



Volume

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Richard Hooker, etc.

W. Bradford Littlejohn's *The Peril and Promise of Christian Liberty: Richard Hooker, the Puritans, and Protestant Political Theology** (2017) is published by Eerdmans. Littlejohn is also the author of *Richard Hooker: A Companion to His Life and Work** (Cascade Books, 2015). C. S. Lewis found Hooker's prose in his *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* to be "mellow gold." In his *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century Excluding Drama* (1954), Lewis wrote: "The style is, for its purpose, perhaps the most perfect in English. . . . On occasion, he can write a paragraph so heightened that readers who have no taste for Hooker will enjoy it, detached, in an anthology. . . . But this is very rare; the beauty of Hooker's prose is functional. His characteristic unit is the long, syntactically latinized, sentence, unobtrusively garnished with metaphor, anaphora, and chiasmus. The Latin syntax is there for use, not ornament; it enables him, as English syntax would not, to keep many ideas, as it were, in the air, limiting, enriching, and guiding one another, but not fully affirmed or denied until at last, with the weight of all that thought behind him, he slowly descends to the matured conclusion. The structure mirrors the real movement of his mind." However functional the beauty of Hooker's writing may have been for his contemporaries and may still be for readers as attentive and discerning as C. S. Lewis, one must entertain the possibility that the neglect of Hooker's ideas today is a function of its "most perfect" prose. Hence, the Davenant Institute (with which Dr. Littlejohn is affiliated) has launched an ambitious project to translate into less accomplished but more accessible prose Hooker's landmark volume. As the Institute's website announces, "The time has come to translate it into modern English so that Hooker may teach a new generation of churchmen and Christian leaders about law, reason, Scripture, church, and politics." One lives in the hope that an initiative may someday be launched employing Hooker's genius to teach a new generation of churchmen and Christian leaders about the importance of beautiful prose. Hope is nurtured by a point of clarification on the same web page announcing this modernization: "Note that our translation should not be treated as a substitute for the original. Hooker's intricate sentence structures are self-conscious and in many cases play a key role in conveying meaning and rhetorical effect. Our hope is that readers may find these editions an accessible point of entry, and then go on to engage the genuine article in due course, experiencing in the process some taste of the illumination and

Part 1

- 1 **Introduction**
- 2 **W. Bradford Littlejohn**, on sixteenth-century debates about liberty, religion, civil order, and the religious duties of civil authorities
- 3 **Simon Oliver**, on how the affirmation of creation *ex nihilo* describes God as the generous source of all being
- 4 **Matthew Levering**, on how the traditional doctrine of divine ideas emphasizes God's wisdom without affirming determinism

Part 2

- 1 **Esther Lightcap Meek**, on how Michael Polanyi described reality as reliably knowable and yet endlessly surprising
- 2 **Paul Tyson**, on how science's assumptions about the relationship between knowledge and belief shapes the thinking of many Christians
- 3 **David Fagerberg**, on how Christian liturgical practices establish a posture toward all of Creation

*An asterisk means that the book is in print; if you wish to purchase it from our friends at Eighth Day Books, call 1.800.841.2541.

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edification it has been our blessing to experience in the course of this project." After all, form *is* content. This new edition of Hooker's *Laws* is part of a larger Davenant Institute project: The Library of Early English Protestantism. The project includes works of 16th- and 17th-century figures who "defined the shape of Reformed orthodoxy for future centuries" as well as English churchmen who "contributed luminous commentaries on the English liturgy, devotional texts, and defenses of episcopacy that would help nourish the distinctive identity of the Church of England in the decades to come, and eventually its offspring in the Anglican Communion."

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Other books & authors mentioned

Simon Oliver's *Creation: A Guide for the Perplexed** (2017) is published by Bloomsbury. Oliver's *Philosophy, God and Motion** is published by Routledge. Matthew Levering's *Engaging the Doctrine of Creation: Cosmos, Creatures, and the Wise and Good Creator** (2017) is published by Baker Academic. His other books include *Was the Reformation a Mistake?: Why Catholic Doctrine Is Not Unbiblical** (Zondervan, 2017), which included a response by Protestant theologian Kevin Vanhoozer. Esther Lightcap Meek's *Contact with Reality: Michael Polanyi's Realism and Why It Matters** (2017) is published by Cascade Books, as is Paul Tyson's *De-fragmenting Modernity: Reintegrating Knowledge with Wisdom, Belief with Truth, and Reality with Being* (2017). David Fagerberg's *Consecrating the World: On Mundane Liturgical Theology** (2016) is published by Angelico Press. Its prequel, *On Liturgical Asceticism** (2013) was published by the Catholic University of America Press.

The **MARS HILL AUDIO** *Journal* is produced at our studio in rural central Virginia, outside of historic Charlottesville. The *Journal* is one of several audio products we distribute, all of them intended to encourage greater wisdom about interaction with contemporary culture.

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