

NOTICES OF RICHARD CURTEYS, BISHOP OF  
CHICHESTER, 1570 to 1582.

BY SIR HENRY ELLIS, K.H., F.S.A., &c.

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IN the Note Books of Bishop White Kennett, among the Lansdowne MSS. in the British Museum, is a memorandum from the work of Richard Coortesse, D.D., Bishop of Chichester, published in 1577, which, in a Preface to the Reader, has a bearing upon the state of Sussex, in regard to the great body of its inhabitants at that period. He was a Lincolnshire man, and of St. John's College, Cambridge, whence he wrote, 17th Dec., 1565 (MSS., State Paper Office), reporting the names of the tutors and students, and that nearly all had conformed in wearing the surplice, pursuant to the Queen's injunctions; but in January following, being discouraged by the strange proceedings at Cambridge, he was advised by Sir H. Cheney to remove. He became chaplain to Archbishop Parker, and in November, 1566, was made Dean of Chichester. On 26th November, in that year, the Archbishop wrote to Cecil, saying he was glad of the appointment, and wishing that a prebend in Canterbury, then vacant, should be given to Curteys, "for his better furniture." (Parker, *Corr.* p. 291.) He was also chaplain to the Queen. On the death of Bishop Barlow, in August, 1568, Parker recommended Curteys for the vacant see of Chichester, saying, "the choice is not great elsewhere, and, he being an honest learned man, I would trust that he should well supply it to God's honour and to the Queen's contentation. He is now but a poor man, and wanteth living; his age is competent." (*Ib.* p. 332.) No appointment then took place; the Queen, however, granted him the prebend in Canterbury, which he does not seem ever to have occupied,

and at length, on 15th April, 1570, the vacant see of Chichester was filled up by his election.

Among the MSS. Coll. Arms (Vincent 162, p. 120), is a grant, in 1569-70, by Gilbert Detheycke, Knight, Garter, of the following arms to Richard Coorteyes, D.D. (without any description to show his descent):—Palé of Or and Az., a fess chequy Ar. and Sa., three martlets of the first.

The bishop's name in the title-page of his own work is written Coortesse; Le Neve, in his *Fasti Eccl. Angli.*, calls him Curteys; Bishop Tanner, in his *Bibliotheca*, Curtoys. In Herbert's *Ames*, the bishop, in one place, stands as Richard Curtis.

The work, the title of which follows, was unknown both to Ames and Herbert: *An Exposition of certayne Wordes of St. Paule to the Romaines, entituled by an old writer, Hugo, a Treatise of the Workes of thre Dayes. Also, another Worke of the Truthe of Christ's naturall Body.* By Richarde Coortesse, Docter of Divinitie, and Bishop of Chichester. *Imprinted by H. Jackson, for William Brome. 1577.*

#### Preface to the Reader, in commendation of the Author:—

First, over and beside his ordinary preaching upon Sondays and Holidays, he hath gone three times through this whole diocese of Chichester, preaching himselfe at the greatest towns, and many learned preachers with him, in other places. And this last sommer was accepted of the substance both of gentlemen, preachers, and people of the whole shire exceeding well, and in suche sorte as the like hath not been seen in the memory of man, to any of the calling in this country. And whereas it was a rare thing before his time to heare a learned sermon in Sussex, now the pulpittes in most places sound continually with the voyce of learned and godly preachers, he himselfe, as *Dux gregis*,<sup>1</sup> giving good example unto the rest in so grave and learned manner, that the people, with ardent zeale, wonderfull rejoicinge, and in great number, take farre and long jorneyes to be partakers of his good and godly lessons.

We are assured that the rooting out of bad and unlearned curates, and the planting of zealous and learned preachers, hath been occasion to him of great expenses and charge. And so, within these six yeares, he hath brought into

<sup>1</sup> Strype states that some of his sermons were printed. Four are preserved in the Library of the British Museum, viz., 14th March, 1574, preached before the Queen, at Greenwich, from Eccl. xiii. 1—7, edited, with MS. notes, by T. Browne, and published on request; a second edition appearing in 1579, and the editor excusing himself for not being able to reproduce in

the printing the eloquence and force of the speaker: 6th March, 1575, preached before the Queen, at Richmond, from Judges i. 1—13: 4th March, 1576, at Paul's Cross, from the Apoc. xii. 1—9; and on the third Sunday in Lent, in the same year, before the Queen, at Westminster, from Acts xx. 28—31.

this diocese, and preferred, or been the meanes of the preferring, of twenty preachers, which be well able to preache in any learned audience in this realme.<sup>1</sup> And by the diligent preaching and other exercising of himself and these in the Scriptures, hath trayned up a xl. more in such sort that they be sufficient enough to preach to any ordinary audience.—He hath travelled in the suppressing of Machevils, Papistes,<sup>2</sup> Libertines, Atheists, and such other erroneous persons; in the maintayning of poor fatherless children against the oppressor; the protecting of widows from the violent; the releasing of strangers for the Gospel's sake; the punishment of fornicators and adulterers; the withstanding of robbers and pyrates; the restrayning of such as unnaturally carry away grayne,<sup>3</sup> victuals, and other the commodities of this realme, and in the meeting with simoniacal practises, &c.: for the which good deeds (such is the malice of Sathan and his lims), most bitter and bad speeches are throwne out agaynst him: yea, and certaine hyred and suborned to go from nobleman to nobleman, from justiciaries to justiciaries,<sup>4</sup> from common table to common table,<sup>5</sup> and, to be brief, from place and person to place and person, to carry such tales and surmises as the informer knowith to be false, and the reporter is meer ignorant of.

“But the scholler is not above his master,” &c. And surely we, for our partes, have often times wondred at his constancie and patience, that whereas we see others so overcome with importunity of slaundersous and infamous reportes and great enemyes, when he heareth any lewd and opprobrious speeches spread of him, he is no whit moved, but onely answereth, “It is for

<sup>1</sup> He had been one of the ecclesiastical commissioners, at the head of whom was Parker, who, on 7th June, 1571, issued their instructions to churchwardens and others, in no wise to suffer any minister to minister any sacrament or say any public prayers, except as prescribed by the Book of Common Prayer and the Queen's laws, or any person, publicly or privately, to teach, read, or preach in any public place of worship, or private house, unless licensed to preach by the Queen, the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Bishop of the diocese.—Parker's *Correspondence*, p. 382.

<sup>2</sup> In March, 1576-7, he cited several before him at Chichester (see *Sussex Arch. Coll.* Vol. III. p. 90, and *Strype's Annals*, pt. ii.), and he wrote to Walsingham on the same day (State Paper Office), stating that those who were backward in religion, grew worse and worse, and recommended the administration of the oath of supremacy at the next sessions. In reporting his examinations on 6th April, he declared that he found, on his late visitation, that many were unsound; and on the 13th, answering the complaints made by Sir Thos. Palmer and others against him to the Council, he declared that what he had done, had been done plainly and uprightly.

<sup>3</sup> James Hore, of Waterford, had sought

his permission to export grain, and complaint was made of his compliance with the request; whilst the Council authorized Michael Hoare, at the same time, to transport 90 quarters of wheat to Ireland.—MSS. State Paper Office.

<sup>4</sup> On 26th April, 1577, a series of articles were exhibited by the Justices of Sussex, declaring the injuries and wrongs done to them. Commissioners were appointed to examine him; and at the conclusion of the conferences, they prescribed conditions for his observance.—MS. State Paper Office.

<sup>5</sup> He was obliged, in June, 1577, to procure a testimonial, under the hands and seals of several gentlemen, that he was not drunk at Mr. John Sherwin's house, as by some he was most unjustly slandered. (MS. State Paper Office.) In 1579, however, he was called upon to deprive his brother, Edmund Coortesse, of the vicarage of Cuckfield and canony in Chichester, as a “lewd vicar, void of all learning, a scoffer at singing of psalms, a seeker to witches, a drunkard,” &c. The bishop adroitly waved the delicate task, and, on Jan. 5th, 1581, the Bishop of London was directed to proceed to the deprivation of the vicar.—MS. State Paper Office; *Strype's Annals*, ii. b. ii. pp. 277-8.

doynge my duty. My master, Christ, escaped not evill tongues, and St. Paul counselleth us to go on by good reportes and evil reportes, *et a malis vituperari et laudari est*; and *Benedicit mihi Deus propter maledictiones istas*. God will bless me for these curses;” and never thinketh more of the matter.

It is also apparent to the eyes of men, what cost he hath, and doth from tyme to tyme bestow, in repaying of his houses, and hospitalite to men of all degrees, and especially upon the poor, whom he doth often and in great numbers feed in his hall after his sermons, &c.

*In Sussex, 16th December, 1576.*

Your beloved in the Lord, the Preachers of the Diocese of Chichester:—

HENRY BLAXTON, M.A., of Clarehal, in Cambridge, and Preacher.

THOMAS GILLINGHAM, M.A., of Corpus Christi College, in Oxford, Preacher.

DANYELL GARDYNER, M.A., of Clare Hall, in Cambr., and Preacher.

WILLIAM COALL, of St. John's Coll., in Cambr., M.A.

RICHARD FLETCHER, S.T.B., nuper Socius et Præses Coll. Corporis Christi, Acad. Cant. nunc Minister Ecclesiæ.

(And above thirty more.)

After the Bishop's death, an Inventory (partially printed in Strype's *Annals*, iii. b. i. p. 482) was taken of the Bishop's goods, and is to be found in Lansd. MS. LIV. art. 44.

A Collection made of the Goods of the late Bisshopp of Chichester, according to the Retorne made by Tho. Bowyer, Richard Lewkenor, and George Bynyon, Commissioners.

*At Aldingborne.*—Imprimis, viij oxen, xxli. Item, viij steares, xvjli. It. xxij kyne, xxviiijli. It. ij bulls, lvjs. It. ij sucklinge calves, xvjs. It. j weyner, iijs. iiij*d*. It. v stone horses, xli. It. v geldings, xvli. viijs. iiij*d*. It. v colts, cs. It. iij suckinge coltes, xxxs. It. ij naggcs, xls. It. xxxj wethers, ewes, and lambes, vjli. It. xxxj hogges, vjli. viijs. iiij*d*. It. xxxiiij loads of hay, xiiijli. xvs. It. xxv q<sup>rs</sup> of wheate, xxvli. It. iij loads of pease, xxxs. It. certeine planks of okes, xvjs. It. xxx<sup>tie</sup> tonne of rough tymber, vli.—Sma. ciiij<sup>xx</sup> xjli. iijs.

*At Chesworth.*<sup>1</sup>—Item, vj drawinge oxen, xvli. It. iij ffatt oxen, xivli. It. viij weyners, lxivs. It. lx loads of wood, cs. It. ij paire of iron-bound wheles, liijs. iiij*d*. It. iij ploughes, w<sup>t</sup> their furniture, xvs. It. vij plough cheynes, xjs. viij*d*. It. vj yokes, xs. It. ij dounge carts, w<sup>t</sup> j paire wheles, xiijs. iiij*d*. It. iij weynes, xijs. iiij*d*. It. j cart, viijs. It. ij nebbes for dounge carts, ijs. It. j paire of doble start ropes, xij*d*. It. x bushels of salt, xs. It. iij paire of shott harneys, and harness for a tiller, xxxs. It. iij harrowes, xs.—Sma. xlviijli. viij*d*.

*At Aldingborne.*—It. iij great bowles, gilt, xvijli. It. iij lesser bowles, gilt, w<sup>t</sup> ij covers, xiiijli. It. j gilt bowle, chased, lxvjs. viij*d*. It. j great salt, with a cover, gilt, cs. It. j silver salt, not gilt, lxvjs. viij*d*. It. a treacher salt, gilt, xxs. It. ij litle bowles, gilt, cs. It. ij litle cupp bowles, thone white, thother gilt, lxs. It. ij gilt cups, xli. It. ij stone

<sup>1</sup> Qu. Horsham.—See *Sussex Arch. Coll.* VIII. p. 36.

potts, cou'ed w<sup>t</sup> silver, xs. It. xxiiij<sup>tho</sup> sylver spones, vj*li*. It. the bedding, with the furniture, the lynnenn, and the diaper, lxxvj*li*. xiijs. It. walnuct-tree planks, xls. It. Doctor Ffleetcher endebted, xiiij*li*. It. the bishopp's seale, xxxs. It. a garnish and halfe of pewter vessell, xls. It. the bishopp's books, xx*li*. It. the rent of *Amberley Castell*, due at th' Annunciation, 1582, xxvij*li*. It. for soile that was solde, xs. It. vj mares, xxx*li*. xs. It. x saddles, ls. It. grasse sould for xxs. It. j brasse caldron, vs. It. j ffetherbedd, xiijs. iiij*d*. It. bricces, xls. It. j lease, xiiij*li*. vjs. viij*d*. It. iiij acres of wheate, liijs. iiij*d*. It. otes, xxxs. It. v plankes, vs. It. j load of ynch board, xs.—Sma. cxlvij*li*.

*In the Kitchen at Chesworth.*—Item, j brasse pott, xs. It. j brasen ladell, xij*d*. It. j beife pricke, vj*d*. It. ij paire of pott-hangeres, xd. It. ij paire of pott-hooks, xvj*d*. It. j gridiron, xij*d*. It. j paire of iron dogges, xd. It. v spitts, vjs. viij*d*. It. ij dripping-pannes of iron, iijs. It. j brasse pann, vs. It. j paire of cobirons, xiijs. iiij*d*. It. j musterd querne, iiij*d*. It. j mortar and pestell of iron, xij*d*. It. ij skymers, ijs. It. ij brasse potts, vjs. It. j iron oven, xs. It. j ffryinge-pann, viij*d*. It. j tryvett, xvj*d*.

*In the Mylke House.*—Item, ij brasse kettells, xiijs. vj*d*. It. j brasse pann, viijs. It. j greate chaldron, xijs. It. j tryvett, xvj*d*. It. j warmyng-pann, ijs. It. tubbs, and other necessaries, xs.—Sma. cxiijs. viij*d*.

Sma. tot.—cccc.iiij<sup>xx</sup> xix*li*. xvijs. iiij*d*.

*Percell of the Bishopp's Goods, and not valued.*—Item, ij mares. It. j geldinge. It. iiij loads of hay. It. ij tonne of tymber. It. iiij new sylu' potts. It. ij old sylu' potts. It. his parlament robes. It. j veluet quishon, embrowdered with gould and tassaed. It. j silk grogrian gowne, faced with veluet. It. a veluett cassock. It. j other grogrian gowne, faced with veluet. It. j night-gowne of buffyn. It. j cloke lyned with bayes. It. j veluett hatt. It. j bason and ewer, of syluer, layde to paune. It. a mapp. It. ij standing cupps, gilt; and his new yeare's giftes, the nomber not certified. It. ij litle standing cupps. It. a younge sorrell mare, conveyed a way by William Turner. It. vj corsletts, and vj hedd peaces. It. xij calyuers, xij flasketts, xj touch-boxes, and xij chardges. It. vij armed pykes, iiij unarmed pykes. It. xj jackes, x bowes, xij halbeards. It. sheaffe arrowes, powder, and matches; xviiij<sup>tene</sup> caps and skulles. It. chese. It. iiij dossen and j pece of old pewter vessell. It. vj new great platters. It. vj lesser platters. It. vj dishes, and vj fruit-dishes. It. iiij pewter chamber-potts. It. j pewter still. It. vj porringers, and vi sawcers. It. xij trencher plates. It. iiij pewter candelsticks. It. j bason, j washing pott. It. iiij chargers. It. iiij washing basons. It. j colender, and ij pewter potts. It. j fflaggon of pewter. It. ij pewter pottell potts. It. v pie plates. It. j mynsing-knyfe, a cleaver, and ij chopping-knyves. It. a lead before the rang, ij yardes long, and halfe a yard broad.

*In the Parlor at Chesworth.*—Item, ij tables, and j side board. It. ij fourmes, and xviiij joined stooles. It. x foot stooles. It. ij cobirons, and j fire-shovell. It. . . . . (sic)

James Allen deposeth, that he carried away certeyne bedding, bouldsters, pillowes, and blankettes, by Mrs. Courteis' appointment, ij dores being broken open.

Will'm Acon deposeth, that ther was conveyed by night from Chesworth, certeyne stuff, and that Roger Robinson, Mr. Mervyn's servant, carried from Aldingborne House a cloake-bagge full of stuff, at the comaundment of his master.

Will'm Bryan deposeth, that a young mare was conveyed by Will'm Turnor, or his assignes; and that John Mervyn conveyed ij stone horsse, ij mares, and j geldinge, and j blagge nagg, before the inventory was taken by the sheriff, and not praised.

Humfrey Pevrell deposeth, that Mrs. Couerteis hath the lease of Chisworth.

Will'm Turnor deposeth, that Mrs. Courteys hath a bond, made by Mr. Coppinger unto the Bisshop.

Strype adds, "Item. No hope to recover anything, the bishop's widow being left very poor. So that the weight thereof is to fall upon the next bishop" (Dr. Thos. Bichley). "The woods are so spoiled that there is scarce sufficient for firewood."

The Inventory was, no doubt, taken in 1582; for in the Kennett MSS. is a memorandum, apparently from Archbishop Grindal's own register:—"Spiritualia Episcopat. Cicestr. post mortem Ricardi Epi. ab Archiepiscopi seisita sunt 1 Sept. 1582."

The Sheriff's valuation probably gives a fair estimate of Sussex prices at the date of the Inventory.

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By the kindness of Mr. Romilly, the registrar of the University of Cambridge, I am able to give the dates of the Bishop's degrees. He was A.B. 1552-3; A.M. 1556; B.D. 1565; and D.D. 1569. In the grace brought in to enable him to take this degree before the usual time, the name is spelt Coortesse. The degree was to be conferred either within the University or elsewhere, by the Vice-Chancellor, or some other Doctor of Divinity acting as his deputy; and there is a memorandum that he was actually admitted to his degree by Gabriel Goodman (acting as deputy for Vice-Chancellor Young), Dean of Westminster, in that room of his ordinary habitation commonly called the Jerusalem Chamber. Dr. Curteys was Fellow of St. John's College.

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