

I learn that “**The Dogs’ Meeting**” is often attributed to **Henry Lawson**, (1867-1922) an Australian writer. The story, probably apocryphal, is that he was in a pub and bet someone a beer that he could write a song about any subject they could choose. The other pointed to two dogs sniffing each other and challenged him to write about that. Lawson won!

I was first introduced to this bit of doggerel, if you will pardon the pun, years ago by my brother, Peter. Some of you may know that Peter loved poetry, and will perhaps recall that often after an evening of visiting had been mellowed by a dram or two of fine single malt whisky, Peter would recite, to everyone’s pleasure, poetry that he had committed to memory over the years. He would often begin with Lawson’s composition, reproduced below, for your enjoyment, in one of its several versions.

It is followed by my own retaliatory (in fact, cathartic, if you can stand another pun) verses, just to have a bit of fun with the cats and dogs equation, and is intended as a light-hearted salute to Lawson and Peter, both, for the enjoyment they have each given us.

The Dogs’ Meeting

Well the dogs all held a meeting and they came from near and far
And some they came by aeroplane and some by motor car
But before into the concert hall they were allowed to look
Each dog had to take his (thump thump thump) and hang it on a hook

Well hardly were they seated there, each mother, son and sire
When a dirty little yellow dog got up and shouted, "Fire!"
They all rushed out in panic. They didn't stop to look
And each dog grabbed a (thump thump thump) from off the nearest hook

And that's the reason why you'll see while walking down the street
Each dog will stop and swap a smell with every dog he meets
And that's the reason why a dog will leave a good fat bone
To go and smell a (thump thump thump) to see if it's his own

The Cats’ Response

The cats all got together, they came from everywhere
Some by rail, some by sea, and quite a few by air
It was an urgent meeting for all felines of the clan
It was time to kill the rumor that dog was man’s best friend

And so they came from near and far this issue to discuss
Just how the world, once and for all, could end this silly fuss
Little kittens, alley cats, and non-descript old toms
Parlour pets, mousers, some much belittered moms

But when asked at the door their (thump thumps) to turn in
To a cat, they refused flat, saying, and with no great chagrin
“To hell with that! Let’s just be cats. Let dogs be man’s best friends.
We’re way too smart and too refined to go sniffing our own ends!”

