CHAPTER TWO

WORKS AND EDITIONS I

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So well known is Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Politie that many readers might believe its author wrote nothing else. But Richard Hooker was first a lecturer and homilist, and his treatises and sermons form a significant even though minor part of his published work. There are ten of these shorter discourses, none published during Hooker’s lifetime, and probably all belong quite early in his career. Two sermons on the epistle of Jude are from his Oxford years (1580–84), and they appeared in a quarto edition in 1614, following the publication, also in quarto, in 1612 of four sermons, which all belong to Hooker’s tenure as master of the Temple (1585–90): (1) A learned and comfortable sermon of the certaintie and perpetuitie of faith in the Elect; (2) A learned discourse of justification, workes, and how the foundation of faith is overthrowne; (3) A learned sermon of the nature of Pride; and (4) A remedie against sorrow and feare. Izaak Walton, Hooker’s early biographer, published A Sermon of Richard Hooker Found in the Study of the late Learned Bishop Andrews, on Matthew 7.7, appending it to his Life of Dr. Sanderson (1678). Finally, three incomplete sermons, found among the manuscripts of Archbishop James Ussher and in his hand, must be attributed to Hooker; they appear in the Folger Library Edition of Hooker’s Works, on Matthew 27.46; Hebrews 2.14,15; and Proverbs 3.9,10.¹

The fate of these sermons—and there must have been many others now lost—was inextricably bound up with the complications

surrounding the disposition of Hooker’s books and papers at his death in early November 1600, in Bishopsbourne, Kent. A servant, acting for Hooker’s father-in-law John Churchman, removed all of Hooker’s remaining writings, with notes and various documents, from his house and brought them ‘in a cloak-bag’ to Churchman in London. There several of Hooker’s close friends sorted the contents and divided them amongst themselves: Edwin Sandys (1561–1629), who had been a pupil of Hooker’s at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and a student at the Middle Temple; John Spenser (1559–1614), sometime fellow of Corpus Christi College and president of the College in 1607; Henry Parry (1561–1616), also a sometime fellow of Corpus Christi College, and later bishop of Worcester in 1610; and Lancelot Andrewes (1555–1626), who became successively bishop of Chichester (1605), of Ely (1609), and of Winchester (1619). James Ussher (1581–1656), archbishop of Armagh, a remarkable scholar and bibliophile, was also to become implicated in the disposal of Hooker’s manuscripts, probably acquiring some of them from his friend Andrewes, which included the autograph manuscript of the *Sermon of Pride* as well as notes for the last three books of the *Lawes*; Ussher left these works, along with his own numerous papers, to Trinity College, Dublin.

Hooker intended his sermons pastorally, or else in their more extended lecture form perhaps as contributions to his controversy with Walter Travers during his period at the Inns of Court. Hooker seems to have taken no care for these works, except as they might have formed part of his thinking toward his major study *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Politie*. In an extension of the Hooker-Travers controversy (wherein, it is said, ‘The Forenoon Sermon spake Canterbury, and the Afternoon, Geneva’), Hooker addressed to Archbishop Whitgift in early 1586 his Answer to Travers’s supplication.² Increasingly, it was becoming clear that Hooker needed time and leisure to compose a full response to his puritan or non-conformist opponents, a labour that he had in these several pastoral