

ART. XII.—*The Visitation Articles of Bishop Robinson, 1612.* By the Rev. C. M. L. BOUCH, M.A.

*Communicated at Penrith, April 2nd, 1949.*

THIS is the earliest set of Visitation Articles so far discovered in the diocese of Carlisle and is therefore of considerable interest. It was found among the documents in the safe of Great Salkeld church; my thanks are due to the rector, the Rev. G. A. K. Hervey, for leave to publish it.

The reader is referred to my book *Prelates and People*, pp. 218 and 244-9, for an account of Bishop Robinson's episcopate. The articles are hand written and cover eight pages of paper, measuring six inches by eight inches; the writing, though small, is perfectly legible. The articles appear to follow the usual contemporary pattern. Only a few of them call for comment. The mere fact that such questions as those contained in question 14 needed to be put at all is in itself evidence of the low standard of clerical morality at this time. That the bishop found it necessary to put the question about polygamy contained in article 37, for the laity, is also suggestive. The word "jangle," article 30, means to chide or brawl.

In *Prelates and People*, pp. 254-8, I give an account of the Visitation Articles of Bishops White, 1627, and Potter, 1629. The latter either had these articles of Bishop Robinson's in front of him when he compiled his own or they both used a common source. Much of article 33 of Bishop Robinson's is, for instance, duplicated by Bishop Potter in his 40th article (see *Prelates and People*, p. 258). In each of them the word "metwand" occurs. This word, a note on which by

Professor Hamilton Thompson will be found in the above book, p. 258, does not occur in any dictionary; so its meaning is unknown. But a reference to graves at Dearham in which hazel wands have been found may perhaps give a clue (CWI vi 360-1).

Articles to be inquired of by the Churchwardens & sworn men in the visitation of the Reverend Father in God Henrie by the providence of God L. Bishop of Carlisle, in the yeare of our L. God 1612, & in the 14th yeare of his Lps Consecration.

For the Clergie.

1. Imprimis whether yor Parson, Vicar, Curate, or Minister be a Preacher of God's word and a maintainer and furtherer of Religion now Established by Publicke Authoritie within this Realme of England or no.
2. Item whether he doo in his sermons, lectures, & other discourses move the people to joyne with him in prayer for ye King's Matie, our Gracious Queene Anne, ye Noble Prince Henrie and their Roiall Issue with addition of such stiles & tytles as of Right dooth apptaine to his Matie; And whether any since the 25th of September 1605 have refused or willingly omitted or neglected so to do.
3. Item whether he be a preacher lawfully admitted and by what authoritie and whether yore Minister or Churchwardens, have, since the tyme aforesayd, suffered any man to preach in yore churche but such as have first shewed their lycense to preach either from the L. archbishop of Yorke or Bishop of ye Dioces where he dwelleth or one of the Universities under their seale.
4. Item whether he be painfull and diligent in preaching to all & in catechizing ye youth of yor parish upon Sondays and holydayes and how many sermons hath yor parson, vicar or minister preached in his owne church within this year last, and yf he be not a preacher how many sermons by his pcurment or otherwise have bene preched this last year and by whome, and whether were they that preached lycensed or no and by whome.
5. Item whether yor minister not being a preacher doo evrie Sunday, when their is no sermon, reade some part of the homilyes set forth and appointed by publicke authoritie.
6. Item whether yor common prayer be read by yor minister

in the church or chappell distinctly and reverently upon all Sundays, holydayes and other dayes as ys prescribed in or by the booke of common prayer without any innovacon or omission and at due and convenient houres, and whether in lyke sort the Sacraments be reverently ministered as in, and by the same booke is appointed.

7. Item whether dooth yor minister usually weare the surplesse whyle he ys saying the publicke prayers & ministering ye Sacraments. Whether has he deferred or refused to baptize any infant, being in danger of death, having notice of the weakness theirow, and wther in his default hath any dyed without Baptizme.
8. Item whether hath he churched any woman after the birthe of her chyld begotten in incest, adulterie, fornicacon or marryed any woman so begotten with child without publicke confession of their fault at their churching or married in the prence of the conregacon upon some Sabaoth or festivall day at morning prayer tyme, leaving their further punishmt to the ordinarie or other competent judge.
9. Item whether hath yor Parson, Vicar, Curate or Minister, since the 25th of September 1609 celebrated matrimonie without lycense granted by such as have Episcopall authoritie except by banns of Matrimonie nowe formerly published these severall Sundays or holydays in the tyme of Divine service in the pish church or chappell were the sayd parties then dwelt, and at any other tyme than between the hours of eight and twelve of the clocke in the forenone or in any other place than in church or chappell were one of the pties did dwell, and whether without consent of parents or other governours.
10. Item whether hath yor parson, vicar or curate more benefices or ecclesiasticall pmotions than one and what be their names, and upon (which) is he most resiant, and yf he have more how doeth he supplye his absences, whether by a curate or minster lycensed to preach or not and yf he be, then by whom is he lycensed & what distribution doeth he make their to the poor where he is not resident, And how many sermons doeth he preach yearly, in that benefice were he ys least resident, And for how long time dooth he kepe hospitalitie their every year.
11. Item whether doeth yor minister or curate serve any more cures than one, and yf so then what other cure doeth he serve.

12. Item whether doeth yor parson, vicar or curate according to an Act of Parlamt in that behalve made call upon and require the people of his parish to solemnize the 5th day of November, and yf day (sic.) doo come to ye churche to joyne in prayers and thanksgiving for the happie deliverance of his Matie, the Quene, prince and states of Parlamt from the most traterous and bloody intended massacree by gunpowder. And whether doe the people of yor parish accordingly repayre to ye churche, or do any refuse or neglect so to doe, present their names.
13. Item whether doeth he carefully visite ye sicke of his parish by exhorting & ministering unto them as by the booke of common prayer is appointed.
14. Item whether ys yor minister suspected or defamed to have obtained his benefice by symonie, or reputed to be an incontinent pson, or keepeth any woman in his house suspected of incontinence, or to be a common drunkard, or a common gamster player at dice or a common usurer or doeth kepe, or suffer to be kept, any alehouse in his house, or ys he faultie in any other crime punishable by the ecclesiaticall censures whereby he ys offensive to his ministerie & calling.
15. Item whether yor minister or churchwardens & others for the retaining of the circuite of yor parish, do use pambulacons as hath bene prscribed.
16. Item whether doeth yor parson or vicar maintaine and kepe in due reparacons the mansion house and other edificies belonging to their ecclesiasticall livings, without suffering them to fall into ruine and decay.
17. Item whether doeth yor minister every Sunday, according to the booke of common prayer, make known to ye people what holydayes and fasting dayes are in the weeke followinge.
18. Item whether any excommunicate pson be admitted into the churche without a certificate of his abslucon from ye ordinarie.
19. Item whether hath yor minister publikely in yor parish churche or chappell, once every yeare reade the constitucions and canons ecclesiasticall, according to his Mats commandment.

For the Laity.

20. Item whether have you in yor parishe churche or chappell

all things necessarie and requisite for common prayer & administracon of the Sacraments; as the booke of common prayer with the newe kalendar, the English bible in the largest volume, two psalters, two bookes of homilies, a decent Baptistry or font, a table for the ten commandments, a convenient seat for the minister to reade service in, a comely and decent pulpitt, a comely communion table, with a faire linnen cloth to lay upon the same, and some covering of silke, buckram, or other such lyke for the cleane keeping theirof, a faire and comely communion cup of silver (with) cover, such as may serve for ministracon of the holy communion, a decent large surplice with sleyves, a chest or box for ye poor & the sayd booke of constitutons & canons ecclesiasticall.

21. Item whether the body of yor churche and chappell with the chancell be well & sufficiently repayerd & kept without pphanacon or abuse (in) any way and yf decayed or pphaned through whose default and whether yor bells and stalles in the same be well maintained, yor churchyard well walled or fenced and decently kept, and yf the same be in any part decayed through whose default.
22. Item whether any Almes house, Hospitall Schole or Spitle wthin yor Parish be well and godly used; according to the foundacon & true intent of the founders theirof, & whether any pension or stipend due to any of them be detained and by whom.
23. Item whether any children be baptized or christened in private houses or otherwise then in cases of necessitie and by a lawfull minister, and yf yea, then whose children were they, and by whome were they baptized; and whether suche so baptized were deffered and brought to ye churche for further manifestacon & approbacon theirof according to ye book of common prayer.
24. Item whether are there any pson or psons inhabiting or sojourning wthin yor parish or chappellrie that be notorious recusants or who negligently or seldome come to yor churche or chappell upon Sabaothes or festivall dayes and who be they and how long have they so continued, and what estate, condicon or degree are they of and whether be their any who in yor sayd pish or chapellrie above the age of 16 yeares who doo not yearly communicate thrise at the least whereof once at Easter and who be they.

25. Item whether doeth yor minister, churchwardens, questmen and assistants yearly within fortie dayes after Easter exhibite to ye Bishop or his Chancellor, according to the 113 canon, the names and surnames of all the pishoners as well men as women who being of the age of 16 years received not the communion at Easter before.
26. Item whether the youth of yor parish doo diligently repair to yor churche or chappell upon Sabaothes and holidayes to be catechized and yf not in whose default.
27. Item whether any doo goo out of ye churche or chappell or doo wth talking walking or any other unsemely offences or unreverent behaviour in the tyme of publike prayer, preaching, celebracon of the Sacraments, catechizing and who are they.
28. Item whether therbe any who privately or publikly by speache or otherwise deprcate any part of the true religion established within this realme, or the ministers or pfessors their of.
29. Item whether have you any scholemr who teacheth either publikly or privately wthin yor sayd parish or chappellrie not being lawfully lycensed thier unto by writing under seale, & how long hath he their taught.
30. Item whether any wthin yor parish or chappellrie doo suffer any to eat, drinke, play, jangle or talke in their house or yard or any butcher or tradesman their shopp windowes to be kept open to sell meate, drinke or wares on Sondag, in time of morning or evening prayers; sermons lectures or catechezing, or that labour or worke on the Saboathe or other commanded festivall dayes to the hinderance of prayers, sermons, or other godly exercises.
31. Item whether any wthin yor parish doo chide, braull, quarrell or fight wthin yor church or churchyard; and who be they; and whether any have drawne any weapon their wth purpose to strike wth the same.
32. Item whether are their wthin yor parish or chappellrie any rush bearing, boarbatings, bulbaytings, may games, morris dances, ales, or any such lyke prothane pastimes or assemblies on ye Saboathe to the hindernace of prayers, sermons, or other godly exercises.
33. Item whether be their any wthin yor parish or chappellrie that use to ringe ye bells supstitiously upon any abrogated holydayes or the evens their of and whether ys the passing

bell tolled when any Christian body is sicke and lyke to dye as yt ought to be, and after the death of any, whether their be any supstitious ringing, supstitious burning of candles upon the corpes in the daye tyme, after yt be light, or praying for the dead at crosses or places where crosses have bene in the way to the church, or other supstitious use of the crosse, wth towells, palmes, met-wands or other memories of idolatrie at buryalls.

34. Item whether are you provided of a parchmt booke in which have bene & are written the names of all the children, men, and women, baptized, marryed, or buryed wthin yor parish contained in yor former register booke, and specially since ye beginning of ye reigne of the late Quene Elizabeth; and whether the day and year of every christening, wedding, & buryall wch have bene in yor parish have bene duly written in yt book, and whether have you a sure coffer wth 3 lockes and keyes for ye safe custody theirof.
35. Item whether is their placed by yre register a table containing the severall rates, and sumes of all fees due to the judge, and other officers of yor court, so as every man may come to viewe the same, without difficultie and whether yor chancellor or any other officer, or minister doo exort or extort any greater fees or sumes of maney, then in ye sayd table is contained, and yf so let the same be expressed.
36. Item whether are their, or have bene since his Mats most happie reigne over this kingdome, within yor parish or chappellrie any incesthuous psons, adulterers, fornicators, or since the 25th of September 1612 any usurers, drunkards, swearers or any other who are vehemently suspected, or defamed of any such crime, who be they.
37. Item whether wthin yor parish or chapellrie are their, or have bene, since his Mats so happie reigne any psons having two wives, or any woman 2 husbands, or any marryed wthin the degrees forbidden, or without banes three severall Sundayes, or holy dayes, first published or in the time by lawe prohibited, without lawfull lycense theirunto from such as have Episcopall authoritie or any who have had carnall knowledge together or before their marriage, or that are vehemently suspected therof and who they be.

38. Whether have any bene privately married together wthin yor pish by any unknowne priest or minister, or any who have not pured their children to be publikely baptized in yor sayd churche or chappell, according to ye booke of common prayer, and who they be.
39. Item whether any wthin yor parish or chappellrie have harboured any woman, begotten wth child forth of lawfull matrimonie & have suffered them to depart away unpunished, or any who do harbour, or relieve, any obstinate recusants or excommunicated psons, and what & how many recusants or psons excommunicated be their wthin yor sayd pische or chappellrie, & how long have they so remained and for what cause they were so excommunicated.
40. Item whether any of yor parishes doo refuse to contribute towards the reparations of yor churche or chappell or towards the provision of any necessarie arnaments theirin, or that refuse to pay yor curate or parishe clerke his wages or other usuall duties, and who they be.
41. Item whether ye churchwardens and sydemen be chosen according to the 89 and 90 canons and during their tyme have faithfully and dutiffully discharged their office, and at or before their goinge oute of the same made a just accompt of their receipts and pceedings to the use of ye churche and whether any part of the churche stocke, or any other lying given to any godly publike use, be delived to any or otherwise employed then apptaineth.
42. Item whether yor parish clerke be dutifull and diligent in attending the minister and of sufficiencie to discharge his place or not.
43. Item whether any wthin yor parish or chappellrie doo occupie or intermedle wth ye goods or chattells of any deceased pson whatsoever whose will, yf any suche be is not lawfully approved, or dying intestate the administration theirof not lawfully granted, and who they be.
44. Item whether is their wthin yor sayd parishe or chappellrie any offender or offenders in any other crime against the canons & constitucions and other lawes ecclesiasticall not expressly contained in any of these articles whose reformation may be had by ecclesiasticall authoritie and who and what the same are.