

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

alike impossible, and the whole seems to become a matter of subjectivity for or against the witness. If at this juncture some fresh evidence, definite objective facts, is brought to light, and a severe cross-examination in the light of those facts fails to discredit the witness's testimony, in ordinary life practical men would say that this testing on some unexpected point—some point perhaps where special obloquy had been cast on the witness—was, at any rate, reasonable ground for holding that, if the means arose for taking the witness in twenty points, similar results might be looked for. It is only a case of *ex pede Herculem* after all.

Let men have the courage not to be browbeaten by being told that "all critics are agreed" that the Book of Chronicles is quite untrustworthy—which, indeed, is not true, unless we explain "critic" in a special sense. If the Book is treated as simply so much Jewish literature, then its claim to be historic must be tested by such little outside evidence as we have got. In the only case where as yet comparison is possible, a rather trying test has been satisfactorily undergone. Those who are content to believe that the Book of Chronicles is a legitimate part of God's Word will not maintain that in lapse of centuries errors of text may not have crept in, or that the author was necessarily at all times absolutely accurate in statements of detail, and especially where numbers are concerned; but they will feel confident that, so far as our evidence goes, we are justified in believing the Book of Chronicles to be honest history, not a concoction of dishonest priests.

R. SINKER.

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

WILLIAM HOWLEY.—I.

I HAVE now come to a Primate that I have seen. It was in 1845, at the annual meeting of St. Mark's College, Chelsea; and his tall thin figure, his tremulous voice, his wig, his nervous rubbing of his hands together all the time he was speaking, the simultaneous standing up of the whole assemblage when he rose to address them—all these things remain fixed in my memory. I saw him again at the annual meeting of the National Society, in 1847, listening to Mr. Gladstone, and portions of the famous statesman's address on that occasion I can also remember.

William Howley was the only son of a country clergyman,

the Rev. William Howley, Vicar of Bishop's Sutton and Ropley, two contiguous villages in Hampshire. He was greatly beloved there. My father was a native of the former village, and my grandmother had always an affectionate word of memory for the old parson that she remembered well. When I first saw his two churches they were be-galleried and be-lion-and-unicorned in the most thorough Georgian style; they are now both in good and reverent order. Mr. Howley's marriage register is in the neighbouring church of Privett, and it shows that his wife was unable to write. Her signature is the usual cross made by such persons to somebody else's writing of the name. And thus it is seen that "the last prince Archbishop" was, on one side, of peasant origin. It is by no means an unusual case, one rejoices to say so. That he claimed no relationship with others of the same name was shown in due time by his refusing to place on his carriage the arms borne by other Howleys; he obtained a grant of arms for himself and issue. His comparatively humble birth did not prevent him from "magnifying his office"; he was a magnificent builder, always travelled in state, four-horsed coach, and invariably with outriders.

He was born at Ropley on February 12, 1765, was educated at Winchester under the well-known Dr. Wharton, and laid the foundation of an excellent education. He won the prize for English verse at Winchester for two successive years. All those years he was remarkable for that steady calmness and equanimity of manners which marked him through life. Sydney Smith, one of his schoolfellows there, used to say that he was the only friend who ever put him in a rage. They had been playing chess together, and Howley having got out-and-out the worst of it, was so teased and bantered by his opponent that he lost his temper and in a fury broke his head with the chess-board. From that time forward, said Sydney, I took care to let him win more games than he lost. In 1783 he matriculated as a scholar at New College, Oxford, graduated in 1787, became a Fellow, and was ordained on his fellowship. His refined taste and scholarship received recognition early; he had won prizes for English verse at Winchester, and now was appointed tutor to the Prince of Orange, afterwards King of Holland, and to the Marquis of Abercorn. The tutorship to the Prince of Orange was a mark of high royal favour; for it will be remembered that it was quite intended to marry the Prince to the Princess Charlotte, and that this meant the prospect of a position exactly parallel to that of our late Prince Consort. Howley was selected because King George III., always a good judge of men, had formed a high opinion of him, not only on account of the

manner in which he discharged his duties as a College tutor, but also because of his learning, the purity of his life and his marked but unostentatious piety. And he proved himself worthy of the trust, for the young Prince went out from the University as good a scholar as could be formed out of royal materials. The marriage project, as we know, came to nothing: the Princess married Prince Leopold, afterwards King of the Belgians, and died in her first confinement. The friendship of the Dutch Prince and his tutor remained unbroken until death, and the King of Holland, so long as he visited England, always paid a friendly visit to his old instructor. By successive advances Howley arrived at his D.D. degree in 1805. By this time he had become a Canon of Christ Church, Oxford (1804), and in 1809 he was made Regius Professor of Divinity in his University in succession to Dr. Hall, who had been advanced to the Deanery of Christ Church. In 1796 he succeeded his father at Bishop's Sutton, to which preferment were added the livings of Andover in 1802 and of Bradford Peverell in 1811. The last he took as Fellow of Winchester College, a distinction which he had held since 1794, and this living was in the gift of the College. In 1805 he married Mary Frances, daughter of John Belli, E.I.C.S. She brought him a large fortune, and became the mother of two sons and three daughters. The first son, born in 1810, died at Lambeth in his twenty-third year; the youngest died in 1820, aged six. The eldest daughter married Sir George Beaumont; the second, William Kingsmill, Esq.; the youngest, John Adolphus Wright, a clergyman, on whom the Archbishop conferred the living of Merstham. This last marriage proved most unhappy. Her death was, so I was told at Addington, caused by her husband's cruelty.

On October 3, 1813, Howley was consecrated Bishop of London in succession to John Randolph. The consecrators were the Archbishop (Manners-Sutton) and the Bishops of Gloucester (Huntingford), Salisbury (Fisher) and Chester (Law). Queen Charlotte was present. She had never seen a consecration before, though she was now seventy years old.

Howley's is a case, almost without precedent, of a man whose influence was unmistakably very great from the time when he was first placed in a post of responsibility, and yet who has left so little to show for it. He was a first-rate classical scholar. Hugh James Rose, certainly no bad judge, used to say he was the best scholar he had ever met. Whilst he was tutor to Lord Abercorn, he met George J. Spencer at Stanmore. The latter was absolutely delighted with him, and declared to his friends that Mr. Howley possessed abilities which would cause him to excel in any line in which they

should be directed. "When Howley first came to Stanmore," he wrote afterwards, "his shy and reserved manner prevented his extraordinary merits from being fully appreciated; but when I went there soon after, I found all the women in love with him and all the men envious of him." He expressed his surprise that though Howley was such a good scholar, he never came before the world as an author, and the reason which he gives is, we venture to assert, the true one—he was never satisfied with himself or his performances. A less fastidious man would have rushed into pen and ink, well contented to win the applause of men; Howley judged his own work with such scrupulousness that he kept it to himself, fulfilling the proverb, "Better is the enemy of good." It was even thus with his public speaking. A *writer* who is continually scratching out and revising gets into no trouble, because when his work finds itself in type it all comes out smoothly. Anybody, for example, who has ever seen Charles Dickens's "copy," especially in his later days, will wonder whether the printers can possibly have kept their temper with the erasures and interlineations, and altered sentences. But a man who does that with speeches which he is delivering to an audience comes to unutterable grief. "Scratching out" then is fatal. There are ludicrous stories in abundance of the poor Archbishop's blunderings in his speeches, simply because the sentence in hand was not quite to his taste, and he proceeded there and then to reconstruct it, until he got into hopeless entanglement.

It was by no means the case that Howley was hesitating in his convictions. He was a strong Tory and did not shrink from showing it. Almost immediately after entering his see, he made his primary visitation; and his charge, which was forthwith published, though written with moderation, was also a very able and vigorous assault on the Rationalism which was gaining ground. The Unitarians, he said in the course of it, "loved to question rather than to learn," and this greatly excited Belsham, who immediately took up the defence of his co-religionists with perhaps more zeal than power, and accused the Bishop of "enforcing the slavish doctrines of Popery rather than the free and enquiring spirit of Protestantism." The Bishop accepted the challenge and replied with dignity as well as with vigour. One of the first duties of a Christian, he said, is to "approach the oracles of Divine truth with that humble docility, that prostration of the understanding and the will, which the great theologians of every age and almost of every Christian Church, have earnestly inculcated." How far he succeeded in convincing his readers, we cannot say, but any man who dispassionately

reads his published charges will probably say that they are not only orthodox, but written with spirit and sometimes with very considerable power. Granted that reasonings more profound may be found on the shelves of any good theological library, the Archbishop certainly thought in a most amiable temper, and also with an abundant fund of common-sense. And let it be remembered that he wrote amid the intervals of hard work with his clergy. I have noted in a previous article how one of the bishops in the Midlands besought to be translated from his diocese to London "because he was overworked in his present sphere of labours, and the Bishop of London had nothing to do." This was not Bishop Howley's view of his diocese, nor has it been that of any of his successors. He recognised his responsibility to his three or four millions of the most mixed population in the Empire, and saw that the clergy appointed to minister to this mighty multitude were pre-eminent among their brethren for their learning, ability, and zeal, as well as for some of the faults and mistakes closely allied to these excellent properties. He was called to lead, superintend and control a body so circumstanced and so constituted, and it will, I believe, be granted by students of the ecclesiastical history of the times that his fifteen years of administration of the See of London were marked with a success which attested at once his prudence and piety, his mild firmness and regulated energy.

Within that period many important events occurred, of which he was by no means an unconcerned spectator. Of the close of the great war and the fall of Napoleon, I have already had to speak. The return of peace was followed by strong internal excitements, the agitation for Parliamentary reform, Queen Caroline's trial, and the struggle for Roman Catholic emancipation. The general excitement on each of these questions was shared by the retiring and gentle-minded Bishop Howley, though he mostly restrained himself within bounds, so as not to become an angry striver or vehement politician. Whenever he addressed the House of Lords, he certainly never made any mark as a speaker. Yet in spite of his changes of phraseology and his reconstructed and therefore involved sentences, his hearers saw that he brought to bear upon his subject a competent acquaintance with it, the result of careful study, an impartial spirit, and a flow of genuine good feeling. He was no such reasoner as Bishop Lloyd, could deliver no such vigorous discourse as Thirlwall, could not play the advocate or the satirist so well as Philpotts; his bearing and presence were not so noble as those of Archbishop Beresford, or his manner so hearty and good-humoured as that of Archbishop Harcourt. And yet

no member of the Upper House enjoyed more personal respect all through his life. Although he gave thirty of his best years to a College life, he was no pedant, and although he was an earnest theological student, he rarely dogmatized. Residing near the Court, a man of his character necessarily acquired considerable influence with the Royal Family. They often consulted him, and many members of the illustrious house sought from him counsel and consolation in their supreme hour.

When Lord Liverpool brought in his Bill of Pains and Penalties to divorce the Queen of George IV., Bishop Howley very strenuously indeed supported the measure, and thereby, so it would appear, won the warm favour of that King, as he had done that of his father. The history of the trial after all the years which have flown by since reads like a horrible nightmare from which the nation has awoken. Traditions of it were still rife when I was young, and cottages had pamphlets and squibs and pictures generally against the King. Bishop Howley, according to the *Times*, which went hotly for the Queen, in his zeal for the Bill went so far as to say in Parliament that the King could do no wrong morally or politically. This is probably a misrepresentation. The King kept out of the miserable struggle so far as his public action was concerned, and probably, if one could run the speech to ground, the Bishop was simply warding off the popular wrath from the monarch, and bidding it direct itself against his responsible ministers; but it must be allowed that it seems to have greatly gratified the selfish King. The Bill was abandoned by ministers, in face of the very alarming menaces of the middle and lower classes of the population; the Queen lost her popularity by accepting a large annuity by way of what was regarded as a bribe, and after a few months wild and ill-judged gyrations she died. But a terrible amount of bad blood had come out of the strife, and the Church had to share for many a year the unpopularity of the national rulers.

It would be a great defect in this paper to leave out any mention of Bishop Howley's work as a builder. The Gothic movement, which soon assumed such large proportions, had as yet hardly begun; Howley may be regarded as one of its pioneers. It cannot be denied that in the first outburst of zeal for neat and decent churches much ignorance was shown, and much excellent work destroyed or marred. Here I will just chronicle (using Mr. Féret's book as my authority) the changes which he made at Fulham Palace: (1) Built the porter's lodge by the stone bridge; his arms are over the doorway. (2) The fountain in the quadrangle (since replaced by one by Bishop Temple). (3) The east front, built by

Bishop Terrick (1765), pulled down and the present substituted for it. (4) The hall, turned into a chapel. It was never consecrated, but was used as a chapel from 1814 to 1867. Bishop Tait built the present chapel from the designs of Mr. Butterfield, and removed the marble floor thither which Howley had placed in his chapel. He also gave much care to the improvement of the gardens. During his episcopate he consecrated the two churches of St. John's, Walham Green, and St. Mary's, North End, both in the parish of Fulham.

When Archbishop Manners-Sutton died in July, 1828, the Duke of Wellington was Prime Minister, and he nominated Howley for the vacant Primacy, who at once rose with ease to his new dignity. He evidently felt safe and sure of his position, for knowing his countrymen, he expressed his strong conviction that they would never suffer hereditary wealth, or titles, or "any species of proud pretension to look down with scorn upon an office which they look up to with reverence." Experience, he declared, had convinced him that "a free, a generous, and an informed people honour the high magistrates of their Church." This might easily have been taken for arrogance, but the whole tenor of his life contradicts that. It was the conviction of his life that he was bound to magnify his office, not himself, but the Church; this was his aim.

He soon showed that he meant to carry out his convictions, for when next year the Duke of Wellington brought in the famous Roman Catholic Emancipation Bill Howley very strenuously opposed it. At his consecration he said he had sworn to stand by the Church of England, and this Bill he considered put the Church in imminent danger. We can easily smile now at the alarm which he expressed; certainly he was the mouthpiece thereby of nine-tenths of the members of the Church. And so we must say of the Reform Bill of 1831; he was equally hostile to that, and thought that it was "mischievous in its tendencies, and would be extremely dangerous to the fabric of the constitution." It was then that the Prime Minister, Earl Grey, uttered his ominous warning to the Bishops to "set their houses in order." He would not have done this, but that it was evident that public feeling was deeply exasperated against the clergy. It was the general belief of the faithful lovers of the Church that its downfall was imminent; and certainly the Whig Government of that day were not desirous of saving it. They were as short-sighted in their interpretation of the popular voice as Howley had been in his diatribes against reform. "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." In 1833 the Archbishop strongly opposed the Irish Temporalities Bill; but meanwhile another event was occurring which was to

change for a while the whole current of thought in the history of the Church of England, and with the mention of it I must close now. The first of the "Tracts for the Times" was published in the latter part of 1833. W. BENHAM.

The Month.

IN his appointments to the three vacant Deaneries, Lord Salisbury seems to have satisfied most people. The choice of Dr. Barlow for Peterborough was not only justified by his long and varied services to the Church, but also gave peculiar satisfaction to the Evangelicals. For Dr. Barlow has for many years been in the forefront of that school, identified more or less closely with all its chief organizations, and taking part in its Protestant as well as in its less distinctive work. Hitherto in recent years, whilst Evangelicals who have disclaimed party ties have occasionally received promotion, the choice for high office of one associated with the Evangelicals as a party has been rare. Very open partisans on the High Church side have found their tenets and their actions no bar to advancement; but it has been otherwise with the Low Churchmen. The selection of Dr. Barlow for a Deanery may, like the preferment of Bishop Straton and Dean Lefroy, be the occasional exception only; but it may also imply the return to a fairer treatment of a school which would have been in a very much stronger position if the two great Premiers of the recent times had not been decided High Churchmen. It is quite unnecessary in these pages to recall the manifold services of Dr. Barlow, and it is pleasant to know that the comparative leisure of a Deanery will still allow him to aid some of the agencies which have long profited by his wide knowledge of men and his skill in administration. Dr. Barlow, it may be worth remembering, is one of the very few people who have ever taken quadruple honours at Cambridge. The late Dr. Hort and Professor Gwatkin are other examples.

It can now be no secret that a strong committee representing Dr. Barlow's friends are organizing some recognition of his great services to the Church at large and to the Evangelical cause within it. In recent years the value of the Vicarage of Islington has grown, and the net income must have been about £1,000 a year with a good house. The Deanery of Peterborough now produces an uncertain stipend of from £500 to £700, with a rather costly residence, recently let for £200 per annum. Dr. Barlow will, however, live in the Deanery.

Bishop Webb, late of Grahamstown, the new Dean of Salisbury, is one of the decided High Churchmen who have held office in the South African Church. There has, however, apart from all such considerations, been a general disposition to welcome the advancement of one who gave the best of his life to Colonial and missionary work. The claim of such clergy upon the Church at home is now being more and more fully recognised. The old sneering tone adopted towards the Colonial prelate who returned home is happily falling out of use. Perhaps the development of closer bonds of union between the Home Country and the Colonies may be helping in the change; but there is also a better appreciation of the value of work done in the Colonies and the mission-field. The two things can hardly fail to react on the attitude of the clergy at home towards the needs of the Church abroad.