



No. 1,605. Vol. XXXVI.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28th, 1941.

[Registered at the G.P.O. for transmission as a newspaper.]

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A GLOOMY YEAR FOR RINGING.

On the face of things there is little that is encouraging to be got out of a survey of ringing in the year that is just closing. Not a church bell has been rung anywhere throughout the length and breadth of the land, and the ban, as we learned last week, is to continue. Ringers from the towers have been called away to serve their country either under arms or in other capacities, and this, coupled with the fact that the bells themselves are completely idle and interest in ringing has in many places almost fallen to vanishing point, has reduced many associations to a condition in which they are unable to do little but hold on for the better times that we all believe lie somewhere ahead. Never surely in the history of the last two hundred years, at any rate, has ringing passed through such a gloomy time of inactivity. Never before have the bells of our land been compelled to observe so complete a silence and that is the real test of our loss. It is not that we are debarred from ringing peals; indeed there are many who think that peal ringing for any but the most exceptional reason would be entirely out of place under present circumstances. The absence of peal ringing in a time of world war is no hardship, but what we have lost and what matters most is the ringing of the bells on Sundays. The bells have always counted for something in the life of the people, more perhaps than is generally realised, and the loss has been keenly felt even if it has now been blunted a little by the passage of time. No good purpose will be served by labouring the argument that the ban is a clumsy preliminary to meet the end the authorities have in view, but it remains the most stunning blow that has ever been delivered at the art of ringing. It not only robs the land of the cheerful and encouraging sounds of the Sunday service bells, but its ultimate effect will be that ringing may lose, through this inactivity, no small proportion of its erstwhile devotees. That falling away of man power from the belfries seems to us one of the inevitable and most serious consequences likely to arise from the present position.

These are the things which first and most naturally strike one in a review of the year, but there is something to be placed on the other side of the account; things that may quite well give us ground, if not for optimism, at least for hope. There are still, in many places and districts, depleted bands of loyal and devoted ringers endeavouring by every means in their power to 'keep the flag flying,' from the company that meets every week for handbell practice amid the ruins created by the enemy in the City of Birmingham to the little bands who

(Continued on page 614.)

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gather from time to time in country villages for district meetings and have little to encourage them but the pleasure of a friendly handclasp, a chat over a cup of tea, and joining in a service. These men are doing a greater work for ringing than perhaps they realise. It is they who later on will be in a position to set the wheels moving again in belfry and associations, and upon whom much of the future will depend. We hope that they will not let disappointment creep in to stay their efforts because they are not getting all the support they think should be forthcoming from some who used to give their aid when times were more propitious. We hope they will hold on undeterred by lack of numbers until the bells may be rung again, for then their help will be more than ever needed, for the leeway to be made up will be enormous. Many who have left the belfry may never return; many who could do so may not because their interest in ringing will be completely dead. These little meetings, whether in town or country, carried on by the stalwarts amid discouraging circumstances, are one of the most hopeful signs for the future.

There is a field which might be made more of, and that is handbell ringing. Quite a number of bands have tried their hand at it with marked success, to their own encouragement and entertainment. It is one of the things which, where all are beginners, requires a deal of patience as well as regular practice, but it can be mastered and it opens the door to no end of interest. Throughout the past year our columns have recorded the successes which have come to those who have persevered, and we would like to hear that handbell ringing had penetrated into a far greater number of centres. It might often prove the one means of keeping the remnants of a company together, as well as laying the foundation of a wider field of interest in the future, and it is to the future that we must all turn our eyes. The present is dark for ringing, although, as we have indicated, here and there the flame is kept burning, if with diminished light. A heavy responsibility rests upon all those who are left at home to carry on in the extremely limited manner that circumstances now permit, and we trust that, despite all discouragements and handicaps, men will not lose heart or interest, but continue to make the best of the existing conditions till the day comes when the bells will be sought by everyone to ring for victory and peace.

HANDBELL PEAL.

PRESTON, LANC.

THE LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.

On Sunday, December 14, 1941, in Two Hours and Forty-Eight Minutes,

IN THE BELFRY OF THE PARISH CHURCH,

A PEAL OF BOB MAJOR, 5058 CHANGES,

Tenor size 14 in D.

EDWARD COWPERTHWAITHE ... 1-2 | C. KENNETH LEWIS ... 5-6
CYRIL CROSTHWAITHE ... 3-4 | *WILLIAM TAYLOR ... 7-8

Composed by C. CROSTHWAITHE. Conducted by C. K. LEWIS.

* First peal 'in hand.'

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CLAVIS CAMPANOLOGIA.'

(Continued from page 605.)

SOME EXTRACTS.**Fixing the Standard Methods.**

The selection of methods in the 'Clavis' is excellent. Ignoring all the merely fancy methods that had been rung from time to time, such as Fulham, Middlesex and College Triples, Titchborne's Invention, Cumberland Pleasure, Cumberland Fancy and the like, and the unsymmetrical Eastern Bob and Double Eastern Bob, the authors printed those old systems whose worth had been fully tried and proved, and added several new ones—new at any rate to London and the majority of ringers—which were to become equally useful. These latter included Kent Treble Bob, Double Norwich Court Bob Major, Stedman on seven bells and upwards, and Superlative Surprise Major. In fact, the 'Clavis' may be said to have fixed the standard methods. Hitherto ringers in different parts of the country often had their own methods; henceforth there was one standard for the whole country. The book also had the effect (not so happy a one) that it practically put a stop to ringers experimenting with new methods and new styles of peals. There was in it so much more than the average band could ever hope to accomplish that men ceased to look for anything outside its scope. Shipway introduced several new systems, but not one of them has been practised. He himself called peals of his Place Triples and Place Major, but no other band rang them. No band practised his Court Bob, or his Double Court Bob, nor, except on two fairly recent occasions, was the method he called Shipway's Principle ever rung to a peal.

As an indication of the development of ringing which accompanied the appearance of the 'Clavis' it is interesting to notice that the first peal of Double Norwich Court Bob Major rung in London was in 1786; the first peal of Cambridge Surprise ever rung was in 1780; the first peal of Stedman Caters in 1787; and the first peal of Stedman Cinques in 1788. All these, except the last, were actually before the book appeared, but they were intimately connected with its preparation. Among the subscribers to the book were men who had taken part in the first peal of Treble Bob Maximus only 31 years before.

Much of the interest in the 'Clavis' lies in the many remarks, scattered throughout the book, which throw light on the customs and opinions of the ringers of the time. A description is given of the correct way to handle a bell and the 'young practitioner' is told that 'he must observe first to place his right foot in the strap' and that he must have his right hand uppermost both at the sally and backstroke.

Footstraps have almost entirely disappeared now, even for use in ringing very heavy bells, but in this passage we learn that then they were universally used even for ringing light bells. Laughton tells us much the same thing, and it is evidence of how very much more pulling bells needed in olden times than they do at present.

The London custom was, and is, to hold the tail end in the left hand, but at Norwich it was traditional to hold it in the right.

Raising and ceasing in peal is mentioned, and here we have an echo of Stedman's Campanalogia—'It is requisite that the bells be raised as fast as conveniently can be, and not to strike till the second sway.' 'Raising

and ceasing in peal when properly executed is undoubtedly very pleasant and melodious; but melodious as it is, the adepts of the art in this city of London very seldom choosing to put themselves to the pains of it, is now chiefly practised by the country gentlemen.' All writers on ringing from Stedman onwards lamented that raising and ceasing in peal is a lost art in London, and to this day it is comparatively seldom practised by metropolitan ringers.

'Many people run away with a notion that anyone may be put to a treble, especially if a plain hunt, 'but,' says our authors, 'we repeat this admonition that the treble be rung by an able and experienced practitioner.' So far as peal ringing at least is concerned, the London ringers acted in accordance with this advice. In their performances the treble ringer was almost always one of the leading members of the band, and not seldom it was the conductor. For a long time in the College Youths' peals Winstanley Richardson rang the treble as if by right.

Later writers, however, while they copy or adapt the rules of the 'Clavis' for instructing beginners, disagree with them here. Hubbard says that there are good reasons for putting the learner to the treble, and he proceeds to give them.

On Holt's Original there is the following comment—'We have placed this first, nor need we hesitate to affirm that it stands foremost in point of merit of all Mr. Holt's compositions, the dividing of it into parts or courses for the purpose of retaining it in memory for calling, is a matter that has totally baffled all the skill and penetration of the present age, and the author himself (we are told) could not retain it sufficiently so as to call without book; and though he composed several peals of grandsire tripples, yet we have great reason to believe that this was his first because it was the first that was rung, which was at St. Margaret's, Westminster, on Sunday, the 7th of July, 1751.'

That the Original was the first peal of Grandsire Triples composed by Holt is almost certainly true, but in point of merit as a composition it is far surpassed by the Ten-part. A clever man with some knowledge of the law of Q Sets could no doubt by dint of perseverance and much experimenting discover the first. He could hardly have discovered the other without a great deal of knowledge of the mathematical laws of Grandsire composition.

William Jones did not know when he wrote that the Original had already been called by two men who took part in the ringing. If the London men had heard anything about it they did not believe it. Three years after the 'Clavis' appeared, James Bartlett rang the seventh at St. Giles-in-the-Fields and called the peal (with William Jones at the fourth), 'and thus gained the honour (which he really did not deserve) of being the first man to conduct the peal and take part in the ringing.'

In calling Grandsire Triples we are told 'it is usual in most parts of the kingdom for the bob caller to ring the observation' and call by the position of his own bell, 'a method which we can by no means approve.' The plan recommended is to call by the bells before. 'The former is too much like a lesson or ballad which is learned by rote, and we trust will be looked on by every

(Continued on next page.)

'CLAVIS CAMPANOLOGIA.'

(Continued from previous page.)

judicious person in the art as too absurd and unscientific to outweigh against the other.'

One of the outstanding compositions in the book is John Reeves' peal of Bob Major with the 120 course ends, and this is made the occasion for one or two very interesting remarks. It is pointed out that the first time 5-6 come home together at a course end the lead end is plained; but at the second time it is bobbed; 'which is the grand reason you cannot come round at the sixty courses, which has been so long the wonder and study of the curious; for if they could be either all called or all omitted, the thing would soon be done.' Here we have in effect an anticipation of Thompson's proof that a peal of Grandsire Triples with common bobs only is not possible.

The composition is the only peal of Major into which singles are introduced, and an explanation is given. 'We don't altogether approve of singles where the number can be obtained without; yet as this is the full extent without parting 7-8, we think and recommend it as a good peal for those who wish to ring a greater length than ever has been done by one set of men.'

The general opinion of the best authorities in the Exercise, then, and for long before and after, was that the natural and normal call for any method is the bob. Anything else should be introduced only when absolutely necessary, and usually only because the extent of the changes cannot otherwise be got.

What sort of alterations were used depended on what they were required to do. Singles were not needed in Grandsire Caters and Cinques, and so were barred, but soon after the 'Clavis' appeared it became the custom to start Cinques by laying 7-8 still. That put the bells at once into the tittums with the 8th after the 11th, and made an easy and graceful home-coming possible. The device was justified by the results it gave, and was tolerated by people who saw no necessity for singles.

During the eighteenth century and most of the nineteenth, practically all the peals of Bob Major rung were in-course, even when they were ten-thousands. The general feeling was that the gain in music when singles are used was not sufficient justification for breaking a sound rule, though no doubt there were men like the authors of the 'Clavis' who recognised that rules were made for change ringing and not change ringing for rules.

The first man who boldly used singles in the modern manner was Edward Taylor, whose peals, with the sixth 24 times right and wrong, were rung in the early years of the nineteenth century. Shipway, who knew Taylor, adopted the plan and applied it to Grandsire Caters; though Joseph Ladley, who called the peal, claimed that he had composed it himself. John Lates, of Oxford, afterwards so well known as a Stedman composer, produced peals similar to Taylor's. But though the work of these men ultimately influenced the Exercise, the more conservative views expressed by the 'Clavis' persisted until the close of the nineteenth century.

When William Jones wrote that Reeves' extent of Bob Major was 'a greater length than ever has been done by one set of men,' he did not forget some claims that had been made. 'There is a frame at West Ham for upwards of 15,000, but it is well-known by the time mentioned and the weight of the bells they could scarcely

ring thirteen.' 'To be sure the extent of Bob Major, 40,320 changes, is recorded in a frame at Leeds in Kent as being performed by thirteen men in 27 hours and some minutes, one man having rung eleven hours, another nine, &c.; but those of the performers who have been spoke with on the subject give such unsatisfactory accounts that it is very little thought of, and it is generally believed, that if they did keep the bells going the length of time, the truth or regularity of the changes was very little attended to.'

The last reference is to James Barham's performance, the other to Philemon Mainwaring's feat.

Throughout the eighteenth century Double Bob was a favourite method with the more skilful bands, especially in London; and for some years before the publication of the 'Clavis' it was the custom to call the bobs in pairs, one when the treble was behind, the next when it was on the lead. This was termed Real Double to distinguish it from the older plan (which is also the present day plan) of calling the bobs only when the treble is leading.

But a dispute had arisen as to what is correct Real Double, and the 'Clavis' describes fully the rival views. The first system 'is to have the first bob when the treble is behind and the second perhaps at a distance of half a lead from the first, or perhaps one lead and a half, or two and a half &c. at pleasure, the object being only to have one behind and one before alternately. The other system is thus: Whenever there is a bob behind the bob before immediately succeeds so there must be infallibly two bobs in a lead.' The reasons for both are given, but the authors decline to express an opinion on the dispute.

The account of Oxford Treble Bob Major has a reference to the supposed right of the band that rings the first peal in any method to give it a name, a question which still interests ringers—'It is remarkable that when a new system is first broached and several companies are each contending for the first peal, the successful champions generally claim the privilege of giving it a name; this is exactly the case in the present instance; for according to the most authentic intelligence we have been able to collect, the first performance of this kind is recorded by a society then called the Union Scholars, who gave it the name of Union treble bob.' But 'allowing every sett or body of men that merit which is their due, we venture to affirm that whoever was in possession of a lead of treble bob on six, could certainly be at no loss, or find much difficulty in producing that on eight, ten, or twelve bells.'

This passage is of no great value as historical evidence. Jones knew no more about the matter than what could be learnt from the peal board at St. Dunstan's-in-the-East and the fact that the London ringers generally called the method Union Bob. There always had been men who denied the right of the Union Scholars to give it their name, and the more correct title gradually prevailed. The 'junior' Society of College Youths seem always to have used the name Treble Bob, and sometimes, but not always, they added the word Oxford. The ancient Society of College Youths in their records call the method Union Bob until 1760. In the Cumberlands' peal book the method is called Union Treble Bob until 1785, though as early as 1763 the title Oxford Treble Bob is used. William Jones, it is quite evident, had no doubt as to which was the correct name.

THE LATE CANON G. H. RIDOUT.

RECOLLECTIONS OF HIS ACTIVITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Recently I read in 'The Ringing World' of the passing of Canon George H. Ridout, at Johannesburg, South Africa. For nine years I knew him intimately. He was a true and faithful servant of our Master and of his parishioners in the parish of Ferreira's, Johannesburg. Deliberately he chose to work in a slum area throughout the 35 odd years he lived in that great gold city. His congregation consisted of coloured people and a few 'poor whites.' Repeatedly he declined preferment and, if I remember aright, a Bishopric. He was ever a happy man—happy in his work and happy in his life—true and faithful to God and man.

He was a man of wide knowledge—of art in paintings and sculpture, of literature, architecture and music. To be his guest at dinner was something to look forward to, for his conversation on the above subjects, particularly the music of Handel, Mozart, Haydn and the mighty Beethoven, were, of intense interest to me.

Apart from these things, his knowledge and interest in change ringing were very great. It was through the latter we became acquainted. On a certain Sunday evening at St. Mary's Parish Church I was surprised and delighted to hear a course of Grandsire Triples rung on handbells, just before the service commenced. The following week this was repeated. I had been resident there for two years and had never heard bells rung in changes. I knew of no bells.

Enquiry from the Vicar led to an introduction to Canon Ridout (though he was not then a Canon). We dined together and on my congratulating him on the perfect changes I had heard, he laughed loudly, admitting the bells were not retained in hand—pleading guilty in his own quiet way to perpetrating a 'pious fraud.' This led to the formation of a 'team' of three—myself on 1-2, Canon Ridout on 3-4 and Colin Kearns 5-6. In a few weeks we had got the first 720 of Bob Minor rung double-handed in South Africa. The Canon was very pleased and presented both Kearns and myself with a copy of F. E. Robinson's book, 'Among the Bells.'

Circumstances then compelled the withdrawal of Kearns, but rather fortunately another ringer arrived in the Golden City, F. P. Powell, who had called the first peal in South Africa about a year previously. I journeyed from Johannesburg, 1,050 miles, to ring in that peal. It was well struck and successful and the second attempt. Mr. Powell called on me at the bank (my place of employment), and I at once took him off to the Canon. Powell took the place rendered vacant by Mr. Kearns being compelled to withdraw, and off we started again. Within six months we had rung Grandsire and Stedman Doubles, Grandsire, Plain Bob, Oxford and Kent Treble Bob, and were wrestling with another method (Double Court, I believe) when Powell suddenly

and mysteriously disappeared—he left Johannesburg. Thus our ambition of scoring the first 5,040 in seven different Minor methods was crashed to the ground. Possibly—I might almost say probably—we could have rung a 5,040 in any one of the four given above, but we preferred them 'all different.' So was lost our (Ridout's and my own) ambition.

Needless to say, we were grievously disappointed and, for myself, rather cross. Six months after this I left on a five months' holiday to Australia, preferring our bright and sunny climate to the dour and gloomy drab and cold English water. I have often regretted it and thought I chose unwisely in not 'risking' one winter in England when, possibly, I could have stood in a few peals of Stedman, Kent and Oxford Treble Bob and Double Norwich Major. Ridout used to 'console' me in his quaint and inimitable way, by pointing out that even a 5,040 of Grandsire, the first in South Africa, was something, 'and about about our first 720's of Minor?' at which we both laughed. How many peals he took part in I never knew. I never rang with him on tower bells.

Canon Ridout was deeply interested in composition, and when in the mood did much work thereat. I have two or three of his peals of Grandsire Triples. I do not think he ever published any, but some of them, particularly one in five parts, I venture to think, were 'worthy' compositions. His objections to publish anything were, if I remember aright, purely 'academical.' He was a believer in 'uniformity' and, so far as possible, in 'symmetrical' calling. Doubtless, however, he has shown some of his work to others more competent to judge of their merit or demerits than I am.

He looked forward to joining the tourists from England to Australia, just seven years ago, but at the eleventh hour events occurred which precluded him making one of the party. In a letter to me he expressed his regret, and, needless to state, it was a great disappointment to me. Had Melbourne, or in a broader view Australia, been 'blessed' with a ringing cleric such as Canon Ridout (and very many others in England whom I need not mention), the history and progress of our beloved science in this fair land of the Southern Cross would, I venture to assert, been vastly different to-day. And, possibly, the sound of bells rung in changes would have been as dear to our people as it is to those of our Mother Country.

Vale! Canon Ridout.
Melbourne.

ERNEST F. BEHAN.

READING.—At 18, Manchester Road on November 13th, a quarter-peal of Bob Major (1,280 changes): Cyril Burgess 1-2, Walter Hunt 3-4, Albert Diserens (conductor) 5-6, Thomas N, Lanaghan 7-8. Rung after an unsuccessful attempt for a peal.

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BELFRY GOSSIP.

The Lancashire Association rang its first peal (one of Grandsire Triples) at Bolton on December 22nd, 1877. Up to the end of July, 1939, it had rung a total of 3,966 peals.

Fewer peals have probably been rung on December 25th than on any other date in the calendar, or, at any rate, it runs a close race with February 29th, but one outstanding performance was achieved on Christmas Day, 1754, when the Society of Young Ringers of Saffron Walden 'did ring the true peal of Grandsire Triples comprised of 148 hobs with two singles,' 'to the no small mortification of their antagonists (some of the old society), who gave them all the obstruction in their power.'

This apparently was the third occasion on which the Original had been called by a man who took part in the ringing. Whether he had any 'visible aids to memory' is not stated.

A very long list of anniversaries fall on the three days after Christmas, and we can mention only a few of them: December 27th, 1760, the first peal of College Exercise, by the College Youths at Hackney; 1831, 15,168 Kent Treble Bob Major at Elland in Yorkshire; 1885, 8,064 Double Norwich Court Bob Major at Leiston; 1894, 9,312 Superlative Surprise Major at Crawley; 1901, 11,111 Stedman Cinques at Birmingham; 1910, 9,728 Superlative Surprise Major at Clent; 1923, 10,440 Cambridge Surprise Royal at Walthamstow.

On December 27th, 1718, the first peal of Major (5,120 Oxford Treble Bob) by the Union Scholars at St. Dunstan's-in-the-East; 1904, 17,104 Double Norwich Court Bob Major at South Wigston; 1909, 10,176 Double Oxford Bob Major at Brierley Hill.

On December 28th, 1749, 6,000 Bob Major at Twickenham; 1820, 6,600 Stedman Cinques at St. Martin's, Birmingham; 1872, 16,608 Kent Treble Bob Major at Earlsheaton in Yorkshire. This last apparently was false in the ringing.

Sir Arthur Percival Heywood was born on Christmas Day, 1849. As founder and for many years president of the Central Council, he occupied for many years a foremost place in the Exercise. A character sketch of him and an account of much of his activities have been given in recent articles in our pages.

Twenty peals were rung 50 years ago to-day. They were Grandsire Triples 8, Caters 1, Stedman Triples 4, Caters 1, Kent Treble Bob Major 5, Royal 1. One of the Stedman Triples was Tebbs' composition, and two were called by Mr. George Williams, one of them at Christchurch, the other at Ringwood. One of the Grandsire Triples was on handbells. H. L. James, E. B. James and J. Austin took part.

The two treble bells given by Mr. George Williams to Stoneham to make a ring of ten were dedicated ten years ago last Saturday.

Fifty years ago to-day (Boxing Day) the first peals of Stedman Triples on the bells at Christchurch Priory and Ringwood, Hants, were rung, and a peal of Grandsire Triples at St. Peter's, Bournemouth. The latter was conducted by the late John W. Whiting. George Preston, we believe, is the only one living of that band. Of the company who rang the peals of Stedman at Christ Church, Ringwood, George Williams, George Baker, James George and A. P. Goddard are still living. The others were Messrs. T. Blackburn, R. W. J. Gollop, W. H. George and E. Merritt.

Peals were still peals in those days, and what about enthusiasm! We are told that for the peals of Stedman, George Williams, now Master of the Winchester and Portsmouth Diocesan Guild, had to get up at 4 a.m. and walk seven miles to the railway station to catch the train that would take him to Christchurch.

MELBOURNE CATHEDRAL LOSSES.

The band at St. Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, has again been robbed by death of a valued member, the third within two years.

The latest loss is Mr. J. T. Trotter, an Australian-born ringer, one of the oldest members of the society, who for many years was tower-keeper. He took great pride in the bells, and the English ringers who visited Melbourne seven years ago can testify to the care with which he tended his charges. The bells went perfectly.

St. Paul's Cathedral Society is suffering also from some lack of interest, we are informed. Usually now there are not more than half a dozen ringers present for service or practice, but among them is Mr. James Murray, who called the first peal in Australia over 50 years ago. The other most regular members of the band are Messrs. J. Spencer and Edgar Knott, who with Mr. Murray took part in the peal of Grandsire Cinques in 1934, and Messrs. Reeder, W. G. Waghorn and E. F. Behan. The last named has recently recovered from a serious accident sustained in the Bush in Queensland, which kept him many months in hospital in Brisbane and Melbourne.

FORMER NORWICH RINGER IN JERSEY.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—Mr. Charles E. Lovett, who now lives at St. Saviour's, Jersey, and was at one time a member of St. Peter Mancroft company of ringers, went to Jersey a few years ago. He and his family were there at the time of the German occupation in 1940. At that time his parents received a cablegram stating that they were coming to England. However, they were left behind and not until June this year was any further news received. All will be pleased to know they were well, but anxious to receive news from home. Many letters have been sent, but apparently not received.

A. E. COLEMAN.

NEW YEAR'S EVE.

WHAT IT MEANS WITHOUT BELLS.

'Of all sound of all bells (bells—the music highest bordering upon heaven) most solemn and touching is the peal which rings out the Old Year.'—Lamb.

What memories are stirred by the words! Once more the event is upon us, but stripped of its most inspiring accompaniment.

New Year without bells! Why, in normal times one would as leave have gone without Christmas dinner. It is now many months since the voice of the bells was heard. Little enough time, measured as time goes, maybe, but a great gap to the bell-lover.

One may say, 'Who minds?' As well ask the question, 'Who cares if no song were ever heard?' The nation would doubtless survive without singing, but would have lost one means of recreation and spiritual 'uplift.'

The case is somewhat different with bells, which have been the music of the common folk for centuries past. Do we not read how in former times thousands would gather to hear a peal rung? All down the years the bells have played a dignified and pleasantly agreeable part in our lives.

If this 'goes' for the ordinary man, how much more intensely so for the ringer, the man who loves his bell and his art. This awful hiatus to him must be as bad as a prison sentence. That this is no overstatement may easily be gathered from a perusal of ringers' doings. A new method is evolved! Immediately a band to ring it is found. A longer or more difficult peal is composed! The enthusiasts are ready to tackle it. One band rings a 6,000; their friends and rivals quickly aspire to a 7,000 or more; and the distances they will travel! We learn that before modern means of transport were thought of, a band *walked* from London to Oxford, to attempt a peal.

It is not beyond bounds of belief that, other means failing, their successors would do it to-day for the same reason. What can this reason be, this magnetic force in the appeal? Certainly not material gain, for there is little money in ringing. No ringers seem able to explain it, not even veterans of 60 or 70 years at the end of the rope. Perhaps it cannot be expressed in mere words.

But the devotees of St. Cecilia are a race apart, enjoying and revelling in another world from which all but fellow ringers are excluded. Maybe it is the physical satisfaction in the ability to control the movement of a body many times one's own weight, or the mental pleasure afforded by a successful journey through the intricacies of a peal, or perhaps a combination of both. Whatever this elusive quality may be, all depends eventually on the bells themselves.

Bells and their message, be it joy or sorrow, have become one of the amenities, without which we should all be spiritually the poorer. There is nothing can ever be quite like bells ringing—not the miserable ting-tang of still bells chimed, but the full-throated clangour of swinging bells. Why, they become live things!

What human effort could ever hope to emulate the 'chorus of the giants' of the Cathedral or even their smaller brothers of the village church. Meanwhile, St. Cecilia weeps!

But her tears may soon be dried, and when the word goes out her children will again spring to life. Perhaps

(Continued in next column.)

TEBBS' PEAL OF STEDMAN TRIPLES.

THE FIRST PERFORMANCE.

From 'The Times' of December 22nd, 1828:—

'On Thursday, the 18th inst., eight members of the Junior College Society, ringers of St. Saviour's, Southwark, and Trinity Church, Newington, rang on the bells at the latter place a true and excellent peal of grandire triples on Steadman's principle, containing 5,040 changes, which was completed in three hours and four minutes, and is the greatest performance ever achieved upon any peal of bells in the Kingdom. The above peal contains 598 bobs and 122 singles and is the most perfect of the kind ever produced, but has never been rung until the present occasion, when every bob and single was regularly called and made. Two years have elapsed since the society first attempted to ring this peal, during which time they have assembled every Thursday evening to perform it, and in the various unsuccessful attempts which have been made they have rung upwards of 200,000 changes in this most difficult of all the systems in the art of ringing. This system of ringing was invented by Mr. Fabian Steadman, a native of Cambridge, about the middle of the 17th century.'

It is evidence of the decline in the standard of London ringing that what was probably as good a band as then existed in the metropolis should have taken two years to ring a peal of Steadman Triples, and then should have claimed it as 'the most difficult of all the systems in the art of ringing.' The College Youths had already, in 1803 rung a peal of Steadman Triples at Kensington.

Joseph Ladley called the Newington peal, and in the band were such well-known ringers as Samuel Austin, James Mash and Edward Lansdell.

The composition by Joseph Tebbs, of Leeds, is in ten regular parts, each part consisting of six courses. In every course there are bobs at 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14, and, in addition, in the last six of the first two courses of each part there is an in-course single, made by the four bells in 4-5 and 6-7 lying still. Another similar single is made at the half-way and end. It is a very regular and, in many ways, excellent composition, but is spoilt for practical purposes by the excessive number of bobs. It has been rung many times, and forty years or so ago Frederick Newman called it several times at different places in London and Kent.

The ring of eight bells at Holy Trinity, Newington, have not been rung for many years, and the number of ringers who have heard them must be very small.

AN ENGLISH BELL.

'I remember,' wrote Earl Baldwin in his book of essays 'On England,' 'many years ago standing on the terrace of a beautiful villa near Florence. It was a September evening, and the valley below was transfigured in the long horizontal rays of the declining sun. And then I heard a bell, such a bell as never was on land and sea, a bell whose every vibration found an echo in my innermost heart. I said to my hostess, "That is the most beautiful bell I have ever heard." "Yes," she replied, "it is an English bell." And so it was. For generations its sound had gone out over English fields, giving the hours of work and prayer to English folk from the tower of an English abbey, and then came the Reformation, and some wise Italian bought the bell whose work at home was done and sent it to the Valley of the Arno, where after four centuries it stirred the heart of a wandering Englishman and made him sick for home.'

Regarding this Lt.-Col. Gerald Thorp wrote to 'Notes and Queries': 'I have known Florence intimately since my childhood, but I never heard the story before. I recollect, however, being told that many of the church bells in the North of Italy about the Italian lakes were of English origin.'

Edward Ironsides, in his 'History and Antiquities of Twickenham,' published in 1797, says: 'The family of Corsini in Italy, I have somewhere read, raised themselves by purchasing bells at the demolition of religious houses in England.'

THE TUNING OF BELLS.—I know well by experience that not one ringer among a thousand rightly understands the scale of music; which if he did, he could immediately tell if a peal of bells were in right tune or not. I appeal to all gentlemen, masters of bell founding, whether it is not customary with them always to tune their peals in the sharp and cheerful key? To which they will answer—It really is (unless desir'd to the contrary by some very whimsical persons) from which it is clearly that tenor, lowest, or greatest bell must always be C (whether in concert pitch or not), all the lesser bells above that being in a regular diatonic order.—William Tan'sur, 'A Musical Grammar,' 1829.

(Continued from previous column.)

the long silence will enhance the joy of once more hearing their grand diapason. Many, alas, will not respond to the call!

When that call comes let not the Ringers be found wanting. May it be soon!

E. M.

HANDBELL RINGING.

A SUITABLE PEAL COMPOSITION.

By THE REV. M. C. C. MELVILLE.

In these days of restricted tower bell ringing, many ringers have discovered afresh, and many more for the first time, the fascination to be found in handbell ringing. It must be the ambition of every such little company to ring a peal, not only for their own satisfaction, but also to mark their progress in a concrete way, and in a good many cases that first peal is one of Bob Major. Judging from my own experience many new conductors are at a loss to know the most suitable composition to call for such a peal, and I trust that the hints which follow will be of value to at least some of your readers.

In handbell ringing it is important to remember that each ringer has two bells to ring, and therefore any composition which keeps each pair of bells, especially 3-4 and 5-6, interconnected, is much easier to ring than one which has, say, the sixth fixed for several courses and at the same time allows the fifth—i.e., the other bell the ringer of the sixth is ringing—to alter its position relative to the sixth in each course.

A peal which is easy both to conduct and ring is a 5,040 by Mr. E. Maurice Atkins. This peal has 5-6 at home, either right way or wrong way round, at the end of every four courses; and the basis of the peal is a round block of four courses rung twelve times:—

23456 W M H

42635 — — —
56234 — — —
35264 — — —
42356 — — —

Apart from six singles called instead of bobs—two half-way and four quarter-way—these four courses are all the conductor has to learn in order to call the peal. Notice how the calls affect the bells in this round block. In the first course 5-6 are brought together by the two bobs at W and M, where the fifth makes both bobs and so comes to course immediately after the sixth. For a whole course 5-6 are together until they come to their parted lead—i.e., where the treble is coursing between them—and then at the three successive bobs at M, H and W, these two bells are made to run in and out. In other words, 5-6, instead of coursing immediately before the tenors, as they had been doing, now find themselves coursing immediately after the tenors. For another whole course 5-6 remain together in coursing order, when, in the last course of the block of four, the calls at W and M once more put them into their plain course position by causing the sixth to make the two bobs.

And now a word about the positions of the six singles. Four of the singles are used to reverse 5-6 in every quarter, i.e., in the first, fourth, seventh and tenth parts of the peal; and the call is made instead of one of the three successive bobs when 5-6 are running in and out. It can be called at any of the three bobs, provided it is in the same place in each quarter. The usual place to make the call is at the Middle in the second course, i.e., the first of the three bobs. The other two singles are utilised to reverse two of the small bells, and Mr. Atkins reverses 2-3 by calling the singles at the Wrong of the first course in the first and seventh parts. These singles are called after the part-end, in which 4-5-6 are all at Home, namely, 23456 (at the beginning of the peal) and 32456 (at half-way). These parts with the half-way singles also have the singles at Middle to reverse 5-6; the other two singles at Middle being called after the part-ends 32465 and 23465. In other words, the four singles at Middle are called after the part-ends in which the fourth has made the bob.

In order to call a peal it is not sufficient to know the positions of all the bobs and singles, call them correctly, and trust to luck that everything will go according to plan. The conductor must know whether or not the bells are in their correct places, and if they do get wrong, to correct them immediately. Some conductors make a practice of learning off certain course or part ends in order to check the ringing as it proceeds, but it is far more satisfactory to know all the time whether or not the bells are right, and the only way this can be done is to know the coursing order of the bells, and how that order is affected by each successive call. At first sight this might seem rather a tough proposition to the inexperienced conductor, but with a little practice and preparation it should not present much difficulty. There is one big difference between learning certain part-ends of a peal and knowing the coursing order of the bells: whereas the former have to be learnt off like a string of numbers, the latter can be worked out as the peal progresses. Naturally all the coursing orders in the world will not straighten out a peal of Surprise, but owing to the simple structure of Bob Major, the coursing order in that method is far more valuable than a knowledge of course or part ends.

Mr. Atkins' peal of Bob Major is very suitable for the beginner who wishes to work out his coursing orders as he goes along because they are so regular: The bells 2-3-4 keep the same order among themselves for the whole of each part, and 5-6 work quite simply in between them.

Now a word on how this coursing order may be worked out. If we look at the figures of a plain course of Bob Major and write down the bells which lead in each row we shall get the following:—

First lead : 2-4-6-8-7-5-3-1 bringing up the Wrong position
Second lead : 3-2-4-6-8-7-5-1
Third lead : 5-3-2-4-6-8-7-1
Fourth lead : 7-5-3-2-4-6-8-1 bringing up the Before position
Fifth lead : 8-7-5-3-2-4-6-1
Sixth lead : 6-8-7-5-3-2-4-1 bringing up the Middle position
Seventh lead : 4-6-8-7-5-3-2-1 bringing up the Home position

Now these rows of figures represent the coursing order of the bells, and, apart from the position of the treble, the coursing order is the same throughout the plain course. The treble hunts through the other bells, being one place earlier each lead. If the conductor is ringing the tenors he can tell from where he meets the treble which of the seven leads is being rung, and which calling position he is coming to when the treble next leads. For example, if the conductor is ringing the tenors and in the plain course passes two bells (namely, 5 and 3) when hunting up before meeting the treble, and three bells (2, 4 and 6) after passing it, he is coming to the Wrong. Similarly, if he passes four bells before meeting the treble and one after, the next lead-end will be at Middle; while three before and two after shows that the Home is coming up. Armed with this knowledge the conductor is not only able to make certain that he is putting the calls in the right places, but can also keep the treble right should it stray.

Except for the position of the treble, the coursing order of the seven working bells never varies unless a call is made; and as the tenors are very rarely parted it is only necessary to keep in mind the coursing order of five bells, namely, 2-3-4-5-6. In the plain course, as we have already seen, that order is (8-7)-5-3-2-4-6-(8-7), the tenors coursing before the fifth and after the sixth: but all we need to remember is 5-3-2-4-6. A bob at Wrong affects the first three bells, namely, 5-3-2, and their coursing order becomes 3-2-5, with the tenors now coursing before the third instead of before the fifth. A bob at Home alters the middle three bells, 3-2-4 becoming 2-4-3; and a bob at Middle the last three, 2-4-6 becoming 4-6-2. Examine the bob at Wrong, 5-3-2 becoming 3-2-5. The bell which makes the bob is the bell which is placed two bells later in the coursing order, i.e., the 5th; the other two bells run in and out, 3 runs out, and 2 runs in. If, however, a single is called instead of a bob, the two bells that run in and out change places in their coursing order: instead of 5-3-2 becoming 3-2-5 as at a bob, it becomes 2-3-5 at a single.

Now let us take the first part of Mr. Atkins' peal and see what coursing order is produced by each call. We start from rounds and a coursing order of 5-3-2-4-6. The first call is a single at Wrong, and so we are dealing with the three bells 5-3-2. Mentally transpose the 5th after the other two bells (reversed because the call is a single) and we arrive at our new coursing order, which is 2-3-5-4-6. The next call is at Middle, think of 5-4-6, make the transposition, and we arrive at 2-3-4-6-5. After a whole course there are three calls in succession, and each call advances 5-6 in the coursing order, the other three bells making each bob in turn. Thus single at Middle, transpose the last three bells, and we arrive at 2-3-5-6-4. Bob at Home, transpose the middle three, and we have 2-5-6-3-4. Finally bob at wrong, transposing the front three, produces 5-6-2-3-4. The next two calls are at Wrong and Middle and the same bell makes the bob on both occasions. If 5-6 have been turned by a single, then 5 is brought to course immediately before the tenors, bringing up the part-end $x \times x \times 6 \times 5$; if 5-6 are not turned, then the bob bell is 6, bringing up the part-end $x \times x \times 5 \times 6$. In the first part of our peal under consideration, 5-6 have been turned and so the bob bell is 5; the bob at Wrong changing the coursing order from 5-6-2-3-4 to 6-2-5-3-4, and the bob at Middle further changing it to 6-2-3-4-5. Finally, at the end of the part, there is the bob at Home, affecting the middle three bells: 6-2-3-4-5 becoming 6-3-4-2-5.

We can now set out these coursing orders in the form of a table, showing the new coursing order after each call. For the first three parts of our peal they are as follows:—

Course end	Calling			Coursing order		
	W	M	H	Wrong	Middle	Home
43625	S	—	—	23546	23465	
65324	—	S	—		23564	25634
26354	—	—	S	56234		
43265	—	—	—	62534	62345	63425
24536	—	—	—	34625	34256	
65432	—	—	—		34562	35642
36452	—	—	—	56342		
24365	—	—	—	63542	63425	64235
32546	—	—	—	42635	42356	
65243	—	—	—		42563	45623
46253	—	—	—	56423		
32465	—	—	—	64523	64235	62345

The conductor should practise these transpositions mentally until he can carry them out practically without thinking about them, and then he will have no difficulty in doing them while the peal is in progress. It will be noticed that the coursing order of the little bells is 2-3-4 from the first single up to the bob at the part-end, when it becomes 3-4-2 for the whole of the second part, and 4-2-3 for the third part.

(Continued on next page.)

BELFRY BRAINS BUST.

A BROADCAST FORUM.

Professors at Variance.

Did any readers of 'The Ringing World,' the other night, hear the broadcast of the exchange of ideas by the 'Belfry Brains Bust'? I doubt it, because if they had I feel sure there would have been many letters to the Editor on the subject and none has yet appeared. One night I was, as I often am, much to the disgust of other members of the household, twiddling the knobs of my receiver, when my attention was suddenly arrested by the Announcer saying, 'This is the Home and Forces programme. We are now going over to the bar parlour of the Dog and Partridge, somewhere out in the country, where we shall hear the Belfry Brains Bust discussing topics of great interest. The discussions are taking place out in the country so that the enemy shall not hear them and profit by the answers which may be given.'

Naturally I pricked up my ears. A 'Belfry Brains Bust'—I had never heard of it. Even the Editor of 'The Ringing World' could not have heard of it, otherwise he must, surely, have told us something about it. There was no time for further thought, however, for the Announcer said in that casual way announcers have, 'Over to the Dog and Partridge,' as if he was in the habit of going over to the Dog and Partridge, or its counterpart, at all sorts of times in between his announcing.

And then came another Voice, 'This is the bar parlour of the Dog and Partridge.' Of course, this was almost superfluous after what the Announcer had said, but presumably it was a necessary preliminary in order that all the world might know that it *was* the bar parlour of the Dog and Partridge. And then the Voice went on:—

'We have set up here a new Forum to deal with questions relating to the Belfry, where once upon a time bells used to ring and the ringers practised what promises to become, if the war lasts long enough, a lost art. The B.B.C. has been fortunate enough to obtain the services of prominent professors to answer the questions which have been sent in to us. I may say that since we invited these questions they have descended upon us as thickly as flakes in a snow-storm or as leaves in Vallombrosia.'

I suppose the Voice thought we could choose which we liked, the flakes or the leaves, although I am sure he was lying any way as to how thick they were. But he went on, knowing full well no one could contradict him:—

'We have christened this Forum the "Belfry Brains Bust," not because we think their brains will bust, but for the sake of alliteration, which always makes a title snappy, and so we have the B.B.B. of the B.B.C.'

There were sounds of muffled laughter from behind the microphone at this piece of sparkling wit.

And then the Voice went on: 'The Belfry Brains Bust consists of Professor O. K. Pistor, Professor E. E. Ling and Dr. N. B. G.—; on account of professional etiquette, I cannot give you his name. And to obtain the opinions of the man in the belfry, so to speak, we have also got with us in the Studio, which at the moment is the bar parlour, Mr. Bob Bellrope, who has been the leader of the bellringers in this village for over seventy years. You will agree that with his vast experience Mr. Bellrope should be able to throw much light on the problems we shall have to discuss.'

At that it sounded to me as if a croaking voice somewhere near the 'miks' broke in to say, 'Hear, hear. I can that.'

And then the compere, or the master of ceremonies, or whatever they call the man who bosses the show, went on: 'We won't waste any more time, but we'll come to the first question, which is, "Why do flies go to the belfry in winter time?" That, I think, is a question which you ought to be able to answer, doctor.'

Dr. N. B. G.—cleared his throat and said he supposed flies went to the belfries in winter time because they had no better place to go. He admitted it was sometimes cold and sometimes draughty, but there might be worse places. At any rate, the flies were out of the way of small boys who might want to pull off their legs and wings. He understood there was on record a conversation between two flies who had taken to a cranny in a tower wall. The lady told her husband she was cold and that their abode was not exactly the kind of winter home she had expected to be brought to. He was rude and had evidently tired of her, so, in the language of Old Bill, made famous by Bruce Bairnsfather, he told her abruptly, 'If you know a better 'ole, go to it.' And then he went to sleep again.

Then Bob Bellrope was asked for his experience about flies in the belfry. 'I don't know why they go there, darn 'em,' he said, 'but they be a blessed nuisance when they starts waking up in the spring time. They crawl all over the place and sometimes they drop down inside my shirt collar, drat 'em. And then I have to take off me shirt to get rid of em.'

'Well now, the next question,' said the Voice, anxious apparently to avoid further personal details, 'is: "What have changes to do with change ringing?"'

Both the Professors started together to answer this and both stopped. Then, 'After you' they politely said in unison, so the Voice came to the rescue, 'Suppose we have Professor Ling first.' 'As you will,' said Professor Pistor with a touch, it seemed to me, of indignation.

'Well,' said Professor Ling, 'changes have a lot to do with change ringing. As a matter of fact, they are its essence, its whole being, the thing-o'-me-bob of the what's-its-name!'

'Yes, but there's other sorts of changes,' broke in Mr. Bellrope. 'Look at me, look at the changes in me. Ringing makes a lot of changes, and so does beer. I used to have a good complexion once, now look at my face, but I wouldn't give it up for worlds; no, I wouldn't give up me beer. And then look at my wife. Once on a time when I went home after ringing and just one at the Crown, she used to call out from her bed, "Is that you, darlin'?" I'm glad you've come home.' Now she's changed, and what does she shout when I get back after ringing and having one at the Crown, and one at the George and perhaps a couple here at the Partridge? She says, "So you've come home again, you old reprobate, have you? I shouldn't have thought it worth your while, they'll be open again in the morning."'

'Perhaps we had better not enter into that, Mr. Bellrope,' broke in the Voice, 'although I must say it rather leads up to the next question, "Why don't ringers drink as much beer as their fathers used to?"'

'That's a lie, they do,' hotly retorted Mr. Bellrope, 'leastwise all I know do. And look at me, do I look as if I don't drink as much as my father could?'

'Well, well, perhaps you do, and we will take it as the answer to the question,' said the Voice. 'Now here is a poser for the professors, "What are round blocks and transpositions?" That, I think, is one for you to tackle, Pistor.'

'Yes, that's a question which I think I can answer,' said the Professor. 'At least I think I ought to be able to, seeing that I invented them, or at least reduced them to law and order. What are round blocks and transpositions? Obviously in the first place there must be round blocks and, secondly, there must be transpositions, otherwise, of course, you could not have things called round blocks and transpositions. Why the blocks are round needs no explanation. Things that are round are—well, round. Now transposition means something totally different. It cannot be a transposition unless it has been transposed, so that when you have something which is called a transposition it is something which has been transposed either by this or by that. If it has been transposed by this it is, in a sense, this transposition; if it is transposed by that it is that transposition. Its meaning is, I think, therefore, quite clear.'

'But tell me, Pistor,' broke in Ling, 'what is the use of round blocks and transpositions? You tell us a round block is something round and a transposition is something transposed. But what use can you make of them?'

'My dear Ling,' said Pistor, 'that is where you show abysmal ignorance. Don't you know that transpositions coupled to round blocks can be made to prove anything? You can prove that the equator runs from the North to the South Pole and up the other side of the world; that the Atlantic is a swimming pool in the middle of the Pacific; that the sun is really the moon and the moon is the sun. All you need is to turn either of these things into a round block and transpose it.'

'Tosh,' muttered Ling under his breath, but it was audible over the air.

Then the doctor butted in. 'But, Professor, surely there is some further explanation needed. Where, for instance, do you get your round blocks and transpositions from?'

'That,' said Pistor, 'is really a secret which, in the interests of the country, it would not be advisable to disclose here in case it might be of advantage to the enemy. But I will add that my friend Ling can't disprove it.'

The Voice broke in, 'I am afraid we have not time to go into that to-night.'

'Hear, hear,' said Bellrope oblivious of the fact that he was still on the air. 'Landlord, bring me another pint. Professor here has transposed the last one with his empty glass.'

The Voice, hurriedly: 'We are now returning you to the Studio for the next part of the programme.'

Well, that is what I heard on the wireless the other night—or I might not have done.

O.P.Q.

THE CENTRAL COUNCIL.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir.—Do those people who have been so loud in their criticisms know anything of what has been done by the hon. secretary of the Central Council to get the ban on ringing removed or modified, or do they wilfully shut their eyes and find fault for the sake of finding fault?

A MEMBER.

HANDBELL RINGING

(Continued from previous page.)

In the second half of the peal, when 2-3 have once more been reversed by the single, the coursing orders for these three bells are 3-2-4, 2-4-3, and 4-3-2.

One final word about Mr. Atkins' peal. If it is rung in full as twelve parts of four courses each, there would be 48 courses or 5,376 changes. The last part is therefore rung as one course only with a bob at Home, thus cutting out three courses and reducing the peal to 5,040 changes.

GRANDSIRE CATERS.

THE HISTORY OF THE METHOD.

BY EDGAR C. SHEPHERD.

(Continued from page 611.)

After the visit of the College Youths the Oxford men seem to have practised hard, and in the following January felt confident enough to accept a challenge to ring a peal. Hearne writes:—

'1734, January 2nd. Wednesday, 4 noon. Christ Church bells being now in very good order, yesterday some select Oxford ringers rung them all for a wager. They were every man of them townsmen, but had received some considerable instructions from Mr. Stone, M.A., a man in orders, a good ringer himself, fellow of Wadham College. The wager was that they could not ring the five thousand and forty changes, quater or cator changes upon them. They were to have six tryals, and if upon the sixth tryal they did not do it, they were to loose. Yesterday they began (being the first tryal) just at twelve o'clock, and finished the whole twenty-seven minutes after three o'clock. This is the first time that this number of changes was ever rung in Oxford. . . . The Oxford ringers yesterday made many mistakes, so that 'twas expected they must have given over several times.

'I did not hear them till they had been at it three-quarters of an hour, but afterwards I heard them quite out until they had done, and I observed fifty-two faults in the ringing, nine of which were very considerable ones. However, take it altogether, 'twas excellent ringing, and they may glory in it.

'The most considerable fault was occasioned by Dr. Gregory, Regius Professor of Modern History and Student of Christ Church, who yesterday broke in upon the ringers, to their great disturbance.'

Hearne reported and commented on all the ringing in Oxford as assiduously and impartially as any modern music critic. His remarks on bad ringing were scathing, but he always gave credit for a good performance.

The band that rang the above 5,040 is given as follows: 1. Hearn, a Taylor, 2, Vicars, second Butler of New College, 3, George, a Taylor, 4, Guy Terry, a Pot-ash maker in St. Clement's, 5, Yates, cook of Magdalen College, 6, John Broughton, Barber, 7, Richard Smith, Glover, 8, Barnes, second cook, Christ Church, 9, Arthur Lloyd, of Holywell, Carpenter, 10, Nicholas Benwell, who shows Great Tom.

Benwell was sexton of Christ Church, and Great Tom, it will be recalled, is the subject of Lawes' fine old round, 'Great Tom is Cast.'

Enthusiasm reached a great height after the success recorded, and in the March of 1735 the same band rang 6,876 Grandsire Caters. They had had three previous attempts. Of the first attempt Hearne speaks well. Of the second attempt he has caustic comments to make.

'They had so many gross faults that 'tis not worth

while to particularise them all, only thus much may be noted, that a bob was missed being called before they had got to two hundred, and that they strangely blundered a little after they had rung 600, and so again a little after they had rang 1,100 and so after 1,400 and 1,900; and at length when they had rang 2,714 (which wants 4,162 of the whole) they were quite out, it being then three-quarters after one. . . . Had they finished the peal and done it well I should have taken care to transmit to print (in one of my books that I print at the theater) the names of the several ringers to posterity, 6,876 changes having never as yet at one time being rung in Oxford. But as the performance was bad (considering the character each ringer bore for his skill in the art of ringing) as it will not be for their credit to have their names mentioned, so neither will it be for the honour of William of Wickham to discover who the persons were that perform'd so lamely on the day he died, which day ought to be observed with all possible decorum, and the ringing should be then as clean and true as can be, for which reason I shall pass over which might be further observed in silence.'

Illness prevented Hearne from hearing the third attempt and the final success, but he was careful to inquire fully into the quality of the ringing.

'March 22nd, Saturday. On Thursday last the Oxford ringers began to ring at New College at three-quarters after twelve o'clock, and rang completely what they had attempted several times before, 6,876 cator changes, finishing the peal about three-quarters of an hour after four o'clock. 'Tis the first time such a number of cator changes was ever rung in Oxford upon ten bells. I did not hear the ringing myself for the same reason I have specified above under March 12th inst., but I have heard from good judges, that, take it altogether, 'twas a glorious performance. For though there were two very great blunders and some other bad ringing, yet considering the length of the peal, it was admirable ringing, such as can hardly be mended, unless it be by the Londoners, it being a thing as it were next to impossible to go through such a long tedious work without faults.'

The band was the same as the one that rang the 5,040 in January, 1734, and Hearne concludes by telling how the ringers 'were much caressed when they had done, and were handsomely treated or entertained at New College.'

The Society of Painswick Youths, established in 1686, has many fine ringing performances to its credit. A tablet in Painswick Church records three peals of Triples in 1731 and 1733, and the following achievements in Grandsire Caters: 8,064 in 1734, 10,080 in 1735, and 12,006 in 1737.

These were the longest lengths of caters up till that time; but, as Snowdon points out, since it was customary for ropes to change hands during long lengths,

(Continued on next page.)

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23456 O H I F

34256	—
42356	—
42635	— x
23645	—
62534	x —
25634	—
63254	— —
32654	—
32465	— x
32546	— x
25346	—
53246	—
62345	— —
24365	— —
43265	—
52364	— —
23564	—
35264	—
35426	— x
54326	—
43526	—
52436	— —
24536	—
45236	—
23456	— —

This peal has the 6th her course-end extent right, and all the 64 and 65 course-ends.

GRANDSIRE CATERS.

(Continued from previous page.)

it is probable that these were not single-handed performances.

Meanwhile, in 1735 the Eastern Scholars had rung 6,012 at Southwark, and in 1737 the Norwich Scholars exceeded the Painswick 12,006.

The grand old church of St. Peter Mancroft had already seen some historic performances. In 1715 the first complete peal ever rung (Bob Triples) was performed there; in 1718 the first 5,040 of Grandsire Triples; and in 1731 the first peal of Stedman Triples. In 1736 the bells were augmented to ten, and in the following year the famous 12,600 was rung. The following is a copy of the tablet:—

'On March 8th, 1737, was rung a peal of Grandsire Caters, which for excellency of its ringers. Harmonious changes, and ye number of them, was certainly superior to anything of its kind ever done in the World; and to Remove all doubt of the truth of the performance several ingenious Ringers were abroad the whole time with proper rules to prove the certainty of ye same. Thus was the great peal perfectly compleated to the entire satisfaction, surprise and amazement of thousands of hearers in the space of 8 hrs. 15 mins. The number of changes were 12,600, rung by 9 men of the company then belonging to the company. The tenor singly, by a young ringer 8000, then a second ringer rung her to the end of the peal. The persons' names and the bells they rung as follows:

Tho. Melchior, 1; Wm. Pettingall, 2; John Gardiner, 3; Tho. Barrett, 4; Robert Crane, 5; Wm. Porter, 6; Tho. Blofield, 7; Edwd. Crane, 8; Chrstr. Booty, 9; James Jerrom, Robt. Liddamon, Tenor.'

There is no trace of the composition. Mr. C. E. Borrett says that the peal is referred to locally as the 'Hundred Courses.' It certainly is the same length as one hundred plain courses, but there does not seem to be any way in which a composition of this length can be obtained in full courses by the use of ordinary bobs. Nevertheless, it was a fine performance, and well in keeping with the grand traditions of the Norwich ringers. ● (To be continued.)

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.

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

HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—Meeting at the Studios, Falconer Road, Bushey, Saturday, December 27th. Handbells from 3 p.m. Tea 5 p.m. All welcome.—H. G. Cashmore, 24, Muriel Avenue, Watford.

ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—North-Eastern Division.—The annual district meeting will be held at St. Peter's, Colchester, on Saturday, January 3rd. Handbells available 2.30 p.m. Service in church at 4 p.m. Tea you must all bring with you, as at previous meetings. Will members please note that subscriptions for 1942 will be due at this meeting. May I appeal to everyone, including our friends over the border in the Northern Division, to come and make this meeting a great success, and show the new Vicar of St. Peter's that the North-Eastern Division is very much alive?—Leslie Wright, Lower Barn Farm, Dedham.

ST. MARTIN'S GUILD FOR THE DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM (Established 1755).—Annual meeting will be held at the Tamworth Arms, Moor Street, Birmingham, on Saturday, January 3rd, commencing at 6.15 p.m. prompt.—T. H. Reeves, Hon. Sec., 136, Newton Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham, 11.

NORWICH DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—A meeting will be held at St. Giles', Norwich, on Saturday, January 10th. Bells (silent) 2.30. Service 3.45. Tea in St. Giles' Parish Hall, Cow Hill, 4.30, followed by business meeting and handbells. Numbers for tea by January 3rd, please.—A. G. G. Thurlow, Gen. Sec., 52, The Close, Norwich.

BATH AND WELLS ASSOCIATION.—Axbridge Deanery Branch.—A meeting will be had at Yatton on Saturday, Jan. 3rd, 1942. Bells with ringing apparatus available 2.30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Service 3 p.m. Tea and business meeting 4 p.m. Names for tea to Mr. L. Pullin, High Street, Yatton, by Dec. 31st. — E. J. Avery, Hon. Local Sec., Sandford.

ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—Northern Division.—The annual district meeting will be held at Bocking on Saturday, Jan. 10th, 1942. It is hoped all the members who are able will make a special effort to attend. Six 'silent' bells available, also handbell ringing. Service and business meeting.—Hilda G. Snowden, Hon. Dis. Sec.

GREETINGS.

The compliments of the season to all ringing friends from all at Glyn Garth, Surfleet.

Season's greetings to all brother bellringers from W. H. Fussell, Slough.

SWINDON.—On Tuesday, December 2nd, in the vestry of Christ Church, a plain course of Grandsire Sextuples on handbells: G. Townsend 1-2, C. J. Gardiner 3-4, W. B. Kynaston 5-6, J. S. Roberts 7-8, M. C. C. Melville 9-10, I. C. N. Bell 11-12, D. W. S. Smout 13-14. This is the first course of Sextuples rung in Swindon, and every ringer is a resident in the town.

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Printed for the Proprietor by the Woodbridge Press, Ltd., Guildford, and Published by the Bells House Publishing Co., Ltd., Breams Buildings, London, E.C.4.