

**SUBSCRIPTION NO BONDAGE, OR, THE
PRACTICAL ADVANTAGES AFFORDED
BY THE THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES AS
GUIDES IN ALL THE BRANCHES OF
ACADEMICAL EDUCATION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649715855

Subscription No Bondage, or, the Practical Advantages Afforded by the Thirty-Nine Articles as Guides in All the Branches of Academical Education by Frederick Denison Maurice

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE

**SUBSCRIPTION NO BONDAGE, OR, THE
PRACTICAL ADVANTAGES AFFORDED
BY THE THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES AS
GUIDES IN ALL THE BRANCHES OF
ACADEMICAL EDUCATION**

SUBSCRIPTION NO BONDAGE,

OR THE

PRACTICAL ADVANTAGES

AFFORDED BY

THE THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES

AS

GUIDES

IN

ALL THE BRANCHES

OF

ACADEMICAL EDUCATION.

WITH AN

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

ON

THE DECLARATION

**WHICH IT IS PROPOSED TO SUBSTITUTE FOR SUBSCRIPTION TO THE
ARTICLES AT MATRICULATION.**

By RUSTICUS.

Another error is, that, after the distribution of particular arts and sciences, men have abandoned Universality or *Philosophia prima*, which cannot but cease and stop all progression. For no perfect discovery can be made on a flat or a level. Neither is it possible to discover the more remote or deeper parts of any science, if you stand upon the level of the same science, and ascend not to a higher science. *Bacon—Advancement of Learning.*

OXFORD,

J. H. PARKER:

RIVINGTON, LONDON: AND DEIGHTON, CAMBRIDGE.

1835.



INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THIS Pamphlet was drawn up at your request, and it is now submitted to your approbation.

The notion that Subscription to Articles is imposed on students entering the University of Oxford as a *help to education* and not as a *test of faith*, has, I doubt not, occurred to many besides myself. It has been my endeavour,

First, to prove that this opinion is rational in itself, consistent with the views of those who drew up the Articles and introduced them into our Universities, and is justified by the analogy of the other cases in which assent to them is demanded.

Secondly, to shew, what precise purpose they are intended to effect in education—that in all Schools and Universities there is a contract expressed or implied between the teacher and learner, as to the principles on which the one agrees to teach and the other to learn—and that to state the terms of this contract is at once the most honest method, and the most serviceable to education.

Thirdly, to shew, that, if the terms or rules of study which a University imposes on its pupils are to be of any practical value in explaining to them the

course of general education upon which they are entering—in connecting the different branches of it with each other—or in removing perplexities which naturally arise in each—they must be drawn from the Science of Theology.

Fourthly, to shew, that by means of this principle we are enabled to answer several popular objections to our system, and even to convert them into arguments in its favour.

The whole Pamphlet was written before I had heard of the Declaration, which it is proposed to substitute for Subscription. I have nothing to say respecting the *purpose* of that Declaration, which I have not said already in the following pages; nothing respecting its particular *form*, which has not been urged much better than I could urge it by other objectors. If the principle, which I have asserted, be a true one, the new form of admission must be far more gratuitously offensive to the Dissenters than that which it supersedes. They cannot understand why a body constituted for purposes of general education should impose a confession of faith on its members. *My* answer is, our Articles are not enforced as a confession of faith, they are imposed for the sake of our general studies; and were they removed, our education would lose its meaning, its manliness, its coherency. The supporters of the *Declaration* can offer no answer to the complaint, they are imposing a direct test which means exclusion, and can mean nothing else.

But the advocates of the Declaration, I perceive,

rest their hopes far less on its intrinsic merit, than upon the alleged confusions and contradictions among the advocates of Subscription. Each one of you, they say, has a different notion of its meaning; how is it possible, then, that we can explain it to the world? I should be loth to add any force to this objection by offering an opinion on Subscription different from that of many who contend for it, if I did not feel sure, that what has ingeniously been converted into an argument for instant change, will strike sober persons as the strongest reason for remaining quiet. If there is so much confusion on this subject even in the minds of considerate persons, why call upon them to legislate? Any measure, which is the fruit of such a state of mind, is likely to be a subject of speedy but too late repentance. This point is most candidly and strongly put by Mr. Sewell. "We seem to be placed," he says, "in a new position, and to require for our guidance many peculiar views, which have for some time been partially lost sight of, because they did not bear directly on our practice. Perhaps nothing but much discussion, with all its accompaniments of tedious enquiry and varieties of opinion, will enable us just at present to see our way fairly before us." Surely this statement is most sound and reasonable. The supporters of the Declaration do not deny that Subscription means something. The character of those who introduced it, the time which it has lasted, even the multitude of plausible notions respecting its purpose, are presumptions to this extent, which they cannot

rebut. As happens commonly in the like cases, custom has made us thoughtless about the purpose of the act, till at last it has nearly escaped us. If this is a reason for abolishing the practice, any practice which is so good as to become habitual through a long course of years must suffer the same fate.

With respect to the assertion, that it is impossible to make the meaning of Subscription intelligible to persons without the University, it is the same which is every day urged as a reason for casting away portions of our Liturgy; "They may, perhaps, have a very good sense to you or me, but they must mislead the people." The experience of many who are living among humble and ignorant persons is the best answer to it. They can testify, that while they suffered loose and vague notions respecting these passages to remain in their own minds, they were indeed utterly incapable of interpreting them to others; but, after diligent and humble meditation, what had been perplexed became so simple to their own minds, that they could expound it to the poorest rustic, and seemed to them so much an organic part of the service of form, to which it belonged, that the whole would lose its meaning and life, if it were taken away.

I cannot doubt that the true idea of Subscription, whatever it be, would commend itself just as readily to the least gifted student or the dullest English parent. If, for instance, I should have succeeded in developing that true idea, would any

plain citizen or country gentleman be greatly perplexed by being told, that these Articles contain the terms, according to which the teacher agrees to teach and the learner to learn, just as the memorandum previous to a deed of conveyance contains the terms upon which a seller agrees to sell, and a purchaser to purchase.

You will, I fear, observe proofs of hasty writing in these sheets; for the thoughts I have no such apology to offer. The subject was forced upon my attention more than ten years before it became one of popular discussion, and owing to various circumstances it has been impossible for me to dismiss it from my mind since. I do not mention this in order to get credit for my statements, which must stand or fall by their own merits, but merely as an excuse for entering on a controversy, in which much abler persons are already engaged.

I ought, however, to add, that these sheets have not been written with any hope of influencing Members of Parliament or the ruling persons in the University, but with the far humbler object of leading some of the younger students into a more correct appreciation of their advantages, and a more quiet and thankful use of them. This is a pleasure to which a very insignificant person may aspire. If it is granted to me, I trust I shall feel humble gratitude for it, and it will be much enhanced by knowing, that you and other kind friends heartily sympathize in it.

I am, very faithfully, yours,

THE AUTHOR.