

PROFANATION OF SAINT PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

William Noy (1577–1634), Attorney-General for England and Wales (1631–1634)

1631

That this abuse and profanation of that holy place has grown only by the neglect and sufferance of the Dean and Chapter in times past.

That the redress and remedy must likewise proceed from their now successors, and from their care, diligence, and zeal in pursuing this intended reformation.

That for redress of walking there in time of divine service, one part of this abuse, the power lies properly in their hands.

Whereupon Sundays and all festival days the boys and maids and children of the two neighboring parishes presently after dinner come into the Church, there they play in such manner as children use to do till dark night, and hence come principally that inordinate noise, which many times suffers not the preacher to be heard in the choir.

That these two parishes are Saint Gregory's and Saint Faith's, both subject to the jurisdiction of the Dean and Chapter of Saint Paul's and to their commissary; and therefore may the more easily be remedied by them if they please by giving order to the parents and masters of them to inhibit them.

That for foreigners and strangers, which are for the most part men of greater sort and quality, it will well beseem Mr. Dean and the canons in their proper persons and habits in time of divine service to come into the body of the church some certain times, and to require such as they shall find walking or talking there either to come into the choir, there to hear divine service, or to depart the church.

That if any hereupon shall grow contemptuous and will not yield to such admonition, the same course may be taken against them by ordinary jurisdiction or before the Commissioners in Causes Ecclesiastical in case of contemptuous profanation.

That if any such necessity should be, it will be requisite that the vergers of the church, or other officers, should be appointed by Mr. Dean and the canons particularly to warn such men as they shall find there walking either to come into the choir or to depart the church. And upon such refusal to give in their names to His Majesty's advocate.

That prosecution may be had against them, wherein the officers shall make the proofs, and for their pains have costs, and yet sue without paying fee.

For such as carry burdens through the church, the way be convenient that the vergers or some servants of the church turn back such as they shall find passing by gentle admonition. And if they shall continue, that they be proceeded against in the Ecclesiastical Court.

That the ancient writing in the church inhibiting such carrying of burdens through the church may be made more visible.