

Douglas A. Sweeney and Allen C. Guelzo, eds., *The New England Theology: From Jonathan Edwards to Edwards Amasa Park* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 320 pages.

For far too long too little has been available on the men who saw themselves as the distinct heirs of Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), namely those theologians who articulated what is often referred to as the New Divinity.<sup>1</sup> With the renaissance of Edwards studies, though, has come a fresh interest in the thinking of that remarkable man's disciples. This is evident in relatively recent monographs on Samuel Hopkins (1721-1803),<sup>2</sup> Joseph Bellamy (1719-1790),<sup>3</sup> and Jonathan Edwards, Jr. (1745-1801).<sup>4</sup> But even with this renewed interest in the theology of these authors, much remains to be done. The theological perspectives of some of the central figures in this movement—men like the influential Nathanael Emmons (1745-1840) and Stephen West (1735-1819)—are still all but neglected.

Not surprisingly, little has been readily available of the primary sources of this theological movement. Limited reprints of nineteenth-century editions of the works of Hopkins, Bellamy, Emmons, and the younger Edwards had been done by Garland Publishing in the 1980s, but what has been sorely needed is a reader of the kind that Sweeney and Guelzo, both long-time students of Edwards and the New Divinity, have now put together. Ranging from selections from the “Wellspring of New England Theology”—Edwards himself—to some of those whom he personally mentored, namely, Bellamy and Hopkins, and on into the nineteenth century to the works of more distant—and some might reckon somewhat more questionable—disciples of Edwards, men such as Nathanael W.

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<sup>1</sup> There were some who called it “Hopkinsianism” or “Hopkintonianism” after one of its leading proponents, namely Samuel Hopkins. See Edwards A. Park, “Memoir” in *The Works of Samuel Hopkins, D.D.* (Boston: Doctrinal Tract and Book Society, 1865), I, 237.

<sup>2</sup> See Joseph Conforti, *Samuel Hopkins and the New Divinity Movement* (Grand Rapids: Christian University Press, 1981).

<sup>3</sup> Mark Valeri, *Law and Providence in Joseph Bellamy's New England: The Origins of the New Divinity in Revolutionary America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

<sup>4</sup> Robert L. Ferm, *Jonathan Edwards the Younger, 1745-1801: A Colonial Pastor* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1976)

Taylor (1786-1858) and Charles G. Finney (1792-1875), this collection is indeed welcome. All of the key issues that the New Divinity dealt with are touched upon, including piety (pages 69-132, *passim*), the New Divinity's predilection for a governmental theology of the atonement (pages 133-148), the key role that New Divinity men played in the abolitionist movement (pages 149-164),<sup>5</sup> and a passion for missions (pages 165-170).

Sweeney and Guelzo provide a judicious introduction to the entire collection, as well as individual introductions to each of the thirty-two pieces included. In the general introduction to the book they give a number of reasons why the New Divinity movement is important. Noteworthy among these reasons is the fact that study of this movement inevitably deepens one's understanding of the course of intellectual and theological movements in the ante-bellum United States.

While I would have liked to have seen something included by the evangelist Asahel Nettleton (d.1844), a New Divinity heir of Edwards and Charles Finney's great opponent, I am thrilled with this volume and its potential for helping students of this era in American theological history appreciate the impact of the New Divinity men and their thought.

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<sup>5</sup> It might have been good to have included something by the African-American New Divinity theologian Lemuel Haynes (1753-1833) to illustrate another dimension of the New Divinity's impact in this area. On Haynes, see John Saillant, "Lemuel Haynes (1753-1833)" in Mark G. Toulouse and James O. Duke, eds., *Makers of Christian Theology in America* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 97-100 and the bibliography at the end of the article.