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These famous bell-founding firms have kindly consented to this adaptation of their advertisements to meet the pressure on our space, due to the compulsory reduction in the number of our pages this week.

RINGING AND THE PUBLIC.

When a fortnight ago we suggested that it will be well after the war to tighten up the discipline at open meetings we rather expected some adverse criticism. Today we publish a letter from a correspondent who signs himself 'A Flat' which we believe fairly represents opinions held by many ringers and which call for some comment.

Broadly speaking, these people hold that the most important thing is to secure and teach recruits. That inevitably means a lot of bad ringing, but it cannot be helped, and if there are complaints from outsiders they must be treated as unreasonable and, so far as is possible, ignored.

These opinions are natural enough and have some grounds in common sense but for the most part they are based on fallacies. The teaching of learners is a necessity and a duty which must not be shirked, but it is by no means the most important thing to consider. It is not an end in itself but only a means to an end and is of value only so far as it serves that end. The main object of change ringing is to sound the bells so that they give pleasure to the listener whether he belongs to the outside public or is himself an expert ringer. There are other objects that appeal to the men who are themselves ringing, but they all should find their consummation in the æsthetic delight which is supplied by the music of the bells.

Nobody can become an efficient ringer unless he has been taught and no ringer can learn without practice. If we wish to train recruits we must put up with a certain amount of bad ringing. That cannot be helped, but it is an entirely different thing to say, as some apparently do, that every practice and every open meeting should be mainly devoted to the training of beginners and that no hindrance should ever be put in the way of the youngster who is trying to push himself to the front. After all there are others besides the ambitious beginner who should be considered. There are those men who have proved themselves to be competent ringers and there is the outside public.

Whenever ringers go to an open meeting or to a strange tower they go by courtesy of the local people whose bells they use and whose hospitality they enjoy. Is it a great thing to expect that in return they should do everything to ring the bells so that the parishioners can derive enjoyment from the sound? For the parishioners, who keep the bells in order and perhaps found the money to install them in the tower, do derive pleasure if they are properly rung, but there is little

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pleasure to be got out of the ringing served up too often at meetings. It is not enough that the ringing should be tolerated, perhaps with muttered curses; the aim should be to give positive pleasure. If this means some self denial on the part of ambitious ringers, some exercise of authority by those in charge, some curtailing of opportunities of teaching, the net result would still be much good for everyone concerned.

The question of teaching beginners needs careful consideration. It is one of those matters on which, unfortunately, it is easy to talk a lot of facile nonsense.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY GUILD.

FUTURE OF REV. W. C. PEARSON'S BOOKS.

The annual general meeting of the Cambridge University Guild was held on Wednesday, April 23rd, in St. John's College. Those present were the Rev. A. C. Blyth (Selwyn), president and treasurer; the Master (Mr. R. Leigh, St. Catharine's); the hon. secretary (Mr. K. S. B. Croft, St. John's); the Rev. C. F. D. Moule (Ridley Hall), and others.

The Treasurer, in presenting the accounts, which were adopted, stated that the balance in hand showed an increase.

On the re-election of officers, the Rev. A. C. Blyth was unanimously re-elected president and treasurer, Mr. K. S. B. Croft was elected Master, and Mr. R. Leigh hon. secretary.

It was decided that a Guild photograph should be taken this term, outside the president's rooms at Selwyn. The printing of peal cards to keep the Guild records up to date was also discussed.

As the library of ringing books of the late Rev. W. C. Pearson, of Clare College, the founder of the Guild, was now in the president's custody in Selwyn College library, it was decided that the president, together with the Master and the hon. secretary, accompanied by any other members of the Guild who desired to do so, should inspect the collection, so that the rarer books could be sorted out and safely stored.

By his will, Mr. Pearson left the books to the Guild to be housed in the University Library 'in the space allotted to the Guild.' There is, however, no such space, and the University Library authorities will not house books for any society, but will only accept them as a gift. On the refusal of the University Librarian to house the books, Mr. Pearson's executors handed them to the Guild.

Touches of Minor and Major on handbells concluded the meeting.

LINCOLN DIOCESAN GUILD.

OFFICERS RE-ELECTED.

The annual meeting of the Lincoln Diocesan Guild was held in the Consistory Court at Lincoln Cathedral on Saturday, April 25th.

The Very Rev. the Dean of Lincoln was in the chair, supported by Mr. R. Richardson (Master), Mr. F. W. Stokes (hon. secretary), Mr. J. A. Freeman (Northern Branch Ringing Master), Mr. J. Bray, Mr. W. E. Clarke, Mr. W. A. Richardson (branch secretaries) and between 40 and 50 members.

Before commencing business the Master expressed the sympathy all members felt with the chairman in his recent sad bereavement.

The Dean was re-elected president for the coming year. The Master and secretary were also re-elected. Letters of apology for absence were received from Canon Marsden, president of the Northern Branch, and Mr. John Freeman, who is serving with the Forces in the Middle East.

The Master expressed his pleasure at seeing so many members present and said that after listening to the broadcast from the Albert Hall on the previous Thursday evening and seeing so many at the meeting that day he felt no fear for the future of ringing.

A vote of thanks was passed to the Dean and Chapter for allowing the use of the Consistory Court for the meeting and for giving permission for the silent ringing of the bells.

After the meeting some of the members attended the Cathedral evensong. During the evening good use was made of the Cathedral bells, and various methods were attempted from Bob Major to Stedman Cinques and London Surprise. Whether it was from lack of sound or want of practice is not known, but it was evident that all was not as it should be, and the expression was made several times during the evening that it was a good thing the bells were silent.

HANDBELL PEALS.

LILLIPUT, DORSET.

THE SALISBURY DIOCESAN GUILD.

On Tuesday, April 28, 1942, in 1 1/2 hours and Eight Minutes,

AT VANESSA,

A PEAL OF GRANDSIRE DOUBLES, 5040 CHANGES;

Forty-two six-scores, ten different callings. Tenor size 9 in D.

MISS FAITH M. CHILD ... 1-2 | MRS. F. JOHN MARSHALLSAY 3-4

FRANCIS S. WILSON ... 5-6

Conducted by Mrs. F. JOHN MARSHALLSAY.

This peal was specially rung in grateful appreciation for the late Sidney Hiller's life's work for the Salisbury Diocesan Guild, and as a last tribute of respect to him.

BUSHEY, HERTFORDSHIRE.

THE HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

On Wednesday, April 29, 1942, in Two Hours and Eight Minutes,

AT 50, RUDOLPH ROAD,

A PEAL OF SPLICED KENT AND OXFORD TREBLE BOB MAJOR, 5120 CHANGES;

Tenor size 15.

EDWIN JENNINGS ... 1-2 | HAROLD G. CASHMORE ... 5-6

EDWIN A. BARNETT ... 3-4 | ERNEST C. S. TURNER ... 7-8

Arranged to a composition of George Lewis.

Conducted by ERNEST C. S. TURNER.

This peal contains 2,560 changes of each method with 48 changes of method.

CRAYFORD, KENT.

THE KENT COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

On Saturday, May 2, 1942, in Two Hours and Thirty Minutes,

AT 10, KING'S CLOSE,

A PEAL OF DOUBLE NORWICH COURT BOB MAJOR, 5024 CHANGES;

Tenor size 15.

ERNEST C. S. TURNER... 1-2 | GEORGE H. CROSS ... 5-6

EDWIN A. BARNETT ... 3-4 | EDWIN BARNETT ... 7-8

Composed and Conducted by GEORGE H. CROSS.

SWINDON, WILTSHIRE.

THE GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION.

(HIGHCLIFFE SOCIETY.)

On Saturday, May 2, 1942, in Two Hours and Fifty-Six Minutes.

AT HIGHCLIFFE, 81, COUNTY ROAD,

A PEAL OF GRANDSIRE CATERERS, 5039 CHANGES;

Tenor size 15 in C.

*IVOR C. N. BELL ... 1-2 | †W. BERTRAM KYNASTON ... 5-6

*JACK S. ROBERTS ... 3-4 | REV. M. C. C. MELVILLE 7-8

*DENNIS W. S. SMOUT ... 9-10

Composed by JOHN CARTEE. Conducted by REV. M. C. C. MELVILLE

* First peal of Caterers. † First handbell peal of Caterers. First peal of Caterers as conductor. A fifteenth birthday compliment to Dennis Smout. The peal was rung at the first attempt.

ECKINGTON, DERBYSHIRE.

THE YORKSHIRE ASSOCIATION.

On Saturday, May 2, 1942, in Two Hours and Forty-One Minutes,

AT 48, HIGH STREET,

A PEAL OF BOB ROYAL, 5040 CHANGES;

Tenor size 14 1/2 in C sharp.

*G. EDMUND DRABBLE ... 1-2 | *A. ROY FOX... 5-6

†G. GORDON GRAHAM... 3-4 | *NORMAN W. FOX ... 7-8

*PERCY J. JERVIS ... 9-10

Composed by E. MORRIS (M.C.A. No. 3135).

Conducted by G. G. GRAHAM.

* First peal on ten bells. † First ten-bell peal 'in hand' and as conductor.

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THE BELLS OF STEPNEY.

A FAMOUS EAST END RING.

By J. ARMIGER TROLLOPE.

In the year 1700 the eastern suburbs of the City of London were about as different from what they are now as they very well could be. Instead of an unbroken mass of mean and uninteresting streets stretching to the River Lea and far beyond into Essex, the district was mainly open country, cornfields and orchards, dotted here and there with villages and hamlets. On the outskirts of the City from Aldgate round about Houndsditch and Petticoat Lane, and parts of Spitalfields, there were foul slums inhabited by Jews and foreigners, and along the riverside there was a very low class neighbourhood. Mr. Justice Withens, who as a lawyer and a member of the Society of College Youths may be said to have been an authority, in one of his *obiter dicta* from the Bench, expressed his scornful wonder at there being a sober Wapping man.

The parish of Stepney (or Stebunhithe as it was formerly called) covered a large part of the area. The village was round the green and the parish church, there were hamlets at Bethnal Green, Shadwell, and other places, and along the main road eastwards from Aldgate there were houses far beyond Whitechapel Church.

The parish church of St. Dunstan was of ancient foundation, and the building as it now stands was erected at different times during the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The tower dates from the late fifteenth century. There has been much restoration and reconstruction throughout.

When the great Priory of the Holy Trinity at Aldgate was dissolved in 1540 four of its bells were sold to Stepney. The present tenor has an inscription containing 118 words and 518 letters, recording its history. Originally given to the Priory by a Nicholas Chadworth in 1386, it was recast in 1604, 1764, 1799, and finally in 1806. Another recasting not mentioned took place in 1599.

The Edwardian inventory of 1552 has not survived, but at the end of the sixteenth century there was a heavy ring of five bells. 'On the xth day of february, 1598, at a meeting of the vestry men, then and there it was agreed amongst them as followeth—First that the great bell be forth wth cast and that evy prshoner wthin the same shall gyve towards the same one yerres pew rent over and besides their qtrs rent now due. And evy pishoner that hath no pew appointed for him or her shall pay viijd according to thauncient custome of this pish over and besides his or her quarterly dues now or hereafter due and payable.'

The response of the parish was slow, the money did not come in at all well, and it was not until the April of the following year it was decided to give the order for recasting to Lawrence Wright. 'The xxix of Aprill, 1599. It was ordered and agreed that day and yere above written, by Mr. Bludder, Mr. Thos. Jones, . . . and the iiij or Churchwardens all present in the vestry that Lawrence Wright of Houndsditch in the pish of St. Buttolphs wth out Aldgate, london, Belfounder, should have the casting of the great Bell called the fyfth bell, and for the casting thereof to have 40 li (viz.) 10 li at the taking of her downe and carrying her away & at the hanging of her vp after new casting 10 li more, and the

remainder of the said some at thend of vj monthes after the hanging, and to be found wth an able security in certaine articles inden for the pforming thereof as shalbe devised.'

Lawrence Wright was a leading bellfounder at the time and the principal business rival of Robert Mot, of Whitechapel. Wright's charges were low, and he got a lot of work in various parishes; but his bells did not always give satisfaction, and he was more than once involved in legal proceedings. In 1587 he recast the tenor at St. Michael's, Cornhill, the famous Rus bell, but did not make a good job of it. The churchwardens were undecided whether they should accept it and pay for it, and in the end the parish agreed to pay Wright £3 17s. for new metal supplied and £9 6s. 9d. for the recasting. That was as much as 'his due is to be accounted justly,' but the parish made the sum up to the round £14 out of benevolence, and promised 'to consider of him better if the bell hold and be better liked of than it is now.' It was not 'better liked of,' and Robert Mot was ordered to recast it.

In 1592 and 1593 Wright recast the fourth and tenor which Mot had recently supplied to St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, but the reason probably was that the bells had been cracked not because they were poor in quality.

About the same time Wright supplied a new tenor to Hillingdon in Middlesex, but the bell was a bad one and the parish refused to pay for it, whereupon he entered an action at law. In reply the churchwardens petitioned the Court of Requests for an injunction calling on him to show cause why the bond should not be cancelled. They pleaded that Wright 'did faithfully promise and undertake to newe caste and substantially make a great bell, . . . tuneable and agreeable with the rest of the bells,' but 'he never did performe in anie good order but altogether contrarie to his said bargaine and agreement.' Nevertheless, 'the said Lawrence of a greddie and unconscionable minde hath or meaneth to sue yor said subjects upon the deeds of obligationerie, intending there greatlie to vex, trouble, and charge your said subjects, having no juste cause or consideracion so to doe.'

In his reply Lawrence Wright said he 'did newe caste and newe make the said bell and hanged the same in the said bell frame accordinge to the true entent and meaninge of the contracte and agreement.' What was the result of the action I cannot say. I have found among the State Papers a letter referring to another suit by Lawrence Wright, but what it was about does not appear. We have no means of judging the quality of his bells, for only one of all those he cast still survives, and that is only a small one, the third at Thurnham in Kent.

RINGING AND THE PUBLIC.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—Your advice in the leader of April 24th reminds me of the mother who warned her boy not to go in the water until he could swim. Needless to say, he never swam the Channel. Too often it is not the daring one who makes a hash at a meeting, but the learned ones who are not paying strict attention to duty. To carry out fully your advice, meetings would soon be like desert isles.

I agree the public does not like ringing, only when they want it. So from experience the best advice is to give it them at regular intervals. Every tower should have a regular practice night and ring then. If they cannot ring themselves, get someone else to do so. Also they should have a regular peal attempt and meetings should be fitted into either peal day or practice night. Let them know there is to be ringing, then be sure and not disappoint them is the best medicine for the objectors.

'A FLAT.'

BELFRY GOSSIP.

In a further raid on Exeter on Monday morning it is reported that churches were among the buildings hit. At one church a bomb struck the tower, slicing half of it away and leaving some of the bells swinging in the open air.

Members of the Essex Association should notice that the date of the meeting of the North-Western District has been altered from May 9th to May 16th.

Congratulations to Mr. George Williams, who reached his 85th birthday yesterday.

Mrs. Rupert Richardson's many friends wish her many happy returns of her birthday, which fell on Tuesday last.

The Painswick band rang 12,312 changes of Grandsire Caters on May 5th, 1817.

What was at the time the longest peal of Superlative Surprise Major, 10,400 changes, was rung on May 6th, 1922, by the Midland Counties Association at the Bell Foundry, Loughborough. The composition had bobs with the treble behind as well as in front.

The Cumberlands rang the first peal of Grandsire Maximus at St. Saviour's, Southwark, on May 7th, 1792.

On the same date in 1807, Elijah Roberts was born.

Fifty years ago to-day two peals were rung. They were Grandsire Triples and Kent Treble Bob Royal.

Fifty years ago yesterday seven peals were rung. They were Bob Major 1, Canterbury Pleasure Major 1, Kent Treble Bob Major 3, Sledman Triples 1, Caters 1.

The last peal was the first on the newly augmented ten at St. Nicholas', Brighton, and the first in the method in Sussex.

REV. M. MELVILLE RETURNING TO LICHFIELD.

The Rev. Malcolm Melville, who has been assistant priest at St. Paul's, Swindon, since September, 1939, has been appointed Priest-Vicar at Lichfield Cathedral, and assistant master of the Choir School.

While at Swindon Mr. Melville has taught several young people to ring handbells, and they have rung peals of Doubles, Minor, Major, Caters and Royal, as well as touches and courses in a large variety of methods, including London Surprise Major. Three of them rang their first peal of Caters last Saturday, one of them, Dennis Smout, for his fifteenth birthday.

Mr. Melville takes up his new duties on May 26th, and returns to the city where he was in college for the two years previous to coming to Swindon.

BOWDEN RINGER MISSING.

Information has been received that Stoker John Hassell, one of the ringers at Bowden, Cheshire, has been reported missing. The ship upon which he was serving was sunk in the Mediterranean. His many ringing friends will hope that despite the uncertainty Mr. Hassell is still alive and well.

Mr. Hassell was one of the old band at Bowden when Mr. David Vincent took them over in 1935 with the object of introducing half-pull ringing, and proved a very useful pupil. He became an excellent striker and safe ringer and rang peals up to Cambridge. Best of all he quickly made many friends in Lancashire and Cheshire ringing circles.

On his marriage at Bowden Church a few months ago whilst on leave, the bride and bridegroom were 'rung out' with handbells, and while his leave lasted he took part in some handbell ringing with his old friend Mr. Vincent and his family at Altrincham.

It was due to the fact that Mr. Hassell left his handbells with Mr. Vincent that the latter's three small sons first amused themselves with change ringing and then secretly persuaded their mother to join in with them until they can now ring Bob Major.

HANDBELLS IN GIBRALTAR.

Our readers will remember that a few weeks ago we published an appeal which had been received by Mr. E. Guise, hon. secretary of the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association, from the Rev. W. F. E. Burnley, C.F., of Gibraltar, for a set of handbells for use among the troops in the garrison, and that an immediate response came from Mr. Charles Dean, of Croydon, who dispatched 14 of his own handbells.

The bells have arrived safely at the Rock and Mr. Guise has received the following letter from the chaplain:—

Dear Sir,—You were kind enough recently to give publicity to an appeal from me for handbells. I must admit that I doubted at the time whether we could reasonably expect a response. But I am grateful to say that I have received a set of 14 on loan from Mr. Dean, of Croydon. I have written to thank him for a generous action which illustrates the close fellowship of ringers everywhere. I should like to thank you also and the Editor of 'The Ringing World' for publishing my request. If you would care to pass this on to the Editor, whose address I do not know, he could inform his readers that our exiled ringers here can now enjoy the pleasure of handbell ringing.—W. F. E. Burnley, C.F.

A NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

MR. KIPPIN'S QUANDARY.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—As you have admitted Mr. Kippin's 'amendment' as a rider to Mr. Price's motion and a vote is now being taken, there is no point in further objection to the method of procedure. At the same time, in view of Mr. Kippin's speech to the Conference this week, I think it only right that he should know that my criticisms of his amendment, and also of the incident at a meeting of the Surrey Association, were sent in the form of a letter to the Editor, and *not* as a contribution to the discussion. Why the Editor, in his capacity as chairman, chose to put it in the discussion, I do not know. I did, as a matter of fact, suggest to him that he should publish it as a letter, and that it would be 'out of order' as part of the debate.

As regards Mr. Kippin's reply to what he calls my taunt, it is true that the object of motion (b) is to get a decision as to whether or not ringers have any confidence in their present method of organisation. In addition, of course, if the motion is passed, it will at least imply that they are not in favour of a National Association. But as Mr. Kippin had no idea that this motion was being tabled, he is *not* entitled to give it as a reason why a motion in favour of a National Association was not submitted to the Conference. The failure to submit such a motion was, therefore, not caused by the submitting of motion (b). Now Mr. Kippin finds himself in a quandary and he endeavours to get round it by an amendment to motion (a). As Mr. Price says, it is a matter of tactics, and it is quite possible that his tactics will be found faulty. I am *not* trying to veto the committee from exploring the advantages of a National Association; I am of the opinion that it should *not* be left to so small a body of men to decide. Therefore, a full discussion is best, and that is what Mr. Kippin appears to wish to avoid. There has been no discussion yet, and the amendment is being voted upon.

Regarding the remarks on motion (b) at the Surrey Association meeting, no complaint was made of the criticisms, but of the request that votes should be given against the motion. I, also, cling to the idea that we are democratic, and that is why I am in favour of discussion before decision, and not decision before discussion.

Highams Park.

C. T. COLES.

EAST GRINSTEAD AND DISTRICT GUILD.

NEW MEMBERS ELECTED.

The 15th annual meeting of the East Grinstead and District Guild was held in the Rectory at Hartfield on Saturday, April 25th. The gathering was well attended, members coming from all parts of the Guild's area. Ringing was enjoyed on six tower bells and the handbells. The company sat down to tea generously provided and served by Mr. J. W. Ritson, the Rev. H. B. W. Denison, the new Rector of Hartfield, and Mrs. Denison, after which the ringers from Balcombe entertained with tune ringing on handbells and accompanied community singing, with Mrs. Denison at the piano.

The Rector took the chair at the business meeting, and in welcoming the Guild to Hartfield, congratulated members on the way they were carrying on in spite of difficulties. He also suggested that some sort of plan should be made to ensure the regular ringing of all church bells after the war, as quite a lot of towers would be left with only one or two ringers.

Five new members were elected, viz., Mr. F. White, Tunbridge Wells; the Misses B. and D. Richardson, Sundridge, and Messrs. Gardner and Johnson from Balcombe.

It was regretted that the Guild had lost by death two vice-presidents, the Rev. H. A. James and Mr. P. R. Mann. The Rev. H. B. W. Denison was added to the vice-presidents. Other alterations among the officers were the election of Mr. E. J. Oliver as treasurer, Mr. G. Lambert taking his job as auditor. Mr. R. Johnson was elected to the committee in place of Mr. B. Saunders, now serving his country.

Balcombe was the place chosen for the next meeting on May 30th. The circular letter from Central Council members with regard to 'The Ringing World' was read and received with much sympathy.

Mr. Relfe passed round for inspection an interesting illustrated account of how Big Ben was hauled into the clock tower at Westminster.

Mr. A. Batten proposed a vote of thanks to the donors of the tea, and a really excellent meeting concluded about 8 p.m.

THE LATE MR. FRANCIS TAYLOR.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,—I feel I must write a few lines in support of Mr. A. E. F. Trotman's letter of tribute to the late Mr. Francis Taylor, whose death is deeply felt by all of us here in Oxford.

At the same time I should like to express our warm thanks for the kind remarks concerning the City ringers. Mr. Trotman will have happy recollections of that complete co-operation which existed between the University and City Societies when we used to meet together at Christ Church Cathedral at 9 a.m. on Sunday mornings during term and ring for service. We are all looking forward hopefully to the time when this can be revived.

Headington, Oxford.

V. BENNETT, Oxford Society.

THE RINGERS' CONFERENCE.

THE ORGANISATION OF THE EXERCISE.

The CHAIRMAN: The result of the voting on Mr. Price's motion will be announced next week. Meanwhile I call on Mr. C. T. Coles to move the second item on the agenda.

Mr. C. T. COLES (Walthamstow): Mr. Chairman, I move 'That this Conference is of the opinion that the present basis of the organisation of ringing societies has resulted in great advancement in the art of change ringing; has stimulated interest in ringing matters generally; and has caused very considerable additions to the number of ringing peals of bells in the country. It further registers its belief that, with the loyal help of all ringers, the present associations and the Central Council are capable of overcoming post-war difficulties.'

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Coles has asked me to make it plain that his remarks on this motion were prepared before the appearance of various letters, notably one from Mr. Kippin, in 'The Ringing World' a week or two ago.

Mr. COLES: My object in moving this resolution is to obtain from members of the Conference some expressions of their opinions on the functions and work of the associations and guilds which have been formed by ringers, most of them during the last 60 years or so; to ascertain if there is any general support for a change; and, if so, in what form the change should be. We have on more than one occasion recently had the idea of a National Association set before us, but nobody has given this any authoritative backing or even stated what benefit such an organisation would be to the Exercise. It must be obvious to anyone that to make a wholesale and complete change in the basis of our organisations would be, if the change was not a success, a great disaster to ringing. We could not revert. Therefore, before any change is decided upon, it would be necessary to explore all its possibilities and to be certain that it would be beneficial. It must also be obvious that until the advantages of a change, say, to a National Association are stated, they cannot be discussed, and as I am quite unable to visualise any advantages whatever in such a change I am moving this resolution in the hope that some such information may be obtained in this Conference.

LESSONS FROM HISTORY.

It is quite unnecessary for me to go deeply into the history of ringing, but I would like to remind members of this Conference that from its earliest days the Exercise has had its societies and guilds, which were at first very much confined to the cities and towns in which they were formed. Some of these societies, notably those known by the familiar names of College Youths and Cumberlands, are still in existence, and are doing good work. But with the spread of ringing, and with much greater facilities for travelling, something more was required, and thus some 60 years ago a movement, started in Devonshire, resulted in the setting up of a number of county organisations. Later a much more direct contact with the church was made and guilds covering whole dioceses were formed. To-day there are nearly fifty of these associations and guilds, covering practically the whole of England and Wales, together with the Scottish and Irish Associations. These societies are completely autonomous, but are closely linked with each other by identity of aims and through affiliation to the Central Council. The associations and guilds themselves, for convenience of working, are usually divided into districts, and the reason of this seems to be that large areas are more difficult to organise than are small areas.

Now what have these societies achieved? This is not easy to answer in a few words, but I would ask members to consider the advancement made in ringing matters generally during the last half-century. Under the direct influence of county and diocesan organisations the number of ringers in the country has increased enormously; facilities for practice, opportunities for learning and improvement, have been greatly multiplied; and in every respect the chances of a recruit becoming an efficient member of the Exercise have been added to. These kinds of improvements went on during the whole period referred to, as most of us who have had some years' experience can testify.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL.

For the more experienced ringer, as well as for the recruit, there have been greater opportunities, as is shown by the enormous increase in the number of peals rung in all sorts of methods. These increased opportunities have been due to the greater interest taken in ringing matters by church authorities, stimulated by the operations of the county and diocesan organisations working amongst them. This interest is also in the main responsible for the number of new peals of bells which have been placed in our churches, and for the large number of augmentations, during the years in which our many associations and guilds have functioned.

The work of the Central Council is well known, and it has had a great and beneficial influence on ringing. This body would have no existence with a National Association in being. At the present time, when actual ringing of bells is entirely suspended, it is necessary that whatever organisation we have shall be kept alive. There is no reason to suppose that this important point is lost sight of by association officials, and these associations, together with the Council, should be

in a position to carry on their work upon the lifting of the ban. Whatever sort of organisation we have, the loyal co-operation of all ringers is of first importance; with our existing organisations intact, there is no reason to suppose that this co-operation will not be forthcoming. I, therefore, move the resolution, which I ask the Conference to pass unanimously.

Mr. R. RICHARDSON (Surfleet): In view of the recent suggestions in the pages of 'The Ringing World' for the formation of a National Association for Ringers, I have great pleasure in seconding Mr. C. T. Coles' motion.

I do not profess to be an historian in the art and I am not going to quote from the dim ages, but, looking back over an active period of about 45 years, I have seen great changes for the better take place in the Exercise. At one time ringers were very much looked down upon and were hardly considered fit persons to associate with respectable people. Now, as a rule, we find them among the leading pillars of the church and often not only carrying out their duties in the belfry, but also acting as churchwardens, sidesmen or members of the church council. In fact, I know a good many country parishes that would be badly off were it not for the energetic and unselfish work of the ringers.

During the present century a great advancement has been made in the standard of methods rung. Most of the old unmusical methods, such as Grandsire Major, etc., have faded out. Many new ones have taken their places and a much wider range of methods is now, or was until the ban on ringing, being practised. A tremendous amount of restoration work has taken place in recent years, many fine old peals having been rehung and many brand new peals added.

All these vast improvements have been due chiefly to the ungrudging and tireless work of the association officials working in conjunction with the Central Council. The associations have gradually expanded and new ones have been formed until there is scarcely a corner of the British Isles that is not covered by them. The Central Council is doing far more than appears on the surface. True it only meets once a year (in peace time), but that does not mean that that is the only day on which it works. Its work is going on all through the year behind the scenes and few ringers realise the amount of work that some of its members do for the good of the Exercise.

A BOND OF UNITY.

During its existence the Central Council has held its meetings in some of the finest and most historic buildings in the country. More often than not it has received a welcome from the Mayor of the city or the Bishop of the diocese, and on many occasions both. All this has helped to knit ringers into a bond of unity, not only with the Church authorities, but also with the national life of the country.

Just what state the Exercise will be in when this dreadful war is over no one can forecast. Until that time, it is up to every ringer in the country to do his utmost in the fight for freedom. When peace reigns once more I feel confident, looking back over the tremendous amount of work they have accomplished in the past, that with the loyal support of every ringer the Central Council, together with the present guilds and associations, will be quite capable of handling the situation and will soon restore change ringing to something of its former glory. Therefore, it gives me great pleasure to second the motion.

Mr. J. E. BAILEY (Dartford): The motion proposed by Mr. Coles savours of smug satisfaction over our past achievements and an attitude of 'Everything will be all right' in the future. I do not think for one moment that either of the gentlemen concerned with the motion intended it to be taken that way, and I hope no one else will be tempted into thinking along those lines.

In my opinion, there are two things at least which societies will have to get down to much more seriously than they have been doing.

One of these is the new recruit. Recruits seem to be fairly easy to obtain, but difficult to keep. I think if societies made the necessary administrative and financial plans, this trouble could be overcome at least in part. If societies show they are interested in the recruit's progress, from the very start, by suitable awards or by other means, it will help to overcome the recruit's feeling he is not wanted until he has proved his mettle. This process is rather long and tedious, and he often feels he is not only trying to learn to ring, but trying to get the right to learn.

Another problem (which is in some ways allied to the one just mentioned) is the fact that the backbone of ringing societies has tended to become their peal total and not the manning of as many ropes as possible for service.

In order to justify our existence and the reconstruction and repair of our bells after the war, service ringing will have to be our main object. Societies can do a great deal to help in this, by giving more prominence to such things as local peals, Sunday service quarter-peals and more detailed particulars of the state of Sunday ringing in their reports and not so much elaboration of peals and their performers.

Perhaps these points are not strong enough to warrant scrapping the whole of our present system, but they are lines which societies could study and make plans to give a lead in post-war reconstruction.

Readers are reminded that contributions to the discussion should reach us by Monday next.

SURREY ASSOCIATION. COMMITTEE'S WAR-TIME POWERS.

Members recommended to follow Conference Arguments.

The annual meeting of the Surrey Association was held at Croydon on Saturday, April 26th. The middle eight of the twelve at St. John's had had their clappers removed and members took the opportunity to renew acquaintance with a bell rope. Stedman and Cambridge were rung previous to the service, which took place in the fine church, and was conducted by the Rev. E. E. Stanton, who took the occasion to remind his listeners that during this inactive period the ideals which bellringers helped to proclaim must not be lost sight of, but that we must be ready to take up our duties when the opportunity was again given to us. Tea was served in the Parish Hall, Silverdale Road.

Its proportions fully maintained the reputation associated with the repasts which have hitherto been provided by the Croydon 'syndicate.'

The business meeting commenced about 6 p.m., and in the absence of the Master, Mr. M. A. Northover was elected chairman. There were present about 50 members and friends, including Mr. C. F. Johnston and the Rev. E. E. Stanton.

Mr. Northover, on behalf of the association, expressed disappointment at the absence of the Master, Mr. D. K. C. Birt, but trusted his stay in the country was proving enjoyable and sent him the meeting's best wishes.

The treasurer's statement of accounts was read and passed. There were no new members to be elected, nor elections to be ratified.

COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

The committee's report for the past year was read by the secretary and accepted. In the report especial thanks were accorded to Mr. G. W. Massey, of Claygate, for his services in connection with meetings held during the year, and best wishes were expressed upon his forthcoming entry into H.M. Forces. The details of the meetings held during the past year revealed that enthusiasm in the association was by no means lacking.

It was confirmed that a letter had been addressed to each incumbent of affiliated towers, whereby the services of a sub-committee to advise and assist in the event of bells becoming damaged by enemy action were offered, but, thanks to Providence, they had not been called upon to offer any assistance. In the same letter occasion was taken to enquire if bell frames had been correctly and adequately insured against war risks.

On the translation of the Bishop of Croydon to Portsmouth, a letter had been sent to this very good friend of the association offering congratulations on his appointment. A letter in reply was subsequently read to the meeting.

It was also announced that the new Bishop of Southwark had consented to occupy the office of his predecessor as president of the association.

Handbell and tower bell ringing still flourishes at the two Croydon churches and also at Leatherhead, though the tower bell ringing is of the dumb variety.

Opportunity was taken to renew the association's best wishes to those of its members serving with H.M. Forces with a hope for their safe and speedy return.

It was finally recommended that members should follow closely the arguments under the Ringers' Conference at present appearing in 'The Ringing World' and reflect on these; also to endeavour to bring them to the notice of non-readers, it being the duty of all lovers of ringing to do what they could to maintain interest.

OFFICERS RE-ELECTED.

The existing officers were re-elected for the coming year as follows: President, the Bishop of Southwark; Master, Mr. D. K. C. Birt; treasurer, Mr. C. H. Kippin; secretary, Mr. F. G. Talbot; assistant secretary, Mr. C. Parks; auditor, Mr. G. W. Steere. Messrs. Cooper and Kippin were elected to serve on the Central Council should this body decide to meet.

Following a resolution from the committee the meeting adopted, with one dissentient, the following motion: 'During war time the General Committee shall have power to suspend or modify any rule subject to subsequent confirmation by the annual general meeting of the association.'

Whilst the secretary on behalf of the committee admitted that in peace time such a step would not be requested, he was sure that the

(Continued in next column.)

DEATH OF MR. CORNELIUS CHARGE.

RINGER IN ENGLAND AND NEW ZEALAND.

We regret to record the death of Mr. Cornelius Charge, of 6, Merthyr Avenue, East Cosham, Portsmouth, who passed away on May 1st. The funeral took place on Monday at Farlington Church.

Mr. Charge, who served for a long period in the Metropolitan Police Force, was at the time a well-known and active ringer in London and devoted his attention to composition. He produced a number of peals, particularly of Stedman Caters, and his name was frequently to be found in peal reports as the composer. Altogether, Mr. Charge had a keen interest in ringing for over 50 years.

After he retired from the police force he went to live in New Zealand for some years, and was residing in Auckland on the occasion of the visit of some of the Australian touring party in 1934. Mr. Charge went on the long journey to Christchurch, South Island, with the visiting ringers and took part at the Cathedral in the two abortive attempts for a peal of Bob Major, one of which came to an end, to everybody's great disappointment, after more than three hours' ringing.

The warmth of Mr. and Mrs. Charge's hospitality during the stay in Auckland will always be remembered by the travellers, who join with Mr. Charge's other friends in expressing deep sympathy with Mrs. Charge in her loss.

CAPT. S. G. ARMSTRONG KILLED.

HIS RAPID ARMY PROMOTION.

The death has occurred in Libya of Capt. Sidney George Armstrong, who before he joined the Army in 1934 was an active ringer both in Surrey and the London area. He was the eldest of six sons of Mr. and Mrs. G. Armstrong and began his bellringing at Bagshot in 1922. He was always ambitious and when he took up his Army career at the age of 27 by joining the R.A.M.C. he advanced very rapidly. He was transferred to India within a year and was on the point of returning to England when the war broke out and he was instead drafted to Egypt, where towards the end of 1940 he was given a commission in a line regiment.

In July, 1941, he was posted 'missing,' but within a month news was received that he had been released from enemy hands and had rejoined his unit. He was promoted captain shortly after, and in August, 1941, was married in Cairo Cathedral to an Englishwoman. Two or three months later he went into action again, and was killed on December 7th, 1941, at Tobruk (or just outside). News has since been received that he was buried in Tobruk Cemetery. He was 35 years of age.

SURREY ASSOCIATION.

(Continued from previous column.)

meeting would appreciate that it would be practically impossible under present conditions to modify or alter rules as occasion demanded if it was necessary to call a special meeting and to obtain the minimum number of votes required as demanded by the rules. The meeting being held that day was a case in point. The rules required this meeting to be held in March normally, but it could not be denied the extra daylight in April was a distinct advantage. He further informed the meeting that they could rest assured that no step would be taken contrary to the interests of the association.

Mr. Kippin spoke in favour of the resolution, and Mr. Northover also gave his support. After some discussion the motion was passed.

It was then decided that the resolution as worded should be added to rule 15(a).

Following a resolution from the annual meeting of the North-West District, the meeting recommended that due consideration be given immediately by the Central Council members regarding the ownership of 'The Ringing World' in time to come.

Mr. Kippin informed the meeting that, as treasurer, he had received no contributions from the Southern District. The treasurer of that district had received no moneys from the secretary, although it was fairly certain that a number of subscriptions had been paid. Mr. Kippin, therefore, demanded that the General Committee should meet and investigate the position.—Mr. D. Cooper seconded.

The meeting terminated with votes of thanks to the Rev. E. C. Stanton, the organist and verger, and to Mr. D. Cooper and Miss Williams for the excellent catering arrangements.

Mr. Northover extended the thanks of the association to the committee for their efforts during the year.

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ANCIENT SOCIETY OF COLLEGE YOUTHS. —

The next meeting will be held on Saturday, May 9th, at the Bell Foundry, Whitechapel Road, E.1, at 3 p.m.—A. B. Peck, Hon. Sec., 1, Eversfield Road, Reigate.

ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—South-Western Division.—A meeting will be held at Hornchurch on Saturday, May 9th. Handbells from 3 p.m. Service at 4 p.m. Meeting to follow. All ringers welcome.—J. H. Crampin, Hon. Dis. Sec., 14, Wellesley Road, Wanstead, E.11.

ISLEWORTH, MIDDLESEX.—The All Saints' band invite ringers to attend an open meeting for handbell ringing and social intercourse at All Saints' Parish Church, Isleworth, on Saturday, May 9th. Handbell ringing from 3 p.m. Service 4.30 p.m., followed by tea and further handbells in the Mission Hall, South Street. You will be very welcome, so do come along and bring your friends. — (Mrs.) O. L. Rogers, Tower Sec., 17, Harvard Road, Isleworth.

SHROPSHIRE ASSOCIATION. — Meeting at Malinslee, Saturday, May 9th, 3 p.m. Handbells and possibly 'silent' tower bell ringing. Local ringers and friends are hoping to provide tea. Good bus service from Wellington. Please make this meeting known to fellow ringers and come along.—E. D. Poole, Hon. Sec., 20, Wrekin View, Madeley, Shropshire.

SALISBURY DIOCESAN GUILD. — The annual meeting will be held at Salisbury in the Church House on Saturday, May 9th, at 3 p.m. Guild service in St. Thomas' Church at 4.30 p.m. Handbells available. — F. Ll. Edwards, Hon. Sec., Kington Magna Rectory, Gillingham, Dorset.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY ASSOCIATION AND LONDON DIOCESAN GUILD.—Annual general meeting, Saturday, May 16th, at St. Lawrence's Church, Brentford (High Street). Handbell ringing from 3 p.m. Service at 4. Tea in the Parish Room at 4.45 p.m. Charge about 1/3 (not more). Business to follow. All requiring tea must advise Mr. J. E. L. Cockey, 1, Listoke, Edgehill Road, W.13, by May 11th. Buses from Hammersmith and Shepherds Bush to Isleworth and Hanwell pass the church, about half-a-mile west of Kew Bridge.—C. T. Coles, Hon. Gen. Sec.

BARNSELY AND DISTRICT SOCIETY.—The next meeting will be held at Felkirk on Saturday, May 16th. Handbells available 2.30 p.m. in the Schoolroom. Six silent tower bells also available if required. Tea will be provided for those who notify me not later than Wednesday, May 13th. All are welcome. — Daniel Smith, Hon. Sec., 28, Chapel Street, Shafton, near Barnsley.

OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD.—Reading Branch.—The annual meeting will be held on Saturday, May 9th, in the Vestry of St. Laurence's Church, Reading, at 4 p.m. Handbells from 3 p.m. Own arrangements for tea.—E. G. Foster, Hon. Sec. and Treasurer.

ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—A meeting of the North-Western Division will be held at the Church, Harlow Common, on Saturday, May 16th. Silent ringing and handbells from 3 p.m. Tea at 4.30. Business to follow.—W. Wheeler, Mill Street, Harlow Common.

HERTFORD COUNTY ASSOCIATION. — St. Albans District.—A meeting will be held at St. Peter's, St. Albans, on Saturday, May 16th. Tower open at 3 p.m. for stimulating interest for new recruits, showing them and any others the working of the bells. This meeting terminates the 'Bell Week.' Lecture, with lantern slides, on Tuesday, 12th, in St. Peter's Institute, Hatfield Road, at 8 p.m. Handbell practice in the tower on Thursday, 14th, at 8 p.m.—H. J. Hazell, Dis. Sec., 15, King's Hill Avenue, St. Albans.

MIDLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION.—Leicester District.—A quarterly meeting will be held at Syston on May 16th. Ringing from 3 p.m. Tea and meeting at Mr. E. Payne's, near church, at 5.15 p.m. It is essential that those requiring tea should notify me by May 13th.—H. W. Perkins, Hon. Dis. Sec.

ESSEX ASSOCIATION.—The 63rd annual meeting will be held at Chelmsford on Saturday, May 23rd. Service in Cathedral 4 p.m. Meeting in Chapter House 4.45 p.m. (approx.). Tea afterwards at Cannon's Restaurant. Please notify me if tea required not later than Thursday, May 21st. Tower bells (8) and handbells available from 2.30 p.m.—L. J. Clark, Hon. Sec., 36, Lynmouth Avenue, Chelmsford.

YORKSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—Eastern District. — The annual meeting will be held at Howden on Saturday, May 23rd. 'Silent' ringing on bells (8) from 2.30 to 8 o'clock. Short service in church at 4 p.m. Fish tea at Manor House Cafe at 5 p.m. (2s. each) for all who notify Mr. J. W. Thompson, 16, Northolmby Street, Howden, E. Yorks., by Tuesday, May 19th. Business meeting for election of officers, etc., after tea. — H. H. Morley, Hon. Sec., 5, Ebor Street, Selby.

SURREY ASSOCIATION. — North-Western District.—The next meeting will be held at Kingston-on-Thames on Whit Monday, May 25th. Full details next week.—G. W. Massey, Hon. Dis. Sec.

PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD. — The annual meeting will be held (D.V.) at Kettering on Whit Monday, May 25th. Central committee 2.45, Parish Hall, Market Place. Service, with address, 3.30, Church of SS. Peter and Paul. Tea 4, followed by business meeting and election of officers. (Tea will be arranged only for those whose names are received by the general secretary not later than May 18th. This is definite.) Handbells available before and after the meeting.—Robt. G. Black, Hon. Gen. Sec., Stamford Road, Geddington, Kettering.

EAST GRINSTEAD AND DISTRICT GUILD. — The meeting at Balcombe, arranged for July, will be held on Saturday, May 30th. Silent tower bells and handbells. Names for tea by Wednesday, May 27th, to Mr. A. Laker, Barnfield Cottages, Balcombe, Sussex. Please endeavour to attend this meeting.—C. A. Bassett, Hon. Sec.

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