



Ancient Bell at Streatley.

The tower of Streatley Church, added to and restored by Herbert Poer, last Bishop of Old Sarum, about 1215, was until 1863, surmounted by a Georgian Cupola. A bell which hung in this Cupola was then removed to the School, but one of the canons being broken, a hole was drilled in the crown of the bell, and an iron ring bolt inserted. This cracked and so much damaged the bell that it is useless in its present state.

It bears an inscription round the shoulder in letters of about the middle of the XVth Century :—

hac in conclabe gabriel nunc pange suabe.

"In this cell, Gabriel, now strike sweetly."

Is the word *Conclave* used in its proper sense of a locked or closed *cell* or *closet*, implying that the bell was originally intended to hang in a separate bell-cote, and leading us to infer that the modern Cupola only carried on the tradition of an older erection? Or is the word to be taken in its modern sense, of an *assembly* or *congregation*, a synonym, in fact, for *church*?

Obviously the false concord, *hac* for *hoc*, arises from a confusion with the word *clavis*. The word *pange* is interesting. From its original sense of "to fix," it came to mean "to compose," in a literary sense; as in Horace, "*poemata panges*" (Ep. I., 18-40), and Lucretius (De rerum Natura iv., 8) "*tam lucida pango carmina*," and then simply to "*sing*" or "*relate*," as in the VI. Century Hymn of Venantius Fortunatus, "*Pange lingua, gloriosi prælum certaminis*," whence probably the compiler of this inscription uses it in the sense of *strike* or *sound*. *Suave*, as a trisyllable, is not unknown in mediæval versification, as in the Hymn of the Magdeburg Breviary, "*Alleliua vox suavis est choris cælestibus*."

The bell is named *Gabriel*, doubtless as being the Angelus bell. Its height is 15½ inches; its circumference at the inscription below the crown, 2 feet 3¼ inches; its diameter inside the sound bow, 13 inches.

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