

CHURCH BELLS.

(*Continued from Page 124 .*)

I would now call your attention to an ancient custom which has for a long time prevailed, namely — the submission of bells to the form and ceremony of baptism.

It was a general opinion that there was much virtue in bells; that they produced devotion in the hearts of those who heard them; that they cleared the air of storms and tempests; and expelled evil spirits. The dislike of evil spirits to the sound of bells is thus expressed by Wynkin de Worde, in the " Golden Legion." It is said — "The evil spirytes that ben in the region of the ayre doute moche when they here the bells rungen; and this is the cause why — the bells ringen when it thondreth, and when grete tempest and rages of whether happen, to the ende that the fiends and wicked spyrtes should be abashed and flee and cease of the movynge of the tempest." Hence the couplet—

" *Funera plango, Fulgura frango, Sabbata pango;*
Excito lentos, Dissipo ventos, Paeo cruentos."

The baptism of bells is traced by Baronius to Pope John XIII. (AD 968), who, himself, consecrated the great bell of the Lateran Church, and gave it the name of John. Evidence of a more ancient date exists in the capitulars of Charles the Great (AD 789), containing a prohibition "*ut clocas non baptizent,*" in whose time, it is said, some rituals had a form of blessing and anointing bells under the rubric "*ad signum ecclesiae benedicendum.*" Le Soeur, an old French writer, declares that the ceremonial of bell baptism exceeds in splendour and minutiae the baptism of Christians. "The service," he says, "is long, the ceremonies are numerous, the sponsors are persons of quality, and the most considerable Priest in the place, or even a Bishop or Archbishop, officiates." * As just recorded, even the Pope himself officiated on one occasion, and recently the Bishop of Chalons baptised a whole peal, calling it "a happy and holy family," and delivered on the occasion a discourse upon the duties and

* Quoted by Gatty on "Church. Bells."

virtues of each particular bell. Certainly there is much in the ancient ceremonial of the baptism of bells which in our judgment is to be deprecated, yet might we suggest that a judicious form of dedication should be employed, whenever these material servants of the sanctuary are located in their appointed chamber. There should be no profane christening, no conversion of the bell into a punch bowl, no forgetfulness of the sacred duties to which they are assigned, but all things should be done in wisdom and joyfulness, in decency and in order. It would be quite proper to give the newly cast peal a triumphal entry, and the evergreen, and the native band, and the school children in their holiday best might

be called into requisition; and then, as formerly ecclesiastics were wont to chant over the metal, even while in fusion, the 150th Psalm, so now the Parish Priest, with his choir, might fittingly welcome the new peal within the precincts of the Churchyard to the same holy and inspired strain, supplicating that the material may tend to the elevation of the immaterial, and concluding with the "*Omnia opera benediciti*," and the final blessing.

Suitable inscriptions on bells are by no means distasteful or uncommon. The "Great Tom" of Lincoln, 1610, says, that it is there "to sound sweetly unto salvation of the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son;" and on one of the bells in the Cathedral of Carlisle, 1667, is inscribed, "I warn ye how your time passes away; serve God, therefore, while life doth last, and say, '*Gloria in excelsis Deo*.'" At Rylstone, in Yorkshire, there was incised in old characters, " S.C.E. *Gabriel ora pro nobis*;" and at Cherry Burton, near Beverley, in old Lombardic type, "J. N. S. *Nazarenus-Rex-Judaeorum misere. n. r. i.*" At Penistone, in the same county, the 1st bell bears the inscription, "*Te Deum laudamus*, 1714;" the 2nd, "*Venite exultemus Domino*;" (the 3rd, 0) the 4th, "*Sancta Mariae, protege, virgo pia, quos convoco*;" the 5th and 6th, "Jesus be our spede." The 1st bell in the tower of the Parish Church of Dewsbury, dated 1828, is inscribed, "*Exaltabo te Domine quoniam suscepisti me nec delectasti inimicos meos super me*;" the 4th, dated 1725, "Let brotherly love continue;" the 6th, dated 1742. "*Sacris absit discordia locis*;" and the 7th, "*Coetum piorum sonitu convoco*,"

date 1725. The two last are very appropriate, and might well be adopted in modern examples. The Dewsbury peal, consisting of a full octave, is celebrated as "England's sweetest melody." The tenor, popularly known as "Black Tom of Sowthell," is said to have been an expiatory gift for a murder. It is tolled on Christmas Eve as at a funeral, and this ringing is called the "Devil's Knell,"! the reason of it being that the devil died when Christ was born.* The custom is still followed of tolling on Christmas Eve, as the Vicar of Dewsbury has informed me, and, I should suppose, is a rare instance of its kind. The tower of Aylesbury possesses eight bells, each one, excepting the 6th, bearing a poetic inscription identical with one in Buckingham. The 1st, or treble, has "Pack and Chapman, of London. *Fecit me*, 1773:—

- " If you have a judicious ear
You'll own my voice is soft and clear."
- The 2nd—
- " I mean to make it understood
Though I'm little, yet I am good."
- The 3rd—
- "Such wondrous pow'r to musick's given
It elevates the soul to heaven."
- The 4th—
- " Musick. is medicine to the mind."
- The 5th—
- "To honour both God and King
Our voices shall in concert ring."
- The 7th—
- "Ye ringers, all that prize your health and happiness,
Be sober, merry, wise, and you'll the same possess."
- The 8th—
- " In wedlock bands, all ye who join,
With hands your hearts unite,
So shall our tuneful tongues combine
To laud the nuptial rite."

Each bell announces the interesting fact—

" PACK and CHAPMAN, of London.
Fecit me, 1773."

In consequence of old bells being recast, many ancient inscriptions have been lost, as was the case with Knaresborough; so also it will happen that old inscriptions are sometimes brought unexpectedly to light, as I will now relate.

* " Quarterly Review," September, 1854,

The fame of St. Helena, like that of Queen Bertha, is inseparably connected with the resuscitation of Christianity — the former as the pious mother of Constantine the Great, the latter as the wife of Ethelbert. Helena confers the honour on Colchester as her native place, and for a time she resided in the Imperial City of York. So recently as in 1814 the tongue of the bell of St. Helen's, Auckland, dropped out, which, after having been cleared of the rust, the accumulation of time immemorial, was found to bear this inscription :—" *Sancta Helena, ora pro nobis.*" We have concluded that we cannot extend the pedigree of the Church peal to the days of Constantine, though it is an interesting circumstance that an ancient bell should be discovered inscribed with the name of an individual who has the sympathy and gratitude of a British people. *

There are some remarkably "Great Bells" in the world which I will now introduce to your notice, with their respective weights, so far as I have been able to ascertain them from past and current literature.

In Russia we naturally expect to find the largest bells. Would that we could contemplate her arts and sciences with less sorrow, and that she had but rested content in peaceful pursuits, instead of supplying graves for so many thousands of our fellow countrymen! "The most conspicuous object in the Kremlin (at Moscow)," says Scott, in 1854, "is the tower of Ivan Valiki, a tall campanile, rising two hundred feet from the plateau, crowned with gold, and looking like a grim giant presiding over the sacred spot. The bells it contains would be considered enormous, were they not completely eclipsed by the 'Czar Kolhoi' (king of bells), placed on a block of granite near." † One of the bells in St. Ivan's Church is 40ft. 9in. in circumference, 16 1/2 in. thick, and weighs 127,836 lbs. Another, given to the Cathedral by Boris Godunof, weighs 288,000 lbs.; and, lastly, comes the Great Bell of Moscow, the greatest bell of the world, which weighs 443,772 lbs., or upwards of 419,692 lbs. more than "Great Peter" of York. ‡ Dr. E. D. Clarke, in his

* "Queens before Conquest," vol. I., p. 231.

† "Baltic, Black Sea, and Crimea," by C. H. Scott, p. 60.

‡ "Illustrated Sat. Magazine" for July 6, 1833; and in Gatty on "Church Bells." p. 17.

travels, gives us an account of a visit which he paid to this gigantic hell. "The Great Bell of Moscow," he writes, "known to be the largest ever found, is in a deep pit in the midst of the Kremlin. The history of its fall is a fable; and as writers have been induced to copy each other, the story continues to be propagated. The fact is, the bell remains in the place where it was originally cast. A fire took place in the Kremlin, and the flames catching the building erected over the pit where the bell yet remained, it became hot, when some water, thrown to extinguish the fire, fell upon the heated metal, and caused the fracture that has taken place in the lower part of it. The bell is truly a mountain of metal. It is said to contain a very large proportion of gold and silver. While it was in fusion, the nobles and the people cast in, as votive offerings, their plate and their money. We endeavoured in vain to assay a small part, but the natives regarded it with superstitious veneration, and they would not allow even a grain to be filed off. At the same time it may be observed, that the compound has a white shining appearance, unlike bell metal in general; and perhaps, its silvery aspect strengthened, if not caused, the conjecture respecting the nature and value of its chemical constituents. We went, however, frequently thither, in order to ascertain the dimensions of the bell with exactness. We applied a strong cord close to the metal, as nearly as possible round the lower part, where it touches the ground, taking care, at the same time, not to stretch the cord. The circumference thus obtained equalled sixty seven feet and four inches. We then took the perpendicular height from the top, and found it twenty-one feet four inches and a half. In the stoutest part, that in which it should have received the blow of the hammer, its thickness equalled twenty-three inches. The cost of this enormous mass of metal, if valued at three shillings a pound, amounts to £66,565 16s., lying unemployed and of no use to any one."*

Mr. Scott, again, in his description of the "Fair at Nijni-Novgorod," observes that "the most characteristic part of it was decidedly that demoted to manufactured metals, from the immense quantity of bells there dis-

* " Dr. E. D. Clarke's Travels," vol. I., pp. 140, 153.

played, but more especially those destined for Churches. A strong frame-work was erected, on which numbers of them, varying from one to five tons in weight, were suspended." They are hung, particularly at Moscow, in belfrys or steeples detached from the Churches, with gilt or silver cupolas or crosses; and they do not swing like our bells, but are fixed immoveably to the beam, and rung by a rope tied to the clapper and pulled sideways.*

The Chinese, too, are famous for the magnitude of their bells ; one at Pekin is 12 1/2 feet in height, 42 feet in circumference, and weighs 120,000 lbs.; at Nankin one weighs upwards of 49,000 lbs.; but in tone the bells of the Chinese are inferior to ours, being nearly as wide at the top as at the batton, and are struck on the outside with a wooden mallet.

The Amboise bell of Rouen weighs about 40,000 lbs., so it is reported; but on this question let it speak for itself:—

" Je suis George d'Amboise
 Qui ai trente cinque mille poids
 Mais lui qui me pesera
 Treate six mille me trouvera."

One at Olmutz weighs 17 tons 18 cwt.; one at Vienna, dated 1711, 17 tons 14 cwt.; one at Paris, date 1680, being 25 feet in circumference, 17 tons; one at Ergurt, 13 tons 15 cwt. The great bell at St. Peter's, Rome, recast in 1785, is 18,607 lbs. in weight; and one 17,000 lbs. is placed in the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio, at Florence, and is 275 feet from the ground.

We now come to an era of our own, and with such masters of the craft in existence, run little chance of losing our characteristic as "the ringing island."

On February 20th, 1847, the Messrs. Mears completed an order for a "great bell" for the Roman Catholic Cathedral of Montreal. A lithograph of it when executed bespeaks one of extraordinary beauty, combined with a very considerable mass of metal; it occupied twelve minutes, when in fusion, in filling the mould, and in its finished form weighs 13 tons 15 cwt. On the external surface are depicted two representations — one of the Baptist pointing to the Typical Lamb, the other to the Blessed Virgin Mary, holding in her right arm the Infant

* "Jones' Art of Ringing."

Jesus; between the two is a cross, and underneath is inscribed "*Negotiamini dum venio omnis spiritus laudet Dominum anno Domini 1847. Fundatae Marianopolis 206°. Pii PP 9. Pontificatus 1° Regni Victoriae Britanniarum 10°.*" At the base is "*Carolus et Georgius Mears Londini Fecerunt.*" On the reverse of the bell is a picture of a ship at sea in full sail, and on the shore are scattered instruments of industry, such as the scythe, the hatchet, the sickle, and spade, accompanied by an inscription "*ex piissimo mercatorum, agricolarum, artificum que Marianopolitani ensium dono.*" The diameter at the mouth of the bell is 8 feet 7 inches, the height to the top of the crown 8 feet 1 inch, and the thickness of sound bow 8 inches.

Previous to this the "Great Peter," in York Minster, had been firmly seated on his throne, and no wonder he should defy the strength of fifteen or thirty men to raise him in the ordinary way, since, as a recent Quarterly observes, "he is the reigning monarch of all the bells of the United Kingdom." * He took fourteen days to cool; the diameter of his mouth is 8 feet 4 inches, his height 7 feet 10 inches, and he weighs 10 tons 15 cwt. On the reverse of the bell are the arms of York, "*ar. on a cross gu. five lions pass. guard, or.,*" and, as an inscription about his crown, declares, he is seated in the metropolitan Church of the Blessed Peter, of York, "*in Sanctae et aeternae Trinitatis honorem.*" He ascended his throne in January, 1845, and once in 24 hours announces to his subscribers of £2,000, and to the citizens of York, that it is the hour of noon, which he does by a condescending response to the mallet of a Sacristan, who, at the time appointed, enters his chamber, and gives him the requisite number of strokes. All other Cathedral duty he deposes to his subjects in the adjoining power. Whenever he does utter his voice we must admire the strength and depth of his tone, and such they are that if he were rung up like an ordinary metal bell, the probability is, he would resent the indignity by extinguishing the ringers in his own person, or overwhelming them with the fallen tower. His country and pedigree are perpetuated by the inscription on his base, "*C. et G. Mears, Londini, fecerunt.*" Like Alexander Selkirk, on the desert island, he is a

* "Quarterly Review," September, 1854.

"monarch of all he surveys," but, as we are constrained to add, is too little known to us as "the sound of the Church-going bell." *

The great bell of St. Paul's, London, introduced by William III., in 1699, has been re-cast, and now weighs 5 tons 2 cwts. 1 qr. and 22 lbs. Its diameter is 10 feet, and thickness of metal 10 inches. The clapper weighs 189 lbs. It is tolled on the death of a Member of the Royal Family, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, the Dean of St. Paul's, or the Lord Mayor. Ghent has a bell which weighs 11,000 lbs., a ponderosity nearly equal to the Great Bell of St. Paul's. The "Great Tom," of Oxford, was originally suspended in the Abbey of Osney, and by its Abbot, Robert King, was presented to Christ Church, in the year 1545, but in 1630 it was re-cast at the cost of John Fell, Bishop of Oxford. The diameter of the bell is 7 feet 1 inch, height 6 feet 9 inches, thickness of metal 6 1-8th inches, and he weighs 7 tons 11 cwt. 3 qrs. and 4 lbs. On each successive evening he has a duty to perform, which is to give 101 strokes in honour of our ancestors, who founded that number of studentships in the college; the original number in 1546 being exactly 100, but another was added in 1664, by William Thurstone, Esq., making up the complement of 101.

Besides an expression of gratitude for past benefits and design, as it would seem from the statute book, is present utility. The statute "*de moribus conformandis*," and sect. 6 "*de nocturna vagatione*," expressly commands all scholars of whatsoever degree to repair to their own college or hall "*ante horam nonam quae pulsatione magnae Campanae Collegii OEde's Christi denunciari solet*," and that, immediately after the striking of the said great bell, the gates of every college and hall must be shut and locked, the infraction of which, hear ye this, venerable matrons, may be punished at the will of the Chancellor or Proctors.

"Great Tom," of Lincoln, in 1610, expressed his

* "Walter Skirlaw, whose arms, six osier wands interlaced in cross, are on the south side of the central Tower of York, built the great bell of Howden (*composicle de Hendon*), in the county of York, which he caused to be made of a great size (*summae magnitudinis*), that it might afford a place of refuge to the people of Howden, if there should chance a great inundation of their town. — "Poole & Hugales's York Minster," p. 127.

object to be "to sound sweetly unto salvation of the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son." He was re-cast in 1835, and now weighs 5 tons and 8 cwt. St. Dunstan, of Canterbury, was re-cast by Messrs. Mears, and, though weighing only 3 tons 10 cwt., is entitled to its rank among the extraordinary or great productions of the bell foundry.

Such are the principal bells that have hitherto been manufactured, and, after all is said in their favour, I should be disposed to join in a cry of "*cui bono.*" As specimens of metallic skill, or as appropriate to be tolled on the decease of the Sovereign, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, they may be desirable enough, in which case one at London and another at Canterbury would suffice; but to introduce them generally into our Cathedrals and large Parish Churches would only be a waste of space and money which might be laid out to a greater advantage. On examining a list of 174 peals of eight bells cast by Messrs. Mears, I find that the heaviest tenor weighs 33 cwt., and the lightest 9 cwt. For a country Church, one of medium weight would be sufficiently heavy to ensure the best of harmony: for a town Church a tenor of larger dimensions should be adopted, as at Luton, where the tenor weighs 20 cwt., or as at Aylesbury, where it now weighs 22 cwt. Out of a list of peals of six bells, the tenors in the majority of instances weigh 12 cwt. The majority of tenors in peals of five, weigh 8 cwt.; in the Cathedral at Calcutta, there is one weighing 25 cwt. A peal of eight bells is the most musically perfect, and should be aimed at where space and stability and means will admit of it. Peals of ten and twelve are within reach of few, and when obtained and hung are difficult to handle scientifically. Peals of six are the most common, and when of the best metal, and nicely adjusted in point of harmony, are very expressive*

The parts of a bell are the body or barrel, the clapper, and the ear or *cannon*, whereby it is hung to a large beam of wood. Bell-metal is a compound of copper and tin, in the proportion of three of copper to one of tin. The thickness of its edges is usually 1-15th of the diameter, and its height twelve times its thickness. The popular notion that the silvery tone of a bell is nothing more nor less than the jingling of sixpences and shillings in a con-

verted form is a fallacy ; for, as we understand, the effect of silver in the composition of a Church bell would, like lead, deaden the sound, and so spoil the peal. The clapper is usually of iron, with a large knob at the extreme, and is suspended with a capability of motion in the middle of the bell. In China, a wooden mallet is employed, and to increase the sound of their bells they leave a hole under the cannon, which Europeans would reckon a defect.

M. Perrault maintains, that the sound of the same bell is a compound of the sound of the several parts thereof, so that where the parts are *homogeneous*, and the dimensions of the figure uniform, there is such a perfect mixture of all these sounds as constitute one uniform even sound, and the contrary circumstances produce harshness. This he proves from the bells differing in tone according to the part you strike, and yet, strike it any where, there is a motion of all the parts. He, therefore, considers bells as composed of an infinite number of rings, which, according to their different dimensions, have different tones, as chords of different lengths have, and, when struck, the vibrations of the parts immediately struck determine the tone, being supported by a sufficient number of consonant tones in other parts. It has been supposed that the sound of a bell struck under water is a fourth deeper than in the air; others maintain it is of the same pitch in both elements.*

The value of bell metal when formed into a new peal is, we believe, says Mr. Gatty, about six guineas per cwt.; for old metal received in exchange about four guineas are allowed by the founder, *silver* included.

Permit me now to notice some of the particular uses to which Church bells are and have been put, besides the common use of calling people to Church. In respect to the "Saints' Bell." "We have commonly seen the Priest," says M. Harding, quoted by Fosbroke, "when, he sped him to say his service, ring the saunce-bell, and speake out aloud '*Pater Noster*,' by which token the people were commanded silence, reverence, and devotion." According to other authorities, it was rung whenever the Priest in Divine Service came to the Trisagium, or "Holy,

* "Art of Ringing," by Jones, Reeves, and Blakemore.

Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth," that all persons within and without the Church oil hearing it might fall down on their knees in reverence to the elevated Host. At Darrington, in Yorkshire, there still remains the Sanctus Bell Cop external to the edifice, which would certainly enable the parishioners to hear from a considerable distance the bell proclaim the particular part of the service at which the Priest had arrived, upon which, says Forbooke, they "then bowed the head, spread or elevated the hands, and said '*Salve, Lux Mundi,*' ' Hail, Light of the World.' "

The "Passing Bell," as its name implies, was originally rung for the benefit of the person dying, and not as now to announce the death of the individual, that intercession might be made, and the Priest hasten to administer extreme unction. In the 67th Canon it is ordered, that "whenever any is passing out of this life, a bell shall be tolled, and the Minister shall not then slack to do his duty." Up to the time of Charles II., and even to 1714, the "Passing Bell" was used in its strict literal sense; at present it is a *mis nomen* to speak of the "Passing Bell," but whether we have acted legally, or even wisely, in transgressing the Canon is not, I apprehend, within the province of an Architectural Society to determine. Certainly one intention is now lost, one we suppose of no slight moment — the aiding, as much as in us lies, "the dying soul in its flight to God." The Canon adds, that "after the party's death, if it so fall out, there shall be rung no more than one short peal, and one other before the burial, and one after the burial." So that space is left for the possibility of recovery even subsequent to the "Passing Bell," for "the prayer of faith shall save the sick," though most probably such instances will have seldom occurred.

The "Curfew Bell" took its rise in England from an order of William the Conqueror, that wherever there was a Church all fires and candles should be put out at the sound of the "*couvre-feu.*" It was rung at eight o'clock, p.m.; and in some places it is customary at the present day to ring a Church bell at eight o'clock, with an effect, we imagine, very different from what it once may have had. It was known abroad, previous to its introduction in England, as at Caen for example, and wa a signal to

the inhabitants of cities, when taken in war, to retire early to rest, that they might be more exempt from the insults of the victorious soldiers. At Marseilles, no one might go out of doors without carrying in his hands a light; and by a Statute of 1291 no one might draw any wine after-the "Curfew" had tolled. Historians agree in thinking that the "*couvre feu*" of William was distasteful to the English, by whom it was regarded as a badge of servitude ; but it does not seem to have been devoid of wisdom, if we consider how commonly in those days houses were built of wood and light materials. There is a soothing charm in that simple stanza of Gray—

"The Curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea;
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me."

which, as it carries us hack reflecting upon the manners and customs of past ages, surely leads us to meditate with thankfulness upon the peaceful, cheerful serenity of an English fire-side.

The "Pancake Bell" deserves an especial notice. It is rung always on Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday, and was formerly the Confessional bell, though the day was as celebrated for feasting as for confession. There is strong reason for believing that eating pancakes on this day is a relique of the adaptation of Papal customs to those of the heathen converts. The "Roman Fomacalia," a festival celebrated in honour of Fornax, who presided over bread making before ovens were invented, was celebrated on the 18th of February.* Then we have the "Fire Bell." In some Churches the entire peal is made to do duty, the object of course being to indicate the breaking out of a fire in the neighbourhood, and to summon assistance. On such occasions the bells are rung backward, or in any way so it be not the right way; and a terrific jingle a peal of six or eight is thus capable of producing.

Also there is the "Incumbent's Induction Bell." After the person empowered to induct has laid the hand of the person to be inducted upon the key of the Church door, and pronounced the usual Formula, "he then opens the door and puts the new incumbent into possession of the

* " Cottage Gardener," vol I,

Church, who, when he has tolled the bell, comes forth, and the inductor indorses and signs a certificate of such induction, on the mandate attested by those who witnessed the same."*

The "Bangu Bell" was a hand-bell kept in all the Welsh and Irish Churches, as Fosbroke informs us, which the clerk or sexton rung solemnly at the intervals of every Psalm sung by the funeral procession. Till lately, at Caerleon, a bell was sounded in the streets just before the interment of a corpse.

The "Marriage Bell," and ringing the old year out and the new year in, are further examples of special use to which Church bells are put; but without particularizing any more, I will call your attention to the Changes which may be performed on any definite number of bells, acknowledging myself indebted to "A Key to the Art of Ringing," by Jones, Reeves, and Blakemore, without date, and bearing a motto "*ars non habet inimicum nisi ignorantem.*"

The invention of changes or regular peals is said to belong to Mr. Benjamin Anable. On seven bells there is every reason to believe that he was the first who produced 5,040 changes, which was the peal of plain "Bob Triples," with two singles. He made an effort at "Grandsire Triples," and in "Bob Major" effected considerable improvement. He died in 1755. Patrick and Holt subsequently produced some of the most celebrated peals. As the art of ringing is chiefly written for the benefit of "the country gentlemen," a brief extract or two will suffice to prove, we fear, that it has still many enemies to contend with, if we are to consider ignorance a foe:—

"The whole art of change ringing is compounded of these four parts, viz., hunting, dodging, snapping, and place-making. In most peals there is one bell (which is generally the treble) called the *hunt*, by reason of the constant regular motion that is assigned to it, by which the rest of the bells are guided in their respective* courses throughout each peal. A plain hunt is no other than a bell that moves one place only at a time, without making either a dodge or a place. A dodge is a retrogradation or returning back one place only and then proceeding in the former course. Snapping is striking one blow only in a place, which you leave immediately without returning. Place-making is a rest or laying still. The series of changes that can be rung on any given number of bells is ascertained by progressive multiplication; e.g., 3 bells will produce 3 times as many changes as 2; 4, 4 times as many as 3;

* "Cripp's Laws of Church," p. 499.

5, 5 times as many as 4; 6, 6 times as many as 5, or 2 X 3 X 4 X 5 X 6=720. These may be rung in a great variety of methods, the most easy and the most common of which is the course which consists of 60 changes, and is commonly called 'plain bob.' The principle upon which this peal is founded is the plain four-and-twenty, which is so plain and easy as to need very little comment or explanation, every bell hunting till the treble leads, when second's place is made, and the four hind bells dodge; by calling a bob every time the 5th and 6th dodges behind, it will go three courses, or 180; the young practitioner being perfect in which he may next attempt to ring 300, the method of which is every time the 6th dodges behind, call a bob, except the 5th dodge with it, and then not. To extend it to 720 there must be two singles, which are generally one at the end of the first eighteen score (or half-way), and the other at coming round. This peal may be comprised in nine bobs and six singles, or in thirty bobs and two singles, or in twenty-one bobs without a single, or without a bob but with twenty-two singles. The peals or changes on six bells are designated 'single bob minor reverse,' 'double bob minor,' 'grandsire sir in,' 'college single,' 'court bob,' 'Oxford double bob,' 'Stedman's slow course,' 'treble bob,' 'new treble bob,' 'college exercise,' 'morning exercise,' and 'Coventry surprise.' " A peal of seven is noted for its 'grandsire triples,' and one of eight bells for its 'bob majors.' Nine bells evolve changes called 'grandsire caters,' and ten 'bob major royals.' The changes on eleven are entitled 'cinques,' and those on twelve bells a 'plain twelve M,' or 'bob maximus.' "

Enough all this to convince the most sceptical that the art of bell ringing is by no means easy to be interpreted; yet its difficulties have been surmounted, and some few village Churches there are which can boast of their "bob minors" or "bob majors" being rung with strict regard to the rules of science. In this, as in other things, perfection is not to be attained without practice.

Chimes, too, as well as changes, may be performed on bells: they can be played either by means of a barrel, as in a hand-organ, or by clock-work. They are more common on the Continent than in England, where they are to be found in almost every principal town. In the Netherlands, the "Carillons" are played like a pianoforte, by a Carillonneur, who employs both hands and feet in executing the various airs. In England chimes arc attached to the "quarters," and give notice in this way of the lapse of time.

It may be of use now to state what is the Ecclesiastical Law as it affects the bells in the Church Tower. Churchwardens are bound at the cost of the parish to provide a bell and rope to ring to Church and toll at funerals, but it does not appear that they are bound in like manner to supply the tower with a peal. Sir W. Wynne, in "Churchwardens of Clapham v. the Hector thereof,"

gave judgment, "a ring of bells," he says, "cannot be provided for without expense, as for ropes, tuning, &c. Suppose at one time the parishioners are willing to take upon themselves such expenses, and at another time refuse, the ordinary could not compel the parishioners to keep the bells in order because they are in the steeple. There must be a bell to ring to Church, and to toll at funerals, but that is all." (Prideaux-Cripps.) Consequently, we must respect our favourite peal as a parochial indulgence, for if we have neither the spirit nor liberality to supply ourselves with one, and with ringers to exercise it, the laAV, it appears, will not aid us, but only make it compulsory that we provide ourselves with one solitary bell. Another point of Ecclesiastical Law is very important, and, one would suppose, should be especially remembered by the Clergy, since, contrary to popular opinion, it gives them supreme command of the belfry :—" Although the Churchwardens may concur in directing the ringing or tolling of the bells on certain public and private occasions, the Incumbent, nevertheless, has so far the control over the bells of the Church, that he may prevent the Churchwardens from ringing or tolling them at undue hours, and without just cause. Indeed, as the freehold of the Church is vested in the Incumbent, there is no doubt that he has a right to the custody of the keys of the Church, subject to the granting admission to the Churchwardens for purposes connected with the due execution of their office. Proceedings may be instituted in the Ecclesiastical Court against Churchwardens, who have violently and illegally persisted in ringing the bells without consent of the incumbent. The citation may be as follows :— 'For violently and outrageously breaking into the belfry of the parish Church of -----, and without leave and permission of the Rector, and in defiance of his authority, several times ringing the bells in the said Church.' " (Dr. Phillimore's edition of Burn's Ecclesiastical Law, in Prideaux 1850). The exclusive right of the minister to the custody of the key of the Church is clearly laid down by Sir John Nicholl in "Lee v. Matthews."

Wherefore, if, as is too frequently the case, the bells of the Parish Church are rung "without just cause," the Incumbent or Minister has full power to stop them; the law wisely gives him this superintending control over the bells

in his Church, only if they be rung superstitiously, or at undue hours, or without just cause, that he may thus guard the interests of Religion. Bells are sacred vessels, and should not be brought in antagonism to innocent and pious purposes. Taken under shelter of the Church, they should never be heard to rejoice over what the Church condemns.

We must presume that this Society is consultative as well as conservative, that we are not merely banded together for the preservation, either in this material form, or in the record of history, of specimens of Architecture and Archaeology, but, also, as our practical bearing upon the age, that we may give advice when consulted upon subjects within its sphere.* Of course, when consulted, we should esteem each instance as an act of confidence towards ourselves, and always give a well-considered judgment in return. If we were asked to recommend a Foundry capable of producing "a very superior article" in the shape of a Church bell, or peal of bells, for my own part I should not hesitate to say, go at once and make known your want to Charles and George Mears, Whitechapel, London, who from their skill and experience in the art, would be certain to give satisfaction. A most musical peal of six in the Parish Church of Wragly, near Wakefield, my own sphere of pastoral duty, emanated from this celebrated firm, so that without at all implying any disparagement of other Foundries, I speak only from self-experience and observation, when I strongly recommend the handi-work of Messrs. Mears to parties in search of a Foundry.

In conclusion: we are Church-reformers as well as Church-restorers, I apprehend, seeking to reform through the process of "faithful restoration." The belfry is scope enough for us try our wits upon. A ringer, to a proverb, is scarcely susceptible of malleability. Why — let philosophers determine. Yet, abuses exist, and the sooner they are eradicated the better. Much that is painful to the pious Churchman might be stopped or mitigated, if the Clergyman of the Parish, in the exercise of his lawful right, would put his veto upon indefensible customs. Abstractedly there can be no harm in a corps of ringers of

* See Archdeacon Bickersteth's Address, 1854.

one parish trying their skill against that of another; it might serve as recreation and practice; but when the belfry is turned into a gambling-house, and the day's ringing terminates in a night's settling, it would surely be a kindness in the Parish Priest, if on the ensuing ringing-match, he were to inform the contending parties that the key was in his pocket, and could not be had, unless they could show "a just cause." Where practice and self improvement are chiefly aimed at, and due decorum preserved, and the prize a simple laurel, the objection to prize ringing is greatly diminished; but we cannot be too unanimous in declaring against the Church bells being used as if they were skittles in an inn-yard, money or ale depending upon the result. Our Society would be doing a practical good if, by any means, it could effect a change in the morale of the belfry, for in too many cases the tone is in the reverse of harmony with the reverence due even to the material Fabric, where such is for ever set apart for the wisest and holiest of purposes. A few suggestions plain and persuasive how the ringer should demean himself when pursuing his honorable calling might almost be printed on a card, and possibly check a patent evil, much of which, however, is done without any evil intention. The locality demands respect, and the remembrance that Church bells are vessels of the Sanctuary, and associated so much with the Service of the Almighty, would, we trust, if thoroughly realized, convince men of understanding that they should be carefully handled, for —

How many a tale their music tells
Of youth, and home and that sweet time
When first we heard their soothing chime.

Those joyous hours are passed away,
And many a heart that then was gay,
Within the tomb now darkly dwells,
And hears no more those ev'ning bells.

And so 'twill be when we are gone,
That tuneful peal will still ring on,
While other bards shall walk these dells,
And sing your praise sweet evening-bells.

T. MOORE.