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## THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND ITS "MULTITUDINOUS DIVISIONS."

Every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand. Matt. xii. 25.

To the Editor of the Catholic Standard.

Sir—We have Divine assurance that a house divided against itself must fall. The truth of this assurance has been manifested in the history of all the heresies that ever raged against "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth," from the time of Simon Magus and Cerinthus down to those of Luther and Calvin, and thence down to our own. The great heresy of the sixteenth century has now endured almost as long as that of Arius in the fourth, and it is now rapidly approaching the same fate. It is divided and subdivided into numberless sects, all of which have departed so widely from the dogmas of original Protestantism that Luther, Calvin, and other great Church-wrights, were they permitted to come up to see the results of their handiwork, would indignantly protest that, heretics as they were, they had nothing to do with such heresies as these, and refuse to fraternise with any of the existing offshoots of their precious Reformation! The greatest of these sects, the Established Church of England, with all the wealth and power, and patronage and honor at its back, and with all merely human means of securing perpetuity at its command, cannot hold much longer together. It was originally constituted to embrace as many jarring opinions as possible, on all the doctrines that Christ and his Apostles taught; it made a sham of authority, but the rotten principle of private judgment was at its core from the beginning, giving all men liberty to exercise a privilege of interpreting Scripture, which the Apostle declares to be fraught with perdition (2 Pet. iii. 16.). The fruits of that principle, wherever it has prevailed, has been dissensions on the most vital points of faith, even from the very first; and, as the wotley thing called Protestantism progressed, indifferentism or absolute infidelity. And the upshot of this principle is that even the Church of England, "the least deformed because reformed the least," the great and mighty Church of England, endowed with revenues greater than those of all other Christian Churches in the world put together, is now tottering to her destruction. The hand-writing against her is manifest on the wall.—She has been weighed, and is found wanting. As a Christian institution her days are over. She is only retained as a tool of the State which made her, and which can unmake her whenever she ceases to answer the purposes of her creators.

All the world knows that the Sacrament of Baptism—the very foundation of Christianity, without which, as Christ himself declares, "man cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John iii. 5.)—is an open question in the Church of England. Such was the judgment of the lay tribunal which manages doctrinal matters for her, and in that judgment the Church, being a creature of lay manufacture merely, obediently acquiesced. All the world knows that, in opposition to St. Paul (Acts xx. 28, Heb. xiii. 17, 1 Tim. v. 19—22, and Titus, i. 5.), and in defiance of the known fact that, down to the time of Luther, no man was ever considered a priest who was not ordained by a Bishop. Archbishop Sumner, Dr. McNeile, and other Evangelical luminaries of the State Church, hold that Episcopacy is no essential portion of a true Christian Church. These are the fundamental points of Christian doctrine on which the Church of England is notoriously divided against herself. But there are many, many others, so vital and so numerous, that they render anything like synodical action on the part of this Church a matter of sheer impossibility. In the acknowledgment of this momentous and ominous fact we are indebted to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the ecclesiastical deputy or lieutenant at its head, in matters spiritual as well as temporal.

The Parliamentary programme of last week included, as usual, the annual farce of the "Convocation." The Houses of Parliament met to despatch the business of the State; the two Houses of Convocation met also, nominally to despatch the business of the Church. But the latter might just as well have staid at home. Their assemblage was a mere ceremonial, unless, indeed, as an act of homage and subjection, for neither the Sovereign nor the Parliament will permit Bishops and Clergy to meddle with what does not concern them, seeing that they are only creatures of the State, and must be content with such laws as the State provides for them, in matters ecclesiastical as well as civil. It appears, however, that many of the clergy, and some of their Bishops, forgetful of their makers and masters, object to this practical nonentity of theirs in making laws for the government of the Church. We learn, from the published sketch of their proceedings on Wednesday last, that in both houses numerous petitions praying for the restoration of the synodical functions of the Church were presented; and, further, that a very animated discussion

amongst the Bishops was wound up by a declaration from the Archbishop of Canterbury that "*he was sure that, in the present state of the Church, and its MULTITUDINOUS DIVISIONS, the prayer of the petitioners would never be granted.*" We learn, also, that the lower house, having presented to the upper house an address, expressing its concurrence in these petitions, and praying that the upper house would take the subject into consideration, the upper house, through the Archbishop of Canterbury, graciously assured the lower house that the subject would receive its "best attention," and that, shortly afterwards, without another word about it, both houses were prorogued till the 10th of August next!

"Think of this, Master Brooke!" It is idle in Bishops who are supposed to "rule the Church of God," to ask permission of the masters who rule them to exercise their own imaginary functions, on account of the "MULTITUDINOUS DIVISIONS" of their Church! We have the Primate's admission of the fact!—Knowing what we do of the internal dissensions of the Church of England, we may well surmise that in such synodical action as that which the petitioners contemplate, almost every heresy that ever was broached would find champions in the Bishops and Clergy of that Church, and that the result, ecclesiastically considered, would bear a strong resemblance to that of the celebrated conflict between the cats of Kilkenny. Not one shred of Church of England doctrine, as declared in Articles, Catechisms, or Book of Common Prayer, would be left unorn by her own false swearing and most disloyal ministers. But, waiving the consideration of the probable consequence of such a theological hurly-burly, I turn to reflecting Protestants who really do believe that they have souls to be saved—who do actually give so much credit to the Bible as to hold that Jesus Christ established a Church which he commanded all men to hear under peril of damnation—a Church St. Paul describes as the pillar and the ground of truth; I ask them whether they can see any semblance to this Church in the rickety thing, so weakened by its "*multitudinous divisions*," that it cannot be allowed to perform the most ordinary functions of a Church lest it should fall utterly to pieces!

All Christians profess to believe in "*one, holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church*,"—at least, all Christians who say the Apostles' creed. Passing over the self-condemnatory use of the word "*Catholic*," which most of them would consider insulting if applied to themselves, I ask whether any Christian can really believe that a Church distracted by "*multitudinous divisions*" is "*one*?" St. Paul gives as the motto or watchword of the true Church, "*one Faith, one Baptism*" (Eph. iv. 5.); what can a Church believe that sees idolatry in the Eucharistic adoration of the Lord—which has as many faiths as it has individual members, and which treats the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration as a thing to be held or denied indifferently as each individual preacher shall think fit? Almighty God says, by the mouth of His prophet, "I will give them one heart and one way." (Jer. xxxii. 39.)

Can this have any reference to a body of State-made Bishops and Priests who cannot safely be allowed to come together on account of their "*multitudinous divisions*?" No; these "*multitudinous divisions*" are the marks of a house divided against itself, which cannot stand (Matthew xxii. 25.). These self-styled Bishops and Priests being themselves "*tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine*" (Eph. iv. 14), can have no connection with the body of Pastors and teachers commissioned by God "for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, until we all meet in the unity of faith." (Ibid. 12, 13.) As grapes cannot be gathered from thorns, nor figs from thistles, so "*unity of faith*" cannot spring from "*multitudinous divisions*." For the frank admission of this irreconcilable difference between the Church of England and the Church of the Gospel, we are indebted to the Primate, whose special mission, it seems to be to damage that church which pays him so handsomely. Protestants who are staggered by it, as all must be who think religion a matter involving eternity, will do well to consider that Jesus Christ did undoubtedly establish a Church, with which He promised to remain to the end of the world, teaching it all truth and guarding it for ever against the gates of Hell. They will do well further to reflect that there is but one Church on earth which has been ever visible, ever teaching one united faith, ever preserved from all dangers, from that day to this; and that they themselves profess their belief in this very Church every time they say the Apostles' Creed.

In the homage which Protestants thus pay to truth, they resemble the Athenians who dedicated an altar "*to the unknown God.*" They profess to believe in the "*Catholic*" Church; and yet they are horrified

if called Catholics. But, be this as it may, the "*one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church*" is now, as ever, fulfilling the mission of her divine Founder (Matt. xxviii. 19—21.) She makes no open question of Baptism. She is torn by no "*multitudinous divisions.*" She holds strictly to the motto, "*one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism.*" She alone teaches authoritatively, for she alone claims Almighty God for her founder, her guide, her preserver, and her spouse. And she alone is making progress in all parts of the world, whilst Protestantism, her mushroom enemy, is everywhere torn by "*multitudinous divisions*," or lapsing into indifference, or sinking into absolute infidelity.

Such ever has been the fate of heresy, such it will ever be, flourishing for a while, supported by great and powerful ones of the earth, but sinking gradually into decay and oblivion, because it has neither divine authority in its origin nor divine assistance in its progress; whilst the true Church of Christ, built upon a rock, and divinely guarded against all the assaults of the world, the flesh, and the Devil, triumphs over all enemies, and as long as the world lasts will still go forth conquering and to conquer. What a contrast does she now present to that rotten thing which was devised, comparatively the other day, to supersede her here in England! The Catholic Church, with upwards of eighteen centuries upon her venerable head, has still all the vigor and elasticity of imperishable youth; whilst the Church of England, dating only from yesterday, is already time-worn, effete, and so torn by "*multitudinous divisions*," that her guardians treat her just as the Commissioners of Lunacy would treat an old lady in her dotage, after a jury had declared her incompetent to manage her own affairs.

They are right, no doubt, and the poor old dame is to be pitied; but what incomprehensible simpletons are they, Mr. Editor, who think that she can, nevertheless, teach and lead them the way to Heaven! Your obedient servant,  
Liverpool, Feb. 10, 1852. CATHOLICUS.

## DR. DURBIN ON THE RESPECTIVE POLITICAL TENDENCIES OF PROTESTANTISM AND CATHOLICITY.

(From the N. Y. Freeman's Journal.)

Dr. Durbin, one of the most celebrated Methodist clergymen of this country, delivered a lecture in Philadelphia on the 29th of January, which was published at length in the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin of Jan. 31st. The title of the lecture was, "*the relation of Protestantism and of Roman Catholicism to Civil and Political Liberty.*" Dr. Durbin professed to exclude all considerations of doctrine and religion from his lecture, and to view the two systems in their purely civil and political bearings. He claimed England and the United States as the proper representatives of Protestantism, and put all Catholic countries together into the opposite scale. He then drew what he represented as a true picture of the preferable civil and political state of the former as contrasted with the latter class.

Dr. Durbin's lecture invites three several lines of argument by way of answer. First to show that England and the United States are not the proper representatives of Protestantism. Archbishop Hughes has shown that the United States is, in no proper sense, a Protestant country, but that Catholics have moved hand in hand, and foot with foot, alongside of Protestants, in all the steps of the real progress of this country in every department. England also, in spite of all her laws against Catholic rights, has always had a large representation of Catholics among her highest titled nobility, and down through all the ranks of her most efficient classes. It is enough to ask, what would England have been without the aid of Irish labor, Irish talent, Irish fidelity, and Irish enthusiasm? This has been acknowledged by distinguished English Protestants, so that we find it a recorded opinion of the celebrated Southey, that Protestantism ought not to be judged by its effects in England, where it has always been mixed up and pervaded with a Catholic element, but that Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, were fitter examples of what Protestantism could do, because there Catholicity was completely done away with. These, then, were the countries that should have been compared with Spain and Naples, and the Roman States.

This is the first line of reply that Dr. Durbin's lecture invited. The second would be to accept England, on which country Dr. Durbin makes his argument almost wholly turn, as the exponent of Protestantism, and to have shown the popular degradation, misery, ignorance and vice of that country, under its Protestant Government and Established Church, as contrasted with the intelligence, contentment, comfort and morality, of the people of Belgium or Austria. This would have been a most withering

process of refutation. The third, however, is the method that has been chosen by a gentleman of New York, in reply to Dr. Durbin. It affords less scope for display than the former two, but we think that it presents the subject in its most serious and most important light. It takes Dr. Durbin on his own ground, and then shows that, according to the distinguished champion of Methodism, Protestantism aims at this world—and misses its mark; while Catholicity, aiming only at heaven, gains more of this world than the other, while at the same time it refuses to seek for it!

DR. DURBIN ON THE POLITICAL TENDENCIES OF PROTESTANTISM AND CATHOLICITY.  
New York, Feb. 17, 1852.

To the Editor of the Evening Bulletin.

Sir,—The lecture of Dr. Durbin on the relation of Protestantism and Catholicity to civil and political liberty, published in your paper of Jan. 31st, is of so remarkable a character, as coming from a professed minister of a Christian church, that I beg a little of your space to make some remarks upon it; though I do not think I need to do more than restate in plain language the principles on which it proceeds.

The first thing in it that strikes me as so remarkable, is that Dr. Durbin, a minister of religion, should so completely leave out of view that which is the chief end of society, and of civil and political institutions, because the chief end of man, for whom society, and civil and political institutions are made and exist. A minister of religion is supposed never to forget that man is made for eternity; and that therefore society and civil and political institutions are good only as they conduce to the preparation of man for his real, because his eternal, destiny. A minister of religion may very properly treat of the relations of religion to the institutions and affairs of time, but what strikes me as so strange, is that he should take such a view as he does of the ends and objects of the institutions and affairs of time—that is of society and of civil and political life. Dr. Durbin treats of these as if they were their own end. He not only does not treat of their fitness and relations to the eternal life, but he treats of them in a way that excludes and virtually forbids their direction towards the attainment of the eternal end of man. His great plea for Protestantism is, the more general and intense activity and absorption in temporal and material affairs that it infuses into populations. He claims for it the paternity of the special and condensed activity and disposition to buy, and sell, and gain, if it were possible, the whole world; which he says is to be found in Catholic countries only to a limited extent. I must confess that such a plea for Protestantism has fallen upon the minds of Christian men with amazement, when coming from a minister of religion, speaking in a church in one of our great commercial cities. We have been accustomed to hearing the ministers of religion pleading in a contrary sense; urging moderation and seeking to limit the thirst for gain, and absorption in material affairs. If I were to be required to make out a defence of Protestantism, I would, as the first step feel obliged to say of the whole argument of Dr. Durbin: "an enemy has done it." As my business is something else, I am content with saying that Dr. Durbin has made against his own cause a charge that it will require much ingenuity to escape from unharmed.

The next mark of Protestant pre-eminence urged by Dr. Durbin is "*the form of public and private schools as distinguished from parish and church schools.*" Here again I have no need to signalise the inaccuracy of the lecturer's position. I am willing to leave it as he claims it, when he says that such only are "*schools in the Protestant sense of the word.*" Remembering then, what the Christian religion supposes, that there is committed to men a positive external revelation of God's will, not found out by man's own reason, but given in words, and to be taught and learned, is it not a strange boast of a professed minister of this religion that his church has divorced the public and private schools from the parish and the church? That it has provided an education for schools without providing religious teaching for them. Dr. Durbin, as a champion of the Methodist church, has made a very singular admission as to the tendency and doings of Protestantism.

The lecturer next proceeds to compare Protestantism with Catholicity in respect of commerce. Here also he gives the palm to Protestantism; and in reply to the objection that commerce is not religious, that "*commerce is commerce,*" he says that:—"With every arrival and departure of a Protestant merchant ship there go Protestant ideas with her, imperceptibly but powerfully distributing the living—we are not speaking of the distinctive and technical doctrines of either church—the living influences of this form of Christianity."

Dr. Durbin here acknowledges that he is not speaking of any direct teaching of the doctrines of the Gospel which might result incidentally from the extension of Commerce—but making abstraction of this, or, as he says, "*not speaking of distinctive and technical doctrines*—he claims as the ideas and living influences of Protestantism, the effects produced by "*the arrivals and departures of Protestant merchant vessels!*" Again, I do not care to show the fallacy of Dr. Durbin's argument. I will leave it for the next champion of Protestantism that comes along, to contradict him by showing that unchristian human nature and not Protestantism, is chargeable with the moral