Richard Hooker is the first major voice of Anglican theology, and his defense of the Elizabethan Church against the attacks of the Puritans set the prevailing tone of Anglicanism for centuries to follow. Through his eloquent treatise on ecclesiastical law the medieval political thought of Thomas Aquinas became a part of the English political heritage, to be used by such writers as Locke, Burke, and Coleridge. The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity is also a primary statement in English of a theory of natural law. Finally, we must turn to Hooker if we are to understand the intellectual background of the Renaissance, for he luminously sets forth the ethical, political, and religious assumptions of his age. The Folger Library has answered a long-felt need in sponsoring this critical, old-spelling edition of Hooker's Works, prepared with all the expertise modern scholarship can bring to bear. Six scholars share the editorial responsibility, consulting their eighteen-member Board of Advisers as necessary. The texts for the edition are based on fresh transcriptions of the earliest and most authoritative documents, in many cases manuscripts written or corrected by Hooker himself or contemporary transcripts of these. The critical apparatus for each text records substantive variants among the authoritative documents as well as departures in accidentals from the copy text. The aim of the apparatus is to enable the interested reader to reconstruct the authority underlying the text. The Preface and Books I-V of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, volumes one and two of this edition, represent all of Hooker's work published in his lifetime. These volumes were prepared by Georges Edelen, Professor of English at Indiana University, and W. Speed Hill, Associate Professor of English, Herbert H. Lehman College, City University of New York.

My Personal Review:
If you are an Episcopalian, you really should read Richard Hooker's works to see where it all began.

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