

**TRACT XC. ON CERTAIN PASSAGES IN  
THE XXXIX ARTICLES, WITH A  
HISTORICAL PREFACE  
AND CATHOLIC SUBSCRIPTION TO THE  
XXXIX ARTICLES CONSIDERED IN  
REFERENCE TO TRACT XC**

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Tract XC. On Certain Passages in the XXXIX Articles, with A Historical Preface and Catholic Subscription to the XXXIX Articles Considered in Reference to Tract XC by J. H. Newman & E. B. Pusey & John Keble

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# TRACT XC.

ON CERTAIN PASSAGES IN THE XXXIX ARTICLES.

BY THE

REV. J. H. NEWMAN, B.D.

1841.

WITH

A HISTORICAL PREFACE

BY THE

REV. E. B. PUSEY, D.D.

AND

CATHOLIC SUBSCRIPTION TO THE XXXIX  
ARTICLES

CONSIDERED IN REFERENCE TO TRACT XC.

BY THE

REV. JOHN KEBLE, M.A.

1841.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

It is not without a grave cause, that I renew the memory of sorrows, mistakes, and strong and (as I think) ill-considered measures, themselves long since past, but abiding in their effects. The re-awakened interest in Tract 90 within the Church of England, attested by its recent reprint in the United States and by the wish which has been felt in England that it should be reprinted amongst us, will justify, I trust, an explanation of the circumstances which occasioned the original prejudice entertained but too widely against it; for to republish it without some such explanation, would be but to re-awaken those sleeping impressions about it. This has already been a result of its republication in the United States, where a paper, apparently a Church organ, notices the fact, only to censure Tract 90 in the terms formerly used about it. To myself, also,—when engaged upon a general defence of the Articles in my recent Eirenicon, and giving the exposition of certain of them which had, in the main, commended itself independently, but coincidentally, to the Author of Tract 90, J. Keble, and myself,—it appeared very desirable to republish that Tract. In it,

the exposition which, in its main outlines, we had severally adopted, was put forth, for the most part, with all that marked precision of thought which characterized its writer. I say, "for the most part," on account of one purposed exception, which I shall come to presently. I therefore obtained the leave of the Author to reprint the Tract, with which he had himself no further concern; but the reprinting of which, or any comments upon it, could in no way commit him, since he has given his own account of it in his *Apologia*<sup>1</sup>. For the following observations I alone am responsible, having purposely abstained from consulting him upon the subject.

<sup>1</sup> *Apologia*, pp. 158—174.



## PREFACE.

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A QUARTER of a century has all but elapsed since Newman, in Tract 90, proposed explanations of certain of the Articles, some of which bear upon things taught in the Roman Church, some, not. Various circumstances concurred to prevent his work being then appreciated as it deserved. We had all been educated in a traditional system which had practically imported into the Articles a good many principles which were not contained in them nor suggested by them, yet which were habitually identified with them. The writers of "The Tracts for the Times," as they became more acquainted with Antiquity and the Fathers, gradually and independently of one another laid these aside. Thus, when we learned the value of genuine tradition, we examined the Articles, and found that Article VI., so far from maintaining "private judgment," or that "Scripture is its own interpreter," rather implied the contrary, and that Article XX., by asserting that "the Church hath authority in controversies of faith," emphatically denied unlimited private judgment. As we knew more of the authority which the Œcumenical Councils had ever had in the Church, we came to observe that the XXIst Article, in declaring that "General Councils may err, and *sometimes* have erred," implied at least that some Councils had never erred, such as those which had established the faith which the Church received. In like way, we saw that since men

could not be justified by a dead faith, when Article XI. said that we were "justified by faith only," it must mean, "justified by a living faith, i. e. a faith working by love," of which the Apostle speaks. We proposed no system to ourselves, but laid aside, piece by piece, the system of ultra-Protestant interpretation, which had encrusted round the Articles. This, doubtless, appeared in our writings from time to time, but the expositions to which we were accustomed, and which were, to our minds, the genuine expositions of the Articles, had never before been brought into one focus, as they were in Tract 90. What was to us perfectly natural was, to others who had not examined the Articles from the same point of view as ourselves, unnatural. They as honestly thought that the system, which had been imported into the Articles, really lay in them, as we were honestly satisfied that it did not. Only we had examined the Articles, in order to see whether or no they contradicted other truths; they who did not believe those other truths, had no occasion to examine them in this aspect, and consequently had not so examined them. This was quite natural. Popular books upon the Articles, to which all were accustomed, which had been employed as text-books in reading the Articles, such as Tomline's, or Burnet's, which came in subsequently, (in our day it was not used, as being held to be unsound,) were on their side, not on ours. Only, when the time came, and our expositions were before them, they ought, before condemning them, to have examined them, and that, not superficially, or on preconceived or traditional notions about the Articles, but comparing them strictly and conscientiously with the *letter* of the Articles, as we had. But *we* had had an interest in so doing, to vindicate our Church from unsoundness as to any Catholic truth; *they* had no such interest, and dreaded, conscientiously from their point of view, our daily-growing influence.

As soon as the attack of the "Four Tutors" made it apparent that the Tract was likely to be misapprehended, Newman explained, that it was written solely against this system of interpretation, which brought meanings *into* the Articles, *not* out of them, and also why he wrote it at all. After stating that he thought that such of our Articles as were antagonistic to things taught in the Church of Rome, were directed against a traditional system in it, which went beyond the letter of its decrees, although it pointed their meaning, he added <sup>1</sup>:

"I should not be honest if I did not add, that I consider our own Church, on the other hand, to have in it a traditionary system, as well as the Roman, beyond and beside the letter of its formularies, and to be ruled by a spirit far inferior to its own nature. And this traditionary system, not only inculcates what I cannot conceive, but would exclude any difference of belief from itself. To this exclusive modern system, I desire to oppose myself; and it is as doing this, doubtless, that I am incurring the censure of the Four Gentlemen who have come before the public. I want certain points to be left open which they would close. I am not speaking for myself in one way or another; I am not examining the scripturalness, safety, propriety, or expedience of the points in question; but I desire that it may not be supposed as utterly unlawful for such private Christians as feel they can do it with a clear conscience, to allow a comprecation with the Saints as Bramhall does, or to hold with Andrewes that, taking away the doctrine of Transubstantiation from the Mass, we shall have no dispute about the Sacrifice; or with Hooker to treat even Transubstantiation as an opinion which by itself need not cause separation; or to hold with Hammond that no General Council, truly such, ever did, or shall err in any matter of faith; or with Bull, that man was in a supernatural state of grace before the fall, by which he could attain to immortality, and that he has recovered it in Christ; or with Thorndike, that works of humiliation and penance are requisite to render God again propitious to those who fall from the grace of Baptism; or with Pearson, that the Name of Jesus is no otherwise given under Heaven than in the Catholic Church.

"In thus maintaining that we have open questions, or as I have expressed it in the Tract, 'ambiguous formularies,' I observe, first, that I am introducing no novelty. For instance, it is commonly said that

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Dr. Jelf, in explanation of No. 90, &c., pp. 17—49.