

THE BELL: ITS ORIGIN, HISTORY AND USES

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The Bell: Its Origin, History and Uses by Alfred Gatty

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ALFRED GATTY

**THE BELL: ITS
ORIGIN,
HISTORY AND USES**

THE BELL:

ITS

ORIGIN, HISTORY, AND USES.

Remove your cap a little further if you please: it hides
my bauble. And now each man bestride his hobby, and dust
away his bells to what tune he pleases. I will give you for
my part—

The crazy old church clock,
And the bewildered chimes.

CHARLES LAMB.

THE BELL:

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ORIGIN, HISTORY, AND USES.

BY THE REV. ALFRED GATTY, M.A.,
VICAR OF ECCLESFIELD.



LONDON:
GEORGE BELL, 186, FLEET STREET.
1848.

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TO HER

WHO FOR LONG HAS HEARD THE BELL WITH ME,

AND

SHARED IN ITS GAY AND GRAVE ASSOCIATIONS;

THE COMPANION OF MY LIFE

AND PARTNER OF MY FORTUNES,

THIS SMALL VOLUME IS, WITH ALL AFFECTION,

INSCRIBED,

A. G.

P R E F A C E .

The following anecdote occurs in one of Bishop Latimer's quaint and spirited sermons—

“ I heard of a bishop of England that went on
“ visitation, and as it was the custom, when the
“ bishop should come, and be rung into the
“ town, the great bell's clapper was fallen down,
“ the tyall was broken, so that the bishop could
“ not be rung into the town. There was a great
“ matter made of this, and the chief of the
“ parish were much blamed for it in the visitation.
“ The bishop was somewhat quick with them,
“ and signified that he was much offended. They
“ made their answers, and excused themselves
“ as well as they could : ‘ It was a chance,’ said
“ they, ‘ that the clapper brake, and we could not
“ get it mended by and by ; we must tarry till

“ we can have it done: it shall be mended as
“ shortly as may be.’ Among the other, there
“ was one wiser than the rest, and he comes me
“ to the bishop: ‘ Why, my lord,’ saith he, ‘ doth
“ your lordship make so great a matter of the
“ bell that lacketh his clapper? Here is a bell,
“ said he, and pointed to the pulpit, ‘ that hath
“ lacked a clapper this twenty years. We have
“ a parson that fetcheth out of this benefice fifty
“ pounds every year, but we never see him.’ ”

The foregoing anecdote has been quoted as an excuse for intimating that the clapper of the writer’s pulpit has not been silent—or, in other words, that the following little work was undertaken as an occasional relaxation from professional composition. It has proceeded from the worn pen of an habitual sermon writer.

“The Bell” originally appeared in the columns of a provincial newspaper,* in a neighbourhood in which bell ringing being much practised as an amusement, there seemed to be an opportunity of connecting the pastime with some solid information and useful reflections. Two hundred copies were subsequently published in a mean

* The *Sheffield Times*.