

being landed at last in that infidelity which is the legitimate result of such a principle; and in which he will find but too many companions, outwardly, staunch members of the church.

The Baptism of Bells.

Bells are first mentioned by Moses, in his account of the high priest's official robe, the "hem" of which was ordered to be furnished with pomegranates and "bells of gold," that "his sound might be heard when he went into the holy place." The Rabbins say that there were sixty-six of these bells. *Exod. xxviii. 31-35.*

At a later period we read of the "bells of the horses," *Zech. xiv. 20*, alluding to the custom, still prevalent in almost all countries, of attaching bells to animals, to announce their approach, or to indicate where they may be found.

The classical reader is fully acquainted with the additional uses of bells among the Greeks and Romans. They were employed to call the people to sacrifice, to rouse servants from sleep in the morning, to keep the soldiers awake during the night-guard, to intimate that a funeral procession was at hand, or that a criminal was going to execution, &c.

The transition to ecclesiastical purposes was easy. In monasteries, the ringing of the bell summoned the monks to prayers or to meals. In churches, they called the attention of the people to various changes in the service, directing them when to stand and when to kneel. These, however, were later inventions.

Large bells, such as are now fixed in the towers of churches, were first made, as some suppose, in the fifth century. We believe that the exact period cannot be ascertained; but it appears certain that as early as the seventh century they began to be placed in churches in England. Our Saxon ancestors were very fond of

the music of bells, and expended large sums of money in procuring them.

Wonderful powers and virtues were attributed to church bells. As their uses were various, their sounds being heard at weddings, at funerals, and on other occasions equally diverse from one another, so their efficacy was manifold. If it thundered, the bells were rung to stop the thunder. If the tempest blew, the ringing of the bell would produce a calm. If the plague appeared, perpetual ringing would chase away contagion. If a man was dying, the passing-knell, mournfully uttering its slow and solemn toll, would so terrify and bewilder the devil, that the departing soul would escape his clutches, and get safe to heaven. As an old author says, "The ringing of bells do exceedingly disturb spirits." This soul-bell, or passing-bell, "was anciently rung," another writer observes, "for two purposes; one, to bespeak the prayers of all good Christians, for a soul just departing; the other, to drive away the evil spirits who stood at the bed's foot and about the house, ready to seize their prey, or at least to molest and terrify the soul in its passage; but by the ringing of the bell (for Durandus informs us evil spirits are much afraid of bells) they were kept aloof; and the soul, like a hunted hare, gained the start, or had what is by sportsmen called 'law.'"

Latimer refers to these superstitions in one of his sermons. "Ye know, when there was a storm, or a fearful weather, then we rang the holy bells; they were they that must make all things well; they must drive away the devil! But I tell you, if the holy bells would serve against the devil, or that he might be put away through their sound, no doubt we would soon banish him out of all England. For I think if all the bells of England should be rung together at a certain hour, I think there would be