

GENERAL READING
CREEDS OF THE BELLS.

A correspondent asks, "Could you not oblige your thousands of readers by publishing the Creeds of the Bells?" In answer to this request we give the poem below as read by Mrs. Scott-Siddons. Although more suitable to the latitude of New York than anywhere else, the descriptions will be found, on the whole, to be correct and certainly very vivid. The poem was written by Mr. G. W. Beagay.

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, and pure as prayer;
And I will put in a simple rhyme
The language of the golden chime.
My happy heart with rapture swells
Responsive to the bells—sweet bells.

"In deeds of love excel—excel,"
Chimed out from ivied towers a bell;
"This is the church not built on sands,
Emblem of one not built with hands;
Its forms and sacred rites reveal,
Come worship here—come worship here;
In ritual and faith excel,"
Chimed out the Episcopalian bell.

"Oh, heed the ancient landmarks well,"
In solemn tones exclaimed a bell;
"No progress made by mortal man,
Can change the just, eternal plan.
Do not invoke the avenging rod;
Come here, and learn the way to God.
Say to the world farewell! farewell!
Pealed out the Presbyterian bell.

"Oh, swell, ye cleansing waters, swell,"
In mellow tones rang out a bell;
"Though faith alone in Christ can save;
Man must be plunged beneath the wave;
To show the world unflinching faith,
In what the sacred Scripture saith,
"Oh swell, ye rising waters, swell,"
Pealed out the clear-toned Baptist bell.

"Not faith alone, but works as well,
Must test the soul," said a soft bell.
"Come here, and cast aside your load,
And work your way along the road,
With faith in God, and faith in man,
And hope in Christ, where hopes began;
Do well—do well—do well—do well,"
Pealed out the Unitarian bell.

"In after life there is no hell,"
In rapture rang a cheerful bell;
"Look up to Heaven this holy day,
Where angels wait to lead the way,
There are no fires, no fiends to blight
The future life; be just and right,
No hell—no hell—no hell—no hell,"
Rang out the Universalist bell.

"To all the truth we tell—we tell,"
Shouted in ecstasies, a bell;
"Come, all ye weary wanderers, see!
Our Lord has made salvation free;
Repent! Believe! have faith! and then
Be saved, and praise the Lord. Amen.
Salvati n's free we tell—we tell,"
Shouted the Methodist bell.

AFGHANISTAN.

This extensive and powerful nation is situated in the very heart of Asia. It is bounded on the north by Turkistan, on the east by British India; on the south by Beloochistan, and on the west by Persia. Between Lat. 28, 25, and 36, 30, N., and Lon. 62, and 72, 80, E.

It contains upwards of 200,000 square miles, being nearly equal in size to France or Germany. The former has 204,000 square miles, and the latter 212,000. Its population has been reported to be from 5,000,000 to 9,000,000. Its surface is very irregular, the largest portion consists of deserts, rocks and mountains, the latter are of the most inhospitable character, preventing any communication into the country except by foot; yet there are many fertile villages well watered, and covered with clover, thyme, violets and odoriferous plants, prized for their beauty. Its products are various and extensive. In the lowlands, rice, cotton, sugar cane, maize and millet are raised.

In the uplands are found European trees and herbs. There are two harvest seasons each year, the spring and autumn. The spring harvest is the most important, and consists of wheat, barley, peas, beans, etc., which are sown in the autumn.

At the end of the spring, rice, Indian corn and various kinds of pulse are sown for the autumn harvest. Apples, pears, quinces, grapes, plums, almonds, walnuts, apricots, pomegranates, citrons and oranges grow in abundance in the gardens of Cabul.

The climate is extremely various, depending more on the elevation than on its position, the latter should give it a decidedly hot temperature. The winds from the snowy mountain summits are very keen. The cold weather begins in September and continues until March, and is very severe. Sometimes much suffering is caused by the scarcity of food. During the winter months wool is worn, and in some cases felt, garments are worn, and over this a large top coat made of well tanned sheep skin, worn with the long shaggy wool inside. In summer these garments are exchanged for those made of chintz or cotton. In the plains and valleys during the summer season the heat is very intense. At Peshawar, within sight of the snow-clad mountain peaks, and in

an artificially cooled tent the thermometer rises for several days to 118° and 113°, which is as hot as the hottest part of India.

The principal entrances into this mountainous country are the Khyber and the Kohat passes. There are several other entrances of minor importance, some of which are mere mountain paths, entirely unfit for the passage of wheeled vehicles. Commerce is carried on by the means of camels and horses, many of which perish whilst performing their arduous journey through the rocky ravines, and over the rugged cliffs of the Hindoo Kosh. The best known, and the most direct entrance into the country, is the Khyber pass, and around it centres the present interest which attracts our attention. Near this pass is a cantonment for about 12,000 British troops, which is supported by another strong force at Rawul Pindu.

The people are very brave and hardy, loving a free and independent life. For many centuries the Persian and Mongol powers ruled the country. In 1748 Amed Khan, a soldier of Nadir Shah, liberated the country and made himself king. During his reign it attained a high point of greatness and prosperity. It was ruled by his successors until 1823, when it became divided between three brothers, into three chiefships, Herat, Cabool and Candahar, Dost Mohammed ruling Cabool. In 1838 the English declared war against him, because he attacked Runjeet Singh, her ally, and in the following year, an army of 12,000 strong, with 4,000 camp followers, entered the country from India.

They took Ghuz in July, and in August Cabool opened its gates to them. For a time the Afghans appeared to be subdued, but in November, 1841, there was a general uprising at Cabool, which eventually terminated by the withdrawal of British troops. On the 5th of January, 1842, the army, which consisted of 4,500 combatants, and 12,000 camp followers, marched out. These poor fellows were thus exposed to great dangers and trials. They had to face the stormy tempests of winter, and the savage weapons of a treacherous and blood-thirsty enemy. They were attacked in the pass, and only one man, Dr. Brydon, escaped, and reached Jellalabad; although afterwards several officers who had been taken prisoners, escaped by bribing their keepers. After the death of Shah Shughah, Dost Mohammed, who had been driven from the throne, returned and reassumed his authority. He carried on war with his neighbors, conquering Candahar in 1854, and Herat in 1862, thus making himself king of the whole country. He died May 27th, 1863, and bequeathed the throne to his son, the late Ameer Shere Ali, who had a long struggle with his brothers and nephews for his position, but he was eventually recognized as king by the British, whose friendship and money and arms kept him on the throne at a time when he could not have maintained himself not even a twelve-month at Cabul.

If we look for the origin and cause of the present Afghan difficulty, we may find it to be the result of certain Russian movements since 1873, which very much disturbed Shere Ali's peace of mind. He feared that Russia would extend her borders to his country, or perhaps some difficulty would soon arise between her and England, and the Czar's troops would march through Afghanistan to British India, and in this state of mind he applied to the Viceroy of India for guarantee of support in case of trouble with his northern neighbor.

Not receiving satisfactory assurance from the Viceroy, Shere Ali allowed himself to be caught by Russian intrigue, and he so far committed himself that he could not accept the terms which the British offered him unless there was some pressure put upon him. As matters thus stood, Afghanistan was fast coming under Russian influence, and there seemed to be but one chance left to prevent it, and that was to send a mission to Cabool, and to put plainly before the Ameer the risk that he was running, and to convince him, if possible, of the good intentions of the British Government towards him. A Russian mission to Cabul hastened the despatch of the British mission, for the safety of which Shere Ali repeatedly said, he would not be responsible, hence it was necessary that it should be strong enough to protect itself. It was necessary to see the Ameer face to face and to try thus to foil the advice of the Russian intriguers. The address to the Ameer was conducted in the most dignified manner, and its language was most courteous. No formality due to the dignity and honour of Shere Ali was omitted, yet in a most contemptuous manner he spurned the alliance of the British, thinking, no doubt, that Russia would support him. This was the kind return for English money and protection, and for the privilege which his subjects had in passing freely through India, to the great benefit of the trade and commerce of his own country. Shere Ali was, by international courtesy, by an existing treaty of 1855, and by the support that

he had received from England, bound to be a friend to her friends, and an enemy to her enemies, but in violation of these he adopted a policy of action quite the reverse, and insulted the dignity and honor of England. It must have been gratifying to British subjects, to learn of the successful efforts of the soldiers in their advances into the heart of the country, through the Khyber, Kurram and Bolair passes, attended with but trifling losses. By being successful in the beginning the troops gained a great advantage, and they could face the prospects with indifference, notwithstanding the disaster that befell them in February. We learn from late intelligence that Yakoob Khan is willing to yield to yield to British demands on condition of being sustained on the throne. He, no doubt, is in some trouble about his position, as Ameer Ratan Khan is rather a formidable claimant, and is making a move in that direction after quietly abiding his time for a number of years. The mother of Abdulla Jan, the deceased heir apparent, is said to have chosen a candidate for the same, hence home difficulties may compel the Ameer to seek British influence as did his father, and it is to be hoped that some definite and permanent conclusion will be arrived at, that will put an end for some time to come to these Afghan difficulties. D.

CUSTOMS IN HOLLAND.

Young people fall in love in the customary manner, but the avain—more happy than his fellows in some greater countries—makes his offer direct to the lady. A marriage of convenience is an unheard-of thing. Consent of parents, however, is necessary, for without it the marriage of persons, even up to the age of thirty, may be declared absolutely null and void; but, here is balm indeed! any one who is more than twenty-one has a legal means of bringing an obstinate parent to reason. Lovers always choose the house and buy the furniture together during courtship. Consequent (or not) on all this, an elopement is a rare thing indeed.

There is an antique quaintness in some of their social customs, which is irresistibly comic. A birth, for instance, is not made known to the world in our meagre fashion; "Mrs. Brown, of a son," but "of a very well-shapen son," or some such phrase. When baby is two weeks old, it gives a bound reception for married ladies only; and on this occasion it is dressed in the height of the prevailing fashion, and wearing a beautiful long white veil.

So, too, in the case of death. You meet a functionary in the street in knee breeches, cocked hat, long piece of crape behind all black and funeral. This individual—a relic of feudal times—takes the news of a death to every house in the street and every acquaintance of the defunct. But these, and many other traits of their simplicity are connected with the natural kindness of the people. Besides their own language, a large proportion of them read, and many even speak English; but with French, you are perfectly comfortable everywhere in the country, and besides this the scholars all talk Latin fluently.

No nation has in its time fought and suffered so much for religion. Freedom, religious and political, gained by the blood of their forefathers so lavishly shed, they now enjoy to the fullest extent. They are an eminently religious people. The comparatively smaller bodies of Lutherans and Roman Catholics excepted, the Reform Church represents the religion of the country. The members of this rank themselves Orthodox and Liberal or Modern, the latter almost corresponding with Unitarianism. Ministers of all denominations are paid by the State; but none can claim pay until a congregation is formed in sufficient numbers to justify the demand. The clergy preach in circuit, and there is a change not merely of minister, but of doctrine as well every Sunday in each church. There are always two collections during the service—one for the poor, and no nation is so liberal to the poor—and one for church expenses. Men and women sit on opposite sides, or men outside and women in the center.

Their freedom, supported as it is by proud recollections of former glories, by the subtle influence of an almost uncontaminated mother tongue, by present tranquil prosperity, and by the feeling, strong in every one's breast, that his *dykes* give him the power of destroying, Samson-like in a supreme moment, himself and foes together in one tremendous act of annihilation, render the nation one of the most patriotic in the world—and, of course, you know I am talking of Holland.

Do you ask where this country may be found? Turn to Goldsmith's "Traveler," whose description of it, as it appeared more than a hundred years ago, still ap-

plies with a remarkable degree of correctness, to the same country as it is today:

"To men of other minds my fancy flies,
Embosomed in the deep where Holland lies.
Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
Where the broad ocean leans against the land;
And sedulous to stop the coming tide,
Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride."

While the pent ocean, rising o'er the pile
Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile
The slow canal, the yellow-blossomed vale,
The willow-tufted bank, the gliding sail,
The crowded mart, the cultivated plain—
A new creation rescued from his reign."

Hence all the good from opulence that springs
With all those ills superfluous treasure brings,
Are here displayed. Their much-loved wealth imparts—
Convenience, plenty, elegance and arts;
But view them closer, craft and fraud appear—
Even liberty itself is bartered here.

Heavens! how unlike their Belgic sires of old—
Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold,
War in each breast, and freedom on each brow!"
—National Repository for April.

SUGGESTIONS ABOUT SERVING DINNER.

The table should be carefully laid, folds of the table cloth in line, two large napkins placed at the head and foot of the table with corners to the centre, every plate being wiped before being set upon the table, the glass clear, the silver polished, the salt-cellars filled with fresh sifted salt. A little stamp upon the salt improves the appearance. When the plates are laid, two forks should be put on the left hand, a knife and soup spoon on the right, large spoons crossed at each salt cellar, and salt-spoons on top; tumblers and wine-glasses on the right of each plate, a napkin folded with a piece of stale bread within its folds, the soup plates placed in a plate at the head of the table and the napkin on the upper one. Soup ladle, gravy spoon and carving knife and fork go before the master; if there is no soup, no ladle; if no fish, no trowel; if but one dish of meat, but one carving knife and fork. If you have neither fruit nor flowers, a bowl, with bits of ice, makes a pretty centre.

The side table should be laid with a white cloth, the silver, plates, finger bowls that will be needed during dinner, arranged tastefully upon it, and one or two spare napkins making it a pretty object.

When the soup is on the table let the waitress come quietly and say, "Dinner is served." A good waitress makes no noise. She will stand at the dining-room door till the family have passed in, and then take her place by her mistress to hand the soup. When the soup course is over the waitress takes off the plates, one in each hand, and takes them to the pantry or to a tray outside the door. Permit no piling of plates as they are taken from the table, nor allow the soiled plates to be placed on the side table. As the soup is removed, hot plates should be ready for fish and meat, and as the waitress removes the hot plate before the dinner she removes the cold plate to the side table. Fish should be served alone—no vegetables. Salad is the only thing allowed with fish. If fish be broiled, lemon, cut in quarters, should be handed, to be squeezed upon the fish, unless fish sauce is preferred. With salmon, thinly cut slices of cucumber, dressed, with pepper, salt and vinegar, should be served. Before the fish is removed, the fish trowel and spoon should be taken off on a tray or plate; before the meat is removed the carving knife and fork and gravy spoon should be carefully taken on a plate or tray. After the meat and plates are removed the unused silver should be taken off, then the salt-cellars. The table being cleared, the crumbs should be taken off with a crumb knife or with a napkin upon a plate; then the spread napkins should be taken off by the four corners.

Place upon the table the desert plates, and spoons, and forks, if for pudding or sweets of any kind; if for fruit, a plate with a colored doily, a finger bowl and a silver knife and fork. If coffee is served, it should be placed on a tray, with coffee cups and sugar, at the head of the table. The old fashion of a polished and bare table for fruit is gone out, except where an elaborate table and men servants are kept.—Mrs. S. W. Oakley.

From observation under the microscope of the Blood of patients (using Fellows' Compound Syrup of Hypophosphites) taken from time to time, positive proof has been obtained of the steady removal of diseased and dead blood particles, and the substitution of vitalised discs, so necessary to the construction of healthy muscles.

FAMILY READING
A CHEERFUL FACE.

Carry the radiance of your soul in your face; let the world have the benefit of it. Let your cheerfulness be felt for good, wherever you are, and let your smiles be scattered like sunbeams—on the just as well as the unjust." Such a disposition will yield a rich reward, or its happy effect will come home to you, and brighten your moments of thoughts. Cheerfulness will make the mind clear, give tone to thought, add grace and beauty to the countenance.—Joubert says—"When you give, give with joy, smilingly." Smiles are little things—cheap articles to be fraught with so many blessings, both to the giver and the receiver—pleasant little ripples to watch as we stand on the shore of everyday life. They are the higher and better responses of nature to the emotion of the soul. Let the children have the benefit of them, those little ones who need the sunshine of the heart to educate them, and would find a level for their buoyant nature in the cheerful, loving faces of those who lead them. Let them not be kept from the middle-aged who need the encouragement they bring. Give your smiles also to the aged. They come to them like the quiet rain of summer, making fresh and verdant the long weary path of life. They look for them from you, who are rejoicing in the fullness of life. Be gentle and indulgent to all. Love the true, the beautiful, the just, the holy.

MINISTERS PREACH REPENTANCE.

BY THE REV. F. DAVIES.

It is a long, long time since I heard a sermon on repentance. I have attended, sometimes, eight camp-meetings without hearing a single plain sermon on repentance. I heard an old minister cry out, "Preach repentance! Preach repentance! How can you get the people saved if you do not preach repentance?"

Christ began to preach and to say repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." John the Baptist had gone before him, preaching the same doctrine. Christ taught His disciples, "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem." Luke 24, 47. Then Christ is exalted at the right hand of God, a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance, (or the power to repent and the blessing that flow from it) to Israel and forgiveness of sins. Paul "testified both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 20: 21. Paul told the Athenians at Mars' Hill, that—"the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Acts 17: 30. Because he hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained.

We should be careful to discriminate between the counterfeit and the genuine repentance. Some may have terror of conscience and not have true repentance. Felix trembled when Paul preached, but he still went on in sin. Judas had great horrors of mind when he had sold Christ for thirty pieces of silver, but he was not a true penitent, for he went out and hanged himself.

2 Slight sorrow of heart is not repentance. Ahab had this, 1 Kings 21: 27; but it was not true repentance.

2 Momentary impulses toward goodness and not repentance. Herod had many good impulses at the preaching of John the Baptist, but he was not a true penitent. The heart must be broken up like the fallow ground, or the good seed will only lie upon the top and the birds of the field will pick it up.

4 Good resolutions are not repentance unless they were carried out. Many seem to repent while their children are sick and forget it when they are delivered from this impending evil.

5 Leaving off some sins is not repentance. Some will give up one term of sin and cleave to another. It is not repentance till we are sorry for all our sins.

True repentance is seen in the Publican, who was so humble, that he durst not lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast and cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Many are like the proud Pharisee who stood and thanked God that he was not as other men. He paid tithes of all that he possessed, and fasted twice a week. Still he was proud of heart and unhumiliated before God.

1. True repentance implies a knowledge of sin. This may be obtained by considering our relations to God and the many violations of his holy laws. "I thought upon my ways and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies." Consideration is one of the first steps to repentance.

2 It implies a sorrow for sin. This sorrow may be expressed in words or

without them, broken and cast past offences.

3 It implies acknowledgment of sin and so says every one who says ever

"I hate the sin, and I love the law."

4. True repentance is seen in the Publican, who was so humble, that he durst not lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast and cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Many are like the proud Pharisee who stood and thanked God that he was not as other men. He paid tithes of all that he possessed, and fasted twice a week. Still he was proud of heart and unhumiliated before God.

1. True repentance implies a knowledge of sin. This may be obtained by considering our relations to God and the many violations of his holy laws. "I thought upon my ways and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies." Consideration is one of the first steps to repentance.

2 It implies a sorrow for sin. This sorrow may be expressed in words or

without them, broken and cast past offences.

3 It implies acknowledgment of sin and so says every one who says ever

"I hate the sin, and I love the law."

4. True repentance is seen in the Publican, who was so humble, that he durst not lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast and cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Many are like the proud Pharisee who stood and thanked God that he was not as other men. He paid tithes of all that he possessed, and fasted twice a week. Still he was proud of heart and unhumiliated before God.

1. True repentance implies a knowledge of sin. This may be obtained by considering our relations to God and the many violations of his holy laws. "I thought upon my ways and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies." Consideration is one of the first steps to repentance.

2 It implies a sorrow for sin. This sorrow may be expressed in words or

without them, broken and cast past offences.

3 It implies acknowledgment of sin and so says every one who says ever

"I hate the sin, and I love the law."

4. True repentance is seen in the Publican, who was so humble, that he durst not lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast and cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Many are like the proud Pharisee who stood and thanked God that he was not as other men. He paid tithes of all that he possessed, and fasted twice a week. Still he was proud of heart and unhumiliated before God.

1. True repentance implies a knowledge of sin. This may be obtained by considering our relations to God and the many violations of his holy laws. "I thought upon my ways and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies." Consideration is one of the first steps to repentance.