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THE STORY OF THE BELL.

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THE village was small, and the church was not a cathedral, but a quiet unostentatious stone chapel, half covered by climbing plants, and a forest of dark trees around it. They shaded the interior so completely in the Summer afternoons that the figure of the altar pieces—painted, the villagers averred, by Albrecht Durer—could scarcely be distinguished, and rested upon the broad canvass a mass of shadowy outlines.

A quaint carved belfry rose above the trees, and in the bright dawn of the Sabbath a chime sweet and holy floated from it calling the villagers to their devotions; but the bell whose iron tongue gave forth that chime was not the bell that my story speaks of—there was another, long before that was cast,

and hung for years, perhaps a century, in the same place. But now it is no longer elevated; its tongue is mute, for it lies upon the ground, at the foot of the church tower, broken and bruised. It is half buried in the rich mould and there are green stains creeping over, eating into its iron heart; no one heeds it now, for those who had brought it there are sleeping coldly and silently all around in the church yard. The shadow of those dark trees rests on many graves.

How came the old bell to be thus neglected? A new generation arose—

“See,” said they, “the church where our parents worshipped falls to decay. Its tower crumbles to the dust. The bell has lost its silver tone; it is cracked, it is broken. We will have a new tower, and another bell shall call us to our worship.”

So the old belfry was destroyed, and