

**Churchwardens' Accounts,
with Special Reference to those of Bushey.**

BY HELEN RUDD.

THE old Churchwardens' Accounts of Watford having been lost these many years, it was hoped that those of its neighbour, Bushey, might provide some of the missing links in local history, nor has hope been in vain. When transcribing the earliest of the ledgers, 1608-1710, one of the first items of interest is "A Cobby of the last Will and Testam^t of JOHN LAWRENCE, sometye of Watford." This Will is dated "the 28th day of Decemb 1613," and here we find the first educational bequest to Watford of which we have any record. There is no mention of it anywhere in the local archives, nor is the name of the benefactor recorded in any list of educational charities. And this is what John Lawrence says:—

".....I give to Elizabeth Lawrence my Wife & to her heires & assignes for ever all that my Tenem^t or Cottage in Watford Towne called COPT HALL wth the appurtenances..... And the Remynder of such Rents as Shall arise or conveniently bee made vpon the said Messuage I will shall yerely for ever bee bestowed vpon Fower Poore Schollers of Watford by the discretion of the Church wardens & overseers of the Poore of Watford.....

In the presence of

NICH. COLBURNE."

Of "Copt Hall in Watford Towne" no trace is to be found to-day. In a fifteenth-century Will recorded in Brigg's *Herts Genealogist* (vol. 1, page 6) the name occurs as Cophedhalle, and in Halliwell's dictionary *Cophead* or *Copped* is defined as a crest of feathers or crested. The sign of a poultry-farm is thus suggested, for John Lawrence is described as a "Chickinman" elsewhere in the Bushey Accounts:—

"Maij ye 6th 1660—for ingrosin ye Cobby of the will of
John Lawrence of Watford Chickinman 00-01-00."¹

Further bequests of his are here recorded for the poor of Watford and Bushey, and for the upkeep of "foote

¹ In 1656 "att a Vestrey Easter Monday," the charge for "Mendeinge a Pen" is 8d.

bridges scituate betweene Brayne Bridge and Shoot upp Hill.”

Of Nicholas Colburne who witnessed the Will, Watford has preserved the following remembrance of his generosity to “Poore Schollers” :—

“ Nicholas Colborne Gent and Elizabeth his wife, with whom he lived in wedlock for more than 50 years, never having any children of their own, yet were the means to bring up and Educate many Children.”

And, when that name again appears in Watford memorials, we are deep in seventeenth-century romance :—

“ I nicolas Coulburn Gent, son of Peter Coulburn late of this Parish of Watford Gent, dect., do hereby make Oath y^t according to y^e Vsage of y^e Church of England by Law established, I am lawfully married to Elizabeth Daughter of Abraham Sheppearde of this Parish Husbandman. Also y^t I did conceal my s^d marriage for some tyme for family reasons. In witness herevnto I have Set my hand this 17th day of November 1718.

So help me God.

NICHOLAS COULBURN.

Jurat coram me

Thomas Berdmore *Vicar*.

Witnesses herevnto

Will Glasford

Joñ Runnington pish Clarke.”

But, of kindly John Lawrence and his bequests to Watford no word save in this dim ledger of Bushey. In the more minute details of its records these pages show us the church and the parish as they existed more than three centuries ago. The church, with most of its peculiarities inside and outside; the continual labour and expense employed in repairing and renewing of glass, woodwork, bells and bell-ropes, the latter a cause of frequent expense when events that caused excitement throughout England gave so much employment to the church bells, and Bushey thus commemorated all the historic events of its day. And there are the names of all the leading inhabitants and land-owners too :—Wilbraham, Coghill, Tench, Blackwell, Cary, Francis, Pierpont, Titus. Place-names long forgotten—Brayne Bridge, Karykot hyll, Sparrows Haven. We find, too, archaic words—quarell, pitage, yonde, boldrop, cotter-rill, osses—besides many other instances of all these features of interest.

The first line of this ledger recalls that iniquitous system of taxation known as

COMPOSITION PAYMENTS. In small parishes Constables' Accounts are often found blended with those of the Churchwardens, or entered in the same book as at Bushey. Many columns of this ledger contain lists of those who were charged by the Constables to furnish various commodities, a custom which originated in the ancient rights of "Purveyance," or providing for the victualling and carriage of the sovereign and his household when "on progress." By degrees this custom came to assume the form of fixed charges levied throughout the county, whether royalty was in progress or not. The trouble was, that this right to maintenance was never clearly defined and never sufficiently limited. Resentment grew to such a pitch, in connection with the seizing of provisions and the inadequacy of payment for these, that Queen Elizabeth was forced to permit the counties to arrange "Composition," which varied greatly year by year, and these compositions were continued under James I, but after a lax fashion. That greedy tyrant tried to extend the right, especially to the feeding of the dogs and hawks and horses, when he was living at Royston. The Justices at Hitchin met again and again, and decided in the end to withstand the claims altogether. The point was considered also at Quarter Sessions, and especially in the following reign, *temp.* 1625. In two or three instances isolated parishes and isolated individuals refused to comply, and the straits to which Quarter Sessions were driven to compel them are very pitiful reading.² This was one of the many grievances between King and Commons which culminated in the Civil War. The odious system died out under the Commonwealth and was never re-established.

These Bushey records are valuable because one very rarely finds details of the *apportionment* of the composition amongst holders of property as in this ledger, where :—

"it was agreed by the inhabitaunce of the Parysshe for All the Payments to be Passed by those whose names are vnder wrytten."

² Mr. Reginald L. Hine, author of the *History of Hitchin*, informs me that references to it are given in the forthcoming volume of Quarter Sessions Rolls Index, with Introduction by Mr. W. le Hardy.

On the first and subsequent pages we have among other composition payments :—

“ Wheatt for the Seventh yeare of his majistis
Rayne the xviiij th. day of January 1608,
Harsborn ffarme ij bls.
Syles Tytoe ij bls.”
[and 20 others]

In a map made by Rector Vyvian in 1799 (the only man who could manage Bushey Parish Registers!) every field-owner is shown, tenant, acreage, and *name of field*. Hartsbourne (as spelt to-day) was in the middle of Bushey Heath or Common, and is marked “*alias Thieves’ Hole*” on the map. There is a tradition, but no evidence, that Dick Turpin lived here. Bushey and Stanmore Commons were notorious places for highwaymen, and the carters used to wait at the Boot Inn, Edgware, proceeding across the commons in companies of twenty and thirty.

“ The Composicon wheat for Busshey for the yeare 1614 charged by
Willm ffells & Richard Adkyns Constables
Sr Edward Carye Knight ij pecks
Mr Silas Tyto ij pecks
(1613) Edward Huddle for plie
of Busshey Hall ij b’.
[and 13 others]

Bushey Hall was a very big mansion built by Sir W. Walker in 1580, on the site of what is now Bushey Mill Farm. In 1624 Edward Huddle is described as of “ Sparrowes Hauen.”

“ Composicon Strawe for the twelveth Yeare of the raigne of or
Soveraigne Lord & Kinge James charged by the Constables of
Bushey

Thomas Nicoll j qr of a loade
Willyam Hyll a q’ter alod
[and 6 others]

“ A noate howe Watford men doe vsually paie the Composicon
Haye in Bushey, That ys to saye Every Yeare One Loade as
appeareth Vnder written for the year 1617

Nicholas Colbourne for Gamons³
being iij Acres iij hundered
Roger Durrant for vj Acres vj hundered.”
[and 16 others]

“ A Sessment made the first daye of Aprill 1618 for the payment of
xxj^s for Coales and Carige of Coale [And for Butter, 1627]

Raphe Wilbraham Esquire j^d
Richard Andersone iiiij^d’.
[and 40 others]

³ Gammons Farm still exists at the top of Gammon’s Lane, Leavesden.

"A moderate & an indifferent taxation for ye Leveyinge of iij Loade of haye due vpon Composition for ye yeare 1620
 Thomas Trundle for ij acres ij hundered
 Raphe ffinch for ye like quantitie."

[and 13 others]

"A noate howe the Remoooves have vsually bene chardged

John Wingfeild	} one Carte."
blank Nelson	
St Edward Cary	

[Nine Carts in all among 40 landowners and tenants].

In the last of the assessments the apportionment is unrecorded in some cases:—

"The composicion Wheate for his Mäties Service for this yeare 1628 charged by Richard Blackwell and Roger Nuttkin Constables
 Henry Coghill gent
 Thomas Adames".

[and 30 others]

Men of Watford are included in these compositions, and some from the distant "Hamlett of Leafsdone." The only trace of any connection between the latter and Bushey is that a portion of the Kingswood estate, known as "Thrum's Field." was copyhold of the Manor of Bushey, which accounts for Leavesden being thus brought into the Bushey compositions. "Thrums" must have been of considerable size, as there are so many apportionments. The name still survives as part of the present Harebreaks estate, and this connection is found by Mr. John Wilson among the records at Watford Place.

Some further details, which are missing from this ledger, are to be found in a most interesting collection of fragmentary MSS. lettered "Rate Accounts." These pages were found inside Rector Falconer's copy of Clutterbuck's *History of Hertfordshire*, which had come into the hands of an old furniture dealer, and at one of her sales a tailor bought the book. He subsequently sold it to the present Rector of Bushey (Rev. G. Montague Hall), who quite unexpectedly found the missing records inside the book and restored them to the church safe, where they will remain. These accounts include a heavy rate for "Shipp Money"⁴—a spark which set the Civil War going—and, on September 14th, 1636, we have "A rate for the Goale⁵ & Maymed Souldiers for one whole yere."

⁴ Bushey's rate amounted to the shameful sum of nearly £30.

⁵ Jail.

ARMS AND ARMOUR. Every parish was bound to keep ready for use a certain amount of armour, and a man or men properly trained to its use. This armour was not intended for merely local use, but for practical service against the national enemies. It was almost invariably kept in the church, and in country parishes the room over the porch was often used as an armoury in Elizabethan and Stuart days. The defensive equipment of the old parish soldiers of Bushey makes a formidable list in the ledger:—

“The xxvjth. of Jan. 1616 weare delivred by Daniel Hayward Constable of the Last Yeare to John Bonycke Constable these Armors following of the cōmon charge:—

Two qualivers, 2 hed peeces, 2 pare of Bandeliers, 3 Swords, 3 daggers, 2 girdels wth hangers, 2 belt-girdels, 2 bullet bagges, one corslet furnished wth pyke.

All w^{ch} John Bonycke Constable receaveth the day above written vpon condicon & promise that mr Wilbraham will see all defects in Armor supplied by the pish against the next Muster.”

To this equipment there are further additions in 1619-22:—

“Two musketts, two pikes, two moldes, two skowrers, two wormes, two restes.”

The qualiver, or caliver, was the regulation fire-arm of Elizabethan days, and was a light kind of musket or harquebus fired without a rest. It was 3ft. 2in. long, and usually had a magazine for bullets in the butt. The bandeliers (small wooden or tin cases) each contained a single charge for the caliver, and were fastened to a broad band of leather worn over the shoulder. The musket, or heavy gun, could not be fired without a forked support or rest, and the worm was a single screw fixed at the end of a rod for withdrawing the charge from a muzzle-loading gun.

All armour was viewed twice a year, and two constables were chosen to make the view, as enjoined in 1285 (Statute of Winchester). From the Armada days selected men of the pressed soldiers, or General Musters, were trained in bands, and such trained bands of apprentices, artisans and shopkeepers “behaved themselves to wonder in battle,” as recorded even by Clarendon.

Bushey makes elaborate preparation for its “Muster” in 1627, thus noting the event:—

“A Sessment made the first day of June 1627 for iij^{li} ijs for veale, lambe, porke, bacone and for poultry for the Muster—

Raphe Wilbraham Esquire x^d
 Willm̄ Hickman de Watford vjd^d
 [and 48 others, with 16 more
 from Leavesdone Hamlett.]

And the names of "those that found Armes in the pishe of Bushey" (fifteen of them) are likewise immortalized thus:—

"Henry Hickman a Corslett and his mā to weare it."
 "Tho Adams⁶ a Muskett and weares it himself."

The relations between the Churchwardens and the "Constabells" of Bushey appear to have been so cordial that they sign the ledger as "Churchstables," and with them is associated the "Head Burrowe," Jerremia Maude. Concerning this office of headborough a seventeenth-century bishop writes:—

"One that is able to do the King and Country Good Service we make him a Constable, a Sidesman and a Headborough, and at length a Churchwarden. Thus we raise him by degrees. Here is the greatest governor amongst us."

In Watford Baptismal Register of this date "Edborough" is given as a Christian name. The Synodsmen is variously spelt Sydeman and Sidseman in the Bushey ledger, and in 1632 it is agreed:—

"by the pishoners of Bushey that the Churchwardens and the Sidemen shall have for every Visitation aloughed them towards their Charges the some of iiijs."

(Signed) GEORGIUS SETONIUS Rector *ibid.*

The canons of 1603 enjoined that every parish should select two or three discreet persons to be general assistants to wardens. In the fifteenth century they were appointed primarily to attend the wardens at Synods.

The "Seuares," as the Surveyors or Survisors spelt themselves, were elected at every Bushey Vestry from the year 1616, and among their interesting memoranda is one of the first day of April, 1656:—

"According to the Lord Protector's ordinance for the Amendinge of the Highwaies, it was agreed by vs that the P'ticular Inhitance both Tennants and labourers Shall (yf they please, they doing the work att such prises as others may be hyred) be admitted to earne the money ymposed vpon them towards the sayd Highwaies."

⁶ In 1638 and again in 1642 Thomas Adams is described as of "Sparrows Haven," an interesting and unrecorded place-name, probably the "Sparrows Harne" of to-day. It is also mentioned in 1624.

There is consternation among "those Cosen Suruaires for the hy waies" when their predecessor claims certain "impulements" (spelt *Pitages*⁷):—

"the 27th of December 1678

Whereas the three pitages before menconed, now in the hands of the now Suruiuo^{rs} of the highwayes, & whereas William Higby sometyme since Suruiuo^r doeth clayme them & doeth threaten to arrest the said Now Suruiuo^{rs} unles they doe deliuer them vnto the said Higby, being really belonging to the said parishe [of Bushey] wee the parishion^{rs} doe thincke fitt to appointe the Now Suruayo^{rs} for the yeare next ensewing, not intending that this shalbe a president for future."

In 1665 and again in 1680 the page is signed with a very fine flourish—the autograph of the celebrated Colonel Silas Titus, who is buried in the chancel of Bushey Church. He is said to have been the author of the famous pamphlet "Killing noe Murder," which was published in 1657 and is, perhaps, the most famous example in our political literature of free utterance of free opinion, for it was a direct incitement to the assassination of Oliver Cromwell:—

"And without doubt when they hear that the Protector was to be Killed, they straight conclude that a man was to be Murdered, not a malefactor punished."

It professed upon its title-page to be by "William Allen," and it was dedicated to "his Highnesse, Oliver Cromwell," but in Morley's edition of Whateley's *Famous Pamphlets* it is stated that the real author seems to have been Colonel Edward Sexby. He wrote and printed the pamphlet, and travelled about England disguised as a countryman to secure its distribution. Being arrested and sent to the Tower, he died within a year, and after the Restoration, Colonel Silas Titus claimed the honour of having written this pamphlet, and it was printed as his.

CHURCH GOODS.

"A common table wyth a fframe, fowre formes whereof one in the Church howse.
Thre bookes of Common praier.
One great Byble.
Anda booke of Biship Jewell his workes.
1616, Aprilis 10."

⁷ Mr. H. C. Andrews (Victoria and Albert Museum) says that this obsolete word means pickaxes.

This is the first inventory of "impulements" (also spelt impellments and implements) used in Bushey Church, and in 1617 there are further additions:—

"A Coṃunion Cupp & Cover of Sylver,
A pewter pott & Ewer of pewter given by m^r Wilbrahā,⁸
Thre table cloths whereof ij Linnen,
A pulpitt cloth,
An hower glasse given by m^r Wilbrahā."

At each "Vestriye" this inventory is copied into the ledger, and in 1624 a "Surplesse" is added; in 1626 "A Locke with two Keyes for the Chist in the Chancell."⁹

The injunctions issued by Henry VIII's vicar-general, Thomas Cromwell, in 1538 included an order to every parish to provide a chest in which the register should be kept. At the beginning of Elizabeth's reign this order was again enforced, and in 1603 the orders of 1538 and of 1597 were embodied in stricter terms (Canon 70, James I, 1603):—

"In every Parish Church and Chapel within this realm shall be provided for the safe keeping of the said [Register] book one sure coffer with three locks and keys, whereof the one to remain with the Minister and the other two with the Church Wardens severally."

The ancient "Sylver Cupp with a Cover of Sylver to it" is recorded in each year's inventory of Bushey Church Goods from 1616 to 1633, and then the following item is given in the Accounts:—

"1633—Payd for a Coṃunion Cuppe 2^l 10^s 0^d."

This Cup, which is still used on every big festival, is dated 1633, and the Rector (the Rev. G. Montague Hall) suggests that the cup of 1616 was melted down to form this present one. In an inventory of the last year of Edward VI, as given in Cussans' *History of Hertfordshire*, Bushey includes the following item in its list of church goods, and this is probably the "Sylver Cupp" of 1616:—

1553—"Itm̄ a challiss of Silluer pcell guilt."

⁸ The old pewter has all gone: "tow pewter fflagons & a pewter bason with a Iron stand to sett it vpon" are recorded in 1674.

⁹ This is the first mention of Bushey parish chest, which has long ago disappeared.

From 1633 to 1648 no inventories are recorded, and then the Communion Cup is mentioned each year till we reach the last inventory in the ledger, penned in the clear, minute writing of the rector, Richard Ward:—

“Aprill the 26th 1676:—The Goods belonging to the Church:
A Silver Communion Cup with a Cover of Silver: a silver Plate
given by Sr Walter Walker’s Lady. A silver fflagon: and a fair
Damask Communion Table Cloth both given by Mrs Jane Gale of
Bushey.

(signed) RI: WARD Rector.”

This rector is rather mysterious. He became “Minister of Bushey” in 1647, but was evidently not ordained till 1661, when he conformed. On his tomb-stone in the church it is recorded that he was “Rector” for 37 years,

“a Contemner of this world becaus he knew it and expected a better.
Thou who dost read, Imitate.”

The “hower glasse” is an interesting item because the use of this “implement” in churches is not to be traced much further back. The frontispiece of the Bishops’ Bible of 1569 represents Archbishop Parker with one on his right hand, and at St. Peter Cheap (London) there is one recorded in 1563 for which one shilling was paid. Bushey records a new one in 1633—“payd for an houre glass & nealer o.1.6.”

The old service-books of Bushey have all disappeared, as also the “grat booke of Juall’s workes,” the only service-books that have been preserved being about a hundred years old. An entry in 1686 says:—

“6 July—Paid for a prayer Booke for the Thanksgiving for ye
Victory over ye Rebells 1s.”¹⁰

One shilling was also paid on the same date—6 July, 1686—“for a booke from the Parriter.” There are many variants of this word in other accounts, such as paritor, parrotter, parritour, all meaning Apparitor, the summoner of the Ecclesiastical Court, and the “booke” was probably his summons.

In the inventories of 1675-6 there are further additions:—

“A booke of Cannons, a Coppie of the Charter whereby the pische
of Bushey is freed from paying of toll, and a great Paper Booke

¹⁰ This of course refers to Monmouth’s rebellion in 1685, but the churchwardens were rather late in paying, as Thanksgiving Day was the 26th of July, 1685.

with a leather Cover a Act of the fowerteenth yeare of the raigne of King Charles the second for the beter reliefe of the Poore."

THE BELLS. The "work about ye bells" begins at Bushey in 1633 and continues till 1669, when "Mr. George Hickman Curche Warden for the Towne of Bushie and William ffillse his partenor [certify] that this yare Bushie Bells ware newe fframed And So Now Com-pleted." The accounts of 1633 include a baldrick, a word often mentioned in old churchwardens' accounts. It means a belt or girdle, and is here used as a thong by which the clapper of the bell was suspended. It has been superseded by a wooden block.

	li	s	d
1633. "for mending ye Great Bell Clapper at twice	0-	5-	0"
"for a new Clapper	0-	13-	0"
"for ye balldrok for ye Great Bell	0-	1-	0"
"for lether for ye boldrup	0-	1-	2."

In 1659 Bushey Church and its steeple were considerably repaired, and some of the payments are interesting:—

	li	s	d
"Payd for the Kings Armes ¹¹	2.	0.	0."
"for abriklayer & his man for one day ¹²		2.	6."
"for men to helpe up the leade into the steeple	0.	1.	6."
"for carrying & recarring of lead	0.	10.	6."
"for wood to heat the soder	0.	1.	6."
"to the plumer for lead & workman Shepp	17.	7.	4."
"to mason for all the stufte & workmanship	20.	0.	0."

In 1660 and again in 1685-6 the joy-bells are often a-ringing:—

	li	s	d
"for Ringing at ye Proclamation	00.	01.	00."
"22 April Given Ringers one ye Coronation Day	00.	06.	00."
"for Ringing ye 29 of May	00.	03.	00."
"October ye 14th being the Kings Birthday for Ringing	00.	05.	00."
"for ringing one Gunpowder Treason Day	00.	03.	00."
"for ye Ringing one ye Day of Thanksgiving ¹³	00.	08.	00."
"for Tooling ye Bell 3 houres att ye Queenes funerall ¹⁴	00.	01.	00."

An item in 1686 is curious:—

"Paid to Goodman Denton for Shooting two Ropes	00.	00.	04 ^d ."
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¹¹ i.e. the Royal Arms, to be put up in the church for the Restoration next year. Most churches during the Commonwealth seem to have destroyed or defaced the King's Arms.

¹² The bricklayer and his mate are now paid 3/- per hour for the two.

¹³ Monmouth's defeat.

¹⁴ In December, 1694, when Queen Mary, consort of William III., had died of small-pox.

In G. S. Tyack's *Book about Bells* the expression "shooting or firing the bells" is defined as clashing the peal simultaneously. An explanation of a similar entry in the Ludlow accounts is entirely different:—

"In anno secundo regni regis E. vjth as folowithe,
viz. Anno Domini 1548.
To Thomas Season for shottynge the belle rope ij tymes iiijd."

In his edition of those accounts for the Camden Society, Dr. Thomas Wright suggests "splicing the rope."

Bushey gives another interesting item in the year 1686:—

"Paid for Cotterrill & Leather of it for ye bell 00.00.06d."

A cotterrill is now called a cotter, and is a wedge or pin used for tightening up metal bolts or other parts, and for fixing bells to their frame-work.

A new "paire of osses" is provided in 1664 at a cost of 2s. 1d., these 'osses or horses being the trestles for the bier. The "seates and benges" receive regular attention, and the sum of 3s. 4d. goes on "Timber for the bothome of the seates," with 1s. for "a seat dore": probably one of the high pews that were all swept away, with the "gallerye" also, at the restoration of the church in 1871. In the 1546 accounts of St. Michael, Worcester, there is an entry of 22d. "for makynge of dores to seats in the churche." The early rule for a congregation in England, as in other churches in Christendom, was to stand when not kneeling. There is no proof of any general "pewing" of churches till the fifteenth century, the patrons and founders of the chantries and chapels being the only persons before that date to have seats, and these were fixed within their screens, gradually spreading to the body of the church.

Throughout this ledger the accounts of Bushey are very minute in their details and extremely varied: as is also the phonetic spelling, of which we have some further varieties in 1670:—

	li	s	d
"The Visitacione att Santalbones for the Charge of the Corte	0-	3-	8"
"for bread and winde for the Comvnione	0-	7-	8"
"for fechinge the winde	0-	0-	6"
"for a Ierne for the Church Gate	0-	1-	0"

And the "glaiser" is kept busy mending the "winders," his "quarells" being expensive things:—

	li s d
" 1660 - for three foout of Glase & rassin & bindin of Glaes & five & twenty quarells	00-04-01."

A quarell of that kind was a square of window-glass placed diagonally. The modern word is "quarry" and refers to glass and tiles placed thus.

"A Chushion for the Pulpitt and a Case for it" is a frequent item. The earliest record of the pulpit is in the MSS. collection lettered "Rate Accounts," and not in the ledger:—

"A Rate made the xviiij of Octob. 1636 for the new Buildinge of the Church Porch, for a Pulpit, a new Window in the Gallrye & other Reprācons."

This pulpit is still in excellent preservation and is a fine example of enriched woodwork of the seventeenth century.

The "Church howse," first recorded in the inventory of 1616 and an object of considerable attention in the ledger, was, "to all memory in 1652," employed as a School and is the "Institute" of to-day.

VERMIN. Choughs, crows and starlings, owls, bats and other pests, styled "Vermin," were responsible for much havoc about the fabric of churches. In the reign of Henry VIII there was a statutory obligation for the provision and maintenance by every parish of a net for the destruction of rooks, crows and choughs. Head money was payable at the rate of 2d. for every twelve old birds. In 1566 "noyfull fowles and vermyn"—polecat, mice, rats, weasel, mole, fox and badger—were marked down for persecution by the parishioners, and payments were made by the wardens of many Hertfordshire parishes. Great Gaddesden accounted for more than 20,000 sparrows in 18 years! The old ledger of Bushey contains no Vermin Payments, and the first of them in the parish accounts occur in the middle of the eighteenth century. Mr. Charles Oldham, of Berkhamsted, in his Natural History researches found many hedgehogs and a few polecats among the payments by the wardens of Bushey; for instance:—

" 1752—Mar. 30. Pd for 60 hedg-hoges	1 ^l 0 ^s 0 ^d ."
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In Dr. J. C. Cox's *Churchwardens' Accounts* there are most interesting details of "Rats and Birds in Churches" from the year 1512, and occasional payments for snakes! At Culworth, Northants, in 1715, six-and-eightpence was paid for a score of old snakes, and six-and-six for thirty-nine young ones. At St. Michael's, Bishop Stortford, there was paid the sum of 2^{li}. 12^s. 7½^d., as followeth:—

"to Edward Wagley, collectore of all man' of veyrmane, for 141 hedgehogs, 53 moles, 6 weasles, 1 polecat, 1476 mice, 80 rats, 202 crows' eggs, 128 pies' eggs, 150 heads of crows and jackdaws, 24 starlings, 5 hawks and 5 kingfishers—April 1569 to April 1571."

In the early years of the nineteenth century these vermin payments by churchwardens were discontinued.

VAGRANTS are many in this ledger, for a vast number of infirm and unemployed persons wandered on the great high-road from London through Bushey. The law of whipping them does not seem to have been enforced here, as in many other parishes which recorded this barbarous practice in the columns of their register, as at Watford, where there is a "Register of Passes" from 1678 to 1694, under which beggars and vagrants were whipped as "wandering rogues," and cruelly hurried out of the town by the Constable:—

"Octob. 28, 1681. Watford.

Richard man, a sturdy Vagrant Beggar, whipp'd with his Wife and Two Small Children & sent by a Pass to Bishops Auklon in the County of Durham. 60 dayes allowed."

"May 30. 1683. Watford.

Jane Joyner wife of William Joiner a sturdy Vagrant Beggar whipp'd according to Law and sent (with her Two Children being under the Age of 7 yeares) by a Pass the ne'st way to Taunton Dean in Somersetshire where she confess'd she was born."¹⁵

The first mention of "undesirables" in Bushey is interesting, although these can scarcely be termed vagrants:—

"1609 the xj day of March.

It is thuse agreed by vs howes names be here vnder written that danyill heydon shall yonde ovte of this towne be fore our Lady day next, And John Beaven And George backer shall yonde ovt of the towne be fore the feste of St Johns day next."

This entry is also interesting for another reason—the word "yonde" is not to be found in any dictionary. It

¹⁵ The whipping of female vagrants was expressly forbidden by a statute of 1791.

should apparently be *youde*, which is a spelling of *yode*, a past tense of the verb "to go," thus meaning *went*; so probably "*shall youde*" is a dialect extension of this use, and means simply "shall go"—an obsolete word, of which Lord Aldenham gives this definition from the Bodleian Library.

At Burnham, Bucks, there is in the church register a long list of persons who were whipped, the majority being females, of both young and advanced age. These poor sufferers were sometimes recommended by the officers to the kinder treatment of other parishes through which they had to pass:—"Be as charitable as the law permits to the bearer and her two children." Cruelty first, then benevolence—and, to quote Sidney Smith, "A. never sees B. in distress, but he wishes C. to go and relieve him." John Taylor, the Water-poet (1630) writes of sixty whipping-posts within a mile of London, the custom of whipping at the cart's tail in the market-place having ceased in 1596 when posts were introduced, with many other barbarously cruel forms of punishment which included the "Cage" (Watford possessed one), a round wooden case turning on a pivot, the culprit being enclosed and whirled round with such dangerous velocity that extreme distress ensued. A great deal of curious information about the wandering orders is set forth in Harman's "Caveat, or Warning for Common Cursetors vulgarly called Vagabonds."

Licensed vagrants travelling with passes or passports, and other tramps in distress were a constant drain on parish funds. In only a few cases have full accounts been preserved, and of these Bushey is one. During the Civil War the columns of this ledger record incessant alms to these "poore passingers":—

" 1659. In November for passingers, 15 of one Compaine 0-1-6
and for 9 of another 0-2-0."

These were no doubt gipsies, of whom there are some instances in Cox's *Churchwardens' Accounts*:—

" 1632 (Stathern) Given to a great Companie of gipes 0-1-4."
" 1658 (Helmdon) To a Company of Gipsees with a passe 4^d."

And among other recipients of Bushey's charity we have "two poore grey men," five French Protestants (who receive the large sum of half-a-crown), and a continuous

stream of "poore people with a Passe" throughout the autumn and winter of 1685-6. Then the churchwardens retire:—

"March the 28th 1686.
Laid out att y^e visitacon for y^e Old Churchwardens
goeing out & the new comeing in for our Dinners 00^{li}15^s00^d."

The nearest *House of Correction* was at "Hemsted" and it provided temporary imprisonment for those who defied the parish constable. In 1673 is noted the payment of part of a tax "Charged vpon this Parish of Bushey for the house of Correcon At Hemsted." Overseers of the Poor are seldom mentioned in this old ledger, their accounts being kept in a separate book dated 1650-1679. As far back as 1566 the Hitchin wardens had purchased "a paper book of a Quier for the accompte of the proctors of the poore," also recorded in Mr. Reginald L. Hine's *History of Hitchin* as "Surveyors of Strangers" and "Beadles of the Beggars." Their earliest document of any detail is dated 1608:—"A Sessment" upon 138 of the more substantial inhabitants, ranged in rough order of propertied importance, as in Bushey at the same date. But it is not till 1619 that the conscience of Bushey awakes towards its sick and poor:—

"*Busshey*—An Assessment made by the Inhabitants there on Sundaye the xjth of Aprill 1619 and deliuered to Richard Coleman & John Bonnicke beinge appointed Collectors for the Poore of Busshey.

Mr Doct^r Westerman p'son of Bushey
Jho: Bonnick ffarm^r of the gleabe Landes x^s
the right Hoble Sr Henry Carye Knight
Controller of his Majt^{ies} Housholde xx^s."
[and 55 others, including some from Watford and Aldenham.]

Among cases of distress in the home-parish is the family of "Richard ffells," esteem for him being shown in care for his children left fatherless. As early as 1650 his name is in the list of "Sidemen," and his father had been "Constabel and Surveior":—

	li	s	d
" 1664-5 payd to the widdo Anne ffyndall for two weekes keepeing Richard ffells boy	0	3	4."
" ffor Schooleing 2 of ffells Children	1	1	0."
" Paid for putting out of one of ffells his Children to be an Apprentice	3	0	0."
" Disbursed for Richard ffells his sonne his Schooling	0	8	8."
" 1676 pd to the widdow ffells for her charges to St Albones	0	2	0."

And in 1676 there follows another sad story :—

“ We whose names are under written doe desire the Churchwardens to paye the some of towe pounds eight shillings fower pence to Ann Day a poore widdow hauing seaven children to maynteyne.”

Those who benefit under the Will of the “ Chickinman of Watford ” are regularly recorded, the payments to them being duly “ reseved of the church wardens of Watford which now Wee have given to the poree.” And in addition to all these various forms of charity the ledger holds long lists of still further calls—relief of those in other parts of the country, who had suffered loss by sea, by fire, or from other causes. The churchwardens collected the gifts of the parish on

BRIEFS, or King's letters, which authorized a collection for a charitable purpose under sovereign letters-patent, and in our Prayer Book the word *Brief* occurs among the notices to be read after the Nicene Creed. During the years 1607-8, and again from 1616 to 1635, Bushey contributed to 166 of these collections, and it was not until 1828 that this public system of begging was abolished. Bushey's “ gatherings ” are scattered far and wide—from Northumberland to Algiers, where Barbary corsairs and Algerian pirates, who were subjects of Turkey, held captives of all nations to ransom in Turkey and Algeria throughout the seventeenth century.

“ 1607—Gerer for Altone in Cumberland for the third Garring	ij ^s iiij ^d ”
“ Gerred for bedfont in middellsexe	v ^s 9 ^d ”
“ Gearred for Elye fyer	vj ^s ix ^d ”
“ 1608—Gared for Robart Nelesson of Reddedes in lanckon shayer	iiij ^s ii ^d ”
“ 1617—Gathered for a scot for a losse by sea of five thousand pounds ¹⁶	xix ^d ”
“ 1618—For the repairing of St Buttolphes church without Bishopsgate	5 ^s 3 ^d ”
“ 1619—Gathered for a losse by sea for Thomas Whitney a prisoner at Argier vnder the turke	ij ^s 4 ^d ”
“ Gathered for Angelo Jacobi of the P'vince of Cypria y ^e som	ij ^d ”
“ For one Theodorine Palumby a Greacian the sume of	ij ^s vj ^d ”
“ For a Grecian Minister Nicholas Xamuebio	iiij ^s vj ^d ”
“ For repairing of an haven in Suffolk ”	[blank]
“ 1635—Collected by abriefe for the pilatinat	3- 5- 0 ”
“ For losse by fire to one Abraham Barnupp of Stansteed abbott in Com' Herts. The breif said to the losse of 300 li. but I hard it was but 3 score	0- 5- 0 ”

¹⁶ In this case the £5,000 was probably “ pounds Scots,” representing £250, but, being a Scot, the sufferer might have been shy about raising the “ rates of exchange ” question.

“ For the man that letts out the watter out of the high waie toward London o- 8- 6 ”
“ For the buylding of the Church of Kirkeanders wth two Chapells of Ease in the County of Cumberland o^{li}5^{so}d.”
(This church was erected by Sir Richard Graham in 1637, at which period Kirk Andrews was made a district parish.)

Of a truth they were many and various who sought Bushey's sympathy and aid, and very carefully were all these precious records kept by those old churchwardens of the seventeenth century, who closed their laborious balancing of accounts on a note of obvious satisfaction:—

“ And So Made ALL EVEN.”

*[The writer desires to tender her thanks to Lord Aldenham, Mr. A. Whitford Anderson, those whose kind interest has encouraged her in these further researches—
“ and so made all even.”]*