

**OBSERVATIONS ON THE
STATUTES
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

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Observations on the statutes of the University of Cambridge by George Peacock

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GEORGE PEACOCK

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OBSERVATIONS

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OF

CAMBRIDGE.

BY

GEORGE PEACOCK, D.D., V.P.R.S., &c.

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P R E F A C E.

THE following "Observations" originated in a request to print a Commemoration Sermon preached in the Chapel of Trinity College, which noticed, though in a very cursory manner, some of the topics which they embrace. In preparing the Sermon for the press, I found it impossible to do justice to so important a subject, without entering into a minuteness of detail and an extent of investigation which was totally incompatible with the form of publication which I had at first proposed.

I am aware that there are some reforms recommended in the following pages which may appear to many persons to be more sweeping and fundamental than the evils which they are designed to remedy would altogether warrant, and I have consequently never ventured to indulge the hope that the suggestions which I have made would be adopted by the University in the precise form in which I have proposed them: but whatever may be the fate which they are destined to experience, I shall feel satisfied that my labours have

not been in vain, if they tend to forward such changes as may make a strict obedience to our statutes at once practicable and reasonable, and restore to our oaths and declarations their just force and obligation.

In discussing so many topics connected with the existing state and administration of the University, it is very possible that some expressions may have escaped my notice which are calculated to give pain to some members of the University: if such should unfortunately be the case, I can only express my unfeigned sorrow, and declare, with the utmost sincerity, that nothing could be more entirely opposed to my intentions and feelings.

I have printed in two Appendices the Bedell's Books of Matthew Stokes and of John Buck, taken from Cole's MSS. in the British Museum: the first gives a most interesting picture of the customs and ceremonies of the University before the Reformation, when the ancient statutes were in force: the second furnishes a very minute account of them immediately after the Restoration; they are both of them calculated to explain some of the most obscure points of our academical laws.

G. P.

DEANERY, ELY,
December 21, 1840.

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The following are References to Notes which discuss various points connected with the History and Statutes of the University.

- Page 5. On the reverence paid to the works of Aristotle.
14. On the origin of the university.
21. On the ancient constitution of the *Caput Senatus*.
26. On the dates of some of the *Statuta Antiqua*.
35. On the gradual extinction of the readings in the schools.
49. On dispensations for degrees before the Elizabethan Statutes.
51. On the period of necessary regency.
62. On the neglect of the statutes in the early part of the seventeenth century.
68. On the decline and fall of the authority of Aristotle.
80. On the exemption of the members of King's College from academical exercises and examinations. See also note in Appendix A., p. vii.
99. On the just limits of the obligations of oaths.
101. On the oath against statutable changes in the statutes of Eton and King's Colleges.
109. On derivative and independent statutes.
111. On appropriated scholarships and fellowships and the Westminster scholars of Trinity College.
113. On the ancient stipends of masters and fellows of colleges, and the distribution of the surplus revenues.
115. On the claims of poverty as recognized in the ancient statutes.
119. On the statutes which fix the periods for taking holy orders.
126. On the forms of prayers used in college chapels.
138. On the academical finances and their administration.
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- iv. On the distinction of academical days as *legibiles* and *non legibiles*.
— On the Barnaby Lectures.
v. On the entering of *Priorum* and *Posteriorum*.
— On the occasional use of the French language in the ancient forms of the university. See Note, p. 4.
vi. On determiners in Lent.
ix. On the trips lists.
xii. On the number of bedells under the ancient constitution of the university.
xiii. On the posers or moderators.
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