

# The Church.

"Our Foundations are upon the holy hills."

"Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the Old Paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

TORONTO, CANADA, DECEMBER 21, 1854.

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## Poetry.

### THE STAR OF THE EAST.

The world lay hush'd in slumber deep,  
And darkness veiled the mind,  
When rose upon their shadowy sleep  
The Star that saves mankind.

It dawn'd o'er Beth'hem's holy shed,  
And scattering at the sight,  
Heaven's idol-host at once have fled  
Before that awful light.

Led by the solitary star  
To glory's port abode,  
Lo! wondrous Wisdom from afar  
Bring incense to her God.

Humility, on Judah's hills,  
Watching her feeble care,  
Turns to an angel voice that fills  
With love the midnight air.

Like voices thro' yon bursting cloud  
Announce th' Almighty plan;  
Hymning, in adoration loud,  
"Peace and good-will to man."

CAMPBELL.

## BELLS.

(Continued.)

ART. II.—The Bell: its Origin, Its Use, and its Significance. By the Rev. Alfred Gatty. London, 1848.

2. Paper on Bells, with Illustrations. By the Rev. H. T. Lillicombe, in Report of Bristol Architectural Society, 1850.

It will be seen that "Great Peter" of York, which has been cast since the fine peal in the Minster was destroyed by the fire of 1540, is the reigning monarch of all the bells of the United Kingdom. It is stated by Mr. Gatty that the ordinary price of a bell is about six guineas per cwt., but it is probable that the rate increases with the size, for "Great Peter" cost no less than two thousand pounds, which was contributed by the citizens of York. It is many inches higher than the tallest gendrier in her Majesty's service, and requires fifteen men to ring it. A bell which once added a glory to the cathedral of Canterbury is said to have required twenty-four men to raise it, and another no fewer than thirty-two.

The two "Toms" of Oxford and Lincoln are supposed by some to have owed their appellation to the circumstance of their giving out a sound which resembled the name. The original Oxford bell, which hung like the present, in the Gate Tower of Christchurch, was brought from the abbey of Osney, and was christened Mary at the commencement of the bloody Queen's reign, by Tresham, the vice-chancellor. "O delicate and sweet harmony!" he exclaimed, when first it summoned him to mass. "O beautiful Mary! how musically she sounds! how strangely she pleases mine ear!" But musically-tongued Mary was recast in 1680, and has now a voice as masculine as its name, for it is neither accurate in its note nor harmonious in sound. Every evening at nine it tolls 101 times, in commemoration of the number of scholarships with which the college is endowed.

The great bell of St. Paul's, which is one of the most popular curiosities in the cathedral, hangs in the south or clock tower, above the two bells which sound the quarters. It bears the inscription:—"Richard Phelps made me 1715." It is struck hourly by the hammer of the clock, but the clapper hangs idle, except when its ponderous stroke announces the death of a member of the royal family, a bishop of London, a dean of St. Paul's, or the Lord Mayor of the year. There is an erroneous notion that most of its metal was derived from the remelting of "Great Tom of Westminster," which, from a clock tower that then stood near the door of the Hall, had sounded the hours for four hundred years to the judges of England. This bell, so replete with venerable associations, was given or sold by William III. to the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, and recast by one Wightman. It was speedily broken in consequence of the cathedral authorities permitting visitors to strike it, on payment of a fee, with an iron hammer, and Phelps was employed by Sir Christopher Wren to make its fine-tuned successor. It was agreed, however, that he should not remove the old bell till he delivered the new, and thus there is not one single ounce of "Great Tom" in the mass. The latter is destined, after the lapse of a century and a half, to have a mighty substitute, for close to its ancient home the external clock of the new Palace of Westminster is to strike the hours on a bell of fifteen tons, and deprive "Great Peter" of York of its short-lived pre-eminence.

But the monster bells of England are mere playthings in comparison with the leviathans of Russia. The Czar Kolokol, or Monarch, as it is called, is the largest in the world. The value of the raw material alone was estimated by Dr. Clarke at £66,563 16s., and by Erman at £250,000. "Great Peter" of York took fourteen days to cool. The molten metal of the Monarch bell was twelve minutes in filling the mould. What must have been the process when, instead of some eleven or thirteen tons, 198 were employed. It was cast by the order of the Empress Anne in 1734, from the metal of a gigantic predecessor, which had been greatly damaged. The people assert that it was once hung aloft, but that the beam from which it was suspended being burnt in 1737, it was buried in the earth by the fall, and a piece broken out. Dr. Clarke maintained, without sufficient reason, that the fall was a fable, as the bell remained in the pit in which it was cast, and that the fracture was

caused by the water, which was employed to extinguish a fire in the building above, having flowed upon the metal when it was heated by the flames. The Emperor Nicholas had it raised in 1837, and placed on a low circular wall. Steps lead into the pit over which it hangs; and this excavation in the earth, with the monarch bell for a dome, is consecrated as a chapel. The Czar Kolokol is dumb, but the lesser sovereign in the tower of St. Ivan sends out its mighty voice three times a year, which produces a tremulous effect through the city, and a noise like the rolling of distant thunder. The bells in Russia are fixed immovably to their beams, and it is merely the clapper which swings to and fro. This alone in the bell of St. Ivan takes three men to swing it from side to side. Barbaric ambition is always pleased with what is big, but the tone of the Russian bells is likewise fine, though, as the art of harmonious ringing is unknown among them, the practical result is a confused clashing of sounds extremely painful to English ears.

With all the Russian fondness for bells, the concession to employ them is a concession which the Czar has never obtained for Greek churches within the Ottoman border. Only the rocky peninsula of Athos has enjoyed a special privilege which the inhabitants showed not, nor show, any backwardness to exercise. Some recent travellers were earnestly entreated by the old sacristan of a monastery, where a tower was just completed, to send out an English bell. The period at which ringing commenced or ceased in the East has not been ascertained. Cardinal Baronius says that the Maronites began to use bells in 565, having received them from the Venetians; and Matthew Paris states that Richard I. was welcomed at Acre with a peal when he landed in 1190 for his crusade. It is not unlikely, among other prospective changes, that the church-bell may be allowed to speak its summons in conjunction with the muezzin's call to prayer.

Enormous as are some of the bells of China, they are inferior to the Russian both in size and tone, and the dulness of their tone is increased from their being struck with a wooden instead of an iron clapper. The Burmese indulge in the almost universal taste; and a large specimen, which was taken in the Dagon Pagoda at Rangoon, was valued at £17,000. But nothing of the big bells of the world, which are rather matters for idle wonder than use.

It is a great descent from the Czar Kolokol to those small ancient hand-bells which are connected with the personal history of the first apostles of Christianity in Ireland and Britain. They are made of a dark bronze, are of a quadrangular form, which was probably copied from Roman specimens, and are usually from nine to twelve inches in height, and about six in width. Sometimes they are cast in one piece, but in many instances they consist of two or three plates riveted together and subsequently fused into one mass by a process of fusing which is not practised in the present day. The more perfect specimens are remarkable for sweetness of tone, and the distressing note given out by others is owing to their being cracked or repaired. In the middle ages they were held in such veneration, that they were carried about when contributions were raised for the monasteries in which they were kept;—they were taken to solemn assemblies, oath was made upon them in judicial trials, and the people were more afraid to swear falsely by them than the Gospel, expecting that the immediate vengeance of the saint would fall upon the offender who dared despise his bell. Nay, some are used in Ireland to this day for the same purposes as of old for enforcing oaths, honouring funerals, exercising a species of ordeal, and for granting the festivals of the patron saint of the district.

Amongst the shadows of bygone times, few are more substantial than those of the "gray fathers" of the Irish and British Church—St. Patrick, St. Kieran, St. Columba, St. Gildas, St. David, St. Senanus. Yet, in remote and secluded districts, bells, which are repeatedly mentioned in historical manuscripts, have come down upon a stream of testimony as having been the identical instruments used by them at their altars and in their ambulatory ministrations. Three are alleged to have had the honour of belonging to St. Patrick himself. One of these is said to have been in his hands when, on the hill of Conifer, the bell-given to "Craugh Patrick," he had his first encounter with the demons of Ireland. His violent ringing proved insufficient to scare away his adversaries, and he at last flung the bell itself into the midst of them, when they fled precipitately, and left the island free from their aggression for seven years, seven months, and seven days. The missile, broken by the fall, was afterwards bestowed on the patron-saint of Killarney, and called "the Boken Bell of Brigil." It was another bell, we suppose, which is mentioned in the "Acta Sanctorum" as having been offered to St. Patrick by an angel, and the zein was shown in attestations of the miracle. This is like the evidence of the Whig witness in "The Rambler," who, to prove that the son of James II. was a supposititious child, testified that he had seen the *terminus-pan* in which the infant had been smuggled to the Queen's bed.

A second St. Patrick bell became an heir-loom of the abber of Armagh, and was employed in 946 by the abbot to measure the tribute paid him by a northern tribe, the bell-full of silver being given him for his "Peace," as successor of the apostle of Ireland. The third and most prized of the relics is that known as "the Bell of Patrick's Will." The breach of an oath taken upon it in 1044 was affirmed to have been revenged by an incursion in

which a large number of prisoners and 1200 cows were carried away. At the commencement of the twelfth century it was encased in a costly shrine, embellished with serpents, curiously and elegantly interlaced. The custody of it had become hereditary, and formed a source of considerable emolument. It appears that a Henry Muldoan, who died late in the last century, closed the long line down which this relic of ancient art had been conveyed in one family through a period of 700 years. The bell itself is much corroded, but appears to have been of rude construction. The work of the later shrine, however, which was undoubtedly executed in the island seventy years before Henry the Second's army landed on the Irish shores, proves that the natives then could hardly have been behind their invading neighbours in the arts of peace. The bell and its shrine were in the Cork Exhibition in 1852, and its sound is described as amply sufficient to scare away evil spirits, as well as any reptiles except the deaf adder.

Hand bells possessing similar virtues, and some of which are preserved, were common in Wales. They were held sacred in all the Welsh churches previous to the Reformation, and were taken round to the houses of deceased persons on the day of the funeral—a very ancient custom, which is stated by Mr. Westwood, in his interesting papers published a few years back in the "Archæologia Cambrensis," to have stood its ground until lately at Caerleon. Some specimens which existed in Scotland partially retained their hold on popular veneration down to nearly our own day, in defiance, as Dr. Wilson remarks, of reforming zeal and the discipline of Presbyterian Kirk-sessions. Curious superstitions were connected with them here, as elsewhere. The bell of St. Flann, which belonged to a famous old chapel at Killin, in Perthshire, was affirmed to cure lunacy, a belief which would now be deemed of itself an indication of the disease. After the patient had dipped in the well or pool of St. Flann, and passed a night in the chapel, the bell, if he survived, was set on his head in the morning with great solemnity, and his wits returned. Still more extraordinary, it was believed that if this invaluable specific was stolen it would extricate itself from the hands of the thief, and return from whence it was taken, ringing all the way. The same power was attributed to a bell in Leinster. A chieftain of Wicklow got possession of it, and he was obliged to tie it with a cord to prevent its escaping to its home, at St. Fidan's church in Meath. Clothair II. (it is Baronius who tells the tale) carried off a bell from Soissons, in Burgundy, which resented its removal in a more effectual way. It became dumb on the road, and when arriving at Paris its voice was gone. The king sent it back to its old quarters, and it no sooner approached the town than it recovered its tone and rang so loudly that it was heard while yet seven miles distant. An occurrence of recent date would in those days have figured among the miracles of the age. On the death of the Duke of Wellington, the bells of Trim, which he had represented in Parliament, and where he spent many of his early years, were ordered by the Dean to be tolled. The tenor, one of the finest and sweetest in Ireland, was no sooner set going than it suddenly broke. On examining the bell it was found to have been cast in 1769—the very year the Duke was born. So we read in 1851.

An old Sancte-bell still hangs in a few of our churches in the bell-tower above the chancel arch. It received its name from being always rung at the words *Sancte, sancte, sancte Deus Sabaoth*, as the priest elevated the Host, and all who heard it knelt and offered a prayer to the Virgin. Most persons have witnessed this scene in the streets of Roman Catholicities, where a hand bell is rung before the priest who carries the sacred elements. Some years since in Spain the sound penetrated to the interior of a theatre, and not only did all the spectators rise up and kneel, but the dancers on the stage stopped in their performance to drop upon their knees.

Of the inscriptions upon bells not very many of early date remain. Some Anglo-Saxon bells, which are only known to us from history, were dedicated to English saints and confessors, as the bell called "Guthlac" at Coygan, and the bells named "Turkell" and "Belen," and "Bagen," given to the same holy site by Turkell's successor. The oldest of those which still exist in England generally bear the name, if not of the Saviour or the Virgin Mary, at least of an apostle, a martyr, or some other saint of special eminence, with the usual addition "ora pro nobis." But in later times it became common to couple some longer invocation with the name. Thus we find, in uncouth Latin, sentiments like the following, which we translate for the benefit of our fair readers:—"Jesus, regard this work, and by thy strength prosper it!" "Je-us, who abidest above the stars: heal our wounds!" "May my sound please Thee, O Christ, Heavenly King!" "Christ! give us the joys of eternal life!" "I am the Way and Giver of Life: give thyself to me."

"Our motto speeds the Redeemer's praise." An old bell at Thurst bears the inscription:—"In the name of Jesus I call, sounding Mary in the world." The bells dedicated to the Virgin have such labels as these:—"I am called Mary: I disperse the storms, scatter enemies, and drive away devils." "I sound in the world the name of Mary." "I am called Mary, and sound the Bree of the World." "O crowned Virgin: I will proclaim thee blessed." "O Mary, by thy prayers protect those whom I call together."

On bells in honour of St. Michael we find:—"I laud in holy tones him who broke the sceptre of the dragon." "May the Creator associate us with the angels!" On a bell in honour of All Saints:—"Govern us, O God! and unite us to Thy saints." On a bell in honour of St. Catherine:—"In this assembly I sound sweetly the name of Catherine." There are many bells dedicated in the names of St. Peter and St. Paul; and on one of them is the epigraph:—"The bell of Peter sounds for the name of Christ."

The bell of the great Minister of Schaffhausen, and another in a church near Lucerne, proclaim that they mourn at funerals, disperse storms, honour festivals, excite the tardy, and pacify the turbulent. The monkish jargon to the same effect was a common inscription in the middle ages:—"Funeraphago, Fulgurifrago, Sabbatopango, Excitator tardis, Dissipator turbulorum." In a few instances the words were deemed, for what reason we cannot perceive, a charm against fire, as was the case with the inscription on the great bell of the priory of Kenilworth, preserved by Dugdale:—"May a healthy and willing mind, freedom for our country, and the peace of Michael and the Angels, be given by Heaven to this house for the honour of God."

An actual fire-bell (cast 1652) in the church of Sherborne has upon it the distich:—"Lord! quench this furious flame; Arise, run, help, put out the same." A local poet seems to have resided about this period in the town, for in the same tower a bell, recast in 1670 from one which was said to have been brought by Cardinal Wolsey from Tournay, has a second couplet which bears a strong resemblance to the first in style:—"By Wolsey's gift I measure time for all; To mirth, to grief, to church, I serve to call."

The original Great Tom of Lincolin (1610) announced that it was dedicated "to sound sweetly unto salvation, of the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son." A bell in Carlisle Cathedral, dated 1667, has this exhortation:—"I warn ye how your time passes away; Serve God, therefore, while life doth last, and say Gloria in Excelsis Deo!" The great bell of Glasgow Cathedral (1790) bears a worthy inscription characteristic of Scotch divines, but, though somewhat lengthy, it has a redeeming conclusion:—"In the year of grace 1591, Marcus Knox, a merchant in Glasgow, zealous for the interests of the reformed religion, caused me to be fabricated in Holland for the use of his fellow-citizens of Glasgow, and placed me with solemnity in the tower of their cathedral. My function was announced by the impress on my hoarse-voice; and I was taught to proclaim the hours of ungodly sin, the hour of death, and the five years had I sounded these awful warnings when I was broken by the hands of inconsiderate and unskillful men. In the year 1790 I was cast into the furnace, refound at London, and returned to my sacred vocation. Reader! thou shalt know a resurrection—may it be unto eternal life!"

If there was no peculiar felicity in the old inscriptions, they were usually reverent. Here and there we meet with an exception, as in the case of "Great Tom" of Oxford, which, before it was recast in 1680, had an epigraph to the effect that in the praise of St. Thomas it rang out "Bum, Bum." The great bell at Rouen bore a miserable stanza, which has been translated by Weever into verse that is not a great deal worse than the original:—"Je suis George d'Ambois, Qui ai treinte-cinq mille pois; Mais lui qui me pesera Treinte-six mille me trouvera."

"I am of George of Ambois, Thirty-five thousand in pois; But he that shall weigh me Thirty-six thousand shall find me."

In those days the ecclesiastics devised the inscriptions, but later, when the church-warden who ordered the bell also filled the label, we must expect to find the most ridiculous specimens of parochial poetry. Thus at St. Mary's, Bentley, in Hampshire, where there are six bells, No. 1 (1703) is inscribed:—"John Eyer gave twenty pound, To neck me a lousy sound."

No. 2 we have, "Unto the church I do you call, Death to the grave will summons all." On another, "Thomas Eyer and John Wisalade did contrive To cast four bells this peale of five." On a bell at Bin-stead, one of a peal of five, "Doctor Nicholas gave five pound To help cast this peal tuncel and sound."

On another, "Samuel Knight made this ring In Bin-stead steeple for to ding, 1695." On a bell at Bradfield church in Berkshire, "At proper times my voice I'll raise, And sound to my subscribers' praise." (To be continued.)

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