

University of Cambridge

Faculty of Divinity

John Edwards of Cambridge (1637-1716):

A reassessment of his position within the later Stuart

Church of England



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A dissertation submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

May 2019

Declaration

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except where specifically indicated in the text.

It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution. I further state that no substantial part of my dissertation has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution.

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Jake Griesel

May 2019

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later Stuart Church of England*

Abstract

This study focuses on John Edwards of Cambridge (1637-1716) and the broader Reformed tradition within the later Stuart Church of England. Its central thesis is that, contrary to the claims of older scholarship, Edwards was not a marginalized figure in the Church of England on account of his 'Calvinism'. Instead, this study demonstrates that Edwards was recognized in his own day and in the immediately following generations as one of the preeminent conforming divines of the period, and that his theological and polemical works, despite some Arminian opposition, enjoyed a very positive reception among significant segments of the established Church's clergy, many of whom shared his Reformed doctrinal convictions. Instead of a theological misfit as he has often been portrayed, this study contends that the Reformed polemicist Edwards was a decidedly mainstream figure in the established Church of his day.

Overall, this study makes a substantial contribution to the largely uncharted field of later Stuart and early Hanoverian Church of England theology, and demonstrates that future accounts of the established Church in this period will have to afford both Edwards and his numerous Reformed contemporaries a considerably more prominent place than has hitherto been the case. It not only confirms Stephen Hampton's work on the persisting vitality of Reformed theology within the established Church during this period, but substantially develops it by demonstrating that Hampton's revisionist thesis significantly underestimated Edwards' stature within the Church as well as the strength and numbers of conforming Reformed divines between the Restoration and the evangelical revivals (1660 – c. 1730).

Finally, this study problematizes scholarly depictions of the later Stuart Church of England as having developed a fairly homogeneous 'Anglican' theological identity, and argues instead that the established Church in this period was rather variegated in terms of theological doctrine, churchmanship, and politics.

Acknowledgments

Numerous people played a role in making my PhD journey not only possible, but also in making it one of the most pleasant and enriching experiences of my life.

Firstly, I am deeply grateful to the master and fellows of Peterhouse, Cambridge, for their generosity in granting me a Peterhouse Research Studentship (full scholarship), without which my doctoral studies would not have been possible. Peterhouse also kindly provided me with funding for an extremely opportune week-long holiday in Greece during this project, which was of unspeakable benefit.

Next, my heartfelt thanks to my doctoral supervisor, Dr. Stephen Hampton, who warmly received me as his doctoral student and whose guidance, expertise, and support throughout this project were invaluable. It was a great joy and honour to be supervised by the scholar whose own research on the Reformed tradition within the later Stuart Church of England inspired much of this study. Indeed, for a project on John Edwards of Cambridge, I could not have wished for a better-suited supervisor.

My deepest gratitude to Prof. Adriaan Neele, my long-time mentor, who first instilled in me a love for historical theology as an academic discipline, and who encouraged me to apply for a PhD at Cambridge at a time when such a prospect seemed to me beyond the realm of possibilities. Since 2012 Prof. Neele has contributed to my development and welfare as a student in more ways than could possibly be enumerated here, but suffice it to say that without him my studies at Cambridge, and consequently this dissertation, would not have happened. In the same breath should be mentioned Prof. Dolf Britz, who, alongside Prof. Neele, played a very important role in exposing me to, and preparing me for, the study of historical theology.

My PhD experience was greatly enhanced by my good friend and *frater doctoralis* Sam Fornecker, who was also working under Dr. Hampton's supervision. Dubbing ourselves 'the Hampton Court Conference', throughout our doctoral studies Sam and I regularly met to enjoy fellowship and a mutual exchange of ideas, which sharpened

my thinking and ultimately refined this study. My thanks also to my cherished friend Roger Revell for our warm fellowship and shared theological reflections during our time at Cambridge. In Sam and Roger, along with Michael Lynch, I had three colleagues who kindly offered feedback on the first draft of this dissertation.

I also greatly benefited from discussions on theology and ecclesiastical history with countless other colleagues during these past few years, but particularly Bob Evans, Tom Langley, Alex Abecina, Esther Counsell, Harry Spillane, Alden McCray, and Takayuki Yagi. I am also thankful to Dr. Jeremy Morris and Prof. Richard Rex for offering helpful critiques and suggestions during my first-year review.

My heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Gerald Bray for supporting and encouraging me in various ways over the past five and a half years, but especially during the preparations for and early stages of this study, when his wisdom, expertise, guidance, and hospitality in Cambridge was of inestimable worth to me. Prof. Erik de Boer and Prof. Bruce Gordon have also regularly encouraged me in my studies, for which I am truly grateful. I am furthermore indebted to Dr. Lee Gatiss and Dr. Randall Pederson for their encouragement and advice on my initial proposal for this study, and also to my friend Dr. Mark Earngey, who was of great support and kindly hosted me in Oxford several times. There were also a host of others, far too many to mention by name, who in non-academic ways brightened my PhD journey by their encouragement, friendship, or acts of kindness along the way.

Special thanks to the staff of Christian Heritage in Cambridge, particularly David Illman, Jack Harding, and Molly Wyer, for their warm hospitality at the Round Church Scriptorium, which I frequented throughout my time in Cambridge. Large sections of this dissertation were formulated and written at my regular desk in the north aisle of the Round Church (i.e. Church of the Holy Sepulchre), the parish church in which Edwards ministered for seven years between 1676 and 1683.

Theologische Universiteit Kampen in the Netherlands kindly hosted me for the month-long Advanced Theological Studies Fellowship in 2018, where I was given the opportunity to present some of this research, on which Dr. Dolf te Velde provided

thoughtful feedback. I have also benefited from helpful discussions, questions, or comments at various conferences, particularly from Dr. Ashley Null, Dr. Richard Snoddy, Prof. Isabel Rivers, Prof. John Coffey, Dr. Gareth Atkins, Prof. Alec Ryrie, Prof. Peter Nockles, Prof. Alan Ford, Niccolò Aliano, and Philip Hobday.

I am furthermore immensely grateful to the Latimer Trust, Peterhouse, and Cambridge's Faculty of Divinity, for granting me funds to travel and present some of my research at several conferences in the United States and Canada at the end of my doctoral studies. Special thanks to Dr. Jordan Ballor for the opportunity to present some of my work to the Junius Institute for Digital Reformation Research.

Penultimately, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my parents, Arnold and Lizette, for their love, sacrifice, encouragement, prayers, and financial support throughout my life, but particularly during my nine and a half years of theological studies culminating with the PhD, none of which would have been possible without them. After an exemplary life spent in loving and sacrificial service to her family and loved ones, my mother sadly passed away just as I came to the end of my PhD studies, and it is to her memory in particular that I dedicate this dissertation.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to my dear wife, Daleen, whose love, support, companionship, and understanding during the course of this project have been immense blessings to me. It is due to her, more than any other, that these three years in Cambridge have been some of the most memorable and joyful of my life.

Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam.

Abbreviations

<i>AEH</i>	<i>Anglican and Episcopal History</i>
CUP	Cambridge University Press
<i>HJ</i>	<i>The Historical Journal</i>
<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
<i>JHI</i>	<i>Journal of the History of Ideas</i>
MUP	Manchester University Press
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
OUP	Oxford University Press
V&R	Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht
YUP	Yale University Press

*I am not left alone, I do not, like Athanasius, encounter the whole world,
no nor the whole clergy.*

- John Edwards

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1. Introduction

1.1. Biographical sketch of John Edwards (1637-1716)

John Edwards was born in Hertford on 26 February 1637.¹ His father, the well-known Presbyterian heresiographer Thomas Edwards (1599-1647), died when John was ten years old, but his mother was an heiress of an opulent fortune, and was thus able to offer her son a first-class education.² Between the ages of ten and sixteen (1647-53), Edwards attended Merchant Taylors' School in London, and in 1653 matriculated at St John's College, Cambridge. The incumbent master of St John's was Anthony Tuckney (1599-1670), a prominent Westminster Assembly divine and soon-to-be Regius Professor of Divinity, who was impressed with Edwards' conduct and abilities.³

Edwards was chosen scholar of the house soon after admission, and rose in prominence within the college, being twice chosen as one of the moderators in the schools.⁴ He graduated B.A. in 1658, was elected a fellow of St John's at the age of twenty-two on 23 March 1659 at Tuckney's behest (with whom he is said to have been 'in full sympathy'), and proceeded to an M.A. in 1661.⁵

¹ The most detailed accounts of Edwards' life are: Andrew Kippis, *Biographia Britannica: Or, the Lives of the Most Eminent Persons Who Have Flourished in Great-Britain and Ireland*, 2nd ed., vol. 5 (London, 1793), 543–46; Hermon Stevens Ray, 'The Religious Thought of Dr. John Edwards of Cambridge (1637-1716)' (PhD Dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 1956); Dewey D. Wallace, Jr., *Shapers of English Calvinism, 1660-1714: Variety, Persistence, and Transformation* (Oxford: OUP, 2011), 205–42.

² Ray, 'Religious Thought', 41.

³ ODNB, s.v. 'Edwards, John (1637-1716)'.

⁴ Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:543; *A New and General Biographical Dictionary: Containing an Historical and Critical Account of the Lives and Writings of the Most Eminent Persons in every Nation; Particularly the British and Irish*, vol. 5 (London, 1798), 275–76.

⁵ Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:543; James Bass Mullinger, *St. John's College* (London, 1901), 143.

The following year Edwards was presented by Sir Robert Carr, 3rd Baronet, to Robert Sanderson, bishop of Lincoln, who ordained him as a deacon on 11 September 1662.⁶ Sanderson, impressed with Edwards, invited him to preach the sermon at the next ordination of priests a mere ten days later on 21 September, on which occasion Edwards himself was ordained as a priest – an extraordinarily swift progression.⁷ Edwards was thus ordained mere weeks after Black Bartholomew’s Day, when at least 936 Puritan ministers were ejected from their livings for nonconformity.

While remaining a fellow of St John’s, his first tenure as a minister commenced at the age of twenty-seven in 1664, when he became vicar of Trinity Church, Cambridge, where he was ‘greatly esteemed as a practical preacher’, and where his preaching is said to have been ‘much frequented by the gown, and by persons of considerable standing in the University. Dr. [Anthony] Sparrow, Master of Queens’, Dr. [Joseph] Beaumont, Master of Peterhouse, and Dr. [John] Pearson, Master of Trinity College, were often heard to applaud his pulpit performances.’⁸ Beaumont became the Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge in 1674, whereas Sparrow and Pearson (who at this time was also the Lady Margaret’s Professor of Divinity at Cambridge) would both go on to occupy episcopal sees. Edwards and Pearson particularly shared a mutual admiration.⁹ Edwards thus enjoyed the esteem of the Cambridge establishment, and earned further respect in 1665 during an outbreak of the plague in Cambridge for opting to leave the safety of the college and to reside in town in order to care for the

⁶ Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:543; ODNB, s.v. ‘Edwards, John (1637-1716)’; Mullinger, *St. John’s College*, 143.

⁷ ODNB, s.v. ‘Edwards, John (1637-1716)’; Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:543.

⁸ James Darling, *Cyclopaedia Bibliographica*, vol. 1 (London, 1854), 1018; Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:543; ODNB, s.v. ‘Edwards, John (1637-1716)’; *New and General Biographical Dictionary*, 5:276; John Lemprière, *Universal Biography: Containing a Copious Account, Critical and Historical, of the Life and Character, Labors and Actions of Eminent Persons, in All Ages and Countries, Conditions and Professions*, vol. 1 (New York, 1810), 461.

⁹ Ray, ‘Religious Thought’, 59.

sick and afflicted in his parish.¹⁰ At this time Edwards also published his first work, a sermon preached at Trinity Church titled *The Plague of the Heart*.¹¹

Charles Henry Cooper, in his *Memorials of Cambridge*, ranks Edwards 'amongst the celebrated vicars, lecturers, and curates' of Trinity Church alongside such revered names as Richard Sibbes, John Preston, Thomas Goodwin, Thomas Herring, and Charles Simeon.¹² According to Mark Noble, Edwards' popularity in Cambridge rivalled that of the later archbishop of Canterbury, John Tillotson, who, though residing in London at the time, was still a fellow of Clare Hall. Noble writes that Edwards 'so distinguished himself, that, according to a tradition current there [i.e. at St John's], Tillotson's auditory often deserted him to hear Edwards, then a rival preacher in that place.'¹³ It appears, then, that besides being esteemed among the Cambridge establishment, Edwards was also popular among the young students of divinity who would soon enter the ministry to serve as the next generation of clergy in the Church: the very ones who would constitute the readership of his later works.

Around this time, Sir Edward Atkyns Sr offered Edwards an affluent living near Cirencester, Gloucestershire, but Edwards opted to remain in Cambridge, taking the degree of B.D. in 1668.¹⁴ Shortly after this graduation, Edwards was unanimously chosen as lecturer at St James' Church in Bury St Edmunds, and was convinced by Sir Robert Carr and Sir Thomas Harvey to take up this office, which he 'discharged with great reputation and acceptance', but which he relinquished after only twelve months,

¹⁰ ODNB, s.v. 'Edwards, John (1637-1716)'; Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:543; Mullinger, *St. John's College*, 143.

¹¹ John Edwards, *The Plague of the Heart: Its Nature and Quality, Original and Causes, Signs and Symptoms, Prevention and Cure* (Cambridge, 1665).

¹² Charles Henry Cooper, *Memorials of Cambridge*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1860–66), 3:371–72.

¹³ Mark Noble, *A Biographical History of England, from the Revolution to the End of George I's Reign*, vol. 2 (London, 1806), 124. It should be noted here that this legend was still 'current' in the early nineteenth century.

¹⁴ Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:543–44.

preferring to return to academic life at St John's in 1669.¹⁵ His return to St John's, however, did not last long; he soon became involved in disputes with the successive masters Peter Gunning and Francis Turner, which ultimately led to his resignation in 1672 at the age of thirty-five.¹⁶ Sources differ on what these disputes were about: some say that Edwards' 'Calvinism' led to conflict between him and these masters, both of whom were Arminians;¹⁷ others hold the reasons behind this friction to be unclear.¹⁸

Considering the date of Edwards' resignation (1672), together with the popularity he evidently enjoyed as a fellow of St John's throughout the 1660s, we may dismiss Ann Hughes' assertion that 'as a convinced Calvinist, John Edwards found his university career languishing after 1660.'¹⁹ In fact, twelve of Edwards' thirteen years as a fellow came after the Restoration. Even if it be granted that Edwards ultimately resigned at St John's on account of Reformed-Arminian differences with Gunning and Turner (which is uncertain, and could equally have been the result of other personal or temperamental differences), yet his Reformed commitments clearly did not lead to a quick academic demise after 1660, for, as noted, he continued enjoying the esteem of many during his fellowship. Edwards thus departed St John's and made the quarter-mile move to Trinity Hall, Cambridge, where he took up the study of civil law.²⁰

¹⁵ Ibid., 5:544.

¹⁶ Ray, 'Religious Thought', 51.

¹⁷ Ibid., 50–51; ODNB, s.v. 'Edwards, John (1637-1716)'; Samuel Macauley Jackson, 'EDWARDS, JOHN', in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1952), 80; Roland N. Stromberg, *Religious Liberalism in Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford: OUP, 1954), 111–12; Wallace, *Shapers*, 206.

¹⁸ Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:544; *New and General Biographical Dictionary*, 5:276; Lemprière, *Universal Biography*, 1:461; John Aikin and Thomas Morgan et al., *General Biography; Or, Lives, Critical and Historical, of the Most Eminent Persons of All Ages, Countries, Conditions, and Professions*, vol. 3 (London, 1802), 526.

¹⁹ Ann Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (Oxford: OUP, 2004), 420.

²⁰ Ray, 'Religious Thought', 52; Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:544.

In 1676 Edwards was invited by the parishioners of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Cambridge to become their minister, which he duly accepted. At Holy Sepulchre his popularity soared, and his sermons 'were as much attended by persons of consequence in the University as they had formerly been at Trinity Church.'²¹ That same year, Edwards married Mrs. Lane, the wealthy widow of Alderman Lane, who had been a prominent attorney in Cambridge. Around the late 1670s Edwards was also offered two considerable benefices in Norfolk by his friend Sir Robert Carr, which he declined, insisting that these should be granted to persons who needed them more.²² Edwards was thus not desirous of preferment: having inherited a substantial estate from his mother and having augmented this by his marriage to a wealthy widow,²³ he was content to serve as a parish minister and to spend his time in study and writing.

Edwards' popular seven-year tenure at Holy Sepulchre ended in 1683, when he accepted a preferment less valuable than those previously offered to him, namely St Peter's Church, Colchester.²⁴ During his Colchester days Edwards published his second work, titled *Cometomantia: A Discourse of Comets*, which he dedicated to the Reformed bishop of Salisbury and former Savilian professor of Astronomy at Oxford, Seth Ward (1617-89).²⁵ Edwards proved popular in Colchester: here his sermons were 'much attended by the inhabitants,' including the mayor and alderman, yet he retired from the ministry in 1686 due to both his and his wife's declining health.²⁶

²¹ Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:544; Ray, 'Religious Thought', 60; Harry Bristow Wilson, *The History of Merchant-Taylors' School, from Its Foundation to the Present Time* (London, 1814), 827.

²² Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:544.

²³ Ray, 'Religious Thought', 43; Aikin and Morgan et al., *General Biography*, 3:526.

²⁴ Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:544.

²⁵ John Edwards, *Cometomantia: A Discourse of Comets shewing their Original, Substance, Place, Time, Magnitude, Motion, Number, Colour, Figure, Kinds, Names, and more especially, their Prognosticks, Significations and Presages* (London, 1684).

²⁶ ODNB, s.v. 'Edwards, John (1637-1716)'; Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:544; Ray, 'Religious Thought', 60-62; Wilson, *History of Merchant-Taylors' School*, 840.

Furthermore, there appears to have been some friction of an unclear nature between him and some of the other Colchester clergy.²⁷

Whatever the case may have been, Edwards retired to an unspecified Cambridgeshire village in 1686 (either Haddenham, Harston, Ashley, Carlton & Weston Colville, or Caldecote, given that he owned estates in all of these places)²⁸ at the age of forty-nine to spend his time in full-time study and writing, possessing the leisure to do so because of his wealth. Henceforth the press rather than the pulpit would be used to disseminate his thoughts, and the rest of his life would be marked by an incessant stream of publications totalling more than forty works, which we shall consider in due course. In 1697 Edwards and his wife returned to Cambridge itself to be near the market, but chiefly so that he could more easily frequent the University and college libraries, since, remarkably, he did not possess a library of his own, other than Bibles, lexicons, dictionaries, and similar reference works of regular use.²⁹

Though retired from full-time ministry, Edwards continued to preach routinely in Cambridge right up to his death.³⁰ Indeed, as we shall see, he was invited to preach the University of Cambridge's commencement sermon in 1699, and published another sermon preached at the University Church of St Mary the Great in 1710.

After being spurred on by his friends to do so for quite some time, Edwards finally proceeded to the degree of D.D. in 1699, at the age of sixty-two. Edwards' first wife passed away in 1701, and 'after a due and decent distance of time' he married Catherine Lane, a niece of Alderman Lane (his first wife's first husband), who had been

²⁷ ODNB, s.v. 'Edwards, John (1637-1716)'; Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:544; Ray, 'Religious Thought', 61–62.

²⁸ 'Will of John Edwards, Doctor of Divinity of Cambridge, Cambridgeshire' (18 March 1714), National Archives, PROB 11/558/65.

²⁹ Ray, 'Religious Thought', 62; ODNB, s.v. 'Edwards, John (1637-1716)'; Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:544.

³⁰ Ray, 'Religious Thought', 62, 64.

brought up for several years by his first wife.³¹ Edwards died at the age of seventy-nine on 16 April 1716, and was buried in the Church of St Andrew the Great, Cambridge, where the extant epitaph states that he was ‘a learned & pious divine, a laborious & usefull writer, & an excellent preacher.’

1.2. Edwards: marginalized or mainstream?

1.2.1. The state of scholarship

Notwithstanding the picture of Edwards as a prominent and influential figure seen above, the virtually unanimous depiction of him found in recent secondary sources is marked by two descriptors: firstly, that he was a staunch and outspoken ‘Calvinist’; and secondly, that this, *ipso facto*, led to his marginalization in the established Church. The typical scholarly portrayal of Edwards is thus of a negligible Calvinist with minimal influence in an overwhelmingly Arminian later Stuart Church of England, fighting for a cause that was largely lost at the Restoration.

Along this line, Roland Stromberg averred that Edwards was by the turn of the eighteenth century ‘almost the sole remaining example of a prominent Anglican Calvinist. High and Low Churchmen alike were Arminian.’³² Hermon Stevens Ray held that Edwards had ‘a faculty of espousing losing causes’ and that he was ‘the last energetic voice raised at the turn of the century in unpopular Calvinian tone.’³³ William Spellman utterly dismissed Edwards as having had a ‘mostly deserved reputation as a misplaced product of another age, a sort of troublesome visitor from the era of the Civil War ready to risk all in defence of some quibble over an obscure passage in

³¹ *Ibid.*, 63–64; Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:544–45.

³² Stromberg, *Religious Liberalism*, 111–12.

³³ Ray, ‘Religious Thought’, 270.

Corinthians.’³⁴ Kenneth Stewart called Edwards ‘the last Calvinist don at Cambridge,’³⁵ whereas John Walsh and Stephen Taylor reckoned him but a prominent example of only a few Reformed conformist survivors in Anne’s reign, in a post-Restoration period during which ‘the old Reformed piety went into precipitous decline.’³⁶

Gordon Rupp, though more nuanced, largely maintained the same vein, noting that ‘[a]lthough by the turn of the century John Edwards of Cambridge was the only noted Calvinist writer, there were more Calvinist dons at Oxford and Cambridge and (we may surmise) in country parishes than has been recognized.’³⁷ John Spurr, Nicholas Tyacke, and Robert Beddard also offered more nuanced portrayals of the presence of Reformed theology in the later Stuart Church. Pointing to several examples of Calvinistic bishops and professors, Spurr grants that ‘the Church of England’s strong Calvinist tradition did not die out in 1641, nor even in 1662. Despite its associations with Presbyterianism, rebellion and king-killing, Calvinist theology retained its hold over some Restoration churchmen.’³⁸ Yet, notwithstanding this observation, he contends that ‘the renunciation of the old orthodoxy, associated with the younger generation of churchmen, was fast becoming the dominant school of the day.’³⁹ Tyacke also acknowledges a strong Calvinist contingent at Oxford up to the turn of the eighteenth century, but maintains that ‘elsewhere Arminianism had emerged supreme’ and that ‘the public affirmation of the English Calvinist heritage was left

³⁴ William M. Spellman, *John Locke and the Problem of Depravity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 143.

³⁵ Kenneth J. Stewart, *Restoring the Reformation: British Evangelicalism and the Francophone ‘Réveil’ 1816-1849* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006), 10.

³⁶ John Walsh and Stephen Taylor, ‘Introduction: The Church and Anglicanism in the “long” Eighteenth Century’, in *The Church of England c. 1689 - c. 1833: From Toleration to Tractarianism*, ed. John Walsh, Colin Haydon, and Stephen Taylor (Cambridge: CUP, 1993), 43.

³⁷ Gordon Rupp, *Religion in England 1688-1791* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 326.

³⁸ John Spurr, *The Restoration Church of England, 1646-1689* (New Haven: YUP, 1991), 315.

³⁹ John Spurr, ‘“Latitudinarianism” and the Restoration Church’, *HJ* 31, no. 1 (1988): 82.

almost exclusively to dissenters.⁴⁰ Beddard observes that '[i]n matters of doctrine most of [Oxford's] leading theologians – Thomas Barlow, John Hall, Robert South, and William Jane – fitted into the Calvinist tradition', and furthermore recognizes an abiding division between Calvinists and Arminians in post-Restoration Oxford.⁴¹ His focus is limited to Oxford, however, and he accordingly does not comment on the strength of Reformed theology within the post-Restoration Church more generally.

The older scholarly portrayal of a large-scale overthrow of Reformed orthodoxy within the later Stuart Church of England has been convincingly discarded by the pioneering work of Stephen Hampton, who has built a compelling case for the continuing vitality and influence of the Reformed tradition within the Church between the Restoration and Hanoverian Succession. Among other things, Hampton points to a sizable number of Reformed bishops, professors of theology (at Oxford in particular), and other eminent clergy of Reformed persuasion – including Edwards – to buffer his claim that 'the Reformed theological tradition remained a potent force within post-Restoration Anglicanism.'⁴² In addition, Hampton provides extensive evidence that Reformed conformists played pivotal roles in several major doctrinal controversies within the Church during this period, and that there remained a perceptible Reformed-Arminian divide within the Church.⁴³ Despite these findings, however, Hampton nevertheless calls Edwards 'eccentric' and describes his career as 'very patchy.'⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Nicholas Tyacke, 'Religious Controversy', in *The History of University of Oxford*, ed. Nicholas Tyacke, vol. 4 (Oxford: OUP, 1997), 617; idem, 'Arminianism and the Theology of the Restoration Church', in *The Exchange of Ideas: Religion, Scholarship and Art in Anglo-Dutch Relations in the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Simon Groenveld and Michael Wintle (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1994), 71–73.

⁴¹ R.A. Beddard, 'Restoration Oxford and the Remaking of the Protestant Establishment', in *The History of the University of Oxford*, vol. 4 (Oxford: OUP, 1997), 833–37.

⁴² Stephen Hampton, *Anti-Arminians: The Anglican Reformed Tradition from Charles II to George I* (Oxford: OUP, 2008), 22.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, chs. 4–7.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 4, 21.

Virtually undeterred by Hampton's findings on the vibrancy of Reformed theology in the later Stuart Church, the most recent writers on Edwards have only slightly amended the hitherto common view of Edwards as a churchman isolated on account of his Reformed convictions. Dewey Wallace asserts that 'Edwards became a harsh harrier of heretics with a style so polemical and with such a reputation for controversy that he was rather isolated within the Church of England' and that Edwards advocated for Calvinism in the Church 'with lonely desperation.'⁴⁵ Notwithstanding Hampton's findings on the persisting potency of Reformed theology in the later Stuart Church, Wallace states that 'Edwards left little sign that he considered himself part of a group' and that 'Edwards's self-avowed Calvinism perhaps marginalized him within the established church.'⁴⁶ Furthermore, he confidently claims that Edwards 'had few if any ties to [the established Church's] leadership,'⁴⁷ and that 'there is little evidence that he was connected to other Church of England Calvinists or to the Calvinistic Dissenters whom he sometimes defended and whose polity he seemed to share.'⁴⁸

Both Tyacke and Jeongmo Yoo, while freely granting Hampton's overall thesis of a strong Reformed presence in the Church as a whole and at Oxford in particular, nevertheless argue that the situation was quite different in Edwards' immediate context of Cambridge, where a 'full-blooded Arminianism' reigned supreme under the successive anti-Calvinist Regius Professors of Divinity, Peter Gunning and Joseph Beaumont, to which Beaumont's successor, Henry James, could possibly be added.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Wallace, *Shapers*, 206, 221.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 222.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 222.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 240.

⁴⁹ Nicholas Tyacke, 'From Laudians to Latitudinarians: A Shifting Balance of Theological Forces', in *The Later Stuart Church, 1660-1714*, ed. Grant Tapsell (Manchester: MUP, 2012), 48–49; *idem*, 'Arminianism', 70–80; Jeongmo Yoo, *John Edwards (1637-1716) on Human Free Choice and Divine Necessity: The Debate on the Relation between Divine Necessity and Human Freedom in Late Seventeenth-Century and Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Göttingen: V&R, 2013), 44–45.

Tyacke depicts Edwards as very much a marginalized figure, asserting that ‘by the 1690s overt Calvinist opposition in Cambridge would seem to have been reduced to the lone voice of John Edwards, a former college fellow living in semi-retirement.’⁵⁰ In support of this claim of Edwards’ marginality, Ray, Tyacke, Wallace, and Yoo all point to evidence in Edwards’ own writings which appear to substantiate it.⁵¹

We shall address these evidences in due course. What is important to note here, however, is that recent scholars unanimously assert that Edwards was a marginalized figure with few (if any) connections or supporters, whether this be understood within the broader Church of England or within his own microcosm of Cambridge. Even Hampton, the one scholar who has hitherto most recognized the abiding popularity of Reformed theology within the later Stuart Church of England, did not recognize Edwards as a figure who in his own right enjoyed a share in that popularity – not to mention perhaps even contributed to it.

1.2.2. Another picture emerges

A sharply contrasting picture emerges upon a perusal of the older primary and secondary sources. The hymnist William Hammond (1719-83) manifestly regarded Edwards as having held a position of prominence in his time, as he lists him alongside Ussher, Hall, Reynolds, Sanderson, Wilkins, Burnet, and Beveridge as having been one of ‘the most learned divines’ from the mid-seventeenth to early eighteenth centuries.⁵² In like manner, Sir Richard Hill, 2nd Baronet (1732-1808) named Edwards alongside Tillotson and Burnet as ‘eminent’ divines who ‘carry weight,’ while the Reformed

⁵⁰ Tyacke, ‘From Laudians to Latitudinarians’, 49.

⁵¹ Ray, ‘Religious Thought’, 92; Tyacke, ‘Arminianism’, 72; Wallace, *Shapers*, 222; Yoo, *John Edwards*, 45.

⁵² William Hammond, *Medulla Ecclesiae: The Doctrines of Original Sin, Justification by Faith, and the Holy Spirit fairly Stated and clearly Demonstrated from the Homilies, Articles and Liturgies of the Church of England* (London, 1744), vii.

conformist Augustus Toplady (1740-78) called him ‘the great and famous Dr. John Edwards, who flourished in the reigns of King William and Queen Anne, and was both a member of the university of Cambridge, and one of its brightest ornaments.’⁵³

Andrew Kippis in his *Biographia Britannica* (1793) grants that there was quite a bit more to Edwards than merely an unpopular Calvinist. While he declares that ‘it is certain that [Edwards] did not live on the best terms with the generality of the clergy’ and that ‘one thing which rendered Dr. Edwards unpopular among many of his brethren, was his great zeal for the Calvinistic doctrines,’ yet another image emerges when he notes that Edwards was considered by some ‘to have been the Paul, the Augustine, the Bradwardine, the Calvin, of his age,’ and that, despite his fervent Calvinism, ‘all unbiased and impartial men voted him, by universal consent, to be one of the most valuable writers of his time.’⁵⁴

Similarly, John Lemprière, writing in 1810, offers a rather mixed portrayal of Edwards, saying that ‘in his writings, which are numerous, [Edwards] showed himself most indefatigable, well skilled in ecclesiastical history, and a subtle and able polemic. That he was occasionally unpopular among the clergy arose from his decided partiality for Calvinistic principles, and his bias towards the abjured doctrines of the old puritans.’⁵⁵ On the aforementioned epithet of Edwards as the Paul, Augustine, Bradwardine, and Calvin of his age, Lemprière comments: ‘though he possessed merit in a very great degree, the commendation is perhaps immoderate.’⁵⁶ As will become increasingly evident in this study, Lemprière’s phraseology in speaking of Edwards as *occasionally* unpopular among the clergy (as opposed to merely unpopular) may have more substance to it than appears at first glance.

⁵³ Richard Hill, *A Letter from Richard Hill, Esq; to his Friend near Shrewsbury, containing Some Remarks on a Letter signed A PLAYER* (Shrewsbury, 1767), 24–25; Augustus Toplady, *The Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Arminianism*, 2nd ed. (London, 1779), 52.

⁵⁴ Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:545–46.

⁵⁵ Lemprière, *Universal Biography*, 1:461.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 1:461.

A guide to Cambridge titled *Cantabrigia Depicta* (1763) lists Edwards alongside such standout contemporaries as William Cave, Edward Stillingfleet, and William Beveridge as being among St John's College's eminent alumni of the period.⁵⁷ The same can be seen in *A Description of the University, Town, and County of Cambridge* (1796), Joseph Wilson's *Memorabilia Cantabrigiae* (1803), George Dyer's *History of the University and Colleges of Cambridge* (1814), and *The Cambridge Guide* (1837), the last of which lists Edwards as one of the thirty-six most eminent Johnians from the foundation of the college in the early sixteenth century up to the early nineteenth century.⁵⁸ In Cooper's *Memorials of Cambridge* Edwards is noted as an eminent fellow of St John's and is called a 'celebrated divine [and] author of numerous publications.'⁵⁹ Edwards also features as a prominent Johnian in James Bass Mullinger's *St. John's College* (1901), who writes that '[Edwards'] numerous theological works, some forty in number, were extravagantly eulogised by his admirers.'⁶⁰ Similarly, Edwards' works, particularly his *The Socinian Creed* and *Theologia Reformata*, are said by Charles Mathew Clode to have 'attracted considerable notice at the time.'⁶¹ Edwards' stature was also recognized by Edward Copleston (1776-1849), provost of Oriel College, Oxford, and afterwards bishop of Llandaff, who called him 'a learned divine of [his] age.'⁶²

⁵⁷ *Cantabrigia Depicta: A Concise and Accurate Description of the University and Town of Cambridge, and its Environs* (Cambridge, 1763), 74.

⁵⁸ *A Description of the University, Town, and County of Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1796), 91; Joseph Wilson, *Memorabilia Cantabrigiae: Or, An Account of the Different Colleges in Cambridge* (London, 1803), 242; George Dyer, *History of the University and Colleges of Cambridge*, vol. 2 (London, 1814), 253; *The Cambridge Guide, Including Historical and Architectural Notices of the Public Buildings, and a Concise Account of the Customs and Ceremonies of the University* (Cambridge, 1837), 152.

⁵⁹ Cooper, *Memorials of Cambridge*, 2:121.

⁶⁰ Mullinger, *St. John's College*, 144.

⁶¹ Charles Mathew Clode, *Memorials of the Guild of Merchant Taylors of the Fraternity of St. John the Baptist in the City of London, and of its Associated Charities and Institutions* (London, 1875), 675.

⁶² Edward Copleston, *An Enquiry into the Doctrines of Necessity and Predestination* (London, 1821), 119.

In addition to having enjoyed, as we have seen, an excellent reputation for his preaching, Edwards' position as one of the most eminent Johnians thus appears to have been especially cemented by his writings, which remained widely read throughout the eighteenth century. To give but one example (with many more to come later on), in 1799 the popular high churchman Edward Barry (1759-1822) called Edwards 'an author who is frequently read and quoted.'⁶³ This broad readership and influence of Edwards' works explains why Robert Watt, in his *Bibliotheca Britannica* (1824), was able to call Edwards 'an eminent English divine.'⁶⁴

Edwards' stature as a divine of eminence was also recognized by authors beyond the pale of the Church of England, of which only a few examples will be offered at present. In 1711, five years before Edwards' death, he was described in an anonymous Presbyterian tract as 'a famous living divine of the Church of England.'⁶⁵ The Particular Baptist Benjamin Wallin (1711-82) in 1768 referred to Edwards as 'a judicious writer' and 'a man of singular piety and learning,' adding that his works are 'full of strong reasoning and solid arguments on every point.'⁶⁶ The Independent minister George Burder (1752-1832), in turn, considered Edwards 'a writer of great respectability.'⁶⁷

What we may gather from such testimonies, of which plenty more will in due course be seen from Edwards' contemporaries and from those in the immediately following generations, is that the comment found in *The Gentleman's Magazine* of November 1792 may not be wide of the mark, when it is said that 'Dr. John Edwards, a Cambridge

⁶³ Edward Barry, *The Friendly Call of Truth and Reason to a New Species of Dissenters* (Reading, 1799), 86.

⁶⁴ Robert Watt, *Bibliotheca Britannica: Or a General Index to British and Foreign Literature*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh, 1824), 330.

⁶⁵ *Remarks upon Mr. Hodges's Pamphlet entitul'd Corah's Transgression in Murmuring against Aaron, Reviv'd by Dissenters in Murmuring against the Order of Bishops, &c.*, 1711, 32.

⁶⁶ Benjamin Wallin, *Lectures on Primitive Christianity* (London, 1768), 80.

⁶⁷ George Burder, *Evangelical Truth Defended: Or, a Reply to a Letter containing Strictures on a Sermon, Preached at Lancaster, by the Rev. Mr. Housman* (Lancaster, 1788), 15.

divine... seems to have been of some consequence and popularity in his day.’⁶⁸ Yet this is exactly what recent scholars have consistently denied.

This stark contrast between recent scholarship and the testimony of older primary and secondary sources occasions an investigation into Edwards’ position within the later Stuart Church of England. The scope of this study, then, will revolve around three closely-related questions:

(1) Was Edwards, as the older sources say, an eminent and influential figure in the later Stuart Church of England?

(2) If so, can we trace the reception of his works, the divines he associated with, likeminded contemporaries, and the possible reasons for his popularity so as to locate him in the Church at the time?

(3) How do these findings contribute to current scholarly understandings of the Church of England between the Restoration (1660) and the evangelical revivals of the 1730s, particularly in the years after the Glorious Revolution (1688/89)?

In order to answer these questions, this study will investigate most of Edwards’ published corpus to unearth his participation in some of the major polemical controversies within the Church of England at the time. This will include a particular consideration of the specific divines he opposed, as well as contemporaries who either supported him or who shared his theological views. As will become increasingly apparent, an investigation of the above will sharply call into question the common portrayal of Edwards as an isolated ‘Calvinist’ with little influence in the Church. It will be argued, then, that previous scholars have severely underrated Edwards’ significance and influence in the Church at the time, and that future accounts of the later Stuart Church will need to afford Edwards a considerably more prominent place than has hitherto been the case.

⁶⁸ Sylvanus Urban, ed., *The Gentleman’s Magazine: And Historical Chronicle. For the Year MDCCXCII*, vol. 2 (London, 1792), 1002.

1.3. Definition of terms

Before we explore Edwards' career as a theologian, it is necessary to establish definitions of several terms employed in this study to avoid confusion or equivocation.

Firstly, this study ordinarily prefers the term 'Reformed' rather than 'Calvinist' or 'Calvinism'. The scholarship on post-Reformation Reformed theology over the past few decades, led by figures such as Richard Muller and Willem van Asselt, has repeatedly underlined that 'Calvinism' is an exceedingly unhelpful misnomer obscuring the fact that the Reformed tradition was far from monolithically dependent on or normed by Calvin, but rather drew from a broad international range of sources and was shaped by different local contexts and circumstances, which admitted a degree of variation within the tradition.⁶⁹ This allowed the English conforming Reformed tradition to have its own peculiarities, such as episcopacy and a set liturgy.⁷⁰ When identifying conforming churchmen as 'Reformed' in this study, it denotes that they 'held fast to a certain set of key theological motifs in their soteriology, Christology, and their doctrine of God, which they shared with the wider Reformed tradition, and which distinguish them from those of their contemporaries whose thought was no longer marked by these motifs.'⁷¹ Although we will follow Muller in preferring the term 'Reformed' as the 'more historically accurate term,'⁷² yet the term 'Calvinism' will still feature in this study due to Edwards' frequent use thereof and because it was

⁶⁹ Richard A. Muller, *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition* (New York: OUP, 2003), 7–9, 16; idem, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725*, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 30; W.J. van Asselt, 'Protestantse scholastiek: methodologische kwesties bij de bestudering van haar ontwikkeling', *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Kerkgeschiedenis* 4 (2001): 64–69.

⁷⁰ Stephen Hampton, 'Confessional Identity', in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism*, ed. Anthony Milton, vol. 1 (Oxford: OUP, 2017), 210–27; Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 5–10.

⁷¹ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 9.

⁷² Muller, *PRRD*, 1:30.

common contemporary polemical shorthand primarily denoting Reformed soteriology (particularly concerning election, grace, and justification), and this will consistently be its denotation in this study.

Secondly, the terms 'Arminian' and 'Socinian' should also be understood in their polemical context. The term 'Arminian' broadly denoted churchmen who rejected Reformed soteriology, without necessarily implying that this rejection was derived directly from the writings of Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609) or the Remonstrants. Similarly, the term 'Socinian' not only designated those who explicitly followed Faustus Socinus (1539-1604) and the Polish Brethren, but 'by *Socinianism*', as Edwards himself related, 'I do not only mean a denying of the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Ghost, but I comprehend in it all the errors about Christ's incarnation and his design of coming into the world, and his satisfaction, and the doctrine of justification, and several other great mysteries and sacred verities of the Gospel.'⁷³ 'Socinianism' therefore denoted a range of errors and heresies commonly associated with, though not necessarily directly derived from, Socinus and the Polish Brethren.

Thirdly, we need to clarify the terms 'high' and 'low churchmen'. Originally – that is, in Edwards' day – these labels primarily had ecclesio-political connotations relating to differing attitudes to the dissenters and church-state relations. The label 'high churchmen', in Grant Tapsell's words, 'connoted those hostile to nonconformity and passionately committed to the ceremonies of the Church re-established in 1662', whereas 'low churchmen' or 'latitudinarians' referred to 'those who were more interested in pragmatic dialogue with Dissenters, and who stressed 'reasonable' religion rather than minute concern with liturgical and ecclesiastical norms.'⁷⁴ High

⁷³ John Edwards, *A Free Discourse concerning Truth and Error, especially in Matters of Religion* (London, 1701), 302.

⁷⁴ Grant Tapsell, 'The Church of England, 1662-1714', in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism*, ed. Jeremy Gregory, vol. 2 (Oxford: OUP, 2017), 36–37; idem, 'Introduction: The Later Stuart Church in Context', in *The Later Stuart Church, 1660-1714*, ed. Grant Tapsell (Manchester: MUP, 2012), 5; Cf. J.C.D. Clark, 'Church, Parties, and Politics', in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism*, ed. Jeremy Gregory, vol. 2 (Oxford:

churchmen generally held Tory political commitments, whereas low churchmen were typically Whigs. *Pace* Spurr, who essentially argued that there were no major or substantial differences between these two parties, this study will abide with Tapsell's more conventional use of these terms as denoting actual ecclesio-political differences among conforming churchmen.⁷⁵ Later uses of these terms as referring respectively to the 'Anglo-Catholic' and 'evangelical' wings of the Church should not be anachronistically imported here.

Finally, this study has avoided the anachronistic term 'Anglican' or 'Anglicanism', with its implied connotation of a unified theological-ecclesiological identity. As will become clear in this study, there was a distinct lack of a unified 'Anglican' identity during Edwards' day, with the Church's identity being contested on various fronts, whether doctrinally or ecclesio-politically. The one thing that the Church of England's miscellaneous clergy did have in common was their conformity to the established Church, which is why this study has consistently used the term 'conformists', 'conforming churchmen', or simply 'churchmen' to denote clergy who were members of the established Church, without thereby implying, as the term 'Anglican' might, that they uniformly adhered to the same doctrines or churchmanship.

OUP, 2017), 293–95; Brent S. Sirota, *The Christian Monitors: The Church of England and the Age of Benevolence, 1680-1730* (New Haven: YUP, 2014), 16; Julian Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty? England 1689-1727* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 196–97.

⁷⁵ Spurr, "'Latitudinarianism" and the Restoration Church', 61–82; Cf. William C. Watson, 'Rethinking the Late Stuart Church: The Extent of Liberal Anglicanism, 1688-1715', *AEH* 70, no. 2 (June 2001): 144, 146–47; Patrick Müller, *Latitudinarianism and Didacticism in Eighteenth-Century Literature: Moral Theology in Fielding, Sterne, and Goldsmith* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009), 42.

2. Edwards' early works and participation in the Socinian controversy (1692-1700)

2.1. Edwards' early works (1692-95)

Prior to retiring from the ministry in 1686, Edwards had published only two works, which have both been noted before: a sermon preached at Trinity Church in Cambridge during the plague (1665) and his *Cometomantia* (1684), which appears to have earned him some recognition, as he was styled 'the worthy author of *Cometomantia*' by an anonymous writer in 1692.¹ Edwards would only publish again six years after his retirement, but when his next publication arrived, it marked the beginning of his relentless post-retirement writing endeavours which would witness the publication of more than forty works in the remaining twenty-four years of his life.

This great industry commenced in 1692, when Edwards released an exegetical work titled *An Enquiry into Four Remarkable Texts of the New Testament*,² which bore the imprimatur of Gabriel Quadring (vice-chancellor of the University of Cambridge and master of Magdalene College), Joseph Beaumont (master of Peterhouse and Regius Professor of Divinity), John Montagu (master of Trinity College), and John Spencer (master of Corpus Christi College). That same year, at the instigation of Beaumont,³

¹ *Merlini Liberati Errata: Or, The Prophecies and Predictions of John Partridge, for the Year of Our Lord, 1690, &c.* (London, 1692), 5.

² John Edwards, *An Enquiry into Four Remarkable Texts of the New Testament which contain some Difficulty in them: With a Probable Resolution of them* (Cambridge, 1692).

³ In the preface Edwards writes the following, which can only refer to Beaumont, who, as noted, had earlier applauded his preaching in Cambridge: 'Let me not incur the imputation of arrogance, if I tell the reader, that when I presented my former *Critical Essay* to the view and censure of a great man (who for his profound knowledge and profession of divinity embellished with an unparallell'd eloquence, hath most justly been esteemed above four lusters of years the oracle of the schools, the glory of the

Edwards published a sequel titled *A Farther Enquiry into Several Remarkable Texts of the Old and New Testament* which, together with the imprimaturs of Quadring and Beaumont, also bore those of Samuel Blythe (vice-chancellor of the University and master of Clare Hall), John Covel (master of Christ's College) and Charles Roderick (provost of King's College). In addition, Edwards published this work under the patronage of Simon Patrick, bishop of Ely. It is evident, then, that Edwards and his works were known and esteemed among Cambridge's elite academics and divines at this time. Edwards would ten years later look back at these two volumes and comment that they had met with 'success' and 'the approbation of the learned.'⁴

His next work, prompted by an ongoing controversy sparked by the republication of the sermons of Tobias Crisp, was his anonymous *Crispianism Unmask'd* (1693), which criticized Crisp's antinomianism and vindicated a Reformed orthodox view of justification and sanctification.⁵ The Welsh dissenter Thomas Edwards (1649-1700) took exception to *Crispianism Unmask'd* and offered a response that same year (1693), in which he which espoused a hyper-Calvinist view.⁶ John Edwards was one of several divines – including his esteemed conforming colleague Edward Stillingfleet (1635-99), the bishop of Worcester – who sided with the Presbyterian Daniel Williams (c. 1643-

Chair, the life and soul of the University, and the astonishment of the whole learned world), he, after he had vouchsafed to express his approbation of it in such favourable terms which it becomes me not to impart, was pleased to encourage me to a *Second Attempt* of the like nature. Which I being animated by so great (but so candid) a judge, have now finished, and here offer to the publick, and submit to the censure of the learned.' See John Edwards, *A Farther Enquiry into several Remarkable Texts of the Old and New Testament which contain some Difficulty in them: With a Probable Resolution of them* (London, 1692), Preface. A second edition was published in 1694.

⁴ John Edwards, *Exercitations Critical, Historical, Philosophical, Theological. On Several Important Places in the Writings of the Old and New Testament* (London, 1702), Epistle Dedicatory.

⁵ John Edwards, *Crispianism Unmask'd: Or, a Discovery of the Several Erroneous Assertions, and Pernicious Doctrins maintain'd in Dr. Crisp's Sermons* (London, 1693).

⁶ Thomas Edwards, *A Short Review of Some Reflections, made by a Nameless Author, upon Dr. Crisp's Sermons, in a Piece, entituled, Crispianism Unmask'd* (London, 1693).

1716) against Independent antinomians such as Stephen Lobb, Isaac Chauncy, and others.⁷ Edwards was respected by Williams, a central figure in these disputes, who the following year referred to him as ‘the learned author of *Crispianism Unmask’d*.’⁸ Edwards’ role in this controversy was also valued by an anonymous writer in 1699, who, taking Edwards’ side against the aforementioned Welshman Thomas Edwards, referred to him as ‘Mr. Edwards of Cambridg [*sic*], that orthodox, moderate Conformist,’ an ‘unexceptionable Calvinist,’ and, tellingly, ‘this famous divine.’⁹

Edwards received further recognition from Cambridge’s academic elite with his three-volume *A Discourse concerning the Authority, Stile, and Perfection of the Books of the Old and New Testament* (1693-95),¹⁰ which defended the authority and integrity of the Bible against Socinians, deists, and sceptics, and marked his participation on the orthodox side in the controversy surrounding heterodox figures such as Charles Blount and John Toland. Besides again bearing the imprimaturs of Blythe, Beaumont, Covell, and Roderick, these three volumes were also given the imprimaturs of George Oxenden (master of Trinity Hall and Regius Professor of Civil Law), Nathaniel Coga (master of Pembroke Hall), and Charles Alston (archdeacon of Essex), the latter of whom acted on behalf of Henry Compton, bishop of London. The first two volumes

⁷ Edmund Calamy, *Memoirs of the Life of the Late Revd. Mr. John Howe* (London, 1724), 184; Edward Bickersteth, *The Christian Student: Designed to Assist Christians in General in Acquiring Religious Knowledge*, 2nd ed. (London, 1829), 322–23; Peter Toon, *The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism in English Nonconformity 1689-1765* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1967), 52–53; Curt Daniel, ‘John Gill and Calvinistic Antinomianism’, in *The Life and Thought of John Gill (1697-1771): A Tercentennial Appreciation*, ed. Michael A.G. Haykin (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 177; David Bogue and James Bennett, *History of the Dissenters, from the Revolution in 1688, to the Year 1808*, vol. 1 (London, 1808), 399–409.

⁸ Daniel Williams, *Man Made Righteous by Christ’s Obedience* (London, 1694), Epistle to the Reader.

⁹ *A Censure on Three Scandalous Pamphlets. I. A Defence of Dr. Crisp, against the Charge of Mr. Edwards of Cambridg, by Esquire Edwards in Wales, etc.* (London, 1699), 3, 5.

¹⁰ John Edwards, *A Discourse concerning the Authority, Stile, and Perfection of the Books of the Old and New Testament*, 3 vols. (London, 1693-95).

again enjoyed Patrick's patronage, and the third volume that of the archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Tenison, along with a longer imprimatur of Beaumont reading:

I judg [*sic*] the reverend author shall do well to print the following Discourse, wherein he hath learnedly demonstrated the excellency and perfection of the books of the Old and New Testament:

*Io. Beaumont, D.D. The King's Professor of Divinity in Cambridge.*¹¹

Again, Edwards at this point does not appear to have been a lone figure at all, but was enjoying the company and approval of eminent men, with Beaumont in particular boosting him to write and publish. Indeed, he would later recall that these volumes were 'well received of those that were competent judges of that sort of literature.'¹²

While the patronages of Patrick and Tenison are clear signs of their recognition of the worth of Edwards' early works, it may be argued that these imprimaturs, given prior to the lapse of the Licensing Act in 1695, are not necessarily marks of 'approval on academic and scholarly ground,' as David McKitterick notes.¹³ Yet McKitterick also observes that 'in practice, however, the University's licence [prior to 1695] was assumed also to bear this further weight [of approval].'¹⁴ So, effectually, these imprimaturs would have been seen as endorsing Edwards' works. Moreover, even if pre-1695 imprimaturs do not necessarily imply approval, yet it is contended here that in Edwards' case they did, since the very same college heads again gave their imprimaturs to some of Edwards' works after 1695, at a time when they were now carrying 'a weight of corporate recommendation.'¹⁵ The fact that imprimaturs after

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 3:Back matter.

¹² Edwards, *Exercitations*, Epistle Dedicatory.

¹³ David McKitterick, *A History of Cambridge University Press*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), 38.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

1695 implied the approval of the attached names would later be noted by Edwards himself, when he commented on the publishing customs of the time.¹⁶ All of this strongly suggests that the imprimaturs given to Edwards' works before 1695, though given before the lapse of the Licensing Act, should not be deemed insignificant.

Yet Wallace, insistent on depicting Edwards as an isolated figure, questions the sincerity of these imprimaturs and the patronage of such eminent clergymen which Edwards' works enjoyed – even those published after 1695. Wallace's objection is founded on the basis that a number of them were men 'with whom [Edwards] had significant theological differences, and several of whom, especially Tillotson, were objects of his attacks.'¹⁷ It is appropriate, therefore, first to clear this possible objection that these patronages and imprimaturs were not necessarily marks of approval.

Firstly, Edwards never published under Tillotson's patronage nor dedicated any of his works to him, being far too strongly opposed to Tillotson to do so, as we shall see.

Secondly, as noted, Beaumont esteemed Edwards' preaching and encouraged him to publish: here is no feigned imprimatur. Furthermore, as mentioned, Beaumont and other college heads again gave their imprimaturs to Edwards' after 1695, when it clearly implied approval. Certainly the patronages of Stillingfleet and Richard Kidder (more on which later) signified approval. Edwards and Stillingfleet had been comrades against Socinians, deists, and sceptics throughout the 1690s. Edwards, who did not hesitate to disagree even with Reformed clergy such as Pearson, Beveridge, and John Wallis on certain issues, never criticized Kidder; rather, we find him recommending Kidder's *A Demonstration of the Messiah* to students even after Kidder's death,¹⁸ when

¹⁶ John Edwards, *A Supplement to the Animadversions on Dr. Clarke's Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity* (London, 1713), Preface; idem, *A Brief Vindication of the Fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith, as also of the Clergy, Universities and Publick Schools, from Mr. Lock's Reflections upon them in his Book of Education, &c.* (London, 1697), Front matter.

¹⁷ Wallace, *Shapers*, 222.

¹⁸ John Edwards, *The Preacher. A Discourse, shewing, what are the Particular Offices and Employments of those of that Character in the Church*, 3 vols. (London, 1705-09), 1:Back matter.

doing so could no longer derive any favours from the deceased bishop, which therefore strongly suggests sincerity in this recommendation.

Thirdly, even in the case where Edwards explicitly disagreed on particular issues with a divine whose patronage he enjoyed, as was the case with Patrick and which only occurred a decade later, it did not prevent such divines supporting Edwards when he wrote on issues of common concern to them, such as anti-Socinian and anti-deist polemics. It is contended here, therefore, that contrary to Wallace's suggestion, the patronage and imprimaturs which Edwards enjoyed, including those given before 1695 but especially those given afterwards, were indeed marks of approval. In other words, they indicate that Edwards was an insider, not an outsider.

Returning to Edwards' triad on the authority and integrity of the Scriptures, these volumes bear noticeable signs of him favouring or associating himself with specific churchmen. For example, he approvingly cites the bishop of Cork and Ross, Edward Wetenhall (1636-1713), on the authenticity of the Scriptures, calling him 'an excellent man' and 'an excellent author.'¹⁹ Against the increasingly common view that many Old Testament religious ceremonies were derived from the heathen nations surrounding Israel and therefore had pagan origins, Edwards cites, among others, two particular English divines whom he held in high esteem: Stillingfleet, whom he calls a 'worthy prelate of our Church,' and Thomas Jackson (1579-1640), whom he describes as 'judicious.'²⁰ A third, who, as noted before, also greatly respected Edwards and highly rated his sermons in Cambridge, was the now-deceased John Pearson (1613-86), whom Edwards describes as 'one of the learned'st men of our age' and a 'judicious writer.'²¹

E.H. Gillett noted this affinity between Edwards and Stillingfleet in together defending revealed theology against deists and sceptics, and added that Edwards 'was

¹⁹ Edwards, *Discourse concerning the Authority*, 1:73.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1:273, 300-301.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 1:374.

perhaps the most polemically orthodox man of his age.’²² Edwards declared that ‘I have a great and passionate desire to serve the Church, to vindicate our holy religion, [and] to advance the cause of Christianity,’ an endeavour which was earning him the praise of his peers and superiors, and which would prove to be at the heart of his remaining writing career.²³ Edwards’ two biblical-exegetical volumes and his triad on Scripture were highly rated by the antiquarian and politician Sir Daniel Fleming (1633-1701), who, in a letter addressed to his son, Sir George Fleming, 2nd Baronet, dated 30 May 1696, heartily recommended them, effectively saying of Edwards’ triad that they were the go-to source on antiquities, and that ‘other antiquities should only be studied as recreations, not as employments.’²⁴ In turn, the dissenter Theophilus Lobb (1678-1763) in 1712 called Edwards, together with Stillingfleet and Calamy, ‘very solid divines’ for their defences of the authenticity of the canonical books of Scripture.²⁵ In fact, as late as 1785 Edwards’ work on Scripture was still recommended by an anonymous Scottish writer ‘above all other writings’ on this topic.²⁶

Within the first three years of his post-retirement publishing activity, Edwards had thus released six volumes, all of which had received praise from various quarters, and which bore the approval of the University of Cambridge’s establishment, the bishop of Ely, and the archbishop of Canterbury. In addition, he seemed to associate himself particularly closely with the renowned bishop of Worcester, Stillingfleet, and this affiliation was about to grow even stronger.

²² E.H. Gillett, *God in Human Thought; Or, Natural Theology Traced in Literature, Ancient and Modern, to the Time of Bishop Butler*, vol. 2 (New York, 1874), 561.

²³ Edwards, *Discourse concerning the Authority*, 2:ix.

²⁴ John Richard Magrath, ed., *The Flemings in Oxford, being Documents Selected from the Rydal Papers in Illustration of the Lives and Ways of Oxford Men 1650-1700*, vol. 3 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), 291.

²⁵ Theophilus Lobb, *A Discourse on Ministerial Instruction* (London, 1712), 43–44.

²⁶ *A Comprehensive View of the Various Controversies among Pagans, Mahometans, Jews, and Christians, Philosophical and Theological* (Edinburgh, 1785), 40.

2.2. Edwards' participation in the Socinian controversy (1695-1700)

Spurred on by the approval of such eminent supporters, and Beaumont in particular, the greater part of Edwards' writing industry up to the turn of the century would be spent engaging in the Trinitarian or Socinian controversy of the 1690s, in which major conforming churchmen such as William Sherlock, Robert South, John Wallis, Edward Stillingfleet, and Edward Fowler were also involved.

While Edwards was keenly aware of the Trinitarian disputes between Sherlock on one hand and South and Wallis on the other, he did not become directly involved in these, preferring to focus on threats coming from other quarters, such as Socinianism, Unitarianism, deism, atheism, and new developments in natural philosophy, which were becoming increasingly conspicuous in the intellectual environment of the day. In Edwards' works of the later 1690s is found a recurrent emphasis on the 'fundamental articles' of Christianity, which he sought to defend against heterodoxy and particularly against those who elevate human reason above divine revelation.

The first of these writings was his *Some Thoughts concerning the Several Causes of Atheism* (1695)²⁷ which was intended as introductory material to a longer treatise published shortly thereafter under the title *A Demonstration of the Existence and Providence of God* (1696),²⁸ which were both published under the patronage of Archbishop Tenison. In *Some Thoughts*, Edwards chimes in on the major then-ongoing Trinitarian controversy, supporting Stillingfleet's doctrine of the Trinity and the attributes of God against the Unitarian Stephen Nye and the Socinians, and agreeing with Stillingfleet in accusing these groups of elevating human reason in matters of

²⁷ John Edwards, *Some Thoughts concerning the Several Causes and Occasions of Atheism, especially in the Present Age* (London, 1695).

²⁸ John Edwards, *A Demonstration of the Existence and Providence of God, from the Contemplation of the Visible Structure of the Greater and the Lesser World in Two Parts* (London, 1696).

religion beyond its due.²⁹ Edwards also positively cites the Gresham Professor of Physic, John Woodward (1665-1728), on the veracity of the biblical accounts of creation and the flood, who would later lend his patronage to one of Edwards' works.³⁰

Yet the main thrust of the book is to warn against the error of overestimating the power of human reason and thereby disparaging divine revelation or revealed theology, an error which Edwards takes to be at the very heart of Socinianism. On this issue Edwards is entirely at one with his supporter, Beaumont, who had likewise identified the overvaluing of human reason as the source of Socinian errors, and who agreed with Edwards that Christian mysteries were beyond the reach of 'right reason' and could only be known by divine revelation.³¹ Since this overemphasis on natural reason undermines those fundamental doctrines of Christianity which are only knowable through divine revelation, and thereby ultimately creates a slippery slope towards disbelief in any revealed religion, Edwards writes that 'in the very *Socinian* doctrine itself there seems to be an Atheistick tang'³² – a sentiment that was appreciated by the Independent minister Stephen Lobb (c. 1647-99).³³ This crying up of natural reason, in Edwards' observation, was taking hold of a number of clergymen and intellectuals at the time, and he offers an idea of the kind of people he has in mind:

No wise man will disapprove of a latitude either in philosophy, or in the dubious and controverted points of theology: but then here he must be upon his guard,

²⁹ Edwards, *Some Thoughts*, 65, 68–73; Mark Pattison, 'Tendencies of Religious Thought in England, 1688-1750', in *Essays and Reviews: The 1860 Text and Its Reading*, ed. Victor Shea and William Whitla (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 432; William J. Bulman, *Anglican Enlightenment: Orientalism, Religion and Politics in England and its Empire, 1648-1715* (Cambridge: CUP, 2015), 264–65.

³⁰ Edwards, *Some Thoughts*, 82–83; idem, *Demonstration*, 105–6, 114, 116, 138, 146, 151, 174.

³¹ Tyacke, 'Arminianism', 74.

³² Edwards, *Some Thoughts*, 64.

³³ Stephen Lobb, *The Growth of Error: Being an Exercitation concerning the Rise and Progress of Arminianism and more especially Socinianism, both Abroad, and Now of Late in England* (London, 1697), 90, 189.

for there are those that under the pretence of throwing off some precarious things in the Old Philosophy, and discarding the empty speculations of the Schools cast off those principles which are useful and sound: under the notion of the advancement of the arts and sciences, and the improvement of the *belles lettres*, and carrying learning up to a greater height, they in the meantime help to pull these down. Especially in religion, under the colour of searching further than others have done into divine matters they abandon some of the choicest principles: under the pretext of reason and good sense they obtrude any new conceit upon the world, and regard not the suffrage of the Holy Scriptures or of the primitive Church. This they call a *rational religion*, and if you offer anything against it, they cry it down as a *dream*, a *romance*, a *fable*, a *phantom*, an *hobgoblin*, and (which is a word which they think comprehends all the rest) *priestcraft*.³⁴

Along with this 'rational' religion, Edwards detects another danger to Christian orthodoxy coming in the form of doctrinal minimalism, which he closely associates with Socinianism, and for which he faults Jeremy Taylor (1613-67), Herbert Croft (1603-91), and Arthur Bury (1624-1714), the former rector of Exeter College, Oxford, who had been expelled in 1689 for his antitrinitarian views.³⁵ Yet there is one author in particular whom he faulted, and who would continue to be an object of his polemical ire for the rest of his life, namely the philosopher John Locke (1632-1704).

Interestingly, Edwards had earlier in this same book spoken quite well of Locke's *Some Thoughts on Education*, in connection to which he called Locke a 'very thoughtful and ingenious gentleman.'³⁶ It was, however, Locke's latest publication which enraged Edwards, namely, his *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695). Due to this work being published anonymously, Edwards had only heard rumours that Locke was the author,

³⁴ Edwards, *Some Thoughts*, 98–100.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 104–5.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 96.

but decided to give him the benefit of the doubt, seeing that ‘that vein of sense and reason, yea and of elocution too which runs through his works are all extinct here.’³⁷

Above all other things in this book, Edwards cringed at Locke’s assertion that ‘nothing is required to be believed by any Christian man but this, that Jesus is the Messiah,’ which leads him to embark on a rampage against Locke, whom he calls ‘all over Socinianized,’ for, in his judgment, omitting doctrines such as the Trinity, Christ’s divinity, Christ’s satisfaction, human redemption, and the like from the necessary articles of faith required to be believed in order to make someone a Christian.³⁸

Some Locke scholars, such as John Higgins-Biddle and Victor Nuovo, have contended that Locke never made the above assertion, as Edwards alleged.³⁹ Yet Locke expressly asserted that ‘all that was to be believed for justification [by the early Christians], was no more but this single proposition; that *Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, or the Messiah,*’ and that this was ‘the fundamental article of [Christ’s] church’, with similar expressions amounting to the same thing found in a number of places in his *Reasonableness*.⁴⁰ This is granted by another Locke scholar, John Marshall, who states that ‘The *Reasonableness* professed a minimal creed, requiring of a Christian only belief that Jesus was the Christ, or Messiah, a belief explained in non-trinitarian language,’ which contemporaries would typically have deemed ‘Socinian’.⁴¹

³⁷ Ibid., 113–14; Victor Nuovo, ed., *John Locke, Vindications of the Reasonableness of Christianity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2012), xlv.

³⁸ Edwards, *Some Thoughts*, 105–21.

³⁹ John C. Higgins-Biddle, ed., *John Locke, The Reasonableness of Christianity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), xlv; Nuovo, *John Locke, Vindications*, xxviii.

⁴⁰ John Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity, as Delivered in the Scriptures*, 2nd ed. (London, 1696), 47, 105, Cf. 26–31, 37–38, 40, 43, 116–24, 171–74, 184–86, 194–95, 202.

⁴¹ John Marshall, ‘Locke, Socinianism, “Socinianism”, and Unitarianism,’ in *English Philosophy in the Age of Locke*, ed. M.A. Stewart (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 164; Cf. Dewey D. Wallace, Jr., ‘Socinianism, Justification by Faith, and the Sources of John Locke’s *The Reasonableness of Christianity*,’ *JHI* 45, no. 1 (March 1984): 63–66; Arthur W. Wainwright, ed., *John Locke, A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St*

Moreover, Edwards fulminated against Locke for elevating the four gospels to a position of higher authority than the apostolic epistles, thereby creating a canon within the canon of Scripture. Locke wrote that “tis not in the epistles we are to learn what are the fundamental articles of faith, where they are promiscuously, and without distinction mixed with other truths in discourses that were (though for edification indeed, yet) only occasional.’⁴² This, in Edwards’ mind, is nothing but a degradation of the apostolic epistles and the doctrines propounded in them to a secondary rank, and a passing them by ‘with some contempt.’⁴³

The Unitarian Stephen Nye (1648-1719) reacted to Edwards’ criticism of Locke that same year, and Locke himself responded in the second edition of his *Reasonableness* (1696), which prompted Edwards to retaliate with his *Socinianism Unmask’d* (1696).⁴⁴ Nuovo remarks that Edwards ‘could stand proxy for a host of clerical critics [of Locke], who might not choose to stand by his side even though they shared his opinions and suspicions.’⁴⁵ One such example was William Payne (c. 1650-97), rector of St Mary Whitechapel, who had preached a sermon at Westminster Abbey in which he shared Edwards’ criticism of Locke’s assertion of only one fundamental Christian doctrine.⁴⁶

It appears that Edwards had by now become aware that Locke was indeed the author, and that he realized the formidableness of challenging such an eminent

Paul, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 37–38; Sarah Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution: The Challenge of Socinianism* (Cambridge: CUP, 2010), 236.

⁴² Locke, *Reasonableness*, 298.

⁴³ Edwards, *Some Thoughts*, 111.

⁴⁴ Stephen Nye, *The Exceptions of Mr. Edwards, in his Causes of Atheism, against the Reasonableness of Christianity, as Deliver’d in the Scriptures, Examin’d; and Found Unreasonable, Unscriptural, and Injurious* (London, 1695); John Edwards, *Socinianism Unmask’d: A Discourse shewing the Unreasonableness of a Late Writer’s Opinion concerning the Necessity of only One Article of Christian Faith* (London, 1696).

⁴⁵ Nuovo, *John Locke, Vindications*, xlvii.

⁴⁶ William Payne, *The Mystery of the Christian Faith and of the Divinity of Christ Proved* (London, 1697), 3–4.

intellectual.⁴⁷ Yet, since the second edition of Locke's *Reasonableness* was again published anonymously, Edwards could feign that the author's identity was uncertain, and thereby attack the book while claiming not to attack anyone's person:

I will not wast [*sic*] time, and trouble the reader and myself about guessing who this writer is. Out of Christian good will and charity I am backward to believe that he who is vogue'd to be the father of these extravagant conceits, is really so. I will still perswade myself that there is *an error of [the identity of] the person*; upon which account I shall be more free than otherwise I should have been.⁴⁸

As Nuovo observes, 'by separating the book from its rumoured author, [Edwards] could abandon all restraint.'⁴⁹ Moreover, the mere fact that Locke published this work anonymously, pointed, in Edwards' mind, to his association with the Socinians:

[T]he writer [of the *Reasonableness*] is wonderfully pleased with his lying hid, and being nobody. I grant that there may be reasons why a man may sometimes conceal his name, and not prefix it to the book he is author of. But there are some reasons that are proper and peculiar to this writer's circumstances, for this is perfectly after the mode of our late *English Racovian* [i.e. *Socinian*] writers, who constantly appear *nameless*, and accordingly herein he shews himself to be of the right *Racovian* breed. And another good reason is this (which indeed argues something of modesty) he would not set a *Christian name* before that book wherein he so grossly abuses *Christianity*, and renounces the greatest part of it.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Nuovo, *John Locke, Vindications*, xlv.

⁴⁸ Edwards, *Socinianism Unmask'd*, Introduction.

⁴⁹ Nuovo, *John Locke, Vindications*, xlvi.

⁵⁰ Edwards, *Socinianism Unmask'd*, Introduction.

Edwards furthermore viewed Locke's minimal 'one article' Christianity as linking him with the Socinians and Unitarians, since the mere belief that Jesus is the Messiah did not clearly include belief in his divinity, nor other fundamental articles of faith. Edwards cites 'the incomparable Bishop Pearson' in support of his insistence that belief in Christ's divinity is absolutely necessary to the Christian religion.⁵¹

Locke wrote that 'the Almighty requires nothing as absolutely necessary to be believed but what is suited to vulgar capacities and the comprehensions of illiterate men,' which Edwards sees as a pretext to a more sinister end, namely, to exclude the doctrines of the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, and other essential Christian doctrines from the necessary articles of faith.⁵² In Edwards' judgment, Locke 'Socinianizes' when minimizing Christianity to one fundamental article for the sake of the unlearned, since, he observes, this is akin to what the Socinian Johannes Crellius does in his works.⁵³ The fact that Nye defended Locke for doing this made Locke's association with the Socinians and Unitarians even more apparent to Edwards.⁵⁴ In fact, the mere belief that Jesus is the Messiah, Edwards retorts, is in a manner even acknowledged by the Qur'an, which acknowledges Jesus as a prophet and a great man, whence he gathers that the faith which Locke considers sufficient to make someone a Christian is no different to the faith of 'Mahometans'.⁵⁵ This, Edwards holds, is the necessary consequence of Locke's minimalism, whom he now styles 'our good Ottoman writer.'⁵⁶

Furthermore, Edwards shows that Faustus Socinus, his Socinian followers Christoph Ostorodus and Crellius, the Unitarian Nye, and the Remonstrant Simon Episcopius all advocate doctrinal minimalism, which, he argues, further establishes

⁵¹ Ibid., 13.

⁵² Ibid., 28; Locke, *Reasonableness*, 30.

⁵³ Edwards, *Socinianism Unmask'd*, 28–29.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 29–34.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 53–54.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 53–54. Cf. J.A.I. Champion, *The Pillars of Priestcraft Shaken: The Church of England and its Enemies 1660–1730* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992), 111–12.

Locke's Socinian tendencies.⁵⁷ Meanwhile, Edwards associates his own views with those of the eminent and orthodox Stillingfleet, who himself had scourged the deists and was about to publish on the Trinity and Christ's satisfaction against the Socinians, as well as against Locke.⁵⁸ Against Nye's assertion that William Chillingworth, the Socinian-leaning leader of the Great Tew Circle, was 'the ablest defender of the religion of Protestants that the Church ever had,' Edwards insists that many other divines, both abroad and at home, have been much more deserving of such an epithet, 'especially' Stillingfleet, whom he calls 'that great ornament and glory of our Church.'⁵⁹

It comes as little surprise that Edwards' next work, *The Socinian Creed* (1697), was published under Stillingfleet's patronage, whose writings against the Papists, Socinians, and deists are showered with lavish praise in the dedicatory epistle. Edwards reveals in the preface that 'some eminent persons of our Church having been pleas'd to honour me with their approbation of what I have lately writ against the Socinians in defence of the orthodox faith, I presume once more to assert and vindicate this noble cause,' adding that he was 'further animated' by Stillingfleet's *Discourse concerning the Doctrine of Christ's Satisfaction*, which was reprinted that same year.⁶⁰ Who these 'eminent persons' were who voiced their approval of Edwards' anti-

⁵⁷ Edwards, *Socinianism Unmask'd*, 61–64; For Locke's close association and familiarity with Socinianism and Unitarianism, see Marshall, 'Locke, Socinianism, "Socinianism", and Unitarianism,' 111–82.

⁵⁸ Edward Stillingfleet, *A Letter to a Deist, in Answer to Several Objections against the Truth and Authority of the Scriptures* (London, 1677); idem, *A Discourse in Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity with an Answer to the Late Socinian Objections against it from Scripture, Antiquity, and Reason* (London, 1697); idem, *A Discourse Concerning the Doctrine of Christ's Satisfaction; or the True Reasons of his Sufferings with an Answer to the Socinian Objections*, 2nd ed. (London, 1697); idem, *The Bishop of Worcester's Answer to Mr. Locke's Letter, concerning Some Passages Relating to his Essay of Humane Understanding* (London, 1697); idem, *The Bishop of Worcester's Answer to Mr. Locke's Second Letter; Wherein his Notion of Ideas is Prov'd to be Inconsistent with it self, and with the Articles of the Christian Faith* (London, 1698).

⁵⁹ Edwards, *Socinianism Unmask'd*, 131.

⁶⁰ John Edwards, *The Socinian Creed: Or, a Brief Account of the Professed Tenents and Doctrines of the Foreign and English Socinians* (London, 1697), Preface.

Socinian writings is not specified, but, as evidenced by his patronage, ‘this great champion’ Stillingfleet would have been among them, whose name, Edwards says in the preface, ‘is as terrible to the Socinians as that of *Duke D’Alva* heretofore to the Dutch.’⁶¹ Edwards and Stillingfleet were thus consciously teaming up against what Edwards calls their ‘common foe.’⁶²

Unlike his preceding anti-Socinian works in which Locke was the prime target, *The Socinian Creed* offers a more comprehensive portrayal and rebuttal of Socinianism as espoused by professed foreign Socinians (such as Socinus himself, Johannes Völkel, Valentinus Smalcius, Ostorodus, Crellius, Jonas Schlichtingius, and Johann Ludwig von Wolzogen), English Socinians (among whom he reckons Locke, Nye, John Biddle, Matthew Tindal, John Toland, and Humphrey Prideaux, the latter of whom Edwards charges with effectively promoting deism), as well as the Dutch Remonstrants (Episcopius in particular), whom Edwards regards as strongly tending towards Socinianism. By now Edwards explicitly identifies Locke as the author of the *Reasonableness*. In this work he also offers replies to Nye and Samuel Bold (1649-1737, rector of Steeple, Dorset), who had both voiced their support of Locke’s views against Edwards.⁶³ Edwards thus depicted Locke as being very much involved in the broader Socinian and Unitarian conspiracy to overthrow orthodox Christianity.⁶⁴

Besides siding with Stillingfleet, Edwards also again cited the ‘great man’ and ‘judicious author’ Pearson against a number of Socinian errors.⁶⁵ Other contemporaries whom Edwards cites as siding with him against the Socinians and rationalistic divines

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Stephen Nye, *The Agreement of the Unitarians, with the Catholic Church*, 1697; Samuel Bold, *A Short Discourse of the True Knowledge of Christ Jesus to which are added Some Passages in The Reasonableness of Christianity &c. and its Vindication* (London, 1697); idem, *A Reply to Mr. Edwards’s Brief Reflections on A Short Discourse of the True Knowledge of Christ Jesus, &c.* (London, 1697).

⁶⁴ Nuovo, *John Locke, Vindications*, li–lii.

⁶⁵ Edwards, *Socinian Creed*, 20, 98–99, 107, 113.

are his namesake Jonathan Edwards (1629-1712, master of Jesus College, Oxford, who likewise linked Locke's views to Socinianism),⁶⁶ John Wallis (1616-1703, Savilian Professor of Geometry at Oxford), and Francis Gastrell (1662-1725, canon of Christ Church, Oxford, and later bishop of Chester).⁶⁷

Locke offered a rejoinder yet again with his *Second Vindication of the Reasonableness of Christianity* (1697),⁶⁸ to which Edwards retaliated with *A Brief Vindication of the Fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith* (1697),⁶⁹ which was dedicated to the two universities of Oxford and Cambridge and backed by the imprimaturs of four Cambridge college heads including the Regius Professor of Divinity: Henry James (vice-chancellor of the University and president of Queens' College),⁷⁰ Beaumont, Covell, and John Balderston (master of Emmanuel College).

Locke, who had known Covell, the master of Christ's College, for many years, sent him a letter on 29 September 1697 demanding an explanation for the appearance of Covell's name among the imprimaturs given to Edwards' work.⁷¹ Covell, who had been on good terms with Edwards and known him from their student days,⁷² responded to Locke on 4 October 1697, explaining what had happened as a 'meer misfortune':

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 206; Jonathan Edwards, *A Preservative against Socinianism: Shewing the Direct and Plain Opposition between it, and the Religion Revealed by God in the Holy Scriptures*, 3rd ed., vol. 3 (Oxford, 1698), 43; Jonathan Edwards of Oxford shared many of John Edwards of Cambridge's critiques of Socinians and rationalist Remonstrants. See Tyacke, 'Arminianism', 78.

⁶⁷ Edwards, *Socinian Creed*, 144, 206, 215.

⁶⁸ John Locke, *A Second Vindication of The Reasonableness of Christianity, &c.* (London, 1697).

⁶⁹ Alan Sell ignores this work of Edwards in his analysis, and consequently neither accounts for its corporate backing, nor offers an accurate chronology of the Edwards-Locke dispute. See Alan P.F. Sell, *John Locke and the Eighteenth Century Divines* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1997), 192.

⁷⁰ James would two years later, in 1699, become the Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge.

⁷¹ E.S. De Beer, ed., *The Correspondence of John Locke*, vol. 6 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 210–11.

⁷² Ray, 'Religious Thought', 110.

[Edwards] meeting me one day told me that he had a new booke for the presse, which Mr Professor [Beaumont] and Vice-chancellor [James] had perused and they had given their *Imprimatur* to it; and he askt my leave to adde my name also. I told him, if it was what they had read and approved of, I should not deny him that, (which indeed I then thought a) small favour. You tell me that you have read over the book, which I solemnly protest is more then [*sic*] ever I yet did; and till it was printed I assure you I never so much as saw it or knew the least syllable of its contents, much lesse of your name; and the author to the bookseller in a manner owns this to be the whole truth. Now I do confesse my self indeed extreamly guilty of too much credulity and easinesse herein, but not in the least of any known or design'd disrespect to you, or any party whatever.⁷³

The damage had already been done, however, and readers of Edwards' *Brief Vindication* would have seen Covell's name alongside those of James, Beaumont, and Balderston as endorsing the book.⁷⁴ Locke himself confessed, in a letter to William Molyneux dated 4 August 1696, that 'most' censured his *Reasonableness* as a 'very bad book,'⁷⁵ and this was largely due to the broad readership of Edwards' animadversions against him, which were lauded not only in England, but also in Saxony, to which they had quickly spread. In a letter from the Dutch Remonstrant Philipp van Limborch to Locke, dated 16/26 March 1697, Limborch informs Locke that the English philosopher's views had been lambasted in the Leipzig *Acta Eruditorum* of October 1696, adding that the editors 'extol John Edwards very highly because he has hitherto campaigned gloriously in England against the Socinian heresy in various writings.'⁷⁶

⁷³ De Beer, *Correspondence of John Locke*, 6:217.

⁷⁴ Higgins-Biddle, *Locke, Reasonableness*, xlvi; McKitterick, *History of Cambridge University Press*, 2:38–39.

⁷⁵ E.S. De Beer, ed., *The Correspondence of John Locke*, vol. 5 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 678.

⁷⁶ De Beer, *Correspondence of John Locke*, 6:42–43. 'Extollunt magnifice Joannem Eduardi, quod praeclare hactenus in Anglia contra Socinianam haeresin variis scriptis militaverit.'

In his *Brief Vindication* Edwards again cites Stillingfleet, who agrees that Locke, by his denial of innate ideas, has ‘undermine[d] the principles of truth’ and ‘discompose[d] the receiv’d notions in philosophy.’⁷⁷ Again, Edwards only has praise for Stillingfleet, whom he lauds as ‘a very reverend and learned writer’ and ‘one of the chiefest and most eminent of the pulpit orators.’⁷⁸

Edwards’ criticism of Locke was also shared by Thomas Beconsall (c. 1663-1709), a fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford, who preached against Locke’s views in the University Church at Oxford in 1697.⁷⁹ Locke’s doctrinal minimalism was also criticized in a 1697 pamphlet attributed to Richard West (c. 1670-1716), a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford.⁸⁰ Yet another clergyman, Richard Willis (1664-1734), the soon-to-be dean of Lincoln and later bishop of Gloucester, Salisbury, and Winchester, faulted Locke for omitting such doctrines as the Trinity and Christ’s satisfaction, and charged him with being under the influence of Thomas Hobbes and leaning towards deism.⁸¹ Locke’s *Reasonableness* was even condemned by the Grand Jury of Middlesex in 1697, which judged that Locke’s work ‘denied the Trinity, appealed to reason as the sole criterion of religious truth, gave rise to Arianism, Socinianism, atheism, and Deism.’⁸² In 1702 Henry Lee (c. 1644-1713), rector of Titchmarsh, Northamptonshire, blamed Locke’s denial of innate ideas for promoting scepticism,⁸³ and the following

⁷⁷ Edwards, *Brief Vindication*, 40.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 40–41.

⁷⁹ Thomas Beconsall, *The Doctrine of a General Resurrection: Wherein the Identity of the Rising Body is Asserted, against the Socinians and Scepticks* (Oxford, 1697).

⁸⁰ *Animadversions on a Late Book entituled The Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures* (Oxford, 1697); Higgins-Biddle, *Locke, Reasonableness*, xlvi.

⁸¹ Nuovo, *John Locke, Vindications*, lxii–lxiii.

⁸² John W. Yolton, *John Locke and the Way of Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 11; Marshall, ‘Locke, Socinianism, “Socinianism”, and Unitarianism’, 111.

⁸³ Henry Lee, *Anti-Scepticism: Or, Notes upon each Chapter of Mr. Lock’s Essay concerning Humane Understanding* (London, 1702).

year, in 1703, Locke's *Essay* was proscribed by the Oxford University authorities.⁸⁴ Notably, the vice-chancellor of Oxford University at this time, William Delaune (1659-1728), was a prominent proponent of Reformed theology. The Irish churchman William Carroll, another critic of Locke, noted that Delaune's successor, William Lancaster (1650-1717), likewise advocated the anti-Lockean cause.⁸⁵

We see, then, that the anti-Locke campaign which Edwards spearheaded enjoyed substantial backing from eminent figures in the Church and universities. He was clearly not alone in charging Locke with doctrinal minimalism, and, as 'Locke's *bête noire* of the 1690s',⁸⁶ his repeated charge of Socinianism on Locke is said to have 'found considerable support'.⁸⁷ As Marshall observes, 'When the Calvinist John Edwards accused Locke's *Reasonableness of Christianity* of being "all over Socinianized" in 1695, he began a long tradition. Within a decade, the charge that Locke's works at least favoured Socinianism had a wide currency.'⁸⁸ Higgins-Biddle notes that Edwards' anti-Locke works 'shaped the interpretation of the *Reasonableness* throughout the centuries.'⁸⁹ Kippis, in turn, adds that Edwards' works against Locke were 'approved and applauded by a number of learned men, both at home and abroad.'⁹⁰

Contemporary accounts lend further testimony to this. The nonjuror John Milner (1628-1703), who shared Edwards' concerns about Locke's views, revealed in 1700 that

⁸⁴ Yolton, *John Locke and the Way of Ideas*, 11; Sell, *John Locke*, 5.

⁸⁵ William Carroll, *A Dissertation upon the Tenth Chapter of the Fourth Book of Mr. Locke's Essay, concerning Humane Understanding* (London, 1706); idem, *A Letter to the Reverend Dr. Benjamin Prat* (London, 1707), 8, 10, 23-24.

⁸⁶ John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), 589; Cf. Wallace, 'Socinianism', 49.

⁸⁷ Higgins-Biddle, *Locke, Reasonableness*, xlvii.

⁸⁸ Marshall, 'Locke, Socinianism, "Socinianism", and Unitarianism', 111.

⁸⁹ John C. Higgins-Biddle, 'EDWARDS, John (1637-1716)', in *The Continuum Companion to Locke*, ed. S.-J. Savonius-Wroth, Paul Schuurman, and Jonathan Walmsley (London: Continuum, 2010), 96.

⁹⁰ Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:545-46.

Edwards' charge of Socinianism on Locke was 'well known.'⁹¹ Locke, in a letter to Peter King dated 22 January 1700, thought that Milner's criticisms yielded so many similarities to those of Edwards, that he speculated whether they might well have been written by Edwards himself.⁹² Milner and Edwards certainly knew each other, as the former was at this time living in retirement at St John's College, Cambridge, and was ostensibly fully aware of the ongoing debates surrounding Locke, in which he himself had his say by siding with Edwards in the anti-Locke campaign.

Another contemporary, William Assheton (c. 1642-1711), rector of Beckenham, Kent, is said by his biographer, Thomas Watts, to have 'much valu'd' Edwards' anti-Socinian works.⁹³ Moreover, in the same account Watts, writing two years before Edwards' death, includes Edwards among 'our great modern divines' alongside Stillingfleet, Patrick, Beveridge, and several others.⁹⁴

Winch Holdsworth (1679-1761), a fellow of St John's College, Oxford, and another partisan of Edwards' criticisms of Locke, remarked in 1727 that '[Locke's treatises], it is well known, have been generally charged with many Socinian principles... And it is well known, particularly, that Mr. Edwards, of Cambridge, did publicly, and in print, charge the book call'd *The Reasonableness of Christianity* with Socinianism, and the author of it, with being a Socinian.'⁹⁵ Furthermore, Holdsworth lists Edwards alongside Stillingfleet, Milner, and others as having campaigned under the same flag against Locke and the Socinians.⁹⁶

⁹¹ John Milner, *An Account of Mr. Locke's Religion, out of his own Writings, and in his own Words* (London, 1700), 36–37, 179.

⁹² De Beer, *Correspondence of John Locke*, 6:773.

⁹³ Thomas Watts, *The Christian Indeed, and Faithful Pastor: Impartially Represented in a Practical Essay, and Historical Account of the Exemplary Life and Works of the Late Eminent William Assheton* (London, 1714), 155–56.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 155–56.

⁹⁵ Winch Holdsworth, *A Defence of the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Same Body* (London, 1727), 18.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 94.

That Edwards' animadversions against Locke and the Socinians were perceived as being part of a broader alliance with Stillingfleet and other eminent clergymen is further evinced by a contemporary anonymous Unitarian tract published in 1698, said to be written by 'a divine of the Church of England,' which identifies Edwards alongside Stillingfleet, Burnet, and South as the prominent opponents of Socinianism and Unitarianism at the time.⁹⁷ Similarly, the London Presbyterian minister of Salters' Hall, William Tong (1662-1727), clearly regarded Edwards as having been one of the preeminent figures in the broader Socinian and Trinitarian controversies of the 1690s, commenting in 1719: 'We remember that when in the reign of the glorious K. *William*, the Antitrinitarians took heart and grew very numerous and confident, they met with a very just opposition from such great men as Dr. *Stillingfleet*, Bp. of *Worcester*, Dr. *Jonathan Edwards* of *Oxford* and Dr. *John Edwards* of *Cambridge*, and several more, and their learned labours were a seasonable service to the Church of God.'⁹⁸

In 1726 the freethinker Anthony Collins (1676-1729), in relation to the controversies surrounding Locke, called Edwards 'the famous Doctor Edwards,' and commented in 1729 that 'many clergymen have written books to banter the works of Mr. Locke, among whom Dr. Edwards must have the first place.'⁹⁹ Higgins-Biddle agrees, asserting that of all Locke's opponents, 'none... wrote with the popular appeal and entertaining style of John Edwards... Edwards was a master of popular controversy, and consequently a dangerous enemy.'¹⁰⁰ As late as 1774, John Wood, rector of Cadeleigh, Devon, remarked that the fact that Locke 'was rather esteemed kakadox

⁹⁷ *The Grounds and Occasions of the Controversy concerning the Unity of God* (London, 1698), 29–30.

⁹⁸ William Tong, 'The Introduction', in *The Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity Stated & Defended* (London, 1719), 7.

⁹⁹ Anthony Collins, *The Scheme of Literal Prophecy Considered; in a View of the Controversy, Occasion'd by a Late Book, intituled, A Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* (London, 1726), 313; idem, *A Discourse concerning Ridicule and Irony in Writing, in a Letter to the Reverend Dr. Nathanael Marshall* (London, 1729), 15.

¹⁰⁰ Higgins-Biddle, *Locke, Reasonableness*, xlix.

[sic] than an orthodox divine is manifest from the controversy in which he was engaged with the learned Dr. Stillingfleet, Bishop of Worcester, and Mr. Edwards.¹⁰¹ We see, then, that Edwards' anti-Socinian works enjoyed an extensive readership and were widely influential within the Church of England at the turn of the eighteenth century, evidently remaining so for many decades afterwards, thereby earning him an undoubted reputation as a major figure on the orthodox side of the Socinian controversy of the 1690s. Given all of this, Bob Tennant is surely not wide of the mark when he refers to Edwards' 'general prominence as a Calvinist theologian' and describes *The Socinian Creed* as 'a famous controversial work.'¹⁰²

It is also noteworthy, as Nuovo has also observed, that despite Edwards' fervent polemics against Locke, he 'does not seem to have suffered any great setback from his effort [against Locke],' that 'his standing at the university continued,' that he remained a regular preacher at the University Church of St Mary the Great in Cambridge, and that he again received the imprimaturs of Cambridge college heads for one of his works afterwards.¹⁰³ Edwards and his works were thus clearly considered to be well within the pale of the mainstream theology current within the University at this time.

It is noteworthy, moreover, that this general approbation of Edwards' anti-Socinian works came despite them containing doctrines and comments which lucidly display his Reformed convictions. For example, already in *Some Thoughts*, his first anti-Socinian work, Edwards is adamant that, besides the doctrines of the Trinity, Christ's divinity, and Christ's atonement, other fundamental articles of faith which are necessary to be believed by Christians include those of original sin, justification on account of Christ's righteousness apprehended by faith, and eternal election.¹⁰⁴ The

¹⁰¹ John Wood, *An Essay on the Fundamental or Most Important Doctrines of Natural & Revealed Religion* (Exeter, 1774), 91–92.

¹⁰² Bob Tennant, *Conscience, Consciousness and Ethics in Joseph Butler's Philosophy and Ministry* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011), 191.

¹⁰³ Nuovo, *John Locke, Vindications*, lxvi.

¹⁰⁴ Edwards, *Some Thoughts*, 110–11.

same can be seen in his *Socinianism Unmask'd*, where, while defending the 'fundamental articles' of Christianity against Locke and others, Edwards mentions his persuasion that justification by faith alone, the imputation of Christ's righteousness to believers, and eternal election are among those doctrines which 'belong to the very essence of Christianity'.¹⁰⁵ Concerning the doctrine of justification by Christ's meritorious righteousness, Edwards asserts: 'He that knows not this, he that believes not this deserves not the name of a *Christian*.'¹⁰⁶ It is observable, therefore, that while Edwards was rebutting the Socinians, he was also laying down several parameters of Christian orthodoxy and, tellingly, linking such with the Reformation:

How few are there at this day that can endure sound doctrine? How many are there that call themselves Protestants, and yet grow weary of those main articles of religion which have been owned ever since the Reformation, and have been defended and vindicated by the pens of the religious and learned? And shall we silently and tamely permit this?¹⁰⁷

Yet, according to the narrative advanced by most of the secondary sources, one should not expect to find books containing such explicitly Reformed sentiments around the turn of the eighteenth century to be endorsed by the patronage of the archbishop of Canterbury and the 'latitudinarian' bishop of Worcester, nor to be given the imprimaturs of the Cambridge Regius Professor of Divinity along with several college heads, nor, moreover, to enjoy the respect of a clearly broad array of conforming clergymen. Granted, the great approval which Edwards' anti-Socinian works enjoyed was primarily due to the fact that they contained potent attacks on enemies he had in common with most of his fellow clergymen. Yet the sturdy,

¹⁰⁵ Edwards, *Socinianism Unmask'd*, 9–23; Edwards, *Some Thoughts*, 110; Edwards, *Brief Vindication*, 32.

¹⁰⁶ Edwards, *Socinianism Unmask'd*, 18.

¹⁰⁷ Edwards, *Socinian Creed*, Preface.

unmistakably Reformed predilections expressed in these works – the very ‘Calvinistic’ sentiments which previous scholars almost unanimously insist led to Edwards’ isolation in the Church – did not prevent them from enjoying widespread approbation.

Also in 1697, Edwards defended the literal biblical account of creation and espoused geocentrism against William Whiston in his *Brief Remarks on Dr Whiston’s New Theory of the Earth*,¹⁰⁸ which he dedicated to his friend John Woodward (founder of the Woodwardian Professorship of Geology at Cambridge), of whom he had spoken very positively in an earlier work.¹⁰⁹ As we shall see, it would not be the last time Edwards crossed swords with Whiston.

Edwards’ next publication, published in 1698 at the request of ‘some of my brethren of the clergy’, was a collection of sermons under the title *Sermons on Special Occasions and Subjects*.¹¹⁰ These sermons were published under the patronage of the First Lord of the Admiralty, Edward Russell, 1st Earl of Orford (1653-1727), who was one of the so-called Immortal Seven who had invited William of Orange over to England, thereby instigating the Glorious Revolution. Russell was a member of the First Whig Junto, the group who controlled the government of England at the time, and had studied at St John’s College, Cambridge, during Edwards’ fellowship there, meaning that, besides both sharing strong Whig political views, the two had been acquainted with one another for several decades.

Among these sermons is found an undated one on John 18:38 titled ‘An Answer to Pilate’s Question, What is Truth?’, which had been preached before King Charles II at Newmarket. Despite not mentioning Arminians expressly, Edwards nevertheless in this sermon censures those who ‘raise disputes’ concerning the doctrines of God’s

¹⁰⁸ John Edwards, *Brief Remarks upon Mr. Whiston’s New Theory of the Earth and upon another Gentleman’s Objections against some Passages in a Discourse of the Existence and Providence of God, relating to the Copernican Hypothesis* (London, 1697).

¹⁰⁹ Edwards, *Some Thoughts*, 82.

¹¹⁰ John Edwards, *Sermons on Special Occasions and Subjects* (London, 1698).

decree and human freedom, and in relation to this 'delight in wrangling, and make use of Scripture for that purpose in the most serious and weighty doctrines.'¹¹¹

More pertinent remarks are found in another undated sermon on 1 Cor. 14:12, which was preached 'before the clergy at the Archdeacon of Ely's visitation'¹¹² and titled 'How the Ministers of the Gospel are to Excel.' Having asserted in a passing remark that 'Luther and Calvin are great names, and will ever be so in the true Christian Church,'¹¹³ Edwards in half a paragraph encapsulates the theme that would be at the forefront of all his publishing efforts for the rest of his life:

The leading requisite, as I conceive, in a preacher, is orthodoxy. He is to be one that owns those principles and articles of faith which have been always profess'd by the universal Church. Let us not assume the title of *Protestants*, and yet reject some of the great heads of divinity which are acknowledg'd by all sober persons of the *Reformation*. Let us not say we are of the *Church of England*, and yet deny some of the chief doctrines contain'd in her *Articles*.¹¹⁴

Thus Edwards evinces that his chief concern is theological orthodoxy, which he explicitly links to the Reformation and to the Church's Thirty-nine Articles. Interestingly, in the preface to these sermons, Edwards mentions his extended future publishing plans (already alluded to in *The Socinian Creed*),¹¹⁵ which would include several preliminary treatises, a *Body of Divinity*, a discourse on the doctrines disputed between the Remonstrants and the Reformed, and another on the controversy between

¹¹¹ Ibid, 23.

¹¹² The very fact that Edwards was asked to preach before King Charles II and at the Archdeacon of Ely's visitation adds further weight to the argument that he was not a marginalized figure in the Church, but rather an esteemed and respected clergyman.

¹¹³ Edwards, *Sermons*, 114.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 117.

¹¹⁵ Edwards, *Socinian Creed*, 57–58.

the Roman and Reformed churches.¹¹⁶ The *Body of Divinity* mentioned here, published in instalments from 1707 onwards, was thus already well underway at this time.

As if the above were not enough to manifest his future publishing intentions to the world, Edwards closes his preface with a pledge which he would uphold for the remaining eighteen years of his life up to his dying breath: 'I have devoted the residue of my life to the publick defence and advancement of Christianity, with all its weighty truths and doctrines, and all the holy duties and practices that appertain to it.'¹¹⁷

In 1699, the year in which Edwards received his D.D., he published his massive ΠΟΛΥΠΟΙΚΙΛΟΣ ΣΟΦΙΑ: *A Compleat History or Survey of all the Dispensations and Methods of Religion, from the Beginning of the World to the Consummation of all things*.¹¹⁸ This work enjoyed the patronage of John Somers, 1st Baron Somers (1651-1716), who was Lord High Chancellor of England at the time. Like two of Edwards' previous patrons (Tenison and Russell), Somers was a member of the First Whig Junto. With Tenison having bestowed his patronage on three of Edwards' works, and another two of Edwards' works enjoying the patronage of Russell and Somers respectively, a total of five of his works before the turn of the century had thus enjoyed the patronage of three men at the very top of the English establishment's hierarchy. This, of course, was in addition to his works published under the patronages of Ward, Patrick, Stillingfleet, and Woodward, along with those enjoying the imprimaturs of the Cambridge establishment (Beaumont in particular) and the approval of Compton. Edwards thus appears to have been somewhat more than a marginalized Calvinist.

Other than effectively labelling Humphrey Prideaux a deist in his *Socinian Creed* (to which, it appears, Prideaux never responded), Edwards had hitherto largely steered

¹¹⁶ Edwards, *Sermons*, Preface.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ John Edwards, ΠΟΛΥΠΟΙΚΙΛΟΣ ΣΟΦΙΑ: *A Compleat History or Survey of all the Dispensations and Methods of Religion, from the Beginning of the World to the Consummation of all Things; as represented in the Old and New Testament* (London, 1699).

away from polemics against mainstream conforming divines. In *ΠΟΛΥΠΟΙΚΙΛΟΣ ΣΟΦΙΑ*, however, we find him for the first time giving free expression of his antipathy for the late archbishop of Canterbury, John Tillotson (1630-94).

Edwards hits out at Tillotson and John Scott (1639-95), rector of St Giles-in-the-Fields, London, for siding with the Socinians in denying that Old Testament believers enjoyed the forgiveness of sins, which, he laments, ‘passes for a general opinion with us.’¹¹⁹ Similarly, Edwards notices the similarities between the Socinians and Remonstrants (he names Grotius and Episcopius) in that both parties hold that the Old Testament promises did not include eternal life. As a result, he calls the Socinians and Remonstrants, respectively, ‘Socinus’s followers and friends.’¹²⁰ Having already been critical in an earlier work of the idea that the Old Testament sacrifices and worship were instituted in imitation of the pagan nations surrounding Israel, Edwards assails Sir Thomas Blount, 1st Baronet (1648-97) and especially John Spencer (who had given his imprimatur to one of Edwards’ earlier works) for advancing this view, while noting that this is also held by Nye and Tillotson.¹²¹ Another major name to receive a blow, though deceased for over a decade by this time, is Samuel Parker (1640-88), former bishop of Oxford, for advocating the use of images in the worship of God. Edwards writes Parker off as ‘a well-willer to the Roman cause and interest.’¹²²

At the same time, however, Edwards speaks well of other English divines, both contemporaries and predecessors. Citing Thomas Jackson and Simon Patrick on minor issues, Edwards again speaks of the former as ‘a judicious person,’ and calls the latter ‘a very reverend and worthy person’ and ‘an excellent person.’¹²³

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 166.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 325–26.

¹²¹ Ibid., 252–53.

¹²² Ibid., 280.

¹²³ Ibid., 69, 106–7, 144.

A review of ΠΟΛΥΠΟΙΚΙΛΟΣ ΣΟΦΙΑ is found in the April 1699 edition of *The History of the Works of the Learned*, which spoke of Edwards and his book in glowing terms: ‘The learned world is already indebted to the worthy and reverend author of this treatise, for what he has formerly obliged them with; particularly, for the judicious volumes he has published concerning the stile, authority, &c. of the holy Scriptures.’¹²⁴ Already impressed with Edwards’ earlier works, the reviewer again gives a positive verdict of this new work, calling it ‘an accurate and elaborate work’ as well as an ‘excellent treatise.’¹²⁵ Yet again, if credence be given to most of the extant scholarship on the later Stuart Church, such laurels should rather come as a shock to us, since they are bestowed upon a book boasting strong Reformed credentials.

For example, Edwards in this work offers a lengthy Reformed exposition of the difference between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace (in which he cites the obviously Reformed John Calvin and John Owen), insists on the absolute inability of humans to do God’s will and approach him without supernatural grace, identifies Christ’s active obedience imputed to believers as the ground of their justification, and happily showcases his familiarity with the works of foreign Reformed divines such as Junius, Musculus, Rivet, Pareus, Bochart, Voetius, and Hottinger.¹²⁶ Furthermore, Edwards again classifies the Church of England as one of the Reformed churches, and unequivocally exhibits his theological disposition when he remarks that, from the writings of Reformed divines,

we may gather the vast improvements in sacred knowledge [since the Reformation]. [Reformed divines] generally argue with close reason, they talk great sense, they shew a deep insight into the inspired writings, they cloath their

¹²⁴ *The History of the Works of the Learned, or, An Impartial Account of Books Lately Printed in All Parts of Europe*, vol. 1 (London, 1699), 248–49.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 249.

¹²⁶ Edwards, ΠΟΛΥΠΟΙΚΙΛΟΣ ΣΟΦΙΑ, 114, 361–74.

matter with fit words, they use an intelligible and easy method, they are happy in applying of divine truths; in brief, their notions are amended, and all the important doctrines of Christianity are more plainly and clearly delivered than before.¹²⁷

Such strikingly Reformed utterances ostensibly did not put the reviewer off, nor seem to have put too many others off either, as Edwards kept enjoying the approval of non-Reformed churchmen, as attested by his next two publications.

In that same year, 1699, Edwards was invited to preach in Great St Mary's Church at the University of Cambridge's commencement, which, of course, would not have happened if he had not been a respected figure among the Cambridge establishment. By the turn of the century, such a status is exactly what his works appear to have earned him, not to mention his ongoing occasional preaching in Cambridge.

This commencement sermon was titled *The Eternal and Intrinsick Reasons of Good and Evil*, and bore the imprimaturs of William Dawes (vice-chancellor of the University and master of Catharine Hall), Beaumont, Humphrey Gower (master of St John's College and Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity), and Balderston. Notice the title of the sermon; Edwards' works against Locke, as we have seen, had achieved considerable fame in English intellectual circles over the previous four years, and thus from the outset only a few in the audience would have been left in the dark as to who or what was being critiqued: Locke and his denial of innate ideas.

Sure enough, this sermon contains animadversions against several prominent figures for their denial or undermining of innate ideas: Thomas Hobbes, Samuel Parker, Richard Cumberland (bishop of Peterborough), James Tyrrell (Whig political philosopher and Locke supporter), John Norris (rector of Bemerton, Wiltshire), William Nicholls (rector of Selsey, Sussex), and, of course, Locke himself, who is again

¹²⁷ Ibid., 636.

denounced for his 'one article' Christianity.¹²⁸ In this commencement sermon Edwards berates all who in any way undermine revealed religion, or who advocate a mere natural morality divorced from the fundamental Christian articles of faith.¹²⁹ As was certainly true of Beaumont,¹³⁰ the three other Cambridge dons who gave their imprimatur to this sermon also appear, then, to share Edwards' criticism of the rationalistic moralism that was becoming increasingly accepted in certain clerical and intellectual circles.

Something else in this sermon catches the eye (or ear, in the case of its first recipients): the person Edwards cites in favour of innate ideas. In front of a learned audience, who would almost certainly have detected the reference, Edwards refers to 'one, who is an unquestionable asserter of the original depravity of mankind, [and] is yet very positive in this, that *there is in the souls of men a sense of divinity and religion, and that even by a natural instinct*, and accordingly he spends a whole chapter to prove the existence of this inbred principle in the minds of all men'¹³¹ – a blatant, unmissable reference to Calvin's *Institutio* Book 1, Chapter 3, containing his famous discussion of the *sensus divinitatis*. Perhaps some students may not have picked up this positive reference to Calvin from Great St Mary's pulpit, but the antennas of the doctors of divinity in the audience would undoubtedly have registered it. Evidently, then, Edwards' openly Reformed sentiments were no impediment to the Arminian Cantabrigian doctors (including the Regius and Lady Margaret's professors of Divinity) giving him their approval, as their imprimaturs once again testify.

The sermon and *determinatio* which Edwards delivered at his doctoral graduation were jointly published the next year under the title *Concio et Determinatio pro Gradu*

¹²⁸ John Edwards, *The Eternal and Intrinsic Reasons of Good and Evil. A Sermon Preach'd at the Commencement at Cambridge, on Sunday the 2d Day of July, 1699* (Cambridge, 1699), 22–28.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹³⁰ Tyacke, 'Arminianism', 74–75.

¹³¹ Edwards, *Eternal and Intrinsic Reasons*, 5.

Doctoratus in Sacra Theologia (1700), with the imprimaturs of Thomas Green (vice-chancellor of the University and master of Corpus Christi College), Gower, William Saywell (master of Jesus College), and Balderston.¹³² Edwards' *concio ad clerum* was based on the account of the exorcism of the Garasene demoniac in Mark 5 and was aimed against deniers of the existence of Satan and demons. His *determinatio*, in turn, addressed the question of whether any canonical books of the Old and New Testament have been lost, corresponding to his earlier work on the perfection of Scripture. Again, even while determining this question before Arminian divines, he shies not away from considering the Church of England a Reformed Church, and happily cites the unambiguously Reformed figures Calvin, Beza, Musculus, Vermigli, Whitaker, Willet, and Gale in support of his thesis that the canon of Scripture is complete and perfect.¹³³

How do we make sense of such an obviously Reformed figure receiving such respect from conforming Arminian divines at this time? An example of how Arminian divines could have shown such appreciation for Edwards despite his explicitly Reformed views may be seen in Robert Jenkin (1656-1727), who was a nonjuror at this point in time, but would conform after the death of James II in 1701, rising to such prominence that in 1711 he replaced the deceased Gower as both the master of Edwards' *alma mater*, St John's College, as well as the Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity at Cambridge. In the preface to his *The Reasonableness and Certainty of the Christian Religion* (1698), Jenkin addresses the very same issues Edwards was addressing, particularly the disparagement or undermining of revealed religion by an overestimation of human reason, and speaks of the causes of atheism in a very similar manner to Edwards' work on that subject. Jenkin admonishes against the use of excessively harsh language in polemical disputes, but asserts, as Edwards does, that strong words may be appropriate when the occasion demands it, such as when fundamental Christian doctrines are being attacked:

¹³² John Edwards, *Concio et Determinatio pro Gradu Doctoratus in Sacra Theologia* (Cambridge, 1700).

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 93, 111, 114.

There is no doubt, but a seasonable reproof or rebuke, though it be very severe, may be not only consistent with charity, but may also be the effect of it; and if ever we may speak with the power and authority, as well as in the meekness and gentleness of Christ, we must do it when the truth of the Christian religion is called into question, and that by Christians.¹³⁴

Soon afterwards, Jenkin offers a clear example of how English divines could have appreciated one another and cooperated on fundamental points they had in common despite disagreeing on other issues, such as Reformed or Arminian understandings of predestination and justification, which were nevertheless important to them. Jenkin expresses his view that

certainly a great distinction is to be made between them from whom we differ in particular points, though of great moment and consequence, and those who reject the whole. Our chief zeal and strength should be employed against the common enemies, who delight in our quarrels, and sport themselves with mutual wounds we so freely give one another.¹³⁵

With this in mind, Jenkin has no problem siding with Edwards against their common enemies: while demonstrating familiarity with the ongoing disputes, he attacks Hobbes, Blount, and, ultimately, Locke on account of the same reasons Edwards does, namely, for undermining revealed religion.¹³⁶ Indeed, Edwards' opponents viewed Jenkin as siding with Edwards and Stillingfleet, as can be seen in a letter written by Bold to Locke on 10 September 1698, who associated Jenkin's

¹³⁴ Robert Jenkin, *The Reasonableness and Certainty of the Christian Religion*, vol. 1 (London, 1698), xxiii.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:xxiv–xxv.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 1:xxvii–xlvi.

arguments against Locke with those of others who had already written against him, of whom Edwards, of course, was chief.¹³⁷

It thus appears entirely possible for divines of differing theological convictions to have respected one another on account of the concerns and views they had in common; indeed, this was not only possible, but clearly appears to have been the case with Edwards. This was not, however, a one-way admiration of Arminians appreciating Edwards for campaigning with them against a common foe, but Edwards himself was also perfectly able to sincerely respect and appreciate Arminian divines due to their soundness on doctrines of particular polemical importance. Reformed versus Arminian differences therefore did not preclude such mutual eclectic appreciation.

2.3. Conclusion

Thus far we have considered Edwards' life, ministry, and written works up to the turn of the eighteenth century. We have seen that, as a student, he had impressed the well-known Tuckney, at whose behest he became a fellow of St John's College. Sir Robert Carr introduced Edwards to Bishop Sanderson, who was likewise impressed with Edwards and ordained him as a deacon and priest in remarkably quick succession, furthermore inviting him to preach at the latter occasion. As a fellow of St John's, Edwards' popularity is reported to have rivalled that which the future Archbishop Tillotson had enjoyed at Clare Hall.

Edwards' ministry at Trinity Church, Cambridge, clearly increased his popularity among both the establishment as well as his parishioners, with the prominent figures of Sparrow, Beaumont, and Pearson all applauding his sermons. This renown drew the attention of noblemen and politicians, who offered Edwards preferments, but which Edwards turned down due to his very favourable financial position. His lack of preferment, therefore, was voluntary, and not due to his Reformed commitments.

¹³⁷ De Beer, *Correspondence of John Locke*, 6:470–71.

Even when Edwards resigned his fellowship at St John's, we see that his reputation did not diminish; instead, he was soon enjoying the same adulation at Holy Sepulchre in Cambridge as he had enjoyed at Trinity Church. Many of the readers of his later works – the younger clergy – would have heard this celebrated preacher's sermons during their studies at Cambridge, and so Edwards would have been well-known to a generation of Cambridge graduates even before his writing endeavours commenced.

We have seen that Edwards' works enjoyed the patronage of some of the preeminent men of the time, both among the clergy and in government: Bishop Ward, Archbishop Tenison (3 volumes), Bishop Patrick (3 volumes), Bishop Stillingfleet, Professor Woodward, Lord Russell, and Lord Somers. Moreover, they were consistently endorsed by the Cambridge establishment; even when Covel explained away his imprimatur given to Edwards' *Brief Vindication*, the imprimaturs from Beaumont and others did not dry up. Wallace is therefore wide of the mark in asserting that Edwards 'had few if any ties to [the established Church's] leadership.'¹³⁸ On the contrary, these works were evidently well received among many clergymen and intellectuals.

We have also witnessed Edwards' cooperation with other clergymen against common foes. This was most clearly seen in Edwards' major role alongside Stillingfleet and others in the Socinian controversy of the 1690s, through which he earned the acclaim of many of his fellow clergy for his sharp attacks on Locke and the Socinians. Several churchmen who would have disagreed with Edwards on other issues had no qualms in approving his sentiments here and fighting alongside him under the same banner against a common foe. Additionally, Edwards' ΠΟΛΥΠΟΙΚΙΛΟΣ ΣΟΦΙΑ was given a glowing review, and his Cambridge commencement sermon again received the imprimatur of the Cambridge establishment despite containing explicit reproofs of Locke and other eminent intellectuals and clergymen.

¹³⁸ Wallace, *Shapers*, 222.

Furthermore, Edwards' works received such approbation even though they espoused unambiguously Reformed doctrines and sentiments. Edwards' patrons and the Cambridge establishment who gave their imprimaturs to his works were ostensibly not put off by this, and certainly for some segments of his clearly broad readership these explicitly Reformed sentiments would have actually rendered Edwards' writings all the more agreeable. Indeed, as Hampton has established, 'the Reformed tradition retained a hold over the minds of many theologians long after the Restoration, and well into the reign of Queen Anne. It remained, in other words, a compelling way of understanding Anglicanism far longer than most historians have recognized.'¹³⁹ Also, by his prominent role in the Socinian controversy, Edwards followed other later Stuart Reformed conformists in being 'recognised by their contemporaries as amongst the key opinion-formers of the post-Restoration period.'¹⁴⁰

Simply put, if Edwards' Reformed commitments had rendered him odious to the vast majority of readers, as the older scholarship typically claims to have been the case, then he would not have enjoyed the undeniably broad readership, influence, and esteem that we have witnessed thus far. As will be discovered in the next chapter, however, the full force of Edwards' anti-Arminian polemics would only be felt once the new century had dawned.

¹³⁹ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 28.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 36.

3. Edwards' anti-Arminian polemics and the battle for Church of England orthodoxy (1701-16)

3.1. Edwards' anti-Arminian works (1701-02)

Edwards' first publication after the turn of the eighteenth century, his anonymously-published *The Whole Concern of Man* (1701), was intended as a corrective to *The Whole Duty of Man*, the most popular devotional work in the post-Restoration Church. Although attributed to the late Arminian Oxford Regius Professor of Divinity Richard Allestree (c. 1621-81), *The Whole Duty of Man* was published anonymously, and so many, including Edwards, treated it as such.¹ Edwards considered this book defective for its exclusive focus on praxis at the expense of doctrinal content. As he explains, both the *knowledge* and *practice* of the Christian religion are 'equally necessary', with the latter depending on the former.²

Edwards hence discusses the central doctrines which Christians should believe and understand correctly, especially 'because mistakes and misapprehensions about them are too common in this age.'³ Presaging the doctrines which would dominate his polemical agenda for the rest of his life, he lists, as before, the doctrines of original sin, total depravity, eternal election, effectual calling, justification by faith alone, the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and the perseverance of believers among the 'essential truths of our religion, and such as are absolutely necessary to salvation.'⁴

In 1701 Edwards also released his *A Free Discourse concerning Truth and Error*, based on his earlier sermon before Charles II at Newmarket. Once more Edwards wrote at

¹ Edwards, *Preacher*, 3:311, 327.

² John Edwards, *The Whole Concern of Man: Or, what he ought to Know and Do, in order to Eternal Salvation* (London, 1701), 21–22.

³ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 59–63, 83–91, 97.

the request of his peers, as several of his listeners at Newmarket urged him to write a more substantial treatise on that sermon's theme, namely, discerning truth from error.⁵

Edwards' *Free Discourse* contained his most explicit polemics against contemporary churchmen to date. His reason for being so 'free' with 'authors of great note and esteem' is because 'generally their mistakes are more dangerous, because the opinion of such men is catching and infectious.'⁶ Edwards hits out, as before, at those who extol natural religion to the detriment of revealed religion. The measuring of God according to 'poor ignorant and defective' human standards and conceptions, says Edwards, is 'the root of Pelagianism and Socinianism.'⁷ Indeed, mere natural moralistic religion falls far short from rendering anyone a Christian:

By natural principles we are intelligent moral *men*, but those of supernatural religion render us *Christians*, and therefore by how much Christianity exceeds morality, by so much should we prefer the exalted truths of the New Testament to those that are attain'd by philosophical instructions and precepts.⁸

Edwards on this account faults the late Archbishop Tillotson for holding that 'the natural knowledge which men have of God is... the surest and fastest hold that religion hath on human nature', that the interpretation of Scripture ought to be governed by 'those natural notions which men have of God' because this is 'one of the surest ways of reasoning in religion,' and even that mothers' nursing of their children 'is a natural duty, and because it is so, of a more necessary and indispensable obligation than any *positive* precept of *reveal'd* religion.'⁹ From such remarks, Edwards

⁵ Edwards, *Free Discourse*, xli.

⁶ *Ibid.*, xxxix.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 80–81; John Tillotson, *Several Discourses*, vol. 4 (London, 1697), 318, 440–41; *idem*, *Six Sermons*, 2nd ed. (London, 1694), 101–3.

avers, one may 'without any breach of charity' conclude that Tillotson 'had a very low opinion of *reveal'd religion*, and particularly the *Christian*, for *natural religion* according to him is *more obligatory* than the *reveal'd* one.'¹⁰ Edwards sensed a duty to warn readers about Tillotson's remarks lest they do 'a great deal of harm' to some people 'who are ready to swallow this saying [about the nursing of children being more obligatory than any precept of revealed religion] of his down for the sake of several good things in the writings of that celebrated prelate,' and since such a depreciation of revealed religion was playing into the hands of the deists, 'who at this time have so great an harvest.'¹¹ Edwards thus depicts Tillotson and Locke as promoting deism, since deism 'is no other than an excessive extolling of natural religion, abstract from all revelation.'¹²

Later in the book Edwards directs the reader to 'the excellent Bishop Pearson' along with the 'most accomplish'd' Stillingfleet as antidotes against Socinianism.¹³ Despite stressing his great respect for 'the learned Annotatour' Henry Hammond, whom he insists 'is in many things a very sagacious expositor,' Edwards nevertheless here targets, among other things, Hammond's Arminian glosses on the term *election*.¹⁴

At last Edwards arrives at one of his chief reasons for writing this book: to animadvert on the recently-published *Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles* (first edition 1699) by Gilbert Burnet (1643-1715), bishop of Salisbury. In his *Exposition*, a work endorsed by Tillotson, Burnet sought to foster 'mutual forbearance' in the Church between divines of differing doctrinal convictions by laying out divergent views on particular doctrines and 'leaving it free to the men of the different systems to adhere to their own opinions; but withal obliging them to judge charitably and favourably of

¹⁰ Edwards, *Free Discourse*, 81.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 82.

¹² *Ibid.*, 87.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 301–2.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 367–72.

others, and to maintain communion with them, notwithstanding that diversity.¹⁵ And, as Burnet himself effectively admits in the preface, there is no doctrine around which he tiptoed more in this way than the doctrine of predestination, clearly manifesting his awareness that the ‘Calvinists’ still had a steady presence in the Church.¹⁶

Edwards firstly reproves Burnet for claiming that his impartiality is such that he will undertake ‘to explain the doctrines of the Church, and not his own,’ which is ‘somewhat strange,’ says Edwards, ‘for I thought the doctrines of the Church had been, and ought to be the doctrines of the clergy, and so are properly their *own*.’¹⁷ Secondly, he accuses Burnet of allowing such latitude in the interpretation of the Articles as to turn them into a ‘nose of wax’, thus rendering them unintelligible and useless.¹⁸ Thirdly, Edwards is at a loss as to how Burnet could call his book an *Exposition*, since he ‘represent[s] the sense of them as ambiguous and uncertain.’¹⁹ Particularly on Article 17 concerning predestination, Edwards takes Burnet to task for claiming that ‘[I] have not on this occasion declared my own opinion,’ which, again, means that Burnet is not really providing an *exposition* of the Articles.²⁰ Burnet’s work casts such murkiness on the Articles, Edwards quips, that ‘by the same figure and mode of speaking he may give the title of *Exposition* to the darkest of the Delphick oracles.’²¹

Edwards fourthly judges Burnet’s *Exposition* to be a ‘very severe reflection on our first Reformers, the pious and learned compilers of these Articles, as if they were not able to write or dictate sense, or could not speak grammatically and so as to be understood; or as if they purposely design’d obscurity and that even in some of the

¹⁵ Gilbert Burnet, *An Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England*, 2nd ed. (London, 1700), vi–vii.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, vi; Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 29.

¹⁷ Edwards, *Free Discourse*, 424–25.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 425–26.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 426.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 426; Burnet, *Exposition*, 169–70.

²¹ Edwards, *Free Discourse*, 427.

most considerable points of our religion; as if they studied to perplex men's minds, and ensnare their consciences.'²² Finally, Edwards remarks that Burnet's manner of treating the Articles allows equivocating, and teaches the clergy that the Church equivocates and that they may follow suit. Allowing the Articles to carry multiple contradictory meanings, of course, flies in the face of the reason why they were compiled and why the clergy are required to subscribe to them, which, as Edwards shows from Canons 5 and 36, was to avoid 'ambiguity' and 'diversities of opinions.'²³

As was the case with his key role in the Socinian controversy of the 1690s, previous scholars have completely overlooked the significance of Edwards' criticisms of Burnet, a closer consideration of which sheds further light on his stature within the Church at this time. Edwards' *Free Discourse* was published at a critical juncture: just as, in the run-up to the convocation of 1701, a committee was being set up by the lower house of convocation under the chairmanship of the Reformed churchman William Jane (1645-1707), Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford and dean of Gloucester, to investigate books suspected for heresy – particularly John Toland's *Christianity not Mystrious* and Burnet's *Exposition*. Previous scholars have failed to notice that, besides Jane, this committee, whose members varied for each session, also included Reformed churchmen such as Beveridge (1637-1708, archdeacon of Colchester, afterwards bishop of St Asaph), Delaune, South (1634-1716, prebendary of Westminster and canon of Christ Church, Oxford), and Edward Lake (1641-1704, archdeacon of Exeter).²⁴ As Martin Greig has shown, Burnet and his advocacy of doctrinal latitude was at the heart of high-church agitation as the convocation of 1701 approached.²⁵

²² *Ibid.*, 427.

²³ *Ibid.*, 427–30.

²⁴ Gerald Bray, ed., *Records of Convocation*, vol. 9 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006), 50, 93, 97.

²⁵ Martin Greig, 'Heresy Hunt: Gilbert Burnet and the Convocation Controversy of 1701', *HJ* 37, no. 3 (1994): 583.

Edwards published his *Free Discourse* in January 1701,²⁶ whereas the committee only began to examine Burnet's *Exposition* in early March that year, while only probing it in more detail in the latter half of May and ultimately formulating their formal complaint to the upper house of convocation in June.²⁷ The committee would thus have had ample time to take Edwards' animadversions on Burnet into account in their verdict, and that they did just that certainly appears to have been the case, as their critiques essentially echoed his. They complained that Burnet's *Exposition*

Tends to introduce such a latitude and diversity of opinions as the Articles were fram'd to avoid;

That there are many passages in the *Exposition* of several articles which appear to us to be contrary to the true meaning of them, and to other receiv'd doctrines of our Church:

That there are some things in the said book which seem to us to be of dangerous consequence to the Church of England as by Law Established, and to derogate from the honour of the Reformation.²⁸

That these objections were almost certainly drawn from or at least informed by Edwards may be established not only in that they mirrored his critiques exactly, but also because he was the only high-profile divine to criticize Burnet's *Exposition* in print on these exact points in the run-up to the 1701 convocation. In fact, the only other traceable divine to publish against the *Exposition* in the run-up to the committee's examination was Samuel Hill (c. 1648-1716), rector of Kilmington, Somerset, whose

²⁶ 'The Fifth and Last Part of the Post-Angel, Containing an Account of the Books Lately Publish'd', *The Post Angel*, January 1701, 69.

²⁷ Greig, 'Heresy Hunt', 584.

²⁸ Bray, *Records of Convocation*, 9:97; Henry Aldrich, *A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Lower House of Convocation, relating to Prorogations and Adjournments* (London, 1701), 58.

complaints, unlike those of Edwards, were aimed entirely at Burnet's Erastian view of church-state relations.²⁹ Other critiques of Burnet, such as that of Jonathan Edwards of Oxford,³⁰ only emerged after the 1701 convocation and followed differed lines.

Burnet himself acknowledged in 1702 that his *Exposition* received no discernible criticism 'for above a year after' its publication³¹ – that is, until Edwards' *Free Discourse*. Burnet also openly declared his awareness that 'men of the Calvinist persuasion' were complaining about his *Exposition* for 'leaving the Articles open to those of another persuasion.'³² Burnet's chaplain, Richard West, likewise appeared wary of a sturdy Reformed presence within the lower house of convocation at the time.³³ Yet another latitudinarian Arminian, John Hancocke, rector of St Margaret Lothbury, London, complained that 'many' high churchmen among the lower clergy 'are grown mighty orthodox' in the 'Calvinistical' sense, and have done so in opposition to the 'low church' clergy.³⁴ Burnet and his sympathisers were thus acutely aware, not only that Edwards was instrumental in triggering a backlash against his *Exposition* by being the first to publish against it, but also that there was a broader group of 'Calvinistical' clergy who shared Edwards' sentiments. Contrary to the assertions of Tyacke and Arnold Palmer, Burnet's *Exposition* did emphatically not 'set the seal on the new Arminian dispensation.'³⁵ Brian Young averred that Burnet 'felt the incongruity of an

²⁹ Samuel Hill, *The Rights, Liberties, and Authorities, of the Christian Church* (London, 1701), Preface.

³⁰ Jonathan Edwards, *The Exposition Given by My Lord Bishop of Sarum, of the Second Article of Our Religion, Examined* (London, 1702).

³¹ Gilbert Burnet, *Remarks on the Examination of the Exposition of the Second Article of our Church* (London, 1702), 2.

³² *Ibid.*, 3.

³³ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 30–31.

³⁴ John Hancocke, *The Low-Church-Men Vindicated from the Unjust Imputation of Being No-Church-Men*, 2nd ed. (London, 1706), 135.

³⁵ Tyacke, 'Religious Controversy', 617; Arnold Palmer, *Jansenism and England: Moral Rigorism across the Confessions* (Oxford: OUP, 2018), 163; Cf. Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 28–31.

Arminian Church maintaining Calvinist articles', but it is rather evident that Burnet knew all too well that the Church was not unanimously Arminian.³⁶

Edwards, by now a recognized and respected author in the Church by virtue of being one of her chief writers against the heterodoxies of recent memory, published his *Free Discourse* with a title page stating that it includes reflections 'particularly on the Lord Bishop of Sarum's *Exposition on the Thirty Nine Articles of the Church of England*,' which would not have escaped the radars of the committee (chaired by the Reformed Jane and including several other Reformed clergymen, it should be stressed) as they were scrutinizing the *Exposition*. This is especially true since his *Free Discourse* – a work instigated by the encouragement of his peers – received a rave review in the *Post Angel* of January 1701, where the reviewer gushes about Edwards and his book:

This book deserves respect from the most injurious time [in which we live]; 'tis true, I never was any friend to controversie, (and this contains reflections on several authors) yet I do believe (if there be a genius guardian of books, and a conserver of learning), this learned piece will be preserved to the end of time; but I won't inlarge, for there is so much clear reason, Scripture and divinity in all the books that this author has publish'd, that I can't say which I prefer most.³⁷

This is not to argue that Edwards' *Free Discourse* enjoyed the universal acclaim of the lower house of convocation, but it does strongly suggest that his sentiments to a significant extent informed the lower house's committee and their report on Burnet's *Exposition*. There were, after all, and indeed surprisingly, simply no other publications on the issue for the committee to consult as they drew up their report. There is little wonder, then, that their report ended up precisely reflecting Edwards' critiques.

³⁶ B.W. Young, *Religion and Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century England: Theological Debate from Locke to Burke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 29.

³⁷ 'Fifth and Last Part of the Post-Angel', 69.

Indeed, the sole response to Edwards' *Free Discourse*, an anonymous 1704 tract defending Burnet, removes all doubt that the complaints of the lower house of convocation reflected those of Edwards, when it reveals that '[t]he general exceptions against the Bishop of Sarum's Exposition of the 39 Articles, are summarily comprised by Dr. John Edwards, in his *Free Discourse concerning Truth and Error*.'³⁸

Edwards was thus recognized, even by an opponent, as an opinion-former in the controversy surrounding Burnet's *Exposition*. Just as Edwards had strongly informed clerical opinion of Locke over the previous six years, so his *Free Discourse* likewise set the tone for the lower house of convocation's report concerning Burnet's suspected heterodoxy. Yet not even a sniff of this is found in the extant scholarship. Once again, it appears that Edwards found himself significantly closer to the mainstream of the Church at this time than scholars have hitherto recognized. The abiding influence of Edwards' *Free Discourse* can furthermore be witnessed, for example, in a 1712 sermon preached in Norwich Cathedral by Herbert Adee (d. 1747), vicar of Friston and Snape, Suffolk, who approvingly quoted it against rationalistic divinity.³⁹

At the request of his friends (again), Edwards next published his *Exercitations Critical, Philosophical, Historical and Theological* (1702) under the patronage of Richard Kidder, bishop of Bath and Wells, whom he counted not only as a patron, but as a friend.⁴⁰ As with his earlier works, his *Exercitations* received praise, with the reviewer in the *Post Angel* of July 1702 writing: 'We suppose the general character of the author, and an hint or two out of the treatise before us, may be motive enough to the reader's perusal,' adding, in a display of Edwards' reputation in the Church at this time, that 'the Doctor's philosophical genius, learning and reputation, are too well known and

³⁸ *The General Exceptions against the Bishop of Sarum's Exposition of the XXXIX Articles, Considered* (London, 1704), 1.

³⁹ Herbert Adee, *A Sermon Preach'd at the Cathedral-Church of Norwich, on September the 7th, 1712* (Norwich, 1712), 14.

⁴⁰ Edwards, *Exercitations*, Epistle Dedicatory.

establish'd in the world, to stand in need of our recommendation.'⁴¹ Such accolades were given to Edwards, who in his *Exercitations* opposes the Remonstrant interpretation of Romans 7 and speaks of 'the great Calvin, and Beza his learned successor,' lucidly demonstrating his theological affinity, as if it were not clear enough to his readers already.⁴² Instead of costing him critical acclaim, his Reformed commitments appear to have earned him such. Indeed, in a sermon preached in York in 1702, a clergyman identified only as 'T.C.' referred to Edwards as a 'great author.'⁴³

3.2. Edwards' anti-Arminian works (1705-16)

The years between 1702 and 1705 saw the first hiatus since Edwards' publishing enterprise began in 1692. Yet there was a lingering appetite for fresh writings from his pen, as he informs us in the preface of his next work, titled *The Preacher* (1705), that he wrote it because several of his fellow clergymen encouraged him to write on preaching. Once more, Edwards' publishing was backed by clerical support, and *The Preacher* sold so quickly that a second edition emerged only weeks after the first.

Although Edwards' *Preacher* is a homiletical manual, yet it doubled as a polemical treatise against what he perceived to be the erroneous doctrines and practices plaguing the Church of England at the time. Edwards explains that he endeavours to correct, to use his parlance, the *matter* and *manner* of preaching, with emphasis on the former:

I have particularly insisted on the *doctrines* which I thought a preacher of the Gospel is indispensably obliged to instruct his people in, but which I observed were either too often omitted, or (which is worse) misrepresented and vilified.

⁴¹ 'The Sixth Part of the Post Angel: Containing a Character of Books with Critical Remarks on Play's and Poems, Lately Publish'd', *The Post Angel*, July 1702, 44–45.

⁴² Edwards, *Exercitations*, 293–94, 390.

⁴³ T.C., *The Day of the Lord upon the Ships of Tarshish* (London, 1703), 4.

And here I am sure I shall have every unbiased and considerate churchman on my side. Our learned and pious bishops, our convocations, our universities, and the body of our clergy have gained immortal renown by their adhering to that faith which our Church in her *Articles* and *Homilies* propounds to you, and which in the main agrees with the *Confessions of Faith* of other *Reformed* Churches. That none of us may be inclined to vary from this standard, that we may not revolt and degenerate from the principles and doctrines of our Church, which she received from the Holy Scriptures, is my design in particularly mentioning them in the ensuing book, and propounding them to my brethren as the deserved subjects of their discourses from the pulpit.⁴⁴

The preface alone already reveals a range of Edwards' views. These include that the Remonstrant doctrines tend towards Popery; that 'they who adhere to the Remonstrants' opinions abandon the doctrine of the Church of England'; that Arminian conformists are less orthodox than Calvinist dissenters; that the departure from the Church's orthodoxy as enshrined in her Articles impugns the integrity of clergy; that the general degeneracy of the age makes the 'paucity' of those who uphold the Reformed doctrines 'an argument for them;' and that Calvinism was regarded as 'the standard of orthodoxy' by virtually all Elizabethan and Jacobean divines.⁴⁵

Edwards furthermore defends his earlier reflections on Tillotson, insisting that Tillotson's sermons disparage 'the doctrines of revealed religion,' extol natural reason too highly, make no distinction between moral and evangelical principles and duties, and that in them 'Dr. *James Harmin* [i.e. *Jacobus Arminius*], and the *Leyden Remonstrants* are preferr'd to St. *Paul* and his writings, *Episcopus* and *Limborch* are more valued than the dictates of the *Apostles*.'⁴⁶ Edwards anticipates that many readers

⁴⁴ Edwards, *Preacher*, 1:iii.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:iv-x, xiv, xix, xxi-xxiii.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 1:xxx.

will dislike his censuring of eminent divines, and acknowledges that the Reformed doctrines 'are going out of fashion' among many clergymen, but maintains that 'I will run the risque of displeasing this present age, in hope that after-times will be more favourable to what I say.'⁴⁷ Holding a minority view is no impediment to him:

If I be thought to be *singular*, and am blamed for contesting against the common vogue and suffrage, I tender this to be considered, that in those matters which are plain and evident, and grounded upon the Word of God, it is not a blameable singularity for anyone to stand alone in the defence of truth.⁴⁸

Yet Edwards insists that he is not alone, observing that 'at this very time there are those of our Church who will not be prevailed with to abandon [the Reformed doctrines],' and that there is yet 'a great part' of the University of Oxford 'that still retains the old Episcopal divinity.'⁴⁹ Thus he recognized that, although the Reformed doctrines no longer enjoyed the prevalence in the established Church which they had in times gone by, they nevertheless retained a considerable number of proponents.

Thus Edwards calls on the clergy to rectify the *matter*, or doctrinal content, of their sermons, and to 'assert and maintain the Reformed religion,' which he equates with 'primitive Christianity.'⁵⁰ Not doing so means that for certain parishioners 'there will be almost a necessity of repairing sometimes to other assemblies besides those of our Church, that persons may have the whole of religion taught them.'⁵¹ In other words, preaching the Church's Reformed doctrines as codified in her Articles and Homilies would be one way of preventing occasional conformity.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 1:xxxiii–xxxiv.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 1:xxxiv.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:xxi–xxiii.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 1:30.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 1:xxxvii.

Edwards observes that all conforming clergymen vow at their ordination to ‘be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines, contrary to God’s word,’ which entails opposing Popery, Socinianism, Pelagianism, Semi-Pelagianism, sceptics, enthusiasts, deism, and atheism.⁵² He comments that ‘it is not difficult to observe that *Pelagianism* and *Semi-Pelagianism* are entertained under the vizour of *rational* divinity,’⁵³ and, having already arraigned Tillotson for having too high a regard for human reason, the target of this remark is obvious. Again, in a thinly-veiled carp at Tillotson and associates, he asserts that Christianity is much more than mere moralism, and that preachers must insist on those doctrines which are distinctly Christian, which include, among others, the doctrines of the divine decrees, eternal election, original sin and depravity, effectual calling, regeneration, the imputation of Christ’s righteousness, and perseverance.⁵⁴ Edwards complains that such doctrines are ‘hardly admitted into any of our sermons’ and are ‘almost shut out of our English pulpits of late, and ’tis to be feared will be forgot in a short time.’⁵⁵ Some of his fellow clergymen reproach these doctrines as belonging to the Presbyterians, but he counters that ‘if these be *Presbyterian* doctrines, then the *Church of England* herself Presbyterianizes in her *Articles* and *Homilies*.’⁵⁶

Edwards believes that a major reason why many clergymen dismiss Reformed theology is because ‘they extol natural reason too high, and give it an ascendant over revealed religion.’⁵⁷ Offering quotes from Tillotson and others like Daniel Whitby and Samuel Clarke as examples of this, Edwards argues that such rational divinity is a slippery slope to Socinianism, that the ‘fundamental truths’ of Christianity have been

⁵² *Ibid.*, 1:30–33, 35.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 1:32.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 1:39–43.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:40, 43–44.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 1:44.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 1:45. Cf. Martin I.J. Griffin, *Latitudinarianism in the Seventeenth-Century Church of England*, ed. Lila Freedman (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 38.

discarded especially since these ‘rational preachers’ have come to the fore, and that some of them ‘have almost reason’d themselves and others out of Christianity.’⁵⁸

Besides Arminianism, moralist preaching, and Socinian-leaning ‘rational’ divinity, Edwards’ insistence on the need for preaching the Reformed doctrines stemmed from what he perceived as the troubling development in the Church of a general doctrinal latitude or indifference, as well as a neglect of doctrine coming as a result of an almost exclusive focus on praxis, as exemplified by *The Whole Duty of Man*.⁵⁹

The rest of *The Preacher* sees Edwards frequently flaring out against Tillotson and others whom he regarded as being of the same ilk. Edwards goes at Tillotson, Scott, Richard Lucas (c. 1648-1715), and Benjamin Calamy (c. 1646-85/6) for preaching mere moralism and for not making clear distinctions between natural and supernatural religion.⁶⁰ He indicts Parker, Tillotson, John Goodman (1626-90), Whichcote, Scott, and William Clagett (1646-88) for holding that religious duties such as meditation, prayer, hearing and reading God’s word, celebrating the Lord’s Supper, and even faith are only *means* to a holy life, and not an intrinsic part thereof.⁶¹ This becomes a familiar refrain: Edwards writes against Tillotson, Payne, John Kettlewell (1653-95), Lucas, and the Swiss Socinian-leaning theologian Jean-Frédéric Ostervald (whom he associates with this group) for mitigating the heinousness of sin and excusing vice; against Tillotson for asserting that Satan ‘cannot imprint wicked thoughts on men’s minds;’ against Tillotson, Hobbes, Lucas, and Whichcote, who question the idea that God would condemn anyone to hell; against Tillotson, Burnet, Nye, and Whitby for denigrating the inspiration and authority of Scripture; and against Tillotson, Lucas, Calamy, Scott, and Whichcote for impious language in their sermons and works.⁶²

⁵⁸ Edwards, *Preacher*, 1:45–46.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:48–50.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 1:74–80.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 1:83–87. Edwards lists these names at the back of the book to evince to whom he is referring.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 1:88–96, 117–18, 130–33, 150–56, 239–42.

From all of this it is clear, especially against the background of Edwards' earlier works against Socinianism and the over-extolling of natural reason, that although he was an avowed foe of Arminianism in general, yet he especially targeted the more rationalistic, moralistic, latitudinarian Arminians, whom he later disparagingly described as 'Tillotsonian' or 'Lucasian.'⁶³

Edwards was far from the only Reformed churchman to decry these 'rational' divines. Besides Wallis (cited by Edwards earlier), Bishop Compton, in a conference with his London diocesan clergy no less, scorned Remonstrant rationalist divines as 'idolizers of reason', adding that 'it is neither wise nor safe to tamper with such authors, who assume to themselves a privilege of altering the stated phrases and expressions of the Church, which has been the first practice of most hereticks for insinuating their errors.'⁶⁴ Luke Milbourne (1649-1720), the high-church rector of St Ethelburga's in London, published a work against rational divinity under Compton's patronage, in which he denounces 'some capital asserters of the *Arminian* tenets' who are 'desirous to give such a *latitude* to religion, as may take in all their *friends*', by which he means Episcopians and the Socinians.⁶⁵ Yet another Reformed colleague, Josiah Woodward (1657-1712) of Poplar, Middlesex, would in his 1710 Boyle lectures decry those who overvalue reason and thereby promote Socinianism, deism, and atheism.⁶⁶ Many Arminians, especially high-church ones, also disliked this rational divinity.⁶⁷

⁶³ Ibid., 3:255.

⁶⁴ Henry Compton, *The Bishop of London's Tenth Conference with his Clergy* (London, 1701), 8, 12, 15-17, 32.

⁶⁵ Luke Milbourne, *Mysteries in Religion Vindicated* (London, 1692), 197.

⁶⁶ Josiah Woodward, *The Divine Original, and Incomparable Excellency of the Christian Religion, as Founded on the Holy Scriptures, Asserted and Vindicated* (London, 1712), 195-99.

⁶⁷ See, for example, Lancelot Blackburne, *The Mystery of Godliness* (London, 1706); Robert Greene, *A Demonstration of the Truth and Divinity of the Christian Religion* (Cambridge, 1711), Preface; Richard Marsh, *The Vanity and Danger of Modern Theories* (Cambridge, 1699), 8, 20-21; Jenkin, *Reasonableness and Certainty*; Robert Wake, *Courage and Sincerity the Main Proof of a Faithful Shepherd* (London, 1704), 5;

At the back of this first volume of *The Preacher*, Edwards provides a catalogue of works recommended to students of divinity, which includes works by contemporary allies such as Jenkin, Stillingfleet, Kidder, and the Reformed conforming divines Sanderson, Pearson, Edward Reynolds (1599-1676), John Conant (1608-94), Ezekiel Hopkins (1634-90), South, Anthony Horneck (1641-97), Peter Newcome (1656-1738), Beveridge, Edward Pococke (1604-91), and William Burkitt (1650-1703). Edwards was thus clearly aware of a steady stream of fellow Reformed divines in the Church of England during the post-Restoration period. Yet this catalogue also includes works by Arminian authors he elsewhere disagrees with, such as Burnet, Glanvill, Vossius, Grotius, Hammond, Patrick, and even Chillingworth, thereby displaying that, despite being Arminians, he did not regard their works as entirely unfruitful. By stark contrast, Tillotson, Lucas, and the other primary objects of his animadversions are entirely omitted. Again, although Edwards was opposed to Arminianism in general, yet he found its rationalistic, moralistic, Tillotsonian version especially odious.

Like Edwards' previous works, *The Preacher* received a positive review, with the reviewer in *The History of the Works of the Learned* calling him a 'learned and reverend author', and adding that Edwards inveighs against clergy who vilify the Scriptures with 'a just warmth.'⁶⁸ In other words, he appreciated Edwards' animadversions against Tillotson and associates. Yet the reviewer does warn sensitive readers about Edwards' polemical zeal: 'We shall only observe that by what we have related out of this author, and by what may be more discerned in the book itself, that he is a bold writer, very free in his reflections, and one that spares no man for favour or affection.'⁶⁹

William Tilly, *The Sins and Vices of Men's Lives, the Chief Cause of their Ignorance and Corrupt Opinions in Religion* (London, 1710), 14–15; idem, *A Return to our former Good Old Principles and Practice, the only Way to Restore and Preserve our Peace*, 3rd ed. (Oxford, 1710), 9–12.

⁶⁸ *The History of the Works of the Learned, or, An Impartial Account of Books Lately Printed in All Parts of Europe*, vol. 6.9 (London, 1704), 571–72.

⁶⁹ *History of the Works of the Learned*, 6.9:572.

In the second volume of *The Preacher* (1706), Edwards remarks that the first volume ‘was universally entertained and approved of by my learned and pious brethren of the clergy and all others that were of well-disposed minds, and friends to the orthodox faith of the Church of England, and lovers of primitive and evangelical truth, of Christian moderation, of the edification of the souls of men, and of universal piety and holiness,’ yet it was censured by ‘some who were of another frame and spirit.’⁷⁰ Three objections in particular were levelled by certain unnamed clergymen.

The first was that Edwards had reproached his fellow clergy. He responds that he did not criticize the whole clergy, but only some, and that he did not slander them, but merely spoke the truth.⁷¹ The real reason behind this objection, Edwards contends, is because he faulted some of the most prominent clergy, and Tillotson in particular. Edwards finds such accusations hypocritical, noting that many Arminian clergy are themselves not hesitant to censure their superiors when the occasion demands it, that his accusers themselves decried Tillotson as a ‘latitudinarian’ and a ‘well-willer to the dissenting party,’ and that ‘they hated him when he was alive, because he was *Archbishop*, but not thought by them to be *Churchman enough*: but they have a reverence and kindness for him now being dead, because of his writings that remain, which they see do universally relish of *Arminianism*... He comes into favour, because he is a stiff *Remonstrant*.’⁷² Edwards insists that he honours Tillotson inasmuch as he is ‘a man of learning, and as he filled the highest seat in our Church,’ yet he is adamant that ‘I stand in awe of no names, be they never so great, when I am convinced that I have a good cause. Truth, like the Divine Author of it, is no respecter of persons.’⁷³

The second objection is that, by advocating Calvinism, Edwards is forsaking the ‘common road’ and inveighing against ‘those doctrines which are generally received

⁷⁰ Edwards, *Preacher*, 2:i–ii.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 2:i–v.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 2:iii–vii.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 2:viii–ix.

by the majority of our divines.⁷⁴ Edwards concedes that the majority of the clergy are Arminian, but deems this no impediment to his case, since the Church of England herself is on his side, as evidenced by her Articles, Homilies, and the vast majority of her clergy since the Reformation, meaning that Arminians are rather the ones forsaking the Church's common road.⁷⁵ Moreover, as before, Edwards maintains that he is by no means the only churchman at this time to embrace the Reformed doctrines: 'I am not left alone, I do not, like *Athanasius*, encounter the whole world, no nor the whole clergy. There are several of my learned brethren that concur with me, and more since I have publickly vindicated those truths. I rejoice to hear that what I have offered, hath had some considerable influence on wise and sober persons.'⁷⁶

Edwards' objectors especially took issue with his 'unpardonable fault' of recommending to students the Reformed works of Calvin, Ames, Twisse, Tuckney, Owen, the Westminster Annotations, and particularly the Westminster Larger Catechism.⁷⁷ Edwards responds that herein he was merely emulating Bishop John Wilkins (1614-72), who recommended Reformed divines in his *Ecclesiastes*, along with the late editors of this work, including John Williams (bishop of Chichester) and John Moore (bishop of Norwich), who added the works of such divines as Thomas Manton, William Jenkyn, William Greenhill, John Cotton, and David Dickson to Wilkins' catalogue, all of whom 'savour of Geneva.'⁷⁸ His objectors would have had no qualms if he had recommended instead the works of Arminians such as Episcopius, Limborch, Bramhall, Heylyn, and Leslie, but now instead they accuse him of trying to 'breed up a generation of Calvinists.'⁷⁹ Edwards reminds them that

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 2:x.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 2:xi-xii.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 2:xii.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 2:xv.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 2:xv-xvi.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 2:xvii.

our Church was founded by such as were friends to Mr. *Calvin's* doctrines, for of that sort were the first Reformers. And afterwards all our archbishops and bishops, the professors of divinity in our universities, and all our preachers and divines were generally *Calvinists* as to doctrine... Those men therefore who cry up the *Arminian* tenents, differ from their own Church, and renounce their first original... They call themselves the sons of the Church of *England*, but do not speak the language of their mother. They usurp her name, but degenerate from her principles, which are originally *Calvinian*.⁸⁰

The third objection is that Edwards disturbs the peace of the Church. He denies this, insisting that he did not intend to cause division, 'for I consider that we are all brethren in Christ, and servants of one Lord and Master,' but instead merely intended to 'speak freely to my brethren concerning those matters which I verily apprehend are blameable in them, and ought to be reprov'd: and this is all that I do.'⁸¹ Again, he points out that his fellow clergy are chargeable for the same fault, as evinced by recent polemical clashes at convocation and elsewhere, yet they do not reckon themselves authors of division.⁸² Instead, Edwards seeks to promote peace by 'proving, explaining and recommending those *Anti-Arminian* doctrines' in order to achieve agreement on them, since, in his view, it is not the understanding, but the misunderstanding of the Reformed doctrines which causes people to oppose them.⁸³

With these objections dismissed, Edwards reveals that the second volume of *The Preacher* is intended to vindicate 'those articles of the Christian religion which are now everywhere spoken against, vilified and even ridiculed, and that by persons whose

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 2:xvii–xix.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 2:xx.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 2:xx–xxi.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 2:xxii.

office it is to assert and maintain them.⁸⁴ The main reason why many clergymen reject doctrines such as the 'old doctrines of the *eternal decrees*, of *justification by faith alone*, of the *imputation of Christ's righteousness*, and the like evangelical truths', is because 'these principles are not so plausible and popular, and so adjusted to the dictates of common and vulgar reason as those of *Socinus* and *Arminius*.'⁸⁵ As Reformed theologians often did, Edwards depicts the Arminians as being in league with the more obviously heretical Socinians 'because of their near relation and affinity':

The *Remonstrants* are beholding to the *Racovians* for their greatest arguments: yea, they subsist by them, and are sustained by their writings: as the *trochilus* picks the *crocodile's* teeth, and thence hath his livelihood. For an *Arminian* is but an underpuller to the great men of *Socinus's* party: and both of them by their pretences to that which they call reason, and by their misapplying of Scripture (which are the two constant methods they make use of) uphold all their erroneous and false propositions.⁸⁶

Edwards furthermore accuses Arminian churchmen of imitating Roman Catholics, seeing that, just as the latter seek to obliterate the 'Northern Heresy' and Jansenism, so the former strive to eradicate the Reformed doctrines from the Church of England.⁸⁷ In doing so, Edwards asserts, these Arminians are going against their own Church:

for though 'tis true that [our bishops and clergy at the Reformation and long afterwards] approved not of the *ecclesiastical discipline* and *government* propounded by Mr. *Calvin*, yet they embraced, believed and professed the

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 2:xxiii.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 2:xxiii–xxiv.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 2:xxiii–xxiv.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 2:xxiv–xxv.

doctrines which that holy man of God asserted, as being the same that are delivered to us in the evangelical and apostolical writings, and the same that are inserted into the *Articles* of our Church.⁸⁸

The main body of this second volume of *The Preacher* is all about asserting the key doctrines which, in Edwards' observation, are either neglected, corrupted, or scorned by many of his fellow clergymen. This is no matter of little importance: 'To adulterate the coin is high treason: and surely then to corrupt our religion is a higher offence.'⁸⁹ Edwards sees five doctrines in particular as being trampled on by many of his contemporaries: the doctrines of eternal election, original sin, the imputation of Christ's righteousness, justification by faith alone, and the absolute necessity of special and supernatural grace in order for humans to do any spiritual good.⁹⁰ While Edwards would treat these doctrines more substantially in upcoming treatises, it is nevertheless instructive to consider whom he here names as the opponents of these doctrines.

Edwards notices that, concerning the doctrine of eternal election, 'great multitudes' of the English clergy have been infected with the 'leaven' of the Pelagians, Rome, the Socinians, and the Remonstrants. He observes that Hammond's *Annotations* have been especially instrumental in spreading this leaven in the Church, and, since Hammond is widely esteemed among the clergy, 'it is no wonder that the doctrine of *election* hath been so exploded by them.'⁹¹ Edwards adds that, at the time of writing, Hammond's Arminian legacy was being championed in the Church by 'no mean figure', namely Daniel Whitby (c. 1637-1726), precentor of Salisbury Cathedral.⁹²

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 2:xxv–xxvi.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 2:2.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 2:4.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 2:30–31.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 2:31–33.

As for the doctrine of original sin, Edwards asserts that many churchmen follow the Pelagians, the Council of Trent, the Socinians, and the Remonstrants in mitigating the severity of Adam's fall, and sometimes even outright questioning or denying original sin. He cites examples of this from Bramhall, Thomas Burnet (c. 1635-1715), Tillotson, Joseph Glanvill (1636-80), Whitby, and Blount.⁹³ In short, says Edwards, '*Pelagius*, who first appear'd against this doctrine, was a *Briton*, and his country at this time affords too many of his persuasion.'⁹⁴

Edwards marks that, despite calling themselves Protestants, the Socinians, Arminians, and Quakers all side with the Papists in opposing the doctrine of Christ's righteousness imputed to believers. Those guilty of this include Blount, Glanvill, William Sherlock (c. 1640-1707, dean of St Paul's), and Edward Fowler (1632-1714, bishop of Gloucester).⁹⁵ Edwards writes off Sherlock's scoffing at the doctrines of Christ's imputed righteousness, Christ's satisfaction, the application of Christ's merits by faith, and the union between Christ and believers as 'a prophane and impious droll.'⁹⁶ Edwards carps that Sherlock, Fowler, and Whitby, in denying that the Scriptures anywhere teach the imputation of Christ's righteousness, are uttering the express words of Bellarmine and Socinus.⁹⁷ The aforementioned deniers of Christ's imputed righteousness also reject the doctrine of justification by faith alone, as do many other churchmen, who dismiss this doctrine as 'Calvinistical.'⁹⁸ Yet, says Edwards,

St Paul's epistles are all over *Calvinistical*, and particularly in the point of *justification*... [and] it is certain, if we will adhere to this apostle, we cannot hold

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 2:33–36.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2:36.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 2:36–40.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 2:37.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2:38–40.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2:40–41.

that we are justified by works in conjunction with faith, as some of our present clergy assert, both in their writings and sermons. And it is observable that they use the very same arguments in this cause which the *Roman* writers do... they plentifully borrow of the champions of the Church of *Rome*, and set down what they say word for word.⁹⁹

Against the objection that the apostle James expressly states that 'by works a man is justified, and not by faith only' (Js. 2:24), Edwards offers a typical Reformed explanation that 'the Apostle *Paul* speaks of that justification which is *before God*, and St *James* of that which is *before man*. The former is by faith alone, the latter by works joyn'd with faith.'¹⁰⁰

Regarding the fifth doctrine, namely the absolute necessity of special and supernatural grace for conversion and salvation, Edwards notes that it is 'the principle part' of Pelagianism to hold 'that man is born with that natural power and strength whereby he can choose that which is spiritually good, and perform all good works, without being beholding to a special grace.'¹⁰¹ He marks that, while some Roman Catholic writers incline to this view and the Socinians 'professedly maintain it,' the Remonstrants are a little more shrewd:

The *Remonstrants*, it is true, acknowledge that nothing is done aright in religion without the help of the Spirit; they grant that the divine assistance is necessary to the doing of every good action. But by this help and assistance they generally mean no more than God's ordinary concurrence. Which is no more than the *pagan philosophers* willingly granted. They all held that divine assistance was necessary to make men virtuous, especially in a high degree. Nay, some of the *Remonstrants*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2:41.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 2:41–42.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 2:42–43.

scarcely acknowledge so much, for they tell us that one man is helped by God as much as another. They hold that God doth as much for those that perish, as for those that are effectually saved, as much for *Judas* as for *Peter*: and if there be anything extraordinary, it is done by a man's own self. It is from man's free will and the right exerting of it that God's grace becomes effectual. And this is the general persuasion of our churchmen at this day, who so extol man's free will and natural power as to derogate from supernatural grace.¹⁰²

Edwards cites excerpts from several noted contemporaries who transgress in this regard, including Goodman, Sherlock, Edward Young (c. 1641-1705, dean of Salisbury), George Stanhope (1660-1728, dean of Canterbury), and John Turner (b. 1649, hospitaller of St Thomas, Southwark) – all of whom directly contravene the tenth and thirteenth Articles of the Church.¹⁰³ Citing Sanderson to corroborate that those are guilty of 'symbolizing with the Pelagians' who give 'man's will the chiefest stroke, and the deciding and last determinating and casting power in the work of conversion,' Edwards concludes that 'these may call themselves *Churchmen*, but they must be beholding to a *catachresis*.'¹⁰⁴ He is clear, however, that these are not reflections on the entire clergy: 'far be it from me to affix these things on all, for I know there are some, and I hope there are many who have not bowed their knees, have not submitted and resigned themselves to these errors and falsities.'¹⁰⁵

Edwards suggests several possible causes of this common rejection of the Church's orthodoxy as codified in her Articles, including divine judgment, pride, worldly interest (he says that some clergymen, like Swiss soldiers, fight for the side that pays

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 2:43–44.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 2:44–48.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 2:45, 48.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 2:49.

best or offers preferment), and an undue estimation of human wisdom and learning.¹⁰⁶ He even posits that unchanged hearts could be one source of these errors, insinuating that some Arminian clergymen may not even be regenerate.¹⁰⁷

Yet according to Edwards, the two main sources of Arminian errors are the overvaluing of reason and the slighting of Scripture. He avows that the truth of the Reformed doctrines is ‘not to be decided by human reason, and the natural dictates of men’s minds, but by the Word of God,’ the contravention of which is ‘the perpetual fault’ of the Socinians and Arminians.¹⁰⁸ If one had to discard all doctrines which pose difficulties to natural human reason, says Edwards, ‘then we must reject most of the great truths of the Gospel’, which, he points out, are called in Scripture ‘the *mysteries* of godliness.’¹⁰⁹ Instead, the doctrines of the Christian religion ought to be all the more esteemed precisely because they surpass and even go against the grain of mere human reason, which bears testimony to their divine origin.¹¹⁰

The second major source of Arminian errors is the slighting of Scripture: ‘to make themselves *Arminians*, they are forc’d to renounce the plainest texts in the Bible.’¹¹¹ He offers Jean le Clerc (1657-1736) and Locke as examples, who both downplay the authority and necessity of the apostolic epistles in the formulation of Christian doctrine.¹¹² Their reason for doing so is obvious, says Edwards: ‘because there are some doctrines in these epistles which they have no good opinion of, yea, which they oppose and contradict: and such are these doctrines that I have spoken of.’¹¹³ Yet, he

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 2:50–94.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 2:92–94.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 2:97–100.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 2:101.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 2:102.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 2:104.

¹¹² Ibid., 2:105–6.

¹¹³ Ibid., 2:106.

points out, the neglect of the Scriptures is what gave rise to Popery, and the Arminian errors plaguing the Church come from the very same source:

[T]his is the origin of the present errors which relish of Popery. Men frame notions out of their own imaginations and reasonings, without consulting the inspired writings... what *tradition* is with the Papists, that *reason* is with some Protestants. The former believe many doctrines, tho' inconsistent with Scripture, for the sake of *tradition*: the latter embrace other doctrines (as repugnant to the Scriptures as those) for the sake of *reason*.¹¹⁴

Considering the specific clergymen Edwards cites as examples of the errors in the Church, and particularly his incessant insistence that the undue weight given to human reason is the chief source of these errors, the observation made earlier holds firm: that although Edwards opposed Arminianism *in toto*, yet his main targets were the more rationalistic latitudinarian variety of Arminians. Yet he does not leave high-church Arminians untouched, reminding them that 'to be of the *Church of England* is not only to observe her rites and discipline, but to own her Articles,' furthermore tracing their Arminian roots back to Archbishop Laud and bemoaning how Arminianism reintroduced Popish elements into the Church.¹¹⁵ However, as before, he emphasises that 'it is not the Church of England, but only a party of men (now unhappily the greatest part) that espouses the [Arminian] doctrines.'¹¹⁶

The second volume of Edwards' *Preacher* concludes with comments related to the 'sober and moderate' dissenters, which would certainly have been objectionable to many readers, especially high churchmen. Although he does not wish to 'derogate in the least from the establish'd constitution', yet he holds that episcopacy is not essential

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 2:107.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 2:154.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 2:154.

to the constitution of a true church, but that orthodox doctrines as contained in the Church's Articles are: 'these are our shibboleth.'¹¹⁷ Accordingly, Edwards holds that churchmen who embrace Arminianism, and thereby dissent from the Church's Articles, are not only as guilty of dissent as dissenters are, but dissent on the more essential matter of doctrinal orthodoxy.¹¹⁸

Furthermore, given that for Edwards doctrinal orthodoxy is more essential than church polity, he does not view the 'sober' dissenters as schismatics, but holds that many of them sincerely dissent for conscience's sake from the rites and ceremonies of the Church, which the Church herself confesses are things indifferent, and that their separation on this account is allowed by the Act of Toleration (1689).¹¹⁹ In fact, he thinks that God has providentially ordained for the dissenters to play a key role in sustaining the doctrines of the Reformation in England, 'for if the high churchmen had had no check, they would have brought in Popery before this time, by a side-wind of *Arminianism*, and by their over-valuing of *ceremony* and *pomp* in divine worship.'¹²⁰

Like the first volume, this second volume of *The Preacher* sold well and a second edition thereof emerged within a year, in 1707, when Edwards also published his most elaborate anti-Arminian work of all, his *Veritas Redux: Evangelical Truths Restored*, which was the first instalment of his extended body of divinity. Edwards reveals that his preparatory works to this body of divinity, namely, his *Free Discourse* and the first two volumes of *The Preacher*, 'have found acceptance among the hearty lovers of learning, truth and religion', which has encouraged him to publish again.¹²¹ Although Edwards anticipates that some readers will be displeased with its contents, yet, with

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 2:178.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 2:182–83.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 2:xxviii–xxxix.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 2:183–84, Cf. xxxii–xxxiv.

¹²¹ John Edwards, *Veritas Redux. Evangelical Truths Restored: Namely, those concerning God's Eternal Decrees, the Liberty of Man's Will, Grace and Conversion, the Extent and Efficacy of Christ's Redemption, and Perseverance in Grace* (London, 1707), i.

his previous works having tasted the critical acclaim of many of his contemporaries, he is confident that his body of divinity ‘will be approved of by the lovers of truth, peace and godliness in the Church of England, and by all others of what denomination soever, that have a true sense of religion upon their minds.’¹²²

Edwards opted to open his extended body of divinity with a treatise on election and its concomitant doctrines because, in his view, the doctrines of the divine decrees, the impotency of the human will to good, original sin, grace and conversion, the extent of Christ’s redemption, and the perseverance of the elect ‘appertain to the foundation, and... are requisite to be known, in order to the right understanding and apprehending the whole Christian religion... Yea, it is impossible to have a true scheme of divinity without these.’¹²³ To substantiate this claim, he offers a survey of how none of the articles of the Apostles’ Creed, nor the divine attributes, nor the petitions of the Lord’s Prayer, nor the nature of evangelical obedience to the Ten Commandments, nor even some graces and duties named in the Beatitudes, can be correctly understood unless the aforementioned doctrines are to some degree established in the believer’s mind.¹²⁴

It would be tedious to go through Edwards’ arguments in favour of eternal election and its concomitant doctrines in a book which he claimed to contain ‘everything that can be said with relation to these heads.’¹²⁵ Given our chief aim of situating Edwards in the Church of his day, our analysis of his *Veritas Redux* will focus primarily on his opponents and those whom he invoked in support of his own Reformed views.

Edwards reveals that he had received letters, some with names and others anonymous, in response to his promulgation of the ‘Calvinian tenents.’¹²⁶ While he

¹²² Ibid., vi.

¹²³ Ibid., vii.

¹²⁴ Ibid., vii–xv.

¹²⁵ Ibid., xxxi.

¹²⁶ Ibid., xxiii.

finds it unbecoming to reveal the authors of these letters, he nevertheless undertakes to respond to their objections. In the second volume of *The Preacher* Edwards already addressed their first objection, namely that he was ‘run[ning] against the current of the divines of this age, and the general persuasion of others’, and he here offers a similar answer as before.¹²⁷

Secondly, his detractors argue that ‘all doctrines essential to our salvation are easily to be understood by the meanest capacities’, whereas the doctrines advocated by Edwards are intricate and bear some difficulty.¹²⁸ Edwards counters that, by the same argument, the Trinity, which is undoubtedly an intricate doctrine carrying a measure of difficulty, could be relegated as unessential.¹²⁹ Indeed, says Edwards, ‘there is not any one part of our holy religion, but hath some obscurities and difficulties mix’d with it,’ and he points out that even the ‘plainest doctrines, such as faith and repentance’, which are essentials, have caused great disputes among divines.¹³⁰

Thirdly, his ‘epistolizers’ hold that the Calvinistic doctrines cannot be found in the canonical gospels, a claim which Edwards rubbishes by citing several texts out of Matthew and John.¹³¹ However, even if the gospels did not mention them, yet the apostolic epistles are equally the word of God, and they ‘frequently inculcate’ these doctrines, as his objector admits.¹³² Furthermore, one writer faults Edwards for ‘making the Church of England a party in the cause,’ but he responds that this critic would have held his peace if he considered that the Reformers, prelates, doctors, and divines of the Church of England at the Reformation and afterwards were ‘zealous asserters of those very doctrines which I have mention’d in my late writings.’¹³³ By

¹²⁷ Ibid., xxiii–xxiv.

¹²⁸ Ibid., xxiv.

¹²⁹ Ibid., xxiv.

¹³⁰ Ibid., xxiv–xxv.

¹³¹ Ibid., xxv.

¹³² Ibid., xxv–xxvi.

¹³³ Ibid., xxvi–xxvii.

contrast, Arminian clergy ‘tread antipodes to the Church which they profess to be of’ and ‘doat on the upstart opinions of *Arminius* and *Episcopius*, who, tho’ men of worth and learning, have led men into errors of a very dangerous and pernicious nature.’¹³⁴

Yet another critic questions Edwards’ commitment to the Church’s episcopal polity, since he takes Edwards’ advocacy of Calvinism to include a call for ‘the discipline of *Geneva*, and the government of the *Kirk of Scotland*.’¹³⁵ This bespeaks ‘ignorance’, Edwards counters, ‘for ‘tis well known that the greatest admirers of our *ecclesiastical polity* have been as great asserters of the *Calvinian* doctrines.’¹³⁶ He cites Sanderson to show that it is an old Arminian polemical trick to render the Reformed doctrines odious by associating them with something distasteful, such as Puritanism, or to blame them for the ‘late unhappy times’ of the Civil War or the ejection of Scottish episcopal clergy from their livings after the Glorious Revolution.¹³⁷ Furthermore, this critic holds that the ‘predestinarian doctrines’ entail that people are predestined to salvation or damnation regardless of how they live, which Edwards denies.¹³⁸

Finally, Edwards’ critics are upset with him because, by advancing the Reformed doctrines as the Church’s orthodoxy, he ‘censure[s] and expose[s] our worthy divines and preachers, who have declared themselves to be of another sentiment.’¹³⁹ In other words, they dislike Edwards’ contention that Arminians are in fact unorthodox. Edwards responds that, firstly, Arminians have reflected on each other much more sharply than he has ever done, as witnessed in the ‘late skirmish’ between Fowler and Sherlock on Christ’s divinity, in which Sherlock effectively designated Fowler a heretic and infidel.¹⁴⁰ Secondly, Edwards says: ‘I don’t see how I can be blamed by

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, xxvi–xxvii.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, xxvii.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, xxvii.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, xxvii.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, xxviii–xxix.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, xxix.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, xxix.

wise and good men for taking notice how some persons have abandon'd those very articles and doctrines which they have subscribed to.¹⁴¹ Edwards did, however, receive one letter in which an unnamed 'learned and grave divine of our Church' gave his hearty approval to Edwards' censures of such authors as Tillotson and Lucas.¹⁴²

Edwards quips that his critics' obstinacy in retaining the 'Remonstrant principles' is, in fact, an argument for the Reformed position, since it proves 'that man's nature is originally perverse, that his will is naturally bent to what is unlawful, that it must be a special and efficacious grace that thoroughly convinces men, and that there are but few that are thus favour'd. These men by their behaviour have effectually demonstrated the reality of these doctrines at the very time when they have opposed them.'¹⁴³

In *Veritas Redux* Edwards continues against his regular peeves such as Hammond, Tillotson, Whitby, Sherlock, Burnet, Scott, Lucas, Stanhope, and Thomas Bennet (1673-1728), evincing, as before, that his crosshairs were especially fixed on those Arminians who style themselves 'rational divines.' Edwards does not hesitate to blame these 'rational divines' for the rise of Unitarianism, the Trinitarian controversy, and disputes on Christ's satisfaction, which so troubled the Church in this period.¹⁴⁴ Indeed, those Arminians who 'printed and preached most against Socinianism were the occasion of its coming in of late, and appearing with so open a face.'¹⁴⁵ By virtue of their shared principles, the Remonstrants and Socinians 'are both employed in the same design [of overthrowing Christian orthodoxy], only the former are the humble ministers and officers of these latter.'¹⁴⁶ Accordingly, Edwards argues, one cannot truly oppose Socinianism while embracing Arminianism:

¹⁴¹ Ibid., xxix.

¹⁴² Ibid., xxix–xxx.

¹⁴³ Ibid., xxx.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 492–94.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 493.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 494.

In short, a man must be a *Calvinist*, unless he be a *Socinian*... Not that I think that all those who are not *Calvinists* are *Socinians*... But my meaning is, that the principles of those who are not *Calvinists*, but *Remonstrants*, lead them directly to *Socinianism*; but men do not always follow and act according to their principles.¹⁴⁷

What is especially worthy of our attention, however, is to consider whom Edwards cites in support of his Reformed position, and how he counters the accusation of Calvinism being a novelty. Except for the final chapter of *Veritas Redux*, Edwards primarily cites Scripture and the Church's Articles in support of his Reformed position. Yet even in the first seven chapters, Edwards' choice of the few divines whom he does cite is very strategic. For example, he does not turn to authorities whom his readers would find objectionable, such as Puritans or nonconformists, but cites divines who were 'wholly in the interest of the Church of England' such as Sir Matthew Hale (1609-76), Jackson, Richard Samwaies (c. 1614-69), and Pearson – all of whom enjoyed excellent reputations among the generality of the clergy.¹⁴⁸ Anticipating the objection that Jackson later became an Arminian, Edwards answers that Jackson merely in weakness succumbed to the spirit of his times:

[I]f afterwards the view of preferment, and the actual enjoyment of a deanery and a mastership, and the favour of the court made some alteration in him (as the like did in other divines in King *Charles* the First's reign, when they saw that none were advanced but *Arminians*) this only shews that he gave way to temptation, but it doth not in the least invalidate his former attestation of the truth.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 494.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, xv–xvi, 28, 126, 104–5, 160–61, 259–60, 303–4, 356, 375; *idem*, *Preacher*, 2:126–27, 173–74.

¹⁴⁹ Edwards, *Veritas Redux*, 545–46.

The point to be stressed here is that Edwards sought to show his audience that not only was it perfectly possible to be a Calvinist and a conformist – and indeed that true conformity to the Church required one to be doctrinally Calvinistic – but that there were eminent examples of such conforming Calvinists in the Church’s recent past.

Edwards even cites his late anti-Socinian comrade Stillingfleet as affirming irresistible grace, with Stillingfleet saying, concerning ‘stupid and senseless people, whose minds are wholly sunk into the affairs of the world,’ that ‘nothing but immediate grace can work upon them, which must work on the will, whatever becomes of the understanding.’¹⁵⁰ While stressing that God’s ‘usual method’ is to persuade the sinner by the Holy Spirit so that the sinner comes to God willingly, Edwards here cites Stillingfleet to confirm that God can and does sometimes even overrule the sinner’s will to irresistibly bring him or her to faith and repentance.¹⁵¹

Edwards rounds off this work with an extensive survey of the manifold witnesses throughout ecclesiastical history who, according to him, affirmed the ‘Calvinian doctrines.’ He first cites various fathers and schoolmen (including Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose, Prosper, Gottschalk, Aquinas, and the Dominicans) as affirming these doctrines, before showing that they also enjoyed the general consent of the Protestant Reformers, and were agreed on at the Synod of Dort by the various Reformed churches, including the Church of England.¹⁵² To show that the doctrines of eternal election, the bondage of the will, and efficacious grace are not foreign doctrines, Edwards then offers an extensive list of English witnesses, ranging from as early as Bede and Alcuin, through Anselm, Bradwardine, and Wycliffe, to the Henrician, Edwardian, and Elizabethan clergy and professors of divinity, and emphasises that not only does the Church of England herself espouse these doctrines in her Articles,

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 362–63; Edward Stillingfleet, *Ecclesiastical Cases relating to the Duties and Rights of the Parochial Clergy* (London, 1698), 32–33.

¹⁵¹ Edwards, *Veritas Redux*, 363.

¹⁵² Ibid., 502–12.

Homilies, Liturgy, and Catechism, but that during the Reformation and afterwards she was doctrinally at one with the continental Reformed churches.¹⁵³ As Hampton observes, '[t]he Anglican Reformed after 1662 were certainly conscious of their links with the wider European Reformed tradition, but it was vital to their polemical task to show that they were the exponents of a home-grown and respectably Episcopalian branch of that tradition.'¹⁵⁴

Edwards' survey continues throughout the Jacobean and Caroline periods, with Edwards offering considerable evidence that the vast majority of English divines up to the Civil War were Reformed, including a number of eminent anti-Puritan and royalist divines.¹⁵⁵ Skipping the Interregnum for obvious reasons, he notices that although Arminianism became dominant in the post-Restoration Church largely through the influence of London-based latitudinarian preachers (i.e. Tillotson and associates),¹⁵⁶ yet a number of Calvinists still retained eminent positions in the Church, among whom he includes Sanderson, Pearson, John Hacket (1592-1670), Reynolds, Henry King (1592-1669), Ward, Wilkins, George Morley (1598-1684), and Thomas Barlow (c. 1608-91).¹⁵⁷ Once more, we see that Edwards was well aware of a sturdy trajectory of fellow conforming Reformed divines in the post-Restoration Church.

In 1707, six of Edwards' works were recommended to the clergy by no mean figure, namely the anti-Arminian Thomas Bray (c. 1656-1730), rector of St Botolph's Aldgate, London, and founder of both the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.¹⁵⁸ Bray's recommendation exemplifies how Edwards enjoyed a positive reception among some of the clergy, and those of a Reformed stripe in particular.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 512–40.

¹⁵⁴ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 7.

¹⁵⁵ Edwards, *Veritas Redux*, 540–57.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 557.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 542–58.

¹⁵⁸ Thomas Bray, *Bibliotheca Parochialis*, 2nd ed. (London, 1707), 32, 38, 59, 62, 65.

In 1707 Edwards also published two sermons. The first, which he recommended to the Society for the Reformation of Manners, is titled *The Heinousness of England's Sins*. Protesting against various sins plaguing England at the time, Edwards predictably included among these the preference of 'natural principles to those that are reveal'd' and the 'gross apostasy from the profession of the Christian verities in our times... which some brand with the odious name (as they account it) of *Calvinism*.'¹⁵⁹ He also reproves the hypocrisy of those high churchmen (undoubtedly with Sherlock in mind) who cried up absolute non-resistance and passive obedience to the monarch under Charles II and James II, only to act contrary to it for expediency's sake with the Glorious Revolution.¹⁶⁰ Yet, despite declaiming against the shortcomings of some of the clergy, Edwards again acknowledges that 'many of them are of holy and unblameable lives, and by example as well as doctrine instruct and edify their congregations.'¹⁶¹ Therefore, while apprehensive of the failings (as he perceived it) of many of his fellow clergymen, he nevertheless still recognized many others as doctrinally sound; that is, Reformed.

The second sermon, titled *One Nation, and One King*, celebrated the union of England and Scotland, which took effect that year. Of especial importance to Edwards in uniting the English and Scottish people is their common Reformed Christian religion, as opposed not only to Popery, but also to Pelagianism and Arminianism, concerning which, since the Reformation, 'the Church (I had almost call'd it the *Kirk*) of *England*, and that of our neighbours were entirely one.'¹⁶² Again he bemoans the many clergy who have forsaken Reformed orthodoxy, and argues that 'our Arminian clergy' have no ground on which to cry against dissenters for not conforming to the

¹⁵⁹ John Edwards, *The Heinousness of England's Sins represented in that of Jerusalem's: Or, in what Respects a Nation may be said to Sin Grievously* (London, 1707), 9.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁶² John Edwards, *One Nation, and One King. A Discourse on Ezek. XXXVII. 22. Occasion'd by the Happy Union of England and Scotland* (London, 1707), 7–10.

rites and ceremonies of the established Church, seeing that they themselves dissent from her established doctrines, and so likewise deserve to be called dissenters.¹⁶³

This is where the union with Scotland could especially prove beneficial, says Edwards, seeing that 'by the concurrence of our brethren in *Scotland*, who are now one with us, the number and strength of those that profess the sound doctrine of our Church will be augmented.'¹⁶⁴ Yet Edwards hopes that not only would English Arminianism be remedied by a fresh supply of Reformed divinity from the north, but also from 'our *eastern neighbours*', the Dutch:

And in time, it may be expected that the *Belgick* and *Caledonian* divines, together with those at home, will be serviceable to influence on our *Arminian* clergy, and be helpful to re-establish those abdicated truths among us, and to give a free vent to the *Calvinian* doctrines, which have been stifled so long a time; and to extirpate *Arminianism*, which at this day is the plague of Christianity.¹⁶⁵

He is adamant that the Kirk, as well as English Reformed dissenters, should be granted freedom of conscience and not be imposed upon in religious externals, and criticizes Herbert Thorndike and Samuel Parker for insisting that church unity trumps questions of apostolic teaching and personal conscience, which Edwards says is a common view 'with them that prefer ceremonies to substantial religion and godliness.'¹⁶⁶ He complains that the absolute insistence on outward conformity to the established Church has led clergy to hypocritically anathematize godly and orthodox dissenters, while 'the most flagrant drunkards and swearers have gone untouch'd;

¹⁶³ Ibid., 10–11.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 11.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 11–12.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 17–19.

yea, sometimes have been taken to the Holy Table.¹⁶⁷ Such clerical hypocrisy, Edwards hopes, will be amended by the influence of the Scots, known for their austere discipline.¹⁶⁸ Having sufficiently incensed Arminian high-church readers with such comments, the Whiggish Edwards furthermore celebrates the securing of a Protestant royal succession through the Act of Settlement of 1701, and attacks the nonjurors and Jacobites by saying that ‘I take it for granted, that he that is for a Popish king is for Popery, or is a well-willer to it, let him talk what he pleases to the contrary.’¹⁶⁹

We have already seen that Edwards’ works were better received among the clergy than scholars have recognized, and this sermon had a wide enough circulation to be republished to an Irish readership in Dublin in 1707.¹⁷⁰ Hitherto there had been no published criticism of Edwards’ anti-Arminian works, with him only receiving private letters from a few critics. Yet, as Edwards well knew, there were undoubtedly readers who were sorely displeased with his criticism of prominent divines, and, with comments such as those seen above, something somewhere had to give.

The first published criticisms of Edwards’ anti-Arminian works emerged in 1707 from the Irish nonjuror Charles Leslie (1650-1722), who, in his staunchly Jacobite bi-weekly periodical *The Rehearsal*, starting in early August, went on a month-long rampage against Edwards. Leslie scorned Edwards’ sermon, triggered by his vociferous Calvinism and by his positive reflections on the dissenters and the Scottish Kirk.¹⁷¹ Leslie despised *Veritas Redux*, in which, he says, Edwards ‘heads the armies of the Philistines and leads them on against the camp of Israel.’¹⁷² He continued attacking Edwards in late August and early September, dismissing Calvinism as the fatalistic

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 20.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 20.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 12–14.

¹⁷⁰ John Edwards, *One Nation, and One King. A Discourse on Ezek. XXXVII. 22. Occasion’d by the Happy Union of England and Scotland* (Dublin, 1707).

¹⁷¹ Charles Leslie, ‘The Rehearsal’, 2, 6, 8, 13, 16 August 1707.

¹⁷² Ibid., 20 August 1707.

doctrine of the dissenters, but all along appears wary of the possible influence Edwards' works could have on his readership.¹⁷³ Thus Leslie, though ridiculing Edwards' views, clearly viewed him as a churchman who carried weight and a force to be reckoned with, which explains why he laboured so strenuously to discredit him.

A second critic, a layman named Thomas Parriett, attacked Edwards in a tract arguing that he had misrepresented the doctrine of the Reformers as having been Calvinistic.¹⁷⁴ Parriett had made identical arguments in a similar tract five years earlier, clearly aware that there was a sufficient anti-Arminian presence in the Church of England to warrant such tracts.¹⁷⁵ A third faultfinder, John Carpender, a recent student of Lincoln College, Oxford, chided Edwards' *Preacher* for criticizing his fellow clergymen, for pointing to the dissenters as exemplary for their emphasis on preaching, and for overestimating the importance of preaching.¹⁷⁶

Yet besides these critiques from a nonjuror, a layman, and a novice, Edwards faced no further published censures for the next two years. Rather, he tells us in 1708 that the reception of *Veritas Redux*, his most ardent defence of Calvinism, was very positive, revealing that he was 'made sensible from men of learning and judgment, that they have a greater esteem for that performance than it merits, and that the design of that volume is agreeable to the sentiments of sober and unprejudiced persons.'¹⁷⁷ In fact, the main problem some of his unnamed readers had with *Veritas Redux* was that Edwards in one instance departed from Reformed orthodoxy.

In the passage in question, Edwards uncharacteristically tosses a bone to his Arminian adversaries by suggesting the hypothesis that perhaps there might be a

¹⁷³ Ibid., 23, 27, 30 August, 3 September 1707.

¹⁷⁴ Thomas Parriett, *The Doctrine of the Martyrs of the Church of England: Vindicated from the Misrepresentation of Dr. Edwards* (London, 1707).

¹⁷⁵ Thomas Parriett, ed., *An Historical Narration of the Judgment of some Most Learned and Godly English Bishops, Holy Martyrs, and other Learned Men down to our Time* (London, 1702).

¹⁷⁶ John Carpender, *A Comparison betwixt Prayer and Preaching* (London, 1708), Preface.

¹⁷⁷ John Edwards, *The Doctrin of Faith and Justification Set in a True Light* (London, 1708), v.

'third sort' of people, neither elect nor reprobate, whom God has decreed to leave in a state of probation, and whose end has not been absolutely foreordained.¹⁷⁸ Now his readers were critiquing him for this, and saying that he was departing from the 'common road' and making concessions to the Arminians.¹⁷⁹ By conceding ground to the Arminians, he was upsetting his Reformed supporters in the Church, and risking his good reputation among them. To appease these Reformed critics, Edwards emphasizes that 'I propound it only as an hypothesis [and] as a supposition,' and admits that 'it would be unpardonable presumption to determine peremptorily,' assuring his readers, lest they might doubt it, that 'I am *heartly* and *entire* in the whole [Calvinian] cause, and have not the least inclination to abandon it.'¹⁸⁰

Let not the significance of this escape the reader – Edwards is here taken to task by some of his fellow churchmen, not for being Reformed, but for not being Reformed enough! This, of course, is entirely at odds with the common depiction of Edwards as a lone Calvinist in an overwhelmingly Arminian church, in which his fellow clergymen are supposed to eagerly lick up such concessions. Clearly he enjoyed a dedicated Reformed readership in the Church with a vested interest in his published works, who, while appreciating his efforts in defence of Reformed orthodoxy, were simultaneously keen for him not to overstep its parameters.

Having in the meantime published a major work on the doctrine of justification (to be discussed in chapter 5), Edwards published the third volume of *The Preacher* in 1709. For most of the book Edwards inveighs against a range of what he perceives as errant practices and doctrines in the Church tending towards either Popery, enthusiasm, or the 'high-church fanaticks' (by which he especially means the nonjurors Henry Dodwell, George Hicke, and their sympathisers), taking stabs at his by-now-familiar set of foes along the way. The customary attacks on Arminianism and

¹⁷⁸ Edwards, *Veritas Redux*, 237–46, 476–77.

¹⁷⁹ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, v–vii.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, vii–ix.

vindication of Reformed orthodoxy as the theology of the Church are also present throughout. Noteworthy is Edwards' quotation from a letter sent to him by an unnamed 'considerable divine of our Church' who, approving Edwards' comments on the malpractices of the clergy, and the profanation of the Lord's day in particular, earnestly requested him to write a discourse concerning the Lord's day, which, Edwards points out, bears witness 'that some of our most serious, pious and learn'd clergy concur with me in my apprehensions.'¹⁸¹

Edwards' chief reason for writing this third volume, however, was to respond to criticism of his earlier volumes from 'some of our ecclesiasticks.'¹⁸² Despite the positive reception which Edwards' first two volumes of *The Preacher* and *Veritas Redux* had enjoyed among some segments of the clergy, he admits that there were 'some' of his brethren who had 'taken up an irreconcilable dislike of what I had written,' seeing that 'it wounded them under the fifth rib that I attempted to restore and retrieve some of the *Calvinian* doctrines.'¹⁸³ Edwards himself notes that there had been a considerable period of 'profound silence' during which 'there was no pen brandished against me', but during which his views had nevertheless been denounced in some of his adversaries' conversations and pulpits.¹⁸⁴ Yet his opponents could not continue refraining from the press, but, according to Edwards, conspired 'among their party' concerning who should respond to his writings, with one of the rumoured designated respondents being a 'city-preacher', possibly a reference to Sherlock.¹⁸⁵ Ultimately, says Edwards, his foes 'resolved to *hire* one to do the business,' namely Leslie, whose month-long anti-Edwards pamphlet campaign has already been noted.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸¹ Edwards, *Preacher*, 3:38.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 3:xiii.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 3:223.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 3:223–24.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 3:225.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 3:225.

A second nonjuring critic, Edmund Elys (c. 1633-1708), wrote a letter to Edwards in 1705 which defended *The Whole Duty of Man* against Edwards' claims that it failed to inculcate belief in orthodox Christian doctrines. Edwards reveals that Elys had earlier written several letters to him 'wherein he was wont to approve of my performances, much above what I could expect, and even to an excess.'¹⁸⁷ Edwards reciprocally expresses an admiration for Elys, who had published in defence of the doctrines of the Trinity and Christ's satisfaction during the Socinian controversy of the 1690s, and had furthermore been a fellow critic of Locke, which explains such mutual admiration.¹⁸⁸ Elys was therefore, unlike Leslie, not a sworn enemy of Edwards, but merely disagreed with him on *The Whole Duty of Man* lacking doctrinal content.

Above all, however, this third volume was a response to Robert Lightfoot (1665-1726), rector of Odell, Bedfordshire, who in 1709 published his *Remarks upon some Passages in Dr. Edwards's Preacher*.¹⁸⁹ Edwards had not envisioned a third volume of *The Preacher*, but Lightfoot's charge that Edwards misrepresented and slandered his brethren compelled him to take up the pen again. Accordingly, says Edwards, Lightfoot 'may be reckoned the author of this my *Third part of the Preacher*, for it is wholly owing to him that I assumed this work again.'¹⁹⁰

Lightfoot's critique of the first volume of Edwards' *Preacher* primarily sought to vindicate those clergymen whom Edwards had criticized, particularly Tillotson, Wake, *The Whole Duty of Man*, Lucas, and Calamy, and to counter Edwards' assertions that the Reformed doctrines of predestination and justification are the doctrines of the Church and her Articles. Moreover, Lightfoot took issue with Edwards for omitting Tillotson's works from his catalogue of books recommended to divinity students,

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 3:225.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 3:226.

¹⁸⁹ Robert Lightfoot, *Remarks upon Some Passages in Dr. Edwards's Preacher, Discovering his False Reasonings and Unjust Reflections upon his Brethren the Clergy* (London, 1709).

¹⁹⁰ Edwards, *Preacher*, 3:xiv-xv.

while including in it 'some trash.'¹⁹¹ Due to Lightfoot's *Remarks* using the same arguments and phraseology of Edwards' regular opponents, Edwards suspects that Lightfoot 'consulted his brethren pretty much', and that not only is his booklet 'the work of many heads', but that '*Lightfoot* represents the generality of the fraternity... and therefore in replying to *him*, I make account that I shall answer them *all* at once.'¹⁹²

Edwards' lengthy rejoinder tackles each of Lightfoot's exceptions in turn, with Lightfoot again defending Tillotson and associates the following year with his *Dr. Edwards's Vindication Consider'd* (1710), in what had now become a nasty altercation on whether Arminian clergy, especially those of the '*Tillotsonian* and *Lucasian way*', were departing from the Church's established orthodoxy or not.¹⁹³ Along the way, Edwards cites yet another letter of approval he had received from an unnamed 'great man of our Church' who supported his animadversions against Tillotson, Lucas, and others, as proof that he was not alone in his criticism of these moralist divines.¹⁹⁴

Around this same time, William Nokes (d. 1723), a former Independent who conformed and in 1712 became rector of Reydon, Suffolk, cited Edwards' *Veritas Redux* to support his claim that Arminianism, which he associates with Pelagianism, must 'be judg'd to be a natural kind of religion, which has no religion in it, is no bond of union between God and man, doth not sanctify but dishonour the name of God; and the contrary [i.e. Calvinism] to be the only truth and doctrine worthy of and agreeing with divine revelation.'¹⁹⁵ Meanwhile, a Welsh translation of Edwards' *The Hearer* (part of *The Preacher* volume 2) had been published as *Y Gwrandawr* (1709).¹⁹⁶

¹⁹¹ Lightfoot, *Remarks*, 86–87.

¹⁹² Edwards, *Preacher*, 3:227.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 3:227–98; Robert Lightfoot, *Dr. Edwards's Vindication Consider'd, in a Letter to a Friend* (London, 1710).

¹⁹⁴ Edwards, *Preacher*, 3:238.

¹⁹⁵ William Nokes, *The Nature, Title and Evidence of Eternal Life Given in Jesus Christ by the Gospel Briefly Stated* (London, 1709), 163–64.

¹⁹⁶ John Edwards, *Y Gwrandawr* (London, 1709).

Edwards, still a regular preacher before the University, next published his university sermon preached on 5 November 1709 titled *Great Things done by God for our Ancestors, and us of this Island* (1710), commemorating both the delivery from the gunpowder plot and King William's arrival. A second edition emerged that same year, and Edwards reveals in the dedicatory epistle to his old patron Lord Russell that 'I was told from several hands, that [this sermon] met with great and general approbation', and that some of his listeners 'were very desirous to see the discourse in print.'¹⁹⁷ Yet when Edwards sought to publish it with Cambridge University Press, it was refused, and so he had to turn instead to Russell for patronage, who, besides being in his second stint as First Lord of the Admiralty, was also the high steward of the University at the time.¹⁹⁸

What did this sermon contain to cause this refusal at the University Press? It had nothing to do with anti-Arminian polemics, of which this sermon is uncharacteristically devoid. Instead, the problem was with Edwards' political views expressed in the sermon. The man behind the sermon's refusal was Gabriel Quadring, the fervently Tory master of Magdalene College.¹⁹⁹ Quadring had, of course, given his imprimatur to Edwards' early exegetical works. Yet, as Kippis explains, Quadring 'evidently appears to have been influenced by a party spirit against our author, who was a zealous Whig; and who, in his discourse, had enlarged much on our deliverance from Popery, on the blessings of the Revolution, and on the praises of King William.'²⁰⁰ Quadring might especially have been triggered by Edwards' remark that those who had through passive obedience sided with James II during the Revolution 'were ready to fight for Popery out of a principle of loyalty.'²⁰¹ Quadring therefore wielded his

¹⁹⁷ John Edwards, *Great Things done by God for our Ancestors, and us of this Island* (London, 1710), iii–iv.

¹⁹⁸ McKitterick, *History of Cambridge University Press*, 2:118–19.

¹⁹⁹ Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 5:545.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 5:545–46.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 5:16.

authority to prevent Edwards' anti-Tory views from being spread through the University Press, which explains why Edwards instead approached his longtime Whig patron for support.

Edwards next published his *The Divine Perfections Vindicated* (1710) in response to a sermon by the archbishop of Dublin, William King (1650-1729), titled *Divine Predestination and Fore-knowledg [sic], consistent with the Freedom of Man's Will* (1709). This sermon was King's attempt to publicly reconcile the Reformed and Arminian positions on predestination, in a clear display that this was an ongoing contention in the Church. According to King, at the heart of Reformed versus Arminian disputes is a misunderstanding of the nature of the divine attributes. He states that God's nature, powers, and faculties 'are so far beyond our reach, that we are utterly incapable of framing exact and adequate notions of them', and, because of this, King harbours a preference for the communicable over the incommunicable attributes of God.²⁰²

King insists that foreknowledge and predestination, when ascribed to God, 'are not to be taken strictly or properly', but should be interpreted 'as thus express'd only by way of condescension to our capacities'; that is, they are merely 'faint shadows and resemblances' or 'parabolical figures', and do not truly correspond to God's incomprehensible nature.²⁰³ He adds that 'when God is said to predetermine and foreordain all things according to the counsel of his will, the import of this expression is, that all things depend as much on God, *as if* he had settled them according to a certain scheme and design, which he had voluntarily fram'd in his own mind.'²⁰⁴ King contends that, although absolute divine foreknowledge would, to human minds, seem to preclude the contingency of events or human free will, yet since human perceptions

²⁰² William King, *Divine Predestination and Fore-Knowledg, Consistent with the Freedom of Man's Will* (Dublin, 1709), 5–7.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 10–12; John Edwards, *The Divine Perfections Vindicated: Or, some brief Remarks on his Grace William Lord Arch-Bishop of Dublin's Sermon* (London, 1710), 4.

²⁰⁴ King, *Divine Predestination*, 11. Emphasis added.

of God's foreknowledge are only shadows and figures of God's actual foreknowledge, and do not truly correspond to it, it is therefore possible, in a manner surpassing human comprehension, for God to possess absolute foreknowledge while preserving human freedom and contingency.²⁰⁵

For King, the doctrines of God's prescience and predestination are thus not intended to be understood by humans (indeed, human knowledge of them is only analogical and does not correspond to the divine reality) but are merely 'design'd to teach us the obligations which we owe to him for our salvation, and the dependence we have on his favour.'²⁰⁶ Thus, for him, these doctrines have a rather pragmatic end. Believers are to think of God '*as if* he had predetermin'd [all his works] after the same manner that wise men do theirs', and '*as if* our salvation entirely proceeded from [God's] mere good will and pleasure, without any thing being requir'd on our part, in order to it.'²⁰⁷

This analogical 'as if' language, which permeates King's sermon, is what Edwards finds especially objectionable.²⁰⁸ He protests that, if the attributes of God in Scripture are only figures expressed *ad captum*, and do not correspond to God's nature in reality, then the Scriptures 'do not give us a true and real view of religion, but a mere feign'd and counterfeit one; for tho' they tell us plainly as can be, that God *fore-knows*, and *predestinates*, and hath *understanding* and *wisdom*, yet this must by no means be understood in a *proper* sense, but by way of *resemblance* and *similitude*, and *as if* it were so, and to fit our undue conception of things.'²⁰⁹ Moreover, Edwards shows that King's reasoning about the divines attributes and foreknowledge is very similar not only to

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 7–12; J.C.D. Clark, "'God" and "the Enlightenment"', in *God in the Enlightenment*, ed. William J. Bulman and Robert G. Ingram (New York: OUP, 2016), 229–31.

²⁰⁶ King, *Divine Predestination*, 12–26.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 26. Emphasis added.

²⁰⁸ Edwards, *Divine Perfections Vindicated*, 4–5.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 9.

that of Leslie, but also to that of Socinus and his disciple Smalcius, who likewise employed this 'as if' analogical language.²¹⁰

Edwards repudiates King's pragmatic view of the doctrines of the divine attributes, which, he says, teaches believers to act according to doctrinal principles regardless of whether such principles are actually true.²¹¹ This manner of treating the divine attributes was playing into the hands of 'Popish writers' who say that the Bible has 'double and doubtful meanings', as well as the deists, sceptics, Socinians, Unitarians, and enthusiasts.²¹² To corroborate this, Edwards points out that the freethinker Anthony Collins had cited King's affirmation that the doctrine of the Trinity is only analogous, and hence argued that subscription to a merely analogous doctrine should not be requisite.²¹³ Edwards' verdict is that King's sermon shows how 'the greatest absurdities and contradictions must be entertain'd' by the Remonstrants in order to eschew the Reformed doctrines of eternal predestination and reprobation.²¹⁴

Despite such a sharp-worded rebuff, King never publicly offered a direct response to Edwards. A few years later he did, however, republish a chapter of his earlier *De Origine Mali* under the title *A Key to Divinity: Or, a Philosophical Essay on Free-Will* (1715), the dedicatory epistle of which reveals that it was published in response to ongoing Calvinist versus Arminian debates.²¹⁵ Though not mentioning Edwards anywhere, King clearly sides with the 'rational divines', and the dedicatory epistle states that 'to propose things above reason, as objects of faith, is as ridiculous, as to bid me believe what I know nothing of' and that "'tis my opinion, with Mr. Lock, that reason must be our last judge and guide in every thing.'²¹⁶

²¹⁰ Ibid., 9–11.

²¹¹ Ibid., 15–19.

²¹² Ibid., 22–26.

²¹³ Ibid., 25; Anthony Collins, *A Vindication of the Divine Attributes* (London, 1710), 26.

²¹⁴ Edwards, *Divine Perfections Vindicated*, 26–29.

²¹⁵ William King, *A Key to Divinity: Or, A Philosophical Essay on Free-Will* (London, 1715), iii.

²¹⁶ Ibid., iv.

Although Edwards was the only Reformed divine to criticize King in print, he would certainly not have been the only one to find fault with the Irish prelate's sentiments. His Reformed contemporary South, whom Edwards had earlier cited against Locke, had similarly attacked Sherlock in 1693 for tampering with an orthodox understanding of the divine attributes, and a trajectory of Reformed conformists opposing what Hampton has dubbed the Remonstrants' 'avant-garde doctrine of God' can be traced throughout the post-Restoration period.²¹⁷ Moreover, in an undated posthumously-published sermon, South, while not mentioning King, nevertheless brushes aside King's exact argument on the divine decrees, seeing it as a symptom of the two controversies 'which are now the most considerable,' namely 'the *Arminian* and *Socinian*.'²¹⁸ While Edwards was confronting Arminianism through the press, South was doing likewise from the pulpits of Westminster Abbey, Christ Church, and the University Church in Oxford.

Yet Edwards' incessant polemics did provoke the ire of Daniel Whitby, who had regularly been on its receiving end. Whitby had once positively cited Edwards on a minor issue, but that was before their disputes began.²¹⁹ In 1710, Whitby came out with all guns blazing, attacking Edwards in three works in the same year. The first of these was Whitby's *Additional Annotations to the New Testament* (1710), in which the Sarum precentor seeks to vindicate his earlier comment that in the entire New Testament 'there is not to be found one exhortation to believe in Christ, or to act faith on Christ', admitting that this remark 'hath met with very hard usage from different hands', but 'more especially' from Edwards, who had castigated Whitby for this in *The Preacher*.²²⁰

²¹⁷ Robert South, *Animadversions upon Dr. Sherlock's Book, entituled A Vindication of the Holy and Ever-Blessed Trinity* (London, 1693); Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 194–95, 221–65.

²¹⁸ Robert South, *Sermons Preached upon Several Occasions*, 11 vols. (London, 1737–44), 9:314–15.

²¹⁹ Daniel Whitby, *A Paraphrase and Commentary upon all the Epistles of the New Testament* (London, 1700), 181.

²²⁰ Daniel Whitby, *Additional Annotations to the New Testament with Seven Discourses* (London, 1710), 97–98.

Edwards was thus merely the most vocal of Whitby's various critics, with many evidently sharing his grievances.

Whitby secondly published his anti-Calvinist *Discourse on the Five Points* (1710), the postscript of which responds to Edwards' *Veritas Redux*, accusing him of misrepresenting the church fathers and wrongly disparaging Arminianism as a novelty.²²¹ Whitby's third and most elaborate attack on Edwards, however, came in his *Four Discourses* (1710), aimed entirely against Edwards. Here Whitby offers his understanding of the terms 'election' and 'reprobation', attacks Edwards' assertions that 'God's foreknowledge depends on his decrees' and that 'God from eternity decreed the commission of all the sins in the world', and defends his annotations on Romans 9 against Edwards' 'cavils'. Notably, Whitby cites the Remonstrants Episcopius and Curcellaeus in favour of his own view, which, for Edwards, lucidly evinced that he was in cahoots with the 'well-wishers to Socinus's doctrines.'²²²

Whitby points out that a reviewer had remarked that Edwards was 'well known to be a very warm, tho' weak, defender of the *Calvinistical* doctrines,' and adds that 'so I am assured he is esteemed by all the learned and judicious men that I have been acquainted with.'²²³ Whitby says that there were a number of clergy of his ilk who 'loath[ed]' Edwards' *Veritas Redux*. Therefore, although Edwards' anti-Arminian works were positively received among certain segments of the clergy, yet we see, unsurprisingly, that they were spurned by others. This, of course, reflects the abiding Reformed-Arminian divide within the Church under Anne.

²²¹ Daniel Whitby, *A Discourse Concerning, I. The True Import of the Words Election and Reprobation; Etc.* (London, 1710), 556–76.

²²² Daniel Whitby, *Four Discourses* (London, 1710), 2; John Edwards, *The Arminian Doctrines Condemn'd by the Holy Scriptures, by many of the Ancient Fathers, by the Church of England, and even by the Suffrage of Right Reason* (London, 1711), 134.

²²³ Whitby, *Four Discourses*, i–iii; *The History of the Works of the Learned, or, An Impartial Account of Books Lately Printed in All Parts of Europe*, vol. 11.11 (London, 1709), 676.

Moreover, Whitby was at this time also attacking the widely-respected Beveridge for teaching the imputation of Christ's active obedience as necessary for justification, and for advancing 'Calvinism' and the doctrine of original sin in his posthumously-published *An Exposition of the XXXIX Articles of the Church of England* (1710).²²⁴ Edwards was thus not the only Reformed churchman to be attacked by Whitby, and would certainly not have been alone in taking exception to Whitby's attack on Beveridge. It is revealing that Whitby concedes that the publication of Beveridge's *Exposition* was greatly anticipated by many in the Church²²⁵ – the publisher's preface thereof says as much, reporting that it was well received in the Church.²²⁶ As Hampton has also noticed, there was certainly no such furore around Beveridge's Reformed exposition of the Articles as there had been around Burnet's latitudinarian Arminian one.²²⁷ This further evinces that there was a considerable market, so to speak, for Reformed divinity in the Church at this time, which elucidates why Edwards' works were not as unpopular as previous scholars have imagined.

Whitby and Lightfoot's criticisms naturally provoked the polemically battle-hardened Edwards, who responded to both with his *The Arminian Doctrines Condemn'd* (1711). Edwards admits that his late writings had been 'exposed to the licentious tongues and pens of many of our clergy,' revealing that although Whitby was his chief adversary, yet the Salisbury chanter was one 'among several others.'²²⁸

Edwards rails against Whitby for denying the doctrine of original sin and for attacking Beveridge's affirmation of justification by Christ's imputed righteousness, and, calling Beveridge a 'reverend prelate', he cites him extensively, along with

²²⁴ Whitby, *Additional Annotations*, 69–87; idem, *A Short View of Dr. Beveridge's Writings* (London, 1711), 24–28, 37–47.

²²⁵ Whitby, *Short View*, 36.

²²⁶ William Beveridge, *An Exposition of the XXXIX Articles of the Church of England* (Oxford, 1710), The Bookseller to the Reader.

²²⁷ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 35.

²²⁸ Edwards, *Arminian Doctrines Condemn'd*, i.

Pearson and Sanderson, in favour of the Reformed position.²²⁹ Whitby had disclosed that in his younger days he had been a Calvinist, but started questioning original sin upon reading the Saumur professor Joshua Placaeus, and afterwards found more reasons to disown this doctrine through conversations with an unnamed deist and the Irish physician John Stearne.²³⁰ Edwards latches onto this disclosure, pointing out that the sources of Whitby's rejection of Calvinism were disreputable and heterodox, and charging Whitby for, by his denial of original sin, openly favouring the Pelagian and Socinian heresies.²³¹ Edwards adds that, by insisting that predestination was entirely based on God's foresight of faith and good works in humans,

Dr. *Whitby* outdoes *Arminius* himself in this point about predestination; for [Arminius] expressly owns, that *the decree of election excludes all causes in man; yea, he outdoth the rankest Papists, he is not so orthodox as one of the chief champions of the Church of Rome [viz., Bellarmine], who, from the mere prevalency of truth, acknowledges in plain words, that there can be no cause of predestination assign'd on our part. Yea, [Whitby] presumes to aver, that the Scripture no where speaks of any personal election.*²³²

The fact that Whitby waded beyond Arminianism into the deeper waters of Pelagianism dawned not only on Reformed churchmen like Edwards, but also on Arminians such as Jonathan Edwards of Oxford, who condemned Whitby's views.²³³ It is striking that the Oxonian Edwards, who attacked another Arminian for promoting Pelagianism, never wrote a syllable of criticism against the Calvinistic

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, viii–ix, 44, 202–3, 224–25, 238, 242.

²³⁰ Whitby, *Discourse*, iii–v.

²³¹ Edwards, *Arminian Doctrines Condemn'd*, xvi–xvii, 21–24.

²³² *Ibid.*, 11–12.

²³³ Jonathan Edwards, *The Doctrine of Original Sin* (Oxford, 1711).

Cantabrigian Edwards, despite involving himself in this dispute. It appears that, for the Oxonian Edwards, Whitby's Pelagian overtures merited a firm response, whereas the Calvinism of his Cantabrigian namesake did not. Perhaps Jonathan Edwards knew that Calvinism, though disrelished by many, was still a recognized, acceptable view in the Church, whereas Whitby's radical Remonstrant position was not.

Just as the two Edwardses had in the 1690s been considered allies against Locke, so Whitby regarded the Arminian Jonathan Edwards as siding with John Edwards and his Calvinism: 'I have had of late two keen adversaries, differing but little in their names, and less in civility of their deportment towards me; both full of bitter Calvinistick zeal.'²³⁴ The Cantabrigian Edwards would three years later express appreciation for his 'learned namesake of Oxford' for having shown Whitby to err not only on original sin but also to espouse a heterodox Christology.²³⁵ Another ally was found in Delaune, the soon-to-be Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Oxford, who at popular request published his sermon preached in St Paul's Cathedral titled *Of Original Sin* (1713) in response to 'the Pelagians of old, the Socinians, and some others at this day' who deny this doctrine, with Whitby, of course, being the most well-known original-sin-denying clergyman at the time.²³⁶

Having published *The Arminian Doctrines Condemn'd* shortly after the new St Paul's Cathedral had been completed, Edwards closes by exhorting Arminian readers to return to the doctrines of the apostle after whom the cathedral is named: 'We have lately repair'd, or rather erected anew, the *Temple* dedicated to St *Paul's* name, but some of us have pull'd down and demolish'd his *doctrines*. Our Church celebrates that

²³⁴ Daniel Whitby, *A Full Answer to the Arguments of the Reverend Dr. Jonathan Edwards* (London, 1712), iii.

²³⁵ John Edwards, *Some New Discoveries of the Uncertainty, Deficiency, and Corruptions of Human Knowledge and Learning* (London, 1714), 126, 132–34.

²³⁶ William Delaune, *Of Original Sin* (London, 1713), 4.

Apostle's *conversion*, but many of us seem to renounce what he hath deliver'd concerning *grace* and *conversion*, and *regeneration*.²³⁷

The freethinker Collins recognized this dispute between Whitby and the two Edwardses as a major polemical conflict of the day, and regarded it as evidence that, despite the majority of the English clergy having become Arminian, yet

the orthodoxy of Queen Elizabeth's time is not quite extinguish'd. We have had our Prideaux's and our Jane's, both professors of the Divinity-chair in Oxford; our Carltons and our Davenants both Bishops; and have now our Souths and our Edwards's of Oxford and Cambridge; and several others who appear in behalf of our old religion against the numerous innovators among the clergy. The two last mentioned divines [i.e. the two Edwardses] have with great vigour (but it must be confessed very weakly) lately attacked the Reverend Dr. Whitby, who in many late books has showed himself a zealous Arminian. I must not omit doing justice to that profound and orthodox prelate the present bishop of London [i.e. Compton], whom many have often heard with satisfaction inculcate the doctrine of predestination in his excellent sermons.²³⁸

Meanwhile Edwards published a sermon titled *How England hath left her first Love, and how she may recover it* (1711), which bemoans how England had 'left her first love', that is, orthodoxy, seeing that 'we swarm with Deists', while Arians and Socinians 'are grown numerous.'²³⁹ England has especially left her first love, however, in that many have disowned the 'ancient principles of Christianity, and of the Reformation, and the

²³⁷ Edwards, *Arminian Doctrines Condemn'd*, 114–15.

²³⁸ Anthony Collins, *A Discourse of Free-Thinking, Occasion'd by the Rise and Growth of a Sect Call'd Free-Thinkers* (London, 1713), 49, 67–68.

²³⁹ John Edwards, *A Brief Discourse, or Sermon; Shewing, how England hath Left her First Love, and how she may Recover it* (London, 1711), 6.

express articles of our excellent Mother the Church of England', which includes not only the rejection of these Articles for Arminianism, but also the reintroduction of 'several Popish notions relating to worship', such as Christ's corporal presence in the Eucharist, the Eucharist as a true and proper sacrifice, ministers as true and proper priests, and the communion table as a true and proper altar.²⁴⁰

It is through such sentiments that Edwards became a talisman to a younger Reformed churchman, namely Thomas Wise (1670/71-1726), fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, rector of St Alphege Church, Canterbury, and one of the Six Preachers of Canterbury Cathedral. Wise had been arguing, against an anonymous nonjuror, that the Eucharist was not a sacrifice in any true and proper sense. Though knowing Edwards only through his writings, Wise nevertheless expresses confidence in Edwards' ability to back him in this dispute, telling his opponents that Edwards 'may prove hard enough for any of *you*, he being undeniably a man of parts and learning.'²⁴¹

A year later the Irish clergyman Edward Nicholson (n.d.) of Primrose Grange, County Sligo, attacked Edwards' *Veritas Redux* with his *Short Notes on Dr. Edwards's long Book* (1712). Clearly aligning himself with 'rational divines' such as Tillotson and Whitby, and even professing that he would rather turn Socinian than Calvinist,²⁴² what is particularly noteworthy about Nicholson's attack is not the usual anti-Calvinist polemics, but what he reveals about the reception of Edwards' *Veritas Redux*.

Nicholson labels Edwards an enemy of the Church of England while significantly adding that there are a number of such enemies who 'cry' about 'Dr. Edwards's learning,' which manifestly includes Reformed conformists, since Nicholson's foes include high churchmen who hold episcopacy 'to be of divine right' but who, despite

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 6–16.

²⁴¹ Thomas Wise, *The Christian Eucharist Rightly Stated* (London, 1711), 89–90.

²⁴² Edward Nicholson, *Short Notes on Dr. Edwards's Long Book, to which he gives the False Title of Veritas Redux, Truth Return'd: Instead of Scabies Ecclesiae Redux, The Scab of the Church Return'd* (Dublin, 1712), 21, 40–42, 79.

having been ‘nursed up’ by the Church, have ‘rebelled’ against her by embracing the ‘*Calvinistical* rubbish (not to call it dung).’²⁴³ Notwithstanding the presence of such ‘learn’d men’ as Edwards and ‘his party’ in the Church, Nicholson is confident that ‘there wants not those in our Church that can at least match them, if not overmatch them.’²⁴⁴ Nevertheless, Nicholson admits that Edwards’ *Veritas Redux* ‘is thought by some [to be a] very ingenious book’ which ‘is handed about as a compleat and superabundant answer to my pamphlet’ and ‘is now become the *oracle* of my antagonists’, adding that ‘some ignorant Calvinists are proud of having him for their champion.’²⁴⁵ In other words, Nicholson’s Irish Reformed conforming opponents considered Edwards their talisman. Despite Edwards’ anti-Arminian works having procured the antipathy of many in the Church, it is once again clear that they simultaneously enjoyed a warm reception among others – a fact repeatedly recognized even by his enemies.

Edwards seemingly never came across Nicholson’s acrid attack, since he would certainly have responded if he did. As he later professed: ‘I bear the motto of a neighbouring nation, *Nemo me impune lacesset*, No man shall insult me, and go Scot-free. I am told by some of my friends, that this *device* hath sav’d me a great deal of trouble since I have been a writer, and is the reason why so few have ventur’d to disturb me with their impertinent answers and replies.’²⁴⁶

In 1713 Edwards published the first two volumes of his *Theologia Reformata*, which, as the title page reveals, was ‘design’d as an antidote in this corrupted age against the dangerous opinions of *Papists, Arians and Socinians, Pelagians and Remonstrants, Anabaptists, Antinomians, Deists, Atheists, Scepticks, Enthusiasts, [and] Libertines.*’ He comments in the preface that ‘the main thing which will render me obnoxious to the

²⁴³ Ibid., Preface, 15, 82.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., Preface, 70.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., Preface, 14, 81.

²⁴⁶ John Edwards, *A Letter to the Reverend Lawrence Fogg* (London, 1715), 6.

censure of some persons is, my espousing the *Calvinian* doctrines, which in the following papers (as well as at other times) I have asserted and vindicated.²⁴⁷ He adds that 'I have a long time seen that those *Calvinian* doctrines, are grown out of fashion, yea, are quite exploded by the generality of our Ecclesiasticks, and therefore I thought it would be some service to the cause of truth and religion, to appear in defence of them.'²⁴⁸ Yet this hyperbolic comment is tempered by what Edwards reiterates shortly afterwards, that despite how widespread Arminianism had become in the Church, 'there is yet a considerable number of persons who remain uncorrupted and untainted, and notwithstanding all opposition and discouragements, adhere to these [Reformed] doctrines, and openly profess them.'²⁴⁹ Hereby we see that it is not true, as Wallace claims, that 'Edwards left little sign that he considered himself part of a group.'²⁵⁰

Despite not receiving many subscriptions for this work, Edwards is nevertheless thankful that 'some of my brethren of the clergy were pleased to honour me with their subscriptions.'²⁵¹ The names of these subscribers are not published, but in a manuscript letter to his old friend John Woodward, dated 15 October 1711, Edwards reveals that those who were 'very ready to advance' his *Theologia Reformata* included his loyal patron Russell and the bishop of Ely, John Moore (1646-1714), who had both 'been pleased to let me know that they will favour it.'²⁵²

Moore's support of Edwards may come as a surprise. His few extant sermons reveal little about his theological disposition, yet we saw earlier that he recommended Reformed books to students – a fact noticed by Edwards himself. Moore studied at

²⁴⁷ John Edwards, *Theologia Reformata: Or, the Body and Substance of the Christian Religion*, 3 vols. (London, 1713–26), 1:iii.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 1:iii.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:viii.

²⁵⁰ Wallace, *Shapers*, 222.

²⁵¹ Edwards, *Theologia Reformata*, 1:xi.

²⁵² 'John Woodward: Correspondence', Cambridge University Library, MS Add.7647/121.

Clare Hall, Cambridge, throughout the 1660s, at the height of Edwards' popular stint at Trinity Church and at the very time when, according to the earlier-seen legend, Tillotson's audience at Clare would slip away to listen to Edwards instead. It cannot be ruled out that Moore may have been among them. Moore's father and grandfather were both Puritans, which may have instilled in him some appreciation for Reformed theology.²⁵³ Furthermore, like Edwards, Moore was a staunch Whig, and Edwards may have found considerable common ground with his diocesan bishop on some theological and political issues, which might in some measure explain this support.

Whatever the case may have been, Edwards' *Theologia Reformata* enjoyed a broad readership. In 1729, sixteen years after its publication, the Arminian Thomas Stackhouse (c. 1681-1752) remarked that Edwards' *Theologia Reformata* was one of the two 'best known, and most in use' bodies of divinity at the time (alongside Richard Fiddes' *Theologia Speculativa*), and that it is a 'magazine of knowledge,' although he warns that one should 'pass by [Edwards'] principles, which are purely Calvinistical.'²⁵⁴ Like Edwards' earlier works, *Theologia Reformata* contains animadversions against a host of contemporary Arminians and 'rational divines', most of whom we have already encountered. Among these, he responds to William Reeves (1667-1726), rector of Cranford, Middlesex, who had excepted to Edwards' views on predestination in 1709.²⁵⁵

Edwards' anti-Arminian animadversions continued the following year in his *Some New Discoveries of the Uncertainty, Deficiency, and Corruptions of Human Knowledge and Learning* (1714), of which a second edition emerged in 1728. Noteworthy in this book in relation to Edwards' anti-Arminian polemics is his criticism of Lawrence Fogg (1623-1718), dean of Chester. Fogg, who had been observing the ongoing

²⁵³ ODNB, s.v. 'Moore, John (1646-1714)', 'Moore, John (1594/5?-1657)'.

²⁵⁴ Thomas Stackhouse, *A Complete Body of Divinity* (London, 1729), Introduction.

²⁵⁵ William Reeves, ed., *The Apologies of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and Minucius Felix, in Defence of the Christian Religion*, vol. 1 (London, 1709), 159; Edwards, *Theologia Reformata*, 1:v-vi.

predestinarian disputes in the Church from the side-line, entered the fray with his *Theologiæ Speculativæ Schema* (1712). A section of this book was translated into English and published as *God's Infinite Grace in Election and Impartial Equity in Preterition Vindicated* (1713), which, as the subtitle states, was designed as 'an antidote against offences, occasioned by sundry celebrated parties unwarily contending about God's eternal prescience, and the internal operations of his grace, in its leading men through faith to salvation.' Fogg's choice of the term 'sundry celebrated parties' to refer to the respective Arminian and Reformed factions in the Church, of course, subverts the old depiction of Edwards as a lone Calvinist voice crying in the wilderness. Fogg clearly considered Edwards a theologian of consequence, representing a broader and by no means negligible Reformed contingent within the Church.

Although regarding Fogg's *Schema* as excelling in some respects, Edwards nevertheless weighed the dean's discussion of eternal election and found it wanting. In particular, Edwards points out that, while Fogg at first rightly faults the Remonstrants for making human free will the determining factor in salvation and for teaching election based on foreseen faith, the dean nevertheless soon afterwards directly contradicts himself by asserting that election and reprobation are founded on divine foresight, that the wills of both the regenerate and unregenerate are indifferent, and that the divine decrees, which he previously professed to be absolute, are instead conditional.²⁵⁶ Edwards goes on to list several other such inconsistencies in Fogg's *Schema* relating to predestination, conversion, and justification, concluding that, while seeking to 'shun the imputation of being a Remonstrant', Fogg ends up showing that 'he really *is* what he pretends *not* to be.'²⁵⁷ Fogg responded to Edwards with a letter, and Edwards returned the favour with his *A Letter to the Reverend Lawrence Fogg* (1715),

²⁵⁶ Edwards, *Some New Discoveries*, 135–36; Lawrence Fogg, *Theologiæ Speculativæ Schema* (London, 1712), 129, 131–32, 141–42.

²⁵⁷ Edwards, *Some New Discoveries*, 136–42.

in which he continued accusing Fogg of contradicting himself, and for ultimately holding to predestination based on prescience.²⁵⁸

The final anti-Arminian work Edwards published in his lifetime was *The Scripture-Doctrine of the Five Points* (1715), a catalogue of biblical texts and quotations from the Articles, Homilies, and Book of Common Prayer in support of the so-called five points of the ‘Calvinian scheme.’ Notably, he dedicated this work to the Princess of Wales, the German-born Caroline of Ansbach, and reminded her of the Germanity of these doctrines, citing a host of German divines as asserters thereof, including Gottschalk, Rabanus Maurus, Hugh of St Victor, Luther, the Augsburg Confession, Melancthon, Bucer, Grynaeus, Polanus, Piscator, Pareus, Spanheim Sr, Ursinus, and Alting.²⁵⁹

A market for Edwards’ writings persisted after his death in 1716, as can be seen with the posthumous publication of his *A Treatise of Repentance* (1718), which consists of sermons preached to Edwards’ former parishes, as well as *The Doctrines Controverted between Papists and Protestants* (1724), *A Brief View of the Mistakes about Happiness* (1724), the third volume of *Theologia Reformata* (1726), and his *Remains* (1731), the last of which included seven of Edwards’ hitherto-unpublished works.

3.3. Conclusion

In this chapter we examined Edwards’ anti-Arminian works after the turn of the eighteenth century, provided an overview of his contention that Calvinism is the orthodox theological position of the Church of England, and considered those Arminian churchmen who were the particular objects of his animadversions, finding them to primarily have been ‘rational divines’ of the latitudinarian, moralistic, Tillotsonian kind. Although Edwards certainly vexed those Arminian clergy whom he explicitly criticized and their sympathisers (as is manifest in the animadversions

²⁵⁸ Edwards, *Letter to Fogg*, 7–31.

²⁵⁹ John Edwards, *The Scripture-Doctrine of the Five Points* (London, 1715), iv–ix.

published against him), yet we have also seen that his anti-Arminian works were simultaneously fuelled by clerical support, received glowing reviews, and enjoyed the approval of considerable segments of the clergy, not least at the 1701 convocation, where his *Free Discourse* informed the lower house of convocation and their committee's judgment of Burnet's *Exposition*. Accordingly, Lemprière's comment, seen earlier, that Edwards' Calvinism rendered him 'occasionally unpopular' among the clergy, as opposed to merely unpopular, certainly holds more water than Lemprière likely envisaged.

We have even seen, in a vivid display of the sturdy Reformed presence in the Church at this time, that Edwards' *Veritas Redux*, his chief work on the so-called five points in dispute between the Reformed and the Arminians, was censured by some of his fellow conforming Reformed brethren for, on one point, not being Reformed enough! Furthermore, despite bemoaning how widespread Arminianism had become, Edwards time and again informed the reader of his consciousness of the fact that significant numbers of clergy were still loyal adherents to 'the old Episcopal divinity', and that his grievances only related to certain factions in the Church.

The picture that has emerged thus far in this study is of Edwards as a member of a later Stuart and early Hanoverian Church of England in which there still was a broad clerical divide between Arminians on the one hand, who, to be sure, constituted the majority, and Reformed churchmen on the other, who made up a large, conspicuous minority. Yet, if this image is accurate, then we should expect to find ample examples of such Reformed churchmen. We have already encountered a number of them, yet there were numerous others. It is such Reformed conforming contemporaries of Edwards to which we turn in the next chapter.

4. Edwards' Reformed conforming contemporaries

4.1. The earlier generation of post-Restoration Reformed conformists

Virtually all of Edwards' works were published after the Glorious Revolution. Edwards' publishing heyday, during which his reputation as a theologian was formed, therefore only commenced after 1689. The primary focus of this chapter will therefore be on his Reformed contemporaries who were active in the Church of England during the reigns of William and Mary, Anne, and George I. Yet we cannot bypass those earlier Reformed conforming divines who were Edwards' contemporaries in the post-Restoration Church, but who died before or shortly after the Glorious Revolution, because among them were major figures in the Church who exerted extensive influence on the generation of clergy who would constitute Edwards' readership around and after the turn of the century.

A number of these earlier post-Restoration Reformed churchmen have been mentioned already, and evidence of their Reformed soteriology will be cited in the margins. Edwards approvingly cited or recommended more than a dozen of them in his works, such as Sanderson, Pearson, Hacket, Reynolds, King, Ward, Wilkins, Morley, Barlow, Hale, Pococke, Conant, Samwaies, and Hopkins.¹ With the exception

¹ Robert Sanderson, *Fourteen Sermons heretofore Preached*, 4th ed. (London, 1657), 29–30; John Pearson, *An Exposition of the Creed*, 4th ed. (London, 1676), 27–29, 129, 168, 236, 282–83, 306, 327–30, 332, 356, 380, 390; John Hacket, *A Century of Sermons upon Several Remarkable Subjects* (London, 1675), 107, 126, 142–43, 164, 172, 199–201, 224–33, 305–6, 317, 415, 612, 650–52, 663–64, 673–74, 721, 961; Edward Reynolds, *An Explication of the Hundreth and Tenth Psalme*, 3rd ed. (London, 1642), 92, 102–3, 296, 344–46; Henry King, *An Exposition Vpon the Lords Prayer* (London, 1628), 9–10, 88, 103–4, 133–44; Samuel Ward, *Opera Nonnulla, viz. Determinationes Theologicae, Tractatus de Justificatione, Praelectiones de Peccato Originali*, ed. Seth Ward (London, 1658), Preface; John Wilkins, *Ecclesiastes, Or, a Discourse concerning the Gift of Preaching as it Falls under the Rules of Art* (London, 1646), 67, 76; Edward Pococke, *A Commentary on the Prophecy of Malachi* (Oxford, 1677), 2–3, 57; John Conant, *Sermons Preach'd on Several Occasions*, 6 vols.

of Hale (Chief Justice of the King's Bench), Pococke (Regius Professor of Hebrew and Laudian Professor of Arabic at Oxford), Conant (archdeacon of Norwich and former Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford), and Samwaies (fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford), the other ten of these were all bishops, and, along with William Nicholson (1591-1672, bishop of Gloucester),² they represent a sturdy Reformed presence among the post-Restoration episcopate.

After the Restoration, Reformed churchmen also held eminent positions at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Edwards' great admirer Pearson, the Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity and master of Trinity College, Cambridge, advanced a Reformed doctrine of predestination in his Cambridge lectures, and did so explicitly 'contra Remonstrantes, sive eos quos Arminianos vocant.'³ Unquestionably the most renowned Reformed divine in the post-Restoration Church, Pearson produced what even his Arminian contemporaries recognized as the preeminent English body of divinity in the Church of this period, namely his *Exposition of the Creed* (first edition 1659).⁴ His colleague John Lightfoot (1602-75), the master of Catharine Hall, Cambridge, and a Westminster Assembly divine, whom Edwards affectionately referred to as 'our English Rabbi', was a fellow opponent of Arminianism, clearly espousing a Reformed doctrine of election and the perseverance of the saints.⁵

(London & Oxford, 1693–1722), 1: 377-378, 397-399; 2: 13-18, 221, 300, 381; 3:183, 191-242; 4:249-250, 282, 437; 5:188-189, 203-204, 414, 513, 534-537; 6:286, 313-314, 354, 359, 441-442; Richard Samwaies, *England's Faithfull Reprover and Monitour* (London, 1653), 135–36; Ezekiel Hopkins, *The Doctrine of the Two Covenants* (London, 1712), 130–31, 135, 153–60, 195, 238–40, 309.

² William Nicholson, *A Plain, but Full Exposition of the Catechisme of the Church of England* (London, 1655), 19–20, 30, 33, 43, 46, 61–62, 65–66; idem, *ΕΚΘΕΣΙΣ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ, or an Exposition of the Apostles' Creed* (London, 1661), 273, 322, 400, 535, 602–3, 644–45.

³ John Pearson, *The Minor Theological Works of John Pearson*, ed. Edward Churton, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1844), 243–67.

⁴ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 34.

⁵ Edwards, *Discourse concerning the Authority*, 1:453; John Lightfoot, *The Works of the Reverend and Learned John Lightfoot*, vol. 1 (London, 1684), 655, 1145–47.

At Oxford the Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity and provost of Queen's College, Barlow, along with Thomas Tully (1620-76, principal of St Edmund Hall and dean of Ripon) and Thomas Marshall (1621-85, rector of Lincoln College and dean of Gloucester), played key roles in preserving Reformed orthodoxy.⁶ Like Pearson at Cambridge, Barlow advanced a Reformed doctrine of election and reprobation in his Oxford disputations – doctrines which were also upheld by Tully and Marshall.⁷

Reformed churchmen of this earlier post-Restoration period were also active in cathedrals. For example, John Wall (1588-1666) was subdean of Christ Church, Oxford, whereas George Stradling (c. 1620-88) and the hymnist Samuel Crossman (c. 1624-84) served respectively as the deans of Chichester and Bristol.⁸ Prebendal and canonical stalls also had their fair share of Reformed occupants. For instance, John Reading (1587/8-1667, rector of Chartham and Cheriton, Kent) was a prebendary of Canterbury, John Doughtie (c. 1598-1672, a.k.a. Doughty, rector of Cheam, Surrey) of Westminster, Francis Fullwood (d. 1693, archdeacon of Totnes) of Exeter, George Topham (d. 1694, vicar of Baston, Lincolnshire) of Lincoln, and Richard Parr (c. 1616-91, vicar of Camberwell, Surrey) of Armagh.⁹ Furthermore, several Huguenots-

⁶ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 10–12.

⁷ Thomas Barlow, *The Genuine Remains of that Learned Prelate Dr. Thomas Barlow* (London, 1693), 577–82; Thomas Tully, *Praecipuorum Theologiae Caputum Enchiridion Didacticum* (London, 1668), 18–20, 37–38, 40; Thomas Marshall, *The Catechism Set Forth in the Book of Common-Prayer Briefly Explained by Short Notes, Grounded upon Holy Scripture* (Oxford, 1679), 6, 8, 20.

⁸ John Wall, *Christian Reconcilement, or God at Peace with Man in Christ* (Oxford, 1658), 7–8, 11, 33–34; George Stradling, *Sermons and Discourses upon Several Occasions* (London, 1692), 80, 300–308, 500; Samuel Crossman, *The Young Mans Monitor. Or a Modest Offer toward the Pious, and Vertuous Composure of Life from Youth to Riper Years* (London, 1664), 25–26, 45.

⁹ John Reading, *A Guide to the Holy City. Or, Directions and Helps to an Holy Life* (Oxford, 1651); John Doughtie, *A Discourse concerning the Abstruseness of Divine Mysteries together with our Knowledge of them* (Oxford, 1628), 12–14; George Topham, *Pharisaism Display'd, or Hypocrisie Detected* (London, 1690), 16–18, 21; Richard Parr, 'An Appendix to the Life of the Lord Primate Usher', in *The Life of the Most Reverend Father in God, James Usher*, ed. Richard Parr (London, 1686), 30–32.

turned-English-clergymen assumed prebendal stalls: Peter du Moulin (1601-84, rector of Adisham, Kent) followed in the footsteps of his famous father, Pierre du Moulin, in occupying a prebendal stall at Canterbury, while Samuel de l'Angle (1622-93), after a lengthy pastorate at the Huguenot bastion of Charenton, became a prebendary at both Canterbury and Westminster.¹⁰ Meanwhile Jean Durel (1625-83) was a royal chaplain, prebendary of Salisbury and Durham, and in 1677 became the dean of Windsor.

Two former Cambridge dons of the Interregnum who initially dissented, Thomas Horton (d. 1673) of Queens' and William Dillingham (c. 1617-89) of Emmanuel, ultimately overcame their scruples and conformed, with Horton taking the rectory of St Helen's Bishopsgate, London, whereas Dillingham became rector of Odell, Bedfordshire – the same parish where Robert Lightfoot, one of Edwards' fiercest critics, would later serve.¹¹ Dillingham oversaw the posthumous publication of his friend Horton's sermons on Romans 8, in which Horton clearly proclaims the doctrines of eternal election, efficacious grace, and perseverance – even remarking that Romans 8:30 (the so-called 'golden chain') was one of his favourite biblical texts.¹²

Dillingham's Emmanuel contemporary, William Gurnall (1616-79), rector of Lavenham, Suffolk, was renowned for the Reformed practical divinity of his *The Christian in Compleat Armour*.¹³ Another proponent of Reformed practical divinity was Nathanael Taylor (fl. 1671-91), vicar of Hibaldstow, Lincolnshire, and the first master of the Grammar School in nearby Brigg, Lincolnshire. Taylor's *A Practical and Short*

¹⁰ Peter du Moulin, *A Week of Soliloquies and Prayers. With a Preparation for the Holy Communion* (London, 1657), 89–90, 146–50.

¹¹ William Dillingham, *Protestant Certainty: Or, a Short Treatise shewing how a Protestant may be well Assured of the Articles of his Faith* (London, 1689), 5, 16, 18–19; idem, *The Mystery of Iniquity Anatomized* (London, 1689), 22.

¹² Thomas Horton, *Forty Six Sermons upon the Whole Eighth Chapter of the Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Romans* (London, 1674), 9, 13, 473–84, 497–508.

¹³ See, for example, William Gurnall, *The Christian in Complete Armour, Or, a Treatise of the Saints War against the Devil*, vol. 1 (London, 1655), 130–31.

Exposition of the Catechism of the Church of England (1683), published under the patronage of his Reformed diocesan bishop Barlow, cites a range of domestic and foreign Reformed divines, including Nicholson, Arrowsmith, Baxter, Leigh, Junius, Tremellius, Hooker, Ussher, Pearson, Du Plessis-Mornay, Alsted, Calvin, Ames, and even the Belgic Confession.¹⁴ Taylor's broad appropriation of Reformed sources was rivalled by another rural clergyman, Edward Pierce (c. 1630-94), rector of Cottesbrook, Northamptonshire, who in support of his Reformed views cited such figures as Conant, Perkins, Ussher, Owen, Hoornbeeck, Baynes, Davenant, Schotanus, Vermigli, Ball, Calvin, Maccovius, Reynolds, Firmin, Baxter, Preston, and Sibbes.¹⁵ The post-Restoration Church evidently did not lack churchmen who, like Edwards, saw themselves not only as standing in continuity with earlier English Reformed divines, but also as part of a broader international Reformed tradition.

James Oldfield (d. 1681), vicar of St Michael in Long Stratton, Norfolk, explicitly adjudged Arminians 'hereticks', and Henry Anderson (c. 1642-89?), vicar of King's Somborne, Hampshire, faulted the Arminians (whom he associated with the Socinians) in a sermon in Winchester Cathedral for rendering God's decree dependent on humans.¹⁶ George Lawson (c. 1598-1678), rector of More, Shropshire, offered a Reformed exposition of election in explicit contrast to the Remonstrant view.¹⁷ Similar views are expressed by Thomas Downe (d. 1693), vicar of Preston, Dorset, in a work

¹⁴ Nathanael Taylor, *A Practical and Short Exposition of the Catechism of the Church of England by Way of Question and Answer* (London, 1683), 16, 30–31.

¹⁵ Edward Pierce, *Christ Alone Our Life: The Great Case of Every Man's Life and Death Determin'd by the Sentence of God* (London, 1691), 7, 10, 16, 21, 26, 35, 39, 46, 59, 64, 66, 76, 77, 88, 89, 123–24, 156.

¹⁶ James Oldfield, *Sincerity, or the Upright Man's Walk to Heaven* (London, 1687), 282; Henry Anderson, *A Sermon Preached in the Cathedral Church at Winchester, the Xxix of May MDCLXXXI* (London, 1681), 17, 22.

¹⁷ George Lawson, *Theo-Politica: Or, a Body of Divinity containing the Rules of the Special Government of God* (London, 1659), 115–31.

backed by Compton's imprimatur.¹⁸ The poet and hymnist John Mason (c. 1646-94), rector of Water Stratford, Buckinghamshire, sounds like Edwards when he bemoans how many of his contemporaries 'have forgotten the doctrines received in the Reformation' and how 'Arminianism [has] overspread the land.'¹⁹

Other Reformed conformists of this earlier post-Restoration generation include Joseph Bentham (1593/94-1671, rector of Broughton, Northamptonshire), Francis Roberts (1609-75, rector of Wrington, Somerset), Ralph Josselin (1617-83, vicar of Earls Colne, Essex), Edward Polhill (c. 1622-94, lay theologian from Burwash, Sussex), George Barker (d. 1684, rector of Danby Wiske, Yorkshire), and John Rawlet (1642-86, lecturer of St Nicholas in Newcastle-upon-Tyne).²⁰

This Reformed presence in the post-Restoration Church was recognized by Edward Stillingfleet. Stillingfleet was well aware that 'many of the greatest Anti-Puritans' in the Church under Elizabeth, James I, and Charles I were 'zealous' Calvinists: men who were 'zealous for our *liturgie* and *ceremonies*' but who 'held the doctrine of *election* and *perseverance*.'²¹ But much more significant for this study is Stillingfleet's admission, in 1679, that 'we do not want [i.e. lack] those of the *highest order* of our *Church* at this day, who are eminent for *learning*, and *piety*, and *zeal* for the *Church*,' and he added that his Calvinistic conforming contemporaries 'would take it very ill [...] upon the account of

¹⁸ Thomas Downe, *The First Principles of the Oracles of God* (London, 1677), 2-4, 31-32, 42-43, 55.

¹⁹ John Mason, *The Midnight Cry: A Sermon Preached on the Parable of the Ten Virgins*, 2nd ed. (London, 1691), 20.

²⁰ Joseph Bentham, *The Christian Conflict* (London, 1635), 11, 88, 95, 102, 129; Francis Roberts, *Clavis Bibliorum. The Key of the Bible, Unlocking the Richest Treasury of the Holy Scriptures*, 4th ed. (London, 1675), 506; idem, *A Synopsis of Theology or Divinity* (London, 1645); Alan Macfarlane, *The Family Life of Ralph Josselin, a Seventeenth-Century Clergyman* (Cambridge: CUP, 1970), 32, 168, 193; Edward Polhill, *The Divine Will Considered in its Eternal Decrees, and Holy Execution of them* (London, 1673); George Barker, *Sermons upon Several Texts of Scripture* (York, 1697), 198-218; John Rawlet, *A Treatise of Sacramental Covenanting with Christ* (London, 1667), 41, 87-88, 141-42.

²¹ Edward Stillingfleet, *Several Conferences between a Romish Priest, a Fanatick Chaplain, and a Divine of the Church of England, Concerning the Idolatry of the Church of Rome* (London, 1679), 76-77, 95.

those [Calvinian] opinions, to be thought *enemies* to the *Church of England*, as no doubt the *Puritans* were.²² In fact, Stillingfleet asserted that it is ‘certain’ that even during the reign of Charles I ‘no man was charged with disaffection to the Church of England merely on the account of these doctrinal points.’²³ Evidently, then, Stillingfleet considered Calvinism a perfectly legitimate position for a conforming divine to hold, and recognized not only that a great number of conformists had espoused it in the past, but also that many churchmen embraced it in his own day, including bishops.

The Arminian Samuel Scattergood (c. 1646-96), though firmly rejecting the doctrines of God’s absolute decrees of election and reprobation, nevertheless tellingly observes that these doctrines are ‘of late earnestly contended for by many persons of eminent learning and piety.’²⁴ Evidently, as far as Scattergood was concerned, the Arminian versus Reformed debate was very much alive in the post-Restoration Church and contended by eminent clergy on both sides. The Particular Baptist Thomas Delaune (d. 1685), writing in 1683, went as far as to consider the ‘greatest part of the Church of England’ to be Calvinistic.²⁵ While Delaune’s remark certainly seems a bit of a stretch, it nevertheless suggests that there was a sufficient Reformed presence in the Church for him to make such an estimation. We see, then, that a significant conforming Reformed contingent at the time was recognized by both conformists and dissenters. Henry Hallam is therefore entirely mistaken in claiming that ‘[Arminianism] became so predominant before the revolution [of 1688/89], that few English divines of eminence remained, who so much as endeavoured to steer a middle course, or to dissemble their renunciation of the doctrines which had been sanctioned at the synod of Dort by the delegates of their church.’²⁶

²² *Ibid.*, 77.

²³ *Ibid.*, 96.

²⁴ Samuel Scattergood, *Fifty Two Sermons, upon Several Occasions*, vol. 1 (London, 1723), 241.

²⁵ Thomas Delaune, *Compulsion of Conscience Condemned* (London, 1683), 33–34.

²⁶ Henry Hallam, *Introduction to the Literature of Europe, in the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries*, vol. 4 (London, 1839), 147–48.

Thus far we have only considered Reformed conformists who died before or shortly after the Glorious Revolution and who, though no longer around during Edwards' publishing heyday, were nevertheless highly influential in the post-Restoration Church in which Edwards ministered, and in which his readership was nurtured. From the foregoing it is clear that, when Edwards' publishing enterprise began in the 1690s, he entered a publishing scene in which there had been an unbroken and well-established Reformed conforming presence throughout the post-Restoration period.

4.2. Edwards' Reformed conforming contemporaries (1689–c. 1730)

We have just seen that the Church retained a sturdy stream of Reformed divinity between the Restoration and the Glorious Revolution, but what about during Edwards' publishing heyday after 1689? In the previous chapter we noted that Edwards occasionally made hyperbolic comments which, *prima facie*, would seem to suggest that the Reformed doctrine of election and its concomitant doctrines had become nearly extinct in the established Church at the time.²⁷ However, as Hampton comments, '[l]ike his father, [Edwards] liked nothing better than to portray himself of [*sic*] the embattled defender of Reformed orthodoxy against prevailing error, which means, of course, that his claim that Arminianism was rampant within the Church of England may need to be taken with a pinch of salt.'²⁸

Indeed, we have already seen that Edwards himself significantly mitigated such exaggerated remarks by repeatedly emphasising that he was only addressing certain segments of the clergy, and that he was well aware that substantial numbers of the clergy still upheld the Reformed doctrines. We have seen that his works were much better received than previous scholars have recognized, which to a large degree was due to the presence of a sizable Reformed readership within the Church. Yet this

²⁷ Edwards, *Preacher*, 2:x; 3:128; idem, *Veritas Redux*, xxiii; idem, *Arminian Doctrines Condemn'd*, 123.

²⁸ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 22.

sizable Reformed presence in the Church is precisely what the older scholarship has denied. Since a central claim of this study is that Edwards was not a 'lone Calvinist' in the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Church of England, but rather had many Reformed conforming colleagues, it is necessary to demonstrate definitively that Reformed orthodoxy did indeed retain a sturdy presence in the Church in Edwards' day. To prove this beyond doubt, the ensuing pages will survey scores of Reformed divines active in the Church at time, with cited evidence of their Reformed soteriology.

First among these, and one of the foremost Reformed churchmen in Edwards' day, was the bishop of London, Henry Compton, who, as seen earlier, disliked the rationalistic Remonstrant divines as much as Edwards did, and expressed this strong dislike in a conference with his London clergy, no less. Compton's chaplain when he was still bishop of Oxford, William Jane, the later Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford who chaired the committee scrutinizing Burnet's orthodoxy, was clearly sympathetic to Edwards' charges against Burnet. Like Compton, Jane did not publish much, yet in one of his few published sermons he does display a Reformed understanding of the divine decrees and human freedom.²⁹

While Jane was teaching Reformed divinity from his professorial chair, his fellow Reformed high churchman at Christ Church in Oxford, the tremendously popular preacher Robert South, was proclaiming it from the pulpit. South's sermons before the University and in Westminster Abbey are crammed with the Reformed doctrines of the divine decrees, total depravity, efficacious grace, eternal election and reprobation, the perseverance of the saints, and clearly affirm that Christ died effectually only for the elect.³⁰ Moreover, he scourges Arminians for denying free grace, the divine decrees and perseverance, for denying the distinction between God's decretive and preceptive will, and for denying that Christ's righteousness is imputed to believers, all of which

²⁹ William Jane, *A Sermon Preached before the Honourable House of Commons, at St. Margaret Westminster, on Thursday, the 26th of November, 1691* (Oxford, 1691), 14–16.

³⁰ South, *Sermons*, 1:277–86; 2:364–69; 3:36–37, 138, 223, 364–67, 393–97; 6:140–41.

he considers 'gospel truths'.³¹ South calls Arminians 'enemies to the absolute decree of God's election, and the certain perseverance of the saints', and rejects their doctrines as 'a strange and new Gospel, and such as the doctrine of our Church seems utterly unacquainted with.'³² He evidently did not, as Young claims, rarely preach on or avoid getting involved in controversy in relation to these doctrines.³³ From all this it is clear as daylight that South did not, as Hallam claimed, 'bend towards the Arminian theology'.³⁴ He positively abhorred it.

Such was the divinity of one of the most popular preachers in the Church, who preached the Reformed doctrines to Oxford and Westminster audiences for decades. It is therefore no wonder that Edwards recommended South's sermons to divinity students. Being a fervent denouncer of Arminianism at this time evidently did not rule out the possibility of simultaneously being a well-respected and influential clergyman in the Church. Like Edwards, South not only associated Arminianism with Socinianism, but regarded the abiding disputes surrounding Arminianism to be one of the 'most considerable' controversies in the post-Restoration Church.³⁵

The fact that South's sermons were 'in vogue with many' was recognized by another Reformed churchman, Benjamin Jenks (1646-1724), rector of Harley, Shropshire, who, while acknowledging his admiration for South's 'Calvinistic rigor' and 'defence of the faith, doctrine and religion of the Church of *England*, expressed in her *Articles*', nevertheless criticized South for the latter's fierce attack on extemporary prayer.³⁶ Jenks studied under Barlow at Queen's College, Oxford, and his works are peppered with the Reformed doctrines of total depravity, effectual calling, eternal

³¹ *Ibid.*, 1:95–96.

³² *Ibid.*, 8:267; 3:367.

³³ B.W. Young, 'Theology in the Church of England', in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism*, ed. Jeremy Gregory, vol. 2 (Oxford: OUP, 2017), 398.

³⁴ Hallam, *Introduction*, 4:146, 177.

³⁵ South, *Sermons*, 9:315.

³⁶ Benjamin Jenks, *The Liberty of Prayer Asserted, and Garded from Licentiousness* (London, 1695), Preface.

election, and perseverance.³⁷ For Jenks the ‘virtue and value’ of Christ’s satisfaction was sufficient for all, yet intended for and applied to the elect alone.³⁸ Citing Romans chapter 9, Jenks speaks of election in terms of God’s ‘free grace and distinguishing love,’ and says of the perseverance of the saints that ‘they that would rob the Church of this doctrine, go the way to undermine the surest ground of consolation, that I know of in the world.’³⁹ Furthermore, like Edwards, Jenks insists that the doctrine of perseverance does not pave the way for licentiousness.⁴⁰ Indeed, both faith and good works ‘spring all from God’s election: and men believe, because ordained to eternal life (Act. 13:42) and are predestin’d, not for good works, but to ‘em (Eph. 2:10).’⁴¹

Of great note is a comment found in Jenks’ vehemently anti-Arminian *Submission to the Righteousness of God* (first edition 1700). Jenks notes that a certain ‘late writer... intimate[d], that the *Remonstrant party* is supposed to be the greatest part of the Church of England, and a *semi-Pelagianism* now the common mode.’⁴² Despite acknowledging the presence of Arminians in eminent positions in the Church, Jenks nevertheless responds that ‘I will suppose [the assertion that the majority of the Church’s clergy are Remonstrants] to be a great *slander*: because I cannot think the main body of our clergy to be guilty of such *prevarication* and mere *sham*: to subscribe, and signify their consent to *Articles* and *Homilies*, as sound and wholesome [*sic*] doctrine; which they

³⁷ Benjamin Jenks, *Meditations, with Short Prayers Annexed, in Ten Decads, upon Various Subjects* (London, 1701), 49, 52–53, 100–101, 110–11, 261, 298, 300–302, 350–53; idem, *A Second Century of Meditations, with Short Prayers Annexed, on Various Subjects* (London, 1704), 36, 45–52, 62, 65–66, 101–4, 114, 192–95, 232–35, 358–61; idem, *Contemplation Full of Admiration. Serious Thoughts of the Wonderful God* (London, 1705), 87, 163, 175–76, 213.

³⁸ Jenks, *A Second Century*, 100–106.

³⁹ Jenks, *Meditations*, 353.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 500–503.

⁴¹ Jenks, *A Second Century*, 359.

⁴² Benjamin Jenks, *Submission to the Righteousness of God. Or the Necessity of Trusting to a Better Righteousness than our own* (London, 1700), vi.

believe in their hearts to be false and rotten.’⁴³ Like Edwards, Jenks regards Calvinism to be ‘the express doctrine of the Church of England’ and argues that most English clergy since the Reformation were of this view.⁴⁴ Judging from Jenks’ comment above, he evidently considered this to still be the case at the turn of the eighteenth century.

Another eminent Reformed contemporary was John Hall (1633-1710), Barlow’s successor as Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Oxford, and master of Pembroke College, Oxford, for forty-five years.⁴⁵ In 1691 Hall, who was well-known for his Reformed commitments, was consecrated bishop of Bristol. As Beddard points out, the successive appointments of Barlow and Hall to the Lady Margaret chair at Oxford – the incumbent of which was elected by his academic peers – ‘bore witness to the unshaken hold of intellectual Calvinism on the mind of Oxford’s theologians.’⁴⁶ Like Barlow and Jane, Hall played a key role in preserving Reformed orthodoxy in post-Restoration Oxford. The Arminian nonjuring antiquarian Thomas Hearne (1678-1735) said that Hall ‘was a learned divine, a good preacher, and his lectures, while professor, were look’d upon by the best judges as excellent in their kind. But notwithstanding all this, as to principles he was a thorough-pac’d Calvinist, a defender of the Republican doctrines, a stout and vigorous advocate for the Presbyterians, Dissenters, &c.’⁴⁷ Hearne furthermore scorned Hall for employing his episcopal power in favour of the ‘Whiggish Party’ and to advance his ‘Calvinistical brethren’, and lumped in William Lloyd (1627-1717), successively bishop of St Asaph, Lichfield and Coventry,

⁴³ Ibid., vi–vii.

⁴⁴ Ibid., viii–xv.

⁴⁵ John Hall, *Jacob’s Ladder: Or, the Devout Soul’s Ascention to Heaven, in Prayers, Thanksgivings, and Praises*, 2nd ed. (London, 1676), 6, 46.

⁴⁶ Beddard, ‘Restoration Oxford’, 834.

⁴⁷ Thomas Hearne, *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, eds. C.E. Doble, D.W. Rannie, and H.E. Salter, 11 vols. (Oxford, 1885–1921), 2:343.

and Worcester, along with ‘some others’, as ‘a great encourager of forreigners [*sic*], especially if they are men of Calvinistical, low, antimonarchical principles’.⁴⁸

Hall’s fellow Reformed Oxford college head, Timothy Halton (1633-1704), was Barlow’s successor as provost of Queen’s College, twice vice-chancellor of Oxford University, and archdeacon of Oxford.⁴⁹ Another Oxford fixture, John Wallis, the Savilian Professor of Geometry and former scribe of the Westminster Assembly, preached firmly Reformed doctrines of grace and election before the University.⁵⁰

One of London’s most popular preachers in his day, and a man whose sermons Edwards recommended to students, was the German-born Anthony Horneck. Horneck studied under Friedrich Spanheim Jr at Heidelberg before furthering his studies under Barlow at Queen’s College, Oxford, where he also served as chaplain. From there he would become a celebrated preacher in the Savoy, furthermore holding prebends at Exeter, Westminster, and Wells. Horneck’s posthumously-published *The Whole Concern of a Christian* (1703) plainly upholds a Reformed doctrine of election, effectual calling, and perseverance.⁵¹ Like his fellow Reformed divines Compton, Beveridge, and Woodward, Horneck was among the chief figures in the formation and early development of the Society for the Reformation of Manners.

We saw earlier that Beveridge, Edwards’ contemporary at St John’s in Cambridge and a divine whose works Edwards cited and recommended, was, like Edwards, attacked by Whitby for his ‘Calvinism’. Prior to becoming bishop of St Asaph, he had

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 3:37, 50.

⁴⁹ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 11.

⁵⁰ John Wallis, *A Brief and Easie Explanation of the Shorter Catechisme, Presented by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, to both Houses of Parliament, and by them Approved* (London, 1648), 5–6, 10–11, 15–17, 19; *idem*, *The Necessity of Regeneration: In Two Sermons to the University of Oxford* (London, 1682), 10–15, 18–21, 29–39; *idem*, *Theological Discourses and Sermons on Several Occasions*, vol. 2 (London, 1692), 18–19, 58, 68.

⁵¹ Anthony Horneck, *The Whole Concern of a Christian, containing Directions for the Well-Governing of a Christian Life* (London, 1703), 13–14, 25.

been rector of St Peter's Cornhill, London, and was also archdeacon of Colchester, president of Sion College in 1681, and a prebendary of Canterbury. In his *Exposition of the XXXIX Articles*, Beveridge offers a thoroughly Reformed exposition of total depravity, free will, and conversion, and, like Edwards, stacks up numerous quotations from the church fathers, especially Augustine, in support.⁵²

Coming to Article 17 on predestination, Beveridge is rather coy, saying that 'both in public and private, I have still endeavoured to shun discourses of this nature: and now that I am unavoidably fallen upon it, I shall speak as little as possibly I can unto it, especially considering how many other truths are still behind to be insisted upon.'⁵³ Indeed, Beveridge's discussion of this article consists almost exclusively not of his own exposition, but of quotations from church fathers such as Augustine, Prosper, Fulgentius, and the English medieval schoolman Thomas Bradwardine.⁵⁴ Yet, despite this coyness, Beveridge's quotations were cannily selected to favour a Reformed understanding of eternal election, efficacious grace, and perseverance. Renowned for his patristic erudition, Beveridge ostensibly wanted to let the fathers do the talking, to show that these doctrines were not merely his own personal persuasions, but had ample witnesses from the primitive church – a tactic which Edwards himself frequently employed. Much more overt expressions of his Reformed persuasions are found in his 4-volume *Thesaurus Theologicus* (1710-11) and his 2-volume *Private Thoughts* (1709-12), in which he upholds a Reformed doctrine of election and particular redemption in explicit contradistinction to 'the *Arminians*, or *Remonstrants*'.⁵⁵

Josiah Woodward, another Reformed divine whose works Edwards recommended, and who like Edwards detested the rationalistic divinity advanced in some quarters

⁵² Beveridge, *Exposition*. See his exposition of Articles 9, 10, and 15.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 219.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 220–24.

⁵⁵ William Beveridge, *Thesaurus Theologicus: Or, a Complete System of Divinity*, 4 vols. (London, 1710–11), 3:344, 369; 4:25, 45; *idem*, *Private Thoughts upon Religion, Digested into Twelve Articles, with Practical Resolutions Form'd thereupon*, 2 vols. (London, 1709–12), 1:77, 92–99; 2:262–313.

of the Church, was both a prominent member of the Society for the Reformation of Manners and a key early figure in the SPCK.⁵⁶ We have seen that the founder of the SPCK, Thomas Bray, who also founded the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel with Compton's support, greatly valued Edwards' works, and recommended several of them to the parochial clergy. Under Compton's direction, Bray furthermore played a pivotal role in establishing the Church of England in the colony of Maryland. Having cautioned the parochial clergy against the perils of reading Arminian authors, Bray himself espoused a Reformed understanding of the divine covenant and election.⁵⁷

Reformed churchmen such as Horneck, Compton, Beveridge, Woodward, and Bray were thus intricately involved in founding and developing the various societies which emerged in the Church around the turn of the eighteenth century. Bray's early SPCK co-worker and its first treasurer, John Hooke (1655-1712), was in fact expressly aware, in 1704, that at the time there was just as much a clerical divide between '*Calvinists and Arminians*' as there was between '*High-Church and Low-Church, Sherlockians and Southians*, such as take the Articles of the Church to be Articles of Faith, and such as take them only to be Articles of Peace', and so forth.⁵⁸ Edwards' opposition to Arminianism was clearly not an isolated case, with his contemporaries recognizing the Reformed-Arminian divide as very much a feature of the early eighteenth-century Church. Contrary to Spurr's claim, the distinction between Arminians and Calvinists had evidently not become 'irrelevant' in the later Stuart Church of England.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Woodward, *Divine Original*, 63, 66–67; idem, *The Young-Man's Monitor: Shewing the Great Happiness of Early Piety: And the Dreadful Consequence of Indulging Youthful Lusts*, 2nd ed. (London, 1718), 20, 25–26, 43–44.

⁵⁷ Thomas Bray, *Catechetical Lectures on the Preliminary Questions and Answers of the Church-Catechism*, 3rd ed. (London, 1703), 49–50, 72–73, 282–84, 315.

⁵⁸ John Hooke, *Catholicism without Popery*, 2 vols. (London, 1704), 2:72.

⁵⁹ John Spurr, 'Religion in Restoration England', in *A Companion to Stuart Britain*, ed. Barry Coward (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 418.

Compton, Beveridge, and Hall were not the only Reformed bishops during Edwards' publishing heyday, however. Another of these was William Nicolson (1655-1727), successively bishop of Carlisle and Derry, who furthermore served for two years as Lord High Almoner to King George I. Nicolson studied under Barlow and Halton at Queen's College, Oxford, where he also served as a fellow for three years. Nicolson not only considers the Church of England to be a Reformed church, but also defends the honour of Calvin, Knox, Foxe, and 'our first Reformers' from the calumnies written against them by the Arminians Jeremy Collier and Peter Heylyn, the latter of whom had bemoaned the fact that most clergy who received preferments under Elizabeth I 'were too much inclin'd to the platform of Geneva.'⁶⁰

Another Reformed prelate, Bishop Charles Hickman (1648-1713) of Derry, complained, like Edwards, about those who 'cry down Christianity, and that covenant of grace which God has establish'd in the Gospel', and who 'cry up morality, and natural religion in its stead'.⁶¹ He furthermore held to total depravity and the consequent need for divine grace to 'over-rule our will', to 'over-rule the perverseness of our nature', and for God 'to be the author of our faith.'⁶² As a result, Hickman concluded that Christians have 'nothing to boast of, but what we have receiv'd'.⁶³ Hickman's sermons were even recommended to the famous revivalist Jonathan Edwards (1703-58) by his fellow New England evangelical Benajah Case (d. 1762) on account of Hickman's 'orthodoxy' and his 'being a Calvinist and a fine writer.'⁶⁴

Richard Tenison (1642-1705), a cousin of Archbishop Tenison and a close friend of Ezekiel Hopkins, was successively bishop of Killala and Achonry, Clogher, and

⁶⁰ William Nicolson, *The English Historical Library*, 2nd ed. (London, 1714), 117-19.

⁶¹ Charles Hickman, *The Christian Faith Explain'd and Vindicated, and Apply'd to Practice* (London, 1713), 262-63.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 194, 204, 236-38, 242, 263-65, 268, 279, 293.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 279.

⁶⁴ Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. Peter J. Thuesen, vol. 26 (New Haven: YUP, 2008), 203-4.

Meath. Tenison was also a Privy Counsellor of Ireland in 1697 and vice-chancellor of Trinity College, Dublin, in 1698. Although his publishing was limited to five sermons, yet in one of these he clearly teaches total depravity and irresistible or ‘invincible’ grace.⁶⁵ Tenison’s preaching was popular among Irish dissenters (in no small measure due to his Reformed views) and led some of them to conform to the established Church.⁶⁶ Another prelate, Thomas Wilson (1663-1755), bishop of Sodor and Man for fifty-eight years, also held a Reformed understanding of total depravity, eternal election, reprobation, and effectual grace.⁶⁷ Moreover, Wilson repeatedly insisted that repentance and saving faith are entirely the gift of God ‘who alone can give [humans] the grace of conversion [or] leave them to their own choice and destruction.’⁶⁸ We see, then, that Wallace is incorrect in asserting that ‘[a]fter the Restoration... Bishops who had held fast to Calvinist theology were disappearing from the scene.’⁶⁹ To be sure, Reformed bishops were indeed a minority among the episcopate, but they were a considerable and influential minority, both before and after the Glorious Revolution.

In the previous chapter we noted that the high churchman Luke Milbourne had under Compton’s patronage rejected Arminianism as repugnant to the Church’s Articles. Two more of Edwards’ Reformed contemporaries, whose works he recommended, were William Burkitt, vicar of Dedham, Essex, and Peter Newcome,

⁶⁵ Richard Tenison, *A Sermon Preached in Christ-Church before His Excellency the Lord Deputy and the Parliament of Ireland* (Dublin, 1695), 8–9.

⁶⁶ ODNB, s.v. ‘Tenison, Richard (1642-1705)’.

⁶⁷ Thomas Wilson, *Maxims of Piety and of Christianity* (Bath, 1789), 78, 210, 218–19, 236, 246; idem, *A Short and Plain Account for the Better Understanding of the Lord’s Supper* (Cork, 1797), 126; idem, *Sermons*, 4th ed., 4 vols. (Bath, 1785), 1:323, 394–400, 436–38; 4:130, 201; idem, *An Essay towards an Instruction for the Indians* (London, 1740), 52.

⁶⁸ Wilson, *Instruction for the Indians*, 182, 185, 195; idem, *Sermons*, 1:71, 154, 208, 218, 270, 297, 483–84, 486; 2:288, 412; 3:232, 241, 444; 4:47, 65, 130, 201, 285, 343; idem, *A Dialogue: Representing the Delusion, the Danger, and, the Mischief, of being Christians without Christianity* (Sherborne, 1775), 15.

⁶⁹ Wallace, *Shapers*, 221.

vicar of Hackney, Middlesex.⁷⁰ Burkitt was well-known for his *Expository Notes*, and his brother-in-law and biographer Nathaniel Parkhurst (1643-1707), vicar of Yoxford, Suffolk, followed him in espousing a Reformed view of eternal election and effectual calling.⁷¹ We have also seen that William Nokes, vicar of Reydon, Suffolk, cited Edwards' *Veritas Redux* against Arminianism. Likewise, the Canterbury-based clergyman Thomas Wise, seen earlier to have considered Edwards his talisman, clearly affirmed eternal election and perseverance, basing the latter, in typically Reformed manner, on the 'indissoluble union' between Christ and believers.⁷²

We have furthermore noted that, besides Jane, Beveridge, and South, other Reformed churchmen such as Delaune and Lake also formed part of the committee scrutinizing Burnet's *Exposition* in 1701. Delaune was a major force in theological education at Oxford in the early eighteenth century. He became president of St John's College in 1698, served as vice-chancellor of the University from 1702 to 1706, was chaplain to Queen Anne, and in 1715 became Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity. We have seen that Delaune, like Edwards, opposed Locke, Burnet, and Whitby, and was therefore very familiar with these disputes in which Edwards played such a central role, siding in all three cases with Edwards' position.

Delaune's sermons proclaim a decidedly Reformed doctrine of the divine decrees and election, and he even remarks that praying in the Lord's Prayer for God's will to

⁷⁰ See, for example, Burkitt's comments on Jn. 1:13; 6:37, 44; Acts 2:47; 4:28; 13:46; Rom. 8:29-30; 9:10-24; Eph. 1:4-6; and 2 Thess. 2:13 in William Burkitt, *Expository Notes, with Practical Observations, on the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, 3rd ed. (London, 1707); Peter Newcome, *A Catechetical Course of Sermons for the Whole Year. Being an Explanation of the Church-Catechism*, vol. 1 (London, 1700), 105-13, 311-13; idem, *Gospel Salvation Explain'd, and Recommended to the Serious Regard of Christians* (London, 1719), 15, 42-43, 48, 54.

⁷¹ Nathaniel Parkhurst, *Ten Select Discourses* (London, 1706), 83, 93, 131-32; idem, *A Second Volume of Select Discourses* (London, 1707), 44, 51, 196.

⁷² Thomas Wise, *Fourteen Discourses on Some of the Most Important Heads in Divinity and Morality* (London, 1717), 149-50, 314.

be done includes that 'we pray no less for the manifestation of God's justice in the endless torments of the reprobate, than for that of his mercy in the unspeakable joys of the elect.'⁷³ Delaune opposes divines who overvalue reason and who downplay the noetic effects of sin, and, like Edwards, identifies one of the main sources of heresies as the 'intolerable conceitedness of [mankind's] own wisdom' which is set in opposition to 'the mysteries of our holy religion', including the doctrines of the Trinity, Christ's divinity, and original sin.⁷⁴ In thoughts identical to those of Edwards, Delaune says of the rational divines who err on these doctrines that 'if they were truly wise, they would take a measure of God's nature and actions, not from the short line of their own understanding which can never reach them, but from the authority of those books which they are capable to judge of, and do judge to be divine.'⁷⁵

Delaune complains of doctrinal indifference and moralism among the clergy, and, as an example of this, he quotes Richard Willis, who insists that 'religion is not so much the believing such a set of truths, as the living by such rules as God and Christ have laid down for us', which Delaune retorts is a 'thought which never ought to have come into any Christian's head.'⁷⁶ Like Edwards, Delaune was not afraid of criticizing eminent but (in his view) erring clergy such as Willis, who was dean of Lincoln and afterwards successively bishop of Gloucester, Salisbury, and Winchester. Delaune furthermore faults Locke's 'one proposition' Christianity consisting of 'a bare belief that Jesus is the Messiah', and like Edwards, instead insists that doctrinal knowledge of 'evangelical truths' is an absolutely necessary component of a Christian's faith.⁷⁷ As he had done in 1701, Delaune hits out against 'any one of what dignity in the Church soever' who 'shall prophanely call the Articles of our faith, *controverted points*, as if the

⁷³ William Delaune, *Twelve Sermons upon Several Subjects and Occasions* (London, 1728), 130–33.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 196–205, 234–35.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 204, 207–9.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 227–29; Richard Willis, *A Sermon Preach'd in the Parish-Church of St. Andrews Holbourn, June 8. 1704* (London, 1704), 8.

⁷⁷ Delaune, *Twelve Sermons*, 230–31.

Church had no certainty about them, and from thence contend for a latitude of opinion', and furthermore expresses hope of the Church being 'purged of all her hypocritical and prevaricating subscribers [to the Thirty-nine Articles].'⁷⁸

Such were the sentiments of one of the preeminent Oxford theologians of the Augustan age, whose views not only repeatedly echoed those of Edwards, but were also no impediment to him being elected by his peers as Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in 1715. Delaune's comrade at the 1701 convocation, the popular preacher Edward Lake, archdeacon of Exeter, president of Sion College in 1697, and the man entrusted by Compton to help keep Princess (and future Queen) Anne Protestant,⁷⁹ happily cites Calvin and 'the divines of the Reformation' on the nature of repentance, and clearly holds to eternal election as well as a distinctly Reformed understanding of total depravity and effectual calling, citing Augustine in support.⁸⁰

While Compton entrusted Lake to minister unto Princess Anne, he likewise entrusted another Reformed churchman, William Stanley (1647-1731), to serve as chaplain to her elder sister, Princess Mary. Stanley, the nephew of Beveridge, studied at St John's College, Cambridge, during Edwards' fellowship there, and afterward became a fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and a regular preacher before the University. He would become archdeacon of London in 1692, and served as master of Corpus Christi College (1693-98) and vice-chancellor of Cambridge University (1693-94), before in 1706 becoming dean of St Asaph at Beveridge's behest. Although Stanley did not publish much, yet in his *The Faith and Practice of a Church of England-man* (1688) he refers to the famous Geneva Reformer as 'master Calvin', and points to Pearson's Reformed exposition of the Creed as the best exposition thereof.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Ibid., 243-44, 266.

⁷⁹ ODNB, s.v. 'Lake, Edward (1641-1704)'.

⁸⁰ Edward Lake, *Sixteen Sermons Preached upon Several Occasions* (London, 1705), 80, 83, 90-91, 224-36, 280-81, 297.

⁸¹ William Stanley, *The Faith and Practice of a Church of England-Man* (London, 1688), 11, 42.

William Turner (c. 1652-1701), vicar of Walberton, Sussex, studied under Tully at St Edmund Hall, Oxford. In a book dedicated to Robert Grove, bishop of Chichester, Turner holds that the (unambiguously Reformed) Gallic Confession and Scots Confession agree doctrinally with the Church of England's Articles, and regards Arminianism as erroneous on several accounts.⁸² In another work, dedicated to Bishop John Williams of Chichester, Turner clearly affirms eternal election, faults the Remonstrant Hugo Grotius for rejecting the perseverance of the saints, and, citing Barlow in support, regards the rise of Arminianism under Charles I and Archbishop Laud as a Popish conspiracy 'to ruin our Church and establish'd religion.'⁸³

Joseph Bingham (c. 1668-1723), rector of Havant, Hampshire, and previously a fellow of University College, Oxford, agreed with Turner that the Church of England's Articles on free will, grace, justification, and election agree with the Gallic Confession – in other words, that the Articles are Reformed.⁸⁴ In response to dissenters, who point to Arminians such as Taylor and Hammond and their objections to Articles 10, 14, and 17 of the Church as examples of how many churchmen hypocritically contradict the very Reformed doctrines to which they have subscribed, Bingham, being himself dismissive of Arminianism, holds that '[a] private man's opinion is no reason for the Church to throw away her doctrine', and that 'the Church is not obliged to alter her doctrine in complement to [Hammond and his followers], no more than the *Dutch* or *French* Churches did, out of respect to *Arminius*, in the Synods of *Dort* and *Charenton*.'⁸⁵ Despite having once propounded a heterodox Sherlockian view of the Trinity, which earned him the condemnation of South and the University of Oxford, Bingham was

⁸² William Turner, *The History of all Religions in the World, from the Creation down to this Present Time* (London, 1695), 289, 291, 660, 664–65, 678.

⁸³ William Turner, *A Compleat History of the Most Remarkable Providences, both of Judgment and Mercy, which have hapned in this Present Age* (London, 1697), 23, 26, 101, 116–17.

⁸⁴ Joseph Bingham, *The French Churches' Apology for the Church of England* (London, 1706), 39–45.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 39–43.

nevertheless clear that he regarded the teachings of Arminius, Episcopius, and Grotius as erroneous and tending towards Popery and Socinianism.⁸⁶

Basil Kennett (1674-1715), a fellow and later president of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and younger brother of White Kennett (1660-1728, bishop of Peterborough), released his own paraphrase of Pearson's *Exposition of the Creed*, in which he, following Pearson, succinctly exhibits a Reformed doctrine of total depravity, regeneration, and eternal election, in explicit opposition to Pelagianism and Socinianism.⁸⁷ Kennett's contemporary at Corpus Christi, Thomas Bisse (1675-1731), shared these Reformed views.⁸⁸ Bisse served as a preacher at the Rolls Chapel in London and as chancellor of Hereford Cathedral, where his brother, Philip Bisse (1667-1721), was bishop.

Thomas Long (c. 1621-1707), vicar of Clyst St Lawrence, Devon, and prebendary of Exeter, was offered the bishopric of Bristol by Archbishop Sancroft in 1684, but declined it. Long asserted that it is 'all one to be a moderate Calvinist and a sober conformist', and even contumeliously listed the Remonstrants as one of the 'seven unclean spirits that create trouble to the Church'.⁸⁹ Another cleric who explicitly opposed Arminianism and classified the Church's Articles as Reformed was Edmund Hickerlingill (1631-1708), the turbulent vicar of All Saints, Colchester, and Edwards' neighbouring vicar during his ministry in Colchester, who ranked the Church of England as one of the Reformed churches and complained that 'many of our publick

⁸⁶ Joseph Bingham, *Origines Ecclesiasticæ: Or, the Antiquities of the Christian Church*, vol. 10 (London, 1722), Preface.

⁸⁷ Basil Kennett, *A Brief Exposition of the Apostles Creed, according to Bishop Pearson, In a New Method, by Way of Paraphrase and Annotation* (London, 1705), 131–32, 143–45.

⁸⁸ Thomas Bisse, *A Course of Sermons on the Lord's-Prayer Preach'd at the Rolls* (Oxford, 1740), 70, 255–57.

⁸⁹ Thomas Long, *Calvinus Redivivus; or, Conformity to the Church of England, in Doctrine, Government, and Worship, Perswaded by Mr Calvin* (London, 1672), 13; idem, *An Answer to a Socinian Treatise, Call'd, The Naked Gospel* (London, 1691), 138.

preachers... oppose and preach down the very Articles of our Church, which they have subscribed, and which we are all bound to maintain and keep close to'.⁹⁰

Edward Waple (1647-1712) became proctor of Oxford University in 1675 and served as rector of St Sepulchre-without-Newgate, London, archdeacon of Taunton, president of Sion College in 1704, prebendary of Wells, and canon of Winchester. Waple repeatedly promulgated Reformed doctrines of election, reprobation, and efficacious grace, for which he cited such figures as Musculus, Calvin, and Poole.⁹¹ Although he grants that some Calvinists in France and the Netherlands urged the doctrine of predestination with 'too great warmth and harshness,' he nevertheless feels, speaking of Calvin, that it is to 'this great and good man' and his 'indefatigable pains and great parts [that] we are indebted [*sic*] for the true sense of the Scriptures.'⁹² Moreover, Waple regards the Reformed as keeping to the safe mean between antinomianism and Arminianism, the latter of which he associates with Pelagianism.⁹³

In his last will, Waple donated his books to the library of Sion College in London, where the librarian was Waple's fellow Reformed churchman William Reading (1674-1744), who was appointed to that position upon the recommendation of Compton.⁹⁴ Reading, who like Edwards criticized the rational divinity of some of their contemporaries, held lectureships at St Alphage London Wall and several other London parishes. Less than a mile from St Alphage, at St Benedict Gracechurch,

⁹⁰ Edmund Hiceringill, *The Fourth Part of Naked Truth, or, the Complaint of the Church to Some of her Sons for Breach of her Articles* (London, 1682), 12–21.

⁹¹ Edward Waple, *The Book of the Revelation Paraphrased* (London, 1693), 102, 369, 463–64, 466, 503; idem, *Thirty Sermons Preached on Several Occasions*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (London, 1729), 1:177–78, 281–82, 289–96, 304, 337, 368–73, 379–90; 3:304.

⁹² Waple, *Revelation*, 191.

⁹³ Waple, *Revelation*, 193.

⁹⁴ William Reading, *Twenty Three Sermons of Mortification, Holiness, and of the Fear and Love of God* (London, 1724), 26, 29, 88, 245–46, 399, 411–12; idem, *Sermons*, 4 vols. (London, 1728–30), 1:176, 269–71; 2:360–61, 640; 3:180, 258–60; 4:394.

another Reformed lecturer ministered, namely Gibbon Sutton (1675-c. 1717), who had throughout the 1690s studied at Trinity College, Cambridge, and served there for a time as a fellow. Sutton's sermons not only clearly espouse a Reformed doctrine of election, but also demonstrate a typical Reformed pastoral concern by informing his audience how they may discern and be assured of their election.⁹⁵ Next door at St John's, Edwards' *alma mater*, the classical scholar Peter Needham (c. 1682-1731), in a sermon before the University in 1716 arguing against compulsion in matters of religion, revealed in a passing remark his opinion that the doctrine of predestination is not 'the sponge of morality and religion,' as was scornfully quipped by some.⁹⁶

The erratic David Jones (1663-1724?), known in London and Oxford for his fiery preaching, in 1698 proclaimed before Oxford University at St Mary's that Christ was crucified specifically for the elect.⁹⁷ Later that same year, again before the University, Jones bemoaned those clergymen who 'think that preaching of *election, vocation, justification, adoption and sanctification*, is nothing else but so much *spiritual cant*.'⁹⁸ He furthermore railed against those who 'hold the *Pelagian* and *Arminian* doctrines, instead of the *Articles* and *Homilies* of our Church', and lambasted clergymen who contend 'so *much*, and so *earnestly*, for the *rites* and *ceremonies*, and so little, *if at all*, for the *doctrines* of our Church'.⁹⁹ Jones complains that such prevaricators cry '*the Church*,

⁹⁵ Gibbon Sutton, *Twelve Sermons, wherein the True Ministers of Christ, and the Grounds of Salvation by Him, are Defended against their Modern Opposers* (London, 1718), 83–87, 110–11.

⁹⁶ Peter Needham, *A Sermon Preached before the University of Cambridge, Upon the 25th of January 1715/16, Being the Day of St. Paul's Conversion* (Cambridge, 1716), 14.

⁹⁷ David Jones, *A Sermon Preach'd before the University of Oxford, upon Act-Sunday, at St. Mary's in Oxford, 1698* (London, 1698), 4–6.

⁹⁸ David Jones, *A Sermon upon Ember-Week, Preached before the University of Oxford, at Christ-Church in Oxford, 1698* (London, 1699), 7.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 13–15.

the Church, the Church... [yet] call the best men of its communion, the soundest preachers and the strictest livers, a company of Puritans and Phanaticks'.¹⁰⁰

The same pugnacious anti-Arminian spirit is seen in William Bisset (c. 1669-1747), minister of St Katharine's by the Tower, London, and later chaplain to Queen Caroline, who was a fierce opponent of the high church party. In 1704 Bisset preached a sermon titled *Plain English* to the Society for the Reformation of Manners at St Mary-le-Bow in London, in which he castigated an array of perceived hypocrisies and faults among the clergy, especially high-church Arminians, including their hypocritical subscriptions to the Church's Articles, 'which look too much Geneva-ward, to suit the genius of our superfine improved Arminian age.'¹⁰¹ He added that '[o]ur honest forefathers the bishops and dignitaries at the *Synod of Dort*, condemned the Arminian tenets as manifest errors; and our parliament in 1627, or thereabouts, complain'd of the increase of *Papists* and *Arminians*, among their grievances, or the growing evils of the age, which called for a speedy redress: But *tempora mutantur, &c.*'¹⁰²

Despite receiving criticism for this sermon, Bisset informs us in the preface to his two follow-up sermons titled *More Plain English* (1704) that his previous sermon, which saw six editions released in 1704, had 'met with some success and acceptance in the world', which encouraged him to preach and publish against Tory high-church Arminians again, and that it was 'only from a very few at the top that I have had the rebukes'.¹⁰³ As before, Bisset's complaints include that many of his contemporaries had forsaken the doctrinal standards of 'our forefathers' in exchange for Arminianism and 'Popish ceremonies'.¹⁰⁴ Like Edwards, Bisset does not hesitate to call Reformed

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 22–23.

¹⁰¹ William Bisset, *Plain English. A Sermon Preached at St. Mary-Le-Bow, on Monday, March 27, 1704* (London, 1704), 44.

¹⁰² Ibid., 44–45.

¹⁰³ William Bisset, *More Plain English. In Two Sermons Preach'd for Reformation of Manners* (London, 1704), Preface.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

dissenters 'brothers', and argues that Arminian high churchmen are in some respects guiltier of dissent than the dissenters themselves:

Many of those who arrogantly call themselves the Church, and by some artifices are grown considerable (though not so much as they would be thought), are indeed the greatest dissenters from it (whose principles I know) amongst us. For if to add and alter, be worse (as implying a bolder presumption) than to diminish, [then] certainly those who change the doctrine, and bring in new rites of their own, without any warrant from authority, are wider from the *Establish'd Church*, than those [i.e. dissenters] who only scruple two or three ceremonies, which all parties confess in their own nature to be indifferent... Especially such [dissenters] whose faith is sound, and sounder than many who would make the Church their own monopoly, even according to their own subscribed scheme.¹⁰⁵

We have already seen that Reformed Whigs such as Edwards, Hall, and Bisset employed their theological views in support of their Whig political commitments. Another such example came in 1720, when an English translation of the Heidelberg Catechism appeared with a title page stating that it contains 'the same orthodox principles, which are taught by the Church of *England*, and by the *Calvinists* in the churches and schools of *Prussia, Poland, Hungary, Transylvania, Holland, Swisserland* [*sic*], &c.'¹⁰⁶ This catechism includes a dedicatory epistle to King George I by a certain Thomas Corbett, who, just as Edwards had done to Princess Caroline five years before, calls on the king to uphold the Reformed faith while highlighting the Germanity of the catechism and its doctrine. Interestingly, the title page bears a woodcut portrait of Joseph Addison (1672-1719), a key member of the Kit-Cat Club, which was a London-

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ *The Heidelberg Catechism: Containing the Principles of the Christian Religion, for which the Protestants in the Palatinate have been long Persecuted by the Jesuits* (London, 1720).

based group of literati dedicated to the advancement of Whig objectives, including the Protestant royal succession. This woodcut thus clearly indicates the Whig political commitments behind this publication. Edwards was evidently not the only Reformed Whig hoping for the Reformed cause to be boosted by the Hanoverian Succession.

Yet, as we have seen, there were simultaneously many Reformed voices among the Tory high churchmen. Another of them, an anonymous defender of the authority of convocation against Benjamin Hoadly's Whiggish and Erastian views, cited 'the famous Synod of Dort' as the Protestant model of the legitimacy and utility of ecclesiastical councils. The author's description of Dort leaves no doubt about his theological commitments, as he calls it 'an assembly drawn together by the zeal of true religion,' and, noting the conflicts between the Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants which precipitated it, asserts that it was at Dort that 'religion was brought again to a state of publick tranquillity, the unity of the Protestant doctrine establish'd, the tranquillity of churches restored, general charity among Protestants preserved, and all future disputes effectually carried in the decisive conclusions or canons of that happy assembly.'¹⁰⁷ Needless to say, such glowing praise for the Synod of Dort and its canons could not possibly have emanated from an Arminian pen.

Another Reformed Tory high churchman wrote an anonymous letter in 1710 to the high church party's champion Henry Sacheverell, titled *A Letter to Dr. Sacheverell: concerning Calvin's Loyalty*, in which he quotes Calvin at length in support of the Tory view on passive obedience, in a clear attempt to show that Calvin was a friend rather than a foe to the Tory cause, which this writer would not have done, of course, if he deemed Calvin's name and theology odious.¹⁰⁸ From the foregoing we see that

¹⁰⁷ *The Clergy Vindicated: Or, an Argument shewing that the Convocation, by their Enquiry into the Doctrines Lately Publish'd by the Bishop of Bangor, have Discharg'd their Duty to God and the Church* (London, 1717), 27.

¹⁰⁸ *A Letter to Dr. Sacheverell: Concerning Calvin's Loyalty* (London, 1710).

Reformed conformists were perfectly capable of agreeing on soteriology while holding divergent views on politics and churchmanship.

A younger Reformed churchman, Thomas Allen (1681-1755), rector of Irchester and Kettering, Northamptonshire, continued Edwards' calls for reform after the latter's death. Citing Article 17 and the Puritan Samuel Hieron in support, Allen clearly upholds a Reformed doctrine of election and its concomitant doctrines, even listing marks by which believers may discern their election.¹⁰⁹ He furthermore recognizes the affinity between the Church of England and 'the Reformed churches beyond the seas', and prays for their welfare in one of his litanies.¹¹⁰ Most remarkable, however, is Allen's *An Expedient to make the Church of England the most Flourishing Church in the World* (1719), which appeals to Archbishop Wake to address some of the shortcomings of the clergy, in hope of bringing about 'reformation' among them. Allen is crystal clear as to what kind of reformation he envisions. Similarly to Edwards, he points out to the archbishop that the dissenters

twit us not only of the evil lives of our ministers, but as though the fundamental doctrines of regeneration from sin to grace, of the free justification of a sinner by faith in Christ's merits and righteousness, and many others, are scarce so much as heard of amongst us: and if any Christian wants true comfort, he must go to them, seeing they preach the Church Articles and doctrines which we neglect. My Lord, so far as this is true, the Church of England must in proportion sink, neither is the ignorance or good-will of the people sufficient to support it. There

¹⁰⁹ Thomas Allen, *The Practice of a Holy Life* (London, 1716), 45, 99, 101, 106, 118, 152, 161–66, 168, 194, 197, 242, 265–71, 300, 346, 348–51; idem, *The Christian's Sure Guide to Eternal Glory* (London, 1733), 33–34, 43, 179; idem, *The New-Birth; or Christian Regeneration. With the Grounds, Nature, and Necessity thereof to Salvation* (London, 1753).

¹¹⁰ Allen, *Practice of a Holy Life*, 52.

must needs be a reformation of its ministers, or else God will take upon him to reform us with his judgments.¹¹¹

Allen accordingly complains of moralistic and doctrinally-impoverished preaching in the Church, and calls for the clergy's preaching to be 'thoroughly and heartily amended according to our Homilies and Articles, and that way followed which was made use of in King Edward's and Queen Elizabeth's days, by our pious and learned Reformers'.¹¹² Allen persistently calls for bland moral discourses to be replaced by lively, penetrating preaching, and, similarly to Edwards, he sees the preaching of the doctrines of the Reformers as a way to draw the 'sober and unprejudiced dissenters' back into communion with the Church.¹¹³ Again, like Edwards, Allen feels that a major cause of breaches in communion within the Church is the departure among segments of the clergy from the Articles, Homilies, and Canons of the Church.¹¹⁴

Various Reformed contemporaries wrote expositions of the Church's catechism, of which we have already cited Marshall, Nicholson, Wallis, Taylor, Beveridge, Newcome, and Bray. Simon Ford (c. 1618-99), rector of Oldswinford, Worcestershire, who explicitly opposed Arminians, admitted that his lucidly Reformed exposition of the Church's catechism was greatly influenced by those of Nicholson and Marshall.¹¹⁵ Several other Reformed clergy expounded the Church's catechism, including Thomas Jekyll (1646-98, minister of the New Church, Westminster), John Wright (d. 1717, rector of Kirton, Nottinghamshire), Benjamin Farrow (d. 1723, rector of Conisholme,

¹¹¹ Thomas Allen, *An Expedient to make the Church of England the most Flourishing Church in the World* (London, 1719), x.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, xviii–xix.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, xix.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹¹⁵ Simon Ford, *The Spirit of Bondage and Adoption* (London, 1655), 7, 50, 172–73, 184–86, 198–204, 212, 245–48, 415; *idem*, *A Plain and Profitable Exposition of, and Enlargement upon, the Church-Catechism*, 2nd ed. (London, 1686), Prefatory epistle, 9–10, 12–14.

Lincolnshire), and Joseph Harrison (1670-1753, minister of Cirencester, Gloucestershire).¹¹⁶ The musician James Clifford (c. 1622-98), canon of St Paul's, curate of St Gregory by St Paul's, and chaplain to the Society of Serjeant's Inn, compiled his own catechism, which repeatedly inculcates a Reformed view of eternal election, reprobation, efficacious grace, particular redemption, and perseverance.¹¹⁷

Another John Wright (c. 1665-1719), vicar of Arlington and Pevensey, Sussex, and prebendary of Chichester, manifests a Reformed view of the divine decrees, as does Dudley Garendieres (c. 1651-1702, rector of Waverton, Cheshire, and canon of Chester).¹¹⁸ They were joined by other Reformed conformists such as Edmund Godwin (c. 1619-1705, rector of Cowley, Middlesex), Thomas Whincop (d. 1713, rector of St Mary Abchurch, London), Thomas Gregory (c. 1668-1706, rector of Woolwich, Kent), Henry Phillipps (fl. 1705, fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford), Samuel Palmer (d. 1724, rector of All Saints and St Peter's in Maldon, Essex), Thomas Curteis (1660-1747, vicar of Wrotham, Kent), Joseph Perkins (fl. 1658-1714, vicar of Hill, Gloucestershire), John Clayton (1657-1725, prebendary of St Michan's, Dublin), Humphrey Bralesford (1658-1733, a.k.a. Brailsford, prebendary of Southwell, Nottinghamshire), Edward Welchman (1665-1739, rector of Lapworth, Warwickshire, and later archdeacon of Cardigan), Henry Brydges (1676-1728, rector of Broadwell, Gloucestershire, royal chaplain, and later archdeacon of Rochester and canon of St

¹¹⁶ Thomas Jekyll, *A Brief and Plain Exposition of the Church-Catechism* (Savoy, 1690), 16, 82; idem, *Peace and Love, Recommended and Perswaded* (London, 1675), 28; John Wright, *The Most Material Difficulties in the Principles of Christianity: Explain'd in an Exposition of the Church-Catechism* (Nottingham, 1713), 56; Benjamin Farrow, *A Practical Exposition of the Catechism of the Church of England* (London, 1708), 68, 76, 81-82; Joseph Harrison, *An Exposition of the Church-Catechism, after a New Method* (London, 1708), 38-39, 204.

¹¹⁷ James Clifford, *A Catechism containing the Principles of Christian Religion* (London, 1694), 32, 51-53, 55, 64-65, 89, 91-92, 94-95, 100-104, 109.

¹¹⁸ John Wright, *A Sermon Preached at the Parish Church of Solihull in Warwickshire, December 21, 1690* (London, 1691), 9-10; Dudley Garendieres, *The History of Christ's Sufferings* (London, 1697), 11-13, 107.

Paul's), and George Kenwrick (1698-1762, fellow of Wadham College, Oxford, and vicar of Horning, Norfolk).¹¹⁹

There were also a number of French Huguenots who conformed and ministered in the established Church during Edwards' heyday, including Pierre Allix (1641-1717, treasurer and canon of Salisbury Cathedral), Marius d'Assigny (1643-1717), Peter Drelincourt (1644-1722, dean of Armagh), Jacques Abbadie (c. 1654-1727, dean of Killaloe), and Stephen (Étienne) Grongnet (d. 1733, vicar of Ockbrook, Derbyshire).¹²⁰ To these should be added the Saumur-educated Channel Islander Daniel Brevint (c. 1616-95), who became dean of Lincoln in 1682.

¹¹⁹ Edmund Godwin, *Two Sermons: Wherein is Shewn how God is the Chiefest Good either in Heaven or Earth, and how He may be ours* (London, 1701), 30–33, 36; Thomas Whincop, *A Sermon Preach'd at the Anniversary Meeting of the Sons of Clergy-Men, in the Church of St. Mary Le Bow, on Tuesday, Decem. 3, 1695* (London, 1696), 5, 21; Thomas Gregory, *Μεθ' Ἡμῶν ὁ Θεός: Or the Doctrine of a God and Providence, Vindicated and Asserted* (London, 1694), 82; idem, *Discourses upon Several Divine Subjects* (London, 1696), 54; Henry Phillipps, *Two Funeral Sermons* (London, 1705), 12–21; Samuel Palmer, *A Defence of the Dissenters Education in their Private Academies* (London, 1703), 5-6; Thomas Curteis, *The Benefits and Obligations of the Divine Love in the Redemption of Mankind* (London, 1715), 38–39; idem, *Essays Moral and Divine*, 2nd ed. (London, 1715), 76–77, 99; idem, *Advice to a Son at the University, Design'd for Holy Orders* (London, 1725), 85–86; Joseph Perkins, *The Redemption of Mankind, by the Passion of Our Lord. A Sermon, Preached on Palm-Sunday, at Kintbury, in the County of Berks* (London, 1692), 2, 7–10, 22–23; John Clayton, *Christ Crucified; the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God* (London, 1706), 7, 10; Humphrey Bralesford, *The Poor Man's Help* (London, 1689), 4–5, 18–21; Edward Welchman, *XXXIX Articuli Ecclesiae Anglicanae, Textibus e Sacra Scriptura Depromptis Confirmati, Brevibusque Notis Illustrati* (Oxford, 1713), 10–12, 18–19; Henry Brydges, *A Sermon Preached at St. Mary Aldermanbury, on Sunday the 15th. of June 1701* (London, 1701), 3, 4, 12; George Kenwrick, *The Surest Guide to Eternity: Or, a Body of Divinity, Extracted out of the Writings of the Old and New Testament* (Oxford, 1725), 96–97; idem, *The Religious Man's Companion* (Norwich, 1729), 13–14.

¹²⁰ Marius d'Assigny, *The Assurance of the Faithfull: Or, the Glorious Estate of the Saints in Heaven, Described* (London, 1670), 3, 7, 27–28, 32; Jacques Abbadie, *A Vindication of the Truth of the Christian Religion, against the Objections of all Modern Opposers*, vol. 2 (London, 1698), 399–410; Stephen Grongnet, *An Apology for the Foreign Protestant Churches having no Episcopacy* (London, 1717), 29–31.

Although the strength of Reformed theology within the established Church indeed ‘seems to have waned’ after the Hanoverian Succession,¹²¹ yet in Delaune there remained a Reformed Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Oxford until 1728, and several of the clergy featured in this chapter lived well into the 1730s, right up to the dawn of the evangelical revivals and beyond. In fact, by the time the would-be Reformed evangelicals George Whitefield (1714-70), James Hervey (1714-58), and William Romaine (1714-95) studied at Oxford in the 1730s, there still abided a Reformed presence through such figures as Henry Felton (1679-1740, principal of St Edmund Hall), Walter Hodges (d. 1757, provost of Oriel College), Richard Hutchins (1698-1781, fellow and later rector of Lincoln College), Thomas Newlin (1688-1743, fellow of Magdalen College), and John Wilder (1681-1743, rector of St Aldate’s, Oxford, and former fellow of Pembroke College).¹²² Whatever the evangelical revivals were, they were not a revival of nearly-extinct Reformed doctrines in the Church of England, seeing that there had been an unbroken trajectory of Reformed divinity in the Church, and at Oxford in particular, throughout the post-Restoration period.

Finally, several prominent laymen buttressed the Reformed cause, including Sir Richard Farington (c. 1644-1719, MP for Chichester), who in 1707 published a kind of anti-Arminian manifesto calling for a return to the doctrines of ‘our blessed Reformers’, as well as Sir Edward Harley (1624-1700, MP for Herefordshire), his son Edward Harley (1664-1735, MP for Leominster and Auditor of the Imprests), Roger Coke (c. 1628-c. 1707, Whig political writer), Nehemiah Grew (c. 1641-1712, fellow of

¹²¹ Mark Smith, ‘The Hanoverian Parish: Towards a New Agenda’, *Past & Present* 216 (August 2012), 84-85; Cf. Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 268.

¹²² Henry Felton, *Sermons on the Creation, Fall, and Redemption of Man* (London, 1748), 15, 39, 85–86, 108, 141, 149–50; Walter Hodges, *Elihu, Or an Enquiry into the Principal Scope and Design of the Book of Job* (London, 1750), 54–56, 73, 107–8, 121–23; idem, *The Christian Plan, Exhibited in the Interpretation of Elohim* (Oxford, 1752), vii, xiii, 20, 57–59, 67, 78, 81; Richard Hutchins, *Ten Sermons* (Oxford, 1782), 60–68, 75, 90–100; Thomas Newlin, *Eighteen Sermons on Several Occasions* (Oxford, 1720), 44, 170, 196, 282, 288–89, 312–13; John Wilder, *Fifteen Sermons*, 2 vols. (Oxford, n.d.–1741), 1:176, 180-182 259, 287, 310–12; 2:183.

the Royal Society and the Royal College of Physicians), and a certain gentleman identified only as 'M.C.', who railed against 'Remonstrant high-church divinity'.¹²³

4.3. Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that when Edwards insisted in his anti-Arminian works that he did not oppose the whole body of the clergy, and that there was a considerable number of his fellow clergymen who concurred with his Reformed views, this claim was based not on wishful thinking, but on reality. Discounting the earlier post-Restoration conforming Reformed divines, and focusing only on those who were active in Edwards' publishing heyday after 1689, we see that, at the very time when Edwards published his anti-Arminian works, there was a notable Reformed presence on the bishops' bench in addition to a host of other Reformed clergymen, deans, professors of divinity, Oxford and Cambridge college heads and fellows, and lay intellectuals. The conforming lay Arminian Samuel Colliber (fl. 1718-37), recognizing this abiding Reformed presence in the Church, did not without reason complain in 1718 that the doctrine of absolute predestination 'is still one distinguishing principle of some who claim the title of *orthodox* for their peculiar character.'¹²⁴

¹²³ Richard Farington, *The Religion of Many of the Clergy in the Church of England since the Reign of King James the First* (London, 1707); Sir Edward Harley, *A Scriptural and Rational Account of the Christian Religion* (London, 1695), 31–35, 68, 78–81, 108, 111; Edward Harley, *An Essay for Composing a Harmony between the Psalms, and other Parts of the Scripture; but especially the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (London, 1732), xxiv–xxxii, xlix–lxii; Roger Coke, *A Detection of the Court and State of England during the Four Last Reigns and the Inter-Regnum*, 3rd ed. (London, 1697), 182, 200–201, 226–27, 229, 231, 238–42, 317, 396, 476; Nehemiah Grew, *Cosmologia Sacra: Or a Discourse of the Universe as it is the Creature and Kingdom of God* (London, 1701), 325–27, 330; M.C., *A Caveat against Illegal High-Church Popish and False Ways to Eternal Life* (London, 1707).

¹²⁴ Samuel Colliber, *An Impartial Enquiry into the Existence and Nature of God* (London, 1718), 195.

All of this goes to show that Edwards was far from alone; he was merely the most outspoken Reformed conformist at the time. His frequent anti-Arminian publishing easily catches the historian's eye, which partially explains why previous scholars misjudged him as a lone Calvinist voice crying in the wilderness. Hampton quipped that Edwards 'argued with anything that moved: particularly if it did not do so in an acceptably Reformed way', and Edwards did indeed animadvert on an array of contemporaries.¹²⁵ Yet none of the divines featured in this chapter were ever the objects of his anti-Arminian polemics – understandably so, since they evidently did 'move' in 'an acceptably Reformed way'. In other words, there was a host of contemporary churchmen whom Edwards deemed orthodox and found no reason to write against.

This is not to deny that the greater part of the clergy did indeed favour Arminianism; despite all the Reformed churchmen cited in this chapter, the overall evidence certainly still indicates that Arminians outnumbered the Reformed. Especially in Cambridge, Edwards, while not destitute of Reformed sympathisers, was outnumbered in a way that he would not have been had he been based in Oxford, the bastion of post-Restoration conforming Reformed theology. This is reflected three years after his death in 1719, when several anti-Calvinist tracts were reprinted by Cambridge University Press as countermeasures to a lingering Reformed presence.¹²⁶

What the findings of this chapter do show, however, is that despite Arminians constituting the majority in Edwards' day, they were not nearly the overwhelming majority which the older scholarship imagined. Instead, they had to contend with a large and influential minority Reformed contingent which split the Church along a Reformed-Arminian line. This is reflected in an anonymous 1704 high-church pamphlet which holds (whether exaggerating or not) that about half of the Church at the time was anti-Remonstrant:

¹²⁵ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 32.

¹²⁶ *A Collection of Tracts concerning Predestination and Providence, and the other Points Depending on them* (Cambridge, 1719).

Suppose the doctrine of the Church of *England* in the five points to be either Remonstrant or Anti-remonstrant; which side soever you chuse, if you make this the distinguishing mark of a Church of *England* man, you must lose near half the Church, and not know which is the true half neither; for the contending parties must unchurch each other, and on both sides men of known zeal for the government and constitution of the Church of *England* must be rejected as no sons of the Church.¹²⁷

It is abundantly evident that the more well-known Reformed conformists of the period, such as Edwards, South, Beveridge, and Compton, were merely, to use Hampton's phrase, 'the vociferous tip of a larger Reformed iceberg' which constituted a sizable part of the Church of England between the Restoration and the evangelical revivals.¹²⁸ Indeed, their number and importance were such that we simply cannot have an accurate grasp of the post-Restoration Church without taking them into account.¹²⁹ Walsh and Taylor called Edwards' *Preacher* a 'pungently Calvinist work', but, given that so many churchmen shared Edwards' convictions, it would not have been nearly as 'pungent' as they had imagined.¹³⁰ Rather, it offers a clear explanation of why Edwards' works, contrary to older claims, actually enjoyed a very positive reception among significant segments of the clergy.

Building on Hampton's revisionist thesis, these findings obliterate many claims of the older scholarship. It is simply not true, as Ray claims, that Edwards was 'the last energetic voice raised at the turn of the century in unpopular Calvinian tone.'¹³¹ It is simply not true, as Crawford claims, that 'Anglican preachers on the whole [in the late

¹²⁷ *A Letter to a Friend concerning the New Distinction of High and Low Church* (London, 1704), 17.

¹²⁸ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 37.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹³⁰ Walsh and Taylor, 'Introduction', 52.

¹³¹ Ray, 'Religious Thought', 270.

seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries] emulated Archbishop Tillotson, teaching the reasonableness of Christianity and the practical benefits of morality.¹³² It is simply not true, as Cragg claims, that 'by the end [of the seventeenth century Calvinism's] power had been completely overthrown.'¹³³ It is simply not true, as Isabel Rivers and Owen Chadwick claim, that '[t]he re-establishment of the Church of England at the Restoration in effect guaranteed... the defeat of Reformation orthodoxy'.¹³⁴ It is simply not true, as Daniel Walker Howe and George Perry claim, that 'Anglican Calvinism evaporated quickly after 1660' and that 'Calvinistic teaching disappear[ed] from the Church, and [found] a refuge only among the Nonconformists.'¹³⁵ It is simply not true, as Stromberg claims, that Edwards was by the turn of the eighteenth century 'almost the sole remaining example of a prominent Anglican Calvinist. High and Low Churchmen alike were Arminian.'¹³⁶ It is simply not true, as Spellman claims, that Edwards had a 'mostly deserved reputation as a misplaced product of another age, a sort of troublesome visitor from the era of the Civil War'.¹³⁷ It is simply not true, as James Force claims, that 'by 1700, [Edwards] had become an anachronism in the brave new latitudinarian world.'¹³⁸ And it is simply not true, as David Bebbington claims,

¹³² Michael J. Crawford, 'Origins of the Eighteenth-Century Evangelical Revival: England and New England Compared', *Journal of British Studies* 26, no. 4 (October 1987): 373.

¹³³ Gerald R. Cragg, *From Puritanism to the Age of Reason: A Study of Changes in Religious Thought within the Church of England 1660 to 1700* (Cambridge: CUP, 1950), 13.

¹³⁴ Isabel Rivers, *Reason, Grace and Sentiment: A Study of the Language of Religion and Ethics in England 1660-1780*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), 1, 12, 90; Cf. Owen Chadwick, 'Arminianism in England', *Religion in Life* 29 (Autumn 1960): 551.

¹³⁵ Daniel Walker Howe, 'The Decline of Calvinism: An Approach to its Study', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 13, no. 3 (June 1972), 310; George G. Perry, *The History of the Church of England: From the Death of Elizabeth to the Present Time* (London, 1862), 667.

¹³⁶ Stromberg, *Religious Liberalism*, 111–12.

¹³⁷ Spellman, *John Locke and the Problem of Depravity*, 143.

¹³⁸ James E. Force and Richard H. Popkin, *Essays on the Context, Nature, and Influence of Isaac Newton's Theology* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1990), 129.

that there is 'scant evidence' for the continuity of the Reformed tradition within the Church of England between the Restoration and the evangelical revivals.¹³⁹ These scholars simply assumed, without any solid grounding from the primary sources, that the later Stuart and early Hanoverian Church was almost monolithically Arminian.

The question naturally arises: how has this sturdy Reformed current in the later Stuart and early Hanoverian Church been overlooked by scholars? A few considerations may at least offer a partial explanation. Firstly, as Hampton has also observed, it has been assumed that for an evangelical revival to have taken place, there first had to be a departure from the evangelical doctrines upheld at the Reformation and afterwards.¹⁴⁰ This can be seen, for example, in Walsh and Taylor, who, after asserting that Calvinism had almost 'vanished' in the Church of England after 1662, comment that 'so large and sudden a vacuum in Anglican spirituality could not continue to be unfilled. With the breakout of the Evangelical Revival, life slowly flowed back into what was recognizably the old Reformed tradition, though it was often expressed in fresh ways.'¹⁴¹ It is reiterated here, as clearly shown in this chapter, that while the evangelical revivals may have expressed the Reformed doctrines in 'fresh ways', yet they emphatically did not revive these doctrines as such, seeing that they retained a firm presence in the Church throughout the post-Restoration period.

In relation to this, it is clear when surveying the authors who have written on Whitefield and the evangelical revivals, that they have overwhelmingly been not only sympathetic to the evangelical revivals themselves, but have predominantly come from dissenting traditions, which in part explains their unanimously negative assessments of the state of the Reformed evangelical doctrines in the later Stuart and early Hanoverian Church of England. Whitefield's Baptist biographer Arnold

¹³⁹ D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Routledge, 2003), 35.

¹⁴⁰ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 3.

¹⁴¹ Walsh and Taylor, 'Introduction', 43–44.

Dallimore provides an epitome of this with his claim that 'English Christianity proved itself to be little more than a religious ethic, sedate and timid – a disposition admirably exemplified in Dr John Tillotson, Archbishop from 1691 to 1694 – and this remained the vogue until challenged by the militant evangelism of the revival.'¹⁴² This is one possible reason as to why this post-Restoration conforming Reformed tradition has been overlooked by scholars. As Mark Noll rightly observes, '[o]nce self-conscious evangelical groups emerged, it was only to be expected that they would paint a dark picture of spiritual conditions before evangelical awakeners arrived on the scene.'¹⁴³

A second reason is that a particular current in Church of England historiography, exemplified by scholars such as John Spurr and William Gibson, has downplayed (and, in the case of ongoing Reformed-Arminian differences, effectually ignored) the fierce theological disputes within the later Stuart Church, to depict a harmonious Church in which a distinct, unified 'Anglican' identity emerged.¹⁴⁴ Yet such a portrayal seems less feasible when considering the abiding disputes between Arminians and the Reformed, not to mention such bitter controversies as those on the Trinity, Christology, and high and low churchmanship, which so clearly divided the Church in Edwards' day.

Thirdly, the idea that 'Calvinism' retained a prominent place in the Church of England into the early Hanoverian period does not sit well with so-called Whig historiography, in which such doctrines are supposed to have been superseded in the new 'enlightened' age.¹⁴⁵ An epitome of this was seen only a few pages ago, where Spellman claimed that Edwards was 'a misplaced product of another age', and where Force called him 'an anachronism in the brave new latitudinarian world.'

¹⁴² Arnold A. Dallimore, *George Whitefield: The Life and Times of the Great Evangelist of the Eighteenth-Century Revival*, vol. 1 (London: Banner of Truth, 1970), 22.

¹⁴³ Mark A. Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys* (Leicester: Apollos, 2004), 34.

¹⁴⁴ Spurr, *Restoration Church of England*; William Gibson, *The Church of England 1688-1832: Unity and Accord* (London: Routledge, 2001).

¹⁴⁵ I am indebted to John Coffey for this insight.

Fourthly, a major reason is because the Church of England in the later Stuart and early Hanoverian period remains severely understudied, especially by historical theologians. The extant studies have focused much more on ecclesio-political issues in this period than on the Church's theology and internecine doctrinal polemics. The vast majority of the Reformed conforming divines featured in this chapter are not so much as mentioned in the secondary literature. Even Hampton, the one scholar who has most recognized this abiding Reformed tradition in the post-Restoration Church, significantly underestimated its actual strength: of the 121 post-Restoration Reformed conformists (including Edwards) mentioned in this chapter, a total of 86 do not feature in Hampton's *Anti-Arminians* at all. Hampton's work aside, other extant studies only mention a handful of these Reformed conformists, and if one or two of the better-known ones are mentioned, such as Compton, South, or Beveridge, little (if anything) is made of their undeniably Reformed views. It is therefore no wonder that this strong Reformed contingent in the Church does not feature in the older scholarship.

An exemplar of how this abiding conforming Reformed tradition has been ignored is found in Young's chapter in the second volume of the recent *Oxford History of Anglicanism*, where he attempts to dismiss Hampton's findings on the strength of Reformed theology within the post-Restoration Church. Young claims, without any evidence, that divines such as South, Compton, and Jane saw themselves not as 'Calvinists' or 'Reformed Protestants', but rather as 'Reformed Catholics' or 'orthodox Augustinians', who, instead of affiliating with the Reformed tradition, were rather 'close to the revived Augustinianism of the Jansenist party in the Roman Catholic Church' – insinuating that Compton and associates were something other than Reformed episcopalian Protestants.¹⁴⁶ Young furthermore questions whether someone like South should be considered a 'Calvinist', since his doctrine of election and grace 'was not teaching he had explicitly, or even implicitly, imbibed from Calvin.'¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ Young, 'Theology', 397–98.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 399.

Against these claims, it should be stressed that these divines abhorred Roman Catholicism and explicitly considered themselves and their Church to be Reformed, with South even calling her ‘the purest and best reformed church in the world’, and he spoke of her faith, in opposition to ‘Popery’, as ‘the Reformed, primitive, and apostolical religion of the Church of England’.¹⁴⁸ It is certainly surprising that Young would suggest that these divines were something other than Protestant, and part of what he calls ‘the “catholic” wing of the Church’, as if they were some kind of proto-Tractarians.¹⁴⁹ The high churchmen of Edwards’ day were professedly Protestant, and it is anachronistic to read later ‘catholicizing’ movements within the Church of England back into the early eighteenth century.¹⁵⁰ Besides, Reformed Protestants widely considered themselves ‘Reformed catholics’ (Perkins being the obvious English example), and used this term to distinguish themselves from Roman Catholics.

In addition, Young’s claim that these divines more aligned themselves to the Jansenists in the Roman Catholic Church than to their own English Reformation heritage is unfounded, and he provides no evidence of this. While it is true, as Palmer’s recent study has shown, that Jansenists did enjoy an appreciable English readership,¹⁵¹ yet none of the Reformed conformists featured in this chapter ever identified with nor derived their views from the Jansenists, but instead simply saw themselves as adhering to the Church’s Reformation tradition as long since established in her Articles and Homilies. In Hampton’s words, ‘[t]he Reformed Anglicans of the later seventeenth century much preferred to point to the English writers of earlier generations.’¹⁵²

As to the objection that South and others did not derive their doctrines from Calvin, this is no impediment, since, as we highlighted in the introduction, the Reformed

¹⁴⁸ South, *Sermons*, 2:401; 5:152.

¹⁴⁹ Young, ‘Theology’, 398.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Spurr, *Restoration Church of England*, 394–96.

¹⁵¹ Arnold Palmer, *Jansenism and England*, chs. 2–4.

¹⁵² Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 7

tradition was not monolithically dependent on or normed by Calvin. Moreover, the term 'Calvinist' was merely a commonly-used shorthand indicating where one stood in the Reformed versus Arminian divide in the Church, which, as we have repeatedly observed, was still a major issue in the Church.¹⁵³ That is why, as we have seen, divines such as South, Compton, Jane, Hall, and Beveridge were recognized by their contemporaries as 'Calvinists', even if they themselves disliked the term. Young only adds to the confusion when he speaks of 'the Calvinist John Edwards of Jesus College, Oxford', whereas John Edwards was, of course, a lifelong Cambridge man, and it was actually the Arminian Jonathan Edwards who was master of Jesus College, Oxford.¹⁵⁴

The preceding paragraphs point to a broader problem already mentioned, namely, that in the limited attention which the later Stuart and early Hanoverian Church of England has received thus far, there is a great deficiency of historical-theological studies focusing on the theology of the period. This also explains, at least in part, why, as we shall see in the next chapter, the older scholarship was equally wide of the mark when they generally held the doctrines of justification by faith alone and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to have been nearly extinct in Edwards' time.

¹⁵³ Wallace, *Shapers*, 9–10.

¹⁵⁴ Young, 'Theology', 405.

5. Edwards' defence of a Reformed doctrine of faith and justification

5.1. Edwards' *The Doctrin of Faith and Justification set in a True Light* (1708)

In *The Preacher* Edwards named the interrelated doctrines of justification by faith alone and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to believers as two benchmarks of Christian orthodoxy which were either neglected or trampled upon by many Church of England clergymen. In this chapter, we turn to Edwards' most concentrated contention for a Reformed orthodox understanding of justification, which is found in the second instalment of his extended body of divinity and the follow-up to his *Veritas Redux*, namely, his *The Doctrin [sic] of Faith and Justification set in a True Light* (1708).

Edwards provides two reasons why he elaborately treats faith and justification here rather than reserving it for his upcoming *Theologia Reformata*: firstly, he wanted to discuss faith as a preliminary discourse to his discussion of the Creed (i.e. the articles of faith) in his *Theologia Reformata*; and secondly, he had lately in *The Preacher* touched on some of the failings of his fellow clergy in relation to these doctrines, and promised to soon 'insist more largely upon it'.¹

Edwards comments that in his day there were 'a set of men' who were either indifferent or inimical to the doctrine of justification by faith alone and the imputation of Christ's righteousness, including Sherlock, who dismisses disputes about faith and justification as a waste of time.² Besides Sherlock, we have also seen that Tillotson, Glanvill, Fowler, and Whitby were among the particular divines whom he criticized

¹ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, ix–x.

² Ibid., xi–xii; William Sherlock, *A Sermon Preached before the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City of London, at Guild-Hall-Chappel, on Sunday, Nov. 4, 1688* (London, 1689), 11–12.

for rejecting these doctrines as ‘Calvinistical’. It is in this context that Edwards ventures ‘to retrieve our *old divinity*.’³

The first justification-related issue which Edwards had with these Arminians concerns the nature of justifying faith. In traditional Reformed scholastic thought, justifying faith consists of three elements: knowledge (*notitia*), assent (*assensus*), and trust (*fiducia*).⁴ A theoretical knowledge of the Gospel (*notitia*) and an assent to its testimony as being true (*assensus*) are both necessary in justifying faith, but it is only when these are accompanied by self-abnegation and an entire trust in Christ and his merits alone for salvation (*fiducia*), whereby his merits are personally applied to oneself by faith, that faith properly becomes *justifying* or *saving* faith. While it is possible for the non-elect to possess *notitia* and *assensus*, *fiducia* is peculiar to the elect alone.

Edwards is in essential agreement with this Reformed understanding of justifying faith, although he modified it somewhat as consisting of *assent*, *consent*, and *trust*, with *knowledge* being subsumed under *assent*.⁵ The difference between *assent* and *consent*, according to Edwards, is that *assent* pertains to the intellect, whereas *consent* is seated in the will.⁶ For our present discussion, however, it is sufficient to note that Edwards was in full continuity with Reformed scholastic thought in considering *trust* or *fiducia* as essential to justifying faith. He writes that

to this act of faith, which is *trusting* and *relying*, belongs a particular application of Christ’s merits, and satisfaction to the soul... neither can the mercy of God in Christ be really advantageous to us, unless it be by some proper instrument

³ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, xix.

⁴ See, for example, Johannes Polyander et al., *Synopsis Purioris Theologiae*, 3rd ed. (Leiden, 1642), 373–82; John Davenant, *Determinationes Quaestionum Quarundam Theologicarum* (Cambridge, 1634), 163–68; Francis Turretin, *Institutio Theologiae Elencticae*, vol. 2 (Geneva, 1682), 611–24; Barlow, *Genuine Remains*, 603–04.

⁵ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 13–112.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 76–77.

applied and made use of. The great and precious promises, in which God's mercies are contain'd and convey'd, are *generally* propounded to the righteous; but it is a true and operative faith which makes the particular and special application of them to our selves.⁷

In other words, faith as *fiducia* is the instrument by which the merits of Christ are appropriated to oneself, and it is this applicatory, instrumental nature of faith which Edwards at length insists upon. He furthermore notes that 'some pious divines' have described this application in metaphorical language such as 'flying' to Christ, 'leaning' or 'resting' upon Christ, or 'laying hold' of Christ, and argues that there is biblical warrant for such language.⁸ He closes his discussion on *trust* by affirming that

a firm persuasion of heart, that Christ died for us in particular, and that our sins are forgiven us for the merits of Christ Jesus, and an appropriation of them to our selves, are part of that saving faith, which ought to be in every true believer. This is part of the definition of *faith* in the writings of all the foreign Protestants, both Lutherans and Calvinists, and in the Homilies of our Church.⁹

Yet Edwards observes that the metaphors used by both Reformed and Lutheran Protestants to describe this applicatory faith is 'ridicul'd and droll'd upon by some that have passed for serious men in our Church', including Patrick, Sherlock, and 'particularly' Tillotson, who 'even deride[s] this way of speaking.'¹⁰ Edwards also notes that neither Roman Catholics nor the Socinians include *trust* in their definitions of faith, with Socinus denigrating the idea of apprehending Christ's merits by faith as

⁷ Ibid., 104–8.

⁸ Ibid., 91–96.

⁹ Ibid., 112.

¹⁰ Ibid., 96–97.

‘a mere fiction of man’s brain and an idle dream.’¹¹ He complains that ‘some of our own divines of the first rank have the same thoughts’, and notes how Patrick ridicules notions such as ‘casting of ourselves upon Christ’, ‘relying on his merits’, and ‘shrouding our selves under the robes of his righteousness’ as ‘juggling’, ‘inchantment’, a ‘magical operation’, and even ‘witchcraft’.¹² ‘Is not this’, asks Edwards, ‘somewhat near the language of those who imputed our Saviour’s work to *Belzebub*, the prince of devils?’¹³

Edwards furthermore points out that *The Whole Duty of Man* and Tillotson mention ‘not one syllable of *relying on Christ*, or any thing that is equivalent to it’, with Tillotson defining faith merely as ‘a firm belief of the history and doctrin of the Gospel.’¹⁴ Patrick likewise rejects fiducial faith, holding instead that saving faith is ‘[t]o assent in such a manner to all that is said of [Christ], or he hath said in the Gospel, that we become obedient to his word.’¹⁵ Fowler’s definition is virtually identical: justifying faith ‘*is such a belief of the truth of the Gospel, as includes a sincere resolution of obedience unto all its precepts; or (which is the same thing) includes true holiness in the nature of it.*’¹⁶ Whitby, too, denounced fiducial faith and the application of Christ’s merits to oneself as ‘unscriptural’.¹⁷ In short, unlike the Reformed, these Arminian churchmen did not include *fiducia* or *trust* as a central part of their definitions of justifying faith.

In response, Edwards quotes the Church’s Homilies, which clearly proclaim trust in Christ to be constitutive of true faith, and express this fiducial faith in metaphorical

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 178–79; Faustus Socinus, *De Iesu Christo Servatore* (Raków, 1594), 401.

¹² Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 179; Simon Patrick, *The Parable of the Pilgrim: Written to a Friend* (London, 1665), 138–44.

¹³ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 179.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 179; John Tillotson, *Sermons*, 14 vols. (London, 1696-1704), 8:9–10.

¹⁵ Patrick, *Parable*, 138–45.

¹⁶ Edward Fowler, *The Design of Christianity* (London, 1671), 221.

¹⁷ Whitby, *Paraphrase*, 240–43; Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 180–81.

terms, such as ‘hanging’ on Christ.¹⁸ He also shows that the Homilies clearly teach that justifying faith is applicatory of Christ’s merits, and that they explicitly call faith an ‘instrument’.¹⁹ He furthermore cites the Irish Articles as teaching the same, and adds that even Thorndike, though rejecting the Reformed view, grants that it is the position of the Articles and Homilies.²⁰ Given the clear witness of the Homilies, Edwards asks ‘is it not strange that those who bear the character of divines of the Church of *England*, should so palpably deviate from the Church it self? For it is plain she holds that one act or part of evangelical faith is relying and trusting on the Lord Christ Jesus for salvation, and all benefits, blessings and favours that come by the New Covenant.’²¹

The reason why the aforementioned Arminians reject fiducial faith and the metaphors used to articulate it, is because they reject the idea that faith is an instrument by which Christ’s righteousness is applied or imputed to believers for their justification.²² And this stems from a different understanding to the Reformed of what exactly justification is. As Edwards notes, Tillotson ‘speaks the sense and language of the rest’ when he says that ‘Justification in scripture signifies no more than the pardon and remission of sins.’²³ So justification is the pardon or non-imputation of sin, without any positive imputation of the extrinsic righteousness of Christ to the believer. And ‘[a]ll the conditions the Gospel requires on our part in order to pardon [i.e. justification]’, says Tillotson, ‘may be reduced to these *four heads*. (1) An assent to the

¹⁸ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 181–82; *Certain Sermons or Homilies, Appointed to be Read in Churches, in the Time of Queen Elizabeth of Famous Memory* (London, 1673), 18–23.

¹⁹ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 183; *Homilies*, 259–61.

²⁰ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 184; Herbert Thorndike, *An Epilogue to the Tragedy of the Church of England* (London, 1659), 256–58.

²¹ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 181.

²² Tillotson, *Sermons*, 12:242; William Sherlock, *A Discourse concerning the Knowledge of Jesus Christ and our Union and Communion with Him* (London, 1674), 102–8; Fowler, *Design*, 223; Whitby, *Paraphrase*, 243–44.

²³ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 243; Tillotson, *Sermons*, 12:226–42; Cf. Whitby, *Paraphrase*, 245.

truth of the Gospel. (2) A trust and confidence in Christ as our only Saviour. (3) Repentance from dead works. (4) Sincere obedience and holiness of life.’²⁴ Tillotson does not explain what he means by ‘trust’, but he certainly does not mean *fiducia* as understood by the Reformed, since he scorns the idea that faith is an instrument by which believers apprehend Christ’s merits (*apprehensio fiducialis* in scholastic terms), which is central to the Reformed notion of *fiducia*.²⁵ Concerning the four ‘heads’ above, he insists that ‘all these are comprehended in the New Testament notion of faith, which signifies the whole of Christian religion’ and that justifying faith ‘doth include in it obedience to the precepts of the gospel.’²⁶ In other words, for Tillotson justification equals pardon, and this pardon requires the meeting of certain conditions, including repentance and good works, which are constitutive elements of justifying faith and therefore not distinct from it.²⁷ The imputation of Christ’s merits does not feature.

This ties in with Tillotson’s view of justification as really indistinguishable from salvation. He asserts that

whatsoever puts a man into a state of justification and pardon: puts man into a state of salvation... the conditions of our justification and salvation are the same: and if assent to the truth of the Gospel, and trust in Christ as our only Saviour, be the only conditions of our justification, then they are the only conditions of our salvation; and repentance and obedience are not conditions of our salvation: but if they be conditions of our salvation, then they are of our justification.²⁸

²⁴ Tillotson, *Sermons*, 12:242–43, 271.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 12:237–38, 255.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 12:219, 243, 271.

²⁷ Donald Greene claimed that the views of Tillotson and his Latitudinarian comrades on justification and good works were consistent with those of the sixteenth-century Reformers. See Donald Greene, ‘Latitudinarianism and Sensibility: The Genealogy of the “Man of Feeling” Reconsidered’, *Modern Philology* 75, no. 2 (November 1977): 165–69.

²⁸ Tillotson, *Sermons*, 12:272–73.

That is why Tillotson finds the doctrine of justification by faith alone so precarious, because if one is justified by faith alone, one would be saved by faith alone, which would render good works unnecessary for salvation, and thereby pave the way for licentiousness. Although he is adamant that good works, being ever imperfectly performed, are by no means meritorious, and that the only ‘meritorious cause’ of a sinner’s pardon is ‘the death of Christ’, he nevertheless insists that good works, being (in his view) integral to justifying faith, form part of the conditions of the Gospel, which, unless fulfilled, one cannot be justified.²⁹ Tillotson’s doctrine of justification, as Hampton has shown, is virtually identical to that of the Remonstrant Episcopius, though it differs from the doctrine of Arminius himself, who held that the act of faith, rather than Christ’s extrinsic righteousness, is imputed to believers for righteousness.³⁰

Edwards responds by insisting on a clear distinction between faith and good works, with the latter being the ‘*effects and fruits of faith*’, and animadverts on Patrick, Tillotson, Le Clerc, Ofspring Blackall (1655-1716, bishop of Exeter), Cave, and Norris for including works in their definitions of saving faith and thereby conflating them, adding that ‘the generality of the divines of this age among us, encline this way.’³¹ The great mistake these Arminians make, Edwards holds, is that they confound justification and salvation, and make good works part of justification when they are rather the effect or fruit of justifying faith, and rather form part of sanctification.³²

Edwards further holds that Tillotson and others are mistaken in equating the remission of sins with justification, and emphasises that justification entails more than simply the remission of sins. He insists that there are ‘two parts of justification, namely, the *remission of our sins*, and the *being accounted righteous*.’³³ The first part is defined as

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 12:238–44; Cf. Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 61.

³⁰ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 60–71; Keith D. Stanglin and Thomas H. McCall, *Jacob Arminius: Theologian of Grace* (Oxford: OUP, 2012), 167–68.

³¹ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 160–63, 363–64.

³² *Ibid.*, 160–63, 363–64.

³³ *Ibid.*, 235.

that act of God whereby he freeth sinners from the guilt of their sins. To *justifie* is to acquit, discharge and absolve a person from his fault and demerit... A justified person then is no longer reckon'd by God as having any sin upon him; for to be justified is to have the guilt of sin wholly taken away. If this be removed, it is impossible he should be accounted faulty and criminal.³⁴

Yet it is the second part of justification which Edwards especially insists upon:

Besides the gracious *pardon* and *absolution* confer'd on the faithful for the sake of Christ's meritorious obedience, there is also the *reckoning us righteous*. This is another essential ingredient of justification. I know this niceness of speaking is not observed by many of our divines of late, for they confound remission of sins and justification, whereas the former is but one branch, or part of the latter... *Accepting the person* is one part of justification, and is a different thing from *pardoning his fault*. A man may cease to be another man's enemy, and yet it doth not follow thence that he becomes his friend, and shews particular favour to him. So these are two distinct notions, that God forgives us our sins, and that moreover he accounts us righteous in his sight. We must form distinct ideas concerning these, because the one comprehends more in it than the other. Forgiveness barely considered, is an absolution from guilt and demerit, but justification is, besides that, an imputation of righteousness to the person, and thereupon an accepting of him, and receiving him into favour... [b]ut this is not on the account of his own righteousness, but of another's... The second branch then of justification (which is the compleating it) is the imputation of Christ's righteousness.³⁵

³⁴ Ibid., 236–37.

³⁵ Ibid., 242–44.

Edwards stresses that there is a *'double imputation*, one on our part, and another on Christ's. Our sins are imputed to him, and his righteousness to us. The demerits of believers were charged on Christ, and thence it is that he suffer'd: The holiness of Christ is attributed to believers, and thence it is that they are justified.'³⁶ This double imputation is intimately intertwined with the Reformed doctrine of the mystical union of believers with Christ, which Edwards identifies as 'the foundation of the reciprocal transferring of sin and righteousness.'³⁷ Sherlock, by contrast, denigrates this doctrine as 'a fanciful union to Christ', insisting that union with Christ means 'an agreement in faith and manners', and not a spiritual union.³⁸ Edwards complains that this double imputation of Christ's righteousness to believers and their sins to Christ 'is of late wholly rejected, or at least slighted by many of our divines'.³⁹

Edwards at length defends the imputation of the sins of believers to Christ on the cross, but his emphasis is more on the imputation of Christ's righteousness or active obedience to believers, which was affirmed by the vast majority of early modern Reformed theologians, though a minority among the Reformed rejected it (including Piscator, Pareus, Gataker, and Baxter).⁴⁰ Against those who reject this imputation, Edwards provides an elaborate exposition of 2 Cor. 5:21 ('he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him'), but also of various other biblical texts, to argue that Scripture plainly teaches that 'Christ reconciled us to his Father, by taking upon him our sins, and making our

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 244.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 293–94.

³⁸ Sherlock, *Discourse*, 102–8.

³⁹ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 244, 275, 280–81.

⁴⁰ Cornelis P. Venema, 'Calvin's Doctrine of the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness: Another Example of "Calvin against the Calvinists"?', *Mid-America Journal of Theology* 20 (2009): 17–22; Alan D. Strange, 'The Imputation of the Active Obedience of Christ at the Westminster Assembly', *Drawn into Controversie: Reformed Theological Diversity and Debates Within Seventeenth-Century British Puritanism*, eds. Michael A.G. Haykin and Mark Jones (Göttingen: V&R, 2011), 34, 39–46.

transgressions his own; and on the other side, that he devolved his righteousness on us, and his obedience became ours... God looks upon Christ's righteousness and obedience as ours, because he voluntarily undertook for us, and what he did, he did in our stead.⁴¹ Thus Edwards affirms the majority Reformed position of the imputation of both Christ's passive as well as active obedience to the believer: '[t]he perfect obedience which Christ performed, is reckoned as if we had done it: and the sufferings which he underwent are accounted as if we had undergone [sic] them.'⁴² He is clear, however, that although Christ's imputed righteousness is the only righteousness that will justify believers before God, yet there is also a righteousness imparted to believers through regeneration, 'by the renewing and changing of our nature, and infusing new habits of grace into us.'⁴³

As he had done before, Edwards points out that Roman Catholics, Socinians, and Quakers all reject imputed righteousness, and he employs this to cast doubt on the orthodoxy of his Arminian counterparts.⁴⁴ He gives an example of how Sherlock takes the word 'righteousness' in 'the LORD our righteousness' (Jer. 23:6) to mean the same as 'mercy' or 'kindness', and quips that '[a]ny thing will some say rather than own the imputation of our Saviour's righteousness.'⁴⁵ Edwards emphasizes that these divines contradict the Church's official doctrine in her Homilies, which proclaim that 'Christ is now the righteousness of all them that truly do believe in him' and that 'He for them fulfilled the law in his life: so that now in him, and by him, every true Christian man may be called a fulfiller of the law.'⁴⁶ He furthermore cites the conformist heavyweights Andrewes, Hooker, and Ussher as all affirming this doctrine.⁴⁷

⁴¹ Ibid., 245–52.

⁴² Ibid., 238, 285–90.

⁴³ Ibid., 308.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 299–300.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 285; Sherlock, *Discourse*, 235.

⁴⁶ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 313; *Homilies*, 14.

⁴⁷ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 313–14.

Concerning the concomitant doctrine of justification by faith alone, Edwards comments that ‘our modern theologians’ hold that when Paul excludes the works of the law from justification (Rom. 3:20, 28; Gal. 2:16, etc.), he excludes only the Mosaic ceremonial law and works performed in an unregenerate state, but not ‘moral’ and ‘evangelical’ works performed by the assistance of divine grace.⁴⁸ ‘This’, Edwards sneers, ‘is the very same thing which the generality of the *Roman* doctors hold.’⁴⁹ Against this view, Edwards at length argues that the Apostle excludes all works from justification, including ‘evangelical’ works performed by the assistance of divine grace.⁵⁰ Citing Perkins in support, he insists that faith itself is not a work, since it functions not as ‘a work proceeding from us’ but rather as ‘the instituted and appointed means of justification... Faith is a bare medium or instrument.’⁵¹ Strictly speaking, ‘[i]t is not faith, but Christ received by faith, that justifies us.’⁵²

Edwards asserts that Paul ‘hath given us a fuller discovery of this grand point of justification by faith alone, than any other inspir’d pen-men... In short, we must expunge St. Paul’s epistles out of the Canon of the Bible, if we refuse to receive this doctrin.’⁵³ Concerning the Apostle James’ teaching that ‘by works a man is justified, and not by faith only’ (Js. 2:24), Edwards reiterates that ‘St. *Paul* speaks of *justification before God*, but St. *James* of *justification before men*. The former consists in God’s forgiving and accepting us thro’ the imputation of Christ’s righteousness, the latter in the declaring and evidencing it to others that we are forgiven and accepted.’⁵⁴

Edwards knew well that a major reason why many reject justification by faith alone and Christ’s imputed righteousness is from a fear of antinomianism, and he ventures

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 330.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 339.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 330–41.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 369–71.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 371.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 329–30.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 424.

to prove that this fear is unwarranted.⁵⁵ He cites as an example Fowler's 'cavil' that the preaching of this doctrine is dangerous because '[t]he vulgar... can scarcely hear of Christ's imputed righteousness, but they are ready to make an ill use of it, by taking from thence occasion to entertain low and disparaging thoughts of an inward real righteousness.'⁵⁶ He also marks how Tillotson mimics Roman Catholics in disparaging the Reformed as *Solifidians* and accusing the doctrine of justification by faith alone of promoting licentiousness.⁵⁷ When Tillotson charges the Reformed for holding that someone may be pardoned without repentance, Edwards counters that '[h]e lays that to our charge which never any writer of our persuasion was guilty of'.⁵⁸ Instead of avoiding this doctrine because of its potential misapplications, Edwards insists that

we must let our hearers understand how *imputed* and *inherent righteousness* are consistent; yea, how they are both of them necessary, the one for our justification, the other for our sanctification: the former to make us acceptable to God, and the latter to fit and qualifie us for everlasting happiness. If we take this task upon us, and discharge it faithfully, there is no fear that our auditors from hearing of Christ's imputed righteousness, will take occasion to think we speak meanly of an inward real righteousness.⁵⁹

As noted, Edwards faulted Tillotson and other Arminians for confounding justification and salvation. Tillotson wrote that 'I think this is universally agreed by divines, that whatever puts a man into a state of justification and pardon: puts a man into a state of salvation', but Edwards retorts that he 'must *think* again, for this is no

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 281–82, 372–73.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 308; Edward Fowler, *The Principles and Practices of Certain Moderate Divines of the Church of England* (London, 1670), 131.

⁵⁷ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 383–85.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 365.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 309.

right thought; for the universal opinion of divines, and those of the Church of *England* in particular, till of late, was, that faith puts a man into a state of justification, but that an universal holiness put[s] him into a state of salvation.⁶⁰ Edwards' explanation of the necessity of good works for salvation but not for justification is instructive:

Now we must know, that the terms of salvation on our part, are not only faith, but obedience, and good works, and all holiness, whether in thought, words, or actions; and consequently the duties [of] repentance, and forgiving offences, and confession of sins, and forsaking them, and turning to God by a new life, are necessary in order to our being sav'd. But then I am to add, that tho' we shall be *sav'd* by these, and other acts of religion commanded us by God, yet we shall not be justified by them... to be justified, and to be saved, are two distinct things... for salvation is a much larger and more comprehensive term than justification. All the graces of the Spirit are saving, but they are not [all] justifying. And justification is but the entrance to salvation... Faith alone is available to the justifying us, because it is sufficient for the apprehending Christ's righteousness, whereby we are justify'd: but faith without works will not suffice for the saving of us, because works are requir'd of us as qualifications in order to eternal happiness... If the power and efficacy of faith alone could avail us to salvation, it were altogether unnecessary to urge the doctrin of repentance, and the performance of good works, since there would be no need of them if faith could suffice of itself.⁶¹

Here Edwards is, of course, following a Reformed *ordo salutis* in which justification forms but one part of the more comprehensive concept of salvation, and is followed by sanctification as a necessary link in the 'golden chain' leading to glorification:

⁶⁰ Tillotson, *Sermons*, 12:272–73; Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 364.

⁶¹ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 360–62.

Justification is subordinate to salvation, as the means to the end. Or justification and salvation differ as the cause and the effect, as the antecedent and consequent, as the part and the whole. None is saved, but is first justified: salvation follows justification. Or we may say, salvation is begun in justification, and completed in glorification. But tho' we should speak thus, yet we must make a distinction between those graces which are serviceable to the *inchoative* and *perfect* salvation. All graces are serviceable to this latter, but one only to the former, and that is faith... [which] tho' it will justify you alone, will not, cannot *save* you alone... In short, faith and works concur in salvation, but not in justification, and consequently there are not the same terms of both.⁶²

So, since good works are an integral part of sanctification, which is an integral part of salvation, Edwards concludes that 'tho' [good works] have nothing to do in justification, yet they are necessary in order to salvation and happiness; yea, they are necessary concomitants of justification', and therefore 'justification evacuates not sanctification.'⁶³ He is clear, however, that good works are by no means meritorious: 'though obedience doth not *merit* salvation, and so is not the *cause* of it, yet it is the *way* to it; and without obedience and holiness no man shall see God.'⁶⁴ In other words, good works, without in any way meriting salvation (which is founded on Christ's merits alone), are integral to the path of sanctification on which every justified person must walk to glorification, and as such are necessary for salvation. Edwards is adamant, therefore, that the charge of antinomianism levelled against the doctrine of justification by faith alone is utterly unwarranted, since 'justification and sanctification, altho' really distinguish'd in themselves, always go together, and are never separated.'⁶⁵

⁶² Ibid., 362–63.

⁶³ Ibid., 407–8.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 176, Cf. 365–366.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 385.

To seal the case for his Reformed view of justification, Edwards appeals to the Church's Articles and Homilies, the former of which he calls 'the standard of the doctrine which she owns, and a true test of her genuine sons'.⁶⁶ Quoting Article 11, which declares that '[w]e are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings: Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort,' Edwards avers that '[h]e is no orthodox son of the Church of *England* who dissents from her *Articles*, and particularly this concerning *justification*.'⁶⁷ He also argues from authorial intent, noting that even Burnet concedes that Archbishop Cranmer and other Reformation bishops held justification by faith alone, concluding that '[i]t is evident hence what was the sense of our Church and her Homilies.'⁶⁸ Moreover, he cites the second part of the Homily of Salvation, which explicitly proclaims, concerning justification by faith alone, that 'this whosoever denyeth, is not to be accounted for a Christian man, nor for a setter forth of Christ's glory, but for an adversary to Christ and his Gospel, and for a setter forth of men's vain glory.'⁶⁹

Edwards emphasizes that justification by faith alone is a key Protestant distinction vis-à-vis Roman Catholicism, points to eminent English Reformers, bishops, and clerics who championed this doctrine and rejected its contrary as Popery – some at the cost of martyrdom – and insists that the exclusion of works from justification was the 'persuasion of all divines of the Church of *England* heretofore.'⁷⁰ Furthermore, he cites Article 12, which teaches that 'good works are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification,' and adds that '[t]his is the sound and orthodox doctrine of the Church of *England*. I could wish that all who call themselves her sons, did speak the language of

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 390.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 389.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 389–90.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 390; *Homilies*, 15.

⁷⁰ Edwards, *Faith and Justification*, 391–93.

their mother in this particular.⁷¹ Thus Edwards called on his fellow clergymen to uphold justification by faith alone and the imputation of Christ's righteousness as the biblical, orthodox, and official doctrines of the Church of England.

5.2. Edwards' views on justification: marginal or mainstream?

As in his earlier anti-Arminian works, we have already seen several times that Edwards in his *Doctrin of Faith and Justification* portrays himself as an embattled, virtually lone defender of Reformed orthodoxy in the established Church. As he writes in the preface, '[t]he main body of our clergy hath other notions of *justification* than I have offer'd, and they are no friends to the *reciprocal imputation* which I insist upon.'⁷² He declares that these doctrines 'were almost extinguish'd in this generation, and even rooted out of the minds of men,' and that the 'credit of [justification by Christ's imputed righteousness] sinks of late among us.'⁷³

Much of the older scholarship echoed Edwards' claims. For example, C.F. Allison argued that the second half of the seventeenth century witnessed the eclipse of the Reformed or 'classical Anglican' view of justification by the moralism of Taylor, Hammond, Thorndike, and the Latitudinarians.⁷⁴ Bebbington agreed, claiming that in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries 'the doctrine of justification by faith had well-nigh disappeared. Calvinism was at a discount after the Restoration.'⁷⁵

While there is no doubt that the Reformed doctrine of justification was indeed rejected by many in the Church of England in Edwards' day, and that the view on

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 405.

⁷² *Ibid.*, xiii–xiv.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, xix, 315.

⁷⁴ C.F. Allison, *The Rise of Moralism: The Proclamation of the Gospel from Hooker to Baxter* (London: SPCK, 1966).

⁷⁵ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 35.

justification espoused by Tillotson, Patrick, and others was commonly upheld, we must nevertheless, as we did in chapter 4, inquire whether the Reformed doctrine of justification was indeed as scarce in the Church at the time as Edwards suggests, or whether there is once again compelling evidence to believe that Edwards' claims, as well as those of the older scholarship, were considerably exaggerated.

Hampton has already demonstrated that the Reformed doctrines of justification by faith alone and the imputation of Christ's righteousness, though not the majority position, nevertheless remained well within the pale of mainstream Church of England theology after the Restoration and at least up to the Hanoverian Succession.⁷⁶ The ensuing discussion will bypass the many prominent post-Restoration conformists who held Reformed views on justification but were no longer alive in Edwards' publishing heyday, such as Barlow, Tully, Lightfoot, Nicholson, Reynolds, Hacket, Wilkins, Hopkins, Horton, Conant, Stradling, and Crossman.⁷⁷ Instead, our focus will be on conformists who shared Edwards' views on justification and were active in the Church after 1689. Although more divines of those mentioned in chapter 4 can be named who affirmed justification by faith alone and the imputation of Christ's righteousness, it will be sufficient for the purposes of this chapter to consider only a sample of twenty-one Reformed contemporaries who shared Edwards' position on these doctrines.

⁷⁶ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 77–128.

⁷⁷ Barlow, *Genuine Remains*, 601–7; idem, *Two Letters Written by the Right Reverend Dr. Thomas Barlow, Late Lord Bishop of Lincoln, concerning Justification by Faith Only* (London, 1701); Thomas Tully, *Justificatio Paulina sine Operibus ex mente Ecclesiae Anglicanae, omniumque Reliquarum quae Reformatae audiunt, Asserta & Illustrata* (Oxford, 1674); idem, *Enchiridion*, 37–42; John Lightfoot, *The Whole Works of the Rev. John Lightfoot*, ed. John Rogers Pitman, 13 vols. (London, 1822–25), 3:270–72; 4:310; 6:246–47, 295–301; 12:391–93; Nicholson, *Exposition of the Catechisme*, 15, 19, 21, 67, 71–73; idem, *Exposition of the Creed*, 38–40, 212, 286–92; Edward Reynolds, *The Works of the Right Reverend Father in God, Edward Reynolds D.D.* (Savoy, 1679), 111, 154–55, 176–78, 382–83; Hacket, *Century of Sermons*, 171–72, 201, 425–26; Wilkins, *Ecclesiastes*, 76; Hopkins, *Two Covenants*, 25–27, 40–58, 126, 162–69, 179–204, 464–65; Horton, *Forty Six Sermons*, 9, 49–55, 136–38, 504–6, 536–38, 555; Conant, *Sermons*, 4:365; 6:371–72; Stradling, *Sermons*, 36–37, 70, 304–5; Crossman, *Young Mans Monitor*, 44–45, 160.

We begin with William Beveridge, Edwards' fellow recipient of Whitby's anti-Calvinist attacks. In both his *The Church-catechism Explained* (1704) as well as his exposition of the Church's eleventh and twelfth articles, Beveridge offers an unequivocal affirmation of justification by faith alone and the imputation of Christ's righteousness.⁷⁸ He clearly affirms the reciprocal imputation of the sins of believers to Christ and the imputation of his righteousness to believers, and, like Edwards, maintains that 'the acts of justification and sanctification are two distinct things... [justification] denotes the imputation of righteousness to us; [sanctification] denotes the implantation of righteousness in us... By our sanctification we are made righteous in our selves, but not accounted righteous by God; by our justification we are accounted righteous by God, but not made righteous in our selves.'⁷⁹ Like Edwards, Beveridge is clear that Christians are justified by faith 'not as it is an act in us, but as it applies Christ to us.'⁸⁰ And his reconciliation of the apparent discrepancy between the Apostles Paul and James on justification is virtually identical to that of Edwards.⁸¹

The same doctrines are again clearly affirmed in Beveridge's *Thesaurus Theologicus*, where he, like Edwards, also holds the remission of sins to be part of, but not synonymous with, justification.⁸² In his *Private Thoughts* Beveridge again clearly affirms justification by the imputed righteousness or active obedience of Christ, and remarks that 'I very much wonder, how any man can presume to exclude the active obedience of Christ from our justification before God; as if what Christ did in the flesh was only of duty, not at all of merit; or, as if it was for himself, and not for us.'⁸³ He

⁷⁸ William Beveridge, *The Church-Catechism Explained: For the Use of the Diocese of St. Asaph* (London, 1704), 77–79; idem, *Exposition*, 181–95.

⁷⁹ Beveridge, *Exposition*, 182–83.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 183.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 184–85, 190–92.

⁸² Beveridge, *Thesaurus*, 1:126–28, 362; 2:63, 74; 3:14, 85, 149–50, 207–8, 246, 277, 327–28; 4:292, 325, 334, 384, 386.

⁸³ Beveridge, *Private Thoughts*, 1:72, 81, 86–92; 2:187, 335–36.

furthermore insists that Christ's imputed righteousness does not negate the necessity of good works:

Not as if I believed that Christ so performed obedience for me, that I should be discharged from my duty to Him, but only that I should not be condemned by GOD in not discharging my duty to Him in so strict a manner as is requir'd. I believe the active obedience of Christ will stand me in no stead, unless I endeavour after sincere obedience in mine own person: His active as well as his passive obedience being imputed unto none but only to such as apply it to themselves by faith; which faith in Christ will certainly put such as are possess'd of it upon obedience unto GOD.⁸⁴

As with his doctrines of election and grace, we see that Beveridge was lucidly Reformed on justification. Robert Cornwall is off target, therefore, in saying that Beveridge's view on the Church's Article 11 on justification 'differs little' from that of Burnet, the latter of whom he strangely calls 'a devotee of the English Reformation.'⁸⁵ As we have seen, Burnet was accused in 1701 of being quite the opposite of that. Mark Olson, in turn, cites Beveridge as representative of 'the High Church Anglican' position on justification in contradistinction to the Reformed position – as if Beveridge's view was somehow at variance with Reformed soteriology.⁸⁶ As seen above, however, Beveridge's affirmation of the Reformed doctrines of justification by faith alone and the imputation of both Christ's active and passive obedience is undeniable. This again raises a point made in chapter 4, and previously also made by

⁸⁴ Beveridge, *Private Thoughts*, 1:91.

⁸⁵ Robert D. Cornwall, 'The Church and Salvation: An Early Eighteenth-Century High Church Anglican Perspective', *AEH* 62, no. 2 (June 1993): 176.

⁸⁶ Mark K. Olson, 'Whitefield's Conversion and Early Theological Formation', in *George Whitefield: Life, Context, and Legacy*, ed. Geordan Hammond and David Ceri Jones (Oxford: OUP, 2016), 38.

Hampton, namely, that while many high churchmen did reject the Reformed doctrines of election and justification, others did not, and we shall see more examples of such below.⁸⁷ There was therefore no singular ‘high church’ view on justification as Olson seems to suggest. High churchmen may have been united by their high view of episcopacy, strong opposition to dissent, and Tory politics, but they were perfectly capable of soteriological disagreements.

Robert South, Beveridge’s fellow high churchman, provides another such example. South affirms the double imputation of the sins of believers to Christ on the cross and the imputation of both Christ’s active and passive obedience to believers: ‘[Christ] not only by his passive obedience loose[d] the bands of death, and rescue[d] us from hell, but also by his active righteousness, entitle[d] us to the joys of heaven.’⁸⁸ He calls Christ’s righteousness ‘the sole, proper, and formal cause of our justification’, and insists that justification by faith, the imputed righteousness of Christ, and free grace do not lead to antinomianism, nor remove the necessity of good works, since faith is always accompanied by good works.⁸⁹

Edward Lake, a member of Jane’s committee in 1701 alongside Beveridge and South, clearly affirms justification by faith alone, the imputation of Christ’s righteousness, and union with Christ by faith.⁹⁰ Yet another member of that committee, the high churchman William Delaune, later Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Oxford, was clearly Reformed on justification. Preaching in St Paul’s Cathedral, Delaune declares that ‘[a]ll men [are] made sinners by [Adam’s] sin, as on the other side they are justified by Christ’s righteousness... The Son of GOD Himself takes [man’s] flesh, that in it He may undergo his penalty by dying for him; and in his life of sorrow upon earth performed the whole law, that man, who had lost his own

⁸⁷ For Beveridge as the epitome of a Reformed high churchman, see Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 23–24.

⁸⁸ South, *Sermons*, 3:397–98; 8:345.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 3:145–46, 150; 5:150–52; 7:104, 285; 10:30; 11:164.

⁹⁰ Lake, *Sixteen Sermons*, 72, 257–58.

righteousness, might now be cloath'd with his.⁹¹ He reiterates this elsewhere, such as when he preached on Christ as redeemer, 'by whose blood being cleansed from our sins, and in whose righteousness being cloathed, we have kind reception *at the throne of grace*... his unspotted life and meritorious death, are pleaded for us.'⁹² And this justification is peculiar to the elect: 'The elect themselves as sinners, have been punished in their redeemer, and that they are saved, is by his righteousness, through faith imputed to them.'⁹³

Henry Compton, in two conferences with his diocesan London clergy, associates the denial of Christ's imputed righteousness with 'the Pelagians, the Socinians, and their harbingers' (a thinly-veiled reference to the Remonstrants), affirms Christ's 'communicable righteousness, whereby we are justified before God through the blood of the Covenant,' and, like Edwards, holds that 'a virtuous and holy life is necessary to salvation, not as giving a right, but as the necessary means to obtain that right, which is purchased by Christ's blood.'⁹⁴ The published prayers of his fellow Reformed bishop, John Hall, are also laced with the imputation of Christ's righteousness.⁹⁵

Hall's Oxford comrade, John Wallis, was also thoroughly Reformed on justification.⁹⁶ He preached before the University of Oxford that 'it is by true faith in Jesus Christ, and no other way, that we can be reputed just or righteous in God's sight... Our works may serve to justifie our faith... But it is our faith [that] must justifie us.'⁹⁷ And so '[w]hoever therefore would be thus accounted righteous in God's sight, must be content to disclaim his own righteousness, as to any thing of merit therein:

⁹¹ Delaune, *Of Original Sin*, 18, 27, 31.

⁹² Delaune, *Twelve Sermons*, 87–89, Cf. 224, 229–32, 254.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 258–59.

⁹⁴ Compton, *Tenth Conference*, 9–10, 36; *idem*, *The Bishop of London's charge to the Clergy of his Diocese at his Visitation: Begun Ann. 1693 and concluded Ann. 1694* (London, 1696), 25–26, 33.

⁹⁵ Hall, *Jacob's Ladder*, 71, 80, 91, 143, 160.

⁹⁶ Wallis, *Brief and Easie Explanation*, 17.

⁹⁷ John Wallis, *The Life of Faith. In Two Sermons to the University of Oxford* (London, 1684), 4–6.

and accept of this imputed righteousness, on the account onely of Christ's righteousness and merits: to the benefit of which we are intituled by faith in him.'⁹⁸

Yet Wallis is adamant that 'when we thus exclude the merits of good works, as to our justification: we do not deny the necessity of them, as to our practice. For it is not every faith... that will justifie us in the sight of God: but, such a faith as works by love; and by works is faith made perfect.'⁹⁹ However, like Edwards and Beveridge, he holds that 'faith as a grace, or faith as a work, doth not justifie us. But onely as, by it, we embrace the righteousness of Christ; by which righteousness alone (so embraced) we can be justified.'¹⁰⁰ And, like Edwards, he points to the *ordo salutis* as requiring good works not for justification, but as part of sanctification: 'For we must be sanctified (as well as justified) if ever we be saved. And though justification and sanctification go always together; (for God justifies none, whom he doth not also sanctify:) yet the notions of the one and the other, are very different.'¹⁰¹ Wallis criticizes the Papists for confounding justification and sanctification and thereby including works in justification, before turning to his English colleagues who do likewise: 'But, why any of us, should be fond of that doctrine... (and that directly against the doctrine of our own Church) I do not see.'¹⁰² Moreover, like Edwards, Wallis cites the Church's Articles and Homilies as teaching justification by faith alone and the imputation of Christ's righteousness, whence he concludes that this 'is the doctrine, and language of the Church of *England*.'¹⁰³

William Burkitt in his *Expository Notes* elaborately discusses justification by faith alone and the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and reconciles the apparent discrepancies between the Apostles Paul and James on justification in the same way as

⁹⁸ Ibid., 6–7.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 7.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 16.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 8–9, 18–20.

¹⁰² Ibid., 8.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 12–18.

Edwards.¹⁰⁴ Nathaniel Parkhurst, like Edwards, criticizes those in the Church who include works in justification and ‘receive not the Scripture and Church of England doctrine of justification by faith, but reject it as opening a door to licentiousness, and unholy living, whereas it is evident, the greatest strictness of conversation is found among them that assert justification by faith, and not by works.’¹⁰⁵ Like Edwards, he holds that ‘though pardon is included in being justified, no man is properly justified in being pardoned, for his pardon declares him to have been guilty and liable to condemnation.’¹⁰⁶ Accordingly, justification requires and includes more than just pardon, since we are ‘utterly unable to stand before God in our best righteousness, without the sprinkling of [Christ’s] blood, and the imputation of his most perfect righteousness.’¹⁰⁷ He is also clear that saving faith is always attended by good works.¹⁰⁸

Lancelot Addison (1632-1703), dean of Lichfield, likewise considers good works to be the fruit of justifying faith, and clearly affirms the imputation of Christ’s righteousness or active obedience, as does William Reading.¹⁰⁹ Benjamin Jenks is in full agreement, whose *Submission to the Righteousness of God* (1700) is a thoroughly anti-Arminian work entirely on justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ.¹¹⁰ Henry Phillipps similarly preached that justification ‘is done in the moment of

¹⁰⁴ See, for example, Burkitt’s comments on Rom. 3:20-26; 4:22-24; 5:18-19; 10:4; 1 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 2:16; and Js. 2:20-24 in Burkitt, *Expository Notes*.

¹⁰⁵ Parkhurst, *Second Volume of Select Discourses*, 19, 157, 164.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁰⁷ Parkhurst, *Ten Select Discourses*, 29–31, 77; Cf. Parkhurst, *Second Volume of Select Discourses*, 58–59, 127–28.

¹⁰⁸ Parkhurst, *Ten Select Discourses*, 37–38.

¹⁰⁹ Lancelot Addison, *The Catechumen, Or an Account given by the Young Person to the Minister, of his Knowledge of Religion, upon his First Admission to the Lord’s Table* (London, 1690), 10–11, 31, 35; William Reading, *The Christian Instructed in the Principles of Religion, and the Concerns of Human Life* (London, 1717), 68, 71; *idem*, *Twenty Three Sermons*, 223; *idem*, *Sermons*, 1:12, 179; 2:658–59; 4:347.

¹¹⁰ Jenks, *Submission to the Righteousness of God*, *Passim*. See also *idem*, *A Second Century*, 253–55, 261–62, 337–41.

[believers'] *conversion*; for upon their closing with Christ by faith, the righteousness of Christ is imputed unto them, whereby their sins are covered, and their persons counted righteous in the sight of God'.¹¹¹ And David Jones, in a 1698 sermon before the University of Oxford, preached that

Christ is the surety of all believers, and has paid off all the debts which they owed to Almighty God, by fulfilling the righteousness of the law in his life, and by suffering the curse of the law at his death. And what a man's surety does, we all know, is the same in law, as if the man himself does it, *Heb. vii. 22*... His incarnation, passion, resurrection, ascension, [*sic*] and intercession is all ours. His wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and himself is all ours. Whatever he had, did, and suffer'd was for our sake and in our stead.¹¹²

Edward Waple holds, like Edwards, that the constitutive parts of saving faith are *assent*, *consent*, and *trust*: 'faith consists in the assenting to the truth of what Christ hath revealed; in a consenting to the goodness of it, and in a delivery up of the soul to Christ, in a full trust upon him for grace to perform duty, for remission of sins, and the reward he hath promised', adding that Christian obedience 'flow[s] from such a faith acting by love'.¹¹³ Waple also affirms the imputation of Christ's righteousness, saying that 'nothing can appear before God's tribunal, in bar to his justice, but the satisfaction and righteousness of Christ, nor be pleaded by us then, but Christ's righteousness, grace, and mercy.'¹¹⁴ Thomas Whincop likewise teaches that saving faith is always accompanied by good works, and adds that "'tis to be remembered, that whatsoever

¹¹¹ Phillipps, *Two Funeral Sermons*, 14–15.

¹¹² Jones, *Upon Act-Sunday*, 10, 21.

¹¹³ Waple, *Sermons*, 1:387.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2:383, 385; 3:341; *idem*, *Revelation*, 420. Cf. *idem*, *Sermons*, 1:384-385, 390; 3:107, 284-285, 310-311.

good work we do is no meritorious cause of our election or salvation, but necessary effects which follow, and from whence we may ground an assurance, to our unutterable comfort, that if we continue in them, our end shall be peace'.¹¹⁵

William Nicolson, in his 1716 Spital sermon preached before the mayor and aldermen of London at St Bride's, Fleet Street, proclaimed a clearly Reformed doctrine of justification.¹¹⁶ In this sermon, Nicolson expressly taught that Christians are justified

by our Saviour's righteousness becoming our own; inasmuch as our late offended Father is now graciously pleas'd to accept us also, on the account of our Lord's sufferings and obedience, as righteous before him... Through the perfect obedience of Christ my redeemer, imputed to me, I find acceptance with God; And, thro' the like imputation of his agonies and death, my sins are pardon'd.¹¹⁷

Yet for this gracious imputation to take place, 'there is still somewhat requir'd on our part (as a means of conveying the benefits to us, and preparing us for the due reception thereof), and this is *faith*.'¹¹⁸ Moreover, citing the Church's Homilies, Nicolson is clear that justifying faith 'is not idle, unfruitful, or dead; but quick and lively, working by charity.'¹¹⁹ And, like Edwards, he affirms that justifying faith is fiducial: 'tis not only the common belief of the Articles of our Creed; but also a firm trust and confidence in the mercies of God, a stedfast hope of having all temporal and eternal blessings from him, through the merits of his Son our Saviour.'¹²⁰ And although good works are necessary for salvation, not on account of any merit in them, but insofar as they are 'the necessary effects of a lively faith', yet

¹¹⁵ Whincop, *Sermon*, 13, 21.

¹¹⁶ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 1–3.

¹¹⁷ William Nicolson, *Faith and Good Works* (London, 1716), 11–12.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 14–15.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 15–16.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 16.

our own works, be they never so seemingly good (never so righteous) in the esteem of ourselves and our fellow-Christians, are not (in their own nature) of any sort of efficacy towards the attainment of everlasting salvation; which never can be had otherwise than by *grace, through faith*. Salvation will ever be, as both justification and sanctification are, the *gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast*.¹²¹

After preaching justification by faith alone and the imputation of Christ's righteousness in an impeccably Reformed manner, Nicolson also acknowledged these doctrines as such, calling them 'the doctrines of that truly (Reform'd) Christian faith which has now been preach'd.'¹²²

Matthew Hole (1639/40-1730), who in 1716 became rector of Exeter College, Oxford, repeatedly affirmed the imputation of Christ's righteousness, the exclusion of works from justification, and trust as a key element of justifying faith.¹²³ Gibbon Sutton's sermons are also well-stocked with these doctrines. To give one example, he writes:

[N]ot as an habit in us, or act exerted by us (though an active not a dead faith saves) not as a work of the law, required by the first commandment, does faith save, but through the sufficient righteousness of Christ, which as a proper instrument it apprehends and appropriates... God requires no more of us, than to believe: All other requisites to salvation naturally flow from faith, are inseparably link'd with faith, and faith cannot be without them.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Ibid., 21–22, 24–26.

¹²² Ibid., 28.

¹²³ Matthew Hole, *Practical Discourses on All the Parts and Offices of the Liturgy of the Church of England*, 6 vols. (London, 1714–19), 1:29–30, 43, 81, 88–89, 93–96, 114, 404, 406; 2:80, 246–47; 4.1:149, 498, 608; 4.2:192, 304–10, 504–7; 4.3:82, 177–78, 281; 6:67, 269, 274–75, 352. I am indebted to Lee Gatiss for directing me to Matthew Hole.

¹²⁴ Sutton, *Twelve Sermons*, 45–50, Cf. 60, 143–47, 183, 197, 199–200.

Arthur Bedford (1668-1745), vicar of the Temple Church in Bristol during Edwards' heyday and afterwards of Newton St Loe, Somerset, professing to teach 'nothing, but what exactly agrees with the antient confessions of all the reformed churches', and extensively citing the Church's Articles and Homilies in support, elaborately expounds a thoroughly Reformed doctrine of justification by faith alone, the fiducial and instrumental nature of justifying faith, the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and good works as the fruits of justifying faith.¹²⁵ Like Edwards, he affirms that good works are necessary as effects of God's grace and redemption, as the fruits of the Spirit, as qualifications to fit believers for the kingdom of heaven, and as evidence to believers of the genuineness of their faith, but he is equally clear that it is not on account of good works, but only of Christ's merits, that believers will attain eternal life.¹²⁶

John Wilder, in his sermons before the University of Oxford, was just as clear on these doctrines. He preached, for example, that '[Christ] took our iniquities upon himself, as if he had actually sinn'd, and mystically transferr'd to us the benefit of his personal sufferings, imputing to us sinners his own consummate righteousness, rendring us thereby as innocent, as tho' we had never transgress'd.'¹²⁷ In a much later sermon before the University in 1739, Wilder at first seems to oppose the doctrine of justification by faith alone, but upon closer inspection it is clear that he was attacking John Wesley's sermon titled *Salvation by Faith*, delivered before the University a year earlier in 1738, for, in his judgment, teaching justification by faith alone in such a way as to exclude the necessity of good works, whereas Wilder insists that justifying faith is 'such a faith as produceth good works.'¹²⁸ In other words, Wilder charges Wesley for espousing an antinomian understanding of justification by faith alone. This appears to

¹²⁵ Arthur Bedford, *The Doctrine of Justification by Faith, Stated According to the Articles of the Church of England* (London, 1741), 1–35, 61–75.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 54–55.

¹²⁷ Wilder, *Fifteen Sermons*, 1:203, 208–10; 2:107, 149.

¹²⁸ John Wilder, *The Trial of the Spirits: Or a Caution against Enthusiasm, or Religious Delusion* (London, 1739), 6–8.

be a rather uncharitable reading of Wesley, given that the Methodist preacher did clearly stress in that sermon that justifying faith 'is necessarily inclusive of all good works and all holiness.'¹²⁹ Nevertheless, while Wesley repeatedly emphasised that sinners are saved by faith alone, he did not mention anything about Christ's righteousness imputed to believers, which appears to have been Wilder's real problem with this sermon. Wilder, demonstrating his Reformed convictions, asserts:

After all, to speak strictly and properly, we are justified in the sight of God, neither by faith, nor by good works, nor by both together, on account of their imperfection; but by the imputed righteousness of Christ, which is the sole meritorious cause of our justification: our faith being only the instrument whereby we receive, or the condition whereby we are qualified to receive the efficacy thereof. And our good works no more than evidences, not to God, who knoweth all things, but to our selves, and other men, that we have a lively faith.¹³⁰

From the foregoing it is clear that there were many conforming contemporaries who shared Edwards' Reformed views on justification. Yet there were also some churchmen whose Reformed credentials are not as clear, but whose views on justification lean in a Reformed direction. We will limit ourselves to three examples.

The first is Thomas Sprat (1635-1713), bishop of Rochester and dean of Westminster, who, in a sermon preached before King William and Queen Mary in 1690, clearly holds to the imputation of believers' sins to Christ on the cross and asserts that 'without [Christ's] righteousness imputed to us, we can never be justified in the sight of God.'¹³¹ In 1694, in another sermon before the King and Queen, he again proclaimed that the 'Lamb of God has taken on himself our offences; and will impute to us his own merits',

¹²⁹ John Wesley, *A Sermon on Salvation by Faith* (London, 1738), 13.

¹³⁰ Wilder, *Trial of the Spirits*, 9.

¹³¹ Thomas Sprat, *Sermons Preached on Several Occasions* (Savoy, 1710), 329, 341-42, 345.

and that 'only the price of [Christ's] most precious blood, and the imputation of his unvaluable righteousness, can atone for the best of our thoughts and deeds, and make them acceptable; nay, even tolerable in the sight of God.'¹³² In this same sermon Sprat also speaks of faith in applicatory terms as 'lay[ing] hold on the merits of [Christ's] death and apply[ing] its virtues to our selves', and states that 'Christ is the only author of our salvation: faith is the principal instrument, as I may call it, of conveying it to us. Works are the certain consequences, the evidences, the life, the consummation of a saving faith.'¹³³ And this, he says, 'is the old, secure, certain method of salvation; this the only direct, unerring way to heaven; this the doctrine, which with one voice, and one consent, our Church teaches and professes.'¹³⁴

Secondly, Sprat's successor as bishop of Rochester, the high-church champion Francis Atterbury (1663-1732), clearly affirmed justification by faith alone. Responding to the Roman Catholic Obadiah Walker's reflections on the Reformation, Atterbury defends the honour of Luther and the 'doctrines of the Reformation', insisting that Luther never taught justification by a bare faith, but repeatedly emphasized 'the necessity of good works in order to salvation', and taught that '*faith alone* justifies, but not the *faith that is alone*.'¹³⁵ Atterbury concurs, concluding that 'good works are inseparable attendants upon this justifying faith, but they contribute nothing to the *act* of justification: they *make* not just, but are allwaies with them that are *made* so. This is L[uther]'s, was the Church of Rome's, and is now the C[hurch] of England's doctrine.'¹³⁶ Against Walker's assertion that Luther's doctrine of justification breeds a false sense of security, Atterbury retorts: 'This is such stuff as no patience can digest.'¹³⁷

¹³² Ibid., 419–20, 425.

¹³³ Ibid., 429–30, 432.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 431.

¹³⁵ Francis Atterbury, *An Answer to Some Considerations on the Spirit of Martin Luther and the Original of the Reformation* (Oxford, 1687), 10.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 10–11, Cf. 60.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 13–14.

He also professes that Luther's doctrine of the bondage of the will is, 'when fairly expounded, the same with the Church of *England's*: as such, we own it, and shall defend it.'¹³⁸ He furthermore equates Luther's doctrines with 'the doctrine of the Apostles, and the primitive church'.¹³⁹ Tyacke took Atterbury's affirmation of Luther's doctrines of justification and the bondage of the will, published in 1687, as evidence of 'the powerful position of Oxford Calvinism at this juncture', thus expressly classifying Atterbury as doctrinally Reformed.¹⁴⁰ Regardless of whether Tyacke was correct on Atterbury being Reformed, the high-church champion's doctrine of justification was evidently in continuity with the Reformed and Lutheran traditions, and at variance with that of Tillotson and associates.

Finally, Thomas Collis (1679-1745), a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, asserted, against such as reject reciprocal imputation because of its supposed unreasonableness, that 'it is faith in the [divine] revelation that can make us apprehend the redemption of the world; the justification of a sinner by the imputed righteousness of another; the recovery of life by another's death; and healing by another's stripes.'¹⁴¹ In other words, according to Collis, if people would not elevate their human reason above divine revelation, but rather submit to it, they would arrive at the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness to believers.

5.3. Conclusion

In this chapter we considered Edwards' affirmation of the Reformed doctrines of justification by faith alone and the imputation of Christ's righteousness, which he

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 65.

¹⁴⁰ Nicholas Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism c. 1530-1700* (Manchester: MUP, 2001), 304–5.

¹⁴¹ Thomas Collis, *The Jewish Philosophers Encounter'd and Confuted. In a Sermon Preach'd before the University of Oxford* (Oxford, 1725), 25.

defended against Arminian contemporaries such as Tillotson, Sherlock, Patrick, Fowler, and others. We have noted that, if Edwards' comments on the vitality of these doctrines within the Church of England in his day are to be taken at face value, and if much of the older scholarship is to be believed, then we should expect the Reformed doctrine of justification to have been on the brink of extinction in the Church.

Yet that is not what we have found. Instead, we have witnessed that during Edwards' heyday there were ample examples of conformists, including several bishops, who propounded lucidly Reformed doctrines of justification. And, like Edwards, they repeatedly appealed to the Church's Articles and Homilies as evidence that these doctrines are her official orthodoxy. As with the doctrines of election and efficacious grace, Edwards greatly exaggerated the demise of the Reformed doctrine of justification. While the Reformed position was certainly not the majority position in the Church at the time, it nevertheless was not peripheral, but remained well within the pale of mainstream Church of England theology. Even some divines whose Reformed credentials are not as clear, such as Sprat and Atterbury, held doctrines of justification which aligned with the traditional Protestant (both Reformed and Lutheran) position, and not with the avant-garde views of Tillotson and associates.

Hampton said that 'Tillotson's teaching on justification... provoked an overt protest only from that irascible Reformed polemicist, John Edwards.'¹⁴² And while it is true that Edwards was the only Reformed conformist at the time to explicitly censure Tillotson and associates by name and in print for their views on justification, it is simultaneously true that the doctrines which he advanced in opposition to those of Tillotson were shared by many of his contemporaries.

Commenting on early eighteenth-century Church of England theology, Gregory Scholtz averred that 'the theology of personal salvation which appears to be predominant in eighteenth-century Anglicanism bears little resemblance to that of the

¹⁴² Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 60.

Protestant Reformation.¹⁴³ He furthermore claimed that ‘the theology of salvation current in the [early] eighteenth century owes little, if anything, to the Augustinian theology of the Reformation... Indeed, [it] is at most points in fundamental opposition with the Reformers’ conception of Christian redemption.’¹⁴⁴ Similarly, Spurr postulates that ‘[t]he Anglican divines of the Restoration offended against the tenets of the Reformed Protestant tradition in their teaching on justification, faith and salvation.’¹⁴⁵

These claims, of course, depend on the selection of conforming authors one reads. If one’s analysis of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Church of England theology is confined to *The Whole Duty of Man* and such divines as Tillotson, Sherlock, Burnet, Patrick, Fowler, Clarke, Whitby, and Wake, then one would certainly arrive at Scholtz and Spurr’s conclusion. But such a selective reading necessarily produces a distorted picture of the theological landscape of the Church of England in Edwards’ day. If, however, one factors in that during this same period there were also eminent conformists such as Pearson, Barlow, Hopkins, Edwards, Beveridge, South, Compton, Hall, Jane, Delaune, Wallis, and Nicolson, whose soteriology did indeed stand in continuity with those of the Reformers and earlier Reformed orthodoxy, then Scholtz and Spurr’s claims become untenable, and a more balanced and accurate picture emerges. As was the case in chapter 4, most of the Reformed primary sources cited in this chapter do not feature in the extant scholarship, so it is little wonder that only one side of the story has been told.

It is abundantly clear from this study thus far that there was no singular non-Reformed ‘Anglican’ soteriology current at the time. Instead, there were competing soteriological currents within the later Stuart Church: a majority current, marked by a sharp discontinuity with Reformed orthodoxy, and a sizable minority current, marked

¹⁴³ Gregory F. Scholtz, ‘Anglicanism in the Age of Johnson: The Doctrine of Conditional Salvation’, *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 22, no. 2 (Winter, 1988–89): 203.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 206–7.

¹⁴⁵ Spurr, *Restoration Church of England*, 298.

by a fundamental continuity with Reformed orthodoxy. Hampton was therefore correct in claiming that the Reformed doctrine of justification ‘remained a serious theological option’ during the reign of Queen Anne.¹⁴⁶ Edwards was thus not a lone defender of a Reformed doctrine of justification which had virtually vanished in the Church after the Great Ejection of 1662. Instead, he was an outspoken advocate of a doctrine which still had a sizable, mainstream adherence within the established Church.

¹⁴⁶ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 127.

6. The reception of Edwards' works

6.1. Edwards' reception within the Church of England after 1716

In previous chapters we discussed the reception of Edwards' works within the Church during his own lifetime. In a reflection of the abiding Reformed-Arminian divide within the Church, we have seen that his works were well-received among significant segments of the clergy, while simultaneously being scorned by others. Yet, given that most of Edwards' works were published towards the twilight of his life, we also need to consider the reception of his works after his death in 1716, to gain an appreciation of his influence both within and beyond the Church of England. In chapter 1 we already noted that several writers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries remembered Edwards as having been one of the preeminent English theologians of his day, which implies that Edwards' works must have enjoyed a considerable readership. It is this broad reception of Edwards' works which we will explore in this chapter.

While Edwards' works certainly appealed to churchmen of a Reformed stripe, recognition of his worth and renown as a theologian is also visible in figures who differed from him in terms of theology or churchmanship. For example, on 18 April 1716, two days after Edwards' death, the nonjuring antiquarian Thomas Baker (1656-1740) eulogised Edwards, saying that '[t]he famous Dr. Edwards died here last Monday night, tho' the Bell has not yet gone for him, we seem to be struck dumb with so great a loss.'¹ Baker lived in St John's College, Cambridge, during Edwards' publishing heyday, and evidently held Edwards in very high esteem despite their different ecclesio-political views and despite Edwards having criticized Baker in his *Free Discourse*.²

¹ Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson Letters 42 fol. 267.

² Edwards, *Free Discourse*, iii-xxxviii.

Another great admirer of Edwards was the Arminian Thomas Stackhouse (c. 1681-1752), curate of Finchley, Middlesex, and afterwards vicar of Beenham, Berkshire. We noted in chapter 3 that Stackhouse remarked in 1729 that Edwards' *Theologia Reformata*, notwithstanding its 'purely Calvinistical' principles, was one of the two 'best known, and most in use' bodies of divinity at the time. Stackhouse read and cited Edwards extensively: not only is his *Body of Divinity* peppered all over with citations from Edwards, but so are his *A New History of the Holy Bible* (1733) and *A New and Practical Exposition of the Apostles Creed* (1747), where he calls Edwards' *Theologia Reformata* a 'noble magazine,' despite again warning that readers 'perhaps may take just offence at [Edwards'] earnestness in advancing Calvinian doctrines.'³ Stackhouse also cited Edwards approvingly in another three of his works,⁴ and demonstrates a deep familiarity with Edwards' overall corpus, providing clear evidence of the appeal of Edwards' works even among anti-Calvinists.

Stackhouse's very favourable but selective appropriation of Edwards comes to light when considering which doctrines he cited Edwards on, and which ones not. For example, in his chapters on Scripture, God's attributes, and the Trinity, Stackhouse cites Edwards no less than forty times altogether, whereas in his chapter directly following these, on the divine decrees and predestination, he does not even cite Edwards once, instead citing Burnet, Whitby, and the Remonstrants Curcellaeus and Limborch.⁵ This is no wonder, since Stackhouse is of the persuasion that

³ Thomas Stackhouse, *A New History of the Holy Bible, from the Beginning of the World, to the Establishment of Christianity* (London, 1733), Passim; idem, *A New and Practical Exposition of the Apostles Creed* (London, 1747), Passim.

⁴ Thomas Stackhouse, *The Miseries and Great Hardships of the Inferior Clergy, in and about London* (London, 1722), 82, 118; idem, *The Honour and Dignity of the True Ministers of Christ* (London, 1726), 8-9; idem, *A Defence of the Christian Religion from the Several Objections of Modern Antiscripturists* (London, 1731), 16, 491, 493.

⁵ Stackhouse, *A Complete Body of Divinity*, 44-133, Cf. 146-64.

[t]he *Remonstrants* have chose [*sic*] a better foundation for their opinion, and, in the pursuit of it, represented God in a more agreeable dress: The *Calvinists* have strong pretensions to Scripture, but perhaps may be mistaken in the interpretation of it: The *Remonstrants* have clearly the advantage, as to the opinions of the antient Church; but the *Calvinists*, it must be acknowledg'd, have a much nearer conformity to the doctrines of our own.⁶

Despite his personal Arminian persuasions, Stackhouse not only recognized Edwards as a theological authority of his time, but, in a display of how Arminians could selectively appreciate Edwards' works, he cited them profitably and extensively on various doctrines, while simultaneously eschewing the 'Calvinistical' doctrines propounded in them. Evidently there was much in Edwards' works that Arminian clergy could find beneficial without them agreeing with his main theological agenda.

Even Edwards' foes acknowledged his stature. Anthony Ashley-Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713), a pupil of Locke, said of Edwards in February 1707 that '[a] certain noted clergyman of learning and ability, and great reputed zeal, a great enemy of Mr. Locke, has (as I am lately told) turned rigid Calvinist, as to all the points of predestination, free-grace, &c. and not only this clergyman, but several more in the University of that high party, who ran as high in opposition to Calvinism but one reign or two since.'⁷ Not only did an anti-Calvinist disciple of Locke recognize Edwards as a 'noted clergyman of learning and ability', but he was also clearly aware that Edwards was not without 'Calvinist' sympathisers at the time, especially among high churchmen. As seen in chapter 3, this is exactly what Burnet, West, and Hancocke realized, much to their dismay.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 164.

⁷ Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury, *Several Letters Written by a Noble Lord to a Young Man at the University* (London, 1716), 6.

The conforming poet and physician Sir Richard Blackmore (1654-1729) wrote *The Accomplished Preacher* (1731) to supplement 'the worthy performances of some eminent divines,' such as Wilkins' *Ecclesiastes* and Edwards' *Preacher*, which he evidently rated as the two chief English homiletical works of the period.⁸ When Edwards' *Remains* were posthumously published that same year, a reviewer called him 'this learned author' and 'so learned a man'.⁹ Similarly, in *The Whitehall Evening-Post* of 10-13 January 1756, he is styled 'that eminent Divine John Edwards, D.D. of the University of Cambridge'.¹⁰

Edwards would prove especially influential among the leaders of the eighteenth-century evangelical revivals and their heirs – particularly George Whitefield, the most famous of the Calvinistic revivalists. Whitefield first encountered Edwards' works in the mid-Atlantic en route to America in September 1739, when he was introduced to Edwards' *Preacher* through the dissenter Jonathan Warne's anti-Arminian works, which quoted Edwards extensively. Especially noteworthy is Whitefield's reaction to his first encounter with Edwards' *Preacher*. On that very day he wrote that he was 'exceedingly strengthen'd' by it, and that in it '[t]here are such noble testimonies given before that University [of Cambridge], of justification by faith alone, the imputed righteousness of Christ, our having no free will, &c. that they deserve to be written in letters of gold.'¹¹

Such was Edwards' impression on Whitefield, that he soon became Whitefield's go-to author in defence of the Reformed doctrines as the Church of England's official orthodoxy. For example, in a 1740 letter to John Wesley concerning the latter's Arminianism, Whitefield directed Wesley to the arguments for God's eternal election

⁸ Richard Blackmore, *The Accomplished Preacher: Or, an Essay upon Divine Eloquence* (London, 1731), xxvii–xxviii.

⁹ 'Article XXIII', *The Present State of the Republick of Letters*, January 1731, 234–36.

¹⁰ *The Whitehall Evening Post; Or, London Intelligencer*, No. 1543, 10-13 January 1756.

¹¹ George Whitefield, *A Continuation of the Reverend Mr. Whitefield's Journal, from his Embarking after the Embargo, to his Arrival at Savannah in Georgia* (London, 1740), 19.

in Edwards' *Veritas Redux*, which he described as 'unanswerable'.¹² That same year, Whitefield in another two letters called Edwards 'that noble champion for the doctrines of grace,' and said that 'I heartily wish [*The Preacher*] written by Dr. Edwards, was in the hands of all the clergy of the Church of England – 'tis full of sound reasoning, and convincing arguments, and never more necessary to be read than at this time.'¹³ It is clear, moreover, that Whitefield's abhorrence of Tillotson's theology was largely derived from his reading of Edwards, as he extensively quoted Edwards in his contention that 'Archbishop *Tillotson* knew no more of true Christianity than *Mahomet*.'¹⁴ Edwards was thus undoubtedly one of the theologians who most impacted Whitefield's thought.

Yet, despite viewing Edwards as an authority on the Reformed doctrines, Whitefield did not regard him as a lone Calvinist within the established Church, but rather considered him alongside such figures as Ussher, Reynolds, Hopkins, and Wilkins as a group of 'great luminaries' who were 'authors of a like stamp' to the Puritans, and who maintained the same 'grand essential truths' which the Puritans upheld, but who 'liv'd and died in communion with the Church of England.'¹⁵ Furthermore, Whitefield included Edwards' *Preacher* and *Veritas Redux* in the prescribed reading material for his proposed college in Georgia, alongside works of the conforming Reformed divines Burkitt, Jenks, Pearson, and Whitefield's evangelical comrade at Oxford, James Hervey (1714-58).¹⁶ Whitefield also expressed his approval

¹² George Whitefield, *A Letter from the Reverend Mr. George Whitefield, to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley, in Answer to his Sermon, entitled Free Grace* (Boston, 1740), 6.

¹³ George Whitefield, *Three Letters from the Reverend Mr. G. Whitefield* (Philadelphia, 1740), 5, 12.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2–12; *idem*, *A Continuation of the Reverend Mr. Whitefield's Journal, after his Arrival at Georgia, to a Few Days after his Second Return thither from Philadelphia* (London, 1741), 19; *idem*, *A Letter to the Reverend Dr. Chauncy* (Boston, 1745), 10.

¹⁵ George Whitefield, 'The Recommendatory Preface', in *The Works of that Eminent Servant of Christ Mr. John Bunyan*, 3rd ed., vol. 1 (London, 1767), iii–iv.

¹⁶ George Whitefield, *The Works of the Reverend George Whitefield*, 7 vols. (London, 1771–72), 3:499.

of Edwards' Reformed conforming contemporaries Beveridge and Hopkins, and considered them to be theologically on his side.¹⁷ In other words, although Whitefield regarded Edwards as *the* great champion of Calvinism within the post-Restoration Church of England, he nevertheless viewed him not as an eccentric figure, but as part of a trajectory of conforming Reformed divines ranging from the mid-seventeenth century right up to his own day.

Edwards was also read among Whitefield's Reformed evangelical contemporaries. Just as Whitefield directed Wesley to Edwards' works, so the Welsh revivalist Howell Harris (1714-73), who remained in the established Church, pointed his Arminian critics to Edwards to confirm that he merely preached the Church's Articles which many clergymen were neglecting.¹⁸ In 1754 the evangelical Thomas Hartley (1708/9-84), rector of Winwick, Northamptonshire, called Edwards 'a learned divine of the Church of England', and expressed his appreciation of Edwards' criticisms of Tillotson and others, whom he judged to have 'warped much from the Reformation standard'.¹⁹

Edwards' works were furthermore appreciated by Thomas Jones (1729-62), chaplain of St Saviour's, Southwark, and a colleague of the Reformed conforming evangelicals James Hervey and William Romaine. In 1755 Jones bemoaned the decline in church attendance and the degeneracy of manners in English society, and laid the blame squarely on 'the moral preaching, so much in vogue.'²⁰ Jones instead called for the preaching of distinctly Christian doctrines, particularly 'justification by Christ alone,' and remarked that an eagerness to avoid any hint of antinomianism had led to 'the present method of preaching justification by works' and 'rank Arminianism'.²¹

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2:166, 206; 4:192; 5:34, 417.

¹⁸ Hugh J. Hughes, *Life of Howell Harris the Welsh Reformer* (Newport, 1892), 157–65; Ray, 'Religious Thought', 323.

¹⁹ Thomas Hartley, *Sermons on Various Subjects* (London, 1754), xx–xxi.

²⁰ Thomas Jones, *A Sermon Preached at the Visitation of the Reverend Dr. Thackeray, Archdeacon of Surry* (London, 1755), 15.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 15–16.

Edwards' influence is clear, as Jones mentions him by name, calls him 'this great and good divine', and quotes his *Preacher* as having long since warned of the perils of Arminianism.²²

Thomas Sharp (1693-1758), archdeacon of Northumberland, showed familiarity with Edwards' works, and the so-called 'Macaroni Parson' William Dodd (1729-77) of West Ham and St Olave Hart Street, London, called Edwards' *Preacher* 'a work, which cannot fail of being highly useful to all young divines especially, which tho' not to be recommended without some limitation is, bating two or three passages, in my poor judgment at least wholly unexceptionable, and cannot fail of producing good effects, if read with a view to improvement.'²³ Even the Arminian Methodist John Fletcher (1729-1785), who remained within the Church, recommended Edwards' *Preacher*.²⁴

Edwards' criticisms of the doctrinal deficiency of *The Whole Duty of Man* also proved influential. This bestseller was edited and republished from 1741 onwards – with the imprimatur of King George II – under the title *The New Whole Duty of Man*, which by 1795 had undergone twenty-five editions. This 'new' version, as its long title indicates, was intended to supply 'the articles of the Christian faith which are wanting in [the 'Old' *Whole Duty of Man*], tho' essentially necessary to salvation.' Edwards's influence is clear at least from the fifth edition (1746) onward, where, a few pages before the title page, under the royal seal of George II, a brief address 'to every devout Christian' is found which quotes Edwards, who is described as a 'learned and judicious divine,' and states that those things which Edwards had 'long since' complained of as lacking in the 'Old' *Whole Duty of Man* are 'now supplied in *this NEW Whole Duty of Man*.'²⁵

²² *Ibid.*, 16–17.

²³ Thomas Sharp, *Discourses Touching the Antiquity of the Hebrew Tongue and Character* (London, 1755), 162–63; William Dodd, *Discourses on the Miracles of our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, vol. 2 (London, 1758), 256.

²⁴ John Fletcher, *The Works of the Rev. John Fletcher*, vol. 7 (London, 1826), 396.

²⁵ *The New Whole Duty of Man, containing the Faith as well as Practice of a Christian*, 5th ed. (London, 1746).

While this *New Whole Duty of Man* did heed Edwards' call by including an exposition of the Apostles' Creed, it nevertheless did not teach doctrines such as eternal election and the imputation of Christ's righteousness as expressly as Edwards would have liked. Nor did it oppose these doctrines, for that matter. The book does quote Article 11, which clearly affirms justification by faith alone, but nowhere is the imputation of Christ's righteousness mentioned.²⁶ Concerning predestination, it at most appears to reject a supralapsarian view of reprobation, and to warn against presumptuously considering oneself elect while only having a bare faith without good works.²⁷ It does mention that God 'from the beginning hath chosen us to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit', and that Christians are 'predestinate to be conformed to the image of Christ, and efficaciously called by God, elect, sanctified, and justified; and shall be perfectly holy when they die', but does not elaborate.²⁸ Yet one should perhaps not expect in-depth discussions on predestination and the efficacy of grace in a book designed for family devotions, and while Edwards' every wish may not have been granted, this *New Whole Duty of Man* did possess significantly more doctrinal content than Allestree's original, partly in reaction to Edwards' critiques.

Not content with this republication, a similar book surfaced in 1756 titled *A New Whole Duty of Man Improv'd*. Again Edwards' influence is clear, as its discussion of the sixth commandment is entirely extracted from Edwards' *Theologia Reformata*.²⁹ This is all the more noteworthy since the anonymous editors of this 'improv'd' version were not Reformed, but lauded Tillotson and Clarke in the preface as having been among 'the best men, and greatest divines, that ever were in the world.'³⁰ What this shows, as

²⁶ *Ibid.*, viii–ix.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 23, 362.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 107–8.

²⁹ *A New Whole Duty of Man Improv'd; Explaining the Necessary Faith and Practice of every Christian; made more Plain and Practical than in either the Old or New Whole Duty of Man* (London, 1756), 273–88.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, v.

seen before, is that it was perfectly possible for divines who differed from Edwards doctrinally to nevertheless esteem him as a theologian of consequence.

The impact of Edwards' criticisms of Tillotson's moralistic theology was also acknowledged by Tillotson's biographer, Thomas Birch (1705-66). Writing in 1752, Birch called Edwards 'the reviver of Calvinism in the church of England', and suggested that his *Preacher* had the effect of rendering Tillotson odious to Calvinistic 'zealots' and particularly to the 'late pretenders to an exalted and supernatural piety' – a reference to the Reformed evangelicals, who found Edwards' works so appealing and Tillotson's so appalling.³¹ Through the centuries Tillotson has widely been regarded as a rationalistic, moralistic, Socinian-leaning divine, and several modern studies have attempted to rid him of this reputation.³² The question naturally arises concerning how this reputation came about. On the one hand it could merely have been a commonly-held perception of Tillotson, but on the other, as Tillotson's biographer admits, and as the primary sources clearly reveal, Edwards was by far Tillotson's most outspoken critic and repeatedly pointed out his affinity to Socinianism. We already witnessed how this directly informed Whitefield's disesteem of Tillotson. Just as Edwards had left a long-lasting scar on Locke's reputation, so he appears to have done the same to Tillotson, which could not have occurred, of course, had he not enjoyed a broad readership.

Edwards' works continued appealing to conforming evangelicals throughout the eighteenth century. We saw in chapter 1 that Sir Richard Hill, a great patron of Calvinistic evangelicals, considered Edwards an 'eminent' divine who 'carr[ies]

³¹ Thomas Birch, *The Life of the Most Reverend Dr. John Tillotson, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury* (London, 1752), 360.

³² William S. Spellman, 'Archbishop John Tillotson and the Meaning of Moralism', *AEH* 56, no. 4 (December 1987), 404–422; Gerard Reedy, 'Interpreting Tillotson', *The Harvard Theological Review* 86, no. 1 (January 1993): 81–103; Peter Facer, 'John Tillotson: A Reappraisal' (MLitt Thesis, Durham University, 2000); Jacob M. Blosser, 'John Tillotson's Latitudinarian Legacy: Orthodoxy, Heterodoxy, and the Pursuit of Happiness', *AEH* 80, no. 2 (June 2011): 142–73.

weight'. In 1768, when six Calvinistic Methodist students were expelled from St Edmund Hall, Oxford, for their 'enthusiasm' and their Calvinism, Hill responded with his *Pietas Oxoniensis*, which cited Edwards' *Veritas Redux* in defence of the students' orthodoxy.³³ In two follow-up books Hill again cited Edwards approvingly on the Reformed doctrines of election and justification being the official doctrines of the established Church, and called Edwards 'learned' and his *Preacher* an 'excellent book'.³⁴ In 1798 Hill again quoted Edwards extensively in defence of the Reformed doctrines being the established doctrines of the Church, and called Edwards 'very learned and pious', adding that 'I would earnestly recommend [Edwards' *Preacher*] to every candidate for holy orders.'³⁵

In his *The Church of England Vindicated from the Charge of Arminianism* (1769), Hill's fellow evangelical Augustus Toplady (1740-1778), vicar of Broadhembury, Devon, also reacted to the expulsion of the six students from St Edmund Hall. Toplady copiously quoted Edwards' *Veritas Redux* to support his argument that Arminianism was repugnant to the Church's established doctrine, and referred to Edwards as 'the great and famous Dr. John Edwards, who flourished in the reigns of King William and Queen Anne, and was both a member of the university of Cambridge, and one of its brightest ornaments' and 'that learned and able divine.'³⁶ Like Whitefield, Toplady wielded Edwards' works against Wesley and his Arminianism. In his *More Work for Mr. John Wesley* (1772), Toplady did not hide his adulation for Edwards, hailing him as

³³ Richard Hill, *Pietas Oxoniensis: Or, a Full and Impartial Account of the Expulsion of Six Students from St Edmund Hall, Oxford* (London, 1768), 57; Catharine K. Firman, 'A Footnote on Methodism in Oxford', *Church History* 29, no. 2 (June 1960): 163-64.

³⁴ Richard Hill, *A Defence of the Doctrines of Sovereign Grace: Being a Full Answer to a Letter Lately Addressed to the Author of Pietas Oxoniensis* (London, 1768), 31-32; idem, *Goliath Slain: Being a Reply to the Reverend Dr Nowell's Answer to Pietas Oxoniensis* (London, 1768), 106-7.

³⁵ Richard Hill, *An Apology for Brotherly Love, and for the Doctrines of the Church of England* (London, 1798), 80-82, 179-86.

³⁶ Toplady, *Church of England Vindicated*, 21-23, 52, 60, 67-69, 74.

'the celebrated Dr. John Edwards of Cambridge... the dust of whose volumes I am not worthy to wipe.'³⁷ Toplady also repeatedly appealed to Edwards in his *Historic Proof of the Doctrinal Calvinism of the Church of England* (1774).³⁸ However, while Toplady clearly viewed Edwards as the preeminent champion of Calvinism within the later Stuart Church, he did not regard him as an idiosyncratic figure. Instead, like Whitefield, Toplady manifests his awareness of other eminent later Stuart conforming Reformed divines such as Sanderson, Barlow, Tully, Wilkins, Pearson, Hopkins, Beveridge, and South.³⁹ Toplady was thus evidently aware of an array of eminent Reformed conformists in Edwards' lifetime.

Edwards' works proved to be staple reading material among Hill and Toplady's conforming Reformed evangelical contemporaries. Toplady and his fellow Reformed conformist William Mason (1719-91) were two of the early editors of *The Gospel Magazine*, founded in 1766. Like Toplady, Mason lauded Edwards as 'that noble champion for the doctrines of the Church of England' and 'that judicious divine', furthermore calling his *Preacher* an 'excellent book.'⁴⁰ It is not surprising that *The Gospel Magazine's* early editors found Edwards so appealing, since it was expressly founded to promote within the established Church the very doctrines which Edwards had championed as her orthodoxy. For this same purpose, the evangelical Thomas Bowman (c. 1728-92), vicar of Martham, Norfolk, wrote his *A Review of the Doctrines of the Reformation* (1768), which cites Edwards' *Preacher* and *Veritas Redux*, and calls him 'a pious and learned writer' and 'judicious.'⁴¹ Another conforming evangelical in

³⁷ Augustus Toplady, *More Work for Mr. John Wesley: Or, A Vindication of the Decrees and Providence of God from the Defamations of a Late Printed Paper, entitled, 'The Consequence Proved'* (London, 1772), 67.

³⁸ Augustus Toplady, *Historic Proof of the Doctrinal Calvinism of the Church of England*, 2 vols. (London, 1774), 1:275; 2:374, 672, 676.

³⁹ Toplady, *Church of England Vindicated*, 15, 75, 142; idem, *Historic Proof*, 1774, 1:122-23; 2:672-76, 716.

⁴⁰ William Mason, *Methodism Displayed, and Enthusiasm Detected*, 4th ed. (London, 1759), 29, 31.

⁴¹ Thomas Bowman, *A Review of the Doctrines of the Reformation, with an Account of the Several Deviations to the Present General Departure from them* (Norwich, 1768), 122-23, 126-27.

Toplady's circle, Ambrose Serle (1742-1812), was likewise familiar with Edwards' works.⁴²

It is clear that the main reason why Edwards' anti-Arminian works so appealed to Reformed conformists of the eighteenth century was due his pointed and elaborate arguments that the Reformed doctrines of election and justification were nothing other than the Church's established doctrines, which supplied them with polemical ammunition against their Arminian counterparts.

That Edwards' works were employed this way did not escape Arminian notice. For example, in 1773 an antagonist of evangelicals, Josiah Tucker (1713-99), dean of Gloucester, blamed the influence of Edwards alongside that of the English delegates to the Synod of Dort, William Prynne, Henry Hickman, John Yates, Francis Rous, George Carleton, and 'many others' for, in his opinion, leading to a distortion of the Articles in favour of Calvinism.⁴³ Edwards' influence in swaying clergy in a Reformed direction was thus acknowledged decades after his death by a prominent anti-Calvinist. Edwards' influence was in a manner also acknowledged by Mark Noble in 1806, who, besides noting that Edwards' *Theologia Reformata* was valued as a 'magazine of divinity', remarks that '[Edwards'] works often led young divines into error: sometimes, in the morning, preaching Arminianism; and, in the afternoon, Calvinism.'⁴⁴

In 1762 an anonymous conforming critic of the Arminian George Horne (1730-92), later bishop of Norwich, recommended Edwards' *Doctrin of Faith and Justification* as an antidote to Horne's moralistic view of justification, and agreed with Edwards that the

⁴² Ambrose Serle, *Horæ Solitariae; Or, Essays upon Some Remarkable Names and Titles of Jesus Christ* (London, 1776), 28, 65.

⁴³ Josiah Tucker, *Letters to the Rev. Dr. Kippis, Occasioned by his Treatise, entituled, A Vindication of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers* (Gloucester, 1773), 132–33.

⁴⁴ Noble, *Biographical History*, 2:124.

Church's Articles are 'certainly Calvinistical.'⁴⁵ Moreover, this author saw Edwards as but one of several eminent post-Restoration conformists who upheld a Reformed view on justification, as he also cites Edwards' contemporaries Beveridge, Hopkins, and Reynolds in favour of this doctrine.⁴⁶ Once again, we here see an eighteenth-century churchman who was distinctly conscious of the fact that Edwards was far from the only prominent Reformed divine in the later Stuart Church.

We have witnessed that Edwards' *Preacher* was broadly appropriated for its anti-Arminian polemics, but its homiletical advice was also appreciated. We have seen that Sir Richard Blackmore in 1731 rated *The Preacher* as one of the preeminent homiletical manuals of the age, and similarly James Henry Worman, writing much later in 1872, considered Edwards one of 'the principal [British] homiletical writers of the 18th century' alongside Philip Doddridge, David Fordyce and George Campbell.⁴⁷ Since the other three only wrote decades later, it appears that, in Worman's eyes, Edwards' *Preacher* was the standout British homiletical work in the early eighteenth century.

Edwards' works were still read appreciatively within the Church towards the end of the eighteenth century. In 1781, Thomas Stevens (c. 1739-1809), one of George III's preachers at Whitehall, agreed with Edwards' critiques of moralistic sermons, and commended Edwards' *Preacher*, whom he called 'rigidly orthodox, and strenuous for the grand doctrines of the Christian faith, and the articles of our established church.'⁴⁸ Moreover, Edwards' *The Doctrines Controverted between Papists and Protestants* was

⁴⁵ *Annotations on a Sermon Preached before the University of Oxford, On Sunday, June 7, 1761. By George Horne* (London, 1762), 12, 14.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 15, 26, 56.

⁴⁷ James H. Worman, 'Homiletics', in *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, ed. John M'Clintock and James Strong, vol. 4 (New York, 1872), 316.

⁴⁸ Jean-Frédéric Ostervald, *Lectures on the Exercise of the Sacred Ministry*, trans. Thomas Stevens (London, 1781), 98n*.

recommended in *The Protestant Magazine* in 1782, and his ΠΟΛΥΠΟΙΚΙΛΟΣ ΣΟΦΙΑ was cited in 1783 by John Bennett, curate of St Mary's, Manchester.⁴⁹

In 1792 William Cleaver (1742-1815), principal of Brasenose College, Oxford, and successively bishop of Chester, Bangor, and St Asaph, recommended several of Edwards' works to young students of divinity.⁵⁰ Cleaver's recommendation was not without effect, as a clergymen in his diocese of Chester, James Glazebrook (d. 1803), chaplain of Latchford, Cheshire, noted in 1794 that Edwards' *Preacher* is 'a work recommended by the present bishop of Chester', and hence cited it extensively, furthermore extolling Edwards as a 'very competent judge' in homiletics.⁵¹ Edwards' works were once more recommended in 1796 by Vicesimus Knox (1752-1821), a conforming clergyman and headmaster of Tonbridge School, Kent.⁵² At the end of the eighteenth century, Thomas Tregenna Biddulph (1763-1838), the Reformed evangelical vicar of St James' Church, Bristol, even rated Edwards' *Veritas Redux* as worthier of a read on the doctrine of original sin than Beveridge and Ussher's treatments of that doctrine.⁵³ As if to reiterate the broad readership of Edwards' works, the high churchman Edward Barry (1759-1822) said in 1799 that Edwards was 'an author who is frequently read and quoted.'⁵⁴

⁴⁹ *The Protestant Magazine; Or, Christian Treasury*, vol. 2 (London, 1782), 91, 94-95; John Bennett, *Divine Revelation Impartial and Universal: Or, an Humble Attempt to Defend Christianity, upon Rational Principles, against the Infidelity and Scepticism of the Age* (London, 1783), 68.

⁵⁰ William Cleaver, *A List of Books Recommended to the Younger Clergy, and other Students in Divinity, within the Diocese of Chester*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1792), 15, 19, 30, 40, 64.

⁵¹ James Glazebrook, *The Practice of what is called Extempore Preaching Recommended* (Warrington, 1794), 2, 18-20, 27-28, 56, 81-82, 84, 91.

⁵² Vicesimus Knox, *Christian Philosophy: Or, an Attempt to Display by Internal Testimony, the Evidence and Excellence of Revealed Religion*, 2nd ed. (London, 1796), 588.

⁵³ Thomas Tregenna Biddulph, *Essays on Some Select Parts of the Liturgy of the Church of England* (Bristol, 1798), 66.

⁵⁴ Barry, *Friendly Call*, 86.

Edwards' works continued to be read, cited, or recommended by churchmen well into the nineteenth century. When the Arminian bishop of Lincoln George Pretyman Tomline (1750-1827) published his *Refutation of Calvinism* (1803), the biblical commentator, rector of Aston Sandford, Buckinghamshire, and founding secretary of the Church Missionary Society, Thomas Scott (1747-1821), responded with a defence of the Reformed doctrines in which he cited Edwards' *Veritas Redux*.⁵⁵ Despite quoting Edwards appreciatively, Scott nevertheless expressed dismay at Edwards' odd speculation concerning a 'third sort' of people:

Dr. Edwards, whom no man will deny to have been eminently able and learned; and who maintains both personal election, and reprobation, in stronger terms than most modern Calvinists; yet supposes a third sort of persons, who are neither elect nor reprobate, but placed in a state of probation peculiar to themselves – I consider this as a most astonishing instance, of so able a reasoner and divine, and so strong a Calvinist, maintaining a sentiment, at once unscriptural on his own principles, and unphilosophical: and it shews, in a striking manner, how inconsistent the most rational, learned, argumentative, and pious persons are, in some special instances.⁵⁶

Still, Scott clearly had a high regard for Edwards, and in another work again quoted him approvingly against Roman Catholicism.⁵⁷ Edwards' works were also appreciated by other prominent nineteenth-century Reformed evangelical conformists, including another early secretary of the Church Missionary Society, Edward Bickersteth (1786-

⁵⁵ Thomas Scott, *Remarks on the Refutation of Calvinism, by George Tomline*, vol. 2 (London, 1811), 293, 754–55.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 2:664.

⁵⁷ Thomas Scott, *The Works of the Late Rev. Thomas Scott*, ed. John Scott, vol. 10 (London, 1825), 207–11.

1850), and J.C. Ryle (1816-1900), later bishop of Liverpool.⁵⁸ Despite regarding the style of Edwards' anti-Arminian polemics as too harsh, Bickersteth nevertheless said of a number of Edwards' works that there is '[m]uch acuteness, learning, and piety in these writings.'⁵⁹ As late as 1873 the Cambridge University librarian Henry Bradshaw still referred to Edwards as 'a well known Cambridge divine of Queen Anne's time'.⁶⁰

6.2. Edwards' reception in Britain beyond the Church of England

Edwards' works were of great appeal to eighteenth-century dissenters and other Reformed theologians in Britain beyond the Church of England. In his own lifetime Edwards firstly enjoyed the admiration of some dissenters in Cambridge itself, some of whom may well have been among his circle of friends. The first instance was a man whom Edwards once cited approvingly,⁶¹ the Leiden-educated James Peirce (1674-1726), who in the years 1701-06 ministered to the Presbyterian congregation in Green Street, Cambridge. In 1710, in response to William Nicholls' *Defensio Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, which attacked dissenters, Peirce quoted large chunks of Edwards' *Preacher* and *Veritas Redux* in defence of the Reformed doctrines and against Nicholls' accusations of schism.⁶² In a clear indication of the broad readership of Edwards at the time, Peirce remarked that '[Edwards'] works are in every English reader's hands'.⁶³

⁵⁸ Bickersteth, *Christian Student*, 474, 482, 498, 500, 506, 513, 517, 520, 522; J.C. Ryle, *Home Truths. Being Miscellaneous Addresses and Tracts*, vol. 5 (Ipswich, 1858), 178.

⁵⁹ Bickersteth, *Christian Student*, 474, 498.

⁶⁰ Henry Bradshaw, *Collected Papers of Henry Bradshaw* (Cambridge, 1889), 70.

⁶¹ Edwards, *Some New Discoveries*, 127-30.

⁶² James Peirce, *Vindiciæ Fratrum Dissidentium in Anglia, Adversus V.C. Gulielmi Nicholsii, S.T.P. Defensionem Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (London, 1710), 154-57, 195-97, 301, 428-31.

⁶³ James Peirce, *A Vindication of the Dissenters: In Answer to Dr. William Nichols's Defence of the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England*, vol. 3 (London, 1717), 265.

John Cumming (d. 1729), Peirce's successor as Presbyterian minister in Green Street, lauded Edwards as one of the 'most valuable doctors of the Church of England'.⁶⁴ After bemoaning the common defection from the doctrines of the Reformation, Cumming wrote that '[t]his general apostacy [*sic*] from the doctrines of the Gospel, especially those which broke out of the Antichristian darkness by the ministry of the first *Reformers*, is so fully detected by that learned advocate and invincible champion of Reform'd Theology, the incomparable Dr. *Edwards*, that I need only refer you to his *Preacher*, for a full conviction of this matter.'⁶⁵

Not all Cambridge dissenters admired Edwards alike, however. The hyper-Calvinist Joseph Hussey (1660-1726), minister of the Independent meeting-house at Hog Hill, Cambridge, in a 1707 criticized Edwards' *Veritas Redux* for, to his mind, misrepresenting the supralapsarian view of God's decree.⁶⁶

Beyond Cambridge Edwards' works also enjoyed a broad dissenting readership. The London Presbyterian John Shower (1657-1715) in 1702 considered Edwards one of the 'greatest' names among 'modern' authors, whereas his fellow Presbyterian Thomas Barker (n.d.) called Edwards a 'learned man' and a 'judicious and exact critick'.⁶⁷ The London-based Independent minister Joseph Jacob (c. 1667-1722) in 1705 considered the two best contemporary English authors on Christ's millennial kingdom to be 'those two famous doctors, Dr. *Thomas Burnet* of the *Charter-house*, and Dr. *John Edwards* of *Cambridge*, than whom in our age none have discover'd more strength of *argument*, or purity of *style*; the *thought* and *language* of both far exceeding the *usual*

⁶⁴ John Cumming, *The General Corruptions and Defection of the Present Times, as to Matters of Religion; with other Threat'ning Symptoms* (London, 1714), 36.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁶⁶ Joseph Hussey, *God's Operations of Grace: But No Offers of his Grace* (London, 1707), 280.

⁶⁷ John Shower, *Sacramental Discourses, on Several Texts, before, and after the Lord's Supper*, vol. 2 (London, 1702), 233; Thomas Barker, *Dr. Wells's Letter to a Dissenting Parishioner Considered* (London, 1707), 8, 36.

proportion; and of these, the *last* in an eminent manner, deserves the thanks of all good Christians for his late excellent book, intitl'd, the *Preacher*.'⁶⁸

In 1707 another dissenter, John England (n.d.) from Sherborne, Dorset, extensively cited Edwards in his defence of 'moderate Calvinism', and lauded Edwards as a 'worthy author, whose design, in the main, for restoring Calvinism, I heartily approve.'⁶⁹ Edwards' *Preacher* and *Arminian Doctrines Condemn'd* were furthermore positively cited in 1717 by Jean Graverol (1647-1718), a Huguenot minister in London, on Calvinism being the true doctrine of the Church of England's Articles.⁷⁰

As we saw in the first chapter, the evangelical hymnist William Hammond (1719-83), who ultimately left the established Church to join the Moravians, regarded Edwards as having been one of 'the most learned divines' of his time, and quoted Edwards' *Preacher* and *Doctrin of Faith and Justification* in defence of the Reformed doctrines of justification and efficacious grace as the official doctrines of the Church's Articles and Homilies.⁷¹ Another dissenter, Jonathan Warne (fl. 1737-42), published seven tracts against Arminianism in which he extensively quoted Edwards, urged his readers to read Edwards, and said Edwards was 'as great a divine of the Church of *England* as ever wrote in vindication of her doctrines'.⁷² It was Warne's tracts, as noted,

⁶⁸ Joseph Jacob, *Desolations Decypher'd and the Kingdom of Christ Discover'd* (London, 1705), iii.

⁶⁹ John England, *A View of Arminianism compared with Moderate Calvinism* (London, 1707), Preface, 37-38, 176-180, 200-201.

⁷⁰ Jean Graverol, *Defense de la Religion Reformée, de ses Pasteurs et de ses Synodes* (London, 1717), 20.

⁷¹ William Hammond, *The Marrow of the Church*, 3rd ed. (London, 1779), 217-18, 263, 276.

⁷² Jonathan Warne, *The Church of England Turn'd Dissenter at Last* (London, 1737), iv-vi, 38, 48, 56; idem, *Arminianism, the Back-Door to Popery* (London, 1738), ii-iv; idem, *The Dreadful Degeneracy of a Great Part of the Clergy, the Means to Promote Irreligion, Atheism, and Popery* (London, 1739), 3; idem, *The Spirit of the Martyrs Revived in the Doctrines of the Reverend Mr. George Whitefield, and the Judicious, and Faithful Methodists* (London, 1740), 54; idem, *The Bishop of London's Doctrine of Justification, in his Late Pastoral Letter* (London, 1740), 36, 39, 43; idem, *An Attempt to Promote True Love and Unity between the Church of England and the Dissenters who are Calvinists, of the Baptist, Independant, and Presbyterian Perswasions* (London, 1741), 44; idem, *The Downfal of Arminianism* (London, 1742), 6.

which first introduced Whitefield to Edwards' works. Notably, Warne names Edwards alongside his fellow Reformed conformists Beveridge, Burkitt, Jenks, and 'many others, too tedious to mention' as examples of the 'godly learned men within these [past] thirty years' who have preached 'the old Church of England doctrine'.⁷³ For the umpteenth time, we see that a strong Reformed current within the Church of England during Edwards' lifetime was recognized by conformists and dissenters alike.

Yet another dissenting witness to this abiding Reformed current was the Cambridge Baptist Robert Robinson (1735-90), who dismisses Jean le Clerc's assertion that Arminianism was 'supported by *les plus habiles gens de l'église Anglicane*,' and asks: 'Was this foreign Arminian reviewer so well acquainted with the other *habiles gens*, on the Calvinistick side, as to be able to justify his comparison?'⁷⁴ Robinson mentions Edwards' dispute with Whitby on the same page, and clearly means that Le Clerc is wrong to assert that the smartest people in the English Church favoured Arminianism in Edwards' day, given the eminent figures on the 'Calvinistick side' of the Church.

The London-based Independent Thomas Ridgley (c. 1667-1734) called Edwards 'a learned writer', and his fellow Independent Richard Rawlin (1686/7-1757) extolled him as 'an eminent writer' and 'a learned man who has deserved well of the Church by his many writings in defence of the doctrines of the Reformation.'⁷⁵ Ridgley's friend John Sladen (1687-1733) furthermore cited Edwards' *Veritas Redux* in the well-known anti-Arminian Lime Street Sermons of 1730-31.⁷⁶

⁷³ Warne, *Church of England Turn'd Dissenter*, 2.

⁷⁴ Jean Claude, *An Essay on the Composition of a Sermon*, trans. Robert Robinson, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1778), 427.

⁷⁵ Thomas Ridgley, *A Body of Divinity: Wherein the Doctrines of the Christian Religion are Explained and Defended*, vol. 2 (London, 1733), 171; Richard Rawlin, *Christ the Righteousness of his People; or, the Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Him* (London, 1741), 63-64.

⁷⁶ *A Defence of Some Important Doctrines of the Gospel, in Twenty-Six Sermons. Most of which were Preached in Lime-Street*, vol. 1 (London, 1732), 191.

The Independent heavyweight Isaac Watts (1674-1748) called Edwards a ‘worthy son of the established church’, rated Edwards’ writings on Christ’s atonement as among the best on the subject, and regarded Edwards, alongside Stillingfleet and Theophilus Gale, as writers who have ‘with great learning’ discoursed on the insufficiency of natural theology.⁷⁷ Watts’ Independent comrade Philip Doddridge (1702-51) also appreciated Edwards’ works,⁷⁸ as did Doddridge’s pupil Benjamin Fawcett (1715-80).⁷⁹ Another popular evangelical preacher, Rowland Hill (1744-1833), ordained deacon in the established Church but practically an Independent, in 1795 called Edwards ‘[t]he great and learned Dr. Edwards, author of that much esteemed and valuable book entitled *The Preacher*, and one of the most eminent divines in the reign of Queen Anne.’⁸⁰ A year later, in 1796, the librarian of Dr William’s Library in London, Joseph Lomas Towers, described him as ‘Dr. John Edwards, an orthodox clergyman, who flourished at the conclusion of the last and commencement of the present century’ and called him ‘a learned divine of the English church.’⁸¹

Several others could be named who read Edwards with approbation,⁸² but by now the picture is clear: Edwards’ works were widely esteemed among dissenters, who

⁷⁷ Isaac Watts, *The Improvement of the Mind*, vol. 2 (London, 1782), 83; Isaac Watts, *The Redeemer and the Sanctifier: Or the Sacrifice of Christ and the Operations of the Spirit Vindicated* (London, 1736), 12; idem, *The Strength and Weakness of Human Reason* (London, 1731), 213.

⁷⁸ Philip Doddridge, *The Family Expositor: Or, a Paraphrase and Version of the New Testament*, 6 vols. (London, 1739-56), 2:559, 569, 571-72; 5:469; 6:175; idem, *A Course of Lectures on the Principal Subjects in Pneumatology, Ethics, and Divinity*, 2nd ed. (London, 1776), 9, 208, 309, 334.

⁷⁹ Benjamin Fawcett, *The Grand Inquiry, Am I in Christ or Not? Explained and Recommended, in Order to Help any Man to Know the State of his own Soul* (Salop, 1756), viii-ix.

⁸⁰ Rowland Hill, *An Expostulatory Letter to the Rev. W.D. Tattersall* (London, 1795), 22.

⁸¹ Joseph Lomas Towers, *Illustrations of Prophecy*, vol. 2 (London, 1796), 525, 751.

⁸² David Millar, *Remarks upon a Sermon Entitled, The Acceptableness of Sincerity to God: And the Unprofitableness of a Mere Speculative Faith to Any Man’s Salvation, Considered* (London, 1727), 48-49; idem, *The Omniscience of God, Stated and Vindicated* (London, 1732), 49, 181, 209; John Enty, *A Preservative against Several Abuses and Corruptions of Reveal’d Religion* (Exeter, 1730), 55; John Mason, *The Student and*

generally considered him a champion of Reformed orthodoxy and one of the preeminent English theologians of his day. Even in the mid-nineteenth century, the head of the dissenting Homerton College, John Pye Smith (1774-1851), recommended Edwards' *Theologia Reformata* as one of the 'most useful' bodies of divinity of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, and called him 'a divine of eminent piety, learning, and literary activity, and a strenuous defender of the Calvinistic system.'⁸³ Moreover, like so many before him, Pye Smith saw Edwards not as a lone Calvinist, but as part of a steady stream of post-Restoration Reformed conformists, as he explicitly listed Edwards alongside Reynolds, Hopkins, Barlow, Beveridge, and South as eminent 'Episcopal clergy at and after the Restoration' who were 'Calvinistic'.⁸⁴

Edwards' reputation as a divine of note was furthermore firmly established in Scotland. Already in 1697, William Jameson (fl. 1689-1720), a lecturer at the University of Glasgow, cited Edwards in support of his contention that many episcopal clergymen espoused theological errors without facing any ecclesiastical discipline.⁸⁵ Similarly, an anonymous 1707 Scottish pamphlet attributed to James Webster (1659-1720), minister of Edinburgh's Tolbooth Church, cited Edwards' *Preacher* to show that many English clergymen had departed from the Reformed doctrines of the Thirty-nine Articles, and listed this among other reasons against a Scottish union with England.⁸⁶ In 1774

Pastor: Or, Directions how to Attain to Eminence and Usefulness in those Respective Characters (London, 1755), 69, 81, 83; Timothy Lamb, *The Words of Knowledge. A Sermon Preached December 25, 1755*. (London, 1756), 16; Andrew Fuller, *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia, 1845), 14–15.

⁸³ John Pye Smith, *First Lines of Christian Theology* (London, 1854), 42.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 297.

⁸⁵ William Jameson, *Nazianzeni Querela et Votum Justum: The Fundamentals of the Hierarchy Examined and Disproved* (Glasgow, 1697), 102.

⁸⁶ James Webster, *Lawful Prejudices against an Incorporating Union with England; Or, Some Modest Considerations on the Sinfulness of this Union, and the Danger Flowing from it to the Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1707), 12.

Thomas Walker (1704-80), minister of Dundonald, Ayrshire, named Edwards alongside Tillotson, Patrick, Stillingfleet, Pearson, Burnet, Tenison, Scott, Hopkins, South, and Beveridge as the major divines in the Church of England in the post-Restoration period, and described them as ‘men of indisputable learning, and undeniable abilities.’⁸⁷ Significantly, he accurately added that ‘some of them were zealous defenders of the doctrine of the Reformed churches’.⁸⁸ Once again, we find another witness to the abiding Reformed current within the later Stuart Church.

In his edition of Mosheim’s *Ecclesiastical History* (1765), Archibald Maclaine (1722-1804), minister of the Scots Presbyterian church in The Hague, the Netherlands, listed Edwards among the preeminent Protestant divines in both Britain and continental Europe during the early eighteenth century.⁸⁹ Similarly, the celebrated John Brown of Haddington (1722-87), writing in 1771, recognized Edwards as one of the preeminent Protestant divines of the eighteenth century, while another Scottish Presbyterian, John Fairly (1729-1806), in 1770 called Edwards ‘an English divine of note.’⁹⁰

The Scottish Reformed evangelical John Erskine (1721-1803) spoke of Edwards’ *The Preacher* in very recommendatory terms, commented that the Reformed doctrine of election had been ‘ably discussed, particularly by Dr. John Edwards and Mr. Toplady’, and in one place, just before quoting some of Edwards’ homiletical advice, said that he refers his readers ‘to [Edwards] whose respected name may, perhaps, add something

⁸⁷ Thomas Walker, *A Vindication of the Discipline and Constitutions of the Church of Scotland, for Preserving Purity of Doctrine* (Edinburgh, 1774), 29.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁸⁹ Johann Lorenz von Mosheim, *An Ecclesiastical History, Antient and Modern, from the Birth of Christ, to the Beginning of the Present Century*, trans. Archibald Maclaine, vol. 2 (London, 1765), 624.

⁹⁰ John Brown of Haddington, *A General History of the Christian Church, from the Birth of our Saviour to the Present Time*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh, 1771), 268, 383; John Fairly, *An Humble Attempt in Defence of Reformation Principles; Particularly on the Head of the Civil Magistrate* (Edinburgh, 1770), 25.

to the force of his remark.⁹¹ Evidently Erskine considered Edwards a theologian of consequence, and expected his readership to agree. Likewise the Scottish philosopher John Goldie (1717-1811) in 1784 called Edwards ‘judicious’ and said ‘I earnestly recommend to every Christian reader [Edwards’ *Veritas Redux*] as being decisive’ on the freedom of the will, predestination, faith, and so forth.⁹² Even into the nineteenth century, Edwards was remembered in Scotland by the Independent minister William Orme (1787-1830), who in 1824 said that Edwards ‘was a man of piety and considerable learning, and by no means destitute of acuteness... he must be no ordinary scholar who does not find instruction in [Edwards’ works].’⁹³

6.3. Edwards’ reception in America

Even in his own lifetime, Edwards’ works had a significant impact on the other side of the Atlantic, with arguably the preeminent theologian in New England at the time, Cotton Mather (1663-1728), citing Edwards in 1710 as exemplary for his defence of Reformed orthodoxy and saying that ‘[m]ore *Edwards*’s would be vast blessings, where the *primitive doctrines of Christianity* are depraved.’⁹⁴ Beginning at least as early as 1706,⁹⁵ Edwards and Mather enjoyed trans-Atlantic correspondence, little of which survived. In an extant letter dated 10 December 1712, Mather told Edwards that

⁹¹ John Erskine, *Simplicity Recommended to Ministers of the Gospel, with Respect to their Doctrine, Method, Style & Delivery in Preaching* (London, 1783), 14, 59.

⁹² John Goldie, *The Gospel Recovered from its Captive State, and Restored to its Original Purity*, vol. 4 (London, 1784), 29, 98.

⁹³ William Orme, *Bibliotheca Biblica: A Select List of Books on Sacred Literature* (Edinburgh, 1824), 163.

⁹⁴ Cotton Mather, *Bonifacius. An Essay upon the Good, that is to be Devised and Designed, by those who Desire to Answer the Great End of Life, and to go Good while they Live* (Boston, 1710), 180.

⁹⁵ Cotton Mather, *Diary of Cotton Mather 1681-1708* (Boston, 1911), 550.

[y]our works (I must continue to inform you) are of great esteem in this country, and besides the many that have been sold, those which I have been the owner of I have caused by way of loans to visit many parts of these colonies, especially our two colleges [i.e. Harvard and Yale]. Your *Theologia Reformata* is longed for, and you have many friends here who pray for your life.⁹⁶

In 1711 Mather republished his *The Old Pathes Restored*, expressly designed to assist ministers in the southern colonies and students in the College of William & Mary in their combat against Arminianism, and not only dedicated it to Edwards, but also ended the work with a quote from Edwards' *Preacher*, whom he calls 'a famous divine of the Church of England.'⁹⁷ In a strange twist, William Whiston (1667-1752), whom Edwards attacked for his 'Arianism' in 1712 (more on which in the next chapter), came across Mather's book and decided to republish it in London in December 1712 with his own preface attached. As Whiston clarifies in this preface, he republished it not because he believed the doctrines which Mather propounds, but, pointing out how both Edwards and Mather had employed the Church's Articles in their advocacy of Calvinism, he desired to show the necessity of 'laying aside all such human and fallible rules as our 39 Articles, not only as to the points I have been chiefly concern'd in, but as to others also.'⁹⁸ Whiston thus cited Edwards' frequent appeals to the Articles as an example of how maintaining the Articles as the Church's confession can have undesirable consequences, and from this argued against the necessity of subscription to the Articles.

Whiston did, of course, have very personal reasons for desiring subscription to the Articles to be waived, or for the Articles to be altered. Two years earlier, in 1710, he

⁹⁶ Kenneth Silverman, ed., *Select Letters of Cotton Mather* (Baton Rouge, 1971), 128.

⁹⁷ Cotton Mather, *The Old Pathes Restored* (Boston, 1711), Dedicatory epistle, 24; idem, *Diary of Cotton Mather 1709-1724* (Boston, 1912), 81-82.

⁹⁸ William Whiston, Preface to *The Old Paths Restored*, by Cotton Mather, 2nd ed. (London, 1712).

was dismissed from his chair as Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge on account of his 'Arianism', which conflicted with both the Thirty-nine Articles as well as the ecumenical creeds. It is therefore unsurprising to see him dismissing creeds and confessions in this way. Whiston furthermore wanted to discredit Edwards by highlighting his association with New England Congregationalists, and to dismiss Edwards' and Mather's Calvinism, which he disparages as the 'plain mistakes of our first Reformers' and as doctrines founded on the mere 'human authority' of the Thirty-nine Articles, which he belittles as 'the opinions of the Church of England' and 'the bare opinions of men'.⁹⁹ Edwards attacked Whiston's preface in 1714, responding to Whiston's anti-Calvinist and 'Arian' views and complaining that Whiston 'publicly defam'd' not only himself but also Mather, whom, he insists, 'deserv'd well of the Church of *England*' for having 'most strenuously and assiduously asserted and vindicated those doctrines which our Church hath taught us.'¹⁰⁰ As his son Samuel Mather (1706-85) reveals, Cotton Mather planned, with Edwards' assistance, to publish a book in England titled *Goliathus Detruncatus*, written against Whiston's 'Arianism', to which Edwards had even written a preface, but Edwards died in 1716 shortly before it was to be sent to the publishers, and the manuscripts were somehow lost, meaning the book was never published.¹⁰¹

In a 1713 letter to their mutual friend John Woodward of Gresham College, Mather called Edwards 'my excellent friend', and in two letters (in 1714 and 1717) to John Stirling (1654-1727), principal of the University of Glasgow, Mather again dubbed him 'the famous Dr. Edwards'.¹⁰² Mather's affection for Edwards shines through in his *Utilia* (1716), where he calls him 'my worthy friend, Dr. *John Edwards* of *Cambridge* (who

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Edwards, *Some New Discoveries*, 120.

¹⁰¹ Samuel Mather, *The Life of the Very Reverend and Learned Cotton Mather* (Boston, 1729), 73.

¹⁰² Silverman, *Select Letters of Cotton Mather*, 135, 150.

has written *many books*, to defend the *labouring truths* of the Gospel, which I earnestly recommend unto the reading, especially of our young students & preachers).¹⁰³

Mather certainly went the extra mile in promoting Edwards' works in America. As noted, he loaned out his copies of Edwards' works to ministers across New England, broadcasted Edwards' name to ministers in the southern colonies, and 'earnestly' recommended Edwards' works to divinity students. Mather's diary on 4 October 1713 furthermore reveals that he endeavoured to 'prevail on [American] booksellers, to become furnished from England, with certain books, that our candidates of the ministry ought in the first place, to be supplied withal', and included Edwards' *Preacher* and *Theologia Reformata* among these desired imports.¹⁰⁴ Mather even explicitly recommended Edwards' *Preacher* in a 1722 sermon before the Anniversary Convention in Boston, which ministers from across New England attended.¹⁰⁵ In 1725 he referred to Edwards as a 'famous Episcopalian divine', and in his *Manuductio ad Ministerium* (1726), a popular handbook for divinity students, he again recommended Edwards' *Preacher*, *Veritas Redux*, and *Theologia Reformata*, which he told students 'will be no contemptible treasure for you, on all occasions.'¹⁰⁶ Mather may well have been involved when his regular publisher, Samuel Kneeland in Boston, republished Edwards' *The Whole Concern of Man* with some additions in 1725.¹⁰⁷ Samuel Mather followed his father's recommendation and read Edwards, whom he referred to as 'the

¹⁰³ Cotton Mather, *Utilia. Real and Vital Religion Served, in the Various & Glorious Intentions of it* (Boston, 1716), Preface.

¹⁰⁴ Mather, *Diary of Cotton Mather 1709-1724*, 243.

¹⁰⁵ Cotton Mather, *The Minister. A Sermon, Offer'd unto the Anniversary Convention of Ministers, from Several Parts of New-England, Met at Boston, 31 d. III m. 1722* (Boston, 1722), 30.

¹⁰⁶ Cotton Mather, *The Palm-Bearers. A Brief Relation of Patient and Joyful Sufferings; and of Death Gloriously Triumphed Over* (Boston, 1725), 55; idem, *Manuductio Ad Ministerium. Directions for a Candidate of the Ministry* (Boston, 1726), 84, 87, 98, 149.

¹⁰⁷ John Edwards, *The Whole Concern of Man: Or, what he ought to Know and Do, in order to Eternal Salvation*, 2nd ed. (Boston, 1725).

noted author of *Theologia Reformata*, and Cotton Mather's nephew Thomas Walter (1696-1725) followed suit, saying that when his Arminian interlocutor will encounter Edwards, it will look 'like a little frog leaping in the face of a lion.'¹⁰⁸

Given such promotion, not to mention other ways in which they were disseminated in America, it is unsurprising to find that Edwards' works were read by a range of American preachers, including Benjamin Colman (1673-1747), William Cooper (1694-1743), John Tennent (1707-32), the famous Jonathan Edwards (1703-58), James Allin (n.d.), Thomas Foxcroft (1697-1769), David McGregore (1710-77), Amos Adams (1728-75), Edward Cheever (1717-94), and William Marshall (1740-1802).¹⁰⁹

Edwards' works were of such appeal in America that in 1720 a Boston-based Arminian Episcopalian, John Checkley (1680-1754), felt compelled to publish an entire tract, not against Calvinism in general, but specifically against Edwards.¹¹⁰ Notably, as if to acknowledge his awareness that the Church of England still retained a strong

¹⁰⁸ Samuel Mather, *A Dissertation concerning the Most Venerable Name of Jehovah* (Boston, 1760), 16; Thomas Walter, *A Choice Dialogue between John Faustus a Conjurer, and Jack Tory his Friend* (Boston, 1720), 25–26, 54.

¹⁰⁹ Benjamin Colman, *Ossa Josephi. Or, the Bones of Joseph* (Boston, 1720), 23; William Cooper, *The Doctrine of Predestination unto Life, Explained and Vindicated* (Boston, 1740), 63–64, 81; John Tennent, *The Nature of Regeneration Opened, and it's Absolute Necessity, in Order to Salvation, Demonstrated* (Boston, 1735), 23; Edwards, *Works*, 26:22, 115, 123–25, 140, 174; James Allin, *What Shall I Render! A Thanksgiving Sermon Preached at Brooklin, Nov. 8th, 1722* (Boston, 1722), 10; Thomas Foxcroft, Preface to *The True Scripture-Doctrine concerning Some Important Points of Christian Faith*, by Jonathan Dickinson (Boston, 1741), vi; idem, Preface to *A Second Vindication of God's Sovereign Free Grace*, by Jonathan Dickinson (Boston, 1748); David McGregore, *The Spirits of the Present Day Tried* (Boston, 1742), 8; Amos Adams, *Religious Liberty an Invaluable Blessing* (Boston, 1768), 36; Edward Cheever, *Ministers Are to 'Testify the Gospel of the Grace of God,' and to Conduct themselves in such a Manner, that they may Finish their Course, and their Ministry with Joy* (Boston, 1772), 26; William Marshall, *The Propriety of Singing the Psalms of David in New Testament Worship* (Perth, 1776), 8–9, 12.

¹¹⁰ John Checkley, *Choice Dialogues between a Godly Minister, and an Honest Country-Man, Concerning Election & Predestination* (Boston, 1720).

Reformed contingent, Checkley conceded in the preface that ‘there are many who call themselves *Church of England-Men*, who won’t like what these papers contain’.¹¹¹

Other eighteenth-century Episcopalians in North America had a more positive evaluation of Edwards’ works. For example, in 1789 his *ΠΟΛΥΠΟΙΚΙΛΟΣ ΣΟΦΙΑ* was recommended to the clergy of Quebec by Charles Inglis (1734-1816), first bishop of Nova Scotia, whereas in 1792 an anonymous Episcopalian of New York called Edwards ‘judicious’ and cited his *Preacher* in defence of ‘the established doctrines of our Church, the glorious truths of the reformation.’¹¹² Moreover, as was the case in England, not all New England Arminians were equally opposed to Edwards: despite being an Arminian rationalist divine, Ebenezer Gay (1696-1787), Congregationalist minister at Hingham, Massachusetts, nevertheless approvingly quoted Edwards’ *Preacher*.¹¹³

6.4. Edwards’ reception in continental Europe

Except for his *Concio et Determinatio* (1700) and a 1709 Welsh translation of his *Hearer*, all of Edwards’ works were published in English. One would therefore not expect him to have gained much of a reputation on the Continent. Yet his reputation did manage to spread into Germany. We saw in chapter 2 that Limborch complained to Locke about Edwards being praised in Saxony for his anti-Socinian works, and indeed a German translation of Edwards’ *Socinian Creed* was published in Berlin in 1719 as *Der Socinianische Glaube*.¹¹⁴ In 1724, eight years after Edwards’ death, the

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, vii.

¹¹² Charles Inglis, *A Charge Delivered to the Clergy of the Province of Quebec, at the Primary Visitation holden in the City of Quebec, in the Month of August 1789* (Halifax, 1790), 70; *The Doctrines of the Church; Or, Methodism Displayed, and Enthusiasm Detected* (New York, 1793), 38.

¹¹³ Ebenezer Gay, *Ministers are Men of like Passions with others. A Sermon Preach’d at Barnstable, May 12. 1725* (Boston, 1725), 17.

¹¹⁴ John Edwards, *Der Socinianische Glaube* (Berlin, 1719).

Reformed Tübingen theology professor, Christoph Matthaeus Pfaff (1686-1760), reckoned Edwards' extended body of divinity among the notable English systematic works of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.¹¹⁵

Similarly, the Lutheran Georg Wilhelm Alberti (1723-1758) in 1752 called Edwards 'famous' (*berühmter*) in relation to his anti-Arminian polemics, while the philologist Johann Christoph Adelung (1732-1806) in 1787 called Edwards 'a famous English doctor and professor of theology at Cambridge' (*ein berühmter Englischer Doctor und Professor der Theologie zu Cambridge*).¹¹⁶ As late as 1866, the Reformed theologian Johannes Heinrich August Ebrard (1818-1888) recognized Edwards as one of the preeminent Church of England divines of his day.¹¹⁷ Clearly, as far as German observers were concerned, Edwards was a prominent figure in the Church of England of his time.

6.5. Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen firstly that Edwards' works enjoyed extensive popularity within the eighteenth-century Church of England, particularly, though not exclusively, among Reformed evangelicals. His works were also, to use Mather's phrase, 'of great esteem' among Reformed divines beyond the established Church, in England, Scotland, and America, with his recognition even reaching into Germany. While many readers revered his exegetical and anti-Socinian works, yet the primary appeal to his broad readership was his anti-Arminian works, in which he stoutly

¹¹⁵ Christoph Matthaeus Pfaff, *Introductio in Historiam Theologiae Literarium Notis Amplissimis* (Tübingen, 1724), 253–54.

¹¹⁶ Georg Wilhelm Alberti, *Briefe betreffende den Allerneuesten Zustand der Religion und der Wissenschaften in Groß-Brittanien*, vol. 3 (Hanover, 1752), 748; Johann Christoph Adelung, *Fortsetzung und Ergänzungen zu Christian Gottlieb Jöchers Allgemeinen Gelehrten-Lexico*, vol. 2 (Leipzig, 1787), 833.

¹¹⁷ Johannes Heinrich August Ebrard, *Handbuch der Christlichen Kirchen- und Dogmen-Geschichte*, vol. 4 (Erlangen, 1866), 72.

defended Reformed orthodoxy as the official theology of the Church of England, thereby confirming both Reformed conformists and dissenters in their Reformed convictions and supplying them with polemical ammunition against Arminians.

There can be no doubt about Edwards' place among the preeminent divines in the Church of England of his day: scores of witnesses confirm it, both in Edwards' own lifetime, as seen in earlier chapters, as well as in the generations following his death, as seen in this chapter. Moreover, these witnesses time and again perceived Edwards not as a lone Calvinist voice crying in the wilderness, but were rather lucidly conscious of the fact that there was a sturdy stream of Reformed divines within the later Stuart Church of which Edwards was but one, albeit the most outspoken.

It is worth noting that Edwards achieved his standing as one of the preeminent divines of his era without any significant preferments wherewith to commend his works to readers – no title of bishop, dean, archdeacon, prebendary, canon, master, or provost. His title pages typically only state 'John Edwards, D.D.', while at times adding 'Sometime fellow of St John's College, Cambridge'. Others commonly listed alongside Edwards as eminent divines of the period (such as Tillotson, Burnet, Stillingfleet, Sherlock, Patrick, and Beveridge) had their preferments to enhance their reputations and the reception of their works. Edwards, however, achieved his recognition as one of the major English theologians of his day purely on the merit of his preaching and published works, assisted by the fact that the Reformed cause which he championed resonated with many of his readers within the Church.

There are two issues touched on in this chapter which require further attention. The first concerns Edwards' role in the 'anti-Arian' campaign against Whiston and Clarke. The second relates to Edwards' popularity among Reformed dissenters, their appropriation of his works in defence of their nonconformity, and how this might have impacted on his standing within the Church of England at the time. These issues, along with other factors related to Edwards' standing in the later Stuart Church, will be addressed in the next, penultimate chapter.

7. Other factors in locating Edwards

7.1. Edwards and the 'Arian' controversy concerning Whiston and Clarke

In the previous chapter we noted that, between 1711 and Edwards' death in 1716, Edwards and his friend in New England, Cotton Mather, were at loggerheads with William Whiston and his 'Arianism.' Even after Whiston lost his professorial chair at Cambridge in 1710, his continuous published rejection of Trinitarian orthodoxy ensured that he remained the object of fierce 'anti-Arian' attacks for several years thereafter.¹

Paul Gilliam has argued, based on Whiston's expressed views as well as on modern revisionist scholarship on 'Arianism', that it is technically incorrect to label Whiston an 'Arian', since his views were rather in agreement with the subordinationist Christology of Eusebius of Caesarea.² A key contention of Gilliam is that 'all non-Nicene Christologies should not be lumped together into one group called "Arian".'³ While granting that Whiston was not an 'Arian' in a strict sense, yet, as far as early eighteenth-century churchmen were concerned (who were indeed prone to lumping together non-Nicene Christologies under the term 'Arianism'), the fact that Whiston openly spoke of the Son as 'created' and renounced the 'Athanasian heresy' of the Son being uncreated, co-eternal with, and eternally begotten by the Father, was more than sufficient to charge him with 'Arianism' – a charge which was widely agreed upon by

¹ For an account of Whiston's trial, see Eamon Duffy, "'Whiston's Affair': The Trials of a Primitive Christian 1709–1714", *JEH* 27, no. 2 (April 1976): 129–50.

² Paul R. Gilliam III, 'William Whiston: No Longer an Arian', *JEH* 66, no. 4 (October 2015): 755–71; William Whiston, 'The Council of Nice Vindicated from the Athanasian Heresy', in *Three Essays* (London, 1713), 3–4, 13.

³ Gilliam, 'William Whiston', 758.

Whiston's critics.⁴ Moreover, the controversy surrounding Whiston came to be commonly known as the 'Arian' controversy. Accordingly, while acknowledging its technical inaccuracy, we will use this term in quotation marks to conform to its early eighteenth-century polemical usage, which broadly denoted an anti-Athanasian Christology rejecting the Son's co-equality and consubstantiality with the Father.⁵

Having already aimed several stabs at Whiston in his earlier writings, Edwards wrote his *Some Brief Observations and Reflections on Mr Whiston's Late Writings* (1712) to rebut Whiston's contention that an 'Arian' or 'Eusebian' Christology was the doctrine of ante-Nicene Christianity before it became corrupted by the 'heresy' of Athanasius. In the preface Edwards first continues his denunciation of Daniel Whitby, against whom his *Arminian Doctrines Condemn'd* of the previous year was aimed, but this time takes a swipe at Whitby's subordinationist Christology, which he takes as evidence of the Salisbury precentor's 'friendly compliance with the whole *Arian* and *Socinian* scheme.'⁶

After promising a thorough treatment of the Trinity in his soon-to-be-published *Theologia Reformata*, Edwards turns to the 'pernicious doctrines' of Whiston himself. The bulk of Edwards' tract is spent showing the lack of authenticity and credibility of the ante-Nicene sources which Whiston cited in favour of his 'Arianism', especially the late fourth-century *Apostolic Constitutions* (*Constitutiones Apostolorum*), which Whiston argued was truly apostolic and took to be 'no other than the original laws and doctrines of the Gospel: the *New Covenant*; or most sacred standard of Christianity; equal in their authority to the four Gospels themselves; and superior in authority to

⁴ William Whiston, *An Historical Preface to Primitive Christianity Reviv'd* (London, 1711), 65–66; idem, *Primitive Christianity Reviv'd*, 5 vols. (London, 1711–12), 4:Passim.

⁵ For this broader use of the term 'Arianism' in early modern England, see Maurice Wiles, *Archetypal Heresy: Arianism through the Centuries* (Oxford: OUP, 1996), 62–63.

⁶ John Edwards, *Some Brief Observations and Reflections on Mr Whiston's Late Writings* (London, 1712), viii.

the epistles of single apostles'.⁷ To Edwards, the 'freakish author' Whiston was thus not only an outspoken 'Arian' who called for the Church's Articles to be discarded, but was also an enemy of the established canon of Scripture, who considered spurious documents of late antiquity more authoritative than the inspired writings of the Apostles. The canon of Scripture and the Church's Articles – the very authorities to which Edwards so frequently appealed, and which for him were the standards of orthodoxy – were being undermined by Whiston in order to uphold his heresy. Whiston was thus, in Edwards' eyes, a heretic *par excellence*, and an epitome of how Socinianism, Arminianism, and 'Arianism' conspired to destroy the established Church's orthodoxy and the foundations on which this orthodoxy was built. It is little wonder, then, that he denigrated Whiston as the worst 'ecclesiastical maggot' to arise in England for many years.⁸

Edwards saw Whiston's 'Arianism' as a symptom of a broader problem, namely the 'gross deviation... from the Articles of our Church.'⁹ He viewed the tacit *de facto* allowance for churchmen to prevaricate and in practice reject articles to which they have solemnly subscribed as having paved the way not only for Arminianism, but also Trinitarian and Christological heterodoxy. Whiston himself placed his finger on this very issue. When the high-church rector of St Anne Soho in Westminster, John Pelling (1668-1750), charged Whiston before the High Court of Delegates for defying the Church's Articles by his 'Arianism', Whiston responded by pointing out that Pelling, and indeed most churchmen, were themselves guilty of defying the Articles, particularly Article 17:

Tho' [our XXXIX Articles] be signed by every clergyman... yet I do desire to know where any learned men of our Church do really and truly, in the obvious

⁷ Whiston, *Historical Preface*, 85–86.

⁸ Edwards, *Some Brief Observations*, xii.

⁹ *Ibid.*, xi–xii.

sense of the words, believe all of them? I profess I have not met with one in all my conversation. I have also liv'd many years in one of our famous universities: in which the XVII. or predestinarian article in particular was so far from being generally believ'd, that Dr. *Edwards*, who professed still to believe it there, seems to have been almost singular and alone by himself in such his belief thereof: and used indeed, as he has no small pretence, to triumph over the University and the Church on that account; as tho' he alone were in those points a true Churchman, and they deserters of their very Articles. Nor will I be so injurious to Dr. *Pelling* himself as to suppose him so far a *Calvinist* as to believe it; tho' he be now prosecuting me for my disbelieving other Articles, which stand upon much the same authority with this.¹⁰

Whiston thus argued that many of his accusers hypocritically wielded against him the Church's Articles 1, 2, and 8 on the Trinity, God the Son, and the three creeds, since they themselves dissented from her soteriological articles, which are based on the same authority. Edwards' concern was therefore confirmed: the tacit allowance in the Church to prevaricate in the soteriological articles naturally opened the door for prevarication also in others such as those concerning the Trinity and the Son's divinity.

As for Whiston calling Edwards' views on election 'almost singular' in Cambridge – while it is true, as we have acknowledged before, that Edwards certainly was outnumbered in Cambridge in a way that he would not have been had he been based in Oxford, yet even in Cambridge, as we have seen, he was not as devoid of sympathisers as Whiston's hyperbolic rhetoric suggests.

The fact that Whiston and Edwards had both long resided in Cambridge, and could hardly have avoided occasionally passing one another in the streets or market, must have added heat to the tensions between them. Even though Whiston claimed that

¹⁰ William Whiston, *Mr. Whiston's Defence of himself, from the Articles objected to him by Dr. Pelling; before the Court of Delegates, in a Cause of Heresy* (London, 1715), 83.

Edwards' polemics against him did not deserve any 'serious notice',¹¹ yet Edwards evidently struck enough of a nerve to evoke Whiston (as seen in the previous chapter) to go out of his way to publish his own edition of Cotton Mather's *Old Pathes Restored* with a preface attempting to discredit Edwards. Despite downplaying Edwards' credentials, Whiston was well aware that Edwards was not an inconsequential figure, as on another occasion he included him in a list of 'very considerable persons' alongside Bishops Lloyd, Parker, Beveridge, Taylor, Sanderson, and Doctors Whitby, Sherlock, Wallis, Gastrell, Hickes, and Seller.¹²

When Whiston's acclaimed friend and twice Boyle lecturer Samuel Clarke (1675-1729), the rector of St James' Church in Westminster, published his *Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity* (1712), it only added more fuel to the 'anti-Arian' fire. As Gilliam did with Whiston, so Thomas Pfizenmeier before him concluded that Clarke's anti-Athanasian views were not Arian, but were 'a reassertion of the early Origenistic-Eusebian-Cappadocian trajectory' of Christological thought, which Pfizenmeier took to have been 'within the broad scope of what has been acceptable as orthodoxy in the history of the church.'¹³ Pfizenmeier consequently concluded that Clarke 'was not a heretic.'¹⁴

The vast majority of Clarke's contemporaries arrived at a starkly different verdict, however, and his *Scripture-Doctrine* was censured by the Lower House of Convocation in 1714 and condemned by various individual critics. Despite advancing a more nuanced position than Whiston's, Clarke unambiguously asserted that the Father alone is self-existent and that the Son is ontologically subordinate to the Father, and

¹¹ Whiston, *Primitive Christianity Reviv'd*, 5:Back matter, 40.

¹² William Whiston, *Reflexions on an Anonymous Pamphlet, Entitled, a Discourse of Free Thinking* (London, 1713), 45.

¹³ Thomas C. Pfizenmaier, *The Trinitarian Theology of Dr Samuel Clarke (1675-1729)* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 217-20.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 220.

hence argued that worship is ultimately due only to the Father.¹⁵ To most contemporaries, these views were more than sufficient to render Clarke a heretical advancer of ‘Arianism’ – a charge which, despite its technical inaccuracy, was widely agreed upon by his critics. Moreover, despite Whiston and Clarke ultimately falling out with one another,¹⁶ they were widely judged to have been ‘Arian’ co-conspirators, as is attested by Francis Hare (1671-1740), who wrote in their defence.¹⁷ As Maurice Wiles observes, to most churchmen ‘there was no midway position between a fully orthodox understanding of the Son and a fully Arian affirmation of his creatureliness.’¹⁸ To be at variance with the Athanasian Creed and the Church’s Article 2 on the Son’s divinity, in however a nuanced manner, was to lean toward ‘Arianism’ and stray beyond the parameters of orthodoxy. After all, the Athanasian Creed itself concludes by confessing that ‘this is the catholic faith, which except a man believe truly and firmly, he cannot be saved.’

Edwards had earlier criticized Clarke as an example of how some contemporaries slighted the doctrine of original sin and imitated Tillotson’s moralistic ‘natural religion’.¹⁹ Clarke was therefore already on Edwards’ radar when his *Scripture-Doctrine* emerged, and Edwards wasted no time peppering it with animadversions through three tracts published between 1712 and 1714, in which he defended the doctrine of the Son’s aseity and his co-equality and consubstantiality with the Father.²⁰ True to

¹⁵ Samuel Clarke, *The Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity* (London, 1712), 243–44, 289, 292–93, 296, 304, 352, 354, 362, 372.

¹⁶ See Wiles, *Archetypal Heresy*, 114–15.

¹⁷ Francis Hare, *The Difficulties and Discouragements which Attend the Study of the Scriptures in the Way of Private Judgment* (London, 1714), 25–30.

¹⁸ Wiles, *Archetypal Heresy*, 117.

¹⁹ Edwards, *Preacher*, 3:ix–x, 243–44.

²⁰ John Edwards, *Some Animadversions on Dr Clarke’s Scripture-Doctrine (as he Stiles it) of the Trinity* (London, 1712); idem, *Supplement to the Animadversions*; idem, *Some Brief Critical Remarks on Dr. Clarke’s Last Papers* (London, 1714).

form, Edwards depicted the ‘Arians’ Whiston and Clarke as being in league with the Socinians, because ‘tho’ [the Arians and Socinians] differ in some particulars, yet they agree in the main, to destroy the true and proper divinity of the Son of God, and of the Holy Ghost.’²¹ In particular, he asserted that Clarke used the same arguments and biblical interpretations as ‘*Crellius, Schlichtingius, Enjedinus, and other Polonian Brethren*’, who had likewise argued that the Father alone is the true and supreme God.²² As was his wont, Edwards regarded this latest controversy as part of ‘a studied contrivance for some years, to alter the scheme of our theology, and so fill the heads of the students of this age with new and unscriptural notions, and such as are contrary to the establish’d Articles of *our own Church*, and to those *Reform’d* ones abroad.’²³

In the ‘anti-Arian’ campaign against Whiston and Clarke, there were, besides Edwards, a plethora of divines who took up the pen against the mathematician and his ‘brother in the *Arian* iniquity’.²⁴ Those who spilt ink against Whiston and Clarke included Pierre Allix (whom Edwards described as a ‘learned author’), Richard Smalbroke, John Hancocke, John Ernest Grabe, Jacques Abbadie, Daniel Waterland, Francis Gastrell, Edward Wells, Edward Potter, Edward Welchman, Thomas Bennet, Richard Mayo, Valentine Haywood, and several others, among whom Waterland, who only entered the fray in 1719, is generally considered to have been chief.²⁵

²¹ Edwards, *Animadversions on Dr Clarke*, 4.

²² *Ibid.*, 4; Edwards, *Some Brief Critical Remarks*, 4.

²³ Edwards, *Animadversions on Dr Clarke*, 4–5.

²⁴ Myles Davies, *Athenae Britannicae: Or, a Critical History of the Oxford and Cambridge Writers and Writings*, vol. 3 (London, 1716), 48.

²⁵ Pierre Allix, *Remarks upon Some Places of Mr. Whiston’s Books, either Printed or in Manuscript* (London, 1711); Richard Smalbroke, *Reflections on the Conduct of Mr. Whiston, in his Revival of the Arian Heresy* (London, 1711); John Hancocke, *Arianism Not the Primitive Christianity: Or, the Antenicene Fathers Vindicated, from the Imputation of being Favourable to that Heresy* (London, 1713); John Ernest Grabe, *An Essay upon Two Arabick Manuscripts of the Bodlejan Library, and that Ancient Book, call’d, The Doctrine of the Apostles* (Oxford, 1711); Jacques Abbadie, *A Sovereign Antidote against Arian Poyson* (London, 1719); Daniel Waterland, *A Vindication of Christ’s Divinity* (Cambridge, 1719); Francis Gastrell, *Remarks upon*

Hampton claimed that '[t]he Anglican Reformed were not as central to the resistance to Clarke's ideas as they had been in the Trinitarian debates of the 1690s.'²⁶ While this is readily granted, yet the contributions of Reformed conformists such as Edwards, Allix, and Abbadie were not negligible either, and there are indications that Edwards' contributions were appreciated by contemporaries.

A glance at the dates when Clarke's opponents published their critiques indicates that Edwards and Wells were Clarke's chief individual critics in the early stages of this controversy, both responding immediately after Clarke's *Scripture-Doctrine* emerged in 1712. As a 'veteran polemicist of the Trinitarian debates of the 1690s',²⁷ Edwards' contribution to the 'anti-Arian' cause was likely to attract attention, and so it proved, as he himself noted that his censuring of Whiston and Clarke 'hath not been unacceptable to the judicious, and such as truly value the doctrines of our most holy religion.'²⁸

Beyond Edwards' own words, there is some evidence of such a favourable reception of his 'anti-Arian' writings. The first of these was the Welshman Myles Davies (1662-1715/16), a former Roman Catholic who became Protestant under Beveridge's ministry in London, and subsequently conformed to the Church of England. In his list of the 'orthodox squadron' who wrote against the 'Arianizers' Whiston and Clarke, which

Dr. Clark's Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity (London, 1714); Edward Wells, *An Essay towards an Impartial Account of the Holy Trinity, and the Deity of our Saviour, as contained in the Old Testament* (London, 1712); idem, *Remarks on Dr Clarke's Introduction to his Scripture-Doctrin of the Trinity* (Oxford, 1713); Edward Potter, *A Vindication of our Blessed Saviour's Divinity; Chiefly against Dr. Clarke* (Cambridge, 1714); Edward Welchman, *Dr. Clarke's Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity Examined* (Oxford, 1714); Thomas Bennet, *A Discourse of the Everblessed Trinity in Unity, with an Examination of Dr. Clarke's Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity* (London, 1718); Richard Mayo, *A Plain Scripture-Argument against Dr. Clark's Doctrine concerning the Ever-Blessed Trinity* (London, 1715); Valentine Haywood, *An Examination of Dr. Clarke's Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity, with a Confutation of It* (London, 1719).

²⁶ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 190.

²⁷ Wiles, *Archetypal Heresy*, 116.

²⁸ Edwards, *Supplement to the Animadversions*, 2.

among others included Hancock, Wells, Waterland, Wake, Potter, and Welchman, Davies lists ‘the indefatigable Dr. Edwards’ first, whose *Supplement* against Clarke he elsewhere describes as ‘orthodox and learned’.²⁹ It is noteworthy that, despite faulting Edwards for critiquing the Christology of some of the ante-Nicene fathers too harshly, Davies was nevertheless of the opinion that ‘[o]f all these [anti-Arian campaigners], Edwards is most orthodox’, and he praised Edwards for, unlike George Bull, rejecting the term ‘subordination’ as a descriptor of the eternal relation of the Son to the Father.³⁰ Davies furthermore wrote a Latin poem in honour of the most celebrated English clergy from the time of John Wycliffe onwards, and deemed Edwards worthy of an entire quatrain, in which he called him ‘the happy conqueror of those enemies who are guilty of striking at the divinity of Christ’, while depicting Edwards as sounding forth ‘holy songs of victory’ over the Socinians and Arians.³¹ Davies thus clearly esteemed Edwards as a champion of orthodoxy of his time. Indeed, even Clarke’s fervent defender John Jackson (1686-1763) referred to Edwards as ‘a great modern critic’.³²

Daniel Waterland (1683-1740), the master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, who became the best-known of Clarke’s critics, referred to Edwards as ‘a learned gentleman’ and approvingly cited his reflections on Clarke.³³ Furthermore, the editor of Waterland’s works, the later bishop of Durham, William Van Mildert, recognized Edwards as one of the ‘men of high character and respectability in the Church’ who

²⁹ Myles Davies, ‘The Present and Primitive State of Arianism Truly Stated’, in *Athenae Britannicae: Or, a Critical History of the Oxford and Cambridge Writers and Writings*, vol. 3 (London, 1716), 43, 85.

³⁰ Myles Davies, *Eikon Mikro-Biblike sive Icon Libellorum, or, a Critical History of Pamphlets*, vol. 1 (London, 1715), 127; idem, ‘The Present and Primitive State of Arianism Truly Stated’, 49–50.

³¹ Myles Davies, *Athenae Britannicae. Clerus Britannus*, Editio Altera (London, 1719), 11. ‘Edwards, reorum Numinis hostium Christique læsi, Victor ovans, sacrum Pæana personet, Socinos, Romiferos, Ariosque frangens.’

³² John Jackson, *An Examination of Mr. Nye’s Explication of the Articles of the Divine Unity, the Trinity and Incarnation* (London, 1715), 18.

³³ Daniel Waterland, *A Second Vindication of Christ’s Divinity* (London, 1723), 467.

wrote against Clarke, and favourably described Edwards' animadversions on Clarke as having been 'very powerful'.³⁴ Modern secondary sources on the controversies surrounding Whiston and Clarke also regularly feature Edwards as one of their major critics, and as part of a larger collective 'anti-Arian' campaign at the time.³⁵

While Edwards' role in the 'anti-Arian' campaign was indeed not as pivotal as it was in the controversies concerning Locke's 'Socinianism', Burnet's doctrinal latitude, and Whitby's rejection of original sin, yet his contribution to the defence of Christological orthodoxy did receive the recognition of some contemporaries as well as later secondary sources. And this recognition appears to have lasted well after Edwards' death, as seen in an appendix to a 1752 'anti-Arian' sermon by Herbert Randolph (d. 1755), rector of Deal, Kent, who appreciatively cited Edwards on the two natures of Christ and reckoned him, alongside such divines as Hall, Hammond, Tillotson, and Lightfoot, as being among 'the venerable names of men in our Church, esteem'd for their judgment'.³⁶ In other words, Edwards' 'anti-Arian' works appear to have enhanced, rather than diminished, his recognition and standing within the Church of his day.

7.2. Edwards' churchmanship and politics

Having considered how Edwards' role in the 'Arian' controversy in some measure boosted his already-reputable standing within the established Church, we now turn to

³⁴ Daniel Waterland, *The Works of the Rev. Daniel Waterland*, ed. William Van Mildert, vol. 1.1 (Oxford, 1823), 46, 51.

³⁵ John Gascoigne, *Cambridge in the Age of the Enlightenment: Science, Religion and Politics from the Restoration to the French Revolution* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989); Wiles, *Archetypal Heresy*, 116; Peter Searby, *A History of the University of Cambridge*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), 284; Pfizenmaier, *Trinitarian Theology*, 180–84.

³⁶ Herbert Randolph, *A Sermon Preached at the Parish Church of Deal, October 15th, 1752* (Oxford, 1753), 29.

other factors which would have affected his relative stature within the Church. In particular, we will consider Edwards' churchmanship, his view of episcopacy, his Whig political views, and his attitude towards the dissenters.

As noted before, many of Edwards' Reformed contemporaries (e.g. Compton, Beveridge, South, Jane, and Delaune) were high churchmen. What George Every says of Jane also applies to the others, namely, that they 'combined rigid views on Episcopacy with an equally rigid Calvinism on the point of predestination'.³⁷ They were averse to relaxing the terms of conformity or allowing concessions to dissenters, including those with whom they otherwise shared a commitment to Reformed orthodoxy. As Hampton has observed, these Reformed high churchmen typically had a 'commitment to the neo-Laudian liturgical agenda of the later Stuart Church, something they exhibited both in their support for elaborate church architecture and furnishings, and by their unflinching loyalty to the rites of the established Church... Theirs was, therefore, Reformed divinity, but with Restoration curlicues'.³⁸

By contrast, Edwards espoused a simpler liturgical taste largely in continuity with the moderate conforming Puritan tradition of the early Stuart period. Insisting that churchmen should not observe liturgical rites beyond those which are prescribed in the Church's rubrics and Canons, he criticized such practices as bowing towards the east, placing the 'altar' (a term he rejected) altarwise against the eastern wall of the church, placing candles on the communion table, the increasing use of organs in worship,³⁹ and the averseness among his neo-Laudian contemporaries to singing metrical psalms, by which they show themselves averse 'to the plainness and

³⁷ George Every, *The High Church Party 1688-1718* (London: SPCK, 1956), 44.

³⁸ Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 23.

³⁹ Despite the rapid return of organs in English churches after the Restoration, the majority of parish churches around 1700 remained without organs, as was the case for most of the eighteenth century. See Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke, *Altars Restored: The Changing Face of English Religious Worship, 1547-c.1700* (Oxford: OUP, 2007), 348–49.

simplicity of God's worship' and to 'the practice of the *Reformed* churches abroad.'⁴⁰ Many high churchmen insisted on conformity to such neo-Laudian liturgical practices, an insistence which Edwards dismisses as 'superfluous and praetor-canonical conformity' or 'super-conformity', that is, an undue conformity to liturgical practices which are not required by, or even contravene, the Church's rubrics and Canons.⁴¹ He furthermore bemoans the 'frequent use amongst us' of images of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and crucifixes, which he declares 'is repugnant to the spirit of those Protestant Reformers whom we pretend to imitate.'⁴² Edwards' concerns about images, excessive ceremonies, and 'super-conformity' were shared by eminent Reformed contemporaries such as Barlow, Hall, and Wallis.⁴³

A major reason why Edwards wrote his *Preacher* was because he felt that in his day there were too many dry moral discourses and an overvaluing of liturgical pomp and ceremony which came at the expense of robust doctrinal and evangelical preaching. He accordingly insisted on the centrality of lively preaching in the liturgy, with emphasis on the direct practical application of the preached Word to the hearts and consciences of parishioners, which he called 'the preacher's chief work'.⁴⁴ Edwards was far from alone in his preference for liturgical simplicity; there was a sturdy stream of post-Restoration churchmen who 'in their search for common ground with moderate dissenters shied away from ritualism.'⁴⁵ And for many, as was the case with Edwards, their evasion of ornate ceremonies would not have been merely due to concessions made to dissenters, but also due to personal taste and conviction.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ Edwards, *Preacher*, 3:19–26.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 3:24.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 3:33.

⁴³ Beddard, 'Restoration Oxford', 833–34, 837; Fincham and Tyacke, *Altars Restored*, 346–47.

⁴⁴ Edwards, *Preacher*, 1:144.

⁴⁵ Fincham and Tyacke, *Altars Restored*, 323.

⁴⁶ Cf. Norman Sykes, *Church and State in England in the XVIIIth Century* (Cambridge: CUP, 1934), 21.

Although cathedrals, city churches, and Oxford and Cambridge college chapels commonly instituted a neo-Laudian liturgical style, there remained room aplenty, especially in parochial churches, for a simpler liturgy harking back to the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods.⁴⁷ In other words, while Edwards' liturgical tastes may not have been high fashion, they were not abnormal either. Despite the neo-Laudian liturgical agenda having gained much traction within the post-Restoration Church, Edwards' simpler liturgical preferences remained well within the range of acceptability.

Yet one issue on which Edwards was certainly in the minority, though not entirely without likeminded brethren, was his advocacy of extemporary prayer in public worship, which was widely rejected in the Church, including by Reformed high churchmen like Beveridge and South. To be sure, Edwards defended the expediency of set prayers against such as opposed them, and loved the Book of Common Prayer, which he called 'this celebrated body of devotion', but felt that limiting public prayer only to set prayers and collects, to the utter exclusion of conceived prayers, was an unwarranted liturgical limitation.⁴⁸ As seen in chapter 4, his Reformed contemporary Benjamin Jenks shared this view, and countered South's attack on extemporary prayer. William Bisset, too, faulted the 'super-canonical high flyers' for outright condemning extemporary prayer.⁴⁹

A more significant issue on which Edwards would have been at odds with many of his fellow clergymen was his view of episcopacy. He declared in *The Preacher* that '[o]ur Church (according to the concessions of some of the learnedst men among us) might be a true church without [episcopacy and its concomitant discipline], but she can't without her doctrine. It is this that makes the substantial distinction between a true and a false church, but the other things do not.'⁵⁰ In his *Theologia Reformata*

⁴⁷ Fincham and Tyacke, *Altars Restored*, 324–25, 337–41.

⁴⁸ Edwards, *Theologia Reformata*, 1:614–22; 2:120–21, 320.

⁴⁹ William Bisset, *The Modern Fanatick* (London, 1710), 46–49.

⁵⁰ Edwards, *Preacher*, 2:178.

Edwards explicitly denies that in the apostolic age bishops constituted a distinct and superior order to that of presbyters, and shows that even some stiff defenders of prelacy, such as Dodwell and Whitby, concede as much.⁵¹ After identifying presbyterian government as the polity of the primitive church, Edwards only offers a suspiciously brief discussion of episcopacy. However, not wishing to run into too much trouble, he comments that

Our Church, to which certainly we ought to give the greatest deference, asserts that *from the Apostles' time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church, bishops, priests, and deacons*. And the known constitution and practice of our Church are a real comment upon this their judgment. And truly we have reason to be thankful to Divine Providence, that our Church is bless'd at this day with such excellent persons of that order, than whom no church in the world can shew brighter examples of learning and piety.⁵²

A clearer picture of Edwards' views on episcopacy emerges in his posthumously-published *Remains* (1731), containing his *A Discourse of Episcopacy* – the most elaborate discussion of ecclesiastical polity in his entire corpus. There Edwards argues, primarily from Scripture but also from early Christian testimonies, that during the apostolic era and afterwards the terms *presbyter* (or *elder*) and *bishop* were used interchangeably and referred to the same ecclesiastical order and office, and that diocesan episcopacy, with its differentiation between bishops and presbyters as distinct orders, was a post-apostolic development traceable to the later second century at the earliest.⁵³ As far as the Ignatian epistles are concerned, which were often cited in support of bishops as a superior order to presbyters, Edwards follows Ussher, Daillé, Salmasius, and other

⁵¹ Edwards, *Theologia Reformata*, 1:523.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 1:529.

⁵³ John Edwards, *Remains of the Late Reverend and Learned John Edwards* (London, 1731), 189, 236, 249–53.

earlier Reformed writers in contending that they are pseudographs, in contrast to Pearson and other defenders of their authenticity.⁵⁴ Edwards readily grants that episcopal government is of ancient origin, but denies that it is 'of *apostolic antiquity*.'⁵⁵ Instead, he argues the case for the primitive equality of bishops and presbyters, which explains why, despite conforming to the Church of England's episcopal polity (which he did not consider to be *jure divino*), he could and would not unchurch his dissenting Reformed brethren who had not received episcopal ordination. He observes that

all our churchmen of moderation and temper hold that there may be, and actually are true churches, such as those of the *Reformed beyond the seas*, though they have no *bishops*: and so accordingly they hold that ordination by presbyters is lawful and valid. They say, indeed, that episcopal orders are required of all that are ministers in our Church, because here are bishops to confer orders: but those that cannot have them, as foreign Reformed divines who live under no bishops, are lawful ministers without them, and the churches they are of, are true churches... From hence it follows, that *episcopacy*, in the late acceptance of it [i.e. as constituting a distinct and superior order to that of presbyters and requisite for valid ordinations], is not a divine institution, and to be necessarily maintained in the Church; for if it were, there could not be a true church without it.⁵⁶

Edwards furthermore insists, like Barlow, that the '*primitive bishop* never acted any thing by himself alone, but always with the consent and assistance of his clergy'.⁵⁷ Significantly, he argues that eminent Church of England divines back him up on the primitive parity of bishops and presbyters, for which he cites a range of churchmen

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 236–38; Edwards, *Some Brief Observations*, 54–55.

⁵⁵ Edwards, *Remains*, 265.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 261–62.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 174, 247–55; Hampton, *Anti-Arminians*, 25–26.

including Cranmer, Stillingfleet, Burnet, Jewel, Whitaker, Bilson, Humphrey, Fulke, Hooker, Mason, Ussher, Rainolds, and even Thorndike.⁵⁸ Edwards' insistence that the primitive church was governed by presbyters and that presbyters and bishops are really of the same order may induce us to gather, as Wallace appears to have done, that despite his conformity to the established Church, he was really a Presbyterian at heart.⁵⁹ However, presbyterian polity is ultimately not the form of church government which Edwards advances in his *Discourse of Episcopacy*. Instead, he explicitly favours Ussher's model of a reduced episcopacy, which he summarises as being

that the bishops, as presidents or super-intendents, are to rule in common with the pastors of parishes: they must all jointly govern the church, and to that end often meet together in synods diocesan, provincial, national... This is the antient, primitive, and moderate episcopacy: it is the governing of the churches by presbyters, and some particular members set over them as presidents and moderators.⁶⁰

Edwards was adamant that 'we speak not against episcopacy, but we mean such episcopacy as the Scripture speaks of', and the 'Scripture-bishop', according to him, was 'the chief of the presbyters, but he was not of a distinct order from them.'⁶¹ Wallace is therefore mistaken in claiming that Edwards 'upheld a straightforward Presbyterianism'.⁶² Instead, Edwards expressly endorsed a reduced episcopacy: 'The short is, the *bishops* in those [early post-apostolic] times were *presbyters*, only he that presided over the body of presbyters was *called bishop*, whilst the rest were generally

⁵⁸ Edwards, *Remains*, 256–61.

⁵⁹ Wallace, *Shapers*, 240.

⁶⁰ Edwards, *Remains*, 257–58, 277.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 253, 278.

⁶² Wallace, *Shapers*, 229.

known by the title of *presbyters*: and the bishop was still a presbyter as to order and function, though for distinction-sake he was known by the name of *bishop*.⁶³

Around the time of the Restoration there had been highly respectable advocates of reduced episcopacy such as Edward Reynolds, John Gauden, Nicholas Bernard, and Ralph Brownrigg, and at the time it was ‘acceptable to many within the Church of England’, yet it remained a minority view.⁶⁴ Many conformists who would otherwise have sympathised with Edwards on doctrinal issues would have differed from him on this matter. One would naturally suspect that, on this issue at least, Edwards would have faced significant pushback, especially from so-called ‘high-fliers’. Yet his advocacy of reduced episcopacy was only articulated in a posthumous publication fifteen years after his death, which largely explains why it never drew any detectable criticism. Moreover, Edwards was not utterly devoid of conforming contemporaries who leaned in a similar direction. John Hall, despite being a bishop himself, was well-versed in the Westminster Standards and was widely suspected for harbouring Presbyterian inclinations.⁶⁵ Thomas Allen, like Edwards, affirmed the primitive equality of the office of elder and bishop, and that episcopacy developed later with the spread of Christianity.⁶⁶ John Hooke, the first treasurer of the SPCK, openly advocated reduced episcopacy.⁶⁷ Such examples aside, there is no doubt that Edwards’ reduced episcopacy was at odds with the general consensus within the Church.

Something which may have depreciated Edwards’ reputation among some was the sharpness of his polemics. It is telling that Edwards himself deemed it necessary, as we saw in chapter 3, to vindicate his incisive animadversions, arguing that his

⁶³ Edwards, *Remains*, 254.

⁶⁴ Spurr, *Restoration Church of England*, 26, 31–36, 143; Stephen Hampton, ‘Hagiography and Theology for a Comprehensive Reformed Church: John Gauden and the Portrayal of Ralph Brownrigg’, *Calvin Theological Journal* 50, no. 2 (2015): 183–84.

⁶⁵ ODNB, s.v. ‘Hall, John (1633-1710)’.

⁶⁶ Allen, *Expedient*, 3–5.

⁶⁷ Hooke, *Catholicism without Popery*, 1:33–36; 2:50–70.

opponents merited it and offering examples from contemporaries such as Sherlock and Fowler to argue that acerbic polemics were par for the course at the time. And although such whetted polemics were indeed commonplace at the time, Edwards' asperity may have been distasteful to some of his fellow clergymen. As Edward Bickersteth would later remark, 'Edwards was a voluminous writer of a controversial spirit, who pointed out and endeavoured to check the departure from reformation principles in his time, but not in the spirit that would commend his sentiments.'⁶⁸ Yet, as we have seen, Edwards' works nevertheless proved popular among significant segments within the Church, and some of his readers may actually have felt that his sternly-worded animadversions were warranted. As we saw in chapter 3, this was evidently the case with an anonymous reviewer of Edwards' *Preacher*, who reckoned Edwards to have animadverted on Tillotson and associates with a 'just warmth'.

Another issue relating to Edwards' location in the Church was his outspoken Whig political views. As noted before, his Whig commitments played a role in securing him the patronage of three members of the First Whig Junto (Russell, Somers, and Tenison) and perhaps was a factor behind his Whiggish diocesan bishop Moore supporting his *Theologia Reformata*. At the same time, however, we have seen how Edwards' Whig sentiments drew resistance from Quadring, who vetoed the publication of his sermon with Cambridge University Press, and how he had to instead seek patronage from his Whig patron, Russell. We have also noted the ire which Edwards' anti-Tory views provoked in the nonjuror Leslie. In a politically divided Church, openly criticizing the political opposition, especially when doing so as a widely recognized divine, was bound to draw responses from his Tory counterparts.

Still another aspect of Edwards' views which would have impacted his standing in the Church was his defence of the 'sober' dissenters, which we considered in chapter 3. Despite abominating the theology of many latitudinarian divines, he nevertheless sided with those who advocated toleration or concessions to the Presbyterians and

⁶⁸ Bickersteth, *Christian Student*, 498.

Independents. However, it was especially the appropriation of Edwards' writings by dissenters in their own defence which irked some of his adversaries. Lightfoot, for example, complained that Edwards' *Preacher* was 'put into the hands of dissenters, in order to vilify our clergy, and give them a mean opinion of the preachers of our Church.'⁶⁹ Indeed, Edwards' works, especially his *Preacher*, were cited by a number of dissenters to vindicate their dissent.⁷⁰

Edwards' favourable reflections on the dissenters would especially have been disrelished by high-church Tories, whose deep-seated animosity towards dissenters was reflected in the popular slogan 'Church in danger' and in the 'Tackers' controversy (1705), the Sacheverell riots (1710), and the Occasional Conformity Act (1711). For Edwards, however, if anything in Anne's reign merited the cry of 'Church in danger', it was that many of her clergy had forsaken her established doctrines, and he complained that 'those very men who make that outcry about the *Church's falling*, are the authors of this rejection and disregard.'⁷¹

Edwards' sentiments on the dissenters would have certainly incensed many of his fellow clergymen, but he was simultaneously far from singular in his call for a moderate attitude towards them. Archbishop Tenison, for one, was well-known for his leniency towards the dissenters.⁷² Indeed, the high churchman Thomas Brett (1667-1744) complained in 1714 that 'moderation' was 'so much cry'd up at this time'.⁷³ So, while Edwards' moderate stance towards the dissenters may have been off-putting to 'high-flying' Tories, it would not have rendered him unpopular among all.

Despite his defence of the 'sober' dissenters, whom he regarded as brethren and fellow upholders of Reformed orthodoxy, it would nevertheless be a

⁶⁹ Lightfoot, *Remarks*, 61.

⁷⁰ See, for example, Charles Owen, *Plain-Dealing: Or, Separation without Schism* (London, 1715), 29, 30, 32, 36; John Norman, *Lay-Nonconformity Justified*, 2nd ed. (London, 1716), 17.

⁷¹ Edwards, *Preacher*, 2:155.

⁷² Hearne, *Remarks and Collections*, 1:221.

⁷³ Thomas Brett, *True Moderation* (London, 1714), 5.

mischaracterisation of Edwards to describe him, as Jean-Louis Quantin does, as ‘formally a member of the established Church but a Nonconformist *in pectore*’.⁷⁴ Wallace similarly described Edwards as ‘at best an uneasy conformist to the Church of England’ and as a ‘loner’ who ‘felt the need of a state church in order to protect the orthodox faith in the nation, even though he was embattled in doing just that.’⁷⁵ Such a verdict naturally follows when one erroneously perceives Edwards as an aberration, but, as this study has repeatedly demonstrated, Edwards held a much more mainstream position in the Church than the peripheral one which the extant scholarship imagined, and he regarded himself, and was considered by many contemporaries, as nothing other than a faithful conformist.

Notwithstanding his sympathy with the Reformed dissenters, Edwards never hints that he wished to join them in their dissent. Instead, his persistent call for conformity to the Church’s doctrines as enshrined in her Articles and Homilies stemmed precisely from his firm commitment to the cause of the established Church: ‘[I]t is from my great deference and respect to the Church of *England*, and its most eminent defenders and patrons, that I so often urge and inculcate these *doctrines*.’⁷⁶ Not only did he affirm episcopacy (albeit a reduced episcopacy), but he furthermore loved the Book of Common Prayer, valiantly championed the Church’s Articles and Homilies, and consistently emphasised his loyalty to the established Church: ‘I adhere to the doctrine, I joyn with the worship, I embrace the communion, and I acquiesce in the government of our Church, and I have always shew’d my self conformable to these.’⁷⁷ Edwards maintained that ‘I prefer our Church, that is, the *Church of England*, to all other churches upon several accounts,’ and even called her ‘the best church in the world’.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity: The Construction of a Confessional Identity in the 17th Century* (Oxford: OUP, 2009), 335.

⁷⁵ Wallace, *Shapers*, 231.

⁷⁶ Edwards, *Theologia Reformata*, 1:iv.

⁷⁷ Edwards, *Preacher*, 2:xxvii.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 2:154; 3:xi.

In other words, Edwards was content with the Church *as established*, and despite hoping for a future transition from high prelacy to reduced or 'primitive' episcopacy, he maintained that "Till then let us be contented with the ecclesiastical government which we have, and which the laws of the land have settled among us."⁷⁹ Edwards' works bear numerous signs of discontent, to be sure, but his discontent was not with the Church *as established*. Instead, it was with the scores of his fellow clergy whom he regarded as deviating from her established doctrines and the principles of the Reformation.

⁷⁹ Edwards, *Remains*, 277–78.

8. Conclusion

The theologian commonly known to his contemporaries as 'Dr. John Edwards of Cambridge' has been typically portrayed in the extant scholarship as a marginalized 'Calvinist' with minimal influence in an overwhelmingly Arminian later Stuart Church of England, who helplessly attempted to fight a battle which had long before been lost at the Restoration. The chief aim of this study has been to challenge this depiction of Edwards and of the Church of England during his lifetime. Contrary to the claims of the extant scholarship, this study has contended that Edwards was one of the preeminent English conforming divines of the period, that he was recognized as such in his own day and in the immediately following generations, and that his theological works, despite provoking some Arminian opposition, enjoyed a very positive reception among significant segments of the established Church's clergy, many of whom shared his Reformed theological convictions. Edwards thus not only enjoyed a share in, but evidently also made a substantial contribution to, the abiding popularity of Reformed theology within the established Church.

In chapter 1 we observed that Edwards had early on left a very favourable impression on eminent churchmen such as Tuckney and Sanderson, and his preaching at Trinity Church in Cambridge proved very popular among students – many of whom would constitute his future readership – as well as among fellows, including college heads such as Beaumont, Pearson, and Sparrow. Edwards' preaching drew the attention of noblemen, who offered him preferments, but which he declined, being already independently wealthy. His lack of preferment was therefore voluntary, and not due to his Reformed commitments as has sometimes been suggested; besides, as we have seen, Reformed theological commitments did not hinder many of his contemporaries from receiving preferments. As a fellow of St John's, Edwards' popularity reportedly rivalled that which Tillotson had enjoyed at Clare, and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sources repeatedly identified him as one of the

college's most famous alumni. Even when he resigned his fellowship at St John's due to friction with Gunning and Turner, we have seen that his reputation did not diminish; instead, he was soon enjoying similar adulation at Holy Sepulchre as he had enjoyed at Trinity Church. After a well-received stint in Colchester, Edwards retired to a Cambridgeshire village and then to Cambridge itself, where he established his reputation as one of the major English theologians of the day by his tireless publishing during the final two and a half decades of his life.

In chapter 2 we considered Edwards' early works and his involvement in the so-called Socinian controversy of the 1690s. There we witnessed that Edwards' early works enjoyed the patronage of some of the most influential clerical and political figures of the time, were consistently endorsed by the Cambridge establishment, and were received cordially among many clergymen and intellectuals. We have also noticed Edwards' cooperation with Stillingfleet and other clergymen against common foes in the Socinian controversy, through which he earned the acclaim of many. In a display of the respect and recognition which Edwards enjoyed among the Cambridge establishment at the time, he was invited to preach the University's commencement sermon in Great St Mary's Church in 1699. Edwards' influence as an opinion-former within the Church was clearly reflected in the impact of his polemical engagement with Locke, which permanently putrefied the reputation of Locke and his *Reasonableness of Christianity* as reeking of 'Socinianism'. Importantly, we observed that Edwards' earlier works were warmly received despite them clearly revealing his Reformed convictions. Indeed, given the abiding commitment to Reformed orthodoxy among many of the clergy, his Reformed sentiments would have actually made these works all the more appealing to a sizable segment of his clearly broad readership.

In chapter 3 we considered Edwards' anti-Arminian works after the turn of the eighteenth century, in which he criticized various contemporary divines, particularly those whom he disparagingly labelled 'Tillotsonian', and endeavoured to vindicate Reformed orthodoxy as the official orthodoxy of the Church of England. In a Church in which the majority of clergy had rejected Reformed orthodoxy, Edwards' polemics

were bound to face resistance from some of his Arminian counterparts, and so it proved. But what the older scholarship failed to notice, and what we clearly witnessed in this study, is that Edwards' anti-Arminian works were simultaneously fuelled by clerical support, received glowing reviews, and were acclaimed by considerable segments of the clergy. A case in point was his *Free Discourse*, which in 1701 informed the committee of the lower house of convocation in their judgment of Burnet's *Exposition*. His *Preacher* and *Veritas Redux* proved popular in no small measure due to their contents resonating with many of his brethren, and his *Theologia Reformata*, as attested by the Arminian Stackhouse, was one of the two most popular works of systematic theology in England during the early eighteenth century. Importantly, even though Edwards regularly decried the fact that most of the Church's clergy were Arminian, he nevertheless emphasised that his criticisms were aimed only at certain contingents within the Church, and repeatedly stressed his sensibility of the fact that, although a minority, there still remained large numbers of clergy who had not forsaken 'the old Episcopal divinity'.

In chapters 4 and 5 we encountered abundant evidence of such large numbers of post-Restoration Church of England divines (and particularly such as were active in the Church during Edwards' publishing heyday) who professed Reformed doctrines of election, efficacious grace, justification by faith alone, and the imputation of Christ's righteousness, many of whom, like Edwards, appealed to the Church's Articles and Homilies. These Reformed divines included some of the most prominent and influential conforming churchmen of the period, including bishops, Oxford and Cambridge professors, college heads, fellows, deans, archdeacons, prebendaries, canons, and key early figures in the new societies which sprang up during Edwards' lifetime, such as the SPCK and the Society for the Reformation of Manners. As such, we simply cannot arrive at an accurate picture of the Church of England between the Restoration and the evangelical revivals without taking them into account. Moreover, Reformed soteriology was not confined to the universities or scholarly publications, but was disseminated at the popular level through sermons and devotional books.

From such a sturdy Reformed conforming trajectory throughout the post-Restoration period and into the 1730s, it is clear that whatever the evangelical revivals were, they were not a revival of a moribund Reformed tradition within the Church of England. Indeed, we have seen that Reformed evangelicals such as Whitefield and Toplady were themselves cognisant of this post-Restoration Reformed current within the Church.

In chapter 6 we witnessed the warm reception of Edwards' works among conforming churchmen of subsequent generations, especially Reformed evangelicals, and have seen how his acclaim extended beyond the confines of the established Church, in England, Scotland, America, and even into Germany. Edwards was thus widely recognized, both in his own day as well as in the immediately following generations, as having been one of the preeminent theologians within the established Church of his era.

In chapter 7 we considered other factors in Edwards' writings and views which provide us with a more rounded picture of his place within the established Church of his time. There we addressed Edwards' involvement in the 'Arian' controversy concerning Whiston and Clarke, and concluded that Edwards' contribution to the 'anti-Arian' campaign further established his reputation as a theologian of consequence in the Church. His Whig views and moderation towards the dissenters, though unpopular with some, were far from exceptional, and, indeed, played a role in securing him the patronage of three figures at the very top of the English political establishment. If any aspect of Edwards' theological thought may be deemed to have been truly singular, it was not his Reformed commitments, as the older scholarship generally held, but rather his advocacy of a reduced episcopacy according to Ussher's model. Yet this view was only expressed in print fifteen years after his death, which in large measure explains why it never provoked any published critiques.

Finally, concerning Edwards' conformity, we have concluded that, despite hoping for a future transition to a reduced episcopacy, Edwards was unquestionably a devoted son of the Church of England, and was content with her doctrine and discipline *as established*. His fervent advocacy of Reformed orthodoxy stemmed

precisely from his dedication to the Church's Articles and Homilies, and his dissatisfaction was not with the Church *as established* but with his contemporaries who 'differ from their own Church' and 'call themselves the sons of the Church of *England*, but do not speak the language of their mother.' Similarly, Edwards' complaint about the insistence among some high churchmen on 'super-conformity' to neo-Laudian liturgical practices was that such practices were not required by, or even contravened, the Church's rubrics and Canons. Whether in doctrine or in liturgy, therefore, his criticisms of his colleagues were based on what he regarded as their nonconformity to the Church's established doctrine, or their exacting a conformity beyond her established liturgy. Edwards' sympathy with the Reformed dissenters did therefore not preclude his own personal and genuine loyalty to the established Church.

If anything distinguished Edwards from his numerous Reformed conforming contemporaries, it was the sheer outspokenness of his anti-Arminian polemics, in which he certainly stood head and shoulders above the rest. The very forthright style of his polemics, in which he explicitly animadverted on high-ranking Arminian divines by name, was unmatched by any of his contemporaries, and rendered him controversial. But the Reformed doctrines which he so unremittingly championed, considered in themselves, were well within the range of mainstream views current in the Church at the time, and, as such, Edwards' espousal of them was far from extraordinary. Although Reformed orthodoxy was indeed not the majority position within the Church of England in Edwards' day, it still retained a firm adherence among a large and conspicuous minority contingent of the established Church's clergy, and was a perfectly viable theological option within the Church.

This raises questions of the theological landscape of the Church of England during Edwards' lifetime. The picture which has so clearly emerged in this study, and which strongly reinforces that which was painted by Hampton, is of a later Stuart and early Hanoverian Church of England theologically divided between an Arminian majority and a large and influential Reformed minority. This important theological dividing line is enough, in and of itself, to cause us to reconsider the idea of a fairly unified

'Anglican' theological identity which scholars such as Spurr, Gibson, and others supposed to have emerged during the later Stuart and early Hanoverian periods.

Yet there were many more points of theological and ecclesio-political conflict which sharply divided conforming churchmen in Edwards' day. Whether we consider the abiding tensions between low and high churchmen on issues such as church-state relations, politics, the nature of conformity, and the toleration of dissenters (just think of how the Church was split by controversies surrounding figures such as Burnet, Atterbury, Sacheverell, and Hoadly); whether we consider contradictory positions on passive obedience and the legitimacy of royal successions which resulted, among other things, in the nonjuring schism; whether we consider how many churchmen were either enamoured or appalled by the influx of Remonstrant theology and the rise of moralistic 'rational' divinity; whether we consider the Trinitarian controversies of the 1690s, in which divines such as South, Sherlock, and Fowler viciously assailed one other in print; or whether we consider the tumultuous 'Arian' controversy surrounding Clarke and Whiston – all of these issues, together with the abiding division between Arminians and the Reformed on soteriology, hardly bear witness to anything resembling a fairly unified 'Anglican' identity among conforming churchmen during Edwards' lifetime.

Whether in doctrine, churchmanship, or politics, the Church of England of which Edwards was a member was a church whose theological and ecclesiological identity was still being contested on various fronts. Unlike the flat and fairly uniform terrain of the city in which Edwards spent most of his life, the theological landscape of the established Church in this period was markedly variegated – much more so, at the very least, than a number of recent studies have suggested. It is on account of this clear lack of unity and accord that this study, as noted in the introduction, has consistently used the term 'conformists' or 'conforming churchmen' to denote clergy who were members of the established Church, while eschewing the anachronistic term 'Anglican' or 'Anglicanism', with its implied connotation of a unified theological-ecclesiological identity.

In the end, Edwards was not an ostracised 'Calvinistic' misfit deprived of any patronage, supporters, or sympathisers. Instead, the overall evidence rather strongly reveals him to have been among the preeminent conforming divines in the Church of England of his era, and a decidedly mainstream figure. To return to the comment found in *The Gentleman's Magazine* of November 1792 which we encountered at the beginning, it is fair to say, based on the abundance of evidence encountered in this study, that 'Dr. John Edwards, a Cambridge divine... seems to have been of some consequence and popularity in his day.'

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