

**HOOKER. BOOK 1 OF THE
LAWS OF
ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY.
EDITED BY R. W. CHURCH**

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RICHARD HOOKER & R. W. CHURCH

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HOOKER

BOOK I

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ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY

EDITED BY

R. W. CHURCH, M.A.

RECTOR OF WHATLEY

FORMERLY FELLOW OF ORIEL

Oxford

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

MDCCCLXVIII

1868

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Ξυφόν ἐστὶ πᾶσι τὰ φρονέειν· ξὺν νόμῳ λέγονται ἰσχυρίζεσθαι· χρὴ τῷ
ξυφῷ πάντων ὅσῳ περ νόμῳ πόλις καὶ πόλις ἰσχυροτέρως· τρέφονται
γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἀνθρώπινοι νόμοι ὑπὸ ἐνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ κρατεῖ· γὰρ τοσοῦτον
ὁκόσῳ θέλει καὶ ἐξαρκεῖ πᾶσι καὶ περιγίνεται.

Heraclitus of Ephesus.

Cum lex aeterna sit ratio gubernationis in supremo gubernante, necesse
est quod omnes rationes gubernationis quae sunt in inferioribus gubernan-
tibus a lege aeterna deriventur. . . . Unde omnes leges in quantum par-
ticipant de ratione recta, in tantum derivantur a lege aeterna.

Thomas Aquinas.



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1868

INTRODUCTION.

HOOKEK'S life was nearly coincident with the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth. ¶ Born about the same time as Raleigh, Spenser, and Sir Philip Sidney ^a; a few years later than Cervantes, Cardinal Bellarmine, and Paul Sarpi ^b; and only a few years earlier than Lord Bacon, Galileo, and Shakespeare ^c, he belongs to that last quarter of the sixteenth century, in which the results of its earlier years, both good and evil, were becoming mature, and which was so fruitful in great men, great events, and new and bold beginnings in politics, religion, and philosophy. ¶ His education was under the characteristic influences which marked the age and reign of Elizabeth, and he lived to be one of the most original and worthy representatives of its spirit: the one adequate exponent of its religious ideas and policy. With these no one more fully sympathized; and no one conceived them in so comprehensive and masterly a manner. The results of the religious movement of the time had taken shape under the resolute but cautious hand of the Queen in a Church polity, which was thought at the time, and has proved to be, unique; but which has also proved singularly suited to the character of the English nation. Of this system, which looks like the growth of accident, though it was really rooted in the conditions of the people whose history it has since so profoundly affected, Hooker discerned the effective and governing principles; he divined what was permanent and capable of life

^a Raleigh, 1552. Spenser, 1552, or 1553. Sidney, 1554.

^b Bellarmine, 1542. Cervantes, 1547. Sarpi, 1552.

^c Bacon, 1561. Shakespeare, 1564. Galileo, 1564.

in it, in comparison with clamorous and more plausible rivals; he gave it a broad and defensible theory, and he seized, and exhibited in an impressive form, all that it contained of what was noble and attractive. Nor was it only its strong and lasting features of which his work is the display: faithfully reflecting the stage of thought when it was written, it reveals equally what was weak and temporary in the Elizabethan Church polity.

Richard Hooker was born, according to Izaak Walton, at Heavitree near Exeter, about the year 1553. Mr. Keble found no record of him in the register books of Heavitree, nor in those of the Cathedral, or St. Mary Major in Exeter; and the best data for fixing the year of his birth seem to be supplied by the President's register, at Corpus Christi College in Oxford. From two entries in this it would appear that he was born about Easter-time, in what we should call 1554^d: that is, according to the old division of the year, in 1553, if he was born before the 25th of March,—in 1554 if he was born on or after March 25.

His family was one of some consideration in the city of Exeter, and members of it had for more than one generation filled the chief municipal offices, and had represented Exeter in parliament*. But his father was a poor man, and intended to bind him apprentice to a trade. At school, however, probably the Grammar School at Exeter, the boy shewed such parts and promise, that his uncle, John Hooker, the chamberlain of the city, a man of wealth and consequence, with some learning and literary tastes, and strong opinions in favour

* In the President's register, under date December 24, 1573, it is said that Hooker would be twenty years about Easter next following (April 11, 1574). Under date of September 16, 1577, he is said to be twenty-three years, about the Easter last past (April 7, 1577). So Fulman, probably from these data, says, 'Richardus Hooker ap. Heavitree juxta civitatem Exoniã natus est circa finem Martii mensis, anno 1554 incunte.' (Vide Keble's notes on Walton, notes 5, 6, 29.) Easter Day in 1554 was on March 25. (Sir Harris Nicolas, Chron. of Hist.) Walton's chronological notices cannot always be trusted.

† The family-name seems first to have been Vowel, alias Hoker or Hooker. (Vide Keble's ed. 1845. vol. i. p. cviii. and p. 9. n. 10.)

of the reformed religion, was induced by the representations of the schoolmaster to undertake to give his nephew the chance of obtaining a university training. The plan proposed is characteristic of the period. 'The schoolmaster,' writes Walton, 'was very solicitous with John Hooker to take his nephew into his care, and to maintain him for one year in the University, and in the mean time to use his endeavours to procure an admission for him into some college, though it were but in a mean degree: still urging and assuring him that his charge would not continue long: for the lad's learning and manners were so remarkable, that they must of necessity be taken notice of; and that doubtless God would provide him some second patron, that would free him and his parents from their future care and charge.' John Hooker was a friend of Jewel, himself a Devonshire man, and, as John Hooker is said to have been, a disciple and admirer of the reformer, Peter Martyr. Looking about for a patron for his nephew, he applied to Jewel: and it was arranged that the lad was to be sent to Oxford at the joint charge of his uncle and the bishop, and under Jewel's protection. Jewel had belonged to Corpus Christi College, one of those recent foundations which had been set up with lavish munificence by men attached to the old opinions, in order to raise up a race of learned defenders for them, but which had followed the time and passed into the hands of their opponents. It was a college from the first of high name and success, and Jewel's old connection with it led him to find 'a clerk's place' there for the lad who was to be its most illustrious name. Hooker, according to Walton, was admitted a clerk at Corpus in 1567^f.

Bishop Jewel, whom, according to Walton's pleasant story, he visited more than once in the course of his journey on foot from Oxford to Devonshire, died in September, 1571. The

^f 'About the *fifteenth* (*fourteenth*, 1st. ed.) year of his age.' (Walton.) The *fourteenth* would suit 1567, the *fifteenth* 1568. Probably the last is right. Dr. Cole, to whom Walton says that he was recommended, became Pres. July 19, 1568. (Keble's note. i. 10.) No record remains of his University matriculation. See note at the end.

loss of his patron left Hooker to depend on what he could do for himself; but he was becoming known in the University; and Sandys, Bishop of London, afterwards Archbishop of York, who had heard of him from Jewel, committed his son Edwin to his care. Edwin Sandys and another pupil, George Cranmer, both of them trained by him at Corpus, and both of them afterwards distinguished men, became the chief friends of his after life, and to their criticism he submitted his works. He became M. A., and was admitted Fellow of the college in 1577. Besides Walton's general statement, probable enough, of his reputation and range of learning, little is told of his Oxford life, except that in a college quarrel, which is not explained, he was expelled for a few months, in company with his tutor and friend, Dr. John Rainolds, a distinguished Calvinist, by a Vice-President, afterwards known for his zeal against Puritans:—that in the illness of the Professor of Hebrew, Hooker was appointed to read the lecture:—and that he was intimate with Henry Savile, afterwards the editor of Chrysostom. His first public appearance in London was in preaching at Paul's Cross, according to Walton, about 1581. He married soon afterwards, and left Oxford for the living of Drayton Beauchamp in Buckinghamshire, where, according to Walton, he stayed for about a year. Walton's account of Hooker's marriage and married life is well known. His story exalts Hooker's simplicity at the expense of his good sense and good feeling, in a way which provokes suspicion. Walton's idea of humility and meekness, charming as are the pictures in which it is embodied, had in it something which often strikes a modern reader as one-sided and unreal; and his account is not consistent with what Hooker discloses of his own character in his writings, which, as Mr. Keble has remarked, shew, as far as writings can shew, not only abundant shrewdness of observation, but much sensitiveness and quickness of temper, and are further marked throughout by humour and very keen irony. Hooker, at any rate, is not likely himself to have told the story. It is much more like the guess of pitying or indignant