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THE
CHURCHMAN

AUGUST, 1900.

ART. I.—THE ARCHBISHOPS OF CANTERBURY
SINCE THE RESTORATION.

VII. WILLIAM WAKE.

ARCHBISHOP WAKE compiled for his son a small volume, "A Brief Inquiry into the Antiquity of the Wake Family," which was printed in 1833 by his great-granddaughter, Etheldred Bennett. Briefly summarized, it says that Hugh Wac, in the reign of Henry I., married Emma, heiress of Baldwin FitzGilbert, who was grandson of Baldwin, Count of Flanders. Who Hugh "Wac" was, whether of Norman or English origin, is doubtful, but the Archbishop is against the Norman idea. He thinks that Le Wake, or "The Watchful," was given to Hereward as descriptive of his character as a military commander. Mr. M. A. Lower, in his book on English surnames, is of the same opinion.

William Wake was born at Blandford, Dorset, January 26, 1657, the son of a well-to-do member of this ancient family. The boy was educated at the Grammar School of his native town, and then matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford (1673), took his B.A. in 1676, M.A. 1679, and B.D. and D.D. by accumulation 1689.¹

His father intended him for commercial life, but he chose the clerical, and was ordained in 1681. Next year he accepted the duty of chaplain to his friend, Sir Richard Graham, who had been created Viscount Preston, and sent as Envoy-Extra-

¹ The Festival of the Sons of the Clergy, which, it is well to note, was founded in the time of the Commonwealth for the benefit of the impoverished clergy, was incorporated by royal charter in 1678, and on this occasion the Archbishop's uncle, Edward Wake, exerted himself successfully to secure care for the widows and children of the clergy in the charter of incorporation.

ordinary to the French Court. Some important results in Wake's life followed from this. He remained three years in Paris, where a very serious controversy was being carried on. The reign of Lewis XIV. had reached its zenith. The crimes and follies of the Fronde had strengthened his position, for the nation in its disgust at these things welcomed a strong unlimited monarchy, and the people were content to acquiesce in the show and glitter; each man saw himself reflected in the King. Public opinion for a while consisted in admiration of the King and the worship of the crown and sceptre. No King of France had been so powerful; never had the boundaries of the kingdom been so wide, or the literature and art of the nation so brilliant. A King at the age of five, he had grown up under clever guidance, and when he attained his majority and assumed the reins of government the nation was united and prosperous. That was the most brilliant and inspiring spectacle of monarchy which the world had yet seen. It was the golden age of pulpit oratory in France, and the King loved listening to it. Controversies there were, and angry ones, too. SS. Francis de Sales and Vincent de Paul had been dead some years, but the great battle between Jansenists and Jesuits was at its height; rival parties at Court were now extolling the logic of the Jesuit Bourdaloue, or the whirlwind eloquence of Fléchier, or the finished periods of Massillon. But all these were paling in lustre before the sustained and fiery power of Jacques Bénigne Bossuet. This illustrious man had been consecrated Bishop of London in 1669, but next year accepted the post of tutor to the Dauphin and resigned his see for an abbacy, devoting himself to his tutorial duties. For his pupil's use he wrote his "*Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle*," in three parts, a work so able that it gained the unstinted praise of Voltaire. In 1685 Lewis made him Bishop of Meaux.

The cleverest woman who ever bore power in France, Mme. de Maintenon, was now at the height of her influence, for good more than for evil, over Lewis XIV. Whatever may have been their relations before, he married her in 1684, after his Queen's death. To understand the basis of his policy, we must remember that Lewis had constantly before him the idea of Charlemagne—the vision of a universal empire. Charles the Great had for a while held sway over Europe, had been crowned monarch of the Holy Roman Empire in 814; but before long his empire had been broken to pieces. The same vision had floated before the eyes of Charles V., but again came disintegration; and the House of Hapsburg had now sunk almost into insignificance. Germany was saturated with Protestantism, and this, if only for its political

affinities, was hateful to Lewis. He hoped to reconstruct a suzerainty over the nations around, which a dread of the still terrible Turks would help to bind together; and it was part of his hope to make England an appanage of his monarchy. Hence his support of Charles II. and his brother James. William of Orange saw clearly his plans, and made it the very business of his life to defeat them. But a formidable difficulty soon rose up against Lewis. He could revoke the Edict of Nantes, which he did in 1685, and so persecute his Protestant subjects in France. But what of the Roman Church itself and his relations to the Pope?

The Jesuits had succeeded in expelling the Port Royalist nuns, but the Jansenists were by no means defeated. And it was impossible that the heavy blows which the Protestant teachers of the Continent had struck at the Papal power should not have effect even upon those who continued to hold Roman doctrine. Lewis himself was almost as determined as our Henry VIII. to assert his royal prerogative, orthodox as he considered himself. He was "the most Christian King," "the eldest son of the Church," the extirpator of heresy; and all this worked together to create in his soul the most boundless arrogance which any despot ever showed. Yet the doom of failure was already gone forth against him. His arms had been so successful that to this day the marks of the brutalities which followed his victories are seen by the tourist all through the Palatinate. "Whom are you fighting against now that the Emperor is dethroned?" said Thiers to Ranke after the fatal battle of Sedan. "Against Lewis XIV.," sternly replied the great historian. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes was the turning-point in his career. The mischief to Germany was done, but from that day onwards his power declined, and when he died, thwarted, impoverished, deprived of children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, hirelings watched by his corpse, and the nation breathed as though a weight had been lifted from its heart.

He had listened to advisers who bade him not be the servile tool of the Roman Pontiff, and he had yielded to that advice when he scolded Pope Innocent XI. for favouring the Jansenists. In his very zeal for orthodoxy he had stood up against the Pope. The maxim of the heathen Emperor M. Aurelius, when he declared to the Christians, "Non licet esse vos," was adopted by Lewis against Protestants and Jansenists alike; and with the same despotic instinct he set himself fiercely against the hopes and plans of men like his friend Bossuet for negotiation and reconciliation between the Catholics and Protestants. Concession of any sort meant diminution of arbitrary authority, and therefore was hateful to

him. Yet it might have seemed that the wider view had hope of acceptance. There had been a struggle between the Holy See and the French King concerning certain feudal rights, which had lasted for nine years. The same year that Wake went to Paris the Gallican Church had published a "Declaration" that the ecclesiastical power has no rights over the temporalities of the kingdom; that a General Council is superior to the Pope; that his power is under the control of Canons, and his judgment is not infallible except when confirmed by the Church. All this was significant enough, and when supported by a monarch so powerful as Lewis was more than the Pope dared resent. Yet it was a failure, because Bossuet himself thus appealed to antiquity, not because he was zealous for liberty of conscience, but because he wanted to serve his master the King. He could not rise above the circumstances of his position; he was the courtier of a monarch whose despotism was like that of a Sultan. Some of his finest sermons are defiled by gross flattery of the King. He certainly does not show to advantage in his controversy with the simple, saintly Fénelon.

But the declaration thus put forth naturally attracted the earnest attention of Wake, who saw hopes of approximation between the Gallican and English Communion. And this hope, though again and again disappointed, never left him. He clung to it so long as he lived. In 1684 a tract was published at Cologne entitled "*Moyens les justes et efficaces pour ramener dans le sein de l'Eglise Catholique ceux qui en sont séparés.*" Wake translated it under the title "*Sure and Honest Means for the Conversion of all Heretics; and Wholesome Advice and Expedients for the Reformation of the Church.*" Writ by one of the Communion of the Church of Rome, and translated from the French" (London, 1688). It has a long preface by him. But at the same time, and, in fact, owing to the same course of studies, he was moved to enter into a firm defence of the Anglican position. Fell, Bishop of Oxford, took advantage of his scholarship to ask him whilst in Paris to collate some manuscripts of the New Testament in the library there for John Mill's projected edition. In doing this he became cognizant of some falsifications of manuscripts by the Sorbonne, of which he afterwards made telling use in contravening Bossuet's "*Variations des Eglises Protestantes.*" He returned to England with Lord Preston in 1685, and immediately set to work with his "*Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England.*" He published it in quarto in 1686, and it has gone through many editions since, and deservedly. The sixth edition lies before me: "Printed for B. Dod, Bookseller to the Society for

Promoting Christian Knowledge, at the Bible and Key in Ave-Mary-Lane, 1751." This valuable work is in the form of a commentary, or extension (for it is all in question and answer) of the Church Catechism, and consists of six parts: i. Of the Gospel Covenant; ii. Of the Articles of our Faith; iii. Of the Gospel Obedience; iv. Of the Duty of Prayer; v. Of the Sacraments; vi. Of Confirmation. Though the greater part of it is occupied with general teaching, it is also in part controversial. For example, when he has to deal with "Repentance," he writes:

Q. What is the next thing required in order to a true Repentance?

A. Confession of sin. Not that God has any need of being informed by us of what we have done amiss: but to the end that we may thereby both raise in ourselves a greater shame and sorrow for our evil doings; and give the greater glory to God by a solemn humbling of ourselves in confession before Him.

Q. Is such a Confession necessary to our Forgiveness?

A. So necessary that we have no promise of any pardon without it: Prov. xxviii. 13, *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.* 1 John i. 8, 9, *If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Q. To whom is our Confession to be made?

A. Always to God; and in some certain cases to man also.

Q. What are those cases in which we ought to confess our sins to man as well as to God?

A. They are especially these three: (1) In case we have offended or injured our neighbour; and upon that account need to obtain his pardon as well as God's. (2) If by any open and notorious transgression we shall happen to have either deserved, or it may be, to have fallen under the censures of the Church; and so confession to the Church is necessary to restore us to the peace of it. Or (3) if we shall have any private reason that may move us to acquaint any person with our sins; for Advice, for Prayer, for Absolution; or for any other the like spiritual advantage, which cannot be had without it.

Q. What think you of that Confession (commonly called *Auricular Confession*) which the Church of Rome requires as necessary to forgiveness?

A. I look upon it as a great and dangerous Imposition that has no warrant from the Holy Scriptures; but is a Rock and

Snare to the consciences of good men; and may be apt to encourage those who are evil inclined to commit sin; whilst by the Absolution which is so readily given them thereupon (and the efficacy of which is so highly magnified in that Church) they are taught to entertain a much less opinion both of the heinousness and danger of their evil doings and of the easiness of obtaining the forgiveness of them, than either the Scripture warrants or their own interest should prompt them to admit of.

So all through; by question and answer the sufficiency of Holy Scripture is declared, and the distinctive doctrines of Romanism rejected. Thus, in the extension on the article of the Creed on the Catholic Church, we have:

Q. Do you look upon the Church of England to be a true part of the Catholic Church?

A. It certainly is: inasmuch as it possesses the true Catholic faith, delivered in the Holy Scriptures, and drawn up in the Creeds of the Church, and by the most ancient Councils acknowledged to be sufficient to denominate those who professed according thereunto, to be truly Catholic Christians; and also holds communion with all such churches as profess the same faith; and as far forth, as they do so.

Q. What is your opinion of the Church of Rome in this particular?

A. That she is both schismatical and heretical: schismatical in cutting off all others from her communion who will not profess her errors and submit to her usurped authority; heretical in professing such doctrines as quite destroy the foundations of Christianity, and are inconsistent with that truth which she herself pretends to maintain.

These are fair specimens; the same controversial attitude marks the whole book, but by no means to the exclusion of a lucid and full explanation of Christian doctrine. After he became Bishop of Lincoln, he republished it with a prefatory address to the clergy of the diocese, in which he gives a full account of the value of catechetical instruction, and of the care which has been taken in the past to promote it. "As by the Sermon in the Morning," he writes, "those who are of riper years and better knowledge in the Gospel of Christ, are edified and instructed; so by teaching and expounding the Catechism in the Afternoon, the younger and more ignorant (who are not yet capable of profiting by Sermons) are informed and trained up with such a sort of learning as is suitable to their age and capacities. And yet, alas! how has this

prudent and useful method been slighted by many and neglected by more. And instead of these catechetical instructions a second Sermon has been introduced in the afternoon, and a new sort of teachers set up, under as new a character, of Lecturers, to preach it; and that, oftentimes, not so much to the real benefit as to the fancies and inclinations of those by whom they are to be paid for it. I cannot say that this is altogether contrary to our present Establishment, because the last Act of Uniformity has given directions for the licensing and allowing of them; but sure I am it is a manifest encroachment upon our good old constitutions, which knew no such persons nor made any provision for them. And the result has been that the Afternoon Sermon has almost quite thrown out the much better and more profitable exercise of Catechising, which has both the Laws of the Realm and the Canons of the Church on its side, whereas the other has neither. And therefore if the One must be allowed, I think the Other, at least, should not be omitted."

In 1688 Wake was appointed preacher of Gray's Inn, in spite of the opposition of James II. At the Revolution he was made Chaplain in Ordinary to William and Mary, and Deputy Clerk of the Closet. Next year he was made a Canon of his old college of Christ Church, and in 1693 Rector of St. James's, Piccadilly (there is a portrait of him in the vestry). In 1703 he became Dean of Exeter, and much against his will—for there is a protest of his against it among the Additional MSS. of the British Museum—he had to resign his canonry at Christ Church. His reason was that that canonry gave him opportunities of carrying on his studies in his University. He continued to hold the rectory of St. James's till 1706. On October 21, 1705, he was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln, in succession to Gardiner. On the death of Tenison (December, 1715) he was translated to Canterbury.

During the years we have been recording, Wake published some books of great and permanent value. Of his work on the Catechism, which also includes within it a reply to Bossuet's attack on Protestantism, we have spoken already. His edition of the Apostolic Fathers held a high place in our English theology till Bishop Lightfoot's superseded it. It was published in 1693, and is still frequently to be met with. A cheap edition of it was published by William Hone in 1820, not with honest purpose. That clever pamphleteer gathered together a number of early heretical legendary gospels, and added Wake's Apostolic Fathers to them, so making up what he called "the Apocryphal New Testament." The addition of Wake's prefaces was a throwing dust in men's eyes, for it pretended to make him thereby responsible for the

rest of the volume, which contained very objectionable matter. However, it wrought no harm, for the "Apocryphal Gospels" did the Canonical Gospels the service afforded by the mighty contrast, and the rest—the part taken from Wake—was of very great service in the light it threw on the history of the early Church. It may be added here that Hone, who was always not only a most industrious but earnest man, became a deeply religious one, and died a full believer in the Christian faith.

Of Wake's other great work I have had occasion to speak in the course of the life of Tenison. It is his answer to Atterbury's "Rights, Powers and Privileges of Convocation." Against it Wake published the great volume which now lies before me, entitled "The State of the Church and Clergy of England in their Councils, Synods, Convocations, Conventions, and other Public Assemblies; historically deduced from the Conversion of the Saxons to the Present Times. With a large Appendix of Original Documents." This is a large folio of 870 pages besides 17 pages of preface, and is very learned, thoughtful, and calm. On which side in the controversy the right lay, opinion probably still remains divided, and for the same reason which we have touched upon in political matters. The destruction of feudalism, and the despotism of the Tudors which followed it, left a legacy of strife and contention between Kings and Parliaments, which had to be settled by the course of events, and was so settled by the State wisdom of William III. Still greater was the difficulty raised by the establishment of the Church of England on the principle of independence of Rome. The Church had to feel its way under new conditions, and it is impossible for any honest, any earnest man not to sympathize with the two parties, each of which felt that it had right on its side, the Catholic and the Protestant. The strife between them was for victory; the good hand of God was leading them, and is leading us still, to recognise the truth which underlies each. Warburton, who was no friend to Convocation, favoured his friend Atterbury's views. Atterbury, he said, went on *principles*, Wake on *precedents*. And though for a while Wake's views were accepted by the nation and Church at large, as most conducive to the public peace and order, yet at all events to-day the Convocation of the Church claims rights which he would have questioned. We shall, however, see more of this when we survey the history of Wake's primacy.

W. BENHAM.

(*To be continued.*)