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**INSURANCE & MAINTENANCE OF BELLS**

The success of the annual meeting of the Oxford Diocesan Guild, at which neither dinner, nor tea, nor bells were available for the members, only plenty of rain, speaks volumes for the keenness which still remains among many ringers for the art which they cannot now practise. When one takes into account the war-time claims on the time of almost everyone, and the difficulties of transport in these days, an attendance of sixty from fourteen of the fifteen branches which are spread over three counties, is more than gratifying, it is almost amazing, and well may the Master (Canon Coleridge) have expressed his delight at having such a gathering to preside over. The meeting was worth while in other respects, for motions were discussed and adopted which will bring to the notice of all the incumbents in the diocese who possess rings of bells in their churches the importance of giving them proper attention, so that they may be maintained in efficient condition while they remain unring; and also that they should be fully insured against war-time loss. Further, representations are to be made urging that the Government should be responsible for the restoration or replacement of bells damaged or destroyed by enemy action.

The importance of these matters has been constantly emphasised by 'The Ringing World,' and we are glad to see that associations like the Kent and the Oxford Guild are taking the matter up with determination. What is also needed is the backing of the Church authorities, and it would be a good thing if the Bishops, either through the Diocesan Conferences or the Diocesan Advisory Committees, could be induced to show a little more interest in the subject of the restoration of damaged bells. In seeking this, ringers are not actuated by selfish motives. Let us admit that we are anxious that, as soon as may be after the war, we want to see all the bells in action again, but there is another aspect of the question. We repeat that very few Church officials stop to realise how valuable a piece of Church property a ring of bells is. In a great number of churches the bells are the most valuable thing in the building, but there is evidence that in many quarters they fall very low on the list in the estimation of those responsible for their safe keeping.

The Government a year ago made bells an instrument of war. Churches have proved to be among the most vulnerable of buildings in air attacks; and if this latter point is admitted, as it seems to be by the Government's undertaking to restore the buildings, the bells, which they are retaining for their own use, ought also to be their responsibility. This, however, can only be brought home

(Continued on page 382.)

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to the appropriate departments by a united effort, in which the Church ought to share. The decision of the Oxford Guild to send a copy of their resolution to the Bishop and the Archdeacons of the diocese is a step in the right direction. Incidentally, in connection with the protection of bells from damage, it is not uninteresting to note that at Mayfield, in Sussex, it has been thought better to take the bells down than to insure them, and seven of the eight have been distributed among various residents on the ground that it is better to scatter them rather than store them in one place. This, if one ignores the legal aspect of the dispersal of Church property, seems to us a very sensible action, for, unless bells are well protected, merely to lower them to the base of the tower has proved of little use if fire should rage through the building.

Another matter of importance which the Oxford Guild discussed was the maintenance of bells left in the towers. Nothing more surely leads to neglect than disuse. In scores of belfries rings of bells have received no attention whatever since the ban fell, and yet, if the fittings are to be saved from deterioration and the bells are to be ready for use when the ban is lifted, it is essential that they should receive periodical overhaul. The Oxford Guild is to call the attention of incumbents to the essential things which should be done in the belfry as pointed out in an article by the head of the Whitechapel Foundry which was published in 'The Ringing World' just over a year ago. Briefly it is very necessary regularly to test all bolts in the fittings and framework, particularly where beams and headstocks are of timber; bearings of all kinds should be kept well lubricated to keep them free from rust, and all ironwork should be painted before it begins to rust. We hope the advice will be acted upon by the clergy; in any case ringers who are left, not only in the diocese of Oxford but elsewhere, should have sufficient interest in the bells to secure the performance of such tasks as prudence dictates should be carried out in the towers. It is they who will probably regret most any neglect that now creeps in. Nowhere more than in the belfry does the old adage apply of 'a stitch in time saves nine.' For want of a little systematic attention many a peal of bells has gone to rack and ruin, and the result has been an ultimate cost, perhaps, of hundreds of pounds. Let this not happen during the war-time silence. The turn of a spanner, a spot of grease, a coat of paint now may save a costly overhaul in the future, to say nothing of heartburning and disappointment to the ringers when the great day comes.

### LEEDS AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.

#### VISIT TO IDLE.

The Leeds and District Society's July meeting was held at Holy Trinity Church, Idle, on Saturday. Handbells were rung in the Church Schools from 3 p.m. until 5 p.m., when tea, which had been supplied by members of the local band, in spite of food rationing, was enjoyed by all present.

At the business meeting after tea the president was in the chair, and members were present from Armley, Bradford, Bramley, Farnborough (Hants), Shipley and the local company. The president referred to the death of Mr. F. W. Dixon, of Guiseley, and it was agreed that the secretary should send to Mr. William Dixon a message of sympathy and condolence. The members stood in silence as a tribute.

One new member was elected, viz., Miss E. Briggs, of Idle.

A vote of thanks to the Vicar and churchwardens of Idle for allowing the meeting to be held in the Schoolroom and to the local company (especially Mr. W. Feather) for the other arrangements was proposed by Mr. E. J. Taylor and seconded by Mr. S. Helliwell. Mr. Tom Hill acknowledged the vote of thanks and said he hoped that when the society next visited the tower the bells would be open for ringing.

The next meeting is due to be held at East Ardsley on Saturday, August 30th.

## HANDBELL PEALS.

LONDON.

THE MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION AND LONDON DIOCESAN GUILD.

On Sunday, July 20, 1941, in Two Hours and Thirty-Eight Minutes,

AT 21, STONARD ROAD,

**A PEAL OF BOB MAJOR, 5056 CHANGES;**

MRS. J. THOMAS ... .. 1-2	ISAAC J. ATTWATER ... .. 5-6
JOHN THOMAS ... .. 3-4	WALTER J. BOWDEN ... .. 7-8

Composed by F. BENNETT. Conducted by J. THOMAS.

Rung as a birthday compliment to Mrs. W. J. Bowden.

BUSHEY, HERTFORDSHIRE.

THE HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

On Friday, July 25, 1941, in Two Hours and Twenty-Five Minutes,

AT THE ROYAL MASONIC JUNIOR SCHOOL,

**A PEAL OF HIGHBURY BOB MAJOR, 5056 CHANGES;**

Tenor size 15 in C.

EDWIN A. BARNETT ... .. 1-2	ERNEST C. S. TURNER ... .. 5-6
JOHN E. SPICE ... .. 3-4	CHRISTOPHER W. WOOLLEY ... .. 7-8

Composed and Conducted by ERNEST C. S. TURNER.

The first peal in the method.

TUNSTALL, KENT.

THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

On Saturday, July 26, 1941, in Two Hours and Twelve Minutes,

IN THE RINGING CHAMBER OF THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN-THE-BAPTIST,

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

Ten different callings. Tenor size 15 in C.

*† JAMES S. WEBB ... .. 1-2	† JOHN E. SPICE ... .. 3-4
† WILLIAM SPICE ... .. 5-6	

Conducted by JOHN E. SPICE.

\* First handbell peal and first attempt. † First peal of Doubles.  
 † First handbell peal, and at 80 years of age. First peal as conductor.

WEST BRIDGFORD, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

THE MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.

On Sunday, July 27, 1941, in Two Hours and One Minute,

AT 9, PATRICE ROAD,

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

Being 42 extents.

BERNARD BROWN ... .. 1-2	RALPH NARBOROUGH ... .. 3-4
* KENNETH J. GRATION ... .. 5-6	

Conducted by BERNARD BROWN.

\* First peal. First peal as conductor. Rung as a birthday compliment to Mr. Ernest Morris, general secretary of the Midland Counties Association.

## GARDEN MEETING AT BOURNEMOUTH.

A very successful garden meeting was held in Bournemouth at the residence of the Rev. R. L. C. Newhouse on Saturday last, when upwards of twenty ringers and friends met on the lawns and listened to or indulged in handbell ringing. A very welcome visitor was Mr. John Jagger from Birmingham, who was in Bournemouth for a few days and took the opportunity to meet friends from the Salisbury Guild and the Winchester and Portsmouth Guild.

The company attended evensong at St. Peter's at 5.30 and were addressed by the Rev. F. A. Sanders, who will shortly be instituted to the living at East Meon. The Vicar, Canon Hedley Burrows, had been prevented from attending the service, but managed to get back to St. Peter's in time to see the ringers before they left the church.

After tea, Mr. A. F. Martin Stewart proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Arthur Davis for arranging the meeting and expressed the pleasure it gave him to feel a continuity was being maintained against the time when the ringers could once again ring the tower bells.

Mr. George Preston seconded the motion, which was carried, and Mr. Davis, in response, suggested that the gratitude of them all was really due to the Vicar of St. Peter's, who so kindly gave the handbell ringers a room for weekly practice and was always ready to help, and also to the Revs. C. A. Phillips and R. L. C. Newhouse, who had made the organisation of the meeting that day so easy. He promised to convey the thanks of the party to those gentlemen. Handbell practice takes place every week at St. Peter's Hall (Tuesdays from 6.30 to 9.30), and all ringers are welcome.

Ringers were present from Poole, Christchurch, Bournemouth (St. Peter's and St. John's) and Hampreston. Mr. W. Cheater cycled from Ringwood 15 miles away.

The Rev. C. A. Phillips offered to entertain the ringers at his house at the next meeting, to be arranged some time in September.

## LANCASHIRE ASSOCIATION.

PRESENTATION TO BRANCH SECRETARY.

The chief item of interest at the annual meeting of the Furness and Lake District Branch of the Lancashire Association was a presentation to the secretary, Mr. N. M. Newby on the occasion of his wedding.

The meeting was held at Ulverston and was presided over by the Rector, the Rev. Stuart Rimmer. After service in the lovely side chapel of the church and tea in the Parish Room, the chairman made the presentation. It took the form of furnishings for his house and an engraved silver bell inkstand.

In an appropriate speech, the chairman gave Mr. Newby the best wishes of the assembled company for his future happiness. Mr. Burles also spoke of his popularity and said that ringers from all over Lancashire and beyond had desired to associate themselves with the gift.

Mr. Newby suitably responded, sounding an optimistic note in his ideas of when ringing will start again.

Mr. Barrett from Dorset was a visitor. Handbells were tried, but everybody was out of practice, even the one-handers.

Mr. Burles was elected as Ringing Master for the ensuing year.

MEETING AT WHITTLE-LE-WOODS.

The first meeting by the Preston Branch of the Lancashire Association since the ban took place at Whittle-le-Woods on Saturday and was very successful from all points of view, considering the present conditions, for though the number present was not large, those who used to attend as well as those who did manage to attend are mostly engaged on war-time work.

Among those present were the Rev. A. Scott, president of the association, Mr. T. B. Worsley, Mr. J. Grounds, two members of the Forces, Mr. E. K. Lewis, of Marple, and Mr. R. Crampion, of Bantstead, as well as members from six or seven of the branch towers.

The tower was open from 2.30 till about 8 o'clock, with a short interval for refreshments. The visitors mostly brought their own rations, and tea was provided by the Vicar and handed round by Mr. Bradley and his daughters.

During the day touches of Double Norwich, Kent Treble Bob, Grandsire and courses of Superlative and Cambridge Surprise were brought round on the tower bells, while touches and courses of Plain Bob, Grandsire and Oxford were rung on the handbells. All things considered, those present overcame the enforced ringing conditions fairly well.

As there was no business meeting, the secretary would like to thank on behalf of those present the local authorities for the arrangements.

## STANDARD METHODS.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—The writer on the above subject, in referring to Shipway Major, points out that it has been little practised in the past and that only one peal has been rung and that at Kidderminster in 1900. Our mutual friend, Mr. W. H. Barber, tells me he was practising with that band, but had to leave before the peal was eventually rung.

However, when he came north to Newcastle-on-Tyne a few years later he set our men going to practise this interesting method, and a peal of 5,002 changes was scored at All Saints', Gosforth, Newcastle, on January 1st, 1908, composed by Gabriel Lindoff and conducted by W. H. Barber.

The same composition was rung again at Gateshead (St. Mary's) on April 27th, 1908, but since then it has been little practised by the Durham and Newcastle Association.

He, Mr. Barber, has heard of another peal being rung, but cannot remember when and where. However, it turned out to be a false composition. Perhaps Gay Lindoff can enlighten us on this point.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

C. L. ROUTLEDGE.

## GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION

'SILENT' PRACTICE ON ST. JOHN'S BELLS.

The monthly meeting of the Bristol City Branch of the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association was held at the headquarters of the branch, the Haymarket Hotel, on Saturday, July 12th. Once again visitors from Cheltenham, Swindon and Taunton were very welcome, and with their assistance some well-struck courses on handbells were heard before tea.

The business meeting was mainly routine in character but the chairman was pleased to be able to inform members that the peal of six at St. John's Church were now available for silent practices and that weekly gatherings had commenced on Wednesdays and were meeting with great success. At least six recruits were making very satisfactory progress, and method ringing now included Grandsire Doubles, Bob Minor, Stedman Doubles and attempts at Kent. With continued support it is expected that two practices will be held to meet the need of various ringers besides handbell practitioners that are held by the newly-formed Guild for handbell ringing.

The secretary (Mr. A. M. Tyler) announced that the association accounts were being sent to members, together with other circulars and announcements.

The date of the next meeting was given as August 16th.

Some of those present then adjourned to St. John's, while others continued with handbell ringing until 6 p.m.

## THE CENTRAL COUNCIL.

(Continued from page 353.)

W. H. THOMPSON.

The list of the members' of the Central Council contains the names of several men who, though they took no great part in the active work of the Council, have earned honourable places in the history of the Exercise. Some were mainly distinguished as practical ringers; some were men who had made good positions in other walks of life, and by their presence added to the dignity, and prestige of the Council; and a few were men who, though not themselves ringers, had by their writings served in no small degree the interests of ringing.

Of these latter the two most distinguished were Dr. J. J. Raven and W. H. Thompson. Thompson's connection with the Exercise is something of an enigma. Until the year 1886, he was totally unknown to ringers even by name. Then he published a little book which not only definitely settled the problem that for a century and a half had, more than any other, puzzled the best brains in the Exercise, but also has indirectly influenced composition to a greater extent than any book of modern times. He still continued to be for ringers little more than a name for, though he was made a member of the Ancient Society of College Youths, his membership was purely an honorary one, and though he was elected an honorary member of the Central Council in 1892, and remained a member until 1913, he attended but one meeting. His personal contact with ringers seems to have been confined to some correspondence with one or two leading men like C. D. P. Davies, William Snowdon and Sir Arthur Heywood. Naturally there are but few details of his career to be told.

William Henry Thompson was born some time about 1845. He was educated at Cambridge, where he was a scholar of Gonville and Caius College, and where he proceeded M.A. in 1869. Afterwards he was in the Bengal Civil Service. He published his 'Note on Grandsire Triples' in December, 1886. He assisted Heywood in his 'Investigations into Stedman Triples.' In 1893 he published 'A Diagram of a System of Peals of Union Triples,' and he made similar investigations into Grandsire Triples, which were incorporated in the second edition of 'Grandsire,' published in 1905. He wrote one or two letters to 'The Bell News,' the last about 1910, and after that his name disappears from ringing records; but we learn from the Cambridge University Calendar that he was still alive in June, 1938, when he must have attained to a very venerable old age.

Thompson was never a ringer, and when he wrote his famous book it is quite evident that he knew little or nothing about change ringing and nothing about composition in general. The problem had been brought to his notice: Is it or is it not possible by means of plain leads and common bob leads only to form a complete peal of 5,040 changes of Grandsire Triples? He was told just enough about Grandsire Triples and plain leads and common bobs to understand what the problem was, and that was all that was necessary for his purpose.

It has never been stated how he came across this problem. It may be no more than a coincidence, but during the time he was in India there was another Cambridge man in the Bengal Civil Service, somewhat senior to himself, who was keenly interested in bells and bell-

ringing. Frederick W. J. Rees learnt to ring when he was at school at Shrewsbury, he maintained his love of the art through all the twenty-five years he was in the East, and he resumed his ringing when he came home. He was interested in the history of the art, but not much in composition, and was just the sort of man who would have been likely to give Thompson the bare facts of the problem without saying anything about composition. Thompson, who was essentially a mathematician, would find the problem after his own heart. But all this is only conjecture.

For his immediate purpose Thompson's ignorance of ringing matters was a help rather than a hindrance. It freed the problem from all side issues and enabled him to tackle it without any prepossessions. What hampers men usually in solving problems in ringing matters is that they know so much about collateral things that they are unable to isolate the essential problem.

It is interesting in this connection to compare Thompson's little book with C. D. P. Davies' many and long articles on the same subject. But then Davies was trying to compose a peal and was exploring every available means to that end.

Thompson's pamphlet consists of only seventeen pages. The problem is stated, the conditions are set down, and the conclusion is reached in a few firm and logical steps. The whole is exceedingly clear and convincing. But while it is clear and convincing, the book is written throughout in the idiom of a mathematician. Thompson knew nothing of ringers' modes of thought or ways of expressing them, and they on their part knew as little about his; and so to the average ringer his book is not much more intelligible than if it had been written in French or Latin.

We may imagine an average intelligent ringer opening the book. He is not an expert in composition, and, like the vast mass of men, has had no mathematical training. This is the first sentence he reads: 'A row of the first  $n$  natural numbers arranged in ascending order of magnitude is said by bellringers to be "in-course." A row of the same  $n$  natural numbers in any other order is said to be "in-course" or "out-of-course," according as such order is producible from or, which comes to the same thing, reducible to ascending order of magnitude by an even or odd number of single transpositions of number with number.' Having read so far, our reader would, as likely as not, shut the book and put it aside as beyond him.

If we were to translate the above into ringer's language we could put it thus: Rounds is the fundamental row and is in-course. Any other row is in-course or out-of-course according as it can be produced from rounds or (which comes to the same thing) rounds can be produced from it by transposing an even or an odd number of pairs of bells.

That sounds so very much simpler and easier, but while the average ringer can understand my translation and can make nothing of Thompson's statement, an ordinary mathematician would readily understand Thompson's, but the other would convey nothing to him.

It is the same throughout, and the book must be translated into what is almost another language before the ringer realises how simple and yet how conclusive the argument is.

Thompson used very few terms familiar to the ringers of his time. He introduced several, some of which have been permanently adopted. The word 'change' never

occurs in the body of the book; instead, we have 'permutation,' and 'row,' both words being used with their ordinary common meaning. 'Change' and 'permutation' have the same meaning, but, while a mathematician would naturally use the second because it is to him the more precise and definite, a ringer would naturally use the first because it means to him a special form of permutation. Thompson's use of the word 'row' has made it for ringers a technical term, with a limited meaning. There is among some people a tendency to use it as synonymous with 'change.' That is wrong.

From Thompson we also get the very useful 'P Block' and 'B Block,' and especially 'Q Set.' He not only uses the conventional signs of algebra in a way unfamiliar to ringers, but he uses expressions which might even mislead if we did not understand how he uses them. When he says that a lead end, say 672534, is hobbled, he does not mean, as a ringer would, that it is brought up by a bob, but that the lead end which follows it is brought up by a bob. In a similar way he calls a Q Set the five lead ends in which the same bell is in fifths and the others in the same coursing order; not, as we should, the five lead ends with the same bell Before.

These things show that Thompson's 'Note' is not an easy book for a casual reader, and, in fact, the great effect it had on thought in the Exercise was not direct, but through the very few who first understood it and then handed its conclusions on.

I have said that the 'Note on Grandsire' influenced composition to a greater extent than any other book of modern times. Of that there cannot be any doubt, but it is as well to make sure what changes it actually did bring about. Davies says in 'Grandsire': 'While former

writers have treated the subject after the manner of Euclid, Thompson has resorted to arithmetic and algebra, the more modern and handier rivals of Euclid's system.' That is quite wrong and misses the whole point. Thompson did indeed use the methods of algebra, but the methods of older men were not those of Euclid. Euclid's system was to assume that one or two very elementary statements were true and on them to build up a vast and complicated structure of abstract truth entirely by means of formal logic. Change ringing and geometry are sciences which, in their essence, are very similar, and it would be possible to do for the fundamental truths of change ringing what Euclid did for the fundamental truths of geometry, but it would need a man with most exceptional mental powers, and such a one has not yet appeared in the Exercise.

The old composers worked by the means that mankind has all along used to find out truth—by experiment aided to a greater or less degree by deductive reasoning. That is how scientists work to-day. The old composers were not trained men, and their deductive reasoning was almost entirely subconscious. Later men, including Davies himself, used it more deliberately. Thompson introduced no new thing here, but he did by his example illustrate how a problem should first be set down clearly, free from side issues and then worked out logically. It should be noted that an essential link in his argument is a table drawn up by an experimental process.

He also showed how useful formulas and conventional signs can be to a peal composer just as they are to an algebraist. They may be useful when explaining to other people, but they are more likely to mystify the ordinary reader.

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## BELFRY GOSSIP.

We should like to remind our readers that much as we should like to do everything to bring members of the Services into touch with the ringers of the districts where they are stationed, we are not able to publish the addresses of any soldier or airman.

We regret to record the death of Mr. Arthur Panther, of Wath-on-Dearne, formerly treasurer and afterwards hon. secretary of the Barnsley and District Society, who passed away on July 21st at the age of 64 years.

The many friends of Mr. Isaac Emery will be sorry to hear he has had to go into hospital for an internal trouble. Those wishing to write to him should address Dewey Ward, The Cottage Hospital, Bromley, Kent. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Mr. Christopher Woolley has received instructions to report to a R.F.A. depot somewhere in Wales, and this will, we fear, mean the break-up of the handbell band which has lately been doing so well at Bushey. A peal in another new method was a fitting climax to the extraordinary successes of the last few weeks.

Mr. J. E. Spice, who took part in four or five of the performances, would like to thank Mr. Woolley and the others for the peals they arranged for him while he was staying in Hertfordshire.

We are pleased to see that Miss O. Hairs has been elected a member of the Sussex County Association and has begun double-handed ringing. It was to her mother, then Miss Elsie Bennett, that Sir Arthur Heywood paid a very striking tribute on her handbell ringing. Miss Hairs' father and grandfather, Mr. Frank Bennett, are, of course, well known to almost all ringers.

We are pleased to hear from Mr. James George that he has now quite recovered from the fall he had recently. He had a bad fall and seriously hurt his back, but fortunately he is now all right again.

The destruction of some of Wren's churches has proved the great architect's frequent use of existing wall and foundations in his rebuilding after the Great Fire of London. This had long been suspected.

William Cooter, for many years one of the most prominent of London ringers, died on July 28th, 1912, at the age of 87.

Fifty years ago yesterday F. E. Robinson rang the seventh at Duffield a peal of London Surprise. A. P. Heywood conducted from the third, and it was the first time a parson had rung a peal in the method.

Fifty years ago to-day four peals were rung. They were Grandire Triples 2, Stedman Triples 1, and Kent Treble Bob Major 1.

## WAR DAMAGED CHURCHES.

Last week in the House of Lords the Bishop of London moved a resolution for the presentation of the Diocesan Reorganisation Committee's Measure, 1941, which places on diocesan committees to be set up the responsibility of the restoration and reorganisation of damaged churches.

The motion was carried after the Bishop had pointed out that before the war there were too many separate parishes and too many churches. Where there had been destruction, he thought there must be consideration of the areas as a whole and a considered policy adopted before rebuilding was begun.

In the House of Commons on the same day it was agreed that the Measure should be presented for the Royal Assent.

## LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL.

### THE BUILDING GOES ON.

Another notable stage in the growth of Liverpool Cathedral was reached on Sunday, when the old and new sections were used together for the first time, the temporary wall which so long divided them having been removed, and it was at last possible to appreciate the full grandeur of the interior. Although appropriate ceremony could not mark this conclusion of 16 years of unremitting labour, it is heartening that this creative work of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott should go on and this noble shrine of the Christian faith should continue to grow in beauty and dignity.

The great central space is now at last finished and the choir assumes its proper relative position in the architect's design. The central space measures 186ft. by 87ft. at its greatest width, with an area of just over 15,000 square feet. This may be compared with the area under the dome of St. Paul's, approximately 10,000, and the similar feature at St. Peter's, Rome, not quite 15,000 square feet.

Equally noteworthy is the height of the under-tower vault, 176ft. This is 60ft. higher than the choir vault, 74ft. higher than the nave of Westminster Abbey, the highest mediæval vault in England, and only 6ft. less than the Nelson column. The vault is octagonal, with four long and four short sides, the culminating point being a circular belltrap. Light there is in plenty from the triple lancets on either side, which, with the rose windows above them, are filled with brilliantly translucent stained glass. The lightness of the under-tower is one of its most striking features, though for the present, with many windows in the older portion boarded up because of enemy action, the choir appears unduly dark.

Above the new section rises the massive tower slowly nearing completion, which will hold the heavy ring of twelve bells already cast and the great bourdon bell of 14 tons. The frame is already in position.

## OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.

### THE ANNUAL MEETING.

#### Action on Care of Silent Bells.

Despite war-time conditions, some 60 members of the Oxford Diocesan Guild, representing fourteen out of the fifteen branches, assembled in Oxford on Saturday week for the annual general meeting. Although, as our correspondent puts it, there was 'no dinner, no tea, no ringing, but plenty of rain,' the gathering was nevertheless an enjoyable one, bringing many old friends together again, and it was made noteworthy by a presentation to the Rev. C. E. and Mrs. Wigg to mark their marriage and as a token of the members' appreciation of Mr. Wigg's work as Deputy Master.

The meeting was held in the Chapter House at Christ Church in the afternoon, the Master (the Rev. Canon G. F. Coleridge) presiding. He was supported by the Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Dorchester, the Rev. C. E. Wigg (Deputy Master), the hon. treasurer (Mr. A. D. Barker) and the general secretary (Mr. R. T. Hibbert). Letters of apology were received from several members, the difficulties of transport or the stress of war work being the reasons given for non-attendance.

The Annual Report of the Guild, printed before the annual meeting on Saturday week, was of necessity but a skeleton of its former self and covered only eleven printed pages, which included four pages devoted to the peals rung before the ban fell on church bellringing in 1941.

#### OFFICERS' REPORTS.

The Master (the Rev. Canon G. F. Coleridge), in his report to the members, said: 'With so little to report at a time when all ringing of bells is prohibited—when means of locomotion are most unreliable or even non-existent—when lighting restrictions hinder movements and paper restricted, all we can do as a Guild is to carry on as best we may, looking to officials of branches and foremen of towers to do all they can in the difficulties which beset them. In this time of stress and upheaval we look to those who in the past have done so much for the welfare of the Guild, with deep thankfulness for their work and with certain assurance that their work will be continued so far as may be possible—that when 'this tyranny is overpast,' our bells may once more ring out in peals of victory, joy and peace.'

The Deputy Master (the Rev. C. Elliot Wigg) reported that during the first six months of the year 1940 the Guild maintained a considerable measure of activity, having regard to circumstances. Several peals were rung, and Sunday ringing and practices were kept going as far as possible. Even since the ban on open ringing came into force in June, the Guild had not lapsed entirely into a state of quiescence. Meetings had been held and a limited amount of ringing, both on handbells and silent tower bells, had been carried out.

A feature of especial interest and encouragement, he continued, 'has been the keen activity of the Oxford University Society, now happily restored once more to affiliation with the Guild. In co-operation with the City ringers, the undergraduates are holding regular meetings at New College, where the clappers have been removed from the bells, and really good progress is being made, both in tower and handbell ringing.'

'I have,' he added, 'personally attended seven annual and five quarterly branch meetings during the year. The restricted petrol allowance unfortunately prevented me from attending several other meetings in more distant parts of the Guild's territory, and this was naturally a source of great regret to me. Since this report will find its way to many towers which I cannot hope to visit for the present, I take this opportunity of sending my warmest greetings to all Guild members with the sincere hope that the time may soon come when the restoration of peace shall bring with it the renewal of old friendships and the happiness of normal Guild activities.'

#### THE GUILD'S FINANCES.

The secretary (Mr. R. T. Hibbert) said in his report: 'The year 1940 finished in a very sad way, as far as the activities of our Guild are concerned, and it is no real comfort to know that all other guilds and associations are in the same predicament. So far our branches have held meetings whenever possible which keeps the social life of members alive. I was able to attend ten branch annual meetings and found a good spirit maintained everywhere, although one missed a great many of the younger men.'

'We have decided not to print names of members serving in H.M. Forces until we can get a full list in a full report; so I beg all tower foremen and branch secretaries to do their utmost to keep this list up to date. The names of units or corps should also be recorded. A list printed to the end of 1940 would be useless, as men are leaving towers now in greater numbers. We must take our membership as being the same as at the end of 1939, although our branch secretaries will not be able to collect subscriptions from a great many towers. I do beg, however, that as many as possible will retain their membership in a proper manner, and so help the Guild to get "on its legs" again as soon as a start can be made.'

'A few peals were rung in the first few months of 1940, and we hope that some members in various parts of the diocese may become

proficient enough to ring handbell peals in the future. No band would regret their efforts if once they became proficient. I conclude with good wishes to all and may God grant us a happy and successful future with many more happy meetings in Berks, Bucks and Oxon.'

The general account of the Guild showed receipts amounting to £68 14s. 11d., including £21 1s. 3d. from arrears of 1939 subscriptions, £46 13s. 6d. from subscriptions for 1940 and £1 0s. 2d. from the sale of annual reports. The total expenditure was £100 11s. 8d., but this included £29 9s. 1d. transferred to the Restoration Fund. The balance at the end of the year was £49 1s. 8d., as against £80 18s. 5d. at the commencement. The reserve fund now has a balance of £76 3s. 8d., and the restoration fund a balance of £117 19s. 1d.

In his report the hon. treasurer (Mr. A. D. Barker) pointed out that the general funds of the Guild amount to £243 4s. 5d., of which £117 19s. 1d. is in the Restoration Fund. Several branches have again failed to send in their contributions before the accounts were closed. It should be remembered that this reduces the amount of interest in the Restoration Fund in the following year, also, as the bank balance is at a minimum, branch contributions are vitally necessary at the proper date.

On the advice of the Savings Bank, £50 was invested in 3½ per cent. War Loan, so that all the Guild's assets are in the same kind of stock, which makes it easier to dispose of them should the necessity arise.

The officers were re-elected en bloc and were thanked by the meeting for good work done under difficult conditions.

The four representatives of the Central Council were also re-elected to serve again if and when the Council meet.

The recommendation from the General Committee that the annual festival or business meeting in 1942 shall be held at Oxford was ratified, and another recommendation asking all tower foremen to keep a correct list of members serving in H.M. Forces and to keep their branch secretaries informed of such names with a view of printing a full list when hostilities cease, was agreed to.

It was decided to print the annual report in abridged form if hostilities have not ceased.

The election of 17 new members was confirmed.

#### PRESENTATION TO THE REV. C. E. WIGG.

The Deputy Master (the Rev. C. E. Wigg), who had taken to himself a wife earlier in the year, was presented with a cheque subscribed by the Guild as a wedding present. The gift was handed to him, with a few happy sentences, by the Bishop of Dorchester.

Owing to the abnormal times, Mr. and Mrs. Wigg had been asked to get something to suit themselves, and their choice was a grandfather clock with chimes. The Bishop, on behalf of the Guild, wished them a long and happy life and hoped Mr. Wigg would long continue his activities for the good of the Guild.

The Deputy Master thanked the members of the Guild throughout the diocese for their beautiful present, and said that as the clock was too big to bring to Oxford for inspection, a photograph of it, with the inscription plate, would be handed round.

Under 'Any other business,' the Master submitted a motion for debate and, he hoped, approval, to be sent to the diocesan authorities asking their support, viz.: 'That in view of the fact that the Government has taken over control of the church towers and the ringing of the bells in our diocese during the duration of war, the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bellringers is of opinion that any damage done to the bells or their fittings by enemy action should be made good by the Government up to their full value.'

The Master drew attention to the fact that in the event of a church being destroyed by enemy action, the Government would pay most of the cost of rebuilding, but not for the restoration of the bells, which, he urged, should be fully insured.

After discussion, the motion was carried and the hope expressed that the Lord Bishop of Oxford and the three Archdeacons would give it their utmost support.

#### PRESERVATION OF THE BELLS.

Capt. Poyntz asked if the Guild could not do something to ensure that the rings of bells in the diocese should be carefully looked after whilst hanging silent, so as to be ringable when the time came for them to ring again. He proposed that a copy of a letter printed in 'The Ringing World' some time ago from the pen of Mr. A. A. Hughes, of the Whitechapel Foundry, London, should be sent to all incumbents whose churches possess a ring of bells, asking them to see that suggestions in the letter are carried out. This was emphatically supported by Messrs. F. Sharpe, J. H. Shepherd, A. D. Barker, A. H. Webb and other experienced ringers, who realise that machinery deteriorates as much or more by neglect than by wear.

A clerical member asked what the military were going to do in the event of invasion if the bells cannot be rung? 'It is a matter,' he said, 'which should be referred to the Central Council, whose duty it should be to take the matter up with the War Office.'

Capt. Poyntz's proposal was adopted and the meeting was brought to a close with the Blessing, pronounced by the Bishop of Dorchester, who, having another engagement, had then to leave.

The members afterwards went over to St. Aldate's Parish Church, where the Guild service was conducted by the Master, and the Rector (the Rev. F. S. Cragg) gave the Guild a most sincere welcome and a very fine 'chat' from the pulpit.

## BELLS BEFORE BUTTER.

CAN WE MAKE THE GERMANS PAY?

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I quite agree with Mr. Pulling that a great majority of ordinary people would try to make the Germans pay. I understand and fully sympathise with their feeling. Lately I walked through the City of London past the scarred walls of the great cathedral and the ruins of so many beautiful churches, and the familiar words of the psalm would keep ringing in my ears, 'Remember the children of Edom, O Lord, in the day of Jerusalem, how they said, Down with it, down with it, even to the ground. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed, happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou has served us. Blessed shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.'

It is a natural feeling and to some extent a right one, but the point is not whether we ought to make the Germans pay, but whether we can make them pay without doing irreparable injury to ourselves.

When the war is over and the victory won, it will be possible to form some estimate of what it has cost us in damage and expenditure. What the amount will be I do not know, but let us say £20,000,000,000, which is not an extravagant estimate. We can send a bill in to Germany and demand payment, but how would they pay it? In gold? There is not so much gold in the world, certainly not so much in Germany. If there were and we could get it all, what good would it do us? We could put it in the vaults of the Bank of England, which would not help us much; or put it into circulation as money. That would mean inflation, the calamity we most dread. If not gold, what else? Raw materials? Germany has not a lot of raw materials we want. What there is is mainly coal and iron. We could make them dig coal and bring it here, so that our wharves and railway sidings were glutted with it. And as a result our own pits would have to close down and our miners go without wages.

The only other thing is manufactured goods. We could take over all the factories in Germany and make them work for us. That would mean the ruin of our manufacturers and our people on the dole.

But, says Mr. Pulling, if we should lose the war the Germans would make us pay. It is quite true they would try to do so, and it is also true that they have a much better chance than we of succeeding. For while they have very little we want even at a gift, we have a tremendous lot they badly covet—colonies, and coaling stations, and raw material, and ships, and empire and the rest. They would strip us of all those things and perhaps benefit by so doing. We can't treat them in the same way, try we never so much.

But what Mr. Pulling feels is that it is not right the Germans should have committed this enormous wickedness and brought this misery on the world, and in the end not suffer for it. He need not worry. They will pay all right, though not in the way he wants. They will pay in blood, and agony, and degradation, and the deterioration of national and individual character. Whatever happens they will have a bitter cup to drain to the dregs. But we shall have to rebuild our churches and replace our bells ourselves. 'X.'

## HANDBELL RINGING.

WHEN DID IT BEGIN?

It is possible to give a reasonably definite answer to Miss Hilda Snowden's enquiry about handbells. At the time of the Reformation (a period which roughly covers a century) the ringing of church bells was not forbidden. Towards the end of King Henry's reign an injunction was issued forbidding the quasi-liturgical ringing during the processions before High Mass, and several not altogether successful attempts were made over a long period to suppress 'superstitious' ringing at funerals and on the eves of saints' days. But ringing for personal, civic and national purposes, and more especially for 'pleasure' (i.e., sport), greatly increased and there probably was more bellringing in Queen Elizabeth's reign than has ever been before or since. Later, during the Commonwealth there was no cessation.

Handbells were used by the Church from the earliest days. In mediæval times they were used as sacring bells, at funerals, and when for any reason a priest carried the consecrated elements. These handbells figure largely in the inventories of 1552. They were single bells and practically all of them were sold for scrap metal in the reign of King Edward VI. Of the thousands in use in England in the year 1550 hardly one survives.

In the South Kensington Museum there is a case of ancient handbells collected by H. T. Ellacombe.

Handbells tuned in sets to the major scale have been used by ringers since the beginning of the eighteenth century. The first definite mention is in 1730.

These handbells did not originate with anything connected with the Church. Most likely they were originally converted sheep bells. The first sets were cup bells and one or two sets of them still survive from the 18th century. Some of the members of the Central Council rang changes on one of these sets in Mr. E. H. Lewis' garden two years ago.

The occasional use of handbells in church before the service, though rare, has not been unknown during the last fifty years.

Miss Snowden says that the ringers' jar in Halstead belfry dates from the time of the Reformation. Is there any authentic information of when this jar was made? It is more than likely that ringers' jugs were in use as early as the sixteenth century, but it is very doubtful if any of the earthenware jugs still existing are as old.

## SUSSEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

SOUTHERN DIVISIONAL MEETING AT WIVELSFIELD.

On Saturday, July 19th, by kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. F. I. Hairs, a meeting of the Southern Division of the Sussex Association was held at their residence at Wivelsfield, when a representative body of ringers was present from Shoreham, West Grinstead, Henfield, Lewes, Balcombe and the Brighton towers. Mr. C. Tyler, one of the few remaining foundation members of the association, whose membership dates from 1885, was also present and brought with him his own peal of handbells.

During the afternoon the bells were well employed in a variety of methods ranging from Grandsire Triples to Cambridge Major and Stedman Caters, while in the evening a well-struck course of Stedman Cinques was brought round. For those ringers and friends who were not too well advanced in handbell ringing—and for the overflow crowds who were awaiting their turn in the ringing room—darts were available. The results of the games provided an interesting sidelight on the activities of some ringers during the black-out evenings, if the remarks of the losers are to be believed.

Tea was provided by Mrs. Hairs, who made an excellent hostess, to whom the partakers of her hospitality are deeply grateful. By general assent it was the best meal ever set before a divisional meeting, not excluding peace time, and even the appetites of some 24 who sat down were not equal to the task of clearing the board. The meal was served in the garden, and as the siren refrained from its dismal wail the illusion of pre-war conditions was complete.

Rain, which had been threatening all the afternoon, began in earnest just as tea finished and drove the business meeting indoors. Mrs. Hairs took the chair. One new member was elected, Miss O. Hairs, who has learnt to ring double-handed before mastering a tower bell. This is a result of the ban on tower-bell ringing, and we must expect it to become more common as a method of starting new ringers. Mrs. Hairs, as Miss Elsie Bennett, scored quite a number of handbell peals before accomplishing one in the tower. The quick progress of the new member was a matter for remark, and it would seem to be a fresh instance of heredity in ringing.

It was proposed that another meeting should be held at Southover, Lewes, on September 6th.

The meeting closed with a hearty vote of thanks to the hostess for the accommodation and hospitality provided, and, in reply, Mrs. Hairs thanked the ringers for their good response to the invitation, and hoped that she had been able to do something to keep the interest in ringing alive in these difficult times.

## PARISHIONERS TAKE CARE OF BELLS.

REMOVAL BETTER THAN INSURANCE.

In the parish of Mayfield, Sussex, the bells of St. Dunstan's Church have been taken down and separately placed in the care of local residents. In informing us of this, Mr. W. Kitchenside writes:—

In view of the leading article in 'The Ringing World' of June 27th last on the care of church bells, the following may be of some interest to you. The Finance Committee of the Parochial Church Council of St. Dunstan's Church, Mayfield, Sussex, have decided to have the eight bells taken down for the duration of the war rather than insure them. It was felt that insurance would not be able to replace them if damaged by enemy action. They will be replaced after the war. The work of taking down the bells was undertaken by Messrs. Gillett and Johnston, of Croydon, with the help of a local firm of builders. The bells are distributed amongst local residents of the parish with the exception of the tenor, which is being left in the churchyard. Here are the inscriptions on the bells:—

- 1.—Treble.—Glory to God in the Highest. Taylor, Loughborough. 1913.
  - 2.—On Earth Peace, Good Will Toward Men. Taylor, 1913.
  - 3.—The Gift of John Baker, Esq., J. W. Fecit. 1724.
  - 4.—R.F., J.M., C.H. John Waylett made me, 1724.
  - 5.—T.G., 1602.
  - 6.—Brianus Eldridge me fecit. W.W., R.W., 1629.
  - 7.—Cast by John Warner and Sons, London, 1898. Mr. John Sands, John Merchant (CH. Wardens). Peter Baker, D.D., Vicar. R. Phelps made me 1712. Recast 1898. J. H. R. Kirby, Vicar. E. Coppard, J. B. Powell, CH. Wardens.
- Tenor.—Brianus Eldridge me fecit. R.W. 1630. Gloria Deo in Excelsis.

The two trebles were added in 1913 to make up the octave as a memorial to the Rev. J. H. R. Kirby, for over 15 years Vicar of Mayfield. There is some doubt as to who cast the fifth bell. In some old books concerning the history of church bells, etc., the founder's name is given as Thomas Giles, in others as Thomas Gilbert. I have never been able to find out which is correct.

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**"SCROOF."**

## THE ORIGIN OF THE WORD.

*To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—I spent some time and trouble trying to find out the origin of the word 'scroof,' and, without being dogmatic, I give the following as the most likely explanation.

'Scroof' is a word which has been used among London ringers for a very long time, probably for more than a century and a half. It does not seem to have been known in the provinces, and in London I have only once found it in writing. That was in the Cumberlands' name book, where a number of men are described as the 'Islington Scroof.'

The word meant the paid band which was attached to a particular belfry. To-day it is practically confined to the paid band at St. Paul's Cathedral. It has survived solely among the College Youths, but it never has been used by that society in any of its official statements. It has, in fact, almost always been treated as a slang word; men talked of the 'scroof' in much the same way as they talked of 'stone,' meaning call-changes.

It would seem that originally the word was used as a term of contempt and it is not hard to explain why. The different words which ringers use were not invented out of nothing. Originally they were words in common speech used in their common sense. Only gradually did they acquire special and local meanings. I have consulted the authorities and the only word from which 'scroof' can have come is the common old English word 'scruff,' a term of contempt which has barely reached the level of a literary word, but which for centuries has been used in different forms in common speech among the ordinary people. Among other things it meant a 'rabble' or 'a set of persons of indifferent character.' Even to-day people sometimes talk about a 'scruffy lot.'

But why should such a term have been applied to a band of ringers? To answer that we must turn back to the conditions of the London Exercise in the eighteenth century. The character of the ringers was extraordinarily varied. At the top there was the small, exclusive Society of College Youths, and at the bottom a number of low class men who had little or no interest or knowledge of the art of change ringing, but who hung round the belfries in the hope of picking up something out of the paid ringing. Both Osborn and Ellacombe have told us something about them in the early nineteenth century.

We can be sure that the College Youths looked on these men with contempt, and we know from the incident at York in 1789 that they resented the idea of being thought to belong to the same class. So they contemptuously called them 'scroof.'

It is not at all unusual that a name originally given in contempt should by degrees become respectable. The word 'stone,' once contemptuous slang, is now a good technical term. In the case of 'scroof' the change was helped by the changing social conditions of the ringers. The high class exclusive College Youths disappeared. The lower class men who took their places improved in character and status. When St. Paul's bells were hung and an official band formed out of the best members of the College Youths, paid ringing was put (at any rate in that one instance) on a far higher level. The 'scroof' were now the pick of the society. But the old term survived, though not without something of its old character as slang.

J. A. T.

## ANOTHER SUGGESTION.

Dear Sir,—'Inquirer' raises one of the several closely related questions as to the origins and meanings of those, obviously, very old words used by the men who built up our art.

Mr. Trollope recently referred to the extraordinarily good work done by the Rev. Earl Bulwer in writing the 'Glossary.' But I see that he left the above word out, also several other of our ancient words, though he gives 'Exercise,' 'Caters' and 'Cinques' and also 'soller.'

In regard to the word scroof, I feel sure that it is derived from 'scroll.' We find such variants as escroll and scroie. It is allied to roll, volume and book. Hence a man 'enrolled' was naturally on the scroie, and, in an illiterate age, soon was on the 'scroof.'

The Northern dialects habitually dropped the 'l.' (They do to-day.)

E. ALEX. YOUNG.

Italian Villa, Elstree Hill, Bromley, Kent.

**THE LOOTED BELLS OF BRISTOL.**

## DEATH SENTENCES THREATENED.

Mr. Justice Charles declared, during a trial for looting, at Winchester Assizes last week: 'One of these days I myself or one of my brothers will exercise our undoubted right and pass a sentence of death for looting.'

Edward Richard Pearce and Gilbert Lovell were charged with stealing nine bells from a bomb-damaged church at Bristol, and were each sentenced to seven years' penal servitude. Each said he wished to appeal.

Some of the bells were stated to have been cast in 1749, and one, a sanctus bell, dated from 1623. When the church was damaged the bells fell from the tower, and later it was found that they had been removed.

According to the prosecution Pearce was found to be selling bell metal, and Lovell was seen breaking up the bells with a hammer.

**MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.**

## MR. ERNEST MORRIS' DISCOVERY.

A meeting of the Leicester District of the Midland Counties Association was held at Anstey on July 12th in beautiful summer weather.

The bells were rung silent during the afternoon to a variety of methods, including Bob Minor, Grandsire and Stedman Triples, Cambridge and London Major, and, in spite of the handicap, the ringing was much enjoyed by all.

At 5.30 p.m. the members, 29 in number, adjourned to a nearby cafe and partook of a tea which was highly satisfactory under the present circumstances.

A room had been taken at a local hotel and after tea a meeting was held there. A violent thunderstorm raged throughout the whole of the meeting, and at times it was difficult to hear the speakers. About half-way through the meeting the lights fused and the meeting was carried on in semi-darkness.

In the absence of the local chairman, Mr. E. Morris was elected to the chair. He spoke of an article which he had very recently found in 'The Leicester Journal' of September 27th, 1782. It was as follows: 'On Thursday last was rung at Anstey in this county, upon five bells, 5,280 Grandsire Bobs, in three hours ten minutes.' There was no mention of the names of the ringers, but this was the earliest record of a peal of Doubles in the county.

The Chairman extended a hearty welcome to the visitors, who included Miss Thompson, hon. treasurer of the association, and Mr. and Mrs. Fred Salter, of Nottingham, Mr. and Mrs. Norman Bagworth, of London, and ringers from Copt Oak and Great Dalby.

Some discussion then took place as to future meetings, and eventually it was decided to hold two more meetings this year. Mr. W. Clarke proposed and Mr. J. Grant seconded that the first meeting be held at Countesthorpe. This was carried unanimously.

It was agreed to hold the second meeting at St. Margaret's, Leicester, on October 4th. This was proposed by Mr. A. Disney, seconded by Mr. G. Morris and carried unanimously.

In closing the meeting, the chairman spoke with regret of the recent death of the wife of Mr. George Straw, a member of the Leicester Cathedral ringers and of the M.C.A. It was decided that the district secretary should write a letter of condolence on behalf of the ringers of the Leicester District, and it was the wish of the meeting that Mr. E. Morris should write on behalf of the M.C.A.

During the rest of the evening there was some handbell ringing and the company in general enjoyed themselves.

When the time came to say good night the rain had ceased and another enjoyable day had come to a close.

**KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION.**

## MEETING OF THE TONBRIDGE DISTRICT.

A meeting of the Tonbridge District of the Kent County Association was held at Tonbridge on Saturday, July 26th, and was attended by 20 members from Brasted, Leigh, Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge, East Peckham and Shipbourne. Mr. T. E. Sone, of Paddock Wood, was also present. In the absence of the Vicar, who sent an apology, the curate conducted the service and gave a very interesting address upon the secret service of life and his experiences years ago as a ringer.

At 5 p.m. tea was served at the Carlton Cafe, after which the business meeting followed, with Mr. W. Latter in the chair. The first item was to elect a new district secretary, and Mr. D. Findlay proposed and Mr. E. J. Ladd seconded that as the year was well advanced, Mr. T. Saunders should act as secretary until the annual meeting of the district in October. This was agreed to.

It was decided that the annual meeting should be held at Tonbridge on the first Saturday in October, and a by-meeting at Sevenoaks on the first Saturday in September.

Votes of thanks were passed to the Vicar, the organist, to Mr. J. Medhurst and Mr. T. Saunders for arranging the meeting, and to Mr. W. Latter for taking the chair.

During the afternoon and after the meeting several touches on handbells were rung by some of the members and were enjoyed by all.

**BARNSELY AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.**

## MEETING AT PENISTONE.

A meeting of the Barnsley and District Society was held at Penistone on July 19th, when members were present from Earlsheaton, Felkirk, Hoylandswaine, Wath and the local company.

A room was reserved at the Bridge Hotel, where handbells were rung in the afternoon until 5 p.m., when a splendid tea was served, which was much appreciated by all.

The business meeting followed, with the president, Mr. E. Brookes, in the chair. The members stood in silence as a tribute to the memory of Mr. O. Greathead, of Conisbrough, who had passed away on July 13th at the age of 53.

The business was soon disposed of, and after a vote of thanks to the local company for the arrangements and the tea there was more handbell ringing. Some of the ringers tried their skill at a 'game of cricket' on the dart board, with the result that the 'old crocks' beat the 'young uns.'

It was decided to hold the next meeting at Barnsley on Saturday, August 9th.

## THE STANDARD METHODS

### FORWARD.

When Sir Arthur Heywood published Duffield he certainly had good reason for thinking he had found not merely a new standard method but one which would be for even bellringing what Stedman is for odd. Yet Duffield from the very first proved a complete failure.

The reason usually given is that the method is too monotonous. That is true, to a very great extent, on eight bells, and monotony was, and is, a sufficient reason for the method not being extensively practised. But it is a fact that Duffield has never had a fair chance. Most of the people who talk about its monotony have never rung it, and only repeat what others have said.

As a Major method there is not a great deal to be said for it, but as Royal and Maximus (for which, as we remember, Heywood specially designed it) there is a lot to be said. For short touches at practice or service ringing it is better than almost every other ten and twelve-bell method in use, and it deserves much more attention than it has received, though we doubt if it will ever receive it.

The reason is that it lies outside the main stream of the development of the art. From the first, change ringing has progressed in a definite way from Plain Bob and Grandsire through Treble Bob to Double Norwich, and on to Surprise. Stedman, it is true, lies outside, but Stedman has often proved a dead end.

Ringers are an exceptionally conservative lot, partly because of the nature of their art, and partly because they remain in active service for so long. It is nothing much for a man to be a ringer for thirty or forty or more years, and at the end he is not so very different from what he was at the beginning.

There is, therefore, not much to be gained by considering the claims of other methods similar to Duffield to rank as standard methods. A large number of them have appeared from time to time, all more or less imitations of Duffield, and some which have tried to correct supposed defects in it. But we may be sure that Heywood had thoroughly explored the whole ground and that he selected the best.

There is, however, one which has had a certain amount of practice and deserves a short notice. This is Forward. Forward is usually said to be John Carter's method, and it is his in the sense that he first introduced it to the Exercise and called the first peal of it, but it is the simplest form of a group of methods which must be obvious to anyone who gives any thought to method construction.

The general plan of these methods is this. The division heads and ends are the rows of the Plain hunting course. Between them is inserted a backward hunting course on a part of the bells and the rest dodge.

12345678	12345678
	34
	43
21436587	21436587
<hr/>	<hr/>
24163857	24163857

In Forward the inserted backward hunting course is on two bells which is 12

12

21

21, and this is put in 3-4, all the other bells dodging in pairs.

So far as construction goes, Forward can be had on any number of bells, and the inserted hunting course can be in 1-2, 3-4, 5-6 or anywhere else; but a little experimenting will soon show that some of these variations give features which we do not allow in practical ringing. For instance—

1234567	12345678
2134657	12436587
1243567	21345678
2143657	21436587
<hr/>	<hr/>
2416375	24163857

Similarly we shall find that if the backward hunting course is on three bells it must be put in the front three or the last three positions, and is only suitable for odd numbers unless there are two of it.

1234567	12345678
<hr/>	<hr/>
2143657	21436587
124	124 578
142	142 758
412	412 785
421	421 875
2416375	24163857
<hr/>	<hr/>
4261735	42618375

These are Erin Triples and a double variation adapted to eight bells.

With the backward hunting course on four bells we get what Henry Dains called Barnsbury Major:—

12345678
3546
5364
5634
6543
6453
4635
21436587
<hr/>
24163857

The plan can in theory be extended indefinitely on the higher numbers, but the extensions are of no practical value.

Further variations can be had by increasing the number of two-bell hunting courses thus:—

12345678
3465
4365
3456
4356
21436587
<hr/>
24163857

Anyone can amuse himself by working out other combinations and so producing other methods. There seems no reason why some of them should not be rung, but they are not likely to appeal to ringers. Forward itself was supposed to have all the good musical qualities of Treble Bob with none of its defects. In practice it is found to be intolerably monotonous, both to ring and to listen to. It is not nearly the equal of Duffield, but as a Royal method is not altogether without some good qualities.

**NOTICES.**

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

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

**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.

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**ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS.—**

The next meeting will be held on Saturday August 2nd, at the Bell Foundry, 32-34, Whitechapel Road, E.1, at 3 p.m.—A. B. Peck, Hon. Sec., Branksome, Eversfield Road, Reigate, Surrey.

**BEDFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION. — Biggleswade**

District.—A meeting will be held at Henlow on Saturday, August 2nd, also handbells. All will be welcomed.—C. J. Ball, 25, Tempsford Road, Sandy, Beds.

**EAST GRINSTEAD AND DISTRICT GUILD.—**

A meeting will be held in the belfry at Balcombe on Saturday, August 2nd. Handbells and ringing on six silent tower bells.—Joint meeting with Sussex County and Hawkhurst Guild at Wadhurst, August 19th. Details later.—C. A. Bassett, Hon. Sec.

**SURREY ASSOCIATION (North-Western District)**

AND **GUILDFORD DIOCESAN GUILD (Leatherhead District).**—A joint meeting will be held at Leatherhead on Monday, August 4th. Ringers may meet at Boxhill S.R. station at 3.30, to ramble through Norbury Park to Leatherhead. Service in Leatherhead Church at 5 p.m. Tea at the Duke's Head at 5.30 p.m. Eight bells (silent) and handbells available at Leatherhead belfry from 3 p.m. and after tea. All ringers heartily welcome.—G. W. Massey and A. H. Smith, Dis. Hon. Secs.

**MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION AND LONDON**

**DIOCESAN GUILD.—**North and East District.—A meeting will be held at Stanmore on Saturday, August 9th. Handbells available at 3 p.m. Service at 4.30 p.m. Tea to follow, for which names must be sent to me by Tuesday, the 5th. By kind invitation of the Rector, the gardens will be open as usual.—T. J. Lock, Hon. Dis. Sec.

**ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—**South-Western Division.—

A meeting will be held at Loughton on Saturday, August 9th. Service at 4.30 p.m. Business meeting to follow. Handbells available during afternoon and evening. Details regarding tea in next week's issue. All ringers heartily welcome.—J. H. Crampion, Hon. Sec., 14, Wellesley Road, Wanstead, E.11.

**LINCOLN DIOCESAN GUILD.—**Northern Branch.—

—The half-yearly meeting will be held at Willingham-by-Stow on Saturday, August 9th. Service 4 p.m. Business

meeting 6 p.m. Entertainment and light refreshment will be provided for those who inform Rev. S. Malkinson, Willingham-by-Stow, Gainsborough, by the Thursday previous. Usual war-time ringing arrangements.—J. Bray, Hon. Sec.

**BARNESLEY AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.—**The next meeting will be held at Royal Hotel, Barnsley, on Saturday, August 9th. Handbells available 2.30 p.m. Tea 5 p.m., followed by usual business meeting and handbell practice.—Those requiring tea must notify me not later than Thursday, August 7th.—D. Smith, Hon. Sec., 28, Chapel Street, Shafton, near Barnsley.

**ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—**South-Western Division.—

A meeting will be held at Loughton on Saturday, August 9th. Service at 4 p.m., followed by tea and business meeting. Handbells available during afternoon and evening. All those requiring tea kindly let me know not later than August 6th. All ringers heartily welcome.—J. H. Crampion, Hon. Sec., 14, Wellesley Road, Wanstead, E.11.

**SUSSEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—**Eastern Division.—

A joint meeting with the East Grinstead and Hawkhurst and District Guilds will be held at Wadhurst on Saturday, August 16th. Six silent bells and handbells available from 3 p.m. Tea for those who notify Mr. C. A. Bassett, 3, Pendrill Place, Wadhurst, by August 13th. All ringers and friends welcome.—John Downing, Acting Hon. Sec., 2, Hughenden Road, Hastings.

**KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION.—**Lewisham District.—

A meeting will be held at Bexley on Saturday, August 16th. Service at 4.30 p.m. Tea at reasonable prices for members notifying me not later than Tuesday, August 12th. Subscriptions can be paid at this meeting.—A. G. Hill, Hon. Dis. Sec., temporary address, 53, Hengist Road, Erith, Kent.

**DEVON GUILD.—**Exeter Branch.—

A meeting will be held at Tedburn St. Mary Rectory on August 16th, at 3 p.m. Service in the church 4.30. Tea 5.15 only to those who notify me by August 9th. Bus leaves Exeter 2.45, returning 7.23. Handbells available.—W. H. Howe, Hon. Sec., 8, Courtenay Road, Exeter.

**WORCESTERSHIRE AND DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION.—**Western Branch.—

The next meeting will be held at St. Nicholas' Church, Worcester, on August 23rd. Service at 3.30 p.m., followed by light refreshments (tea and biscuits) and business meeting in Trinity Hall. Numbers not later than Tuesday, August 19th.—E. F. Cubberley, Hon. Sec., Park Cottages, Kempsey, near Worcester.

'THE CHURCH BELLS OF BERKSHIRE.' Part IV. Reprinted from the Journal of the Berks Archaeological Society. To be obtained from the author, Mr. Frederick Sharpe, Derwen, Launton, Bicester, Oxfordshire. Price one shilling.

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