it became the custom to cast bells to be rung in peal. Dr. J. J. Raven was of the opinion that 'before the year 1000 there must have been a considerable number of peals of bells in England,' and he bases his opinion on the oft-quoted story of the ring of seven which Abbot Egebric hung in the tower of Croyland Abbey; but it is probable that such rings as there were then were in monastic and collegiate churches. In France the diocesan statutes of Saint Charles Borromeo ordain that a cathedral should have from five to seven bells; a collegiate church, three; and a parish church two or three. Roughly, the same rule obtained in England, and in London, in the early fifteenth century, when we first get any detailed information from churchwardens' accounts, it seems that it was usual for the parish churches to have a ring of three in addition to a small sanctus bell.

For some centuries before this England had been largely influenced by the Continent and especially by Northern France; but the failure of the long Hundred Years War with France made her once more an insular country and she began to develop her life independently of outside influences. It was then that the Perpendicular style of Gothic architecture was invented, a style which is English to the core and has no counterpart elsewhere. It was then, too, that the laity seem to have taken the control of the fabrics of the churches into their own hands and especially they seem to have concerned themselves about the bells.

In earlier times the uses of bells and ringing followed the same style as in other parts of Christendom, but somewhere about the year 1400 distinct influences began to work which in time gained for England the title of the 'Ringing Isle' and ultimately produced change ringing and our modern Exercise.

These influences arose among the laity and, though not wholly secular, had at least a good deal that was secular in them. Bell ringing in England became something quite distinct from that on the Continent, where, except in Belgium and Holland, it has never developed from what it was six centuries ago. Here is the real reason why, when, during the reign of Edward VI., the parish churches were stripped of all their goods and ornaments, the bells in the steeples were left.

During the fifteenth century the love of bells which probably had long been growing among Englishmen, became almost a passion, and throughout the country, parishes, not only in London and the large towns, but also in villages wherever people could afford it, were increasing the number of their bells to five. At the time of the Reformation there was hardly a parish church of importance that had not a ring of five bells.

The reason why five was the chosen number is perhaps not difficult to see. The people had gained a love for the music of the bells, and that meant not only that the bells must be tuned to an harmonic scale, but also that they must be rung properly. It was in those things that English bell ringing diverged from the Continental use. But since the bells were so hung that they could not be swung much higher than frame level, the

rate at which they were struck was necessarily rather rapid, and in those conditions five bell ringing would be most effective. The ear would not call for more, and except in the case of heavy rings, even six bells would sound too many.

Rings of six were, in fact, very rare and full octaves hardly thought of. In one of his books, now in the British Museum, Dr. Raven made some marginal notes of the number of bells in the county of Norfolk at the time of the Reformation, and he compared it with that of his own time. The earlier number was 2,153, the later 2,004; which shows that, though the number of sixes and eights has considerably increased, the number of fives has been very much diminished.

The inventories which were made in the year 1552 give us a very good idea of the number of bells in London at that time. These inventories are preserved in the Public Record Office. They are not complete and in a few cases they are mutilated. They show that in the City steeples there were two rings of six, thirty-five of five, twenty-six of four, and twenty of three. It is probable that if we had the missing inventories they would show five or six more rings of five.

The two rings of six were at St. Sepulchre's and St. Michael's, Cornhill, and possibly there was another at St. Bride's. The number of bells in the inventory relating to that church has been partly erased, but there remains what looks like the letter 'x,' and that I took as belonging to the word 'syx' or 'six.' But Mr. C. T. Flower, the Deputy Keeper of the Rolls, who is, of course, a far greater authority on the matter than I am, examined it for me and told me it is impossible to say what it stands for.

These bells naturally differed a great deal in weight. Some of the steeples were small and not much more than turrets and could hold no more than a light ring of three. On the other hand, the tenors at Bow, St. Sepulchre's, St. Michael's, Cornhill, and probably St. Bride's were all over 30 cwt. Heavy and light, all the bells were hung for ringing and all were rung. In early days ringing had not yet become a skilled art and the preserve of a select few. Like cricket and football to-day, it was a sport that any average young man could engage in.

There is ample evidence that these bells were very carefully tuned and that the public ear was very sensitive in the matter. The parish authorities did not just leave the tuning to the founders and accept what they did. The custom was to appoint some expert person to go to the foundry and supervise the matter. Thus in 1510 the churchwardens of St. Mary-at-Hill 'paid for Reeves labur & his Breakfast for comyng from ludgate to Aldgate to here the iiijth bell in Teune vjd'; and not satisfied with that, they 'paid for wyne & peres at skrasis howse at Aldgate for Mr. Jentyll, Mr. Russell, John Althorpe, John Condall, & the clerkes for Synt Antonys to go and see whether Smythes bell wer Teunabill or nat.'

In 1588 the vestry of St. Michael's, Cornhill, 'paide to ye waytes of the Cittie that took paynes to take the note of or belles & to goe to Mr. Motes to take the note of the newe bell then cast xvijjd.'; and later 'spent upon a company of other musiciens to take a ffurther noute of the same bell, xijjd.'

(Continued on next page.)

THE BELLS OF LONDON.

(Continued from previous page.)

Tuning forks had not been invented in those days and the tuning was done by ear, but that does not mean that it was less accurate or efficient. When a single bell had to be cast to match bells already in the steeple pitch pipes were used. According to modern standards many of the old bells would be out of tune, even the strike notes, for the system was different. A modern founder tunes the different parts of a bell and gets each to a certain definite pitch. The older founders tuned, not one of the various notes given by the bell, not even the most prominent, but the combination of all of them. Their ears, in fact, heard only one note and they tuned that. It is only of recent years that men's ears have been trained to hear and distinguish the lesser notes and overtones of a bell. Ears were not less keen in olden times, but when the overtones were wild, the result would be heard as poor quality in the tone of the bell. No doubt it still is so with the majority of men who have keen musical ears.

Later evidence of the care bestowed in former times on the tuning of bells is shown by the fact that the parish of Fulham employed John Harrison, a noted authority on musical tones, to supervise the tuning of Rudhall's bells; and by the case of St. Peter Mancroft bells. That famous ring was cast at Whitechapel and the parish sent their organist, a Mr. Garland, to superintend the tuning. The bells are in the key of C, but Garland did not have them tuned true to the ordinary major scale, but gave them the temperament of E flat. The peculiar charm and appeal of those bells has often been ascribed to this, though what it means has been a puzzle to many people. The explanation is that in a true scale the intervals between the notes are slightly irregular and therefore if a keyed instrument like a piano or an organ is tuned true to one key, say C, it would not be true to any other key. So in actual practice there is a compromise. Rings of bells are usually tuned true (or supposed to be tuned true) to whatever key the tenor happens to be, but Garland gave Mancroft bells the intervals which would be true for the key of E flat, although the tenor actually is C.

The difference is too small to be noticed by an average listener, and whether it has the effect stated I am not musician enough to judge, but the fact that it was made shows that careful and accurate tuning was done long before Canon Simpson published his book.

Although any definite information on the matter is necessarily lacking, it seems likely that many, perhaps the majority of pre-Reformation rings of five were tuned to the minor scale. The reason for thinking so is not only the large number of old rings of five tuned in this way which still survive, but the minor scale is the natural scale of the old folk melodies. Actually there exist at present only two pre-Reformation rings of five—St. Bartholomew's at Smithfield, and St. Lawrence's

at Ipswich. The latter is in the major scale and I believe the other as well; but the five at Norwich Cathedral and the five at St. George's Tombland, Norwich, both of which are (except for one recast bell) pre-Reformation, are in the minor.

For five bells the minor scale is musically exceedingly effective, but it is not suitable for a larger number, and probably many minor fives were turned into major sixes by the addition of a tenor. That evidently happened at St. Michael's, Cornhill, when, in 1430, William Rus gave the famous tenor which bore his name; and also at St. Andrew's, Norwich, where the parishioners bought the large bell from the neighbouring Dominican Priory and added it to the ring of five in their own steeple.

SUPERLATIVE SURPRISE ROYAL.

THE FIRST PEAL.

On Monday, March 27th, 1826, the company of All Saints' Ringers, Wakefield, ascended the tower of the Parish Church and had the honour of Ringing in a masterly style a true and complete Peal of Superlative Surprise Royal, consisting of 5,400 Changes, in Three Hours and Twenty-Six Minutes, by Ten Men only (Tenor weighing 31 cwt.). The great superiority of this Peal over any other is it being the only true Peal ever rung in the Kingdom in so intricate a method, and will be a standing laurel for the Society for ages to come. The Peal was Composed by Mr. Joseph Tebbs, of Leeds, and was by him presented to the Society and rung by them at the first attempt. The peal was nobly conducted by Mr. William Woodhead, and Rung by the following Persons—The Band as stationed. Mr. William Fawcett, Treble. Mr. Joseph Sugden, 2nd. Mr. Mark Blackburn, 3rd. Mr. George Pickering, 4th. Mr. John Hall, 5th. Mr. James Gill, 6th. Mr. Joseph Gill, 7th. Mr. Thomas Netherwood, 8th. Mr. William Woodhead, 9th. Mr. Robert Collett, Tenor.

The Peal.

45236	
62534	
56234	First part end
34562	Second part end
62345	Third part end
45623	Fourth part end
23456	Fifth part end

This performance replaced a false peal rung by the same band standing in the same order on January 16th, 1825. The method, which was by Shipway, is a poor one and dropped out of use, but Henry Law James revived it and called a peal for the Lincoln Diocesan Guild at Ewerby on June 5th, 1926.

DUDLEY AND DISTRICT GUILD.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The annual meeting of Dudley and District Guild was held at Dudley and was fairly well attended. A short service was conducted by the Rev. Dr. C. P. Shepherd, Archdeacon of Dudley, and president of the Guild, who also gave a very interesting and inspiring address. Afterwards an adjournment was made to the school, where light refreshments were served. Ringers were present from Brierley Hill, Coseley, Sedgley, Stourbridge, Wollaston, etc.

At the business meeting which followed, the president, who occupied the chair, said how pleased he was to see such a good number present despite the difficult times.

The treasurer presented the balance sheet, which showed a balance in hand.

On the proposition of Mr. J. Lloyd, the officers were unanimously elected, en bloc.

It was decided to hold the next meeting jointly with the Worcester-shire Association at Hagley some time in June.

A very hearty vote of thanks was given to the chairman for his address in church and for presiding at the meeting, also for the use of the school hall. The secretary was thanked for the refreshments and the ladies for serving them.—The chairman closed the meeting with prayer.

Good use was made of the handbells in the school hall till black-out time, and a happy meeting was brought to an end.

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AN EAST ANGLIAN GARLAND.*To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—It was with much pleasure that I read in your issue of March 6th the reminiscences of Mr. Charles J. Sedgley. It is some years since I first had the good fortune of meeting Mr. Sedgley and his talented colleagues of St. Mary-le-Tower, Ipswich, on the occasion of a business trip to that town. Although I had travelled in many parts of the country previously and rung in a number of towers, I was never a really keen ringer, although I had rung a small number of peals, limited to odd bell methods only. On entering the belfry of this famous twelve-bell tower, where courses of several Surprise Maximus methods were rung, I received a welcome that I had thought only was given to more well-known ringers of the Exercise, but I afterwards learned that all visitors are treated in this way in East Anglia. It was then I decided to become a keener ringer, and with the help of C. J. S. and the enthusiastic members of St. Mary-le-Tower I had in three months rung 'inside' to Cambridge Maximus and a number of Major methods, scoring several peals in that period. So as with other ringers who have visited East Anglia, I too have happy reminiscences of that district.

ARTHUR V. PEARSON.

Penn, Wolverhampton.

LAPPED HANDBELL RINGING*To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—With reference to the article in this week's 'Ringing World' by G. E. Barker, I think this would refer to the Halesworth (Suffolk) company of ringers, who, when I was first acquainted with them in 1885 and 1886, were very proficient at what was known as table ringing, the bells being passed backwards and forwards, and Bob Maximus, Treble Bob Maximus and Graudsire Cinques were quite the usual methods rung at the time.

In Colchester, from 1892 onwards till 1937, we also had a band that rang the same methods and were in great requests at concerts, and in 1934, 1935 and 1936 we rang the bells at the carol services at Christ Church, Colchester, at Christmas time, although we were attached to the St. Peter's company. We were very much appreciated wherever we went, but owing to one of the company removing to Newcastle and myself to Barking I understand the Colchester men were unable to carry on.

Probably Mr. F. Lambert, of Halesworth, one of the original conductors there in 1886, could enlighten us further on the subject.

R. W. STANNARD.

Barking

THE EXPERTS.*To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—When I first wrote to you on this matter it was not my intention to commence a long correspondence. My main idea was to indulge in a little good humoured banter at the expense of a type of ringer we all know.

Wild horses would not drag from me the names of any individuals, however, and my last desire is to become acrimonious. I have had my say, and I hope no harm has been done to anybody—but rather that we have all learned the lesson that there is much concerning our art which has still to be discovered. I hope Dr. Slack will continue his research work and look forward to seeing more of his efforts. Perhaps next time he will be more fortunate in producing something which will be considered 'good copy.'

I have no desire to pursue the matter further, though I quite expect the bloodhounds will be on my track regarding the views I put forward on Spliced Surprise! Well, 'good hunting.'

38, Penn Lea Road, Bath.

J. FRANK SMALLWOOD.

THE FIRE BELL AT SHERBORNE.*To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—I was very interested by the remarks made by my old friend Mr. A. A. Hughes in your issue of March 13th re the Fire Bell at Sherborne Abbey.

The shape is much like the dome on the old G.W.R. locomotives, and the note (if one can call it a note) is just a very short discord. When I was at Sherborne School in 1887 there was a fire in the town and the Fire Bell was rung and the noise was just horrid! I have heard this bell and the old 7th were cast in Sherborne. Am I correct? If so, would Mr. Hughes let us know the founder's name?

JOHN H. B. HESSE.

ANONYMITY.*To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—If my good friend William Keeble will kindly read my previous letter on this subject again, and this time a little more carefully, he will see that I did not suggest that all anonymous letters should be consigned to the waste paper basket. After referring to letters containing personalities, forms of abuse, etc., I asked that such letters should not be published, and ended by suggesting that in all cases where there is the slightest infringement of decency the letters should be excluded. This, I think, is in complete agreement with what Mr. Keeble himself 'goes so far as to say.'

C. T. COLES.

Higbams Park, E.4.

John Taylor & Co.

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THE EDITOR.

The Editor. Mr. J. S. Goldsmith, continues to make progress, but is still confined to bed.

BELFRY GOSSIP.

On March 23rd, 1837, Elijah Roberts tapped 19,440 changes of Treble Bob Maximus at his home in Liverpool. The feat was not witnessed by any ringers, but as he had already tapped peals with competent umpires, there is no reason to doubt its performance.

On the same date in 1898 the St. Martin's Society of Birmingham rang 8,888 Stedman Caters on handbells, conducted by Bernard Witchell.

The first peal of Albion Major, one of 6,048 changes, was rung at Liversedge on May 24th, 1837.

The 'junior' Society of College Youths rang the first true peal of Real Double Bob Maximus at St. Bride's on March 24th, 1784, and two days later at Southwark the ancient Society of College Youths beat it with a 6,048.

The Cumberlands' famous long peal of Treble Ten, 12,000 changes, was rung at Shoreditch on March 27th, 1784.

On March 28th, 1750, the Cumberland Youths rang a peal of New Bob Triples at St. Leonard's, Shoreditch. It was the first in the method, which is given in most of the standard text books, but does not appear to have been practised elsewhere. It is a good method and not an easy one.

Fifty years ago to-day one peal was rung. It was Double Norwich Major on the back eight at Quex Park by the Cumberlands and conducted by George Newson. Fifty years ago yesterday 13 peals were rung—Grandsire Triples 4, Caters 1, Stedman Triples 2, Kent Treble Bob Major 1, Royal 1, and Minor 4.

IMPORTANT.

Owing to Good Friday falling in next week, 'The Ringing World' will be published on Thursday. Notices and all other communications must reach 'The Ringing World' Office by Monday next.

MRS. GEORGE WILLIAMS. THE FIRST LADY PEAL RINGER.

Last Tuesday was, in a way, a notable anniversary in the history of the Exercise, for 50 years earlier on that date a lady took part in a peal for the first time.

Lady tower bell ringers were then quite unknown, or if that is putting it a little too strongly it would be quite true to say that the one or two women who had got so far as to handle a bell were looked upon by men ringers with good natured condescension as something of the nature of freaks. The idea that ladies would ever seriously think of taking a place in the belfry was so remote that it did not excite even opposition.

Lady handbell ringers were almost as rare, for double-handed ringing was practically confined to a comparatively small number, and they mostly whose feelings and traditions led them to think of bell-ringing as a purely male pursuit. There were indeed a few leaders of the Exercise who might have said in a general sort of way that handbell ringing could be a very lady-like accomplishment, men like Sir Arthur Heywood, who encouraged his own daughters to ring changes on handbells, but who would have regarded with horror the idea of women in a belfry, especially if they mixed there with men.

Perhaps there were other enthusiastic ringers like Mr. George Williams who did their best to induce their wives to take a pair of bells when their ringing friends visited them. If so nothing much came of it except in his case. He was successful in making his wife a good handbell ringer, and when Thomas Blackburne, the bell-hanger, happened to be in Brighton for a time doing some job there, the opportunity was taken to start for a peal. There were two unsuccessful attempts, but it was rung on March 24th, 1892, by Mrs. George Williams 1-2, Thomas Blackburne 3-4, George Williams (conductor) 5-6, and Alfred P. Goddard 7-8. It was Mr. Williams' first handbell peal.

Five years later, in 1897, Mrs. Williams rang two more handbell peals, but she never attempted tower bell ringing. She was, however, the harbinger of the female host which, coming at first as spies, has of late years beaten down male opposition and made good its position in the belfries of the land.

ENDOWMENT FOR RINGING.

At the annual meeting of the Parish Council at the Surrey village of Witley last week mention was made of the Bellingers' Charity, the revenue from which consists of £1 7s., annually paid by Sir John Leigh, M.P., in respect of a piece of land left to the parish by Anthony Smith. It was stated that payment had not yet been made for last year.

THE RINGERS' CONFERENCE.

DISCUSSIONS OPEN.

Rehabilitation After the War.

The Ringers' Conference opens in our columns to-day, and we hope that all who can do so will join in making the scheme a success.

The proceedings begin to-day with the chairman's address and the opening of the discussion on the first motion on the agenda.

THE CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS.

The CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen, The opening of the Ringers' Conference in 'The Ringing World' to-day calls for a few remarks from me as Chairman. My position is perhaps somewhat unique inasmuch as I am self-appointed, but I do feel that in this I have the backing of the large majority of those who are interested in this project. The fact is it is necessary to have someone to deal with the debates who is on the spot and in touch with what is happening, otherwise delays will be inevitable and the collapse of the scheme probable. That explains why I occupy this position and I think I need not say any more on the point except that I shall do my utmost to exercise the powers of the office fairly and justly.

Having made that initial explanation, I should like to pass on to the subject of the Conference itself. Most of you know how it came to be established. The Conference has been set up to help maintain interest in ringing affairs over as wide a field as possible among as many people as possible. The circumstances of these times make it inadvisable, if not out of the question, for the Central Council to meet. It is three years now since the Council last assembled, and I think that even the critics of that body will agree that we as an Exercise have lost something from the absence of these annual gatherings and their accompanying discussions. This Ringers' Conference cannot replace the Central Council in regard to the powers that it exercises because it has no delegated authority from the associations, but it will, I hope, do something to keep alive interest in ringing affairs at a time when, largely owing to the ban and the gradual thinning out of our ranks by the claims of the national effort, interest is likely to evaporate until almost all life has disappeared from the Exercise.

I hope this Conference will do something to keep that interest alive. It is a completely new experiment and its success depends upon the amount of active support that ringers themselves give to it. We not only hope that ringers, both ladies and gentlemen, will read the reports of the proceedings with interest, but that they will enter into the spirit of the discussions and share in them. The response made by ringers to provide an agenda has been most gratifying, and I look forward to a series of interesting discussions. The motions already submitted cover quite a number of subjects, and many ringers should have something of value to contribute to the common stock, particularly on matters which vitally concern the future of the Exercise. We want to utilise the collective wisdom of as many people as possible.

I do not intend to anticipate the discussions in any way, but will leave them to their natural development, hoping that the contributions to the debates will be made as promptly as possible in order that a steady flow of 'speeches' may be maintained. I hope that the Conference will prove the success which those who have organised it are endeavouring to make it.

I will ask Mr. Price, to whom we owe the original suggestion for the project, to propose the first motion on the agenda.

REHABILITATING RINGING.

Mr. J. P. PRICE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to propose the following motion:—

'That a small committee be formed immediately to consider and report upon the best and quickest means of rehabilitating ringing when the war is over.'

I think everyone in this Conference will agree that there is no more important subject to which ringers can direct their attention than that of restoring ringing when the war is over. It is a great pleasure to me, therefore, to be able to bring this subject before the Exercise, because I feel rather proud of the fact that my suggestion for the holding of a Conference was taken up by ringers with such enthusiasm. At the same time, I would like to thank the Editor of 'The Ringing World' for so warmly backing up the proposal and giving facilities for carrying it out. I hope the same enthusiasm with which the scheme has been taken up will characterise the ringers' interest in this particular subject, because there has never been a greater menace to the art through all its history than confronts it at the present moment.

In bringing the matter to the notice of the Conference, I do so in the sincere hope that some practical plans may be formed. Pious resolutions on matters of this kind would get us nowhere, and it is for that reason I suggest that the first step should be the formation of a small committee.

The position of ringing, I think everyone will agree, is a really serious one, despite all the efforts that may be being made to endeavour to keep life in our organisations. With ringers cut off from

the church towers by the official ban, there is a slow canker eating into the vitals of our art. It is true that there is a small proportion of enthusiasts trying to keep the organisation and the practice of ringing within a limited sphere in operation, but the enterprise and interest of thousands of ringers have disappeared, partly, of course, because they are removed from their local surroundings, and partly because lack of interest has broken their old attachment.

This is apparent at a time when the ban has been in operation for less than two years. No one knows how much longer it is likely to last, and it is futile to attempt to put a period to it, but the longer it goes on the worse will be the plight of the art and the Exercise unless some tangible scheme is ready to be put into operation as soon as circumstances permit.

A VARIETY OF VIEWS.

A good many ringers probably have their own ideas as to how the problem of the future is to be met, and I feel it will be of immense advantage if these views can be ventilated in this Conference. The ideas can then be collated and some kind of practicable scheme formulated in the hope that either the associations or the Central Council, or whatever other body may be left at the time, will put it into operation.

Most of us, of course, would like to see young hands encouraged to learn to pull the bells even though they are limited to doing so on a silent apparatus or on bells without clappers. In the meantime we want to ensure that all our bells despite their silence are kept in proper order.

Then, too, there is need, it seems to me, for a much wider development of change ringing on handbells. Everyone knows that this phase of ringing is not as simple as some people imagine, but properly organised I feel a great deal might be done to keep the art going in many more towers than those in which it at present finds a place.

There are numerous other ways in which plans could be laid so that when the war finishes quick action can be taken, particularly in the direction of helpful organisation by the associations, and I hope that ringers of all shades of opinion and from all types of district, each of which will have its special problems, will contribute to the information which may be brought in this Conference as the result of this motion. For that reason I will leave any further suggestions for the time being to those who intend to take part in this debate.

With regard to the appointment of a committee, I would like to see it made representative of all the varying interests connected with the Exercise. I would also like to see the committee go into the question immediately and not leave my motion as a sort of pious resolution lying on the table to be dealt with, say, 12 months or two years hence. I want the Conference to do something here and now so that before it eventually dissolves a report of this committee may be given due consideration by everyone who is interested, and in any action that may possibly be taken I hope the Conference will appoint a really representative, if small, body to get down to the problem.

• ADVICE WANTED.

Mr. L. W. BUNCE: When Mr. Price asked me to second his resolution I readily agreed, but I think I should have hesitated if I had known that our motion was going to be put at the top of the agenda, and we should have, in a manner of speaking, to open the Conference. That I rather feel, ought to have been done by someone of greater experience and standing, for I am not a person who knows much about change ringing or the way the associations are carried on. I might have known more if the war had not broken out; but that's another matter. Nevertheless, I am keen to see facilities in readiness when ringing is again allowed.

It would have been rather presumptuous if we had taken on ourselves to advise the Exercise what ought to be done when peace comes. We are not doing that. What we are doing is to suggest that it would be a good thing if some of those people who have knowledge and experience should think things out. The question is not what will have to be done, but whether it would be a good thing to have some people to give us advice.

A friend of mine told me he thought the whole idea is unnecessary. 'Nobody knows,' he said, 'what will happen when the war is over. The best thing is to wait and face our troubles when they come. Meanwhile we have quite enough to keep us occupied with the things of to-day. Look what happened after the last war. A lot of ringers never came back from France, and of those that did a lot never re-entered the belfries. But there were enough ringers to get things going again, and in a few years' time the Exercise was as strong as ever it had been. So it will be again with ordinary luck.'

He may be right. I cannot speak about what happened in the last war. I was not old enough. But I do know that many changes did take place in ordinary life, and I am quite sure that many will result from this war. These changes are bound to affect ringers and ringing. They can't help it. And I feel we ought to do everything we can to be ready.

Of course, no scheme can be devised which is certain to meet every case, and opinions are sure to differ about what ought to be done. Some people may think we ought to overhaul our organisation, and there are those who think we ought to have a National Association. Perhaps it is worth thinking about. But I suppose I am out of order in referring to what really belongs to another item on the agenda.

(Continued on next page.)

THE RINGERS' CONFERENCE.

(Continued from previous page.)

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bunce is not out of order in referring to a National Association. He would be out of order if he went into details.

Mr. BUNCE: Then there are such questions as the training of beginners and how far the ringing of difficult methods should be encouraged, and others. I think it would be a good thing if we had some lead on these matters, and so I have great pleasure in seconding the resolution.

SUGGESTED COMMITTEE.

The CHAIRMAN: I think a committee should be nominated in connection with the motion so that the personnel of it may be considered with the motion itself. I have given some careful thought to what its constitution might be, and I particularly would like to see youth among the representatives upon it, for youth, after all, will have to carry the responsibilities of the future. I am going to suggest to Mr. Price that he should include in his motion that the following, subject to their consent, shall constitute the committee, with power to add to their number:—

Representing the established associations: Mr. C. T. Coles, Hon. Secretary of the Middlesex County Association and the London Diocesan Guild; the Rev. C. E. Wigg, Deputy Master of the Oxford Diocesan Guild.

Representing youth: Mr. E. A. Barnett (Crayford) and Mr. A. G. Tyler (Hon. Secretary of the Bristol City Branch of the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association).

Representing 'blitzed' districts: Mr. G. R. Newton, Liverpool; Mr. S. F. Palmer, Sheffield; Mr. R. F. Deal, London.

These, I think, if they will be kind enough to serve, will form at any rate the basis of a representative committee from all over the country, but I suggest that nothing should be done to prevent the committee, if they so desire, from bringing in to their assistance any other ringer they may think fit. Assuming that this committee is acceptable to the Conference, I suggest that in order that they may be able to get to work at once, Mr. Coles should act as chairman, that each member should compile his own suggestions and recommendations and forward it to the chairman within three weeks of the passing of the resolution, that the chairman should then draw up a comprehensive report, which he should submit to the members for their approval or criticism, and that this report should be submitted to this Conference before the proceedings are finally closed. Such a procedure would, I feel, go a long way not only to meeting the desires expressed in the resolution, but to getting something actually done which could be placed on record and acted upon immediately opportunity occurs.

Mr. PRICE: I shall be only too happy to fall in with the Chairman's suggestion and include the constitution of the committee with the motion.

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER SUGGESTED.

Mr. C. CULLEN: I suggest that if sufficient ringers are got into the towers this problem will solve itself. The lack of people sufficiently interested in change ringing has been a problem for years and is likely to be accentuated after the war. In my opinion an effort should be made to interest the public and explain to them exactly what is change ringing. The vast majority think it consists in 'playing tunes' by 'machinery.'

I suggest that each association has a 'public relations officer' whose job it would be to see that the Press is correctly informed on ringing matters and so avoid the ridiculous tosh so often published. When a meeting is contemplated an article could be sent beforehand to the local paper, a stock one emanating from the Central Council forming the basis and local interesting points or illustrations being added. The incumbent of the church to be visited could also announce the impending meeting and invite members of the congregation to attend, the public relations officer acting as a guide. A pamphlet could also be prepared with a title such as 'What happens when the bells ring,' explaining the historical and the technical side of the Exercise simply and readably. These could be distributed to towers at cost price, part being left blank for overprinting a local name or a half-tone block. The pamphlets could be priced and left in the church porch and the revenue used for the upkeep of the bells. Further, the ringers themselves might like to have them to give to people they meet and to whom they might talk of ringing matters. In any case, interest in change ringing would be fostered, and interest is the first step in procuring exponents and so rehabilitating the Exercise.

Apocryphal the ignorance of the public generally, Mr. Chairman, here is an example. At a meeting in this district of Kent the officiating clergyman, although his address was about ringing, admitted afterwards that he had never seen a belfry or a bell frame, and on this occasion he made no attempt to fill this gap in his education. True it wasn't his church, but he was an elderly man and must have come into contact with many peals of bells at various places. Incidentally, why not make a point of holding a meeting at a place where ringing is at a low ebb, and not as so often happens where it already flourishes. Just one other comment, on the lack of ringers. Of the towers within one hour's cycle ride of Chelmsfield, where I reside, there is no ringing at seven, and in eight others only occasionally are the

(Continued in next column.)

OXFORD UNIVERSITY SOCIETY.

CONTINUED PROGRESS.

The past term has been one of the most successful the O.U.S.C.R. has ever had from the point of view of general progress, and easily the best ever from that of peal ringing. There have, of course, been losses in membership, but there has always been a stable nucleus of about a dozen enthusiasts. Besides these, no less than eleven beginners have joined at various times, although there has been no deliberate recruiting campaign. Without doubt there is the knack of kindling enthusiasm in recruits. For instance, four young ladies from Somerville came along for the first time, a fortnight from the end of term; after a couple of practices they borrowed a set of handbells, and spent a whole Sunday afternoon puzzling things out for themselves.

All practices are divided into two parties, one for the benefit of beginners and the other for the beginners of last term. All of the latter could ring Bob Major fairly well at the beginning of term, so it was resolved to pass on to better things and avoid the danger of stagnation. With this object the methods practised have included Grandsire and Plain Bob on all numbers, Stedman Triples (nine members can now take an inside pair through a plain course), Double, Little Gainsborough, Shipway's Court, New London Court and Richmond Bob Major, and also touches of Spliced Major. Stress is always laid on the importance of faultless striking and a good beat. Next term it is hoped to ring Kent Treble Bob and Double Norwich. It must be emphasised that in ringing these Major methods there is no question of learning the work of a pair in the plain course. The principle of ringing by the places is strictly followed, and, for instance, a course of Richmond Bob was rung without the band being told anything except what places occur in a lead.

Needless to say, with so many members, it has never been possible to arrange intensive practices for just one band, with a view to peal ringing. Nevertheless, six peals have been rung (without any special practice), being three of Bob Minor, one of Minor in five methods, and two of Bob Major. The standard of methods would doubtless have been higher had it not been for the guiding principle of letting nothing interfere with the ordinary practices. Although Plain Bob has been the predominant method in these performances, every peal marked something fresh for somebody. Three members, all of whom started ringing last October, have rung their first peals, so that seven resident junior members have now rung peals. Far from these six peals having been rung by the same band, no less than eight members have taken part, two of them being old members. Apart from society peals, the O.U.S.C.R. has contributed the greater part of the band in peals of Bob Major (with the Cambridge University Guild), Spliced Plain and Gainsborough and Bob Royal. An attempt for a society peal of Royal would have had a good chance of success, but could not be made, as one of the band contracted mumps.

The members are very proud of the fact that they can now manage entirely without outside help. It is probably unique for a society composed entirely of junior members of a university to have reached peal ringing standard by its own efforts. Although the O.U.S.C.R. is now a self-contained whole, it is always very pleased to see outside ringers at practices; for instance, the three peals referred to above were rung during visits to Oxford of ringers from other towns. It is, in fact, one of the aims not only to build up a strong and vigorous society which will be able to ring peals in a variety of methods, and maintain a high standard of ringing generally, but to make Oxford a centre of handbell ringing, where ringers will always be sure of receiving a hearty welcome and of having some good handbell ringing.

J. E. S.

LEATHERHEAD, SURREY.—On Tuesday, March 17th, in the belfry of the Parish Church, on handbells, 1942 Bob Major: W. J. Whiting 1-2, A. H. Smith 3-4, A. H. Winch 5-6, G. Marriner 7-8. Conducted by A. H. Winch. Longest touch on handbells by all. Rung to mark the conductor's 40 years' connection with the Leatherhead company.

THE RINGERS' CONFERENCE.

(Continued from previous column.)

bells heard, and this in a part of a country considered very enthusiastic. I believe in each case this is solely due to lack of man power. I feel that every effort should be made to interest the public in ringing matters and that a member of each association should regard it as his particular job to see that all possible ways of achieving this end in his district should be examined. Every encouragement should, of course, at the same time be given to newcomers to the Exercise.

Readers are invited to send their contributions to the discussion on this subject without delay. Owing to Good Friday necessitating the earlier publication of 'The Ringing World' next week, the contributions should reach this office not later than Monday morning.

SURREY ASSOCIATION.

NORTH-WESTERN DISTRICT MEETING.

Important Discussions.

The annual meeting of the North-Western District of the Surrey Association was for the second successive year held at Leatherhead on Saturday, and was attended by about 45 members and friends representing most of the district towers and, among others, Feltham, Leytonstone, Isleworth, Reigate, Chertsey and West Grinstead.

The eight clapperless bells in the tower were in use during the afternoon to methods ranging from Grandsire Triples to Cambridge Major, while the handbell enthusiasts withdrew to the vestry to display their skill.

In the absence of the Vicar through illness, the service was conducted by the Rev. A. E. Chapman, the assistant priest, who apologised for his inability to stay to the tea and meeting owing to other engagements.

Tea was served at the Duke's Head, and it is interesting to note that the majority of those present had sent notifications for tea, a record for the district.

The chair at the annual business meeting was taken by Mr. D. Cooper, District Master.

Miss W. M. Adams, of Banstead, was elected as a ringing member, and the election prior to a peal that morning of Mr. Cecil R. Longhurst, of West Grinstead, as a compounding member was ratified.

The committee's report for 1941 was read and adopted. The majority of district activities had been at a standstill, although a few bands maintained contact with one another for handbell or silent tower bell practice. Some bands had broken up entirely, whilst others appeared to be in a somewhat moribund state. Noticeable exceptions were those at the Croydon churches and at Leatherhead. The calling-up of keen members of local hands and deaths of several prominent ringers in the past few years had accelerated this decadency. Communication with members was now mainly by post, a more laborious and expensive and far less efficient process. Postage costs had increased considerably on the previous year and would no doubt continue to rise. As air raids had lessened and almost ceased during the year there had been no report of serious damage to any of the churches in the district.

VALUED MEMBERS LOST.

During the year four members were lost by death: Mr. Arthur H. Bundle, of Carshalton, Mr. Charles H. Reading, of Mitcham, Mr. Frederick G. Woodiss, of Banstead, and Mr. Arthur Dean, of Leatherhead. Mr. Reading was for a long time assistant secretary of the association and also treasurer of this district. He did much good work for the association and for the Mitcham Christ Church band. Mr. Fred Woodiss had been for many years successively treasurer and then secretary of this district, relinquishing the latter office only two years ago. He remained a member of the committee until his death. He founded the present Banstead band and took a keen interest in ringing throughout the district. He rang 78 peals for the association. Mr. Arthur Dean, one of the vice-presidents, was for very many years an important member of his local hand, and its captain since 1923. He maintained at Leatherhead a competent band, making it a centre of ringing activity in the district. He rang about 200 peals for the association. It was deeply regretted by all that for several years past he had been incapacitated and was unable to reach the tower and ring.

No peals were reported rung during the year. This was a decrease of four from the previous year.

The district participated in four meetings during the year—at Leatherhead (twice), Reigate and Ewell. Two business meetings were held. All the gatherings were a great success and the attendances averaged 36. A ramble from Merstham to Reigate in June was a tremendous success, mainly owing to very favourable weather, although a few complained of the heat. The elements were less kind in August when a similar ramble from Box Hill to Leatherhead was not held.

The membership at the beginning of 1941 was 183. Six new members had been elected, including one honorary member. Four deaths had been reported, five members had been transferred to the compounding list, and five had allowed their subscriptions to lapse, leaving a membership as at December 31st of 175, a net decrease of only eight from previous figures. There were now seven honorary members, 144 members representing 17 towers, and 24 unattached members.

MEMBERS IN THE FORCES.

The number of ringers known to be serving in the Forces had risen slightly, and at least 20 members could claim exemption from payment of subscriptions on these grounds. Of these ten had paid their subscriptions for 1941.

The year, though it could show no material progress, had shown a minimum of back-sliding. Though no doubt more active members would be lost to the Forces, if the remaining members continued to support the association both financially by paying the small sum asked for by way of subscriptions, and also by attending meetings arranged for them, they would greatly assist the resumption of peace-time activities when that became possible.

The treasurer's statement of accounts for 1941, showing a balance of £14 6s. 5d. (an increase of 11s. 6d.) was also adopted.

The arrangement of meetings during the year was left to the judgment of the committee, but it was agreed that the next meeting should be held if possible on Whit Monday, May 25th. The annual general meeting was to be held on April 25th.

The following officers of the district were declared elected in the absence of other nominations: Master, Mr. D. Cooper; treasurer, Mr. H. W. Simmons; secretary, Mr. G. W. Massey; auditor, Mr. H. N. Pitaw.

The three representatives on the committee were elected by ballot as follows: Mrs. C. H. Kippin, Mr. Charles Potheary and Mr. H. V. Young.

It was unanimously agreed that Mr. D. Cooper should deputise for the secretary during the latter's prospective absence on war service with the R.A.F.

The general officers of the association were renominated as follows: Master, Mr. D. K. C. Birt; secretary, Mr. E. G. Talbot; assistant secretary, Mr. C. Parks; auditor, Mr. G. W. Steere. Nominations were also received for two Central Council representatives, and Messrs. C. H. Kippin, D. Cooper and W. Claydon were proposed.

TREASURER TO RETIRE.

The general treasurer, Mr. C. H. Kippin, stated that he had no wish to be re-elected for the current year. After some discussion Mr. F. E. Collins gave notice of a proposed alteration to the rules of the association to permit the offices of treasurer and secretary to be combined for the duration of the war owing to the comparatively small amount of work attaching to the former post at the present.

Discussion on the proposed National Association, the Ringers' Conference and the future of 'The Ringing World' took place.

Mr. F. W. Housden spoke in support of a National Ringers' Association run on the same businesslike principles as those national associations in other walks of life, with paid secretary, central headquarters and a general executive (which could run 'The Ringing World' in perpetuity).

Mr. Kippin drew attention to the concern felt of the possible extinction of 'The Ringing World' in time to come. It was important to consider this problem because should circulation cease even for one week it would be impossible to recommence publication until after the war owing to the present paper restrictions.

Mr. T. Price congratulated Mr. Housden and Mr. Kippin on their recent letters published in 'The Ringing World,' and urged them to continue pressing in every way possible for the achievement of their ideals.

Mr. Norman Bagworth, Mr. H. V. Young, Mr. Arthur H. Smith and others also spoke. It was agreed that insufficient thought was given to the subjects under discussion by the people who mattered—the average ringers of the country. Until deep thought and active support of the go-ahead members was given by the average ringer, little could be done.

Mention was made of several motions on the agenda for the Ringers' Conference. Motion 2 (b) received particularly severe criticism. It was too wide in scope and too conservative in nature. It was suggested that ringers should be urged to vote against the motion in its present form.

Finally, and as a result of this varied discussion, Mr. H. V. Young proposed, and Mr. C. H. Kippin seconded, the following resolution, which was carried unanimously: 'That the General Committee be instructed to bring forward at the annual general meeting that due consideration be given immediately by the Central Council members regarding the ownership of "The Ringing World" in time to come.'

It was hoped that opportunities would arise for the discussion of this question between individual members of the Central Council as the Council would not meet as a body.

The meeting terminated with votes of thanks to the Rev. Chapman for conducting the service, to Mrs. Arnold, the organist, and to Mr. George Marriner for making the necessary arrangements for tea and meeting.

Further handbell ringing then continued for about an hour, although many members preferred to discuss the many provocative suggestions brought forward at the meeting.

SALISBURY DIOCESAN GUILD.

DEVIZES BRANCH OFFICERS RE-ELECTED.

The annual meeting of Devizes Branch was held at Southbroom, Devizes, on Saturday week. The Guild service was held at St. James' Church, conducted by the Rev. E. B. Brooks (priest in charge of St. Mary's) in the unavoidable absence of the Vicar (the Rev. A. W. Douglas). Col. F. W. Hek, T.D., A.R.C.O., was at the organ.

Tea, arranged by Mrs. T. Weeks, an hon. member of the Guild, with two helpers, was partaken of in the Parish Room, but a smaller attendance than usual was present, owing to so many having been called to the Forces.

In the absence of the branch chairman (Mr. E. F. White), the business meeting was presided over by Mr. A. T. Weeks, vice-chairman of the branch, and all the officers were re-elected for the coming year.

The secretary was asked to send the sympathy of the branch to Mr. S. Hillier, and wishing him a speedy recovery.

Thanks were given to all who had made the meeting very enjoyable and successful.

ELEMENTARY COMPOSITION.

FOR THE AVERAGE READER.

We have now got together some material to use in composing peals, and we have found out some means of composing. To revert to the simile we employed, we have got a good stock of sound bricks and a heap of excellent mortar, and so we can proceed to the building of a wall. They are plain standard bricks and our wall will only be a simple one without ornaments but it will give us the opportunity of doing some good, solid building.

Our bricks are the Natural Courses of the method. There are, in all, 120 of them, each consisting of 112 changes (for, as you will remember, we are dealing with Bob Major), each is represented by its course end, and between any two of them there can never be any repetition of rows.

But half of these 120 Natural Courses are even, and the other half are odd, and first of all we will see what we can do with the sixty even ones. We will put the sixty odd ones aside for the present.

Our mortar is the Q Sets which we have described in full in previous articles. They, as we saw, are of various kinds, but only one kind can be used with Natural Courses of like nature. So that our apparatus for joining up Natural Courses consists of sets of three bobs made on the same three bells and separated from each other by a full course. Any one of these operations joins together three full courses.

Any course or any combination of courses which starts and ends on the same row is called a block, and in Bob Major every such block is a 'round' block, which means that we can choose any row in it we please to begin and end with.

The first of our round blocks produced by a Q Set of bobs is the three courses with a bob at the end of each, and that is thoroughly typical of all the round blocks.

Now, suppose, instead of beginning with rounds, we begin with the lead end, 13527486, and from that prick three full courses with a bob at the end of each; we should have a block exactly similar to the first, except that the rows in the two added Natural Courses would be different. Instead of joining together the three Natural Courses 42356, 34256 and 23456 by three bobs at Home, we should join together the three 52436, 35426 and 23456 by three bobs at the Wrong.

Or suppose we started from the row 14263857 and pricked three full courses with a bob at the end of each; we should have a block similar to the other two, but again the two added Natural Courses would be different. Our block would consist of 43652, 63254 and 23456 joined together by three bobs at the Middle.

The plain course (23456) appears in all three of these, for each of the operations is joining two full Natural Courses to the plain course, and the Wrong, Middle and Home are the only lead ends where that can be done.

We can, if we please, join to the plain course two full Natural Courses at the Wrong, two at the Middle, and two at the Home. We have no choice as to what Natural Courses we take in at any one of these positions; that is settled for us, and the number is fixed too; we can add two, we cannot add one, or four, or five or any other number—at least not by the Q Set we are using. All we can decide for ourselves is which and how many of the three possible Q Sets we shall use.

Suppose we use all three. That will give us the block—

28456	W.	M.	R.
52436	—		
35426	—		
43652	—	—	
63254		—	
42356		—	—
34256			—
23456			—

This is a nice, straightforward, easy example of building up a touch by joining together Natural Courses by means of Q Sets.

And here we are going to make a digression. We have been talking of making bobs at Home, meaning at the lead end at the end of the course; but when we wrote out the touch above we put for the bob positions the letters W, M and R, the R standing for 'Right.' Which is correct? Well, the really proper way is to call the bob at the end of the course the Right; for that is the way recommended by the Central Council. But the other is the older usage, it is still very commonly employed by ringers, and it comes naturally off the tongue when we are speaking of these things. Besides, it is convenient to have two words which mean the same thing so long as we make sure it does not cause confusion.

To resume. In our touch above we made bobs at each of the possible three positions in the plain course and in each case we completed the Q Set. In all the other courses we made a bob in one position only. Suppose we select one of the vacant positions in any one of the courses, make a bob there, and complete the Q Set. Let it be the Home of the third course 43652. Such a Q Set will join together the three Natural Courses 43652, 64352 and 36452; and since 43652 is already joined to six other Natural Courses our touch will become as follows:—

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

What we have done is to join up into one round block nine separate independent Natural Courses, and in doing so we used four Q Sets. In the same way we can bob any of the vacant positions in one of these courses and by completing the Q Set add two more Natural Courses.

We know our touch is true because each time we bobbed a Q Set we took a couple of bricks from our original heap of sixty.

But we shall soon find out that we cannot bob every Q Set where there is a vacant position in one of the courses. For instance, suppose we make a bob at the Middle in the course 64352. To complete the Q Set we want the Natural Courses 34256 and 24653. The last is on our heap of material, but we have already used the other, and it is not available for the second time.

NOTICES.

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

NOTICES must be received **NOT LATER THAN MONDAY.**

'The Ringing World' can be sent direct by post from the Editorial Office for 4s. 3d. per quarter.

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, March 28th, at the Bell Foundry, Whitechapel Road, E.1, at 3 p.m.—A. B. Peck, Hon. Sec., 1, Eversfield Road, Reigate.

HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Meeting at the Studio, Falconer Road, Bushey, Saturday, March 28th. Handbells from 3 p.m. Tea 5.30 p.m. All welcome.—H. G. Cashmore, 24, Muriel Avenue, Watford.

WORKSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—Annual meeting of Western Division, in conjunction with Leeds and District Society's nomination meeting, will be held at Christ Church, Upper Armley, Leeds, on Saturday, March 28th. Handbells available from 3 p.m. in Conservative Club, near church. Business meeting after tea (approximately 5.30), election of officers, etc. An interesting talk after meeting on 'Proof of Composition,' by Mr. W. Barton, association's peal secretary. Annual reports available. All welcome.—Frank Rayment, Dis. Sec., Bramley, Leeds.

LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.—Rochdale Branch.—A meeting will be held on Saturday, April 4th, at the Bird in Hand (bottom of Church Brow), Newhay. Time 6.30 p.m. Please make an effort to pay subscriptions on this date and oblige. Reports, also handbells, will be available.—Ivan Kay, Hon. Sec.

ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—A meeting of the committee will be held at Chelmsford Cathedral on Saturday, April 4th, at 4 p.m.—L. J. Clark, Gen. Sec., 36, Lynmouth Avenue, Chelmsford.

WORCESTERSHIRE AND DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION.—The annual meeting will be held at Worcester on Easter Monday, April 6th. General business meeting in College Hall at 3 p.m. prompt. Chairman: The Very Rev. Arthur Davies, Dean of Worcester. As parties cannot be catered for, will members please make their own arrangements for tea.—J. D. Johnson, Hon. Gen. Sec., Sedgbarrow, Evesham.

ELY DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—Annual general meeting at Cambridge on Easter Monday. Ringing on the Sage apparatus at the Church of St. Mary the Great from 2.30 p.m. Service 4.30. Please make own arrangements for tea.—K. Willers, Sweetbriars, Trumpington, Cambridge.

LLANDAFF AND MONMOUTH DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—The annual meeting will be held at Newport on Easter Monday, April 6th. Meeting at 3 o'clock in St. Woolos' Church Hall.—J. W. Jones, Hon. Sec., 94, Altery View, Newport, Mon.

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; preacher,

Rev. A. St. J. Heard. Tea in the County Restaurant, Davey Place, 5.15. Business meeting 5.45. In view of present difficulties, tea (at 1s. 9d.) will be served **ONLY** to those who send me their names by April 1st.—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. Tea will only be supplied to those who notify Mrs. E. E. Davis, 118, Sarsfield Road, Balham, S.W.12, not later than April 8th. Please bring your own sugar.—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. Tea at Waterend Barn 5.15 p.m. Those requiring tea must notify me by Thursday, April 9th. St. Peter's tower open at 2.30 p.m. for silent ringing and handbells.—G. W. Cartmel, Hon. Sec., Duffield, St. Albans.

GUILD OF DEVONSHIRE RINGERS.—Exeter Branch.—A meeting will be held at Exeter on Saturday, April 11th. Service at St. Edmund's Church 4 o'clock. Arrangements for tea will be announced at the service. Handbells available. Bands and visitors attending kindly notify me by April 4th.—W. H. Howe, Hon. Sec., 8, Courtenay Road, Exeter.

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 is being arranged, particulars later. Names for tea must be sent to Mr. Perkins, 52, Landseer Road, Leicester, not later than April 8th, and note—**no names—no tea**, and this notice will be enforced.—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. To assist in catering, please notify intention to be present not later than Wednesday, April 8th.—T. H. Reeves, Hon. Sec., 136, Newton Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham 11.

REV. W. C. PEARSON'S LAST PEAL.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—It may be of interest to some of your readers to know that I have a record of the late Vicar's peals as late as September 10th, 1930, a peal of Double Norwich Court Bob Major, 5,088 changes, composed by C. W. Roberts and conducted by W. C. Rumsey. I have rung several peals with the Vicar, and I feel almost certain this was his last. He rang the treble.

G. A. FLEMING.

Witnham.

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