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RULES AND REGULATIONS
OF THE
OXFORD UNION SOCIETY.

CORRECTED TO DECEMBER, 1839.



OXFORD :

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1839.



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RULES

OF THE

OXFORD UNION SOCIETY.

OF THE SOCIETY.

I.

THE Society shall be called "*The Oxford Union Society*," and shall have for its object the promotion of Debates, and the maintenance of a Library.

II.

The Meetings of the Society shall be held on Thursday Evenings during Term; at Eight in Winter, and Nine in Summer; and shall begin as soon as residence shall have generally commenced.

III.

But a discretionary power shall be vested in the President, after having placed a written notice in the Reading Room, to alter the appointed day, or hour, and to call Extraordinary Meetings of the Society.

OF THE DEBATE.

IV.

The Debate shall have for its object, the discussion of any subject not immediately involving Theological questions.

V.

No Member shall be allowed to alter a question which has been chosen for Debate, without the sanction of the President.

VI.

If any Member whose question has been selected shall omit to open the Debate in person or by proxy, he shall be fined two pounds.

VII.

The Debate shall commence immediately after Candidates proposed for admission have been ballotted for ; or, on nights appointed for the election of Officers, immediately after the notices of their proposal have been read to the Society.

VIII.

The Question shall be proposed in the form of a motion, and it shall be competent for any Member to move an amendment.

IX.

The President shall not put a second amendment to the vote, before the Society has disposed of the first.

X.

Any Member may move a rider either to a motion or to an amendment, but it shall be put to the vote afterwards, as a distinct clause, if the motion or amendment to which it is annexed shall have been carried.

XI.

The President shall refuse to put to the vote any amendment or rider, or any part of such amendment or rider, which he shall not consider entirely relevant to the original motion.

XII.

No Member shall be permitted to speak more than once during the Debate ; the privilege of reply being reserved to the Mover of the question.

XIII.

It shall be lawful, however, for a Member to rise a second time during the Debate, or after the reply of the Mover, for the purpose of explanation ; or of correcting any *matter of fact* which may have been erroneously stated by any speaker. But in neither of these cases may any *argument* be introduced.

XIV.

And during the course of a speech, with the consent of the speaker, *but not otherwise*, a Member may rise for either of these purposes and with the same limitation.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

XV.

No Private Business (with the exception of the proposal of Books by the Librarian, and immediate business by recommendation of Committee) shall be brought forward except at two Meetings, *one* of which shall be in the first fortnight, and *one* in the last fortnight in Term. On these two Meetings there shall be no Public Debate, if on the Monday preceding either of them the President shall give notice in the Reading Room that there is sufficient Private Business in hand to occupy the evening.

XVI.

If any Business remain over from the *former* of these Meetings, the President shall use his discretion in summoning an Extraordinary Meeting. If any remain over from the *latter* of them, he shall summon Extraordinary Meetings until it is settled. But no motion shall be introduced at an Extraordinary Meeting, unless notice has been given of it in the Reading Room, before the Sunday previous to the Ordinary Meeting.

XVII.

The President shall give notice in the Reading Room towards the end of each Term, what Meetings in the next term will be appointed for the Discussion of Private Business.

XVIII.

Motions recommended by the Committee may be discussed without previous notice, and shall take precedence of all other Private Business except the Librarian's list of Books.

XIX.

Any motion may also be brought forward of which it was impossible that notice should have been given, and which has reference solely to the conduct or adjournment of the then Meeting.

XX.

No motion shall be put to the vote as a single question, which shall appear to the President to involve two or more distinct propositions, but each shall be brought forward separately. (This Rule shall also apply to the Debates.)

XXI.

No motion, if rejected, shall be brought forward a second time in the same Term, but the repeal of any motion may be moved in the same Term in which it has been carried.

XXII.

A motion for taking in a newspaper, if it has been rejected for two consecutive Terms, shall not be brought forward again until the third Term after its second rejection.

XXIII.

No notice of a motion which has been placed upon the Boards shall be altered or withdrawn without the sanction of the President; and no motion under discussion shall be altered or withdrawn, without the permission of the majority of the Society. (This Rule shall apply as well to the proposal of Officers, as to Private Business generally.)

XXIV.

Any Member, who has given notice of a motion in Private Business, and shall not appear to move the same, either by himself or proxy, shall be fined ten shillings. (This penalty shall not apply to Members who may not be resident in Oxford.)

XXV.

In the discussion of Private Business every Member may speak more than once.

XXVI.

Questions may be asked of any Member of the Committee relative to his official duties. Discussions upon such points shall be regulated by the President.

XXVII.

No motion shall be brought forward involving a contradiction of, or exception to any existing Rule, unless it be accompanied by motions to correct the Rules which in the judgment of the President are affected by it.

ELECTION OF CANDIDATES.

XXVIII.

Any Member may propose any Candidate who has resided at least one Term in the University. (Easter and Act Terms shall be reckoned as one Term.) Any Member who shall violate this Rule shall be fined two pounds.

XXIX.

Any Member having a Candidate to propose, shall write the Candidate's name and college, together with his own, on a board placed in a conspicuous part of the Reading Room for that purpose. Those whose names have been so placed before the previous Sunday, shall be ballotted for at each meeting, unless they exceed twelve, in which case the twelve first shall be ballotted for.

XXX.

No Candidate can be ballotted for unless the initials of his Christian name have been entered upon the boards.

XXXI.

The balloting for Candidates shall be the first business transacted at the Society's meetings.

XXXII.

No balloting box shall be carried round a second time, after it has once been opened.

XXXIII.

The election of Members shall be vested in the whole Society ; and one black ball in four shall exclude.

XXXIV.

The President shall give public and immediate notice of the names of such Candidates as are elected.

XXXV.

No Candidate shall be proposed at more than two meetings in the same term.

HONORARY MEMBERS.

XXXVI.

All Members of the Cambridge Union Society, and of the Historical Society of Dublin, are Members of the Society. This privilege does not extend to those Gentlemen who having been Members of the Universities of Cambridge or Dublin, shall *hereafter* become Resident Members of the University of Oxford : but if such Member shall be a Graduate, or shall have otherwise paid the full amount of Subscription required by the Rules of the Society to which he formerly belonged, he shall not be liable to the payment of the £5. on election, required by Rule XXXVII.

XXXVII.

Graduates shall be ballotted for as in Rule XXIX, and if elected shall pay £5. and become Honorary Members.

XXXVIII.

Every Member, provided he has paid at least £5. in subscriptions, becomes an Honorary Member on leaving the University, or at the commencement of the Term in which his name appears on the list of Candidates for the second Examination.

ADMISSION OF STRANGERS.

XXXIX.

Members of the Committee shall have the power of introducing two strangers, whether Members of the University or not, to the Debate, and other Members of the Society one each. The mover of the question chosen for the Debate, whether on the Committee or not, shall also have the privilege of introducing two strangers. All Masters of Arts are privileged to attend the Debate.

XL.

A book shall be kept in the Debating Room in which every Member shall write the name of any stranger he may introduce to the Debate. And if any Member fail to enter his stranger's name, or introduce more than he is entitled by the preceding Rule, he shall be fined one pound.

XLI.

During the Discussion of Private Business no stranger shall be permitted to be present.

XLII.

A book shall be kept in the Reading Room in which shall be entered the names of all strangers introduced by any Member to the Reading Room. Friends of any Member, who are not permanently resident in the Town of Oxford, and non-resident Masters of Arts, are thus admissible during their stay in Oxford; but the introduction of any other Member of the University, or of any person permanently resident in the Town of Oxford, shall expose his introducer to a fine of one pound.

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PAYMENTS.

XLIII.

The regular subscription for each Term shall be twenty shillings; but no subscription shall be required of any Member, who shall reside less than one full week in Term.

XLIV.

Every Member, who is in Oxford before the Sunday previous to the second meeting in Term, shall be bound to pay his subscription before the second meeting; and all Members not included in this provision shall pay their subscription before the second meeting after their arrival in Oxford; under penalty in either case of a fine of ten shillings.

XLV.

The President shall state these rules, together with Rule XLIX. in his Circular letter announcing the first Meeting in Term.

XLVI.

The Subscription of a Member elected at any one of the four first Meetings in Term, shall be one Pound ; if he be elected after the fourth Meeting, ten shillings ; but if at the last Meeting in Term, the entrance money alone is required.

XLVII.

The entrance money shall be one pound, which, together with the Terminal Subscription due from him, must be defrayed by each Member before the second Meeting after his Election, or such Election shall be declared null and void.

XLVIII.

The Treasurer shall give notice to each Member immediately on his Election, and shall state the payment due from him to the Society.

B 2

XLIX.

When any Member shall have incurred a Fine for delayed Subscription or otherwise, notice of the same shall be given to such Member by the Treasurer; if the sum so due be not defrayed within Three Days, the Member's Name, with the amount and date annexed, shall be placed in a conspicuous part of the Reading Room; if it be not discharged by the second Meeting after such exposure, his name shall be struck off the list of the Society by the President, who shall communicate the same to the House. All Names thus struck off, shall be printed and placed in the Reading Room.

L.

No part of the Society's Funds shall be applied to the support of any public Subscription whatever.

THE COMMITTEE.

LI.

The affairs of the Society shall be managed by a Committee of Ten, consisting of the President, Librarian, Treasurer, and seven other Members.

LII.

No Member of the Society shall be eligible to be on the Committee (except in the capacity of Librarian) until he has been in the Society during the space of one Term, and taken part at least once in the Public Debates.

LIII.

The tenure of office by the Committee, (with the exception of the Librarian and Treasurer,) shall expire after the third Meeting in Term.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS GENERALLY.

LIV.

1. The names of all Members who may be proposed to be on the Committee, in any capacity, shall be submitted to the Society on the proper day of Election, in the form of a motion, of which the usual notice shall have been given, and which shall be read to

the House by the President, between the balloting for Candidates, and the commencement of the Debate ; or, if there be no Debate, between the balloting for Candidates and the commencement of private business.

2. Such motion shall not, however, be put to the vote openly, but the decision of the Society shall be taken by secret suffrage, in which the Member or Members so nominated, who shall have the largest number of votes, shall be elected.

3. The result of such suffrage shall be ascertained by the Committee after the Meeting, and posted as soon as possible in the Reading Room.

LV.

The manner of secret suffrage for Candidates for Offices, shall be as follows.

Each Member shall deliver into the hands of the Secretary, (or some other Member of the Committee appointed for the purpose,) a Paper containing the Names of the Candidates for whom he votes, which

the Secretary shall, without reading it, put into the balloting box. Each Member so voting, shall also give his own Name in writing to the Secretary, in order to establish his vote on the occasion. No proxies shall be allowed.

LVI.

Should any occasional vacancy occur in the Committee, a new Member shall be elected as above.

LVII.

No Member shall be proposed for any Office in the Society without his consent having been previously obtained. Any proposer who violates this Rule, shall be fined one pound.

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT.

LVIII.

The President shall be elected at the second Meeting in each Term, but shall not enter into Office until after the third Meeting.

ELECTION OF THE LIBRARIAN.

LIX.

The Librarian shall be a Member of the Society of at least eight Terms' standing in the University, and shall be elected at the third Meeting in Term, without any reference to the Public Debates, to serve for two Terms consecutively.

ELECTION OF THE TREASURER.

LX.

The Treasurer shall be elected at the first Meeting in each Term, and shall enter upon his Office immediately.

ELECTION OF THE SEVEN REMAINING MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE.

LXI.

The seven remaining Members of Committee shall be elected at the third Meeting in each Term.

LXII.

If in voting for them, any Member of the Society shall send in a list of more than seven, he shall be considered as having voted for the first seven on his list.

LXIII.

From these seven, a Secretary shall be appointed by the Committee themselves.

MEETINGS AND POWERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

LXIV.

The Committee shall meet once every week, (or oftener, if summoned by the President.) Three shall form a quorum, of whom the President, Librarian, or Treasurer, must be one: their Office shall be,

1. To select questions for Debate, of which notice shall be placed in the Reading Room a fortnight before their discussion.

2. To consider all subjects referred to their arbitration, and report thereon to the House.

3. To examine the votes of the Society in election of Committees.

LXV.

The Committee shall have the power to order all Pamphlets they may think proper for the use of the Reading Room, (with the exception of strictly Theological Pamphlets,) without obtaining previous permission from the Society.

LXVI.

The choice of Tradesmen to serve the Society, shall be wholly vested in the Committee.

LXVII.

If any Member of the Committee absent himself therefrom, without sufficient excuse, or do not attend within a quarter of an hour of the time appointed for its sitting, he shall be fined five shillings. This fine, however, shall not be imposed if he shall already have

served on the Committee three Terms, or filled the Office of President, Librarian, or Treasurer, provided that he does not hold one of these Offices at the time.

LXVIII.

If any Member of the Committee shall refuse to transact any business assigned to him, such refusal shall be equivalent to the resignation of his office.

OF THE PRESIDENT.

LXIX.

The President is the sole interpreter of the laws, and shall decide every question of order.

LXX.

1. In the Meetings of the Society, it shall be the duty of the President to interfere (though not appealed to) whenever there is a breach of order ; and it shall be in the power of any Member to call his attention to any conduct which appears to him disorderly, or to request him to fine any Member.



2. The President shall also interfere, when any words are spoken in the Society, which in his judgment impute dishonourable motives or conduct to, or are otherwise injurious to the personal honour and character of, any Member of the Society; and the speaker so called on by the President, shall be bound immediately to explain.

3. All explanations shall be received without question as to the real meaning and intention of the speaker; but it shall be in the power of the President, (if he deem it necessary,) after such explanation, to direct the speaker to withdraw the expression objected to. No words, however, shall be questioned except at the time they are uttered.

LXXI.

1. The sole authority of inflicting fines shall be vested in the President, but it shall be imperative upon him to inflict them when he considers them to have been incurred by transgression of the Rules of the Society, or by disorderly conduct at the Society's Meetings.

2. Any Member refusing to explain or withdraw expressions used at the Meetings, when desired by the President, or persisting in or imitating what the President has declared to be disorderly conduct, shall be fined one pound.

3. On any Member being fined by the President for being out of order, the particular act for which he is fined, shall be specified on the Journals of the House, in order that the same may be fully considered, if an appeal to the House should afterwards be brought forward.

LXXII.

But no fine inflicted by the President, or any decision pronounced by him, shall be subject to appeal until after the expiration of his Office; nor even then, unless notice of such appeal shall have been placed by the appealing party, in a conspicuous part of the Reading Room, within a week of the occurrence complained of.

LXXIII.

The President shall be allowed to take part in any discussion, whether on the subject for Debate or in Private Business, on resigning his chair to the Librarian or Treasurer; or in their absence to any Member of the Committee except the Secretary.

LXXIV.

The President shall have no vote, except when the numbers for and against a Question are equal, when he shall have the Casting Vote.

LXXV.

The absence of the President for two successive Meetings, without sufficient reason being laid before the Society, shall be equivalent to the resignation of his office.

ADJOURNMENT.

LXXVI.

The President shall declare the House Adjourned,

1. If there be fewer than Fifteen Members present at the Debate ; or Twenty at the Discussion of Private Business, or at the Ballotting for Candidates for admission.

2. If any Member enforce an Adjournment, which may be done at Half-Past Eleven.

3. If a Motion for Adjournment be carried—to which the consent of two-thirds of the Members voting shall be requisite.

LXXVII.

Adjournment shall not be moved more than once in half an hour.

OF THE LIBRARIAN.

LXXVIII.

No Member of the Society but the Librarian shall have the power to propose Books to the Society ; and no Member shall on any pretence move an amendment, except in the way of a direct negative, to his proposals. It shall be necessary for the Librarian to give notice of the Books he intends to propose, before the Sunday previous to the Meeting on which they are brought forward.

LXXIX.

But it shall be in the power of any other Member of the Society, after giving notice of his intention before the Sunday previous to the Debate, to propose any Maps, Magazines, Reviews, or Newspapers, provided the motion do not extend to volumes already formed.

THE LIBRARY AND READING ROOM.

LXXX.

The Librarian shall be generally authorised to apply the sum of Twenty Pounds each Term to the purchase of Books. It shall be his duty to consider the best manner of expending this sum, and to keep account of its expenditure.

LXXXI.

The Librarian shall transact all business relating to the Books and Periodical Publications of the Society.

LXXXII.

The Librarian shall make a Report to the Society on the First or Second Meeting in each Term, containing a classified list of all books purchased by the Society during the last Term, together with a Financial Statement of the Library Fund.

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LXXXIII.

A Book shall be kept in the Reading Room, in which any Members may enter the names of such Works as they may think desirable for the Society.

LXXXIV.

It shall be in the power of the Committee, if they should think fit, after giving notice of their intention before the Sunday previous to the Debate, to recommend the Society to purchase any of the Books whose names are entered in the Book above mentioned.

LXXXV.

Proposals of Books by the Librarian shall take precedence of all other Private Business; as shall also such recommendations of the Committee to purchase Books, as are mentioned in the preceding Rule.

LXXXVI.

No more than Ten Books shall ever be proposed at One Meeting; and it shall be necessary for the Librarian to affix their probable expense to the notice of the proposal of each of them.

LXXXVII.

Any Member desiring the use of a Book at his own Rooms may receive it upon application to the Society's Servant, at the Reading Room. But if he take it without seeing the Servant or leaving notice for the Librarian, he shall incur a fine of 5s.

LXXXVIII.

The Society's Servant shall keep a Book, in which he shall enter the titles of all Books borrowed, the Names of the borrowers, and the dates at which they were sent and returned, together with the Names of any Members desiring to borrow a Book which has been already taken out.

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LXXXIX.

No Member shall have more than two volumes out at the same time, or detain them longer than a week, if a claim is made for them, as provided for in the preceding Rule ; but, if no such claim be made, the Member who is in possession of a book may retain it for another week : but in no case shall any book be kept out longer than a fortnight. In the Easter vacation, however, any Member may have three Books out at the same time ; in the Christmas four ; and in the long vacation five.

XC.

The Servant shall deliver Books at the rooms of Members desiring the use of them, *only* between the hours of Ten and Eleven, of Two and Three, and of Eight and Nine.

XCI.

At some one of these hours the Servant shall call at the rooms of any Member, who has had a Book

from the Library in his possession for a week, in order to receive and bring it back to the Library : but he shall not, in the absence of the Member, take such Book from his rooms, unless he shall have been specially directed by him to do so.

XCII.

If the Servant shall call at any Member's rooms, and shall not find him at home, he shall leave a notice, and in no case shall the Servant call a second time for the same Book. But every Member, who has received the notice before Eight o'clock, shall be bound to return the Book the same night : if after Eight, before Eleven the next morning. If he neglect to do so, a notice shall be sent him by the Librarian, requiring him to return it within a day after receipt of the notice, on pain of a fine of five shillings : and every Member who receives such notice, shall pay a fine of one shilling : for every additional week which he may keep it, he shall pay a fine of £1 ; and if he do not return it within a year, his name shall be struck off the list of the Society. Absence from Oxford shall be considered no excuse whatever.

XCIII.

Every Member shall be held responsible for the safety of all Books which he may borrow : and for any material injury the Committee shall authorise the President to inflict a fine according to the value of the Book ; or a fine of one shilling for smaller injuries.

XCIV.

Any Member who shall wantonly deface or damage the property of the Society, or injure its Reading or Debating Room, shall be fined £2. (Under the head of defacing the property of the Society shall be considered the writing irrelevant questions, or any questions under fictitious signatures.)

XCV.

All Fines that have relation to the Library shall be collected by the Librarian ; but shall be subject to an appeal to a General Meeting. And all monies hence proceeding shall be applied to the use of the Library.

XCVI.

All Books shall be returned on or before the day of the last meeting in every Term, on pain of a fine of £1.

XCVII.

The following Books are always confined to the Reading Room :

ALL ATLASSES and MAPS.

ALL NEWSPAPERS bound or unbound.

ALL REVIEWS, MAGAZINES, or PAMPHLETS, unbound.

ALL JOURNALS, REGISTERS, LISTS, and CALENDARS.

ANNUAL REGISTER.

BOYER'S DICTIONNAIRE FRANCOIS.

CAMDEN'S BRITANNICA.

CAMPBELL'S POLITICAL SURVEY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

CARLISLE'S TOPOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY.

CHALMERS' BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY.

CRUTTWELL'S GAZETTEER.

ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA.

ENCYCLOPÆDIA METROPOLITANA, except the volumes containing History and Biography.

JOHNSON'S DICTIONARY.

LIBER ECCLESIASTICUS.

MIRROR OF PARLIAMENT.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY.

PATERSON'S ROADS.

UNIVERSITY POLL BOOK.

Any Member who shall take out any Newspapers belonging to the Reading Room shall be fined five shillings.

And any Member who shall take out any other Work or part of a Work, mentioned in this List, shall be fined one pound.

The Committee shall have the power at any time of recommending to the Society the addition to this List of any Books they may think fit.

The Librarian also shall add to this List at any time such Books as he may conceive to be much wanted for reference upon the subject of an approaching Debate. And the Committee shall have power at their next Meeting to annul, confirm, or extend all such additions.

XCVIII.

No Book shall be allowed to circulate among the Members for the first week after its purchase by the Society.

XCIX.

The bound volumes of Reviews, Magazines, and Pamphlets, may be taken out of the Reading Room for the space of three days only during Term ; but in the Vacations they may be taken out in the same way as other Books.

C.

In the long vacation there shall be no Books whatever confined to the Reading Room.

CI.

The Reading Room shall be closed on Sundays.

CII.

On other days the Reading Room shall be open between the hours of Nine A. M. and Ten P. M., except in the long vacation, when it shall be opened at Ten in the Morning, and shut at Eight in the Evening. No Member shall on any pretext be allowed to enter it after the Servants have left.

CIII.

Any Member who shall bring a Dog into either the Reading or the Debating Room shall be fined ten shillings.

CIV.

Any Member who shall be convicted by a majority of the Society of a breach of any of the Standing Rules, for which no special penalty is provided, shall be fined £1.

OF THE TREASURER.

CV.

The Treasurer shall keep a regular account of the Receipts and Disbursements, and shall conduct the Financial Affairs of the Society. He shall also have the general arrangement of the Reading Room.

CVI.

The Treasurer shall make a financial statement to the Society at the last meeting in each term, which shall be entered in the Book of the Society's proceedings; and such statement shall be printed in the President's circular, announcing the First Meeting in each Term.

CVII.

Every Treasurer's Accounts shall be audited by his Successor and the Secretary for the time being, who shall meet for that purpose in the Committee Room, an hour before the time appointed for the Second Meeting in Term.

OF THE SECRETARY.

CVIII.

The Secretary shall minute the proceedings of the Society, and have charge of all its records.

CIX.

He shall also keep an interleaved copy of the Rules of the Society, in which he shall enter all alterations made from time to time. This copy he shall always have by him at the Meetings of the Society.



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