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SEVEN-BELL RINGING.

In his short letter published in our last issue, Mr. Edwin Barnett raises a matter of considerable interest. Why, he asks, has Court Bob Triples never been popular? and we may amend and amplify his question and ask, 'Why has there been so little development in method ringing on seven bells compared to that on other numbers?'

The fact is undoubted. Though, probably, the majority of the ringing in eight-bell towers is Triples, it is practically confined to two methods, Grandsire and Stedman. When a band turns its tenor in, there are, even for average ringers, several methods they can practise, while for the more expert the selection is wide and varied. During these last fifty years scores of new Major methods have been rung and some have been added to the group of standard methods, but actually fewer Triples methods are rung now than during the closing years of the last century. Then, in addition to Stedman and Grandsire, Bob Triples was rung regularly, and not only so but Oxford Bob and Court Bob were beginning to be popular in different parts of the country.

Bob Triples was killed by the action of the Central Council, and we need shed no more than a sentimental tear over its disappearance; but the others are first-class methods which should form a useful addition to ringers' repertoires. They belong to a group of eleven methods, all with a bell-in-the-hunt like Grandsire, and four of them, Court and Double Court, Oxford Bob and Double Oxford Bob, were introduced to the Exercise as far back as Shipway's book. Joseph J. Parker did much to popularise Oxford Bob, and for a considerable time it looked as though it was going to take a regular place among the standard methods. Court Bob had also some vogue, though not so long or so widespread as the other. Double Court, which in some respects is the ideal seven-bell method, was most unaccountably neglected, and the only peal so far rung of it was the one at Ealing in recent years, conducted by Mr. Ernest Turner. Double Oxford has had scarcely more attention, the first peal being rung at Chester in 1908, with Mr. Edwin Lewis as conductor.

For bands whose capacity is not yet developed enough to tackle Major ringing, and who are practically confined to Grandsire, Oxford Bob supplies an ideal alternative. It is very similar and just as easy, while the method is fully worthy of the attention of men who are able to ring a variety of other methods. So are the rest, but they are neglected, and the hopes that the Central Council's book

(Continued on page 96.)

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on Triples would do something to alter the neglect have not so far been realised.

Several reasons can be, and have been, given for this. There is a charm about the music and rhythm of Major ringing which is largely lacking in Triples, though when we think of the long and widespread popularity of Stedman and Grandsire, we are not disposed to attach too much importance to that point. There is the lure of the title 'Surprise,' which has deluded so many into the feeling that only the methods in that class are really worth striving after. And there is the deep-seated conservatism of the Exercise which impels men to keep to the old things or, if they make progress, to progress in the old fashion. Years ago, a band's development followed a fixed path. If they began with Grandsire, they went on in due course to Stedman, and there usually they stopped. If they began with Plain Bob, they went on to Treble Bob, Double Norwich, and with luck to Superlative, Cambridge and London. Perhaps they stopped for a little to take in Stedman on the way. Of late years there has been far greater development of method ringing, yet it is notable how much it has conformed to the old pattern. Most of the new methods rung have been Surprise, and the merits of the plain Major methods have only just begun to be recognised. It is a good and healthy sign that they are being recognised, and perhaps it will lead on to a recognition of the merits of the Triples methods.

One other reason for the neglect of the seven-bell methods may be found in the fact that they are not easy to call. It takes more skill and knowledge to conduct a peal of Grandsire Triples than to conduct a peal of Superlative Surprise Major, and the other Triples methods are not less difficult to call. There is also the necessity of using Holt's singles in them, and to modern ringers Holt's singles appear as something abnormal and displeasing. Their use has practically been dropped in Grandsire, and the Ten-part, magnificent composition though it be, is almost obsolete. But their use cannot be dropped in Oxford Bob, Court and the others, and that is a disadvantage. However, we hope that when the time of reconstruction comes, ringers will bear these Triples methods in mind, for we believe they would prove to be very useful.

A FALSE REPORT.

Among the extracts from 'The Norwich Mercury' of more than a century ago sent us by Mr. Charles E. Borrett is the following:—
Dagenham, Essex. On Saturday Oct. 5th 1804 the Society of Cumberland Youths opened the new peal of bells on which they rang 7008 changes of Oxford Triple Bob Majors in 4 hours 49 minutes, but as they were commencing another peal in the evening Mr. Channon Master of the Society got his leg entangled in the rope which drew him to the next loft and falling on his head, he was killed on the spot.

The account reads very circumstantially, but it certainly is not true. The record of no such peal appears in the 'Cumberland's' peal book, and we believe that at the time there were only six bells at Dagenham. Less than six weeks after he was supposed to have been killed, Malachi Channon rang the treble to 5,039 Grandsire Caters at Shore-ditch. His last peal was one of Treble Bob at Bethnal Green on September 26th, 1819. It was rung by his 'particular desire, it being the last he intended to ring, he having been a member of the society 52 years and 72 years of age.'

Channon lived to a good old age and Matthew Wood told Mr. Albert A. Hughes that as a boy he remembered him at Bethnal Green.

The writer of the paragraph in the 'Mercury' probably got hold of some rumour of another tale which was told about the elder George Gross. He was said to have got his foot entangled in the rope while trying to adjust the buckle of his breeches when ringing, and to have been badly hurt. That tale as told is also obviously inaccurate, for Gross was ringing peals when he was supposed to be suffering from a dislocated shoulder.

This is one piece more of evidence that old newspaper reports about ringing have to be very carefully tested before they can be accepted as true history.

SIX BELL PEAL.

DUBLIN.

THE IRISH ASSOCIATION.

On Sunday, February 15, 1942, in Two Hours and Fifty-Two Minutes,

AT THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE, *

A PEAL OF GRANDSIRE DOUBLES, 5040 CHANGES;

Tenor 14½ cwt.

ARTHUR WORRELL Treble	DAVID MCGREGOR 4
FRED E. DUKES 2	WILLIAM E. HALL 5
MISS ADA C. DUKES 3	WILLIAM MCGREGOR Tenor

Conducted by FRED E. DUKES.

First peal. Rung with the bells half-muffled in memory of the late Gabriel Lindoff.

HANDBELL PEALS.

PRESTON, LANCASHIRE.

THE LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.

On Saturday, February 21, 1942, in Two Hours and Twelve Minutes,

IN THE BELFRY OF THE PARISH CHURCH,

A PEAL OF SPLICED TREBLE BOB MINOR, 5040 CHANGES;

Being seven extents in thirteen methods, viz.: (1) Willesden, College Bob IV. and Old Oxford Delight; (2) Wragby, St. Albans and Neasden Delight; (3) Norbury and College Exercise Treble Bob; (4) College Exercise and Duke of Norfolk Treble Bob; (5) Kingston and Oxford Treble Bob; (6) London Scholars' Pleasure and Oxford Treble Bob; (7) Sandal and Oxford Treble Bob. Tenor size 15 in C.

E. ROGER MARTIN 1-2	C. KENNETH LEWIS 3-4
CYRIL CROSSWHITE 5-6	

Conducted by C. K. LEWIS.

First peal in 13 methods 'in hand' by all. First peal in 13 methods by the association. There were 39 changes of method.

CAMBRIDGE.

THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY GUILD.

On Saturday, February 21, 1942, in Two Hours and Seven Minutes,

AT ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE,

A PEAL OF KENT TREBLE BOB MINOR, 5040 CHANGES;

Seven different extents.

Tenor size 13 in E.

REV. A. C. BLYTH	KENNETH S. B. CROFT
(Selwyn) 1-2	(St. John's) 3-4
ROGER LEIGH (St. Catharine's) 5-6	

Conducted by ROGER LEIGH.

First peal of Kent Treble Bob by all.

KENT VETERAN'S DEATH.

SERVED UNDER SIX VICARS.

The death occurred on February 15th at Charing, Kent, of Wallace Charles Good, at the age of 76 years. Mr. Good was born at Chelmondiston, Suffolk, later moving to Sproughton, where one of his boyhood friends was the late Charles Mee. He went to Charing when a young man, where he learned to ring and joined the choir in 1885, and so had been a ringer and chorister for over 56 years, serving under six vicars. He was a member of the Kent County Association. On completing 50 years' service he was presented with a chiming clock by the parishioners.

Mr. Good rang for the Golden and Diamond Jubilees and the funeral of Queen Victoria, the Coronation and funeral of King Edward, the Coronation, Silver Jubilee and funeral of King George V., and the Coronation of King George VI.

The funeral took place at St. Peter and Paul's Church, Charing, on February 16th. He leaves a widow and three ringing sons in bereavement.

LEICESTERSHIRE RINGER'S DEATH.

MR. STORER WEST'S FIFTY YEARS' SERVICE.

We regret to record the death at the age of 71 years of Mr. Storer Whitcraft West, of Whitwick, Leicestershire, who passed away on January 27th. Last September he completed fifty years as a bell-ringer, and he had also served the church and parish in other capacities with equal loyalty. He had been three times churchwarden for a total period of 17 years, besides being a chorister and Sunday School teacher. He had also served for many years as one of the managers of the Day Schools. In these directions he had devoted his long life to the service of his fellow parishioners, but, married on August 7th, 1893, Mr. and Mrs. Storer have been denied their golden wedding to which they were looking forward. In addition to the widow, four daughters, all married, are left in bereavement.

Mr. West, who had rung a number of peals, first joined the Midland Counties Association on October 26th, 1895, and was well known and highly respected among ringers in Leicestershire.

BELFRY TRAGEDY.

FATAL ACCIDENT AT ST. GILES'-IN-THE-FIELDS.

A sad tragedy occurred in the tower of St. Giles'-in-the-Fields, London, last week, when as the result of an accident Mr. Reginald Edward Geare, one of the churchwardens and a ringer, who was also a fire watcher, lost his life.

The curate of the church, the Rev. Joseph Jones, heard one of the bells sound once, and went to find out what had happened. He noticed blood trickling from the floor above into the porch.

Hurrying upstairs with other church officials, he found Mr. Geare dead on the first floor. Only a few minutes before deceased had received the Sacrament from the curate at the altar.

At the inquest on Saturday it was suggested that deceased might have gone to the bell chamber to fill a fire bucket. The flap of a trap door through which the bell rope runs on to the second floor gave way and he fell with it, fracturing his skull.

A verdict of 'Accidental death' was returned.

Mr. Geare, who was 65 years of age, although not a very skilled ringer, was the mainstay and secretary of the band formed some few years ago at St. Giles'. The respect in which he was held by members of the Middlesex County Association was shown by the fact that he was elected to a seat on the Central Committee.

The funeral was on Monday. It was conducted by the Rector of St. Giles' and was attended by the Mayor and Corporation of the Borough of Holborn. The principal mourners were Mr. Geare's brother and sister, and Mr. Albert W. Coles represented the Middlesex County Association and London Diocesan Guild. The interment was at Wallington Cemetery.

A memorial service for Mr. Geare will be held at St. Giles'-in-the-Fields on Sunday next at 11 a.m., and the Rector would like to see as many ringers present as possible.

STOCKPORT SOCIETY'S LOSS

DEATH OF MR. G. L. BURGESS.

The death has occurred at Stockport of Mr. George Leonard Burgess, for the past eight or nine years secretary of St. George's Society of Ringers. Mr. Burgess, who leaves a widow, and one daughter, underwent a serious operation last year, from which he recovered sufficiently to resume his work for the borough gas department. Unfortunately, a relapse occurred recently and he succumbed on February 15th, at the early age of 39 years.

The funeral service at St. George's on Wednesday week was conducted by the Rev. T. A. Parker, who subsequently read the committal prayers at the crematorium. Besides four brothers and two sisters present, eight of his ringing comrades attended the service, including Mr. Hiram Meakin, 'father' of the society, now 75 years old, and Mr. A. Barnes of Reddish, also in the seventies, who braved the bitterly cold wind to be present. Two ringers, with two of the deceased's workmates, acted as bearers.

In spite of a rather frail physique, Mr. Burgess had rung a few peals, including Bob Major (the first of Major on the bells), Bob Royal, Oxford and Kent Treble Bob Major, and Stedman Triples, and invariably did his best to be present for Sunday ringing. He may perhaps be best remembered for his undoubted gift as organiser of the society's summer outings. Three or four of these, among the towers of Cheshire and Derbyshire, will ever remain high spots in the memory of those privileged to take part in them. The society mourn the loss of a genial and good comrade.

SEXTON FOR 65 YEARS.

DEATH OF MR. W. A. TANTON AT LYMINGE.

At the advanced age of 88 years, another pioneer of change ringing in Kent has passed away in the person of Mr. William Albert Tanton, of Lyminge, who died on February 13th. He had been sexton at Lyminge Parish Church since 1877, and two lead boards hang in the tower commemorating his completion of 50 and 60 years' service respectively.

During this long period he had taught many ringers, among the best known being Mr. Louis Head and the late Mr. John H. Cheesman.

Mr. Tanton had not rung many peals himself, but his first was scored as long ago as 1882—a peal of Bob Minor, when Lyminge had only six bells.

There were many friends present at the funeral service on Monday week, including Mr. J. Andrews, of the local band, and Mr. Louis Head. Two of the deceased's favourite hymns were sung, 'Let saints on earth' and 'Jerusalem the golden.' He was laid to rest beside his first Vicar, the Rev. Canon Jenkins.

It was with the greatest regret that Mr. A. Castle, of Fulham, could not be present at the funeral, 'for,' he writes, 'Bert Tanton had been indeed a rare old friend since 1892—ever ready to help and give the best advice both in striking and method ringing. It was something of a tragedy that, as in the case of so many departed ringers in these days, no bells could be rung to mark the passing of this old and loyal servant of the Church.'

THE BELLS OF LONDON.

(Continued from page 89.)

SOME EARLY USES.

In the provinces and especially in the villages the morning bell and the curfew continued to be rung generally until the nineteenth century, not because they were interesting survivals from the past; but because they supplied a real want. When that want was met by other means the use gradually died out, though long established custom prolonged it further than would otherwise have been the case.

The morning bell was a general summons to men that it was time to begin work; the curfew was a notice that the day's toil was done. 'I ring at six to let men know,' says the inscription on a Coventry bell, 'When to and from their work to go'; and a bell at St. Ives by Henry Penn, of Peterborough, has, 'Arise and go about your business.'

The evening bell was for ages intimately associated with the close of the day in the English countryside, and has inspired one or two passages of supreme poetry. Milton's lines in 'Il Penseroso':—

Oft on a plat of rising ground
I hear the far-off curfew sound
Over some wide-watered shore
Swinging slow with sullen roar,

give the very spirit of a noble tenor heard in the distance, on a quiet evening across an English landscape; and only a supreme master of the use of words would have thought of such an adjective as 'sullen' in connection with a bell. Here Milton consciously or unconsciously followed Shakespeare.

Just as familiar and equally fine is the superb description of nightfall in the opening stanzas of Gray's 'Elegy,' where the first line, 'The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,' with its long open vowel sounds, strikes the solemn keynote of the whole poem.

There is, perhaps, only one other passage in poetry that I should care to put alongside these two and Shakespeare's reference to the passing bell, and that is Tennyson's 'Twilight and evening bell, and after that the dark.' Bells are often mentioned by poets, but these four are perhaps the only instances where they come into really great poetry. Three of them concern the curfew and that shows how much the bell counted for in the life of the people.

In the middle years of the nineteenth century there were still scores of towers where both morning and evening bells were rung; but every year saw the number getting less. In a few places the custom lasted into the present century, but little survived the first great war.

The early morning bell, naturally, was the first to go. It required some effort on the part of the sexton to get up every morning in time to ring the bell at five or six o'clock, and when other people ceased to bother about whether he did it or not why should he trouble himself? Also its lapse may in places have been hastened by similar reasons to those that led to it being discontinued at Hammersmith, where, in the reign of George I., an invalid parishioner, named Martin, found it an intolerable nuisance. He offered to erect a cupola on the church steeple with a bell to strike the hours if the ringing were stopped, and the parish agreed to accept the offer, but a later churchwarden resumed the practice. Martin then appealed to the law and the Earl of Macclesfield, Lord

Chancellor, granted him an injunction, restraining the churchwardens from having the bell rung.

This case is sometimes cited as an instance of an aggrieved parishioner procuring by legal process the cessation of bell ringing; but the injunction was granted on the grounds that the parish had entered into an agreement in return for a valuable consideration, and had broken the agreement.

At Pershore in 1894, although the curfew was still rung at eight o'clock in the evening from November 5th until Candlemas Day, the morning bell, which used to be rung at five o'clock, had been discontinued. The reason given was that the old sexton, whose name was Blake, one day mistook the time and rang five hours too early.

In several places the ringing of the evening bell was endowed. In 1472 John Donne, mercer, gave to the parson and churchwardens of St. Mary-le-Bow a tenement with the appurtenances to the maintenance of Bow Bell and the nightly ringing of it. Sometimes the gift was associated with the delivery of the donor from some danger. Thus the Ashburton bell at Chelsea old church was given by Thomas Ashburton in 1679 and endowed with money so that it could be rung every evening at nine o'clock, because on one dark night he lost his way and was in great danger of falling into the river when the sound of the bell from the church steeple warned him of his peril. Chelsea old church was destroyed in a recent air raid, but what happened to the Ashburton bell, which had not been used since 1822, I do not know.

John of Colton, citizen of Norwich, in his will, dated January 9th, 1457, directed that his body should be buried in St. Giles' Church. 'I give and devise a piece of land containing one acre with its appurtenances in Heygham-next-Norwich to the parishioners of the said church, on condition that they for ever cause the ringing called curfew bell faithfully to be observed in the said church every night.' Kirkpatrick, the Norwich antiquary, notes from a deed of 1474 that the land was called Colton's acre and that the ringing was to be during one quarter of the ninth hour. Tradition says that Colton, coming home towards the city late one night, lost his way and would have walked into the river and been drowned, had he not heard the great bell of St. Giles'.

'For ever' is a long time. The bell was duly rung during nearly four and a half centuries after the testator's death, but the custom ceased some fifty years ago. I have a personal interest in this curfew, for, by means of it, I first learned to handle a bell. I and my contemporaries, in our earliest ringing days, were, I think, the last to 'put the curfew out' at St. Giles'.

The curfew was also endowed at the neighbouring parish of St. Peter Mancroft. Peter Read gave his house in St. Lawrence's parish to the end that the great bell of St. Peter Mancroft should for ever be rung at 4 o'clock a.m. and 8 o'clock p.m. for the help and benefit of travellers. This house came into the hands of the parish in 1569 and was said to be given for 'the ringing of the Bow Bell called the 4 o'clock and 8 o'clock.' In my time the ringing of both morning and evening bells had ceased, though the latter was a recent memory.

The title 'Bow Bell' seems to have been generally used all over the country for the evening bell, and shows that the bells of Cheapside were already famous. In 1467 the Ordinances of Worcester decreed—'Also the

Bow belle accustomed in the seid citie to be rongen at ix of the belle to be contynowed yerly for grete ease of the said citie. The paryish clark ther to have his fees accustomed therfore.'

In addition to the morning and evening bells, which at one time were rung from practically every steeple in the land, a mid-day bell was rung in many places. Like the others, this was a civic use and was for the purpose of letting people know the time.

In the case of the evening bell there is no doubt that in its origin and its use throughout it was primarily a secular one, though for a time it was associated with the Angelus. The morning bell probably served the double purpose of ringing for the service of prime and the beginning of the secular day, and in a similar fashion the mid-day bell may have served a double purpose, religious and secular. In the nineteenth century antiquarians like Henry Thomas Ellacombe saw in the ringing for medieval church services the origin of all the uses that had survived. 'Bells rung at strange times and called by strange names are all lingering relics of the Angelus or Ave bell, which, previous to the Reformation, was rung in every parish church morning, noon, and evening, where practicable, in memory of our Saviour becoming man for us and our salvation, and of the morrow Mass bell. The people had so long been accustomed to their sound, and they became so useful for social purposes, that they continued after the Reformation, when they were given new names.'

So wrote Ellacombe in 'Church Bells' in 1872, but though there may be some truth in what he said, I do not think it is all or most of the truth. Church bells and the church fabric served in the Middle Ages wider purposes than merely religious services. They had their

place in the social and civic life of the people and ministered to many purely secular needs. Ellacombe, and those who thought as he did, were engaged in a crusade against what they considered the profanation of church bells in their time, and they looked back to the Middle Ages as a period when bells were considered to be sacred objects not rung for any profane or secular purposes, or by any persons who were not properly ordained to the office.

In another letter to 'Church Bells' (1871) Ellacombe said that in pre-Reformation times all the bells were rung from the floor of the church and in the presence of the congregation, 'and there was another thing which would have made it very inconvenient for a ringer of those days to climb up a narrow winding staircase of a tower, that he was vested in *camisia*, which was put on him when he received minor orders. After the Reformation, the ringers, being no longer in minor orders and church discipline much relaxed, the evil extended to the belfries, just as it affected the musical services of the church when the singers were expelled from the chancels to galleries at the west end set up for their own special accommodation.' Such evidence as there is entirely contradicts these opinions and they appear to be merely unfounded conjecture.

RINGING, TOLLING AND CHIMING.—The great superiority of tone of bell's ringing over tolling and even tolling over striking by a clock hammer has often been noticed, but never accounted for. I think the explanation is this:—It is now known well that the note of an approaching sound like a railway whistle is sharper than when it is receding because the velocity of transit is added to or subtracted from the velocity of vibration which fixes the note. The bell in full swing, while it also vibrates from the blow, is always sending out vibrations of slightly different velocity.—Sir Edmund Beckett (Lord Grimthorpe).

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BELFRY GOSSIP.

In response to the appeal made in our issue of February 6th by the Rev. W. F. E. Burnley, Chaplain to the Forces, Mr. Charles Dean, of Croydon, has sent a set of fourteen handbells to Gibraltar. His generous action was made possible by the co-operation of the Colonial Office.

The peal of Kent Treble Bob Minor on handbells by Cambridge University Guild was rung after meeting short for Bob Major. It had been the Guild's intention to attempt a peal of Kent before the end of term, so it was suggested that this opportunity should be taken. The attempt was successful, and great credit is due to the conductor, who was able to call seven 720's at such short notice.

Another interesting performance recorded this week is a peal of Treble Bob Minor on handbells in thirteen methods, rung at Preston, Lancs. It was the first peal of Minor in 13 methods by the Lancashire Association. There was obviously nothing unlucky about the number 13 in this case.

The first peal of Double Norwich Court Bob Major on handbells was rung at Cambridge on February 23rd, 1891. Henry Law James called it and the composition was by Mr. E. Bankes James.

On February 25th, 1777, the Leicester company rang 10,080 changes of Grandsire Caters. This is the peal composed by John Martin, of which Mr. Edgar Shepherd recently gave us very interesting information.

On the same date in 1889 John Carter called at Walsall 10,032 Grandsire Major, the longest length rung in the method.

The Senior Society of Cumberland Youths rang on February 26th, 1805, 6,129 Stedman Caters composed and called by the younger George Gross. It remained the record length for 40 years.

A peal of Bob Royal rung on handbells at Abingdon on February 26th, 1777, may have been the first double-handed peal in the method, but there is at least the possibility that it was lapped as so many of the early performances were.

John Briant, the bellfounder, of Hertford, died on February 27th, 1829.

Fifty years ago to-day eight peals were rung. They consisted of Grandsire Triples 2, Stedman Triples 1, Kent Treble Bob Major 2, Oxford 1, Double Norwich Court Bob Major 1, and Minor 1.

Ten years ago to-day 24 peals were rung. They consisted of Bob Major 2, Canterbury Pleasure Major 1, Stedman Triples 2, Kent Treble Bob Major 3, Oxford 1, Little Bob Major 1, Double Norwich Court Bob Major 1, Cambridge Surprise Major 2, Bristol 1, London 1, Spliced 1, Grandsire Caters 2, New Cambridge Surprise Royal 1, and Minor 5.

ELLACOMBE AND CHANGE RINGING.

HIS ACTIVITY IN DEVON.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—It is to be hoped that Mr. Trollope will give us his authority for numbering the Rev. H. T. Ellacombe among those for whom 'change ringing had scant interest.' It is true that Mr. Trollope qualifies this statement by acknowledging that 'Ellacombe was to some extent an exception'; but the general trend of the article is that Mr. Ellacombe, in company with numerous other well-known authorities on bells, had but lukewarm interest in practical ringing.

A very cursory examination of Ellacombe's famous 'Church Bells of Devonshire' would produce much evidence in a contrary sense. For example, on page 256 he writes: 'The peals of bells are generally very badly hung, very few are fitted with stays and slides, the ropes are too heavy, and without tufting for the sally; certainly most discouraging to scientific ringing.'

In his lists of bells in the various churches of the county he includes the first recorded performances of change ringing in the following towers: Clyst St. George, Devonport Dockyard, Kelly, Milton Damerel, Plympton St. Mary. It is indeed evident that he went to considerable trouble to verify the beginnings of change ringing in Devon.

Further, on two separate occasions he obtained skilled bands of ringers, once from Bristol and once from London, who rang various methods, including Grandsire (Doubles and Minor), Stedman, Plain Bob and Treble Bob, on the bells of Clyst St. George. In the middle of the last century this was no small undertaking and must have involved him personally in considerable expense. On the second of these occasions he himself shared in the ringing.

How far it is true that 'he did not progress much further than Grandsire Doubles' I do not know, but to those who are aware that most of his lifework was done in isolated country parishes with little if any opportunity for practice, that he was able to ring Grandsire Doubles (as was unquestionably the case) is evidence of real keenness and enthusiasm.

And on the top of all this when over 80 years of age he was one of the founders of the Guild of Devonshire Ringers, the first territorial association of change ringers in England. It is at least probable that his own enthusiasm was mainly responsible for its establishment.

E. S. POWELL.

Staverton Vicarage, Daventry.

ANONYMITY.

USE THE WASTE PAPER BASKET.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—Your recent defence of the practice of publishing letters written over a nom-de-plume appears to be to be somewhat unconvincing. There are only two points in the article with which I can entirely agree; one is that some readers do not like anonymous letters, the other is that the man who behind the screen of anonymity unfairly attacks another is condemned as a despicable character.

But where do you draw the dividing line? How far would you allow an anonymous writer to go before either using the blue pencil or refusing to publish the letter? I suggest to you that there have been several letters published recently which should have had the writers' names appended. There was a lengthy correspondence in which a person who called himself 'Anti-Silent' not only called upon 'somebody to do something,' but was somewhat abusive because other people would not agree with him. Later another correspondent who wrote over the nom-de-plume of 'Looking Forward,' referring to the National Association proposal, said that the benefits must be apparent to everyone, and then set about the 'older members of the Exercise who are too much set in their old ways and satisfied with things as they are,' concluding his outburst by calling for the scrapping of these old fogies if necessary!

Then there was a letter signed 'A Member' in your issue of January 16th, the last paragraph of which was, to say the least of it, in very bad taste.

More recently, too, another anonymous person, referring to a resolution passed by the North Staffordshire Association, asked for reasons why the resolution was passed, adding, 'To these questions I could add certain other remarks, but intend reserving the same pending a reply from a responsible source.' Responsible, indeed! Is not one of our affiliated associations responsible enough without being called to account by a person who gives members of that association no opportunity of judging if he is himself 'responsible'?

I venture to suggest to you, Mr. Editor, that letters of the type I have drawn attention to should be consigned to the waste paper basket, even though the insertion of them may stir up some sort of excitement in the minds of a few of your readers. The majority, I believe, do not like anonymous letters, especially as we members of the Ringing Exercise are generally well known to one another.

Your statement that 'The Times,' amongst other great newspapers, inserts anonymous letters may be true, but it is only on very rare occasions that one is published, and then it does not infringe in any way on the niceties of correspondence. During the past week, for instance, 49 letters were published in that paper, of which two only were anonymous, and in neither of which were any personal matters dealt with. It is admitted that it may be difficult to say what is strictly fair or otherwise, but I think that in all cases where there is the slightest infringement of decency then the letter should be excluded. Many of your correspondents, like the late William Willson and James Hunt, could hit hard in correspondence, but they were not afraid to sign their letters, and they were highly respected for so doing. Not so the anonymous writer, who can never command respect.

Higams Park, E.4.

C. T. COLES.

THE PERSONAL FACTOR.

Sir,—There was a time when I used to think, like many of your readers, that if a person's letters or articles were worth anything, they were worth his or her own name being put to them, but of late years I have come to regard this as a cheap 'cry or excuse' by a section of people. They are usually the people who hate rivalry and are all right while they can be holding the reins. Whether in verbal debate or in written correspondence, the person to them will always come before the subject; but it is strange how these people will sometimes express complete agreement with the same sentences when they don't know the name of the person who is writing. I have proved time and again that there is nothing like a nom-de-plume for 'catching these people out.'

I well remember writing to 'The Ringing World' once under a nom-de-plume, and the day following the appearance of my letter sitting opposite one of my bitterest opponents at a tea table at a ringing meeting. Needless to say, the man was one who had an old-standing grudge, and it wouldn't matter what I said it would always be wrong.

On this occasion it so happened that the topic I had written about started a conversation at the table, and I well remember the individual concerned 'jumping in' with the remark, 'Ah, didn't ole so and so (mentioning the nom-de-plume) put a jolly good bit in "The Ringing World" yesterday!' Then he turned to one of his pals and continued, 'It's about right what he says, you know, Lou!'

I laughed to myself until he had finished talking and praising my letter, then I butted in with saying, 'Well, do you know who wrote that letter?' He replied sarcastically, 'No, nor more do you!' I then 'let the cat out,' 'Well, you happen to be talking to the very man,' I said.

Rather than shake hands the man got up with his cup of tea in his hand and went and sat at another table across the room with his back to me and beckoned his three pals over to join him—and so the enmity continues to this day.

(Continued in next column.)

THE RINGERS' CONFERENCE.

MOTIONS BY MARCH 7th.

We hope to publish a preliminary agenda in our issue of Friday, March 13th. We hope, therefore, that those who have motions to propose will send them in time to reach us by Saturday in next week, March 7th.

The motions may be on any subject relating to bells, bell ringing, or ringing organisations, and should be accompanied by the names of the proposer and seconder.

Proposers and seconders, also, should lose no time in preparing their speeches, ready for insertion in our columns, and, by way of an early hint, we would like to remind those who will contribute that they should be prepared to send in their 'speeches' immediately on the appearance of the proposer's and seconder's contributions. If everyone waits before writing to see what everybody else says, the discussions will be hung up.

Motions by March 7th to—

THE RINGERS' CONFERENCE,
'THE RINGING WORLD' OFFICE,
LOWER PYRFORD ROAD,
WOKING, SURREY.

IRISH SECRETARY'S VIEWS.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I have read with great interest the correspondence regarding the Ringers' Conference. I agree with all that has been written in support of the project, which certainly should stimulate the Exercise.

The decisions arrived at will be a guide to the Central Council as to the side they should take, and discussions at the Central Council should be considerably reduced because perhaps most of the views will have been ventilated in 'The Ringing World.'

Much has been written recently regarding a National Association. I am opposed to such a scheme, but it would be worth while discussing whether it would be a benefit to ringing or not. Personally, I do not see that such an association would be a benefit, as we already have a Central Council.

With best wishes for the success of the Conference and hoping to be able to take part in the discussions.

FRED E. DUKES,
Assistant Hon. Sec., Irish Association.

Dublin

TAPPING PEALS.

WHY ARE NOT MORE DONE?

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—Thirty years ago I tapped a few peals of Minor, including a 7,200 in ten plain methods and a 5,040 in seven Surprise methods, but I have not previously taken part in any correspondence on tapping.

Peals can be rung on tower bells, on handbells or tapped, and they have to be composed. In a spirit of friendly competition we can try to beat each other's records in any of these four branches of ringing. Tapping appears to be either the least attractive or the most difficult, because in the whole history of ringing, peals (on six or more bells) have been tapped by four men only. Their names in order of date are Roberts, Segar, Broyd and Morris.

Many conductors have spent weeks in picking a band and obtaining permission, etc., sometimes to meet one short on the day. A tapper has none of these difficulties. He can go for a peal any time of the day or night convenient to his umpire and himself.

Men of ability, great energy and plenty of spare time now count their peals in hundreds. Some of them can tap even London Surprise Major. It would be interesting to know how it is that during a long and successful career they have not been able to spare the time to tap one peal and bring the number up to five.

Those who would like to know how it is done will find an article written by me in Mr. Ernest Morris' book.

J. SEGAR.

Market Place, Retford.

ANONYMITY

(Continued from previous column.)

During the 22 years that I have been taking 'The Ringing World' I could quote numerous similar instances where personal enmity has revealed its presence and changed the whole course of a subject when a person's name has been signed. As an inveterate correspondent to your columns I have decided, therefore, that a nom-de-plume is the best, despite what some might say to the contrary.

'ANON.'

RINGERS' GOLDEN WEDDING.

MR. AND MRS. R. WHITTINGTON'S RECORD.

The congratulations of their many friends will be extended to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Whittington, of Cranleigh, Surrey, upon reaching their golden wedding. Both are ringers and are, we believe, the first ringing couple to reach such a noteworthy anniversary. They were married on February 25th, 1892.

They were the first married couple to ring a tower-bell peal together, having rung this at Cranleigh in 1912; indeed, at the time of their silver wedding five years later they were still the only couple to have achieved this distinction.

Although a silver wedding peal was lost on the actual anniversary, they had the satisfaction of ringing together a commemorative peal before the year was out.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Whittington were great cyclists, and at one period travelled over 100,000 miles on a tandem cycle, in the course of which they visited and rang in 400 towers. They have still many happy memories of these journeys left to them.

Unfortunately, Mrs. Whittington does not now enjoy good health, but Mr. Whittington is as keen on cycling as ever. The war has necessitated his going back into the business from which he had retired three years previously, so that his activities outside have been severely restricted since, but we have a recollection that just before the war his granddaughter took 'grandpa' on a hundred mile cycle ride one day—and grandpa was over 70.

Mr. Whittington has rendered valuable service, both to the old Winchester Diocesan Guild and the present Guildford Diocesan Guild. He has served on the committee of both, and was one of the leading spirits in the formation of the latter when the division of the old Winchester Diocese took place. He has also been a member of the Central Council. The present circumstances have brought him one great disappointment, namely, that it will not be possible to attempt a peal on the 25th anniversary of that which celebrated the silver wedding.

KATE.

A MYSTERY SOLVED.

It is ten years ago now, or will be in a couple of days, since a peal was rung at St. Giles'-in-the-Fields. There was nothing remarkable about the peal and there was nothing remarkable about the band that rang it. They were a lot of quite ordinary people, and anyone who, going into a saloon bar, should have suddenly come into their company would have experienced no thrill, nor would he have lingered over his beer hoping to catch some words of wisdom that might fall from their lips. They were commonplace men. Among them were some heroes who had fought for their country and watered with their blood the fair fields of France and the thirsty deserts of the East; poets, chiefly of the mute inglorious class; orators, who might have swayed grave senates or stirred to the depths the hearts of vast multitudes; and suchlike. In fact, they were an average band of ringers, and there would have been no necessity and no excuse for saying anything about them but for one thing. They were bachelors.

Is bachelorhood a thing to be praised or a thing to be condemned? We do not know. Ought we to congratulate a bachelor or pity him? We cannot say. This we know that these men were bachelors and they gloried in their state; else why ring the peal?

But their glory was shortlived, for there appeared a letter in 'The Ringing World' signed by Kate, who told them just what she thought of them. It was only a short letter, and from a literary point of view not a good letter; but it was to the point, and throughout the country over the faces of ringers there spread a broad grin.

Who was Kate? Nobody knew, and, though suggestions were made and hints thrown out, still nobody knows. But now after ten full years we are permitted to reveal the secret. Kate was not a human being fashioned of earthly clay. The hand that held the pen was indeed a hand of flesh and blood; but the influence that dictated the message came from the world of spirit and fancy. Kate was no ordinary woman; she was an inspiration; still more, she was a good joke.

PREFERMENT OF LANCASHIRE RINGING CLERGY

Members of the Lancashire Association, and particularly those of the Liverpool Branch, have heard with much pleasure and satisfaction of the preferment of two of their clerical ringing brethren.

The Rev. D. P. Roberts has accepted the living of St. Catherine's, Edge Hill, Liverpool, and the Rev. J. A. Briggs has been preferred to the living of Emmanuel Church, Everton, Liverpool. Both of these clergymen are very capable change ringers, and the best wishes of all ringers are extended to them in their new spheres of activity.

'DUBLIN JUBILEE QUARTER PEAL'

A quarter-peal of Grandsire Doubles (1,260 changes) was rung at St. George's Church, Dublin, in honour of the jubilee (50 years) of the 14th Dublin Company of Boys' Brigade, before the jubilee thanksgiving evening service. The ringers were Miss Sadie Lanigan, 1, Fred E. Dukes (conductor), 2, Miss Ada Dukes, 3, William E. Hall, 4, Mrs. F. E. Dukes, 5, William McGregor, 6, George McGregor, 7, Matthew Doolan, 8. The quarter-peal was rung on 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6, with 7, 5, 8 covering.

EARLY FOUNDERS AND THEIR BELLS.

SOME GOOD WORK.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—In reply to Mr. Munday's interesting letter regarding Edward Read's first bell, I am glad to state that later bells by this founder do not bear such a bad reputation as the former second at Basingstoke. Bells by Read are comparatively rare, but he cast a ring of six for Catherington, Hants, in 1751, some of which, I believe, have been recast. I have not heard any of Read's Hampshire bells, but his three Berkshire examples, viz., Blewbury, 1752, East Garston, 1752, and Farnborough, 1753, are quite good. The latter has a mediæval bell on each side of her, and Read appears to have endeavoured to match these in tone.

The tone of the seventh bell at Blewbury impressed me considerably when I examined these bells in 1939, and I remember asking Mr. Gregory, who accompanied me, to ring this bell longer than usual so that I might listen to her fine tone. But as the whole question of the partial tones of 'Old Standard' bells is so complex, and their strike notes to a great extent an aural illusion, others may think differently. The strike notes of both the Blewbury and East Garston bells are approximately F sharp.

With reference to the East Hagbourne bells, mentioned in your issue of February 6th, I have since received a letter from Mr. A. A. Hughes, of the Whitechapel Bellfoundry, in which he states: 'It is an extraordinary thing to find a ring of eight of such varied dates so nearly accurate for tune. I registered the vibrational pitch of each and, if I remember correctly, not one was more than about three frequencies out. I am, of course, referring to the "strike" notes.'

This is a very striking testimony to the skill of our old founders and tuners, who relied on their ears in these matters, and had no scientific instruments to guide them.

FREDERICK SHARPE.

Launton, Oxon.

EDWARD READ'S FIRST BELL.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—With reference to the letter under the above heading in your issue of the 13th inst., Mr. Munday, also Mr. Sharpe, will be interested to know that in the same year, 1751, Edward Read cast a ring of five bells for Catherington Church, Hants, the second and third bells of this peal being recast and a treble added to make six by Messrs. Mears and Stainbank in 1887. The peal was tuned and rehung by ourselves in 1935, and Read's bells in this peal were certainly more tuneful than his bell in the Basingstoke peal.

Incidentally Mr. Munday is not quite right with Read's spelling on the second bell, at Basingstoke, which actually is as follows:—

EDWARD: READ: AT: ALBOURN: WILLTS: FECIT: 1751:

The tenor at Catherington is 8½ cwt., and Read cast heavier bells, viz.: The 7th at Blewbury weighed 14 cwt. approximately, and the 5th at East Garston, Berks, 11½ cwt. approximately. Mr. Sharpe in his 'Church Bells of Berks' describes Blewbury 7th as a 'fine-toned' bell and gives the date as 1752, whereas in his letter to 'The Ringing World,' February 6th, he quotes this bell as Read's latest bell dated 1757.

JOHN TAYLOR AND CO.

THE OLDEST BELL.

To the Editor.

Sir,—In reply to your correspondent on this question, I would draw his attention to the tenor of the ring of four at Cold Ashby, Northants, which still bears the date 1317, and I might say there is another at Hardwick in the same county 1395, though this was cracked and welded by Bariman 1926. Whether the 1317 bell at Cold Ashby is the oldest I cannot say, but I should assume it is one of the oldest untouched. Its weight is just over 7 cwt.

P. A.

PENGE RINGERS MISSING.

Many ringing friends in Lewisham District of Kent County Association and London will be sorry to hear that Edgar J. Barrett, of Penge, has been posted missing while serving with the R.A.F. in the Middle East. At the time he was a Sergeant Wireless Operator on ferry duties.

He was one of the keenest members of the young band which was becoming quite well known at St. John's, Penge, just before the war, and his keenness led him to cycle many miles in search of practice in Kent and London.

He joined the R.A.F. at the age of 18½ and celebrated his twentieth birthday at home at Christmas time.

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DAVID MAXON, ROPE WORKS, GRANTHAM

GEORGE CONYARD.**AN OLD KENT RINGER.**

I have often thought when reading Mr. Trollope's historical articles how much I would like to have known personally some of the old ringers he mentions, and have regretted many times that I did not jot down my impressions of some I came in contact with who were active ringers nearly a century ago, and who were old men when I was a boy. There is one, however, with whom I was closely associated and who many will still remember in North Kent. This was George Conyard, and in appearance he looked exactly what he was, a typical vergar and sexton of a country church—as ours was at that time—with his side whiskers and round clerical hat.

He was a good old ringer as far as he went and a man of whom I was fond. I used to think him very clever to be able to chime three bells all by himself and would watch him at every opportunity. This had to be done twice every day, at 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. and three times on Friday, when the Litany was said at noon. He would begin at a quarter to the hour, chime the front three for five minutes, then the third would be chimed for five minutes, and the treble the remaining five. In due course it came about that he would chime the three, and leave me to finish with the single bells, and eventually I was able to do it all by myself. This was a great asset to George Conyard, for until then he was unable to have a day off, as no one else could do the chiming. It was also an asset to me, for on those occasions when he was away I was allowed out of school to deputise for him. On more than one occasion I have told the schoolmaster that I had to chime for Mr. Conyard in order to get out of school at half-past eleven on a Friday.

A TWOPENNY FEE.

As I said just now, he was the sexton, and it was the custom until quite recent years in the parish for the passing bell to be tolled. It often happened that he was busy grave digging, and could not easily spare the time. On these occasions he would send to the school and ask for me to come and do it for him. This was a greater pleasure than chiming for service, for he always gave me twopence. I found, in after years, he received a shilling.

After I started ringing we went about quite a lot together, and these excursions sometimes provided what are now very amusing experiences, although some of them were not so at the time.

Once we went to Bromley. How we got there I cannot remember, but we walked home. On the way we came to a hop field through which he said there was a short cut. It was dark and we missed the path, and in endeavouring to find it we noticed a very strong smell. We pulled up just in time to prevent falling into a large tank of tar sunk into the ground.

Another of his short cuts which did not turn out according to plan was soon after Eynsford bells were increased from six to eight. We had been there for a peal and missed the last bus from Farningham to Dartford. It was then nearly ten o'clock and we were none too pleased at the prospect of a seven-mile walk home. 'Never mind,' said George, 'if we take the footpath across these fields we can cut off nearly a mile,' so away we went. All went well until we had nearly reached the road again, when George trod in a rut and sprained his ankle. We got him to the main road with great difficulty. The next problem was how to get him home. Eventually a cab was obtained at an exorbitant price, but there was nothing else for it at that time of night.

A VISIT TO GRAVESEND.

One Saturday night at Gravesend we went into the market where a cheapjack was selling watches, and we joined the crowd of on-lookers. Presently there was considerable commotion, and the vendor of these watches started to abuse poor old George when he refused to take one for which he was alleged to have made a bid. Needless to say, we did not stop and argue, and when we got away Lewis Silver told us that a local ventriloquist in the audience was the culprit. He evidently thought that George, with his whiskers and hat, was a fitting subject for his humour.

George was one of a band who rang a 10,080 of Canterbury Pleasure at Erith 50 years ago. My father had arranged to walk over with him. When father called at his home George said, 'I can't possibly start for a peal. I've got lumbago.' Father was most unsympathetic and answered, 'You'll have to. Who do you think we can get to take your place?' 'But I can't walk all that distance, let alone ring,' protested George. 'You must,' insisted father, and George gave in. They arrived at the tower and started. After an hour his lumbago left him. George lived nearly twenty years afterwards, but he never had lumbago again.

One of the things I regret most in my ringing life is connected with George Conyard. The late F. G. Newman at one time had William Eversfield's manuscripts. When he fell on hard times he parted with them to F. J. French, of Bevelux, who in turn gave them to George Conyard. At his death I asked his daughter to let me have his ringing papers, which she promised to do. I did not go at once for them as I should have done, and when I did was told 'There was only a lot of dirty old papers and I put them in the dustbin.'

E. B.

MR. F. DENCH'S JUBILEE.

To-morrow is the fiftieth anniversary of Mr. Frederick Dench's first peal, Court Bob Triples, which he rang at Crawley on February 28th, 1892.

Mr. Dench was one of the band that made history at this Sussex tower, under the conductorship of Mr. James Parker, their best performance being the then record length of Superlative Surprise, 9,312 changes, rung in 1894.

When the band broke up Mr. Dench went to London, where he was associated with the talented company at St. Stephen's, Westminster, and the College Youths. For many years now Mr. Dench has been in business in Saffron Walden. His contributions to the art have included many valuable compositions in a number of methods.

BANKERS' PEAL RECALLED.

The seventh anniversary of the bankers' peal falls on March 2nd. A band of ringers, all in the banking profession, met in London on March 2nd, 1935, and rang a peal of Bob Major on the bells of the Church of St. Olave, Hart Street, City, in three hours and one minute. The peal was arranged by Mr. F. S. Wilson, then manager of Lloyds Bank, Ltd., Wincanton, and it was conducted by Alan R. Pink, then of the Westminster Bank, Ltd., Eton. No less than five banks were represented. A correspondent, who duly reminds us of the anniversary, says: 'The witty and clever remarks of the Editor of "The Ringing World" upon the performance are worth repeating'. We blush at the compliment, but here they are:—

IN THE BANK.**'BANKERS RING THE CHANGES.'**

'A band of bankers rang a peal on Saturday in the heart of the City of London, in Hart Street in fact. It was quite appropriate that the peal should be rung in the world's financial centre, and while in these days of dealing in millions, a few shillings, more or less, count for little, unless the conductor had produced sufficient bobs to enable the financiers to "ring the changes" to good purpose, their peal stock would unquestionably have slumped. There was, however, a capital issue, and this peal is safely banked. Congratulations, therefore, to these "men of money" (other people's money they will probably tell you) upon their success.'

It is to be much regretted that the bells of St. Olave's Church have since been destroyed by enemy action.

A NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.**NORTH STAFFS ASSOCIATION'S VIEWS.****To the Editor.**

Dear Sir,—I read the letter of your anonymous correspondent, 'Communal,' asking why we of the North Staffordshire Association oppose the formation of a National Association.

Apart from all political reasons, it seems fatal to want to destroy all the past traditions, all local interests and all local funds.

Mr. F. W. Housden, who wrote the first letter suggesting a National Association, gave no reasons why, except the general comment that 'the issues at stake could not be successfully dealt with' by the present many individual associations.

It is a very drastic proposal to make without giving any definite reasons.

ANDREW THOMPSON, Hon. Sec.,

North Staffordshire Association.

THE DEMOCRATIC WAY.

Dear Sir,—Your correspondent asks what reason we have for opposing the liquidation of all local societies and the forming in their place one big national association run by its all-powerful general secretary. This is certainly the modern political method of running a Fascist State (or Russian, for that matter), and many people in this country think it is the only way of getting things done. But opposed to this fascist way there is the richer democratic way—where power resides in the local bands, where ringing is run by the ringers themselves, not by a bureaucratic clique or all-powerful general secretary.

That is why some of us oppose it. And it is not as if the local societies were hostile to one another or refused any sort of co-operation through their central committee.

HUGH BENSON.

Sneyd Vicarage, Stoke-on-Trent.

HANDBELLS AT CHERTSEY

The old curfew town of Chertsey can claim but little in the way of handbell ringing, but it is recalled that on March 20th, 1909, a peal of Grandsire Triples was rung there for the Winchester Guild. This was the first and only handbell peal ever rung in the town, and the ringers were William Shepherd (conductor) 1-2, Arthur F. Shepherd 3-4, George Edser 5-6, J. B. Hessey 7-8. Those two splendid handbell ringers, Arthur Shepherd and George Edser, were great 'pals' together, but both passed from us during the last Great War.

After 33 years it is pleasing to record a quarter-peal of Grandsire Triples rung in the tower on February 16th last by E. Morey 1-2, W. Shepherd (conductor) 3-4, J. B. Hessey 5-6, E. J. Crocker 7-8. It was the first handbell quarter-peal by E. Morey and E. J. Crocker, and the first quarter-peal 'inside' by J. B. Hessey.

ELEMENTARY COMPOSITION.

FOR THE AVERAGE READER.

We will turn back to our three courses of Bob Major which, as we said, is the simplest and most typical of all compositions. When we were ringing it we noticed that it consists of three full courses, and when we picked the rows we discovered that these were three full Natural Courses, one beginning with 12345678, one beginning with 14235678, and the third beginning with 13425678. These three were joined together by bobs.

We saw that the plain course (and similarly the other two courses) consisted of seven forward hunting courses joined together by a backward hunting course made at the lead-ends when the treble is leading. Now let us look at what happens when the bobs are made. Only three bells are affected, the rest work as they would do had there been no bobs, so we will write down the hand and back rows of these three bells.

We discover that they go through a complete six, that is a hunting course on three bells; and we notice further that this hunting course is in the opposite direction to that of the hunting course (on seven bells), which joined together the hunting courses (on eight bells) to make the Natural Courses.

In other words the operation which joins together the three Natural Courses is similar to that which joins together the seven hunting courses to make up the course. First we have the plain forward hunting course on eight bells. This is extended by the backward hunting course on seven bells to make the Natural Course. And that is extended by the forward hunting course on three bells to make up the 3-course composition.

It sounds a little complicated when put down in words, but really it is very simple, and it is worth studying and understanding; for here you have the easiest example of the fundamental idea on which the whole science and art of change ringing is based—cyclical movement on varying numbers of bells and in opposite directions.

When in any composition there are a number of bobs which together constitute a complete hunting course (as these do) they are said to form a Q Set.

When, as in Bob Major, Double Norwich Cambridge, London and many other methods, only three bells are affected by the bob, the Q Sets will consist of a hunting course on three bells. When, as in Grandsire Triples, Kent Treble Bob Major, and Bristol Surprise, five bells are affected by the bob, the Q Set will consist of a hunting course on five bells. We give the hand and back rows of the bob changes of Grandsire Triples with the 3rd called Before, and it will be seen that five bells, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, go through a complete hunting course.

But when we are writing out compositions we do not give hand and back rows where the bobs are made. We give only the back stroke row when the treble is leading and assume the rest. It is usual therefore to say that the Q Set in Bob Major consists of three members, and we should write the example above as 2345678, 4235678 and 3425678.

Similarly the above Q Set of Grandsire Triples would be written down, not by the rows given, but by the back-

stroke row that follows each pair. Thus—1532746, 1735624, 1637452, 1436275 and 1234567.

W. H. Thompson and those writers who immediately followed him had another plan so far as Grandsire Triples is concerned. They wrote down the backstroke row when the treble is leading before the bob is made. This was natural enough in the explanation that Thompson was giving, but it has a good deal confused the matter. The point is that the reader should understand what a Q Set really is.

We have used the term Q Set for a number of bobs which are definitely related to each other, but that is not the whole of the matter. Suppose we omitted all the bobs and wrote down the rows which would occur if our three Natural Courses remained separated independent round blocks not joined to each other. We should still have the rows of a hunting course on three bells, but in the opposite direction to that produced by the bobs. These rows we also call a Q Set, and to distinguish the two kinds we call one a bobbed Q Set and the other a plain Q Set.

Q Sets are almost the most important things that there are in composition. That is why we should try to understand something about them from the very start, and why we have thus early dealt with what to some people may seem properly to belong to the more advanced part of the science.

There are two reasons why Q sets are so very important. The first is that they supply one of the most efficient means of joining together Natural Courses. We have already had an example of that in our three courses of Bob Major, and we shall have more to say on that point. The second reason is that whenever we require to include in any composition the full extent of the rows, we must have all the Q Sets intact. If one member of a Q Set is bobbed, all the members must be bobbed. If one member is plain all the members must be plain.

It will not take us much trouble to convince ourselves that this is so. Suppose we call a bob at the end of the plain course of Bob Major. That will give us with the handstroke 2436587. Suppose, somewhere later in our peal 3425678 comes up plain. The handstroke will be 3246587. So far all is well. But how are we going to get the third member 2345678? We cannot have it plain for we should want 2436587 as the handstroke; and we cannot have it bobbed for we should want 3246587 as the handstroke, and both of them we have already used.

So far we have dealt with Q Sets consisting of bobs only or plain leads only. There is another class of Q Sets in which singles appear, and we shall have to consider them next.

ISLEWORTH VISITS CROYDON.

On Saturday, February 7th, the band of young ringers which has been formed and taught at Isleworth by Mrs. O. L. Rogers visited Croydon to fraternise and practise with the band of young lady ringers at St. Peter's who, despite some severe setbacks, are carrying on, not only by holding practices, but by ringing every Sunday for the evening services in church.

Well-struck courses of Bob Royal, Grandsire Caters and Grandsire Triples were rung and good practice put in on the silent tower bells. Afterwards the party was entertained to tea by Miss Terry and her mother.

It is good to know that such excellent work is being done to provide for the future of the art of change ringing.

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.

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HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION. — Meeting at The Studios, Falconer Road, Bushey, on Saturday, Feb. 28th. Handbells from 3 p.m. Tea 5 p.m. All welcome.—H. G. Cashmore, 24, Muriel Avenue, Watford.

HEREFORD DIOCESAN GUILD. — Kington District.—A meeting will be held at Eardisland on Saturday, Feb. 28th. Bells (6, silent) and handbells available 3 p.m. Service 4.45. Tea 5.15. Business after tea.—J. C. Preece, Dis. Sec., Lea Lodge, Staunton-on-Arrow, Leominster.

BARNSELY AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.—The next meeting will be held at Wath-on-Deane on Saturday, Feb. 28th. Handbells available, Church House, 2.30 p.m. Tea at Warburton's Cafe 5 p.m., followed by business meeting, Church House, at 6 p.m. This meeting is arranged later to have it "moonleat." All are welcome.—D. Smith, Hon. Sec., 28, Chapel Street, Shafton, near Barnsley.

BEDFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION. — Biggleswade District.—A meeting will be held at Henlow on Saturday, February 28th. Silent tower bells and handbells. As tea cannot be arranged, the meeting will not commence until 5 o'clock.—C. J. Ball, Hon. Sec., 25, Tempsford Road, Sandy.

LEEDS AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.—The next meeting will be held at St. Michael's, Headingley, on Saturday, February 28th. Handbells in the tower from 3 p.m. to black-out time (approximately 6.45 p.m.).—H. Lofthouse, Hon. Sec., 8, Wortley Road, Leeds 12.

ST. MARTIN'S GUILD FOR THE DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM (Established 1755).—The 54th annual Henry Johnson Commemoration will be held at the Imperial Hotel, Temple Street, Birmingham, on Saturday, March 7th. Owing to prevailing conditions this will be a luncheon to commence at 1.30 p.m. prompt, Vice-President, Albert Walker, Esq., in the chair. Tickets will be issued to fully paid-up members at 1s. each; to other members and friends at 5s. 6d. each. All applications for tickets must be received by Saturday, February 28th. Apply T. H. Reeves, Hon. Sec., 136, Newton Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham, 11.

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.—North Bucks Branch.—A quarterly meeting will be held at Hanslope on Saturday, March 7th. Handbells 3 p.m. Service 3.30, followed by tea and meeting. Will those requiring tea please notify me by Monday, March 1st? All welcome.—R. H. Howson, 19, Greenfield Road, Newport Pagnell, Blechley.

MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.—Loughborough District.—A meeting will be held at Loughborough on Saturday, March 7th, to elect officers and

consider future activities. Handbells in the Foundry campanile from 4 p.m. Please attend if possible.—A. E. Rowley, Hon. Sec.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—The next meeting will be held at Hanley on Saturday, March 7th, at 3 p.m. A committee meeting will be held at 4 p.m. in the tower, and the business is important. No tea arrangements will be made. All ringers welcome.—Andrew Thompson, Hon. Sec.

MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.—Leicester District.—A meeting will be held at Belgrave on March 7th. Ringing (8 bells, silent) from 3 p.m. Tea and meeting, Hotel Belgrave, near church, at 5.30 p.m. Those requiring tea must notify me by March 4th.—H. W. Perkins, Hon. Dis. Sec., 53, Landseer Road, Leicester.

BATH AND WELLS DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.—Taunton Deanery Branch.—Annual meeting will be held on Saturday, March 7th, at St. James', Taunton. Bells, with silent apparatus, available 3.30 p.m.—R. W. Hayward, Hon. Sec., Tregoney, Hovelands Lane, Taunton.

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.—The annual general meeting (1942) will be held in the Chapter House, Christ Church, Oxford, on Saturday, March 14th, at 3.15 p.m. (p.v.). A good attendance is requested.—Richard T. Hibbert, Gen. Sec., 69, York Road, Reading.

BIRTH.

COLMAN.—On February 20th, to Patricia (nee Humphrey), wife of Robert Colman, a daughter. 14, Chepstowe Crescent, W.11.

MARRIAGE.

CURSON—ROBERTSON.—On February 21st, at Christ Church, Eaton, by the Rev. B. M. Downton, Russell William, elder son of Mr. W. A. and the late Mrs. Curson, of Melton Road, Hethersett, to Mabel, elder daughter of Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Robertson, of 7, Henley Road, Norwich.

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