

## DOGS IN CHURCH. By J. M. MACKINLAY, M.A., F.S.A.Scot.

In the *Life and Letters of John Cairns, D.D., LL.D.*, by the Rev. Dr A. R. MacEwen, allusion is made to an interview which Cairns had with Wordsworth in the Lake District. In the course of the interview, Wordsworth spoke with disapprobation of the custom common in the Border counties of shepherds bringing their dogs with them to church on Sundays. In the north-east of Scotland, attempts were formerly made to put down the practice of taking dogs to church. In *Inverurie and the Earldom of the Garioch*, by the late Rev. John Davidson, D.D., occurs the following entry in connection with Oyne parish, Aberdeenshire :—" 1673, March 23.—Appointed that Patrick Mortimer, elder, wait next Lord's day, betwixt the second and third bells, and observe who brought dogs, and take the clip and draw them to the church style ; the owners of the dogs to satisfie as Sabbath breakers" (p. 339). Twenty-three years earlier, as we learn from the same work, the magistrates of Inverurie had set their faces against the custom. Among the extracts from the Inverurie kirk-session and burgh minutes, quoted by Dr Davidson, occurs this entry :—" February 17th, 1650.—Every an that brings doggs to the kirk with them to pay 40 sh. for the first time, hav a merk for the second tym, whilk is still to be doublit so long as

they continue so doing" (p. 316). The following extract from the "Records of the Kirk-Session and Presbytery of Aberdeen" from 1562 to 1657 occurs in *Antiquarian Gleanings*, compiled by Gavin Turreff (second ed., p. 174):—"Whereas, against the decencie observet within all well reformat churches, many of the inhabitants of this burgh, both men and women, brings with them their dogges to the paroch kirk on the Lord's day, and uther dayes in the weik, in tyme of sermones and Divine service, whair throw and be the barking and perturbation of these dogges, the people are aftin withdrawn from hearing of God's word, and often Divine service is interrupted, ane thing that is not comelie to be seen in the house of God, so it is not to be comported with in a civil burgh; for removing the quhilk abuse the magistrates, ministers, eldaris and deacons of the Kirk-session of this burgh hes statut and ordanit, and be thir presentes statutes and ordaines, that no inhabitant whosoever within the same suffer thair dogges, whether they be mastives, cures, or messens, to follow them heireftir to the paroch kirk of this burgh on the Saboth day, nor no uther day in the weik, in tyme of sermones and public prayeris; certefyeing all these persones whose dogges sall be sein and knowin in the said kirkes the tymes fore-said, that they, and ilk ane of them, efter tryall and conviction, sall pay to the collector of the Kirk Session of that burgh the sowme of fourtie shillings Scots money for the use of the poor, *toties quoties*, by and attour that it shall be lesome to the scourgeris to fell their dogges. Quhilk ordinance is appoynted to be intimat to the inhabitants of this burgh be the reidaris the next Lord's day in both the churches, that none pretend ignorance heirof." It may be remarked in passing that the *messans* referred to in this quotation are lapdogs. In his *Proverbs of all Nations* (p. 101), under the heading of "Self-Conceit," Kelly quotes the following saying:—

"'We hounds slew the hare,' quoth the *messan*."

In the royal burgh of Cullen in Banffshire a bedehouse, said to have been founded by the Findlater family, at one time existed for the support of a certain number of poor persons. According to a local tradition referred to in the *New Statistical Account of Scotland* (Banffshire, p. 352, n.), the men connected with this hospital were required to be in

attendance at the door of the parish church on Sundays, armed with pike staves to prevent the entrance of dogs into the building. Chambers, in his *Book of Days* (vol. i. p. 525), remarks: "In some parishes, persons were regularly appointed to whip dogs out of church, and dogwhipping is a charge in some sextons' accounts to the present day." In various English parishes bequests were made to ensure the exclusion of dogs from church. Thus, in the parish of Trysull, Staffordshire, in the year 1725, John Rudge bequeathed twenty shillings a year to be paid to a poor man for keeping the parishioners awake in church, and for preventing the entrance of stray dogs. By a bequest, made by Richard Dovey of Farmcote, of date 1659, an annual payment of eight shillings was made to a poor man in the parish of Claverley, Shropshire, for the performance of the same duties. There was a similar provision for the exclusion of dogs from church in the parishes of Chislet in Kent and Peterchurch in Herefordshire. A certain piece of land, about two acres in extent, called the "Dogwhipper's marsh," was burdened with an annual charge of ten shillings, to be paid to a person whose duty it was to keep order during divine service. (Edwards' *Remarkable Charities*, referred to in Chambers' *Book of Days* (vol. i. p. 524), and Thiselton Dyer's *Church Love Gleanings* (p. 62).

In the north of England, the officer whose duty it was to look after the dogs was known as the dog noper. In Brockett's *Glossary of North Country Words*, the verb "to naup" is defined as to beat, to strike. In Jamieson's *Scottish Dictionary*, "to nap" has the same meaning. Mr John Nicholson, in his *Folk-Lore of East Yorkshire* (p. 9), says: "Of church officials, the dog nauper (whipper) is now obsolete, but it was customary for him to head the funeral procession with his rod of office, decorated with a black crape bow." Regarding the instruments used in the removal of dogs, Mr Wm. Andrews, in his *Curiosities of the Church* (p. 176), gives the following particulars:—"In Baslow church, an ancient chapel of Bakewell, Derbyshire, there is still preserved the dogwhipper's implement. There are also persons alive, or recently deceased, who can recollect its use. The thong of the whip is about three feet long, and is fastened to a long ash stick, round the handle of which is a band of twisted leather. In the church of Clynnogfawr, in North Wales, is an

instrument for dragging dogs out of the church. It is a long pair of 'lazy tongs,' with sharp spikes fixed at the end." Churchwardens' accounts supply data showing how important the dogwhipper was reckoned in former times. Among the examples cited (p. 177) by Mr Andrews are the following. In the Wakefield churchwardens' accounts are such entries as—

		£	s.	d.
1616	—Paid to Gorby Stork for whippinge doggs, . . . . .	0	2	6
1624	—Paid to the dogwhipper, . . . . .	0	2	0
1625 } 1628 }	—Paid to Lyght Owler for whippinge doggs, . . . . .	0	1	4
1664	—Dogwhipper, for his qr. wages, . . . . .	0	4	0
1703	—For hatts, shoes, and hoses for sexton and dog-whipper, . . . . .	0	18	6

The same writer mentions that at East Witton, in Yorkshire, a man, known officially as the dogwhipper, had a salary of eight shillings a year. (*Ibid.*, p. 177.) In his *Church Lore Gleanings* (p. 61) the Rev. T. F. Thiselton Dyer says:—"In 1571, as appears from the church books of St Mary's, Reading, John Marshall was chosen clerk and sexton, and for the sum of 13s. 4d. he was 'to see the church kept clean from time to time, the seats swept, the mats beaten, the dogs driven out of the church, the windows made clean, and all other things done that shall be necessary for the good and cleanly keeping of the church, and the quiet of divine service.'" After giving other examples of a like kind, Mr Dyer adds (p. 61):—"The dog noper, an official appointed for this purpose, still holds office at Ecclesfield; and in the records of Goosnargh, Lancashire, it was ordered (April 10th, 1704) that the sexton, so long as he demean himself dutifully, do sweep the church, and whip the dogs out of it every Lord's day." The same author reminds us (p. 62) that "in the life-size portrait of old Scarlett, the sexton, hung in the nave of Peterborough Cathedral, his dogwhip is seen thrust through his waist-belt." In the *Book of Homilies* issued in 1563 is a sermon on "Repayring and keeping cleane and comely adorning of Churches," and in it is this sentence relating to the fabric of the Church: "It is the house of prayer, not the house of talking, of walk-

ing, of brawling, of minstrelsie, of hawkes, of dogs." (Black letter ed. of 1635, second tome, p. 80.)

In the churchwardens' accounts of Bradeston church, Norfolk, under date 1544, a certain sum is entered as having been paid for "a hesppe of twynne for ye nette at ye church dore." It has been thought that the net was stretched across the church door during service to keep dogs from entering. (Thiselton Dyer's *Church Lore Gleanings*, p. 62.) Rev. MacKenzie E. C. Walcott, in his *Sacred Archaeology*, *sub voce* Dog-whipper, gives the following information:—"Dogwhipper.—An official in many post-Reformation churches and cathedrals, as Durham and at Ripon; in Queen Elizabeth's time, at St Paul's he paid a special visit on Saturdays. In the Cathedral of Lima there is a perrone. In Germany he is called *Hundfogde* or *Spögubbe*, and in France, *Roy de l'Eglise*. At Amsterdam there is in the New Church the dogwhipper's chapel; and in Portugese churches a common adjunct is the *kapella dos execuções*." A singular custom at one time existed in the north of England of whipping dogs found in the streets on a certain day in October. This was done till early in the present century. St Luke's Day, October 18th, was known in York as Whip-dog Day. Dogwhipping used to be practised also at Sheffield, Rotherham, Hull, and elsewhere. At Hull, the 10th of October was the day specially set apart for the cruel custom, and time was when every urchin had a whip ready for the occasion. The origin of the custom is obscure, but it is believed to have taken its rise in pre-Reformation days. (Andrews' *Bygone England*, pp. 88-90.) On the Continent, sick dogs were sometimes taken to church to be healed. The dogs were held by their owners, and selected passages from the Gospels were read aloud as the principal part of the ritual. (F. Thiers's *Superstitions qui regardent tous les Sacrements*, referred to in *The Antiquary*, January 1896, p. 19.)

[Mr Thomas Ross, F.S.A. (Scot.), has directed my attention to a picture by David Allan, the Scottish Hogarth, born 1744, died 1796. The picture, called "Presbyterian Penance," or "The Repentance Stool," represents the beadle driving several dogs out of the church with a large key in one hand and a broom-switch in the other. In *The Athenæum* for 13th February 1897, the critic of "Gloucestershire Notes and

Queries" (vol. vi.) remarks :—"The following inscription painted on a board is still to be seen in the north porch of Hawkesbury church :— 'It is desired that all Persons that do come to this Church would be careful to leave their Dogs at home, and that the Women would not walk in with their Pattens.'" I am indebted to Mr F. R. Coles for drawing my attention to the following entry from the Session-book of Oyne Parish, of date 16th March 1673, quoted in *Archæologia Scotica*, (vol. iii. p. 13, note) :—"The minister and elders, considering how God's worship was molested by dogs in the church, desired the collector to cause mak ane dog-clip. 23rd.—John Meldrum, collector, declared he had cause mak ane dog-clip; and it was appointed that ane of the elders, viz., Patrick Martaine, should wait on the next Lord's day, betwixt the second and third bell, and cause thos who brought dogs to the church (either themselves or ther servants) to tak the clip and draw them to the church styl; and it was ordained that thos who disobeyed to do so should be caused satisfie as occasioners of sabbath breaking." In his *Travels in Scotland* (London, 1807), the Rev. James Hall remarks (p. 428) :—"So much trouble do dogs give in some churches, that there is one appointed to go through the church-yard with a kind of long-handled forceps, which he holds out before him, and with which he wounds the tails, legs, and ears, &c. of the dogs, and thereby keeps the church and church-yard clear of these useful, but totally unnecessary animals in a place of public worship."]