A ship is said to be in the wake of another when she follows her on the same track, or a line ſupposed to be formed on the continuation of her keel.

Two distant objects observed at sea are called in the wake of each other, when the view of the farthest is intercepted by the nearest ; ſo that the obſerver’s eye and the two ob­jets are all placed upon the same right line.

Wake is the eve-feast of the dedication of churches, which is kept with feasting and rural diversions.

The learned Mr Whitaker, in his History of Manchester, hath given a particular account of the origin of wakes and fairs. He observes, that every church at its coniecration received the name of ſome particular faint : this custom was practiſed among the Roman Britons, and continued among the Saxons ; and in the council of Cealchythe, in 816, the name of the denominating faint was expressly required to be inſcribed on the altars, and also on the walls of the church, or a tablet within it. The feast of this faint be­came of courfe the festival of the church. Thus Christian festivals were ſubstituted in the room of the idolatrous anni- verfaries of heatheniſm : accordingly, at the first introduc­tion of Christianity among the Jutes of Kent, pope Grego­ry the Great adviſed what had been previously done among the Britons, viz. Christian festivals to be instituted in the room of the idolatrous, and the ſuffering day of the martyr whofe relics were reposited in the church, or the day on which the building was actually dedicated, to be the efta- bliſhed feast of the pariſh. Both were appointed and ob- ſerved ; and they were clearly distinguished at first among the Saxons, as appears from the laws of the Confessor, where the *dies dedicationis,* or *dedicatio,* is repeatedly diſcriminated from the *propria festivitas sancti,* or *celebratio finch.* They remained equally distinct to the Reformation ; the dedication-day in 1536 being ordered for the future to be kept on the first Sunday in October, and the festival of the pa­tron faint to be celebrated no longer. The latter was, by way of pre-eminence, denominated the *church's holiday,* or its peculiar festival ; and while this remains in many parishes at present, the other is so utterly annihilated in all, that bishop Kennet (fays Mr Whitaker) knew nothing of its distinct existence, and has attributed to the day of dedica­tion what is true only concerning the saint’s day. Thus instituted at first, the day of the tutelar faint was obferved, most probably by the Britons, and certainly by the Saxons, with great devotion. And the evening before every saint’s day, in the Saxon Jewiſh method of reckoning the hours, being an actual hour of the day, and therefore like that appropriated to the duties of public religion, as they rec­koned Surrday from the first to commence at the ſun-set of Saturday ; the evening preceding the church’s holiday would be obſerved with all the devotion of the festival. The peo­ple actually repaired to the church, and joined in the ſervices of it ; and they thus ſpent the evening of their greater festivities in the monasteries of the North, as early as the conclusion of the feventh century.

These ſervices were naturally denominated from their late hours waec*can* or *wakes,* and *vigils* or *eves.* That of the anniverſary at Rippon, as early as the commencement of the eighth century, is expreſsly denominated the *vigil.* But that of the church’s holiday was named cyric wae*ccan,* or church-wake, the church vigil, of church eve. And it was this commencement of both with a wake, which has now cauſed the days to be generally preceded with vigils, and the church-holiday particularly to be denominated the *church-wake.* So religiously was the eve and festival of the patron faint obſerved for many ages by the Saxons, even as late as the reign of Edgar,, the former being ſpent in the church, and employed in prayer. And the wakes, and all the other holidays in the year, were put upon the fame foot­ing with the octaves of Christmas, Eafter, and of Pentecost. When Gregory recommended the festival of the patron faint, he adviſed the people to erect booths of branches about the church on the day of the festival, and to feast and be merry in them with innocence. Accordingly, in every pariſh, on the returning anniverſary of the faint, little pavilions were constructed of boughs, and the people indulged in them to hoſpitality and mirth. The feasting of the faint’s day, how­ever, was ſoon abused ; and even in the body of the church, when the people were assembled for devotion, they began to mind diversions, and to introduce drinking. The growing intemperance gradually stained the ſervice of the vigil, till the festivity of it was converted, as it now is, into the ri­gour of a faft. At length they too justly ſcandalized the Puritans of the last century, and numbers of the wakes were difufed entirely, eſpecially in the east and ſome western parts of England ; but they are commonly obſerved in the north, and in the midland counties.

This custom of celebrity in the neighbourhood of the church, on the days of particular faints, was introduced into England from the continent, and must have been familiar equally to the Britons and Saxons ; being obſerved among the churches of Asia in the sixth century, and by those of the weft of Europe in the ſeventh. And equally in Asia and Europe on the continent, and in the islands, theſe ce­lebrities were the causes of thoſe commercial marts which we denominate *fairs.* The people reſorted in crowds to the festival, and a confidet able provision would be wanted for their entertainment. The proſpect of interest invited the little traders of the country to come and offer their wares ; and thus, among the many pavilions for hoſpitality in the neighbourhood of the church, various booths were erected for the sale of different commodities. In larger towns, surrounded with populous districts, the resort of the people to the wakes would be great, and the attendance of traders nu­merous ; and this reſort and attendance constitute a fair.— Basil expreſsly mentions the numerous appearance of tra­ders at theſe festivals in Asia, and Gregory notes the same custom to be common in Europe. And as the festival was observed on a ſeria or holiday, it naturally assumed to itſelf, and as naturally communicated to the mart, the appellation of *feria* or fair. Indeed ſeveral of our most ancient fairs appear to have been usually held, and have been continued to our time, on the original church-holidays of the places ; besides, it is obſervable, that fairs were generally kept in church-yards, and even in the churches, and allo on Sun­days, till the indecency and ſcandal were ſo great as to need reformation.

*Wake-R*obin*.* See Arum.

WALACHIA, a province of Turkey in Europe, bounded on the north by Moldavia and Tranſylvania, on the east and ſouth by the river Danube, and on the west by Tranſylvania. It is 225 miles in length, and 125 in breadth ; and was ceded to the Turks by the treaty of Bel­grade, in 1739. It abounds in good horſes and cattle; and there are mines of ſeveral kinds. The soil is ſo fertile, that it is capable of producing any thing ; and there are good pastures, with wine, oil, and all maimer of European fruits. The inhabitants are chiefly of the Greek church.

WALCHEREN, an island of the Low Countries, and one of the principal of thoſe of Zealand ; ſeparated from Dutch Flandern by the mouth of the Scheld. It is about nine miles in length, and eight in breadth ; and though it lies low, has good arable and pasture land. The chief town of this island and the whole province is Middleburg.