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THE QUEST OF BELLS

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THE QUEST OF BELLS



THE QUEST OF BELLS

BY
LAVINIA SILLIMAN BEVER

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY THE
AUTHOR



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No. 1.

W. G. Jones, 3, 18.

To
Mary, Louis, Ren, and Pauline
For whom may joyous bells ever be ringing,
these pages are lovingly inscribed

FOREWORD



HE author of this little book is and has always been a very busy woman. How she has found time for this study is a puzzle to me.

For a long time I have seen in her home a cabinet filled with quaint and beautiful bells gathered from the four corners of the earth. I had sufficient interest to ask about them, but I confess my interest was but a passing one. To collect bells and study them seemed to me a trivial task at best.

But since reading this book in manuscript I have changed my mind. I now see how wide the study has been and how much there is to learn apart from the mere story of the bells.

It is not strange that almost every great poet has used this theme—Longfellow in his “Song of the Bell” writes:

*Say! how canst thou mourn?
How canst thou rejoice?
Thou art but metal dull:
And yet all our sorrowings,
And all our rejoicings,
Thou dost feel them all!*

Too few of us go beneath the surface of things.

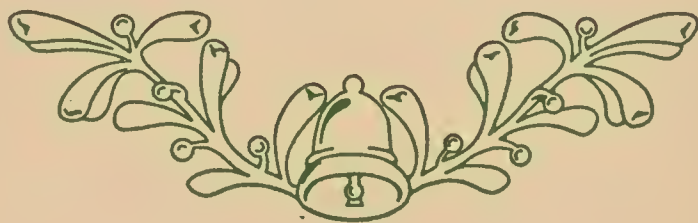
The bells are constantly ringing their various messages and we are too absorbed in the ordinary affairs of life to listen.

Life for most of us is hard, material, destitute of vision, lacking in lustre. There is no splendor on the hills, no glory in the sky, no burning bush on the Berkshires in October, no "mellow lin-lan-lone of evening bells."

It is my honor and privilege to commend this little book and I do so with the hope that its perusal may aid us in seeing the inner meaning of the bells and teach us that there is nothing inconsequent in life.

R. J. CAMPBELL

The Rectory
Cedar Rapids



The words of a great preacher in their melodious pathos are like the sound of country bells, provoking one knows not what vein of music and meditation and falling sweetly and sadly on the ear.

—JOSEPH FORT NEWTON

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*Flushed warmth within; without, white cold;
In library chamber vast and old,
I, basking in the fragrant red
By logs of birch and cedar fed —
So still the night — heard, toll on toll,
The distant belfry call to soul
Belated, or distraught with sin,
To pray the holy Christmas in.*

— MARION HARLAND

THE QUEST OF BELLS



HIS sketch on BELLS was originally written merely to be read before the Clio Club, which was the first literary club in Cedar Rapids, with no thought of publication, but many who heard it, both club members and other friends, urged me to let it be printed. As I kept adding to my collection of bells year after year, and it grew to be of so much interest I, at last, decided to publish it.

Were the possession of old or valuable specimens of bronze, brass, porcelain, pottery, furniture, etc., the only desirable thing which came from many hours spent in finding them, perhaps Philistines might indeed say, what a lot of time wasted; but we collectors find so much more than just these things of age and art—knowledge of many lands, the people, their habits, insight into human nature, and we do get a deeper insight into human nature, which is worth any amount of relic hunting. (The words of David Harum come to mind, and one must smile as one recalls them. “The’s as much human nature in some folks as th’ is in others—if not more.” We’ve often thought “some folks” have the more.) Also





many historical events, early traditions and legends. Many are the lessons we may learn if we keep our wits about us as we search and study as we go on—and we do go on, for this “fever” does not wax less as the days come and go. That very charming Lamb in his essay on old China says, “When I go to see any great house, I inquire first for the china-closet.” I have found it the same with my old furniture, china, and especially of the bells. As yet there is no marked scantiness of the delightful and desirable, old and unique (enough though to make the quest most alluring), but one must have enthusiasm. Around the world since the beginning of history the music of the bell has sounded—thin and faint at first, but gaining strength as the years rolled on, until today it stands for all that is holiest in every land. In China, four thousand years ago, the bell rang out beside some pagan shrine, while its contemporary called across Egypt’s sands and Nile-fed strip of green. It is not strange, surely, that the old Egyptians deified old Father Nile to whose flood they owed their daily bread—as well as the soil upon which they lived. There is something in the simplicity of the Egyptian faith which makes one ashamed of one’s own spiritual cowardice. On coming to the great temple Karnak the devout sailors celebrate the approach with song and beating of gongs and trumpets. The Nile boatmen have few songs, but all so true and simple in intention that one never tires of their monotony. One sees here and there some lonely

tower rising from the sea of sand. Old Karnak forms the largest, most imposing ruin in the world. The Egyptians built their temples not for centuries but for ages.

Today we hear the bell call above the altars of the world. In buried cities are being found little bronze resounding cones. Irreverent writers claim that even Noah used a bell to call together his party of "personally conducted" tourists, prior to that unprecedentedly damp spell wherein he, as Mark Twain declares, proved himself a poor navigator by running into the only bit of land in sight! The gorgeously dressed high priest, Aaron, wore a fringe of bells upon his robe of blue. Students of bell lore have pushed their quest into every land and we find there are many legendary stories, all so interesting.

There is a curious legend connected with the bells of Messingham Church. It is said that a long, long time ago a traveler was passing through Messingham when he noticed three men sitting on a stile in the churchyard and saying, "Come to church, Thompson: come to church, Brown," and so on. Being very much surprised, he asked what it meant and was told that, having no bells, they called folks to church in this way. The traveler remarked that it was a pity so fine a church should be without bells and at the same time asked the men if they could make three for the church, promising to pay for them himself. They undertook to do this. They were respectively a tinker, a carpenter, and a shoe-

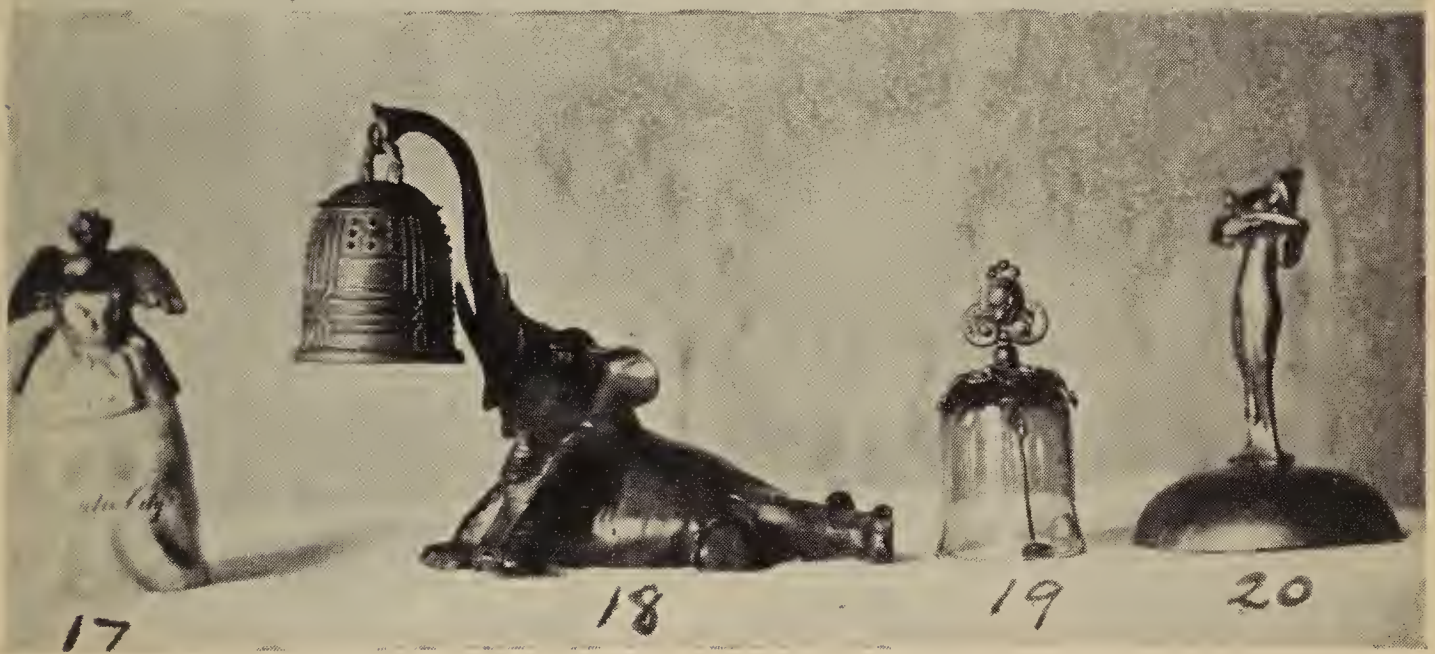


maker. When next the traveler passed that way, he found the three men ringing three bells which said, "Ting, tong, pluff," being made respectively of tin, wood, and leather!



We read of a custom that dates back to the reign of Charlemagne—the baptism of bells—a custom which is still extant in Roman churches. It is first mentioned in the time of Pope John XIII, when he gave his own name to the great bell of St. John's Lateran, Rome. The bells must be hung so that the Bishop may be able to walk around them. When he has chanted a few psalms in a low voice, he mingles water and salt and consecrates them, sprinkling the bell both inside and out. Then he wipes it clean and with holy oil describes on it the figure of the cross, praying the while that when the bell is swung up and sounded, faith and charity may abound among men and all snares of the devil, hail, lightning, winds, storms may be rendered vain, and all unseasonable weather be softened. After he has wiped off that cross of oil he forms seven other crosses on it—only one within. The bell is censed, more psalms sung, and prayers put up for its welfare. After this, feasts and banqueting are celebrated just as at a wedding.

The subject of BELLS has always been to me strangely attractive; the very word can be pronounced musically—BELLS. More intimately than any other instrument are bells associated with the



7. Beautiful Temple Bell from China. Bronze, very old, and sweet tone. Clapper a lotus bud (lotus stands for purity).

8. Brass Temple Bell from Benares, with Buddha handle and wings pointing upward.

9. Bronze Call Bell from Rome, with crouching Venus handle. Very fine.

10. Bell made from the brass on the U.S.S. Maine, sunk in Havana harbor. "Remember the Maine" on the handle, with dates, etc.

11. Ancient Gilded Brass Bell from Edinburgh (Mary Queen of Scots).

12. Lovely Bronze Dutch Peasant Woman Bell.

13. Ivory Porcelain Hand-bell from India. Decorated in green and gold with the God Brahma for handle. Elephant head each side.

14. Salon Bell in Florentian ware, richly decorated with human figures and coat of arms and inscriptions.

15. Roman Bell. Stork handle, very old.

16. Chinese Bronze Bell, with sacred owl for handle. Figures in deep relief.

17. Mephistopheles Bell with money bag, from Atlantic City.

18. Temple Bell from Japan. Did ever an elephant hold his trunk more gracefully than does this one supporting a bronze temple gong, which has panels in relief. In each of the four are nine "sacred snails."

19. Amethyst Glass Bell from Egypt. Handle an ibex head and horns. Very clear tone.

20. A charming girl with arms up-lifted, letting fly a dove of peace. Silver-brass.

religious and imaginative, the mournful, the meditative, with the most joyous and with the saddest feelings of mankind. A quaint old writer describes their three-fold duties:

*To call the folk to church in time,
We chime;
When joy and mirth are on the wing,
We ring;
When we lament a departed soul,
We toll.*

What is there so altogether fascinating about the bell whose "century-rusted tongue, burials tolled and bridals rung? Once we read the age of those who had passed on by the tolling of the bell whose sound stirred within us thoughts of our own mortality. Now we read the obituary in the newspaper without one fine emotion. The bell which has stirred nations and which for ages has told of the joys and sorrows of the world is no longer ours except in poem or in picture.

It is impossible to trace the origin of BELLS. They were known in earliest ages, and referred to by ancient writers. Doubtless BELLS, so-called, were at first little more than concave pieces of metal, four-sided in form, fastened with rivets, the natural sounds suggesting their use for certain purposes. Their origin may be said to date from the discovery of the sonorous qualities of metals. An old painting of King David represents him as playing with a ham-



mer upon bells hung before him. Noah employed a similar instrument to summon his ship carpenters to their work.



Bells seem to have been universally known in ancient times. Tribes inhabiting hitherto undiscovered islands have been found in possession of them. The Indians brought small bells to Columbus. Possibly some bronze bells found in the palace of Nimrod may be regarded as the oldest of which we have information. Bronze bells have been found in the ruins of Nineveh. The Greeks had bells in their markets and garrisons, and the Romans used them to note the hour of the day and to announce the time for baths. The origin of the name "Bell" is not definitely known; some suppose it to have been derived from the word "pelvis," a *basin*, designating shape. Others claim that it was derived from the Saxon word "bellan," to *bawl* or *peal*. An Eastern writer says bells derive their name from the sun, which was called "Baal" or "Beal" from his supposed dominion over everything. We read of a Roman custom of hanging a bell and a scourge to the Emperor's chariot signifying prosperity and admonishing against pride.

Æschylus tells us that Greek warriors concealed bells within the hollows of their shields, and when the captain came around, they rang them to show they were awake. Plutarch mentions that in a certain city nets with bells attached were placed underneath the water, to announce the capture of the flee-

ing inhabitants. The ancient shepherds hung bells on their flocks as we now do. "And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds." It is generally thought large bells were first used by the Christians, but they were undoubtedly used in China two thousand years before the Christian era. It is not fully known who first introduced bells into Christian churches. In the eleventh century they were not uncommon in Germany and Switzerland. From that time the bell has spoken for itself. From its eyrie in the belfry, it has become inspector and registrar-general of all the principal occurrences of human life – at feast and festival, at mourning and at meeting, its iron tongue has always something to say. Belfries or towers are scattered all over the world, but the one which stands apart from all others is Giotto's Tower in Florence, and it *is* Giotto's. It is square built – 276 feet high. It is coated from base to summit with different colored marbles and is divided into four stories. Crowded as it is with tablets, reliefs, and statues, there is a lightness about it which no word can describe. The statues are sculptured by famous artists – some of them are prophets, patriarchs, and sibyls. The building should be seen and studied under different effects of sunlight and moonlight. George Eliot says that in the thirteenth-fifteenth centuries the population was so large that Machiavelli says the bells of the campanile sounding the tocsin would in a few hours bring together 135,000 armed men, all from Florence and the adjoining valley. Art was



born in Florence and is still flourishing there. Statues and marble groups adorn the streets; the very stones have tongues—the holy fanes, the towers are eloquent. “O what a preacher is the time-worn tower, reading great sermons with its iron tongue.”



When we stop to think how much the bell has said to the world we are astonished. We read of bells being in use in churches by the Bishop of Llandaff in 550. Christian architecture and the introduction of church bells were nearly coeval events, and it was for the support of bells that church towers were made. A canon of the English Church especially directs that parishes must furnish bells and bellropes. Some of the bellropes or handles made for the grand homes of Europe are very artistic and beautiful. The one shown was designed by Robert Kretschmar, of Leipzig. The figures are intended to be made in bronze. The two small bells at top are arranged to



hide the crank to which the pull is fastened and are of the same metal. The cord is silk, thus making the useful ornamental as well. Bells seem to have acquired a kind of sacred character; foundries were set up in religious houses, attended with great ceremonies. Frequently the Bishops were the master-manufacturers. They were consecrated to the duty of calling worshipers together. They were also washed and named, and had sponsors, who were then as now persons who donated the bells in whole or part.

Before the use of church bells people were called together by various means. Egyptians used trumpets; Chinese, sounding stones, suspended by cords. Once, it was the custom to call worshipers by persons termed "God's Runners," going from house to house. Unlike other nations, the Turks do not use bells to call to prayer; their call is by the voice of the muezzin, from the summit of the minaret.

There is a pretty legend told of a bell which was hung in a church in Schenectady, New York. It was cast in Amsterdam in 1734, and when the molten metal was nearly ready to pour into the mold, many friends of those who had come to the new land brought spoons, coins, and trinkets and cast them into the crucible, with prayers for their folk across the sea. Those who heard the silvery notes as they rang out on the frosty air of the Mohawk Valley, a century ago, thought them especially sweet. This bell was melted in a fire in 1860.



The "Angelus" bell tolled three times a day when every one bowed himself in prayer. Angelus is a prayer to the Blessed Virgin, introduced by the Pope in 1095. It is so named from the first word of the prayer, Angelus Domini. An Angelus bell from Spain, dated 1317, has an inscription "Ave Maria Gratia Plena"—Hail Mary, full of grace.



*Ring soft across the dying day
Angelus!*

*Across the amber-tinted bay,
The meadow flushed with sunset ray,
Ring out, and float and melt away,
Angelus!*

*Oh has an angel touched the bell,
Angelus!*

*For now upon the parting swell
All sorrows seem to sing farewell,
There falls a peace no words can tell,
Angelus!*

Once when Millet's "L'Angelus" was on exhibition, two persons, unheeding the crowd, stood before it in admiration. "But what," asked one, "would that picture be, after all, without the Angelus? Just two peasants in a potato field." "What would the world be without the Angelus?" asked the other. "Just a spinning globe with hopeless toilers crawling upon it." Oh! yes, indeed, without the Angelus and what it typifies, life would be without love, without

hope, and a weary journey. Longfellow in *Evangeline* often speaks of the Angelus—"Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus sounded." After Longfellow's death, among his papers was found the manuscript of his latest written poem, "The Bells of San Blas."

The Passing Bell rings when one passes out of life, so that those who hear it may pray for the soul. From this custom is doubtless derived that of tolling church bells at funerals. "Prayers ascend to Heaven in troops, at the good man's passing bell." The Sanctus Bell, as now used in Catholic churches, is a small bell rung by an acolyte at the time of the consecration of the elements, to call the attention of the people. It was formerly a large bell, hung in a turret of the church and rung at the words, "Sancte, Sancte, Sancte, Deus Sabbaoth" when all who heard were enjoined to bow in adoration.

The tocsin, or alarm bell, was early suspended in castles and forts, to announce the approach of the enemy, as well as to warn of flood and fire. The wicked Macbeth calls out: "Ring the Alarum bell—Blow wind! come wrack! at least we die with harness on our back."

Who does not listen with hushed breath as the fire-alarm bell rings out so suddenly and we count the strokes. One of the ancient English customs is to ring a great bell on Shrove Tuesday to call the people together to confess their sins. For centuries it has been customary to eat pancakes on this day and this



summons came to be known as the "pancake bell," a name which it still bears in those places where the custom is now maintained.



*But hark, I hear the "Pancake Bell,"
And fritters make a gallant smell.*

What tender memories come crowding, when we hear sung the beautiful poem of Moore:

*Those evening bells, those evening bells,
How many a tale their music tells,
Of youth and home and that sweet time
When first I heard their soothing chime.*

Longfellow has been called the poet of bells. His beautiful tribute to Bayard Taylor comes to me: "Friend, but yesterday, the Bells rang for thee their loud farewells. And to-day they toll for thee, lying dead beyond the sea." Longfellow made many allusions to them in "Evangeline" and has written a dozen or more poems on them. Much that is best and interesting in literature has been suggested by them. Tennyson, Poe, Cowper, Coleridge, Schiller, Moore, Lamb, Herbert, Holmes, Whittier, and many others have written in their sweetest strains about them. The chimes of Bruges are the finest in the world and they inspired the poem, "The Belfry of Bruges."

*In the market place of Bruges
Stands the belfry, old and brown,*

*Thrice consumed and thrice rebuilt,
Still it watches o'er the town.*

*Not a sound rose from the city at that early morning
hour,*

*But I heard a heart of iron beating in the ancient
tower.*

*Then most musical and solemn, bringing back the
olden times,*

*With their strange unearthly changes, rang the mel-
ancholy chimes.*

*Like the psalms from some old cloister when the nuns
sing in the choir*

*And the great bell tolled among them, like the chant-
ing of a friar.*


Among the poets who have sung of the Sabbath Bell is George Bungay, who wrote "The Creed of the Bells."

*How sweet the chime of the Sabbath Bells;
Each one its creed in music tells,
In tones that float upon the air,
As soft as song, as sweet as prayer.*

From 1550 to 1750 was the golden age of church bells. The decorations most often used on them are the cross and fleur-de-lis, accompanied by a motto.

After careful tests of later years, it has been proven that copper and tin are the only metals capable of producing a proper ringing alloy; iron and steel,





and even silver and gold have entered into the composition of bell metal, but to the injury of the tone. An English writer says, "Persons speak of sweetening the tone of a bell by the introduction of a little silver, as they would of sweetening a cup of tea with a lump of sugar – this is a mistake." Bells have been made of every conceivable shape within certain limits. Long, narrow bells, quadrangular, and mitre shape in Europe indicate antiquity, and the graceful, curved inwardly, midway, and full trumpet mouthed bells indicate an age not earlier than the sixteenth century.

The quality of a bell depends, not only upon the nature of its composition, but its shape and proper proportions of height, width, and thickness; the tone of a bell is a result of vibrations; when struck it changes shape, and these changes constitute its vibration; one moment, it is oval, with longest diameter at right angles with that of the preceding. Like other sounds, bell tones are readily reflected; the Swiss muleteers are said to tie up their little bells at certain places lest their ringing shake the snow and bring an avalanche down.

Even the meek beast of burden knows his own bell – in countries where mules are employed to carry burdens the leader, called *madrino*, wears a little bell; the other mules follow with great docility. When troops of them all mingle in their stopping places, they are readily separated, each recognizing at once his own bell.

It is remarkable how far the sound of bells can be heard. This depends upon material, shape, climatic condition, manner of ringing. In Indiana, a bell weighing over 13,000 pounds has been heard sixteen miles, and in Japan on a clear day one can be heard twenty miles away. The sea is a marvelous conductor of sound, and has been turned to valuable account by an ingenious device known as the submarine bell. The bell is dropped deep into the sea from a light-ship and rung at intervals by a cable attachment. Other ships have a submarine telephone. In this way the deep tones of the bell may be heard for many miles.

“If a bell have any sides, the clapper will find them,” said Ben Jonson, and yet the proper ringing requires experience and skill. They pay much attention to this in England. There is a vast difference between the peal and play of the chimes of England and the liquid melody which floods the landscape of Chinese Asia. The one, music high in air, seems ever to tell of faith, triumph, and aspiration, the other, in minor notes from bells hung low on yokes, echo despair. There are a great number of large and important bells in England. Among the most noted and largest is the great bell in St. Paul’s. Sir John Stainer, of St. Paul’s Cathedral Choir, says, “Bells stand somewhat in an anomalous position; they are not musical instruments, from an artistic point of view, and yet no more beautiful music can be heard than the rising and falling of the Church peal,





winding along the sloping valley-side, or floating fitfully along the surface of the river—now swelling aloud on the evening breeze, now hushed almost to silence.” The Great Tom at Lincoln weighs five and one-half tons. And a bell in England, called “Black Tom of Scott Hill,” is said to have been an expiatory gift for a murder. It is tolled on Christmas Eve, and its ringing is called the devil’s knell, under the supposition that the devil died when Christ was born. If all the bells in England should be rung together at a certain hour, there would be no place but some bells might be heard, and so the demon would have no place in all England. England has been called “The Ringing Isle.” The same feeling pervades the literature of English bells. Southey says “Great are the mysteries of Bell ringing.” His tragic poem, “The Inchcape Rock,” is worth many readings.

*No stir in the air, no stir in the sea,
The ship was as still as she might be;*

.

*Without either sign or sound of their shock,
The waves flowed over the Inchcape Rock,
So little they rose, so little they fell
They did not move the Inchcape bell.*

This bell the holy Abbot of Aberbrothok had placed there as a warning in time of storm, but one day a wicked sea rover thought he would plague the



22. Brass "Apostles' Bell" from Brussels. A reproduction of the St. Salvator bell in the Cathedral tower of St. Michel and St. Gudule; names of the four evangelists in Latin with their respective attributes. A man, an ox, a lion, and an eagle are in relief.

23. Ancient Bell from dear Arezzo. Lace-like decoration, figures, and coat of arms.

24. Lama's Temple Bell from Thibet. Three sacred horns, leather strap handle.

25. Chinese Sacred Dragon, with gong.

26. A motherly old Barnstable fisherwoman, colored porcelain from England.

27. Napoleon Bell in brass from Paris.

28. A Brass English Bedside Candle Bell.

29. Mission Bell from California, El Camino Real, King's Highway.

30. Porcelain Bell from Quebec. Opposite side shows the dog who bided his time and gnawed his bone.

31. Dark colored Porcelain Bell from Holland. Decoration by hand in Damascus design, which is 2,000 years old.

32. Bronze Bell from Switzerland with figures in relief and lion handle supporting coat of arms.

33. Ancient iron Florentine Table Bell.

34. Bell from Lucerne. William Tell and his son, in carved horn, brown and white, form the handle.

35. Brass Camel Bell from Egypt, with decoration in relief and small bell for clapper.

priest, so he cut the warning bell, and it sank. "So," said he,

*The next who comes to the rock,
Won't bless the Priest of Aberbrothok.*

It happened that he was the one to lose his life. Coming back years later to Scotland, he lost his way in a tempest and his boat struck the Inchcape Rock—as there was no warning bell!

*And ever in his dying fear
One dreadful sound he seemed to hear;
A sound as if with the Inchcape bell,
The evil spirit was ringing his knell.*

A fine lighthouse with a revolving light, was completed in 1811 on this Bell Rock, the cost of which was about sixty thousand pounds.

In some parts of England small bells are arranged on a stand and struck by small instruments held in each hand of the performer, producing a sweet tinkling kind of music.

Throughout England and Scotland comparatively few dissenting places of worship possess bells—still fewer have towers or steeples. Thinking of the soft music of those village bells the lines of Cowper come to mind:

*In cadence sweet! now dying all away;
Now pealing loud again, and louder still,
Clear and sonorous as the gale comes on.*





Many of the church towers in London have peals of bells. Eight bells make the most perfect peal. The merry peal is almost a national institution. One of the most celebrated peals of bells is that of St. Mary-Le-Bow, Cheapside, which forms the basis of an expression meant to mark a London nativity, "Born within the sound of Bow-bells." Long ago they rang bells as a token of merriment, and Shakespeare has said:

*Get thee gone, and dig thy grave thyself,
And bid the merry bells ring to thy ear,
That thou art crowned, not that I am death.*

There are many famous bell-ringers, but few persons have any proper conception of the marvelous power of expression that bells possess in the hands of such skilled musical players. All feelings and passions of the human heart can each be represented in a most impressive way by the varied tones of bells. Of all devices which men have sought for obtaining a distinction for making a noise in the world, bell ringing is the most harmless. The number of changes which can be played upon a chime of bells is marvelous. Twelve bells can produce 479,091,600 changes.

Bells have been regarded with sincere affection. The mighty conqueror of Europe was deeply stirred by the sound of them. Bourrienne says of Napoleon, "How often has the booming of the village bell broken off an interesting conversation—he stopped, lest the moving of our feet might cause the loss of a

single beat of the tones. His voice trembled with emotion, while he said—‘that recalls to me the first years I passed in Brienne.’” One of Napoleon’s companions said of him, “I’ve often been a witness to the singular effect of the sound of a bell on him.” Once, dismounting from his horse, the great conqueror sank upon an old tree stump and burst into tears. The sound of the evening bells found its way into his heart. They lifted him above sordid ambitions. A man who cries is thinking about Almighty God; he may not know it, but a tear has in it somewhat the thought of God. On a small brass table bell, the figure of Napoleon forms the handle (p. 37).

There have been many superstitions about bells. It was long imagined that the ringing of them had power to avert destruction by storm and pestilence, in the belief that their sound purified the air, though in later days this influence is ascribed to natural causes, and now, in France, they ring bells at the approach of a storm. Certainly there is nothing of simple human contrivance for which a community has stronger regard or with which associations are more deeply mingled. Especially are they appropriate at weddings.

The mellow wedding bells!

Golden bells!

What a world of happiness their melody foretells.

Upon the balmy air of night

How they ring out their delight!

And from the molten golden notes

And all in tune





THE GREAT BELL OF MOSCOW

*What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens
While she gloats
On the moon!*

Then there are the great bells of the world; in Moscow alone are more than a thousand large bells. The Russians regard the sound of bells as a part of worship; waves of melody, oceans of music, rung out in praise, they are the voice of millions of people all crying out to the Great Father. They are not always rung with regard to harmony, and it is sometimes almost painful to hear them. The great bell of Moscow is the largest bell in the world. It is called the King of Bells and weighs 440,000 pounds; it cost in simple bell material \$300,000, and there were nearly \$1,000 worth added in jewels, plate, etc., when it was cast. This bell is placed upon a circular ball or base of granite about five feet high. On it is a marble slab bearing the following inscription:

THIS BELL
WAS CAST IN 1733 BY ORDER OF THE
IMPERIAL EMPRESS
ANNE, DAUGHTER OF JOHN.
IT WAS IN THE EARTH 103 YEARS
AND
BY THE WILL OF THE
IMPERIAL EMPEROR
NICHOLAS
WAS RAISED UPON THIS PEDESTAL AUG. 4TH, 1836

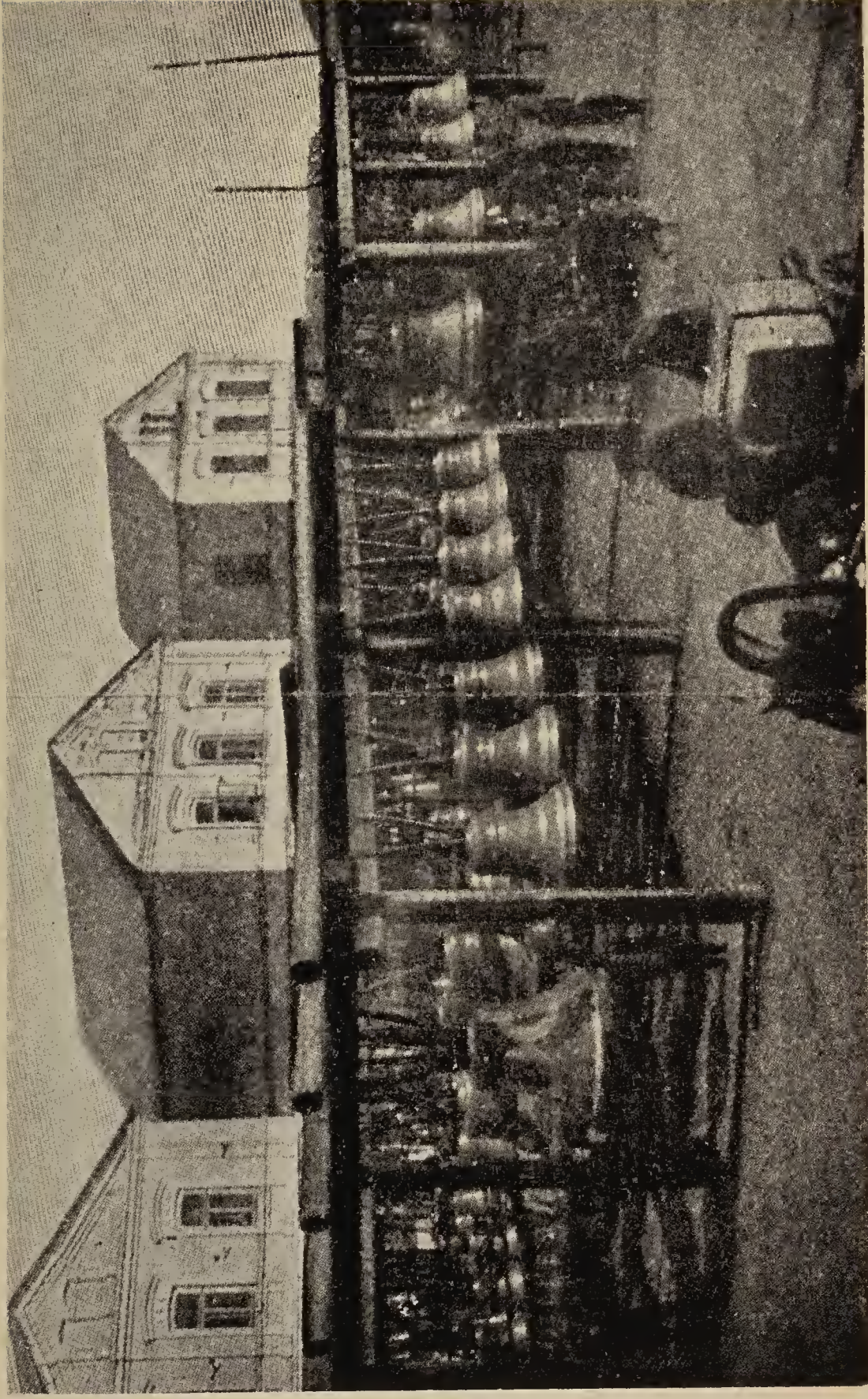




There are several figures cast on its surface, among which is that of the Savior, the Blessed Virgin, and the Evangelists surrounded by Cherubim. This bell was cracked in the making and never rung—is used as a chapel within the Kremlin gate.

The wonderful annual market in Russia is the greatest in existence. It lasts from July till September and is the chief channel for the interchange of the products of the East and West. Buyers from all parts of Asia and Europe visit the market, and goods to the value of twenty millions sterling are sold annually. Among the numerous attractions of this vast fair is the great bellmarket, where all sorts, sizes, and shapes of bells may be bought, from specimens weighing but a few pounds to monsters of many tons.

There is another monstrous bell in Russia, which is rung only three times a year. There is also the Assumption Bell, in Moscow, the diameter of which is eighteen feet. It weighs about 220,000 pounds. It is suspended above the Chapel of St. Nicholas, in the Kremlin. As it is reached by a passage leading from the tower of Ivan (at the foot of which is the “Great Bell”), it is usually spoken of by travelers as being one of the forty bells suspended in the tower. It was cast in 1817 from metal of a bell destroyed by fire in 1812. It is said, when it sounds, which is but once a year, a deep hollow murmur vibrates all over Moscow, like the fullest tones of a vast organ, or the rolling of distant thunder. Russian bells are fixed



GREAT BELL MARKET OF RUSSIA

immovably to their beams; tongues are slung by leather bands.

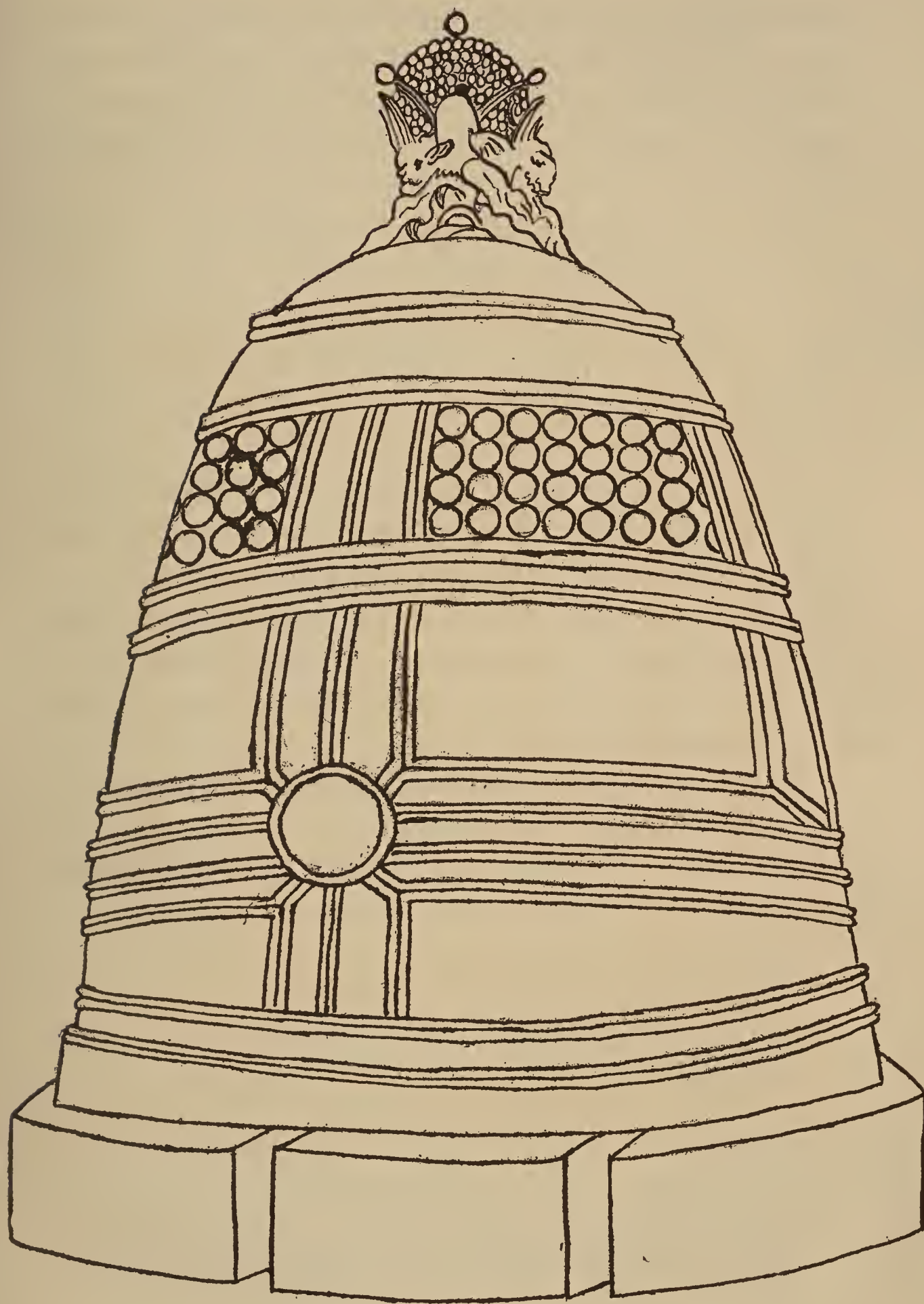
China has a great fondness for bells; large bells have their origin here. It is not uncommon to see enormous bells lying on the ground, having broken down the towers. Each bell seems to be of excellent workmanship, and richly ornamented with inscriptions inside and out. They are struck with wooden mallets instead of iron clappers. "The Great Bell of China," in Peking, weighs 120,000 pounds, is fourteen feet high, and twelve feet in diameter. The Chinese often make their bells in the form of a Dragon, symbol of power. It is the largest of reptiles with feet and scales; it can make itself dark or luminous, heavy or thick; can shorten or lengthen itself. A dragon has four claws for a lower rank in China—the one shown has four (p. 37).

In Japan bells are very common, found in every size and number. When entering a temple in Japan, the custom is, to sound the bells to arouse the deity and have him wide awake to the devout. Japan has many colossal temples with large belfries or towers built separately; many of them have immense bells, whose notes "quiver the air into leagues of liquid melody." The mellow music of a Japan temple bell is very sweet. The people love their temple bell as a dear friend. The bell in the temple of Daibutsu, Kyoto, was cast in 1614. A friend writing from Kyoto says: "Often while on the hotel balcony, we heard a strangely fascinating sound rolling towards





THE GREAT BELL OF CHINA



BELL AT TEMPLE OF DAIBUTSU, JAPAN

us through the sacred groves in solemn silvery vibrations. We discovered after a short walk the cause. It was a huge bronze bell—about seventy-four tons in weight—whose sweet-voiced call to prayer has echoed over this hill for nearly three hundred years.”

There are few sounds more pleasing than the vibrations of a distant, deep-toned bell. The Japanese treat their bells cleverly. Suspended from the belfry roof is a large rounded shaft of wood; the attendant swings this from side to side and strikes one mighty blow. The difference in sound produced by using wood instead of metal is, even on small bells, astonishing. There is no grating jar, no sharpness in the tone, but one stupendous boom of sound, as though a musical cannon were discharged. The ever widening reverberations fall upon the ear more and more faintly till they die away like the murmur of surf upon the sea shore.



There is a long inscription on the Japanese bell in Wellesley College which summons the students to their studies. At least it did before the recent big fire there. One inscription reads,

*Buddha in compassion tender,
With this bell instead of words,
Wakens souls from life's illusions,
Lightens this world's darkness drear.
Many souls its sweet tones heeding,
From their chains of sin are freed,
Oh how potent is his merit,
Without bounds in all the worlds!*


The Japanese newsboys wear jingle bells at the hip, attached to the sash, and as they run about they announce their "Extrys." I have many Japanese bells in my collection, more than from any other country.

There is a cult in Japan founded on the four cardinal virtues—urbanity, courtesy, purity, and imperturbability—and it has become a mighty force in holding the Japanese true to a high standard in matters of taste. This cult developed from a tea ceremony, which was really a gathering of connoisseurs to look at works of art, etc. The tea is drunk in a very slow, solemn manner, each gesture being fixed by rule, hands are washed, a bell is rung, and the guests walk to and from house to garden in a stated manner, which never varies—very interesting to see—once.

In the Sintu temples in Japan, one finds a mirror as an emblem of purity, placed on the altar. Their form of worship is simple, they first wash themselves in the fount, pray opposite the mirror, throw a little money into the box, and finish by striking a bell, to show that their religious duties are over.

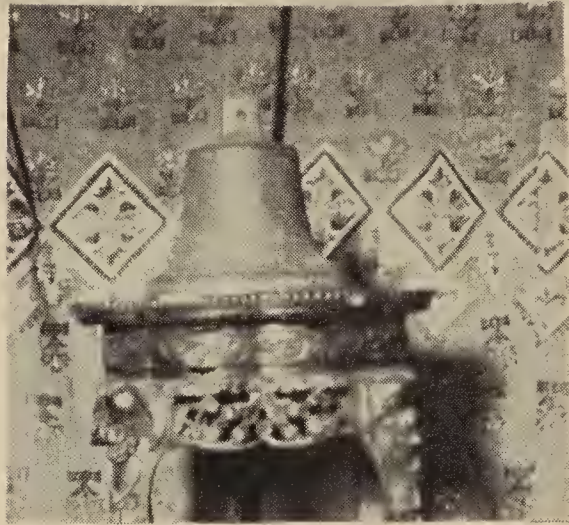
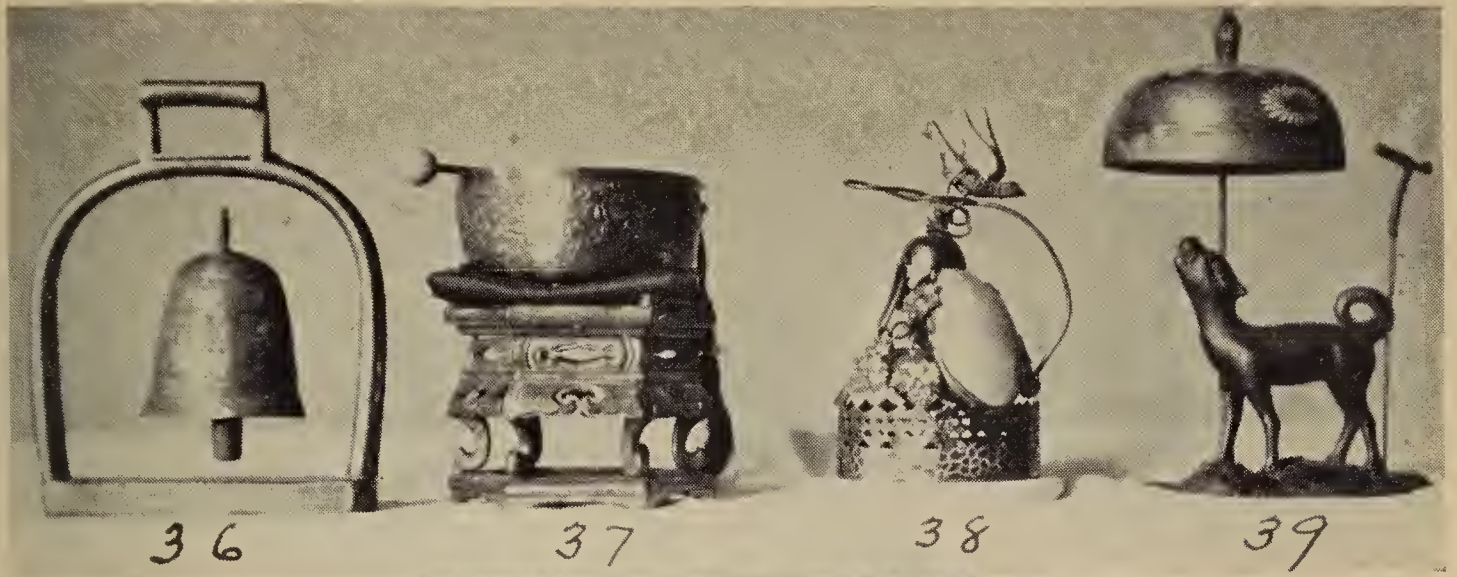
India is quite unique, differing from all other lands in her history and religion. At Kandy is the old Buddhist Temple of the Sacred Tooth. The people speak of this little old building with great reverence; it contains a relic, said to be the left eye-tooth of Buddha taken from his ashes over three thousand years ago. A celebrated traveler says that



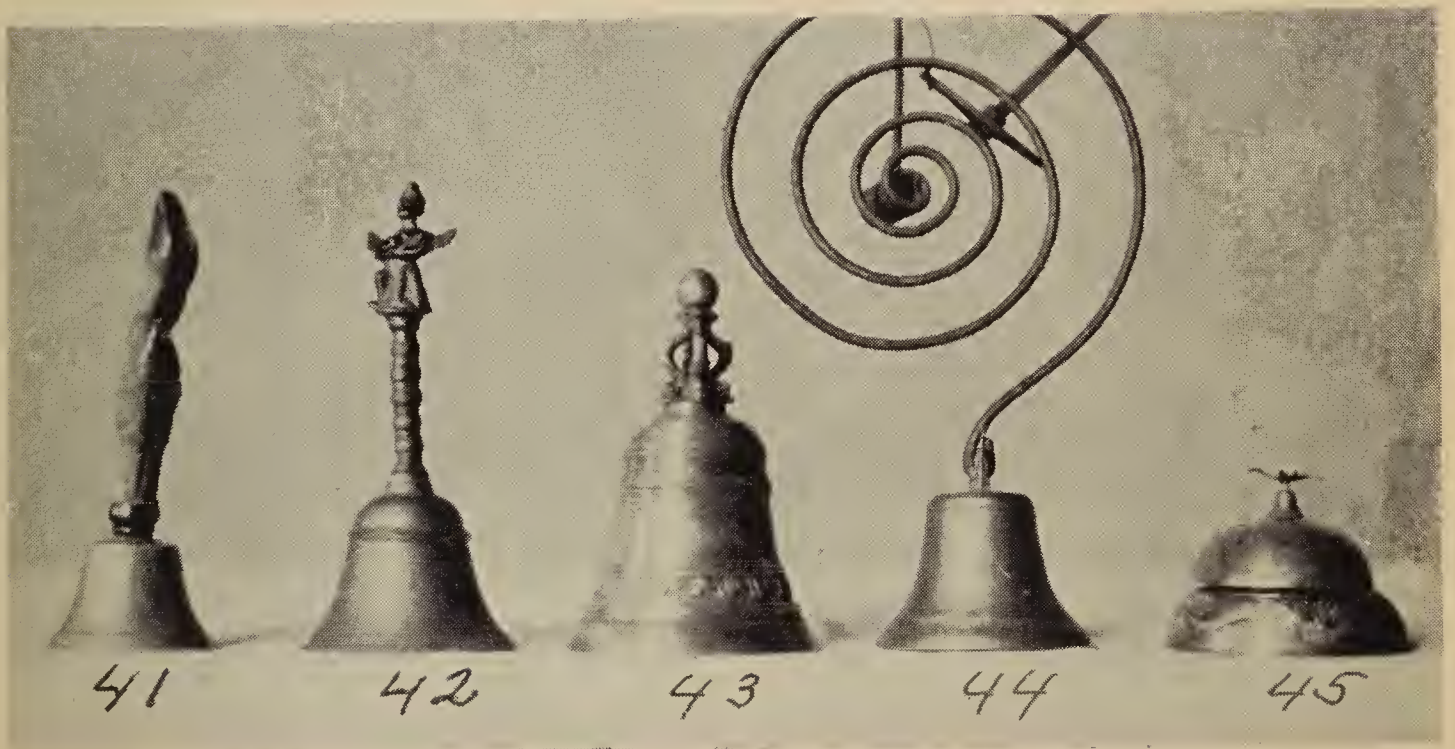


only a few distinguished foreigners are allowed to see it—probably it never was a man's tooth, being so large—more likely a piece of elephant's tusk. You enter a small building and see behind a grating, on a richly decorated altar, a golden bell three feet high, adorned with rubies and other precious stones. Beneath this outer bell are several smaller ones, and last of all, resting upon a golden lotus, is the tooth itself. Sir Edwin Arnold visited this temple, when they made a flowery speech to him, beginning "O Poet." Sir Edwin gave a present to the temple, whether a bell or not, I do not know, but hope it was. India has given the world some unique bells. The Himalayas are said to be the loftiest range of mountains on earth, their name being derived from two Sanscrit words, *hima*, snow, and *alaya*, a house; hence the appropriate translation of their title is "The Halls of Snow."

It was from the little town of Darjeeling which means "up in the clouds," that a former Rector, Dr. Thomas E. Green, sent me a very old temple bell—from Thibet—used by Buddhist Lamas. He said he was very fortunate in getting it from a persecuted peasant, who was driven out of Thibet and who brought this bell to sell. I am more than fortunate that Dr. Green gave me the chief treasure of his trip. The top is ornamented with lotus leaves, at the bottom are three sharp points—perhaps, three "sacred snails." Those heathen people look upon so many things as sacred to which we give hardly a passing



40



36. Ancient Temple Gong from Japan, richly chased.

37. Beautiful Pagoda Bell from Japan, on gilt wood standard.

38. Bell from Italy in gilt and mother of pearl case. Bird rings handle.

39. Barking Dog from Japan, with gong decorated.

40. Iron Bell of historic interest, from the first train engine heard in Panama, when Paul De Lesseps came in 1880. He

gave it to a workman from whom a friend purchased it for my collection.

41. Swiss Bell, fawn-hoof handle.

42. Temple Bell from India, brass, kneeling buddha.

43. Buddhist Bell from India. Four sacred dolphins supporting bell handle. Very fine and very old.

44. Original Door Bell from Bever home, with bell pull.

45. Modern Japanese Push Bell. Stork on push, fine bronze.

thought. Also, the Lamas or Buddhist priests from Thibet are seen turning a kind of handbell, within which is a roll of printed prayers. The revolution of the machine reels off the prayers without interfering in the least with the holder's thoughts. Even this is considered too much work by some Buddhists, and great cylinders, containing prayers enough for a whole community, have been made so as to revolve by means of water-wheels or wind-mills! One of these prayer barrels may be seen at Darjeeling and a bell marks each revolution as it turns on its axis; a famous ancient prayer-wheel has a poem written by hand. Charms of jade, bone, etc., are often attached to the weight and chain by which the rotary movement is given to the wheel. These prayer machines are in every Thibetan family. They keep them jealously guarded and it is very difficult to get one. They are made of copper, brass, and silver. The lower class of Thibetans have strange and mystic religious ceremonies in which, disguised in skins and ghastly masks, they sing and dance with extraordinary contortions, to the accompaniment of weird music, made by bells, horns, flutes, and drums. They make such a noise with all these instruments that sometimes the prayers are quite inaudible. And, Oh Merciful God! these poor benighted people have only to look up to see what might be the gates of pearl in heaven! where the mighty form of Kinchin Jinga, twenty-nine thousand feet high, stands glorious and rosy in the morning glow, and peak after



peak gives a magnificent greeting to the god of day. Kinchin Jinga is the glory of Darjeeling, the representative of the Himalayas. I have often thought Mt. Ranier must look at sunset like this Himalaya mountain, all glowing and glistening in icy pink and deep rose. These mountains say great things to us if we listen. Sometimes they seem to say in tones that leap from peak to peak—I Am.



It is a far call from India back to Holland and though she is a small country, her bells are remarkable for their size and number; they are hung about every church and public building in endless variety; and they are never left at rest.

*And roof of tile beneath whose eaves
Hang porcelain bells that all the time
Ring with a soft melodious chime.*

Some of these Dutch bells are very attractive in blue and white porcelain.


In Italy and Switzerland there are bells made of baked earth, which have a sweet sound. Some of the Italian bells are very artistic. While climbing the steep ascent of that ancient street which leads past the old Palazzo Pubblico at Arezzo, thickly hung with old armorial bearings of many bygone soldiers and other great men, long since crumbling into unremembered dust, if the time should be one of the early summer days, when the bright flowers are springing up from the dreaming earth, as we turn the corner towards the duomo, we feel the keen air

that sweeps the cathedral close, and remember that the long list of eminent names claimed by Arezzo are due to the influence of its bracing power. As we walk up this narrow time-worn street, we meet, with little effort of imagination, poets, painters, sculptors, away down the ages, whose names are not "writ in water."

As we walk we hear the solemn tones the bells are pealing, while anthems and burst of choral song mingle and ascend even more continuously from here than elsewhere, it seems to us. Is it from its quiet isolation, on the hill above the city, that the pealing seems so heavenly? One cannot come away without offering a prayer for beautiful Italy. We sit alone and listen to the voices and the far away sound of bells, until the service is over; the last note dies away, books and doors are closed, and all are gone! truly a blessing has come to us! We return down the same street—only a span in breadth, glad, happy, and so pleased that we have an ancient bell of bronze from an old palace in "Dear Arezzo." The bell is decorated with human figures, cupids, arabesques, and a coat of arms. The clapper is an oblong smooth bulb shape. The handle and bowl are cast in one piece—it is very graceful (p. 37).

The Swiss truly are a commercial people. You find something to buy at every turn. The shops are full of ivory carvings, wood carvings, and many things useful and ornamental. I found numbers of bells. I have William Tell and his son in ivory carving (p. 37), but the bell I prize most from Switzer-





land is a silver table bell with the celebrated Lion of Lucerne in relief on one side (p. 39). Thorwaldsen did a wonderful thing when he modelled in clay this masterpiece, which Lucas Athorn sculptured in the living rock of dark gray sandstone. Carlyle has written some glowing words about this Lion of Thorwaldsen's. It has been called the most moving piece of sculpture in the world. The inscription carved in Latin in the rock above the lion reads: "To the faith and valor of Switzerland."

At the Centennial Exhibition were shown most artistic and beautiful bronzes. The gem of one collection, from its rarity, was a large silver-bronze bell, about three feet high, which was made in Venice. The impression of many, if not most, people is that bells are usually formed of smooth surfaces of bell metal, unrelieved by any figures, or chasing, unless it might be the date of their manufacture or names of donors. This beautiful Venetian church bell, against which hangs a small hammer with which to test its tone, is most delicately chased with many figures of saints and with scripture scenes as fine as lace work. This ornamentation covers the upper half of the bell.

Spain has some famous bells. The bell-master in the Giraldo at Seville is blind, as are other bell ringers of Seville. The most celebrated bell is that belonging to the cathedral of Toledo. It is said that fifteen shoemakers could sit under it and draw out their cobblers' thread without touching. Another story of this bell we read in Washington Irving's "Moor-



46. Black Forest Bell, with portraits and decoration in relief.

47. Dutch Tea Bell, with blue wind mill.

48. Quebec Souvenir Bell. White china, picture of calache and horse.

49. Charming French Girl from Paris. Blue and white china.

50. Chinese, with gay mandarin.

51. Graceful Silver Japanese Bell, snake handle.

52. Silver Table Bell from Switzerland, with Lion of Lucerne in relief.

53. Souvenir Bell from Avon, with Shakespeare Coat of Arms.

54. Old Mission Bell from Swiss Alps.

55. Nuremberg Bridal Bell, silver, holding drinking cup for groom.

56. Grotesque Porcelain Bell, made in Europe.

57. One of the first Cow Bells in Iowa, from the old Bever farm. "Oh, Mary go and call the cattle home."

58. Delightful little Holland Girl, blue and white china.

59. A real Bell[e] from the South, porcelain.

ish Chronicles." King Ferdinand having gained possession of the city of Cordova, so long the seat of power of the Moors, began to repair and improve the grand mosque. The greatest and most magnificent in Spain, it was now converted into a holy Catholic church. In this mosque were found the bells of the church of San Iago in Galicia, which a Mohammedan ruler of unpronounceable name, mostly a's, l's, and g's, in 975 had brought in triumph and placed there. They were turned with their mouths upward to serve as lamps and remained a shining memento of his victory. King Ferdinand ordered that these bells should be restored to the church of San Iago; and as Christians had been obliged to bring them on their shoulders, so infidels were compelled in like manner to carry them back. Great was the popular triumph when these bells had their tongues restored to them and were once more enabled to fill the air with their holy clangor. The king having restored the bells to San Iago, had others suspended in the tower of the mosque. When the pilgrims who came to Cordova heard these bells chiming from the tower of the cathedral, their hearts leaped for joy and they prayed for blessings on the pious King Ferdinand. In Mrs. Browning's "Casa Guidi Windows," she says,

*Spain may well
Be minded how from Italy she caught,
To mingle with her tinkling Moorish bell,
A fuller cadence and a subtler thought.*





There are many old bells in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales; the oldest are often quadrangular, made of thin iron plates, riveted together. The bell of St. Patrick's Will is six inches high, five inches broad, four inches deep, and is kept in a case or shine at Belfast. It is inscribed in 1091.

Early in the sixteenth century, we reach the threshold of the golden age of bells. As the Stradivarius violin is the result of centuries of experimenting, so the bells of Van Dengheyn and Hemony, 1650, are the true models for all succeeding bell-makers. To any one fond of the dear bells, it is exceedingly entertaining to study the construction of them, how they are cast, inscribed, molded, tested, tuned, etc. A tuner must be a musician—he tunes by taking small chips out of the bell. There is a great deal of skilled mechanical labor connected with bell casting and the work requires the closest attention from start to finish. The bell founder should be an artist as well as artisan. It takes several weeks to cool a large one. A good bell yields one note; any person with an ear for music, can tell what the tone is. This note is called the consonant. The note of the bell in Grace Church, Cedar Rapids, is E. It was this bell which inspired James Duncan's poem, "Song of the Bells."

*In your tower, alone,
By the power of tone,
Ham'ring the hours into rhymes,
Brazen hearts into chimes,
And—the Bells,—*

*Rolling out o'er the hill,
Like a voice that is lingering still,
Be ye strong,
It is long—
But, in time, time, time.*

We do not like to think of the many horrible massacres and battles that have been rung in with bells; we love to connect them with the religious and joyous feelings, and the hopes and pleasures of life.

Octaves of little bells have been used with church organs and orchestras. We have spoken of those used on horses and sheep, and must not omit to mention the tinkling cow-bell. The pleasure of a drive in the country is enhanced as we hear the soft ringing of a bell attached to a cow's neck. "The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea." House bells worked with wire and spring coils are scarcely one hundred years old. The old bell pulls, which we still sometimes see in old houses, have nearly disappeared, though lately we have noticed decorators are using them with beautiful tassels in handsome rooms. Electric bells mostly fill their places. Electric bells are used to protect orchards. So familiar have electric bells become to most of us that even their sound at unexpected times, or in unusual places, rarely startles us. Not so with birds, to which the sudden ringing of a bell on a tree or a post means something far more uncanny than any scarecrow flapping in the wind. Knowing this, the head master of an Austrian school has patented an electric scarecrow system



in which a clock marks the connection at regular intervals to electric bells scattered over the orchard.

An electric bell tinkled sharply beside the florist's desk. "Frost bells are now pretty generally used by florists and fruit growers," he said. "An electrical contrivance is connected with a thermometer and when the mercury falls to a certain point—you regulate this danger point to suit yourself—a bell rings a warning in your house or office. Many a crop of winter fruit and flowers has been saved in the past year or two by the clever little frost bell."



A bell which brings precious memories to me and may to some of you who read this sketch, is the first bell rung in my home to which I came as a bride. How often it has welcomed dear friends, some of whom have gone to their long sleep. For the good it has done, and for tender memories, it may some day be hung where it can again peal forth in some service (p. 53).

Who has not heard a country school bell? Can you not see the young girl teacher standing in the doorway, ringing her bell vigorously?

*Ring! bells of September, your merriest peal,
Though deep in the midst of our pleasures you steal;
Farewell to the woodland, the mountains, the shore,
To the frolicking waves with their tumult and roar;
One last lingering glance at their gem-bedecked
foam,
For the bells of September are ringing, "Come
home."*

And oh! the welcome sound of the dinner bell!

*That all-softening overpowering knell,
The tocsin of the soul—the dinner bell.*

It seems as if the whole civilized life is set to bell music in one way or another and runs the gamut from monster bells down to the jingling baby's rattle. Occasionally they can be found as souvenirs of noted places and events, though they are not common. I have asked in many places for them without success, and have discovered strange bells in some little old shops that even the owners did not know they had. Once in a while we come across a quaint one. Strange answers are sometimes made to our inquiries and requests. Walking along the Boardwalk at Atlantic City one day, we stopped in front of a small shop; the keeper was an Egyptian, at least he looked like one. "Have you any bells?" asked we of the eager eye. "Au, no, no," said he. Still, we looked over his well-filled shelves, thinking there must be one. At last, on a top shelf, we saw a rather devilish looking red object with wings, grabbing a large white bag. "Surely that's a bell," said we. His black beady eyes smiled, astonished at our penetration, and reaching for it he said, "Oh yes, Madame, that is Atlantic City bell (p. 23); the bag is full of money. You may have it for what you like."

The bell of special interest in this country is the famous Liberty Bell, which on the 4th of July, 1776, announced the signing of the Declaration of Inde-



pendence. It is now in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, with other relics of Revolutionary times. It was cast in 1751, and upon it in relief are placed the words from the Bible, "Proclaim Liberty throughout all the land to all the inhabitants thereof."



*Did ye think I was cracked
 With my tongue ever stilled;
 That the soul of me lacked
 God's own spirit that filled
 The souls of my sires when they heard me and
 thrilled
 To the notes of my music—to His purpose willed
 By patriot martyrs in blood that was spilled
 That we all might be free?
 Know ye these things of me;
 That my spirit is deathless and ever shall be,
 That my strength grows yet greater in souls of the
 free,
 To slay every tyrant and free every slave;
 To brand every bigot and scourge every knave.*

This bell probably never will leave Philadelphia again. There is a great crack in the metal which is said to be increasing in size as the years pass. The bell was sent to the Columbian Exposition at Chicago twenty-two years ago and it also was sent to the exposition at Seattle. The officials of the San Francisco exposition brought so much pressure to bear that the consent of the Philadelphia officials was obtained, and as a result it was sent to San Francisco

where it was guarded with as much care as if it were a human being.

*Let me swing!
Let me ring!
Hear me sing!
Hear me bring
My message of Freedom – God's voice set a-wing,
Proclaiming and naming each man to be king.
Aye, cherish thou must
Me, ye souls of the just,
Nor dishonor taint me
Nor foul purpose rust,
For do ye not cherish
Me then shall ye perish
With all of thy temples laid crumbling in dust,
With all of thy glories grown foul with the lust
Of honor's betrayal and unhallowed trust.*

In the Centennial year a bell weighing 13,000 pounds, to represent the thirteen original states, was set in the tower of the old State House, in Philadelphia. It is in constant use and tells the hours of the day in deep tones.

We have great interest in the Columbian Liberty Bell, cast in 1893. Its purpose is to help perpetuate peace the world over. It has been photographed more than a thousand times. It is estimated that more than 200,000 men, women, and children were interested in its casting by gifts or personal donations of gold, silver, copper, tin, and bronze. Historic



articles, formerly owned by many patriots, Revolutionary and Civil War relics, family heirlooms, coins of all nations, including copper pennies which were current when Christ was on earth, Indian copper relics, gold and silver spoons by the hundred, gold and silver thimbles by the quart, and jewelry by the peck; these were all represented in the casting. No other bell in the world approaches this in variety and peculiar value of its composition, or in the elegance of its finish. The inscriptions on the bell are "Glory to God" and "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another."



A distinguished English writer has said, "The sound of the bell has traveled, with the light that has lighted the Gentiles, and now that the gospel has penetrated the most distant parts of the globe, there is not perhaps a minute in which the melody of bells is not somewhere rising towards Heaven." Charles Lamb said, "Of all sounds of the bell, the most solemn and touching is the peal which rings out the old year." Tennyson's poem, "The Death of the Old Year," beautifully expresses this feeling:

*Toll ye church bells, sad and slow,
And tread softly and speak low,
For the old year lies a dying.*

.

*Old year you must not die,
You came to us so readily
You lived with us so steadily
Old year you shall not die.*



60. Carved Brass Call Bell, with maiden who courtesys and rings a bell.
61. Pagoda from Japan, hanging gong.
62. Baby Bell from London, ivory ring. Sheep Bell from Spain, with coat of arms. Wind Bell.

Those who visit Schaffhausen are supposed to do so only for the sake of the Rhine-fall; but to me the fall was not so interesting as the carved and painted house-fronts, encrusted with ornamentation, the old fortress commanding the city, the eleventh-century minster where, though all else has been laid waste, the ancient bell is reverently preserved, with its inscription that inspired Schiller's "Song of the Bell":

*Now then with the rope so strong
From the vault the Bell upweigh,
That it gains the realms of song
And the heavenly light of day!
All hands nimbly ply!
Now it mounts on high!
To this City, Joy reveals!—
Peace be the first strain it peals!*

In the old royal exchange of London, there hangs a chime and while the building was being destroyed by fire, the bells were playing, "There's nae gude luck about the house."

The Curfew Bell was rung about 8 o'clock in the evening. The custom was introduced into England by William the Conqueror, from France, where it was rung as a signal to put out the fires and lights. Hence, *couvre feu*, cover fire. In many places even now the "Curfew tolls the knell of parting day." Rose Thorpe has written a beautiful poem, "Curfew shall not ring tonight."



*She has reached the topmost ladder,
O'er her hangs the great dark bell
And the awful gloom beneath her,
Like the pathway down to hell!*

*Shall she let it ring? No, never!
Her eyes flash with sudden light,
As she springs to grasp it firmly,
Curfew shall not ring tonight!*



The glorious chimes or carrilons are scattered all over the world. The largest chime in America is in the magnificent court house and city hall in Minneapolis. The chime is heard for many miles.

In Sarah Grand's book, *Heavenly Twins*, she speaks of the chimes which "come mellowed but clear and resonant, causing a continuous murmurous sea of sound."

The old, quaint, and historic bell used on Robert Fulton's first steamboat, *Clermont*, 1807, was lately installed in a place of honor on the fine new steamer, *Robert Fulton*, on the Hudson.

The largest bell in Canada is that of Notre Dame Cathedral in Montreal. It weighs 24,780 pounds. It was cast in London in the tenth year of the reign of Queen Victoria. The largest bell in the United States is the alarm bell on City Hall, New York; it weighs 26,000 pounds. The largest revolving, swinging bell in the world is in Cincinnati. In

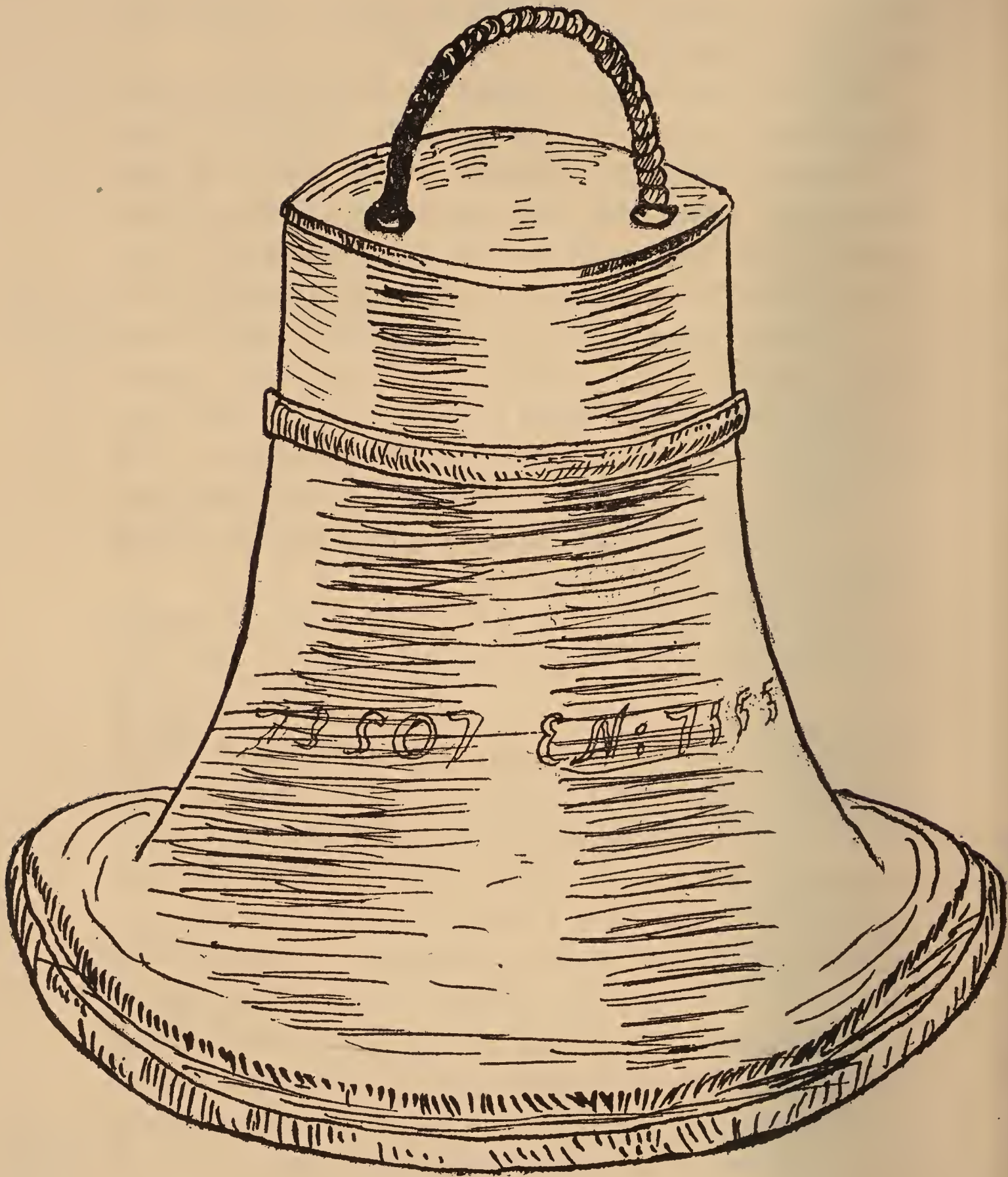
Iowa, St. Ambrose, Des Moines, has one of the oldest bells in America.

The first bell rung in America was erected on the first church built in this country, early in 1494. Columbus landed at Isabella, on the island of San Domingo, 1492, and there built a church. This church was destroyed by an earthquake in 1542. About twenty-five years ago, in the branches of a fig tree which had grown up among the ruins of the belfry tower of the church, a bell was seen, which proved to be the original bell in question, and this historic bell is now in the city of Washington. It is of bronze, eight inches by six and a half, bears the letter F in old gothic characters, and has the image of San Miguel on its surface.

The 1st of March is a day of joyful festivity among the school children in some parts of Switzerland. At 4 o'clock in the morning a party of school-boys marches through the village clanging cowbells, big and little, with all their might to proclaim the dawn of a boisterous day to their slumbering school-mates still abed. As the day grows bright the boys gather, each one with a huge bell hung around his neck, on the village square, where they form in ranks according to their size. When the preparations, always conducted amid great excitement and juvenile jubilation, have been completed, the procession starts on a tour through the streets to the accompaniment of furious bell-ringing and noisy yodeling.

Bells have been cast of glass of considerable thick-





OLD SCANDINAVIAN BELL
In possession of the Boston Society, Boston

ness and they make a fine sound, but are too brittle to stand the use of a clapper. However, there are many beautiful small ones. I have one, a chime in the key of C, in my collection.

The oldest known dated bell in Christendom and one of the most interesting in the United States, was procured in London at the shop of the bell founders who cast "Big Ben." The inscriptions on this bell are in Latin, which translated are, "James, Jesus Christ, Mary: Quintana and Salvador made me in the year of our Lord 1247." The James mentioned is St. James, the patron saint of Spain. It is very probable that this was the "Santa Maria bell" in the campanile of the parish church at Santiago. St. James, according to the legends, often appeared in the sky, mounted on a milk-white steed, and gained the victory for the Spaniards in their bloody battles with the Moors. Today, although Santiago has a population of less than 25,000, it has forty-five ecclesiastical edifices with two altars and 1184 bells, and is visited annually by scores of thousands of pilgrims. When this bell was cast in 1247, Louis IX of France was making ready for the sixth crusade, 1248-1250; the Magna Charta of England had been granted by King John just thirty-two years before; the Franciscan Order had been founded by St. Francis but thirty-seven years; America was undreamed of and Columbus would not be born until two hundred years later! Surely this old bell, although cracked and clapperless, still has power to call up strange



scenes and forgotten deeds from the vanished past.

The Cathedral at Antwerp has a set of ninety bells and on them an air is played every half hour.

Some of the inscriptions found upon bells are very interesting, showing the religious feeling, superstition, or amusing sentiment prevailing at different times and places. Some are quaint, whimsical, and nonsensical. They also serve as historic records: "Our motions speed the Redeemer's praise." On one famous bell, "My name is Roland, when I toll there is fire, when I ring there is victory in the land."



On a fire-bell in Shelburne:

*Lord! quench this furious flame;
Arise, run, help put out the same.*

On one in Derbyshire:

*Mankind like me are often found,
Possessed of naught but empty sound.*

In Oxfordshire:

*I ring to sermon with a lusty boom,
That all may come and none stay at home.*

In Berkshire:

*At proper times my voice I'll raise,
And sound to my subscriber's praise.*

Another in Derbyshire:

*When of departed hours we toll the knell,
Instruction take and use the future well.*



An unique Mahogany Table with group of old Bells

Lowell's inscription for a bell at Cornell University is fine:

*I call as fly the irrevocable hours,
Futile as air or strong as fate to make
Your lives of sand or granite; awful powers,
Even as men choose, they either give or take.*

In the flow of time and years, the note of the bell becomes more significant, making as the centuries pass, an educative power in seriousness. "As sad as a temple bell."

So we see bells are ringing in every land, making a complete belt of melody around the world, and calling forth most tender sentiments of love and adoration. If we listen perhaps we may hear the soft twilight bells ringing a tender, true message to us. Who knows?

Ah! when I hear the music of the distant bell,
Falling so still, when the dark day is half done,
Visions more beautiful than ever word can tell,
Inspire to do, and make His work mine own.
And when the sounds grow faint until they die away,
The echoes answer, haste to work, some thing
On the wide sea of life awaits thy hand each day,
That must be done ere our last bell shall ring.



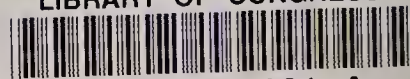
Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
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