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**THE 'CONFERENCE' IS ON.**

The suggested scheme put forward in our columns to enliven interest in ringing affairs in these dull days has met with such widespread and representative approval, that an attempt to establish this ringers' conference would appear to be well within the possibilities of success. That being so, we hope to launch the project as soon as details have been worked out. Letters continue to come in approving of the idea and promising support and, from the correspondence which we have published, the experiment will, we think, be welcomed. As far as we know it will be something entirely new in journalism, because it is intended to run the conference on the same lines as a discussion in Council, governed as far as possible by the recognised rules of debate. This, of course, is something widely different from the ordinary newspaper practice of inviting promiscuous correspondence.

There are a few points of detail which still remain to be settled, some of them raised in the letters which we have published. At the outset, however, we think it should be made quite clear that this scheme is in no way intended to usurp the functions of the Central Council. The Council is an elective body, the Conference is not, and while from the representative thoughts that may be expressed on any subject through the Conference, the Council may get some line on the views of ringers, no vote that could be taken could in any way bind the Council in the future. While the scheme before us is intended as a serious endeavour to maintain interest among ringers and to ventilate their opinions on topics of general importance to the ringing fraternity, it is not promoted in any desire to undermine either the purpose or the stability of the Council.

What it will do, we hope, is to bring under discussion many subjects of greater or less importance in which ringers of all types will take their part — expert and novice alike. The discussions will not be confined to 'front benchers' alone, contributions from the back benches will be equally desirable, because it is often from this source that valuable suggestions come; in fact the opinions of 'the rank and file' will be specially welcomed. And here we would remind the hesitant ones that it is not the length of expression of their views that carries weight. An opinion expressed clearly but briefly is always more convincing than a long speech.

(Continued on page 62.)

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In his letter last week the Rev. C. Carew Cox put forward a number of very useful suggestions, most of which will have to be embodied in the scheme if it is to work smoothly. The publication of an agenda before the Conference opens is, for instance, a necessity so that everyone may be prepared for the discussions that are to follow, but there are certain objections to the items themselves being chosen, from those submitted, by a committee. Whoever is responsible for conducting the Conference could, we think, be entrusted with the task of seeing that the subjects on the agenda are suitable for debate. This much, at any rate, we can say, as far as any control is exerted from 'The Ringing World,' this Conference will be treated with the seriousness we hope it will deserve, and any frivolous motions, or motions obviously dealing with petty personal grievances will be rigidly ruled out. There ought to be sufficient general topics to frame an interesting agenda, without resort to the types we have mentioned.

One objection, in our view, to making 'quick' decisions through a committee is the delay that must inevitably occur. Opinions cannot be obtained from half a dozen people, circulated and recirculated, often more than once, without a great deal of delay, not to say labour. It is true that a committee might lift from the shoulders of one individual the responsibility of accepting or rejecting a motion, but if such a decision were challenged it might be possible to take a postcard vote to decide whether or not the motion should be discussed. The other point which it is suggested might be referred to a committee is the number of weeks over which a discussion on any one subject will extend. That question, we think, will be decided by the interest displayed in the matter under debate, and will largely settle itself; in any case if it dragged on until boredom was threatened it would be open to someone to move 'that the question be now put,' and then the postcard vote could be made to serve a double purpose.

There is one other important question to be settled and that is the title under which this scheme shall be carried on. Various suggestions have been made and carefully weighed and, backed by the authority of the Oxford Dictionary, which defines the word as 'consultation,' we think 'Conference' is the name which best commends itself. What now remains is for the members of the Exercise to join in this effort wholeheartedly, not only to help make the scheme a success, but because we also think they will get some little pleasure and profit out of it themselves. We therefore invite ringers to submit suitable motions for the agenda, subjects which they are prepared to back by reasonable argument and which they think will interest others besides themselves. They should, at the same time, secure a seconder, and not leave this to chance, because one of the rules which will have to be observed is that when a new subject is opened the 'speeches' of both proposer and seconder shall appear together, so that others who wish to take part in the debate may be in a position to do so at once. A motion without a seconder previously secured will not be put before the Conference. This, we feel, is not only fair to the other 'speakers,' but is necessary to the smooth running of the scheme. Later on we shall publish more details of the arrangements, but in the meantime we repeat, 'The play is on,' send your notices of motion to 'The Ringing World.'

**HANDBELL PEALS.**

BIRMINGHAM

THE ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS.

On Saturday, January 24, 1942, in Three Hours and Four Minutes;

At the TAMWORTH ARMS, MOOR STREET, CITY.

**A PEAL OF STEDMAN CINQUES, 5007 CHANGES;**

Tenor size 19 in A.

FRANK E. HAYNES ... .. 1-2	FRANK E. PERVIN ... .. 7-8
FRANK W. PERRINS ... .. 3-4	GEORGE F. SWANN ... .. 9-10
WILFRED WILLIAMS ... .. 5-6	GEORGE E. FRERN ... .. 11-12

Composed by JOHN CARTER. Conducted by FRANK W. PERRINS.

Referee—Albert Walker.

BRISTOL.

THE GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.

(BRISTOL GUILD OF HANDBELL RINGERS.)

On Wednesday, January 28, 1941, in Two Hours and Twenty-Six Minutes,

At 21, WATBEN ROAD, ST. ANDREW'S,

**A PEAL OF BOB MAJOR, 5040 CHANGES;**

Tenor size 15 in C.

ROYSTON G. BRYANT... .. 1-2	ALBERT M. TYLER ... .. 5-6
*THOMAS HARRIS ... .. 3-4	DONALD G. CLIFT ... .. 7-8

Composed by H. JOHNSON.

Arranged and Conducted by ALBERT M. TYLER.

\* First peal of Major away from the trebles. First peal of Major as conductor.

**YOKEL'S COMMENTS.**

AND A GOOD TALE.

To the Editor.

Dear Zur,—I were looking through some old 'Ringing Worlds' t'other night, afore sending 'em for scrap to help the war along, and I came across my last letter to 'ee. Darn me if 'tweren't well over a year ago. How the time do fly; there were I telling 'ee about when I got married and now I've got a darter o' six months as sits on my knee and reads your paper. 'Er and the missus and me 'll be in the peal columns one of these days, perhaps.

I don't know nothing about this Dr. Slack's peal, but it seems a pity as there's this 'ere talk going round. I'll back you feels sometimes like filling up a page with all them figgers just to show some people, but for meself with paper so scarce I'd rather see a page filled with summat more interesting to most on us. And very interesting your paper's bin, I reckon.

My guy, didn't ole 'Anti-Silent' and 'Plain Hunt' have a go? Summat on both sides as usual—I be allus on about that, bain't I? But talking about ringing arter the war, I reckon in some ways us'll be better off, like you be arter a hopegation. This 'ere long silence 'll do one thing; it'll clear out the sluggards—they won't come back to the towers, and them as are left 'll be the keen 'uns. They'll have to larn young 'uns and hard going 'twill be, I know, but, bless my soul, in most towers it were the same afore the war. You teaches 10 youngsters and only 5 stays, and when you gets a good band one on 'em leaves the district and another gets hisself married to the wrong woman and you 'as to start agin.

Ah, but 'twill be harder this time, for there's many a ringer as'll be absent from ropes-end after this touch, unless (as I hopes) there's changes to be rung when the homing course is done and the Lord has called stand to 'ee 'ere.

'Y'know, I ain't sure as us couldn't a done a bit more about ringing if us adn't bin sort o' flummoxed at this silly Home Guard invasion warning business. It took us about a year at 'ome to realise as us could take the clappers out of all except the big 'un, and ring t'others silent. Oh ah, I know some folks did, but a good many didn't, and in our part of the world—though us be busier at work—I reckon us might a found time to larn some 'vacuees as 'ould go back to the towers ready for the towers as were left.

Us be a rum lot, 'y'know—us be that slow a-startin', and us wastes a devil of a lot o' wind yelling about the Nazis and Japs doing dirty things to us first. Same as the stopping of ringing; you don't often get the Government to change a order once they've made un, and arter us 'ad 'ad a good oder us ought to a got going on what was left.

Well, I must finish. Did 'ee ever 'ear the story about they ringers what never used to stay to church after ringing? Well, one Sunday night they stays, and the parson were that mummered to see 'em 'ee scraps the sermon he were going to preach and gives 'em one on that bit in the Gospel, 'Because there was no room for them in the inn.' Ah, that's a fact.

'Ere, a don't 'ee call I from the West Country like 'ee did last time: I be Oxfordshire, bred and barn—well, not quite, but I come from Wiltshire when I were 2. Well, 'ere's hopink you're feeling better, dear Zur, and with all the best to all ringers for 1942, wherever they may be.

YOKEL.

**WINCHESTER & PORTSMOUTH GUILD.**

AN UNOFFICIAL ANNUAL REPORT.

**Master's Contribution to Records.**

For sixty years without a break the Winchester Diocesan Guild and its successor, the Winchester and Portsmouth Diocesan Guild, issued an annual report, but at the last annual meeting it was decided to suspend this publication in view of war-time conditions.

Happily for the continuity of the records, however, an abridged report of the Guild's work has been issued to the affiliated towers unofficially by the Master (Mr. G. Williams) with the wholehearted concurrence of the hon. treasurer (Mr. W. Linter) and the hon. secretary (Mr. F. W. Rogers).

This record includes the list of officers, the affiliated towers and their correspondents, the details of the seven peals rung in 1940 with the report of the Recorder of Peals, the resolutions of the Executive Committee in November, 1940, to suspend operations until the ban on ringing is lifted, together with the balance sheets. Thus most of the essential information concerning the Guild is on permanent record, to find its place with the reports of the previous sixty years.

In issuing this unofficial document, the Master says his reason was that having the first fifty years' Reports of the Guild bound in two volumes and the remaining years to 1939 intact, he adopted this course to make sure of getting some kind of 1940 record and keeping a record of the Guild's continuity. He hoped his action would be appreciated, not only by those who were at the annual meeting, but by the much larger number who were unable to attend.

'This being an unofficial report,' adds the Master, 'I make no comment on the year's activities, beyond regrets at there being no official Report for 1940, and making an appeal to all members of the various towers to support the Guild under most trying circumstances (no ringing, meetings, etc.) by co-operating locally for silent tower or handbell ringing if possible.' The Master concludes by saying that these remarks have the approval of the hon. general secretary, and the report, therefore, appears over their joint names in the usual way.

**THE CHURCH BELLS OF BERKSHIRE.**

MR. F. SHARPE'S NEW BOOK.

As announced on our notice page, the fifth part of Mr. Frederick Sharpe's work on 'The Bells of Berkshire' has been published and is now on sale. It follows, of course, the same style as the preceding parts and, like them, has many most interesting illustrations of bells, frames, wheels, carillons and inscriptions.

Archæologically, the towers dealt with are exceptionally interesting, the rings being in every instance made up of bells from various foundries. Two are eight-bell rings, and of Hagbourne, which contains the work of no fewer than six men, it is said that it is 'reputed by many campanologists to be the finest toud ring in the Diocese.' A suggestion was once made that Hagbourne bells should be tuned on more modern lines, but this met with great opposition from the parishioners. When the bells were recently rehung, a stipulation was made that they should not leave the tower and the tuning should not be altered.

It was here that on May 15th, 1935, the Rev. C. C. Cox called Holt's Original on the first occasion on which a peal of Grandsire Triples was rung by eight priests of the Church.

Mr. Sharpe has many interesting notes on the frames, from which we quote the following: 'An examination of bell frames of the 17th century, constructed to house either three or four bells, shows us that wherever space would allow these were planned so that all the bells swung side by side, and in the majority of cases to swing east and west. The mouth to mouth arrangement was a much later innovation.

'Mediæval bells were longer in proportion to their respective diameters, owing to the scale of tuning favoured by their founders, than those of the 16th and succeeding centuries: the canons of mediæval bells were long and the bells were "tucked-down" by reason of the canons not being let in to the headstocks very far; and the positions in which the drive-in type gudgeons then in use had to be fixed made the rim of the bell further from the centre of oscillation than with the strap type. This arrangement, while very effective for musical purposes, was not very convenient for the ringer, and after the introduction of change ringing early in the 17th century, bellhangers began to tuck up bells far higher into their headstocks than previously; and also the strap type gudgeon was invented allowing the centre of oscillation to be level with the bottom of the headstock. Then founders gradually shortened bells in proportion to their diameters, producing the distinctive tonal qualities so characteristic of post-Reformation bells and enabling bell pits to be further shortened.'

Other topics are dealt with in a similarly informative fashion and help to give the book a far wider interest than that which belongs merely to the particular bells dealt with.

Books of this sort are usually very expensive to buy, but as this is issued in parts at fairly wide intervals, it ought to find a ready sale among ringers and especially among those who pride themselves on their libraries of bell literature.

## LONDON CHURCHES & ARCHITECTS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

BY RICHARD F. DEAL.

In the year 1711, Parliament, under Queen Anne, passed an Act legalising the expenditure of £350,000 in building fifty new churches in London.

To raise this sum, a duty was imposed on coal entering the port. The Queen herself displayed much interest in the project, which it has been suggested, was an expression of thanksgiving for Marlborough's victories over the French in the Netherlands. Eleven or twelve new parishes were formed from parts of the ancient parishes of Stepney, St. Giles, etc., and were provided with new churches. During the first half of the century several of the old parish churches which had been dilapidated were completely rebuilt, in some cases with money granted under the provisions of the Act.

The style of architecture employed in every case was the one we now call 'Renaissance.' It came to us from Italy, and was first practised here by Inigo Jones in the 17th century, and later by Wren: but its earliest foundations are in ancient Greece and Rome. Renaissance architecture is based on the 'Orders,' five in number; an order comprehends the column, with its base and capital, and the beam, or entablature, which it carries, this being divided into architrave, frieze and cornice. The design and proportions of an order are governed by fairly rigid rules, but the complete order may be used in a number of ways, either decoratively or as part of the construction.

Wren was the first architect to use the orders in the arrangement of towers and spires, the one most favoured being the 'Corinthian,' distinguished by the conventional foliage ornamenting the capitals: this is characteristic also of the 'Composite,' generally seen when two orders are employed, as at St. Paul's; the lower order then being Corinthian, the upper one Composite.

Contemporary with Nicholas Hawksmoor, Wren's pupil (of whom I have given a short account) were several men whose work should be of interest to us as ringers: notably James Gibbs (1682-1754), John James (d. 1746), Henry Flitcroft (1697-1769) and George Dance, the elder (1698-1768). These men, in a general way, worked on the same lines as did Wren, but with certain differences, which we need not enter into here, except to note that they were rarely faced with the problems presented by confined or awkwardly shaped sites and, judging by the usually solid character of their work, were untroubled by considerations of economy, as no doubt Wren often was—a legacy of the Great Fire. Their buildings were faced with the durable Portland stone, and the internal work (particularly joinery, carving and plaster ceilings) shows craftsmanship of a high order. Several towers of this period were furnished with bells, and their designers usually seemed to appreciate the requirements of ringers.

James Gibbs, a native of Aberdeen, designed St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, built at a cost of £33,017 9s. 3d., and consecrated in 1726. I need not try to describe this church, which is well known to ringers, and was admirably illustrated in these pages a few weeks ago. The Corinthian portico is considered one of the best in London. Other works of Gibbs are the church of St. Mary-le-Strand, very ornate, but with much beautiful detail;

the steeple to Wren's church of St. Clement Danes, and St. Bartholomew's Hospital (greatly extended since his day). He was responsible for several buildings in the Universities, including the Radcliffe Library at Oxford. The fine cupola, 100 feet in diameter and 140 feet high, is a prominent feature in any view of the city. In recognition of the excellence of his work here, he was given the degree of M.A.

Gibbs designed the 'New Church' at Derby (All Saints', now the Cathedral), where the noble 15th century tower was retained. He has another small church in London, St. Peter's, Vere Street, externally of the plainest brickwork, but inside much resembling St. Martin's. His lineaments are recorded in a bust below the west gallery at St. Martin's.

John James, of Greenwich, designed St. Alphege's, Greenwich. It is believed that Hawksmoor was associated with him in this work. As Wren's assistant and clerk of works, Hawksmoor would enjoy much respect and influence at Greenwich: he was appointed 'Surveyor of all new churches,' and apparently had supervisory powers, which may appear rather irregular, as he designed several of these churches himself. Greenwich Church has suffered severely by enemy action, and has lost many objects of interest, but I believe the tower and ten bells are intact.

Another famous church by James, St. George's, Hanover Square, has a fine Corinthian portico, but it looks low and heavy compared with that of St. Martin's, which has the advantage of a broad flight of steps leading up to it. The tower, too, lacks the grace of St. Martin's. St. Luke's, Old Street, is another well known church by the same master; the spire is in the form of a fluted obelisk. In the tower is a Whitechapel bell of 29 cwt.

St. Giles-in-the-Fields (1733), its steeple not unlike St. Martin's, is by Henry Flitcroft, who rebuilt St. Olave's, Southwark (1740), demolished a few years ago. There were eight bells here until 1843, when they were destroyed with the interior of the church in the great 'Tooley Street Fire.' Hawksmoor's church at Limehouse passed through the same ordeal a few years later. I recollect St. Olave's tower as being very low, and having no louvre openings, and have wondered how the bells were accommodated—possibly at one time there was another storey. Many years ago I came across Flitcroft's grave, in the churchyard at Teddington, Middlesex.

George Dance, the elder, was Clerk of the 'City Works,' an office corresponding to the modern one of City Surveyor. He was responsible for some notable buildings in and around the City, including the Mansion House, the residence of the Lord Mayor during his term of office. Dance left two churches—St. Leonard's, Shore-ditch, with a good portico of the Doric order, its steeple resembling in some respects that of Bow; and another church not so well known to ringers, although it has a fine eight, St. Botolph's, Aldgate. This is a plain brick and stone building (our critics might be excused for calling it ugly). The tower is of fair dimensions, but not very strong, and ringing there has never been a pleasure.

The younger Dance, by the way, also attained eminence in his profession, but made only a small contribution to London's church architecture. He designed Newgate Prison, of which the grim facade, adorned with representations of fetters, etc., is remembered by many Lon-

doners. I believe his only remaining church is All Hallows', London Wall.

St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate (1725) is by James Gold, 'an architect otherwise unknown.' It is a spacious church with galleries, the tower being at the east end, its lower stage forming the chancel. The elevation to Bishopsgate is simple and not without dignity, but the tower is weak in design and construction. The whole of the west side from ringing floor level rests on a wide brick arch. Nevertheless, the bells do not go badly—but those who know them have the advantage!

St. John's, Westminster, is sometimes ascribed to Sir John Vanbrugh, famous architect and playwright, but is almost certainly the work of his pupil, Thomas Archer (d. 1743). This church (now badly damaged) has four towers, and wits of the day professed to see in it a resemblance to an inverted table, or to a great animal wallowing on its back with its feet in the air. Another and perhaps better example of Archer's work is St. Paul's, Deptford (1730), which has a pleasing arrangement of stairs and terraces leading up to the entrances, and a small round tower with three bells. Archer is remembered chiefly by St. Philip's at Birmingham, now the Cathedral.

St. John's, Horsleydown (1733), where ringing history was made, is one of the Queen Anne churches. I have been unable to find out the name of its designer. The tower is very small, and some ingenuity must have been required to fit ten bells into it! The spire is a much tapered Ionic column—an architectural absurdity. Only the walls and tower remain. In an old book I found a quaint yarn concerning the name of the parish. A King of England, while riding there, suffered inconvenience

and loss of dignity through his horse suddenly assuming a recumbent position, from which it refused to budge—hence 'Horse-lay-down.' It is more likely that the name was derived from 'Horse-down,' a public grazing place for horses.

The latter half of the century was a sterile period for church building, producing but two towers of note, those of the neighbouring parishes of Islington and Clerkenwell. The author of St. Mary's, Islington (1754) was Lancelot Dowbiggin, 'Citizen and Joiner of London,' and there is no record of any other building from his design. In the steeple he may have been inspired by Bow and Shoreditch; but there is a certain weakness in the arrangement to which I think is due the considerable oscillation during ringing. In spite of some faults the spire of Islington is very graceful and picturesque: the church has suffered severely by high explosive, and the tower may have been shaken, although it shows no outward sign of damage. This is a church in which I have a strong personal interest, and many 'old-fashioned' ringers will be sorry if ringing there is impossible in the future. We must await the decision of the architects. The spires of Islington and St. Giles' are the same height, 164 feet.

St. James', Clerkenwell (1790, James Carr, architect) is, I think, London's last eighteenth century church. It is a plain brick and stone structure of little interest, but is redeemed from the commonplace by a rather fine tower about 100 feet high, which carries an open stone lantern and spire in three stages. It is somewhat austere compared with earlier examples, being relieved only with Doric pilasters and the rather shallow cornices and

(Continued on page 71.)

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### BELFRY GOSSIP.

Mr. R. W. Stannard asks us to say that his address is 133, Beccles Drive, Barking, not Bocking, as given with his letter in our last issue. Members of the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association and the Sussex County Association will read with regret that Mrs. Hope passed peacefully away on December 24th. The Rev. N. E. Hope is Master of the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association and was formerly at Hastings, Sussex. The deepest sympathy will go out to him in his bereavement.

Ten years ago last Tuesday, Henry Law James passed away at the age of 63. He had been almost throughout his life one of the most prominent leaders of the Exercise. He exercised a great influence during his lifetime and ringers still benefit by the work he did. The bells at Surfleet are his memorial, but hardly more so than the peal of Spliced Surprise Major.

Benjamin Annable died on February 1st, 1756. He was buried at St. Bride's, Fleet Street, where he had rung his first and many others of his peals.

The Rev. C. D. P. Davies, composer and author, died on February 5th, 1731, at the age of 74.

The first peal of London Surprise Major on handbells was rung at Romford on February 6th, 1904. The band was G. R. Pye 1-2, W. Pye (conductor) 3-4, Ernest Pye 5-6, and W. Keeble 7-8.

The bells of St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate, were opened on February 7th, 1783, and on the same date in 1925 the College Youths rang the first peal of Cambridge Maximus at St. Paul's.

The first peal of Forward Major was rung on February 8th, 1889. Fifty years ago to-day eight peals were rung. They were Grandsire Triples 2, Caters 1, Kent Treble Bob Major 3, Doubles 1, and Minor 1.

Ten years ago to-day 28 peals were rung. They were Grandsire Triples 3, Caters 1, Bob Major 3, Royal 1, Kent Treble Bob Major 1, Royal 2, Double Norwich Court Bob Major 1, Superlative Surprise Major 3, Bristol 1, London 1, Doubles 6, and Minor 5.

### THE COLLEGE YOUTHS.

The Master presided last Saturday at the meeting of the Ancient Society of College Youths, and was supported by the hon. secretary, the treasurer, and Messrs. E. A. Young, G. N. Price, H. Miles, H. Langdon, R. F. Deal, J. E. L. Cockey, J. Shepherd, C. H. Kippen, F. Collins, W. T. Elson, H. Hoskins, J. A. Trollope, R. W. Stannard, Gilbert Debenham, George Debenham and Charles Roberts.

It was reported that a meeting had been held with the Rector of St. Magnus, who is taking steps to form a band to ring handbells when peace comes instead of on the tower bells, silenced for various reasons. The band will be formed in the parish and the College Youths have promised their support.

Mr. Langdon called attention to the society's property now in charge of St. Paul's Cathedral authorities, and a number of members were appointed to call at the Cathedral and inspect the books so as to make sure they are not suffering from any deterioration.

Mr. Elson presented a copy of Mr. Nichols' 'Bells Through the Ages' to the society's library. This book belonged to the late Challis Winney and was given him by Mr. Young.

Reference was made to the collection of books formed by the late Rev. W. C. Pearson, and the secretary was instructed to make enquiries as to what will become of them.

A resolution was passed approving the proposed 'Ringers' Conference' in the pages of 'The Ringing World.'

The Master called attention to the deaths of two old members, Messrs. Charles Mee and D. G. Taylor, and the meeting stood as a mark of respect.

Mr. Stannard brought greetings from the St. Mary-le-Tower company of Ipswich.

### A NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

To the Editor.

Sir,—The North Staffs Association's resolution reported in a recent issue of 'The Ringing World' against the uniting and re-forming of the Exercise into one national unit raises two questions. The first part of their resolution states; 'That the North Staffordshire Association of Change Ringers recognises the Central Council as the representative body of all associations.' Well! does any one suppose that under a National Association the said body would not hold the same status? The only difference would be that it would be considered the central body of all ringers instead of all associations, which would give it closer and greater ties. The second question is, on what grounds does the North Staffordshire Association object to any National Association being formed? To these questions I could add certain other remarks, but intend reserving the same pending a reply from a responsible source. 'COMMUNAL.'

### DEATH OF MR. FRANK FOOT.

OLD WOKING RINGER.

The death has occurred of Mr. Frank Foot, who had been a ringer at Woking for about 20 years. He was 77 years of age. In the days when there was regular ringing at Woking Parish Church Mr. Foot was one of the mainstays of the band by his regular attendance.

**THE RINGERS' CONFERENCE.**

DECISION TO GO ON WITH SCHEME.

**Notices of Motion Invited.**

We appear to have received sufficient support for the proposal put forward by Mr. J. P. Price to set up a Ringers' Conference, to be conducted through the columns of this paper, to justify experimenting with the scheme.

'Conference' has been decided on as the title after due consideration, and in future the scheme will be run under that name.

Some comment on the preliminary aspects of the project is made in our leading article and further details as to the proposed working of the scheme will be published shortly.

In the meantime we invite ringers to send in notice of any motion they would like to discuss in the Conference. It should be accompanied, of course, by the name and address of the sender (no nom-de-plume will be accepted) and also of the seconder. Letters on this subject should be addressed to 'Ringers' Conference, "The Ringing World" Office, Lower Pyrford Road, Woking, Surrey.' Notices should be sent with as little delay as possible.

**ENERGETIC SUPPORT DESERVED.***To the Editor.*

Sir,—I have read with very great interest the proposal to hold a 'Ringers' Council' to be conducted through the columns of your paper. The idea should commend itself to all ringers who have the interests of the Exercise at heart, and deserves the energetic support of everyone, especially members of the Central Council, who, by the force of circumstances, are debarred from holding their usual meetings for the furtherance of our art.

You, Mr. Editor, are to be congratulated for the help and co-operation which you have so willingly offered.

For my part, I hope to be able to enter into any discussions which may be raised.

With all good wishes for the success of the scheme.

G. W. STEERE, Hon. Secretary,  
Society of Royal Cumberland Youths.

Sutton, Surrey.

**BENEFIT OF THE EXERCISE.**

Dear Sir,—The suggestion contained in 'The Ringing World' of January 16th is certainly beginning in the right direction, and I give it my support in the belief that much valuable information will be available as the result of the discussions.

I think it matters little under what name the discussions take place. What does matter is that the main object must be for the benefit of the Exercise as a whole, taking into consideration—and I stress this point—the circumstances which may arise during and after the war as far as can be determined.

Wanstead

F. W. HOUSDEN.

**ENCOURAGEMENT TO SHY RINGERS.**

Dear Sir,—I think the suggestion of a Ringers' Council is an excellent one, and I, for one, am quite willing and ready to do all I possibly can to further the scheme.

Many ringers are found to be shy when attending association meetings and generally leave all the talking to the more matured members.

I know from experience that many useful suggestions have been in the minds of these shy members, but they only mention them when the meeting is closed.

The suggestion of a Ringers' Council will, I am sure, remove the embarrassment and encourage these shy ringers to talk.

EDGAR GUISE, General Hon. Secretary, G. and B.D.A.

(Continued in next column.)

**HANDBELLS WANTED FOR GIBRALTAR.**

READERS' HELP INVITED:

Ringers stationed at Gibraltar with the Forces want the use of a set of handbells. Can any of our readers assist in this matter? It would be worth some sacrifice to help relieve the tedium of the long vigil at this vital bastion of Empire.

Mr. Edgar Guise, hon. secretary of the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association and Bristol United Guilds, has received the following letter dated from the Officers' Mess, Royal Engineers, South Barracks, Gibraltar:—

Dear Sir,—We have several men in this garrison interested in campanology, and I am writing to know whether it would be possible to obtain the loan of a set of handbells; or if you know of a set for sale at a reasonable price we might be able to raise the money. I expect some of the destroyed churches in Bristol had a set, and since most ringers are now away perhaps we could borrow them.

The men here welcome most eagerly the opportunity to take part in any activity which relieves the monotony of the comparatively restricted life on the Rock.

W. F. E. BURNLEY, C.F.

**FULHAM AND MORTLAKE BELLS.***To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—Mr. A. A. Hughes tells me that Mortlake tenor is only 14 cwt., and as Fulham tenor is just under a ton, the two bells can hardly be said to be 'much the same note,' as I stated. The difference in weight will, however, account for the fact that after the two peals of Caters had been rung it was found necessary to recast the two trebles.

J. ARMIGER TROLLOPE.

**THE RINGERS' CONFERENCE.**

(Continued from previous column.)

BE UP AND DOING.

Dear Sir,—I should like to congratulate Mr. Price on his excellent idea and I should like to say that I consider the motion he himself proposes to put down overrides all the others he mentions, viz., that a committee be formed to consider and report upon rehabilitating ringing after the war. It must be plain to any Simple Simon that after the war associations in general will not start where they left off. The causes will be varied and numerous, so it is up to those that remain, even old fogeys, to be up and doing. Far too often has it been the case in some of the national efforts of 'Too late.' So ringers beware and get going whenever and wherever you can.

W. KEEBLE.

Colchester.

**UNDER WHAT TITLE?**

Dear Sir,—Mr. Price's suggestion for using the columns of 'The Ringing World' as a common meeting ground for ringers' views on specific subjects seems to me an ideal substitute for the Central Council during these adverse times. I welcome the idea and hope for its success. One or two matters need illuminating, however.

First, as regards a title, I agree with Mr. Edwards that 'Council' is not fitting, but surely 'Conference' does not fit either, for the contributors will in no way be elected representatives of either associations or bellfries. I suggest the 'Ringers' Forum' as the best title.

Again, will all the 'speeches' on the subject under discussion be published? Or must one be 'on the Front Bench' to 'catch the Speaker's eye'?

Finally, will the resolutions be formally adopted as would be the case with those of the Central Council in the normal way? I notice that Mr. Coles would have such resolutions 'as guidance' for the Central Council 'in the difficult days ahead.' If this is to be, then I fail to see the purpose of the whole thing. The decisions must carry weight for the debates to be productive.

There are, of course, almost an unlimited number of subjects that can be introduced into the 'Forum,' but personally I should like to see the following discussed:—

'Whether it is desirable that the so-called Standard Methods be revised in the light of modern development in the art, and, if so, what methods should be recognised?'

'Should the practice of ringing peals for "Aunt Emma's birthday" and other such unbecoming reasons be encouraged?'

KENNETH ARTHUR (Corporal, R.A.F.).

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Clocks, Chime Additions, Re-  
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## THE LATE CHARLES MEE.

### FUNERAL AT SPROUGHTON.

The funeral of Mr. Charles Mee, who, as announced in our last issue, died on Monday, January 26th, took place on the following Thursday at All Saints' Church, Sproughton.

There was a large congregation, and the church service, conducted by the Rev. R. Lee (Rector), with Mr. Samson at the organ, included the psalm, 'The Lord is my Shepherd,' and the hymn, 'O God, our help in ages past.' A course of Grandsire Triples was rung on handbells by Percy May, Edgar Rivers, Frank Rolfe and Gordon Hagger after the service.

Chief mourners were Mr. C. F. Mee (son), Mrs. N. V. Hover and Mrs. R. A. Beeston (daughters), Mr. F. Hover and Mr. F. C. Beeston (sons-in-law), Mr. Ralph Mee and Mr. J. Mee, R.A.F. (nephew).

Many business firms with which Mr. Mee had been associated were represented. Members of the British Legion were present, and the National Association of Master Monumental Masons, of which Mr. Mee had been a member for a long period, was represented.

Among many floral tributes were wreaths from the family, the St. Mary-le-Tower Society, the British Legion, and parishioners and friends, including the Parish Council.

Mr. Mee had lived in Sproughton all his life, and his many activities, together with his cheerful and helpful disposition, won him many friends in the district. He had served as postmaster for nearly 50 years. He had also been clerk to the Parish Council and Church Council, and was sexton for nearly 60 years.

Mr. Mee was well known throughout the land as an active and prominent ringer. In his young days he was one of those (who included James Motts and William Catchpole) who made the Ipswich district one of the chief centres of the art of change ringing. He rang 119 tower-bell peals and 21 handbell peals for the Norwich Diocesan Association, 26 peals for the Suffolk Guild and several others for various associations.

In 1886 he called the first peal of Bob Triples rung by the Norwich Diocesan Association, in 1900 the first peal of New Cambridge Major, and in 1903 the first peal of Forward Major. He also called the first peals of Cambridge and London Surprise Major by the association in the diocese. Earlier peals of these had been rung at Hackney by non-resident members.

On handbells his peals included the first by the Norwich Diocesan Association of Grandsire Triples (1888), Bob Major (1889), Grandsire Caters (1889), New Cambridge Surprise Major (1900) and London Surprise Major (1903). The last two were single handed and rung by the members of a six-bell band. They also rang double handed a non-conducted peal of Kent Treble Bob Major.

Mr. Mee represented the Suffolk Guild on the Central Council and was the district secretary of the Hadeleigh branch of that Guild. He was a member of the Ancient Society of College Youths. In his younger days he was a keen cricketer, and in later years played a good game of bowls.

## THE LATE REV. W. C. PEARSON.

### To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—In reply to Mr. Melville's enquiry, I am able to say that the late Rev. W. C. Pearson was a native of Henley. He succeeded his father as Vicar, and they held the living between them for nearly a century.

Like Mr. Melville, my son and I will always remember him with gratitude. About 10 years ago he wrote to me saying how interested he was in my son's ringing activities and he would like to give him a set of handbells 'if I would accept them from a stranger.' In due course a splendid peal of 18 arrived. Had it not been for this, in all probability neither of us would have taken up handbell ringing.

A year later, when returning from a holiday on the East Coast, we broke our journey and went to see Mr. Pearson, and I will remember the pleasure it was to meet him—a quiet, scholarly old gentleman.

We saw his wonderful ringing library, and I am glad to know this is to be preserved.

I am also glad to see Mr. Cross correct the statement about the disappearance of the Vicar and Henley tower from ringing. He strongly disapproved of the formation of the Suffolk Guild, and this, perhaps, was the reason why peals at Henley were not as frequent as previously, but the reason he dropped out of active ringing was due to an accident from which he never fully recovered. He fell from a ladder and dislocated his shoulder.

E. BARNETT.

Crayford.

## DEATH OF MR. CHARLES WEBB.

The death is announced of Mr. Charles Webb, of Kings Norton, Birmingham, who died on January 13th last at the age of 55. He was buried in the churchyard of St. Nicholas' Church, Kings Norton, on January 16th. The St. Martin's Guild was represented by Mr. Harry Withers and Mr. Downes, and the Worcestershire Association by Mr. W. B. Cartwright.

Mr. Webb had been in charge of Kings Norton tower for a good many years and had rung upwards of 50 peals, including peals in all the standard methods and Cambridge and London Surprise.

## MUSIC IN TRIPLES METHODS.

### STRIKING COUNTS MOST.

#### To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—Perhaps I did not make myself quite clear in my last letter on the points raised by Mr. Turner. In the first place, I pointed out the difference between Triples and Major, and which cannot be compared together. You can do a little picking and choosing in Major, but *not* in Triples, also there are plenty of unmusical Major changes. I contend, however, that all possible Triple changes are at least bearable.

Of course, the character of Triples methods varies. Grandsire, for instance, has a more running or fluid sound than Stedman, but, as I have said before, all the possible changes have to be rung, and my experience has been that the outside public, for whom we ring, only judges on the striking.

Whilst not being so hypersensitive to six bob blocks as some people appear to be, I certainly do not say they are ideal, but if they are in any particular composition they have to be rung.

In the particular composition under review no mention is made of the 122 pairs of bobs, or isolated calls, only six bob blocks.

In various parts of the country a very old method called 'Stoney' is alone rung, where *all* the bells keep repeating, not merely the back pair, and we must assume that a lot of the congregation, as well as parson and choir, have musical ears, but, as long as bells are struck, they like it!

I have even rung 'Stoney' in some of the most exclusive London towers, on civic occasions, etc., with some of the foremost ringers of the day, and none of them appeared unduly depressed.

Of course, we all differ on different points. Mr. Turner, for instance, cites the five-pull dodges in Superlative as monotonous; now most of us around here, weaned on Superlative, like them, especially when tenors are on the front, and the little bells gambling out behind, whilst if you are on the back it gives you a chance to blow your nose and look at the clock!

MAURICE F. R. HIBBERT.

Bushey:

## GRANDSIRE CATERS AND CINQUES.

### To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—It has been my intention for some weeks to write to you and congratulate Mr. Edgar C. Shepherd on his very good and interesting articles on Grandsire Caters, which method, in my estimation, produces some of the best music to be heard on ten bells.

His review of the Central Council Collection of Peals of Grandsire Caters was excellent, and I agree with him that there is still scope for other variations.

In the same book I have looked through the peals of Grandsire Cinques, but cannot find one coming home from 4256387x90. The similarity of Cinques to Caters is shown in the following touches:—

Caters.

23456789

65324978 2S. 4S.

42563 8 in and 1

Rounds as usual in five leads.

Cinques.

234567890x

6532487x90 2S. 5S. 10S. 12

42563 11 in and 2

Rounds by 1. 2S. 3. 4S. in five leads.

So again there is room for other compositions of peals.

I wish also to corroborate Mr. Arthur V. Davis in appreciation of the Rev. M. C. C. Melville's clear explanation of calling Bob Major on handbells.

I spent a few enjoyable evenings in his company, one ringing a peal of Superlative Maximus and another ringing several Surprise methods on the six bells at St. Clement's, Ipswich, with Mr. Fred Bowell and his band.

On that occasion I had the pleasure of pointing out to him the birthplace of Cardinal Wolsey and Wolsey's Gate at the east end of St. Peter's Church, which was to have been the entrance to seven acres of colleges which Wolsey intended to build, but it never materialised.

G. E. SYMONDS.

57, Mornington Avenue, Ipswich.

## HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

### FUTURE MEETINGS IN ST. ALBANS DISTRICT.

A meeting was held in St. Peter's Institute, St. Albans, on Saturday, January 17th. Although numbers were small, a homely little company was able to ring some touches on handbells.

The principal business was a discussion on the question of future meetings. As it is not possible to hold meetings in the St. Albans district very frequently, there was a desire to make the meetings more or less periodical, and it was, therefore, decided to make an attempt at quarterly meetings.

Ringers were present from the immediate locality, and Mr. W. Ayre was a welcome representative of the Western District.



**DR. SLACK'S PEAL.**

A PROBLEM FOR MR. TROLLOPE.

*To the Editor.*

Sir,—It is with interest that I have read the letter in a recent issue by Mr. Trollope on the above peal.

I suppose we have to take Mr. Trollope as serious and accept the verdict that when Heywood stated that the only outstanding thing in Stedman composition was a seven-part, that he, Heywood, was quite aware of the fact that an equal two-part with only two singles was possible. If so, I am afraid that I must differ.

The only arguments which Mr. Trollope seems able to put forward against publication appears to be these six bobs sets. We know quite well that he detests them and are appreciative of the fact that when 50 of them appear in a peal that this must cause a depression at Faling.

However, the position is this: Dr. Slack has so far been the only one to produce a peal of Stedman Triples in two equal parts; therefore, being the only one, surely it marks a development in composition in the method.

Mr. Trollope is perfectly entitled to his point of view. My own is that when a thing has been done it is easy to state, 'Well, it is nothing. We have known all these years that it was possible.'

Therefore, seeing that Mr. Trollope has been such an outstanding figure in the Exercise for several years, also possessing more than average ability in the subject of compositions, perhaps he will therefore produce a two-part with only two singles and eliminate these six bobs sets.

EDWIN JENNINGS.

Bushey.

**THE EXPERTS CONFOUNDED.**

Sir,—Those ringers who, like myself, are more concerned with the practical rather than the theoretical side of ringing may be forgiven if they indulge in a little mild amusement at the expense of the theorists. Dr. Slack has certainly put the cat amongst the pigeons by producing something said to be 'impossible.'

Not only that, but he did it in next to no time, and in a way which would probably not be approved by the experts—he proved his two-part peal first and composed it afterwards!

Now, during my ringing career I have noticed a vogue used by the theorists which is very arbitrary in its nature, and one of its best exponents was the late Rev. H. Law James. There was a certain 'That's it, and don't argue' attitude which produced a kind of finality.

Therefore, I feel we ordinary folk may be excused if we experience a little private satisfaction at the confounding of these gentlemen; and we are likely to get even more amusement out of the attempts of the experts to put themselves in the right again!

It all goes to show that there is plenty to be discovered yet concerning the theory of our art, and it is possible that gentlemen of Dr. Slack's undoubted ability may be able to provide the answers by using methods which I suspect are not known to the dogmatic experts who, up to the present time, have had it all their own way.

There must be some explanation for the wonderful achievements of Mr. A. T. Morris who, some years ago, staggered the Exercise by 'tapping' peals off in Surprise methods week after week. So far as I know, there has never been any explanation of these remarkable exploits, and we ordinary folk would like to know what it was that Morris had which the rest of us do not possess, and how he did it!

J. FRANK SMALLWOOD.

**NOVEL NEW YEAR GREETING.**

SURPRISE FOR CANADIAN VISITORS.

Ringling in the New Year took a novel form at Yateley, Hants. The occasion was a British Legion dance at the Drill Hall, when well over 200 persons were present, including many Canadian friends, who were taken quite by surprise. The ringers quietly assembled on the stage with the curtain down, and the company sang 'Auld Lang Syne' just before midnight. The hall was then put in darkness when 12 strokes were sounded on the tenor handbell. The curtain slowly rose upon the floodlit stage and the dawn of the new year to a well-struck course of Grandisle Triples.

At the completion the audience were spellbound, and when they realised it all surged forward amid deafening applause. After it had subsided the ringers gave a short performance of tune ringing, much to the delight of the overseas friends, who no doubt heard for the first time our method of ringing in the New Year and will long remember this little incident.

At some future date it is hoped to let them hear more. The ringers taking part were C. Bunch 1-2, S. J. Riddell 3-4, G. Butler 5-6, A. Goodall 7-8.

**A NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.***To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—In answering Mr. Hughes, Mr. Pulling and Mr. W. Sheppard, I now realise that I have been supporting something to which I have so far given very little thought, and I unreservedly withdraw every word of my previous letter on this matter. I hope my remarks have caused no one any anxiety.

T. HARRIS.

Shirehampton, Bristol.

**LIVES OF GREAT MEN.**

JAMES WASHBROOK AND WILLIAM PYE.

*To the Editor.*

Sir,—I was pleased to see the admirable suggestion put forward by Mr. G. Cross and supported by my friend, Mr. George R. Newton, requesting a biography of that great ringer, the late James W. Washbrook. Therefore, it is with interest that I have noted your remarks in your recent leader.

In Volume 1 of your paper you state, 'The Exercise has never seen a greater ringer than William Pye. William Pye's achievements mark him as our premier ringer, a position in which to-day he is unassailed and unassailable.'

At the foregoing year the respective ages of the late J. W. Washbrook and the late W. Pye were 47 and 41 years respectively, and, therefore, being only a period of six years between them, we can therefore place these two great ringers of the same generation, although Mr. Washbrook commenced peal ringing several years before Mr. Pye.

In your paper of March 15th, 1935, you state the following, 'By the death of Mr. W. Pye there passes the greatest ringer the Exercise has ever known.'

I do not wish your readers to think that I am trying to prove that Mr. Pye was a more outstanding ringer than Mr. Washbrook, but, having read all the volumes of 'The Bell News,' 'The Ringing World,' 'Campanology' and 'The Bell Ringer,' I suggest that any young ringer reading these papers will come to the conclusion that for all round ringing ability Mr. Pye was without question the greater ringer of the two.

For the benefit of your young readers, I think it will be as well to mention that Mr. Washbrook was born in 1864 and Mr. Pye in 1870, and that at the age of 25 Mr. Washbrook had rung 232 peals, calling 178 of them, and 70 of these were his own compositions.

I had the pleasure once as a boy of meeting Mr. Washbrook. In those days I looked at the heads of the Exercise from afar, but he gave me the impression that one could approach him, but this can also be said of William Pye.

Now, sir, I come to the point regarding the outstanding ringer of all time. I may be wrong, but in my own opinion, writing without bias, for an outstanding ringer such as you have mentioned you must take all-round ringing ability.

Therefore, comparing notes of the two great ringers before mentioned and taking their records, the only conclusion any young ringer can come to is that William Pye was the greater of the two. Anything Mr. Washbrook did (with the possible exception of ringing two tower bells to a peal) Mr. Pye equalled and excelled.

On handbells Mr. Pye's record is far the best, on tower bells, both for quality and numbers, Mr. William Pye's record comes before Mr. Washbrook's, and, therefore, their respective records and abilities are beyond comparison.

In conclusion, I must mention that I have never found anyone doubting any of the numerous records which Mr. Pye during his career put up, and at the age of 59 he rang the tenor to the long peal of Cambridge Maximus, a performance which few will deny to be one of the most outstanding ringing achievements of all time.

Bushey.

EDWIN JENNINGS.

**JAMES W. WASHBROOK.***To the Editor*

Dear Sir,—On opening my 'Ringing World' this morning my first glance came on the letter of our friend, Mr. G. R. Newton, of Liverpool, re the above noted ringer. With his remarks I quite agree, as the doings of such giants of our art in the past are always welcome reading, more especially by our younger members of the progressive type.

Curiously enough, by same post as my 'Ringing World' I received a letter from one of my very old ringing friends, and one of his remarks it was, 'I note G. H. Cross is asking about the records of Washbrook in "The Ringing World." I should think myself that he is easily the most gifted ringer of all time, as he was a master of all the arts (an all-rounder).'

He suggested that I might be able to go back as far as any present-day ringers who rang peals with him in his prime. Well, I may be able to tell many very interesting episodes, but I would like to see articles from one or both noted ringers, who were frequently ringing with him in his prime (viz., Canon Coleridge and Tom Hibbert) before he went to Arklow, Ireland. Of course, his double-handed peals on tower bells there may have exceeded anything I had known of him. But one thing we all know, clever men have made mistakes. I always remember one of his 'very dry remarks' when asked if he could ring a pair to a certain method, 'I expect I can manage a pair to anything I can ring in the tower.'

GEORGE WILLIAMS.  
Eastleigh.

BURBAGE, LEICESTERSHIRE.—On January 20th, 720 Bob Minor: A. Jordon 1-2, A. Ballard (conductor) 3-4, F. Measures 5-6. Rung as a birthday compliment to Mr. Ballard. A peal had been arranged, but one of the band mistook the date. Any ringers in the Forces who are stationed in the district will be welcomed for handbell ringing at 74, Clarendon Road, Hineley, or 128, Sketchley Road, Burbage.

## ELEMENTARY COMPOSITION.

### FOR THE AVERAGE READER.

When we are dealing with a subject like composition it is a good thing to begin at the very beginning, though very few people ever do so. If we were writing a full treatise on the matter, complete in every detail, we should start with what happened three hundred and fifty years or so ago, when ringers were seeking for something better than the raising, round-ringing and ceasing which had served for so long, and were beginning to move the bells about among each other. We should show how, once this idea of movement was accepted, the invention of the Sixes followed naturally, and then we should go on to show how the Sixes contain the germs of all the composition that has appeared throughout the whole history of the Exercise. Our treatise would be the explanation of the logical and inevitable development of a single idea. And if it were done properly (a big if) a very fine and interesting treatise it would be.

But we do not intend to try to write such a treatise; we will leave that to the future, and to an abler pen. Our intention is much more modest. Still we will go back to the beginning, but to the beginning of a man's experience as a ringer, not to the beginning of the Exercise. After a man has learnt to handle a bell and can ring rounds he is taught to hunt a bell, and when that is done he learns the work of a simple method, Grand sire Triples it may be or Plain Bob. He notices that in these methods, if nothing is said, the bells will come again into rounds before very long; and if it is desired to keep them going still further, bobs, or perhaps bobs and singles, must be called and made. These bobs and singles are always made at the same place in a lead; and so the touch will consist of a combination of plain leads and bobbed leads. Which leads must be bobbed is settled first by the composer, and his intentions are carried into effect through the calls of the conductor, the ringer being no further concerned than that he must do what he is told.

That being so, the general impression is created that composition is the arranging of plain leads and bob leads in such a way that the required number of changes is produced without repetition. Quite a lot of people think that there is no more in composition than that. Of course, they recognise that a man must know something about how to combine plain and bobbed leads, and the more experienced he gets in the job, the more successful he will be. But essentially for them the thing is what we have just described.

A man starts with rounds and goes on to prick changes. He does not trouble about anything but the lead ends which are rows when the treble strikes the backstroke blow of its whole pulls at the lead. The rest of the rows in the lead he takes for granted. He combines his plain leads and his bob leads as he thinks he will, and in due time with a little luck he will come back to rounds and have his touch. All he has to do further is to prove the touch and see that there is no repetition of changes. In some methods he will work by course ends instead of by lead ends, but the general method of working is the same.

That style of composing is called the experimental or hit-or-miss style. It was at one time almost universal, quite a lot of good work has been done by it, and it still has its uses.

But the cleverer and more experienced composers found out in course of time that there are other and better ways of composing, which would give them larger and more certain results. The earliest composers of all worked on entirely different lines, but with them we are not for the present concerned.

We will go back again to our novice who has just learned to ring a plain course. Suppose it is Bob Major and he is ringing the sixth. He will find perhaps that when he has done all the work of the course the conductor will call a bob. He will then ring his work over again. Then there will be another bob, and another full course before rounds comes up. He has in fact rung three complete courses and at the end of each there is a bob.

These bobs have not affected him, but they have altered the work of the bells in 2, 3 and 4, and so have prevented repetition of rows. When he comes to prick down the course ends that have been rung he will find that they are 14235678, 13425678, and 12345678. He knew that they rang the whole of the plain course and the making of the bob was the only thing which stopped the bells coming into rounds. He knew that he himself rang the full work of a course three times over. Now, if he will take the trouble to write out all the changes in the touch, he will find that there have been included three complete courses all exactly alike except that one of them started from 12345678, one from 14235678 and the third from 13425678.

When he has got so far he will see the use of bobs in a rather different light. They are something more than just alternative lead ends to plain lead ends. They are links which join together courses. And composition becomes something different from the merely experimental combining of plain leads and bobbed leads. It is the joining together of a certain number of separate and independent courses which we have already selected and which we wish to include in our touch or peal.

The three courses of Bob Major joined together by bobs at the end of each is the simplest composition we can have; but it is typical of a vast number of compositions, some of which appear to be, and indeed are, very complicated indeed. It will pay us to study these three courses and see what they have to teach us. We shall find out later that bobs have other uses, but for the present we will consider them as links by which we can join together courses.

Courses, mark you, not leads. There are some authorities who tell us that bobs are one of the two ways in which leads may be joined, plain lead ends being the other. They tell us that especially with regard to Grand sire Triples. We are not going to contradict them, for they had their reasons for saying what they did. But for us, now at this present time, the things that are joined together are courses.

The reason we say this is because the course is the only thing in change ringing which is complete in itself. It is the unit with which we must work. The method gives us the course without being interfered with, as our novice found out when he rang his three courses of Bob Major. So long as the composer and the conductor leave the method alone it will keep on in the same course and go on repeating it over and over again without stopping.

When any composition, whether it is a course, or a touch, or a peal, has this capacity of so to speak going

on for ever, we call it a Round Block. It is really like a circle without any beginning or end. Though for convenience we select one row and call it the course end, the method itself takes no account of any beginning or end. If you start with 13527486 and prick down 112 changes of Bob Major you will have the plain course with rounds somewhere in the inside, just the same as if you started with 12345678.

Well then, our first point is that bobs are links by which we can join together courses. Our second point is that the course is the unit of composition and the first thing we notice about it is that it is a Round Block.

It is quite possible that there are people who will tell us that the course is not the only possible unit of composition. We know that quite well, but one thing at a time, please.

### ALDBOURNE FOUNDERS.

*To the Editor.*

Dear Sir,—The recent correspondence in 'The Ringing World' has brought to light many interesting details of old sets of handbells cast at the Aldbourne Foundry, which appears to have been one of the first, if not actually the first, to produce musical handbells.

But in the correspondence quite a number of conflicting dates have been given which require correction, and I append below a list of the earliest and latest known bells by the various owners of the Aldbourne foundry:—

#### WILLIAM AND ROBERT COR.

Earliest bell, Berwick Bassett, Wilts, 1694.

Latest bell, Marlborough, Wilts, 1724.

#### OLIVER COR.

Earliest bell, Chaddleworth, Berks, 1725.

Latest bell, Shalbourne, Wilts, 1727.

#### JOHN COR.

Earliest bell, Chieveley, Berks, 1728.

Latest bell, Great Bedwyn, Wilts, 1741.

#### JOHN STARES.

Earliest bell, Boxford, Berks, 1744.

Latest bell, Crawley, Hants, 1746.

#### EDWARD READ.

Earliest bell, Basingstoke, Hants, 1751.

Latest bell, Blewbury, Berks, 1752.

#### ROBERTS WELLS I.

Earliest bell, Hemington, Somerset, 1760.

Latest bell, Ashmansworth, Hants, 1780.

#### ROBERT WELLS II. AND JAMES WELLS.

Earliest bell, Shalbourne, Wilts, 1782.

Latest bell, Havant, Hants, 1799.

(The names Robert Wells and Son occur on the tenor at Hagbourne, Berks, dated 1781.)

#### JAMES WELLS.

Earliest bell, Ashbury, Berks, 1800.

Latest bell, Bremhill, Wilts, 1826.

Should any of your readers know of earlier or later bells by these founders, it would be of great interest if the details could be published.

There is a bell at Houghton, Hants, cast by William and Robert Cor, dated 1742, but this is an error for 1724.

Launton, Oxon.

FREDERICK SHARPE.

### LONDON CHURCHES AND ARCHITECTS

(Continued from page 65.)

mouldings of the period: proportions and outline are good.

The London churches I have mentioned (necessarily in a rather 'sketchy' manner) have for the most part suffered to a greater or less extent during the recent troubled period. No doubt much of the excellent work which has been lost is recorded by photographs, or in the careful drawings of architects and students, so that restoration (or reproduction) is possible, though it might be costly. It is to be hoped that on the return of normal conditions every effort will be made to restore and preserve our 'Queen Anne' and other eighteenth century churches, for as a class they are distinct from any other style of church building we have known. They afford us a valuable object lesson in variety of plan and design, and in excellent construction and workmanship.

### NOTICES.

THE CHARGE FOR NOTICES of Meetings inserted under this heading is at the rate of 3d. per line (average 8 words) per insertion, with the minimum charge of 1/6. NOTICES must be received NOT LATER THAN MONDAY.

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

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

EAST GRINSTEAD AND DISTRICT GUILD. — A meeting will be held at Wadhurst on Saturday, Feb. 7th. Handbells and six silent tower bells.—C. A. Bassett, Hon. Sec., 3, Pendrill Place, Wadhurst, Tunbridge Wells.

BATH AND WELLS DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION. — Chew Deanery.—The eight bells of Long Ashton will be available (with silent apparatus) from 3 o'clock onwards on Saturday, February 7th. All ringers are welcome and their pleasure assured on bells that go like tops.—Percy G. Yeo, Hon. Local Sec., Long Ashton.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—The next meeting will be held at Longton on Saturday, Feb. 7th, at 3 p.m. Bells available for silent practice and handbells.

ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS.—The next meeting will be held on Saturday, Feb. 14th, at the Bell Foundry, Whitechapel Road, E.7, at 3 p.m. The payment of 1s. 8d. to enable those members who have not attended the required number of meetings to vote on matters of finance is now due.—A. B. Peck, Hon. Sec., 1, Eversfield Road, Reigate.

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD.—Kettering Branch.—The branch annual meeting will be held at Rothwell on Saturday, Feb. 14th. Service 4.30. Tea and meeting afterwards.—H. Baxter, Branch Sec., 21, Charles Street, Rothwell, Northants.

GUILDFORD DIOCESAN GUILD. — Leatherhead District.—The annual district meeting will be held at the Duke's Head, Leatherhead, on Saturday, Feb. 21st. Details next week.—A. H. Smith, Recreation Bungalow, Dorking Road, Great Bookham.

WORCESTERSHIRE AND DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION.—Northern Branch.—Meeting at St. Thomas', Stourbridge (D.V.), Saturday, February 21st, at 3.30 p.m. Bells (8) available for 'silent' practice. Tea 5.15 p.m. Handbells and usual social evening.—Bernard C. Ashford, Sec., 9, Bowling Green Road, Stourbridge.

### PUBLICATION.

THE CHURCH BELLS OF BERKSHIRE, Part V. (reprinted from the Berkshire Archaeological Society's Journal, by kind permission of the Society). To be obtained from the author, Mr. Frederick Sharpe, Derwen, Launton, Bicester, Oxfordshire., One shilling, post free.

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