CHAPTER THREE

WORKS AND EDITIONS II

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It is not often one has a chance to right a textual wrong, to reverse—an appeal—a textual injustice, to correct a textual record fixed in print now for twenty-five years, but, thanks to the opportunity of making a contribution to the Companion, I am able to do exactly that, at least with respect to how chapters 3 through 6 of Book VI of the Lawes were edited and how they appear in the third volume of the Folger Edition.

Book VI was to have discussed the issue of ‘Ecclesisticall Jurisdiction,’ responding in particular to the Puritans’ brief that ‘certayne Lay-elders’ ought to be ‘established for the exercise of that power’. The argument excluding lay-elders as agents within the Church’s jurisdictional mandate was aimed at the writings of Thomas Cartwright and Walter Travers. A decade earlier, in 1585, Travers had sought to install a Puritan polity in the Temple where he was Deputy Reader and Hooker was Master (by the Queen’s appointment, no less). On this topic Hooker had had first hand experience.

Book VI at one time existed as fair copy, readied for the press; we have extensive notes on it by George Cranmer and Edwin Sandys reprinted in the Folger Edition and in Keble’s edition. We know the identity of its scribe; he was Benjamin Pullen, a clerk employed by Hooker’s father-in-law, John Churchman. He had earlier prepared a 225-folio MS of Book V for the press which is extant. In their notes on the missing MS, Cranmer and Sandys call for treatment of additional topics, for a more explicitly polemical stance, and for fuller documentation from Cartwright’s earlier debates with John Whitgift. John Keble abstracts its contents, as does Rudolf Almasy.

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1 Lawes VI.title; FLE 3:1, cf. also VI.1.1; 3:2.
3 Bodleian MS Add. C.165.
4 Keble 1.xxxvi–xxxvii.
5 ‘Richard Hooker’s Book VI: A Reconstruction,’ HLQ 42.2 (Spring 1979): 117–139.
The latest date we can assign to these notes is spring/summer of 1596 when Cranmer and Sandys together set out on a diplomatic mission to the Continent. As of 1599, Sandys places himself in Paris on 9 April. Thereafter the two return to London: Sandys to deliver his report, *Europæ Speculum: A View or Survey of the State of Religion in these Westerne Parts of the World*, to Archbishop Whitgift; Cranmer to join the English campaign led by Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, to subdue the Irish. Hooker’s sixth book was unlikely to have been much on their minds.

Cranmer died in a skirmish with Irish rebels in 1600, just days after Hooker’s own death; Sandys was in London, but extremely busy, having been abroad for three years. There would have been a window of opportunity, from December 1597, when Book V was published, to 1599, when *A Christian Letter of Certain English Protestantes* appeared, for Hooker to initiate revisions. But Hooker’s final note to the reader of Book V—‘Have patience with me for a small time, and by the helpe of Almighty God I will pay the whole’—does not sound like a man cheerfully rolling up his sleeves and getting on with it, now that the goal was in sight.

After 1596 the Hooker family were no longer living at the Churchmans’, and Hooker now had the daily responsibilities of a parish cure as well as a family to care for. Seeing through the press (in London, of course, miles from Bishopsbourne) a revised and augmented Book VI could not have been a priority for him. When he speaks in 1597 of needing only ‘a small time…to pay the whole’—that is, Books VI, VII, and VIII—he is either grossly underestimating what remained to be done, or we have lost at least one entire layer of composition, if not more, from the archival record, one that would have advanced each of the three unpublished books one step closer to completion than the surviving documents support. Hypothetically, then, Book VI would have been revised, fair copied, and readied for the press (as was Pullen’s MS of Book V); Book VII would have been in a scribal copy ready for vetting (as was the MS of VI underlying Cranmer’s and Sandys’s notes); and Book VIII, in authorial draft, would have been ready for inscription.

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8 See John Booty’s Introduction to *ACL* 4:xiii.
9 *FLE* 2:498.22.