

Academic Hutchinsonians and their quest for relevance, 1734–1790

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Abstract

An examination of the Oxford group of the followers of John Hutchinson (1674–1737), the self-taught Hebrew scholar, natural philosopher and cosmologist, provides insights into the change in the movement that bears his name. Hutchinsonians who studied at Oxford, like George Horne (1730–1792), William Jones (1726–1800) and Alexander Catcott (1725–1779), first adopted Hutchinson's ideas in much the same uncompromising form as the earliest followers of Hutchinson had done. However, later on, we see an effort by members of this Oxford group to moderate the profile of the movement. They gradually developed a sense of the need to embrace a more generalised orthodoxy instead of pursuing at all costs their own esoteric defence of the Trinity. They also began to soften what had been their sometimes patronising, sometimes aggressive attitudes to those not convinced of Hutchinson's brilliance and sufficiency. The realisation among this Oxford group that a full-blooded Hutchinsonian system was on the margins of orthodox thinking led them to develop a more integrated approach which arguably contributed to the gradual breakdown of Hutchinsonianism as a coherent body of thought.

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Introduction

John Hutchinson (1674–1737) elaborated a complete and self-sufficient system, with the aims of bolstering the Trinitarian and scriptural foundations of Anglican

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religion against its assailants and of cleansing cosmology of what seemed the Deistic and pantheistic tendencies of Newtonianism. Hutchinsonianism had several interlinked aspects, which comprised: a linguistic method of dealing with the Hebrew of the Old Testament that allowed the highlighting of the Trinitarian promise in the Old Testament, supplemented by a history of religion that sought to prove that the Trinity was old as creation; a sensationalist approach to revelation, which placed the emphasis on the physical evidence of Scripture; and a Trinitarian cosmology founded on scriptural evidence, designed as an alternative to Newtonian cosmology and to the speculations of natural religion.

The Hutchinsonian method of interpreting the Old Testament attracted interest in the movement among academic circles, such as at Oxford; even new followers who were to carry Hutchinsonian concerns on into the nineteenth century took up an interest in Hebrew as their initial Hutchinsonian undertaking.¹ Here I am going to concentrate on three Oxford Hutchinsonians, namely, George Horne, William Jones of Nayland and Alexander Catcott.

George Horne (1730–1792) was born at Otham, near Maidstone. His first teacher was his father, Samuel Horne, rector of the parish. Then he was sent to Maidstone school for two years. Horne won a Maidstone scholarship at University College, Oxford, matriculating 17 March 1745/1746. It was in his undergraduate years that he met William Jones. When they met they were already acquainted with Hutchinson's writings.² Horne graduated B.A. in October 1749, and was elected to a Kentish fellowship at Magdalen College in 1750. William Jones (1726–1800) was born at Lowick in Northamptonshire on 30 July 1726. On 9 July 1745 he matriculated at University College, Oxford. While Horne spent most of his life at Magdalen where he ended up being the president in 1768, Jones was ordained priest in 1751 and went as a Curate to Wadenhoe in 1754. Alexander Catcott (1725–1779), the Hutchinsonian divine and geologist, was the son of Alexander Stopford Catcott who had initiated the Hutchinsonian controversy on *Elahim*. Catcott Junior was born at Bristol on 2 November 1725.³ He was educated at the grammar school, and entered Winchester in 1739. Catcott Junior was given one Hebrew scholarship of the two that were available at Wadham College, Oxford which is where he met Jones in 1744.⁴ Catcott Junior graduated B.A. in 1748. Catcott Junior shared an appetite for natural philosophy especially with Jones. Their long correspondence has survived and is preserved in the Bristol Central Library Collection.⁵ Hutchinsonianism was already known among Oxford circles before Horne, Jones and Catcott Junior entered the university. The Hutchinsonian pamphlets of individuals like Benjamin

¹D. Gurses. "The Hutchinsonian Defence of an Old Testament Trinitarian Christianity: The Controversy over *Elahim*, 1735–1773". *History of European Ideas* 29 (2003):393–409.

²*DNB*.

³I will use Catcott Junior to distinguish Alexander Catcott, the Hutchinsonian divine and geologist, from his father Alexander Stopford Catcott, who had initiated the Hutchinsonian controversy on *Elahim*, who I will refer to as Catcott Senior.

⁴William Jones. *Memoirs of the Life, Studies and Writings of the Right Reverend George Horne*. (London, 1795) 23.

⁵Bristol Reference Library, *Catcott Correspondence*, B26063.

Holloway and Walter Hodges were in circulation as early as 1734.⁶ This period also was the time when the Hebrew Controversy had a kick-start with Catcott Senior's sermon in 1735.⁷ It was in its coherent, systematic form that Hutchinsonianism was first made known to members of Oxford University.

Here I should make it clear that in the Oxford group, I include the members of Oxford University from the 1730s to the 1790s. The Hutchinsonianism of Oxonians like Horne, Jones and Catcott Junior represent the continuity of some Hutchinsonian concerns, but also the beginnings of the breakdown of a compact system of thought into individuals' preferences. Oxford Hutchinsonianism initially exhibited all the traits of early Hutchinsonianism in general, the Trinitarian agenda, the anti-Newtonianism and most of all a concentration on the Hebrew of the Old Testament. However, the interests of the Oxford followers shifted over time. The Oxford group differed from the early followers like Julius Bate (1711–1771), Robert Spearman (1703–1761) and Duncan Forbes (1685–1747) by each taking up some aspects of Hutchinsonianism within a wider, not exclusively Hutchinsonian, set of ideas. I will elaborate on how and why some less popular Hutchinsonian undertakings like Hebraic studies and anti-Newtonianism were dropped from the coherent body of thought.

Some historians have commented on the modification in the movement, but without delving into the dynamics of this shift: 'By the beginning of the reign of George III in 1760 there had emerged a distinctively Anglican, and largely High-Church, Hutchinsonianism.'⁸ No explanation is provided as to how and why the movement diverted from a compact system which would encompass almost all branches of intellectual enquiry, to a more devotional attitude in an effort to relate to the cause of the declining Church. One reason for this chasm in our knowledge between the early and late Hutchinsonian attitudes is that not many people have tried to provide an insight into the transition that the movement went through. My suggestion regarding this change will be that Hutchinsonians like Horne and Jones engaged in an effort to moderate the Hutchinsonian profile. The later eighteenth century was going to witness a Hutchinsonian agenda which was basically moderate, aimed towards uniting with the Anglican orthodoxy. An analysis of how these followers perceived Hutchinson will be incorporated into this discussion in order to argue if Hutchinson's grand design lost its importance in the eyes of the Oxonian group.

Hebrew

Oxford was one of only two universities in the British Isles that had a chair in Hebrew, the other being Trinity College in Dublin, and it provided a lively

⁶Although the publication of Hutchinson's *Works* created a wave of interest in Oxford, there is evidence towards the existence of Oxonian following as early as 1734, which is a subject of further research in its own right.

⁷Alexander Stopford Catcott. *The Supreme and Inferior Elahim*. (London, 1736).

⁸K. Hylson-Smith. *High Churchmanship in the Church of England from the Sixteenth Century to the Late Twentieth Century*. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993) 91.

environment for Hebraic studies—sometimes perhaps too lively. Talking about the scholars of the time in Oxford, historians commented that ‘their energies were dissipated in the controversy about vocalization-points’.⁹ So it should not come as a surprise that George Horne and Walter Hodges, two Oxford Hutchinsonians, published their early pamphlets on Hebrew as a part of this controversy.¹⁰ Hebraic studies were to remain one of the primary concerns for Hutchinsonians during the 1750s and most of the 1760s.

Horne’s *Four Letters* which was published in 1755 clearly indicates that his Hutchinsonian interest was initially in Hebrew. Nayland testified to this in his *Memoirs of Horne*:

It is known to the public, that he came very early upon the stage as an author, though an anonymous one, and brought himself into some difficulty under the denomination of an Hutchinsonian; for this was the name given to those gentlemen who studied Hebrew and examined the writings of John Hutchinson Esq. The famous Mosaic Philosopher, and became inclined to favour his opinions in Theology and Philosophy.¹¹

Horne wrote another pamphlet attacking Kennicott’s plan of compiling a genuine text of the Old Testament in original Hebrew in 1760.¹² *A View of Mr. Kennicott’s Method* established the interest of the Oxford audiences, Hutchinsonian and non-Hutchinsonian alike, in the controversy over Hebrew etymologies. In another study which is generally attributed to George Horne, Horne expressed his belief in Hutchinsonian methodology:

Our Author [Hutchinson] is justified by the divine command, in going back to the old ways, and inquiring for the old paths: ... He offers to prove the Scriptures a regular, uniform, consistent system of natural and sacred truths ... He appeals to our senses for the perfection of the Hebrew language, on which all his discoveries are founded. What more could he have done to excite our attention?¹³

Although Hutchinson’s ideas had a certain appeal in academia, especially at Oxford, it also initiated a transformation in the movement, which should be examined in order to be able to understand the reasons behind the breakdown of certain aspects of the movement.

The combination of a full-blooded system of thought with uncompromisingly confrontational followers did not help the reputation of Hutchinsonians in its early stages. The Hutchinsonian insistence on their possession of the monopoly on truth

⁹D. Patterson. “Hebrew Studies.” *The History of the University of Oxford, vol. 5, Eighteenth century*. Eds. L.S. Sutherland and L.G. Mitchell. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986) 549.

¹⁰Walter Hodges. *The Christian Plan*. (London, 1752); *Reflections*. (Oxford, 1755); *Strictures*. (London, 1756); George Horne. *Four Letters*. (London, 1755); *A View of Mr. Kennicott’s method*. (London, 1760).

¹¹Nayland, *Memoirs*. 22.

¹²George Horne, *A View of Mr. Kennicott’s Method of Correcting the Hebrew Text*. (London, 1760).

¹³*An Abstract from the Works of John Hutchinson, Esq. Being a Summary of his Discoveries in Philosophy and Divinity*. (Edinburgh, 1753) 4–5. The British Library Catalogue suggests that this work may be written by George Horne.

exhibited itself as a problem in the controversies they joined. Both Hutchinson and his early followers held the absolute belief that they were reforming religion and their way was the only way. Hutchinson was adamant that he had no equal in his Hebraic method: 'I am also the first who has broke off the fetters clapped upon that language, cleared many of the blunders in the present translations.'¹⁴ In the first half of the eighteenth century Hutchinsonianism was regarded as something of an oddity because of its vigorously pursued, yet rather cryptic methods. Examples of reactions to the uncompromising nature of Hutchinsonianism can be found in many places. As early as 1726, William Whiston (1667–1752) happened to give some lectures in Bristol.¹⁵ Catcott Senior followed those lectures. To Whiston's 'real grief and surprise', Catcott Senior then went on to be a follower of 'that wild Hebrew enthusiast, Mr. Hutchinson'.¹⁶ Some called the Hutchinsonian method 'Incomprehensible Whim Wham!'¹⁷ and made fun of the Hutchinsonian insistence that Hebrew was essential to unleashing the knowledge of the natural and the divine: 'It is absolutely necessary to everlasting salvation, that every mother's child understand Hebrew, and commence a natural philosopher'; it was further argued that the Hutchinsonian claim to salvation was 'no ways to be attained, but by inspiration, and utterly renouncing all pretences to reason and common sense'.¹⁸ The novelist Tobias Smollett wrote a satire on the Hutchinsonian Hebrew method.¹⁹ One of the characters in his novel *The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom* (1753), the mad Sir Mungo Barebones, bears a striking resemblance to Hutchinson and his principles. E. Wasserman himself argued that Hutchinson was playing fast and loose with Hebrew.²⁰ In the 1750s there was a record number of anti-Hutchinsonian publications because of the publicity generated by the 1748 publication of Hutchinson's *Works* and because of the then raging controversy over Hebrew etymologies.²¹

Early Hutchinsonians were not preoccupied with relating to their potential allies, i.e. High-Church circles, Anglican apologists and academia in general. The founder of the movement was not a member of the inner circle of intellectuals, nor did he make an effort to engage with the Church hierarchy to gain followers or appreciation. The contemporary naturalist and geologist John Woodward (1665–1728), who hired Hutchinson to collect fossils and assist him in the preparation of his pamphlet *An Attempt Toward a Natural History of Fossils* (London, 1729) which was published after his death, regarded Hutchinson as 'a

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵“An Annotated Catalogue of the Works of A. S. Catcott LLB and of his Sons.” *Memoir of A.S. Catcott*. Bristol Reference Library, Ref. no. 28011, 39.

¹⁶*Ibid.* 40.

¹⁷T. Jack. *Symbolum Hutchinsonianum, or the Essential Articles of the Hutchinsonian Creed, Extracted out of the Truly Learned John Hutchinson Esq.* (London, 1750), 21.

¹⁸*Ibid.* 21.

¹⁹E. Wasserman. “Smollet's Satire on the Hutchinsonians.” *Modern Language Notes* 70:5 (1955): 336–337.

²⁰*Ibid.* 337.

²¹*The Philosophical and Theological Works of John Hutchinson, 12 vols.* Eds. Julius Bate and Robert Spearman (London, 1748–1749).

miner' after all.²² The general orthodoxy regarded him as an oddity too. William Warburton on one occasion commented that Hutchinson was the latest in the line of people who were prone to the fashionable madness of dealing with the unpointed Hebrew text of the Old Testament.²³ Hutchinson's push and privilege came from the patronage of Charles Seymour, sixth Duke of Somerset, and his followers' dedication. The fate of the movement was to undergo a transformation with the introduction of academics to the movement who had an awareness of connections and relevance to contemporary moods.

Let us investigate the ways in which the shift of interest from Hebrew towards a more direct theological attitude as a part of the Hutchinsonian undertaking occurred. D. Katz observes a change, though he associates this with the general decline of learning in the universities in the late eighteenth century. Katz presents Hutchinsonians as an isolated group of Hebraists at Oxford and quotes Spearman's bitterness about this decline: 'The Hebrew tongue, left to the ignorant and vile comments of those who knew nothing of its excellency, is grown contemptible even to a proverb.'²⁴ The Hutchinsonian controversy, however, was still alive in 1755 when Spearman made this comment on the state of Hebrew, and it continued for another ten years. After the 1760s, however, we see Hebraic studies becoming redundant as a Hutchinsonian interest. The Oxford generation lost their interest in the prospect of the Hebrew undertaking after their failure in the controversy over *Elahim*. Although the shift from Hebrew should not undermine the fact that Hebraic studies were a long-lasting element of the Hutchinsonian undertaking during most of the eighteenth century, it hints at a collapse in the cluster of the movement. The controversy, which started in 1735 and lasted until 1773, displayed not only how Hutchinsonians dealt with the Hebrew text, but also testified to the abrasive nature of the movement in the face of criticism from orthodoxy and heterodoxy alike. Only in the later stages of the controversy, which coincided with the first efforts at moderation by Hutchinsonians in the 1750s and 1760s, and ended with their defeat in the controversy, can one observe an attempt to conciliate non-Hutchinsonian Trinitarian Protestants. After a decade-long row over the use of unpointed Hebrew in establishing fundamental points of Christianity, especially the Trinity, individuals such as Horne longed for a more peaceful environment in which to further the Hutchinsonian undertaking concerning the heart of the matter:

Enough has been given to the arts of controversy—let something be given to the studies of piety and a holy life. If we can once unite in these our tempers may be better disposed to unite in doctrine.²⁵

²²*Letters to H. Sloane*. British Library. MS Sloane 4044: f. 156.

²³William Warburton. *Letters From a Late Eminent Prelate (W.W.) to One of his Friends [Bishop Hurd]*. (London, 1809) 57.

²⁴Robert Spearman and Julius Bate. *Abstract from the Works of John Hutchinson*, 2nd edition. (Edinburgh, 1755) 206.

²⁵*Aphorisms and Opinions of Dr. George Horne, with Notes and a Biographical Sketch*. (London, 1857) 34–35.

Anti-Newtonianism

Early Hutchinsonians did not see Newton and his followers simply as searchers after the truth of the material cosmos, but as aiming to reach conclusions about the Divine Cosmos leading to Deist/Arian or even Unitarian conclusions. As far as the Hutchinsonians were concerned, Newtonians were more to blame than any other potentially heterodox group in England, for the existing threat to the religious and political establishment.²⁶ Anti-trinitarianism of all sorts was a danger to the establishment, but Arianism gained the most notorious reputation as both an ancient heresy and one which could easily associate itself with a powerful, new cosmology: that of which Isaac Newton was the architect.

The general accusation early Hutchinsonians such as Spearman directed against the intellectuals of his time was their tendency to ‘bend’ the divine essence: ‘Every man has a God ... nowadays they are generally of his own manufacture.’²⁷ Spearman accused Newton of creating a concept of the universe that would lead to a denial of the Trinity. ‘His definitions of his Deus makes him to exist in one person; directly opposite ... to the Christian faith; which teaches, that he exists in three persons.’²⁸ Spearman saw the ‘religion of nature’ as the most dangerous enemy to revelation. This natural religion was the only faith of the Arians and Socinians, who were

So fond of taking God only to be one person and consequently the second and the third persons of the trinity turned out to be what people made of them, superior to men and divine but not by nature but by appointment.²⁹

However, the study of nature should not have been an inspiration for Unitarian tendencies as far as Spearman was concerned, since

This material world is an emblem or type of the immaterial, that it was framed so as to give us ideas ... of the essence, existence ... of God; which will prove ... the fundamental point of Christianity.³⁰

Accordingly Hutchinsonians came up with fire, light and spirit as representations of Trinity and as active agents which performed actions in the universe.

Fire philosophers of various sectarian convictions elaborated their theories on the origin, and final conflagration of the universe. The fire–light–air plenum of the Hutchinsonians was central both to their anti-Newtonian mechanics and

²⁶For a discussion of the seventeenth century background of the tension between the New Science and religious orthodoxy see M. Hunter. *Science and the Shape of Orthodoxy: Intellectual Challenge in late Seventeenth-Century Britain*. (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995) 11–12. See also S. Gilley. “Christianity and Enlightenment: a Historical Survey.” *History of European Ideas* 1 (1981): 103–121.

²⁷Robert Spearman. *An Enquiry after Philosophy and Theology, Tending to Show When and Whence Mankind Came at the Knowledge of These Two Important Points*. (Edinburgh, 1755) 1.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 21.

²⁹Robert Spearman. *Letters to a Friend concerning the Septuagint Translation and the Heathen Mythology*. (Edinburgh, 1758) 484–488.

³⁰Spearman. *Enquiry*. 27.

Trinitarian theology. Of the fire philosophies of the age it had the most confident followers.³¹

The anti-Newtonian aspect of the movement soon transmitted itself to the Oxford circle. In their early careers, as will be seen, George Horne, William Jones and Catcott Junior were very much interested in taking up the anti-Newtonian cause. However, for some, this evolved into, or perhaps even out of, a more general interest in natural philosophy. The scientific enquiries of Catcott Junior and Jones's interest in natural philosophy illustrate an increasing preoccupation with extending particular aspects of the system. Jones's interest in cosmology was not his main Hutchinsonian concern. The friendship of Jones and Horne also demonstrates their mutual interest in the theological aspects of the movement. Horne, on the other hand, in his later years, altogether dropped the cosmological/ philosophical aspect.

The Oxford group carried the anti-Newtonian aspects of the movement into the late eighteenth century. Jones elaborated on the transformation that he and his fellow Hutchinsonian went through

When a student had once persuaded himself that he sees truth in the principles of Mr. Hutchinson, a great revolution succeeds in his ideas of the natural world and economy. Qualities in matter, with a vacuum for them to act in, are no longer venerable and the authority of Newton's name, which goes with them, loses some of its influence.³²

However, the Oxford group throughout this period yearned for their studies to be relevant to contemporary intellectual moods. Horne especially, as will be argued in a later section, made a special effort to move Hutchinsonian ideals from the margins to the centre of orthodox thought and tried to clarify the unpopular tenets of Hutchinsonian enquiry without damaging the core. This is true also for the anti-Newtonian aspect of the movement as well as the Hebraic undertaking.

I shall investigate the different forms of anti-Newtonianism pursued by the Oxford group, using Horne, Jones and Catcott Junior as representative examples, each of whom displayed slightly different versions of anti-Newtonianism.

George Horne (1730–1792)

With figures such as Horne, Jones and Catcott Junior we see a revival of the interest in arguments against Newtonian natural philosophy. This interest in its very early stages was vigorously anti-Newtonian. Young Horne was very much influenced by Hutchinson's opposition to Newtonian physics and the view that it was inadequate and incompatible with the Genesis account in the Old Testament.

³¹A.J. Kuhn. "Nature Spiritualized: Aspects of Anti-Newtonianism." *ELH Essays for Earl R. Wasserman*. Ed. R. Paulson and A. Stein (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976) 118.

³²Jones. *Memoirs*. 36.

Horne's early publications echoed Hutchinson's anti-Newtonianism.³³ The opening lines of one of his pamphlets showed no signs of diminishing hostility. Reflecting upon the bad reputation of Hutchinson's thoughts on cosmology, Horne had come up with

One great reason why Mr. Hutchinson's discoveries have not been received, at least examined to see whether they deserve or not, I am fully persuaded, upon a thorough consideration on the matter, is this—It has been an opinion for some time entertained, that Sir Isaac's philosophy is absolutely certain and infallible.³⁴

It was enough, declared Horne, that 'The Newtonian system has now been in possession of the chair for some years.'³⁵ He argued that in the meantime, Hutchinson had come up with a more sensible philosophy. Horne's main anti-Newtonian argument was that in a cosmology like that of Newton, the causes of natural phenomena are left without any explanation. One reason for this was because Newton's mathematical system was not, according to Horne, compatible with the physical world. It was all about effects, and that left holes in the system. Of course all the criticisms of Newtonian cosmology ended up with one ultimate accusation: the fact that his thought led to infidelity, neglected revelation and ignored the Trinity. 'Horne believed that the marginalisation of revelation in Newtonian natural philosophy had given a major impetus to infidelity.'³⁶

Horne in his tracts on natural philosophy 'argued trenchantly against the Newtonian concept of a vacuum, implicit in his theory of gravitation, as conducive to atheism'.³⁷ On another occasion, one can easily see the resemblance to Hutchinson's uncompromising and offensive style

Who is that vain, presumptuous wretch, that shall dare to say or think they are in a vacuum, even supposing such a thing ever was, or is possible to be?³⁸

William Warburton noticed this daring pamphlet of Horne called *The Theology and Philosophy in Cicero's Somnium* and recommended it to Bishop Hurd in his correspondence in 1751. In his letter, Warburton expressed his astonishment at Horne's audacious anti-Newtonianism and presented this tract as the definitive study of Hutchinsonianism. Warburton's witty approach to Horne's anti-Newtonianism is also worth noting

³³George Horne. *The Theology and Philosophy in Cicero's Somnium ... Explained, or, An Attempt to Demonstrate that the Newtonian System is Perfectly Agreeable to the Notions of the Wisest Ancients* (Oxford, 1751); *A Fair, Candid and Impartial State of the Case between Newton and Mr. Hutchinson. In Which is Shown, How Far a System of Physics is Capable of Mathematical Demonstration; How Far Sir Isaac's ... Has that Demonstration, etc.* (Oxford, 1753).

³⁴Horne. *Fair, Candid Case*. 6.

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶N. Aston. "The Dean of Canterbury and the Sage of Ferne: George Horne looks at Voltaire." *Crown and Mitre: Religion and Society in Northern Europe Since the Reformation*. Eds. Jacob, W.M. and N. Yates (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1993) 147.

³⁷Patterson. "Hebrew Studies." 457.

³⁸Horne. *Theology and Philosophy*. 9.

Mr. [Alexander] Pope used to tell me, that when he had any thing better than ordinary to say, and yet too bold, he always reserved it for a second or third edition. And then nobody took any notice of it. But there is one book, and that no large one, which I would recommend to your perusal, it is called ‘The theology and philosophy of Cicero’s Somn. Scip. Examined’. It is indeed [the] *ne plus ultra* of Hutchinsonianism. In this twelve-penny pamphlet Newton is proved an Atheist and a Blockhead. And what would you more?³⁹

It is obvious that Horne inherited the early Hutchinsonian distaste for Deist and Arian leanings which tended to strip the books of Scripture of their authority on the truths of nature. But the forms of anti-Newtonianism in England were not restricted to this, and Horne was by no means alone in arguing along these lines.⁴⁰ Some writers, who mention Hutchinsonianism without discussing it extensively, advert more to its religious character as a High-Church reaction to Newtonian supremacy over science in the eighteenth century.⁴¹ Horne’s anti-Newtonianism essentially represents part of a Hutchinsonian agenda aimed at restoring the Trinity to the centre of Christian dogma.

Horne in his later years was going to drop his anti-Newtonian stance. After his 1753 publication *A Fair, Candid Case* Horne no longer published Hutchinsonian pamphlets of anti-Newtonian nature. If one traces his publications there is a pattern of dropping the radical Hutchinsonian elements of thought and a deliberate attempt to concentrate on more devotional aspects of his undertaking. Horne in time ended up being a Hutchinsonian clergyman, with little inclination towards the natural sciences. He acknowledged that his calling gave him little opportunity for ‘nice enquiry into philosophical minutiae’.⁴² The gradual transition in Horne’s reception of Hutchinsonianism from an out-and-out provocative identity to a subdued and moderate one could be regarded as a representative for the change movement itself went through.

³⁹William Warburton. *Letters From a Late Eminent Prelate (W.W.) to One of His Friends [Bishop Hurd]*. (London, 1809) 84.

⁴⁰For a discussion of the critique of Newton by Daniel Waterland, Richard Grey, William Warburton and George Berkeley see S. Mandelbrote. “Newton and eighteenth-century Christianity.” *The Cambridge Companion to Newton*. Eds. I.B. Cohen and G.E. Smith (Cambridge University Press, 2002) 409–431. See also, M. Byrne. *Alternative Cosmologies in Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1998) 12. See also, J.E. Force. “The Breakdown of the Newtonian Synthesis of Science and Religion: Hume, Newton and the Royal Society.” *Essays on the Context, Nature and Influence of Isaac Newton’s Theology*. Eds. J.E. Force and R.H. Popkin (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1990) 143–165.

⁴¹R.E. Schofield. *Mechanism and Materialism: British Natural Philosophy in an Age of Reason*. (Princeton, 1970) 122; P.B. Nockles. *Oxford Movement in Context: Anglican High Churchmanship, 1760–1857*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); D. Nicholls. *God and Government in an Age of Reason*. (London: Routledge, 1995).

⁴²*George Horne to... Browning* [no date]. Cambridge University Library, Horne Papers, Add. MSS 8134/B/1, f. 44.

Alexander Catcott (1725–1779)

Catcott Junior's Hutchinsonian interests included a focus on natural history and cosmology. His most famous publication was *A Treatise on the Deluge*, which followed the Hutchinsonian determination to prove the value of the Genesis account, properly interpreted, as a guide to natural phenomena.⁴³ In this pamphlet, Catcott integrated a great deal of his land study to support his interpretation of the Flood account. Catcott Junior also compared the theories of the Flood put forward by other people such as John Woodward and the Swiss naturalist Johann Jacob Scheuchzer (1672–1733). The Hutchinsonian circle welcomed the *Treatise*.⁴⁴

Catcott Junior pursued his interest in natural history alongside his general Hutchinsonian interests. Catcott Junior, like his father, engaged in correspondence with many of the Hutchinsonians. These included William Romaine (1714–1795), William Stevens (1732–1807), George Randolph, a physician from Bath, Horne, Jones and Spearman. In his Oxford Journal, Catcott Junior mentioned visits to people such as William Gardner, the husband of Hutchinson's niece and a Hutchinsonian, and having dinners with Romaine and Horne.⁴⁵

Catcott Junior also exchanged letters with people known for their interest in geology; which becomes evident when one draws a profile of persons with whom he kept in contact. Emmanuel Mendes Da Costa (1717–1791), British naturalist of Portuguese origin, was the most famous of them.⁴⁶ Catcott Junior also 'went on geological trips with other Bristolians'.⁴⁷ He also kept journals, which constitute valuable accounts of his travels in England and Wales, collecting fossils and studying the strata. Catcott Junior's journals include scientific observations and different theories compared and contrasted concerning the Deluge, in the light of evidence obtained from the land. Catcott Junior occasionally expressed his dislike of aspects of Newtonianism, and its supposed tendencies towards naturalism are expressed in matters concerning the Deluge and the reformation of the earth.

M. Neve and R. Porter located Catcott junior as a participant in the effort to adjust the natural with the biblical account.⁴⁸ The whole point of Diluvialism, which Catcott Junior himself was attached to, was to argue that there was scientific

⁴³Alexander Catcott. *Treatise on the Deluge*. (London, 1761).

⁴⁴George Horne to Catcott Junior. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063, f. 54. 23 June 1761.

⁴⁵Alexander Catcott. *Oxford Journal* 1 (1748): 16.

⁴⁶Emanuel Mendes da Costa to Catcott Junior. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063, f. 60. 16 July 1765. The tradition in natural history of adjusting the natural account to the biblical has many examples from the eighteenth century and Mendes da Costa did subscribe to this tradition with his work *A Natural History of Fossils* (London, 1757). On Mendes da Costa, See R. Hayward. "Emmanuel Mendes da Costa: A Case Study in Scientific Reputation." *Travels of Learning: A Geography of Science in Europe*. Eds. M.P. Diogo, A. Simoes and A. Carneiro (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003).

⁴⁷J. Barry. "The Cultural Life of Bristol, 1640–1775." (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, St. John's College, Oxford, September 1985) 253.

⁴⁸M. Neve and R. Porter. "Alexander Catcott: Glory and Geology." *British Journal for the History of Science* 9 (1977): 37–60.

evidence for the Flood.⁴⁹ The comments of some Newtonians like Whiston to explain the Flood as resulting from the termination of the gravitational force were not acceptable to Catcott Junior.⁵⁰

Catcott Junior's interest in cosmology was primarily that of a scientific enquirer. His premises, however, were undeniably Hutchinsonian. He was not interested, for example, in explaining the Deluge by concepts such as the termination of the gravitational force and the subsequent rise of the waters, or the attraction caused by a comet, which produced a universal flood. Catcott Junior dismissed these peculiarly Newtonian concepts and believed in the sufficiency of the Genesis account.

In brief, Catcott Junior was a Hutchinsonian with an interest in natural philosophy, an occupation which highlighted his anti-Newtonianism as a scientific enquiry. His scientific endeavours, his collecting of fossils and his land surveys were aimed at providing evidence not only for the existence of the biblical Flood but also to serve his ultimate Hutchinsonian purpose: to establish the authority of the book of Genesis. In this way, the Hutchinsonian belief in theological representationalism exhibited itself in Catcott Junior's geological interest. Catcott Junior, in sum, was a member of the Oxford group who had become less interested in describing the whole Hutchinsonian system, while not perhaps rejecting it. Catcott did not publish on any other aspect of Hutchinsonian pursuit. If one compares his Hutchinsonianism to his father's, for example, one can see the striking difference in their application of the Hutchinsonian system of thought. Catcott Junior felt at liberty to choose what he liked in Hutchinson, while Catcott Senior saw the system as a compact body of thought and embraced it that way.

William Jones (1726–1800)

The correspondence of Catcott Junior and Jones coincided with the period of Jones's preparation of his tract on natural philosophy. The surviving correspondence in the Bristol Reference Library indicates that they started exchanging letters in 1759. This was while Jones was in Wadenho in Northamptonshire, working as curate to his brother-in-law, the Rev. Brook Bridges. In 1762, *An Essay on the First Principles of Natural Philosophy* appeared. Jones's biographer William Stevens summarised the aim of the work as

⁴⁹Diluvialism was mainly a form of natural history where Scripture was the main source. Empirical evidence provided secondary information to help with the biblical account. The Flood was the most popular subject in this sense. There were different theories regarding the existence of the Flood and the reformation of the earth after it. See, D.A. Young, "Scripture in the Hands of Geologists (Part One)." *Westminster Theological Journal* 49:1 (1987) 1–34; D.A. Young, *The Biblical Flood, A Case Study of the Church's Response to Extrabiblical Evidence* (Michigan: Eerdmans, 1995), 76–77. See also, R. Rappaport, "Geology and Orthodoxy: The Case of Noah's Flood in Eighteenth Century Thought." *British Journal for the History of Science* 12:37 (1978): 1–18.

⁵⁰Alexander Catcott. *Oxford Journal*. Bristol Reference Library, Ref: B 14490, 24.

To demonstrate the use of natural means or second causes in the economy of the material world, from reason, experiments, and the testimony of Antiquity.⁵¹

The correspondence shows that there was an exchange of ideas between Jones and Catcott Junior during the preparation of this work. Jones published three more pamphlets on natural history, the last being *Considerations on the Natural History of the Earth and its Minerals* in 1787.⁵² Jones's practice of experimental science found support from John Stuart, third earl of Bute (1713–1792). His interest in nature in relation to Scripture is expressed by his biographer Stevens:

The powers of nature truly understood, in the sense of this Author, agree with what is revealed to us concerning the nature of God and Man, which is a farther recommendation of the plan ... But Nature, falsely understood, as in modern philosophy, leads to such ideas of God as are contrary to the Christian religion.⁵³

Jones's argument was that Hutchinsonianism did not aim to mystify the relationship between God and Nature, but on the contrary, by the use of experimental philosophy, to show that Creator and creature could and should be distinguished. Thinking otherwise, Jones argued, would lead men to invent ideas that would lead to materialism. The Hutchinsonian argument that operations in nature were carried on by the agency of the elements fire, light and air, argued Jones, could be deduced from a study of experimental philosophy. The theory of matter was an important issue here. One way of distinguishing creator and the creature was to argue for inert matter, which Newtonians totally challenged. What could not be deduced from experimental philosophy was what Jones and his fellow Hutchinsonians accused Newtonians of: to assume that the clockwork structure of the universe invented itself. 'Nature is Christian',⁵⁴ asserted Jones; nature pointed to a purpose, and symbolised the very truth about the Trinity, and all this could be proved with the tools of experimental study of nature. This thought, although implicit in Hutchinson himself, was argued by him from another direction—that of the Scriptures. Both Jones's and Hutchinson's way of thinking would agree that natural philosophy should not disagree with revelation. Jones published a series of books to illustrate his thinking.⁵⁵

Jones's motive in engaging with natural philosophy as a part of his Hutchinsonian understanding came from his wish to argue that the results of scientific enquiry should not dispute but could confirm the revealed truth about God and His creation.

⁵¹*Works of William Jones*. Ed. William Stevens. xxvi. See Appendix for other publications of William Jones on natural philosophy.

⁵²William Jones. *Considerations on the Nature and Economy of Beasts and Cattle*. (London, 1785), *The Religious Use of Botanical Philosophy*. (London, 1786) and *Considerations in Natural History of the Earth and its Minerals*. (London, 1787).

⁵³Stevens. *Works of Jones*. xxvii.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*

⁵⁵William Jones. *Physiological Disquisitions, or Discourses on the Natural Philosophy of the Elements*. (London, 1781), *An Essay on the First Principles of Natural Philosophy*. (Oxford, 1762), *Zoologia Ethica: A Disquisition Concerning the Mosaic Distinction of Animals into Clean and Unclean*. (London, 1771), *The Book of Nature*. (London, 1792).

It was most probably the Newtonians, not the prospect of experimental science itself, who ended up mixing the causes of natural phenomena with the effects, argued Jones. He also argued against Newton and his followers for their confusing God and His creation:

It seems, by some persons, that the elementary philosophy naturally leads to Atheism, and Sir Isaac Newton himself is charged with giving countenance to materialism by his ether though nothing can be further from the truth; and it is surprising how such a thought could ever enter into the head of any man. It is the aim and study of the elementary, called the Hutchinsonian philosophy, not to confound God and nature, but to distinguish between the creator and the creature.⁵⁶

Jones here did not seem to agree with Hutchinson that Newtonianism necessarily had materialistic implications. In brief, Jones's ideas were perhaps the most outspoken statements supporting the anti-Newtonian face of Hutchinsonianism. Jones also provided the reasons behind his anti-Newtonianism, which stemmed from the potential danger of setting up or inventing a natural philosophy which would undermine God's transcendence: 'A system may be fabricated and called natural, but a religion cannot be.'⁵⁷ The point to make here is that Jones' reasoning did not need to rely on Hutchinson himself, though it did not depart from Hutchinson's sentiments.

Moderation or reconceptualisation?

Another point put forward to argue that the influence of Hutchinson declined, is that his followers gradually welcomed other intellectuals to their libraries, such as Charles Leslie (1650–1722), Non-Juror and controversialist, William Law and John Ellis, as influences to complement Hutchinson.⁵⁸ Hodges gave the first signs of this in 1750. Talking about his influences, Hodges did not deny Hutchinson's authority, however, he wanted to make it clear that: 'I have used his bucket, yet I went for my water to the Fountain Head'.⁵⁹ Horne's early intentions to integrate the learning and influences he had in one melting pot is evident by his extensive use of material from Leslie. Jones commented on this in his biography of Horne. It was after the publication of *An Essay on Spirit* by Dr. Clayton, the bishop of Clogher in Ireland in the year 1750, that Jones and Horne met with the works of Leslie. While preparing *An Answer to the Essay on Spirit* in 1753, they consulted the works of Leslie and

⁵⁶Stevens. *Works of Jones*. xxvi.

⁵⁷Jones. *Memoirs*. preface.

⁵⁸C.D.A. Leighton. "Knowledge of Divine Things: A Study on Hutchinsonianism." *History of European Ideas* 26:(2001): 159–75, 166.

⁵⁹Walter Hodges. *Elihu or an Enquiry into the Principal Scope and Design of the Book of Job*. (London, 1750) lxvii.

appreciated him.⁶⁰ Although these years do coincide with Horne's militant anti-Newtonian period, they could be regarded as the beginnings of the realisation that Hutchinson's teaching could be supplemented with material from the orthodox canon. These were, however, early days for Horne and Jones in terms of the moderating of their Hutchinsonianism. Later on, in the late 1760s, the demise of the Hutchinsonian Hebrew method led them to realise that Hutchinson's influence should be concealed if their message was to be put across. Thus, there was gradual change in emphasis, rather than an immediate dropping of the name of Hutchinson.

Jones much later in 1799 felt the need to explain their appreciation of the writings of Leslie or others alongside those of Hutchinson:

When the writings of Leslie, or Law, or Hutchinson, were before Mr. Horne, he used them with judgement and moderation, to qualify and temper each other: he took what was excellent from all, without admitting what was exceptionable from any.⁶¹

Thus, the use of other writers by Horne and Jones does not necessarily demonstrate a departure from Hutchinson as such, but an invitation for other intellectuals to join their speculation and to incorporate a sanitised Hutchinsonian thinking with contemporary thought.

William Jones's collected works, which were edited by William Stevens, provide certain clues as to the ways in which he adopted Horne's suggestion of dropping Hutchinson's name. Jones preferred to talk about Hutchinson's influences and targets. In a tract called *A Short Way to Truth, or The Christian Doctrine of a Trinity in Unity*, Jones gives a long definition of Trinitarian analogy as used by Hutchinson without ever mentioning his name. He refers instead to other thinkers who promoted more or less the same argument, such as Bishop Horsley and Charles Leslie, as contemporaries and influences.⁶² In matters of cosmology Jones again referred to other anti-Newtonian thinkers such as the Dutch physician and botanist Hermann Boerhaave (1668–1738), without giving explicit references to Hutchinson.

Although Jones was reluctant to present both Horne and himself as devoted followers of Hutchinson, his opinion of Hutchinson does not differ markedly from someone in the earlier circle of followers, except that he feels the need to discard Hutchinson's vehemence:

He [Hutchinson] was a man of a warm and hasty spirit, like Martin Luther; who to certain modern speculations in philosophy and theology, could preserve no more respect than Luther did to the errors of Popery.⁶³

⁶⁰On reactions to Clayton's pamphlet see, N. Aston. "The limits of Latitudinarianism: English reactions to Bishop Robert Clayton's *An Essay on Spirit*." *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 49:3 (July 1998) 407–433. See also C.D.A. Leighton. "The Enlightened Religion of Robert Clayton." *Studia Hibernica* 30 (1998): 157–184.

⁶¹Jones. *Memoirs*. 74.

⁶²Jones. *Memoirs*. 325 and 335, respectively. On Horsley see, F.C. Mather. *High Church Prophet, Bishop Samuel Horsley (1733–1806) and the Caroline Tradition in the Later Georgian Church*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

⁶³*Ibid.*

Ironically, this is in fact the way that Hutchinson wanted to be perceived. He always thought of himself as a reformer of religion in the ranks of Luther.

George Horne was the first Hutchinsonian to state the necessity of abandoning the militancy of Hutchinson and the early followers. His Hutchinsonianism illustrates a transition, not in its ultimate aim, but in how to pursue the Trinitarian mission. In his early years Horne did not hesitate to show Hutchinsonian traits which would offend Newtonians in matters of natural philosophy and Hebraists in matters of Old Testament exegesis. But in his later years, Horne expressed a reluctance to maintain this militant approach. Referring to the long Hutchinsonian controversy on *Elahim* in his later years, which he himself had joined with various pamphlets, Horne demanded a better medium than Hebraic studies. His intention in doing so was related to his willingness to get rid of the conflict-ridden features of the Hutchinsonian undertaking.

Hutchinson himself was cited as an influence less and less by the later following. This does not, however, mean that Hutchinson's influence became insignificant and increasingly irrelevant for the later Oxford Hutchinsonians. On the contrary, for the later group of followers Hutchinson's system of thought lost little of its importance. However, the Oxford group had highly respected public reputations which they did not wish to lay open to damage. Their effort to strip references to Hutchinson from their writings can be seen as an effort to ameliorate the profile of the movement. It becomes almost impossible to rule out this suggestion when one traces the private correspondence among Hutchinsonians themselves. One could see this as a representational modification, but it is partially a willingness to call on non-Hutchinsonians like Leslie to strengthen their arguments. In other words, it was not a total rejection of Hutchinson, but a less open exploitation of him by using parts of the orthodox canon.

When Hutchinsonianism gained ground in places such as Oxford, Horne observed the difficulty of being simultaneously a Hutchinsonian and a respected divine. Horne realised the hostility towards himself and his fellow Hutchinsonians in his early career:

These [are] poor gentlemen, the Hutchinsonians, because they'll never get any preferment. The bishops ... all entered into a league never to promote them ... [yet] we are not of the numbers of them who preach Christ for gain or take orders because we are likely to get more by that than anything else.⁶⁴

On another occasion, Horne complained about religious dissent and how unnecessary it was to display partisanship in matters of religion. In a letter to Catcott Junior in 1761, Horne asks if he had read William Dodd's treatise *A Conference*. In his letter Horne made sarcastic comments on Dodd's efforts to clear himself from all labels for promotion, a strategy which he himself pursued in his later years, not for promotion perhaps, but for moderation:

⁶⁴Cambridge University Library, MS 8134/B/2, 'Commonplace Book,' parts of it quoted in N. Aston. "Horne and Heterodoxy: The Defence of Anglican Beliefs in the Late Enlightenment." *English Historical Review* 108 (1993): 895–919, 899.

Have you seen the Conference between the five worthies of different persuasions, a Mystic, a Hutchinsonian, A Calvinist, a Methodist, and a Churchman? It is said to be Master Dodd's, who has been employed for some time in scrubbing and scouring himself clean of all the isms, for preferment. The parties in this conference are poor fools indeed, and pin one another down like so many ninepins ... The pamphlet shows one very melancholy truth, which is, that we are crumbling every day more and more into sects and divisions, and by and by it will be a difficult matter to get half a dozen people together who shall agree in matters spiritual.⁶⁵

It is obvious that the issues that Horne was referring to here, were part of a larger debate, larger than the Hutchinsonian scheme of things. The breakdown of Anglican phenomena into various factions by Methodist challenges, the problematics of Calvinism, were all causing concern in orthodox circles. Here Horne's comments are more than a personal slant, however; it shows that Horne might have seen his own undertaking, his own Hutchinsonianism, as contributing to the totality of the assault upon the Anglican Church.

This desire to moderate or soften the profile of Hutchinsonians and to avoid divisions in the Church can be seen in Jones's account of the life of Horne. *The Life of Dr. Horne* was very much an apologetic work, virtually an effort to clear away all the charges of Hutchinsonianism against Horne. On one occasion, Jones almost denied that Horne was interested in Hutchinson's Hebrew methods, despite the facts that Horne actually produced pamphlets defending the Hutchinsonian Hebraic method and that his interest in Hutchinsonianism was initiated by Hutchinson's Hebrew method:

I do not recollect, that his writings anywhere discover a professed attachment to the Hebrew criticisms of Mr. Hutchinson; and I could prove abundantly from his private letters to myself that he was no friend to the use of such evidence either in philosophy or divinity.⁶⁶

On the other hand, we see Jones, in a later work, acknowledging Hutchinson's undeniable influence on the career of Horne:

I know it to be true, that he owed to him, the beginning of his extensive knowledge; for such a beginning as he made placed him on a new spot of high ground; from which he took all his prospects of religion and learning.⁶⁷

The true nature of the movement itself had not undergone a radical adjustment, but one can see a concealment of attachment to Hutchinson. The use of other non-Hutchinsonian material was part of this concealment, rather than a real change of heart. However, there came a point, in the last decades of the eighteenth century,

⁶⁵George Horne to Catcott Junior. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063, f. 54. 23 June 1761.

⁶⁶Jones. *Memoirs*. 175.

⁶⁷William Jones. *A New Preface to the Second Edition of Memoirs of the Life, Studies, Writings, &c. Of the Right Rev. George Horne*. (London, 1799) ii.

when one can observe a real disintegration of the movement and the Hutchinsonians' eclectic search for the defences of orthodoxy underwent this transformation.

A comment made by Horne represents his intentions as to how the teachings of Hutchinson should be restructured. Horne's call for a modification in promoting Hutchinson is evident here:

I had much rather the name of Hutchinson were dropped, and the useful things in him recommended to the world, with their evidence, in another manner than they have been.⁶⁸

Although it was possible for Horne's generation to relate themselves to the general orthodoxy, it was inevitably a hard thing to do so via Hutchinson. A change of method for Horne was to use Hutchinson without mentioning him. Horne gave the reason for such a necessity in his private correspondences. Talking about Hutchinson as a member of a fraternity, Horne observed: 'A writer on philosophy and divinity, brother John, in such times, comes across with great disadvantages.'⁶⁹ It seems likely that Horne and his fellow Hutchinsonians did not want to contend with the 'great disadvantages' that would not only hinder their own public profile but also the credibility of their undertaking.

It would be safe to argue that Hebraic studies and the anti-Newtonian agenda of the movement were the pulling power of the movement for the Oxford group. Later, each follower pursued his own Hutchinsonian interests according to his preferences, but the overall aim remained intact as the defence of the Trinity, the transcendence of God and the authority of biblical revelation, whether through an engagement with biblical hermeneutics or through a study of natural history. Too much significance can be attached to the shift of interests of the later Hutchinsonians. The Hutchinsonian paradigm rested on the authority and credibility of each individual component of the Hutchinsonian scheme, which had to be able to withstand criticism when taken alone. Accordingly, here in the Oxford phase, we see Catcott junior dealing only with natural philosophy as his contribution to the undertaking.

In another sense, the anti-Newtonianism of George Horne may have diminished as a part of his Hutchinsonian interest, but this does not necessarily prove that a significant transformation had occurred in his basic ideas. The freedom of movement allowed by the Hutchinsonian system enabled later followers to pursue one particular Hutchinsonian interest without putting stress on the others. Did this make someone less of a Hutchinsonian? One would be inclined to think so. But this could also be interpreted as the endurance of the movement in adapting to the need for change. Yes, Horne may have desired that Hutchinson's name should be dropped, but this did not stop him praising Hutchinson's grand design. Horne's Hutchinsonianism can hardly be doubted, and by reflecting on his example of trying to keep his private devotion and public persona separate in his later years, it can be suggested that this may well have been the pattern for a considerable number of

⁶⁸Jones. *Memoirs*. 55–56.

⁶⁹George Horne to Catcott Junior. Bristol Reference Library. *Catcott Correspondence*. B 26063, f. 55. 19 October 1761.

Hutchinsonians in the second half of the eighteenth century, which bears the result of being reduced to Anglicans.

As a general conclusion it can be said that the Oxford group transmitted early Hutchinsonian traits well into the late eighteenth century. What strikes us the most about this later phase of the movement is the search for moderation, an effort to ameliorate the Hutchinsonian profile. The reasons for doing so are explained by the fact that some undertakings of the system were becoming marginalised over time. The Hebraic undertaking was a defeat for the Hutchinsonians. The ways in which they pursued this undertaking only created tension and division. The realisation of the problem that the Hutchinsonians themselves represented for those who were potentially their orthodox allies led figures like Horne and Jones to develop a more integrated approach. Anti-Newtonianism as a Hutchinsonian interest became a secondary issue and at times was altogether dropped. It became an optional personal interest of individual Hutchinsonians rather than an essential component of the Hutchinsonian system of thought. Compared to their singular, and at times seemingly eccentric, efforts, Hutchinsonians were now engaged in an endeavour to ally themselves with the more general orthodox views. In an effort to represent Hutchinsonianism to the wider orthodoxy, Jones, according to William Stevens, recommended Hutchinson's teaching as a means to 'turn Christians into Scholars and Scholars into Christians'.⁷⁰ The effort to further the merger of Hutchinsonianism with a wider orthodoxy took another shape with Jones's publication of the edited works of his friend Horne. Later, in the second edition, Jones wrote a new preface containing about thirty pages explaining Horne's Hutchinsonian interests and showing how consistent they were with the Holy Scriptures.⁷¹ Jones argued that Hutchinson's teachings were beneficial to everyone, for a man who read Hutchinson would 'still be a good subject, a devout Christian, and a sound member of the Church of England, and perhaps more sound and more useful, than he would have been without them.'⁷²

It is important to note here that Jones does not say that one could not be 'a good subject, a devout Christian and a sound member of the Church of England' without them, just that they would be helpful.

The transformation Hutchinsonianism went through was going to take on further shape in the form of the establishment of orthodox groupings and societies such as the Hackney Phalanx, the Society for the Reformation of Principles and Nobody's Friends, the last two founded by Hutchinsonians. The result of the short-lived Society for the Reformation of Principles was the publication in the same year of a collection of tracts called *The Scholar Armed against the Errors of Time*. Even by the time J. H. Overton prepared the DNB entry for Jones in the late nineteenth century, *The Scholar Armed* was still in use by young students of divinity. This should not come as a surprise, despite the publication's Hutchinsonian roots. The collection reflected the ideals of the society Jones had in mind: a buttress for orthodox

⁷⁰James Allan Park. *Memoirs of William Stevens*. (London, 1823).

⁷¹Jones. *New Preface*.

⁷²James Allan Park. *Memoirs of William Stevens*. 83.

Christianity, not the vehicle for an Anglican sect. The fact that Jones was also associated with the well-known and respected orthodox group called the Hackney Phalanx, constituted largely by Oxford High-Churchmen, also demonstrates the direction in which Jones was heading.⁷³

Individual Hutchinsonians like Jones of Nayland and William Stevens helped the formation of the more mainstream Anglican cause towards which the Oxford Hutchinsonians had begun to move. Historians have generally interpreted this flourishing of orthodox societies and groupings as symptoms of the High Church revival and as precursors of the Oxford movement. As far as Hutchinsonianism itself is concerned, one thing seems to have been overlooked: these changes endangered the distinctiveness and unity of the movement itself.

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⁷³Nockles. *Oxford Movement* 270–274.