

# 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](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php)

clearer knowledge of, and more careful attention to, the laws which God Himself has ordained for man's health and well-being will secure the most beneficial results, and lead to a happier state of things than in many places at present prevails. Many of these evils are remediable, and we may reasonably expect the blessing of God on those who set themselves to recognize and act on the remedies which He has put within our reach.



### Leaders of Religious Thought. III.—Hooker : Anglican Thought.

BY THE RIGHT REV. THE BISHOP OF BURNLEY.

OUR two former sketches, Martin Luther and Thomas Cranmer, afforded occasion for touching our breach with Rome, and the consequent revision of our formularies and the ritual and worship of our island Church. Our present task is to combine a rapid review of our position in the times of Elizabeth with a sympathetic notice of a notable writer who before all others understood that position and defended it—Richard Hooker.

To the prosecution of the first part of this task a citation from Bishop Creighton's "Queen Elizabeth" may helpfully contribute at the outset :

"Nothing is more curious in Elizabeth's career than the steadfastness with which she refused to allow of Parliamentary interference in ecclesiastical matters. She was determined that the large system which had approved itself at the beginning of her reign should be allowed to shape itself into accordance with the needs of the nation, and that time should be given it for that purpose. . . . We have seen," he continues, "how great were the difficulties which beset the restoration of religious unity in England.

"Besides the Romanist party, which, unfortunately, had a

political significance which the State deemed it impossible to overlook, there was also a party which wished to go further in the direction of Continental Protestantism. The Romanists stood aloof from the Church, and claimed only to go their own way. The Puritans aimed at transforming the Church into agreement with the system of Calvin, and they continued to raise one question after another. When the contest about vestments ceased, the Puritans put forward the system of Church government which Calvin had set up. They were greatly aided by the action of the Papacy towards Elizabeth, that action culminating in her excommunication, and Philip II.'s attempted descent on England by means of the Armada. This action made the majority of Englishmen desirous to emphasize the breach with Rome. . . . The Puritans advocated the abolition of Episcopacy, and the introduction of the Presbyterian system. They did not ask for toleration ; they did not plead for freedom. They claimed that the Church should be changed into something else, that its formularies should be disregarded, and that a rigid discipline should be introduced. For this purpose they took orders and held office in the Church, that they might use their position to subvert it.

“ These views were entirely opposed to the principles which had hitherto prevailed in England. They passed beyond the bounds of legitimate discussion. They did not propose the adaptation, but the subversion, of the Church.

“ Archbishop Whitgift, in compliance with Elizabeth's injunctions, was resolved to put a stop to this, and ordered that all the clergy should subscribe to the Book of Common Prayer, and the Thirty-Nine Articles. . . .

“ It is often said that the Queen was destitute of religious feeling, and acted only from motives of policy. This view is not borne out by facts. In early life she had made up her mind as to the essential elements of personal religion, and did not overestimate the significance of outward forms. But she had a keen sense of the meaning of religious systems in their relation to national life ; and she saw the importance of England

becoming the seat of the Church of the New Learning, a Church which did not break with the past, but received all that had been contributed by human intelligence towards understanding the errors of the old system and the means to be adopted to remove them. While as independent as possible, the system of the Church was to remain."

This passage succinctly outlines the situation in the times covered by our subject. Anglicanism was taking permanent shape, and, with all her faults, Elizabeth was exercising a wiser supremacy than had she adopted the arrogant policy of her father.

Among those who strove to accentuate our severance from the Papacy, a severance from all the traditions of Christian antiquity, it concerns us to notice two.

The first was Walter Travers, a man of "competent learning and a blameless life," who had been ordained by the Antwerp Presbytery, and at the time when Hooker was appointed Master of the Temple held the office of Evening Lecturer in the Temple Church. His views and the Master's were speedily shown to be gravely divergent, insomuch that, as one said, "the forenoon sermon spake Canterbury, and the afternoon Geneva."

Though bitterness was, to the credit of both sides, mostly avoided, the warfare of opinion grew to something of a scandal. Travers was inhibited, and on his inhibition appealed in an elaborate Petition from the Archbishop to Her Majesty's Privy Council.

This Petition, extending to seventeen closely-printed pages of Hooker's Works, was answered by him at still greater length.

Travers disappeared, but left behind a party among the benchers to give no little pain and trouble to the Master. This split in the barristers' ranks is noticeable, as it was the provocative cause of the inception of the superb work with which Hooker's name will be associated as long as the Church of England exists. Walter Travers had a teacher in England, as well as those abroad. This was Thomas Cartwright, who had

been at Cambridge a contemporary of Archbishop Whitgift, who was bent upon introducing the full Genevan form of Church government into England. Of his personal opinions he was a fearless advocate. He addressed many remonstrances to Archbishop Whitgift against what he considered the imperfect character of the English Reformation. These remonstrances he had printed, and the "Ecclesiastical Polity" may be said to be in a great measure an elaborate answer to them. But for this circumstance they would long ago have ceased to be heard of.

These two names, then, have to be noticed as supplying indirectly, the one the motive, the other to a considerable extent the matter, of Hooker's great work.

Of this work, "The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity," it is impossible here to offer an analysis. Its scope is a most able and erudite defence of the usages, ritual, and teaching of the English Church as set forth in the Prayer Book and Ordinal. The work consists of eight books. The first five of these were undoubtedly the work of Hooker. There is some doubt about the authorship of the remainder. The first four books were finished and published in 1594, when the author held the Rectory of Boxum, in the Diocese of Salisbury.

Three years later (1597) the fifth book was printed. This book is the core of the whole work, and is complete in itself, as it was issued alone. Whether the last three books are Hooker's, or only built up upon rough drafts obtained by Dr. John Spenceer after Hooker's death, will perhaps never certainly be known. According to one story, the full originals were burnt through the carelessness of his widow in allowing some opponents to obtain access to them.

As a commentary upon our Prayer Book this fifth book stands alone. Indeed, nothing that ever has been written on the Book can compare with it for profound knowledge of the subject, for cogency of reasoning and force of language. Enthusiastic admiration was accorded by so unbiased a critic as the Pope himself,<sup>1</sup> who, when the first book was read to him (in

<sup>1</sup> Clement VIII.

Latin), exclaimed: "There is no learning that this man hath not searched into. In these books there be such seeds of perpetuity, that, if the rest be like this one, they shall last till the last fire shall consume all learning."

The biographical element, as in the other papers of this series, is subordinated to the particular line of religious thought to which the man in each case has himself contributed, and Hooker comes before us as a leader of distinctively Anglican or English Church thought. His mission was to defend our position as a Church. He is the strong upholder of the *via media*, the middle path, which our Church has ever consistently taken and kept between the unreformed Western Church on the one hand and those who, on the other, would have us break altogether with fifteen centuries of Christian tradition, and be content to own ourselves as one among the numerous bodies whose annals are, comparatively speaking, but of yesterday, and which would regard it rather as a reproach than as a ground for boasting if their spiritual ancestry could be traced back to times before the Reformation dawn.

Before passing, to glean one or two lessons that lie for us in the life of Richard Hooker, let a word be borne with on this position of ours as a community. There is no situation in this sorry world, however advantageous, which lacks its drawbacks; and one of the drawbacks of our stable and established position is that we have hitherto been called but very infrequently to render an account of ourselves; a reason for our Church-membership; our credentials have not been examined. The reasonableness, the Scriptural character of our forms, have been for generations taken for granted.

With other communities that have arisen in our midst (their rise assisted by the complete toleration in religious thought and habit which now reigns) it is otherwise. Enthusiastic and confident attachment binds the members of a sect together. No half-beliefs in the creed embodied in that sect weaken the bond that binds them; no suspicion that a man's private opinion cannot be honestly read into that creed clips the wings of

devotion, and sets the critical faculty at work while he listens to the sermon. The word "adherent" exactly describes his relationship to the community. Far be it from us to wrong the attachment of a great proportion of our Church's members by calling in question their loyalty to, and loving confidence in, their Church; but while this is unquestionably the case with very many, there are, it cannot be denied, not a few whose attachment is of a more fragile nature, who only half believe in the Scriptural and primitive character of certain portions of the Prayer Book, and whose unuttered misgivings are mainly directed to just those parts of the Prayer Book which Hooker mainly laid himself out to defend—viz., the Sacramental Offices and the Ordinal.

That this equivocal adherence on the part of many is a constant weakness to our community is our own steadily growing conviction, and this is altogether apart from the question of divergencies of ritual or teaching in individual ministers and congregations. We are speaking of the forms which all parties possess in common. It is these, and not our interpretations of them, that are by many but timidly and with mental reservation received; and as long as this is so, the full corporate strength of the Church must in an appreciable degree be dissipated. That the lay members ought to be called upon actually to subscribe to all that is found in the covers of the Prayer Book is not by any means contended; but that our Church, as a witness for the truth in the land, would be stronger than she is to-day if a hearty acceptance of the Book as a whole were more general than it is is a reasonable persuasion.

And it appears to us a sign of the lack of religious seriousness that the controversies of the past two generations of English Church life have been so largely (I might almost say exclusively) rubrical or ritual. Men's minds have been drawn aside from the study of the services of the Prayer Book to the ritual presentation of those services. We have gazed so long and so intently at the red type that some of us can hardly see anything else.

Richard Hooker was born in 1553 at Heavitree, a suburb of Exeter. His parents—worthy, industrious people—were able to afford a fair education for their children, and Richard early impressed his schoolmaster with his abilities, so that he persuaded the father to abandon the intention of apprenticing him to a business, pledging himself to double diligence in instructing him without other reward than what so hopeful an employment might bring.

From school he passed to Oxford, assisted thither by his uncle and his uncle's friend John Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury; high religious ideals being already furnished him in the training of parents and master, the latter his earliest and most unwearied patron, whose name Walton fails to recover. Bishop Jewel dying shortly afterwards, Dr. Cole, the head of Hooker's College, Corpus, succeeds as instrument of his advancement.

While at Oxford he seems to have marked his course as well by his rapid progress in the studies of the place as by the practices of a quiet and unobtrusive piety. According to his biographer, he was never known to lose his temper or utter an uncomely word. A lowly and devout Churchman, he was in four years but twice absent from chapel prayers.

His merit was recognized fully by his University. From commoner to scholar he rose, and then from scholar to Fellow, and in 1579, when only twenty-six, he was appointed Lecturer in Hebrew; and within three months of this promotion was, with his friend Reynolds and others, for some pretended cause, expelled the college, to be restored within a month.

Ordained three years later, he was shortly after appointed to preach at St. Paul's Cross, where he came, weary and weather-beaten, to be laid up and nursed back to strength in time for the sermon. The sermon procured him controversial trouble, as it traversed one of Calvin's tenets, Bishop Elmer, however, of London, being found in the event among his advocates. The nursing of his hostess procured him a wife within the year, in her daughter. By his marriage he was



drawn from his tranquil cloistered studies to the busy cares of a married priest and a country parsonage at Drayton-Beauchamp, in Buckinghamshire.

Thence, after a short year, we trace him to the Mastership of the Temple, offered at the instance of Archbishop Sandys, of York. Hooker was now thirty-four, and but twelve more years of life remained to him.

He had come, as we have already seen, to no bed of roses. Bitter strife awaited him, and finally drove him from his post to two successive country benefices, where he could prosecute his studies in comparative quiet, and enrich by means of his masterpiece the thought of the Church he loved so deeply and served so well.

The account of his last hours is beautifully told by Walton. Space remains only for a few touches. A cold taken on the Thames, between London and Gravesend, brought on a sharp sickness, which he bore with equanimity. He often remarked to his friend Dr. Saravia that he did not beg a long life of God for any other reason but to live to finish his three remaining books. Not many days before the end his house was robbed, of which being told, his only question was: "Are my books and papers safe? No other loss can trouble me." After partaking of the Holy Sacrament his friend noted a "reverend joy" in his face. A little later, asked in a silent interval for his thoughts, he replied that "he was meditating the nature of the angels and their blessed obedience and order, without which peace could not be in heaven; and oh that it might be so on earth!"

A life as pure and full of fruitage as ever sinful soul had grace given to live was made by him no ground of confidence in passing to his account. "Though I have by His grace loved God in my youth, and feared Him in mine age, yet I plead not my righteousness, but the forgiveness of my unrighteousness. . . . Good doctor, God hath heard my daily petitions, for I am at peace with all men, and He is at peace with me; and I feel that joy which this world can neither give nor take from me." Little

more he said until a quiet sigh put a period to his last breath, and so he fell asleep.

Izaak's closing prayer for the clergy of England we who are of them shall put up for ourselves: "Bless, O Lord, his brethren, the clergy of this nation, with effectual endeavours to attain, if not to his great learning, yet to his meekness, his godly simplicity, and his Christian moderation, for these will bring peace at the last."

Wordsworth's latest Church sonnet may fitly close this paper:

". . . . . That stream behold,  
That stream upon whose bosom we have passed,  
Floating at ease, while nations have effaced  
Nations, and Death has gathered to his fold  
Long lines of mighty Kings—look forth, my soul!  
(Nor in this vision be thou slow to trust:)  
The living Waters, less and less by guilt  
Stained and polluted, brighten as they roll,  
Till they have reached the eternal City, built  
For the perfected Spirits of the just."



## The Person of our Lord and the Kenotic Theory.

### II.

BY THE REV. F. S. GUY WARMAN, M.A.

**L**AST month we considered the view—fragmentary and inadequate, it is true, but still, I hope, fairly and justly stated—which St. Paul appears to take in this passage of this great fact of Divine revelation to man. St. Paul refers all the outward and physical manifestations of *κένωσις* to the mental attitude of our Lord. "Let this mind be in you which is also in Christ Jesus." We have striven to do likewise, and now it only remains, from the same standpoint, to examine two great questions which are pertinent to the correlation of the two natures of Jesus Christ—namely, the question of His relation to evil and that of His moral and mental development.

I. Christ came to "deliver us from the evil" by sharing our