

Poems — Antichrist, or the Reunion of Christendom: An Ode

Gilbert Keith Chesterton



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ANTICHRIST, OR THE REUNION OF CHRISTENDOM:
AN ODE

"A BILL WHICH HAS SHOCKED THE CONSCIENCE OF EVERY
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN EUROPE."—*Mr. [F. E. Smith](#)*, ON THE
WELSH DISESTABLISHMENT BILL.

ARE they clinging to their crosses,
F. E. Smith,
Where the Breton boat-fleet
tosses,

Are they, Smith?
Do they, fasting, trembling, bleeding,
Wait the news from this our city?
Groaning "That's the Second Reading!"
Hissing "There is still Committee!"
If the voice of [Cecil](#) falters,
If [McKenna](#)'s point has pith,
Do they tremble for their altars?
Do they, Smith?

Russian peasants round their pope
Huddled, Smith,
Hear about it all, I hope,

Don't they, Smith?
In the mountain hamlets clothing
 Peaks beyond Caucasian pales,
Where Establishment means nothing
 And they never heard of Wales,
Do they read it all in [Hansard](#)—
 With a crib to read it with—
"Welsh Tithes: [Dr. Clifford](#) answered."
 Really, Smith?

In the lands where Christians were,
 F. E. Smith,
In the little lands laid bare,
 Smith, O Smith!
Where the Turkish bands are busy
 And the Tory name is blessed
Since they hailed the Cross of [Dizzy](#).
 On the banners from the West!
Men don't think it half so hard if
 Islam burns their kin and kith,
Since a curate lives in Cardiff
 Saved by Smith.

It would greatly, I must own,
 Soothe me, Smith,
If you left this theme alone,
 Holy Smith!
For your legal cause or civil
 You fight well and get your fee;

For your God or dream or devil
 You will answer, not to me.
Talk about the pews and steeples
 And the Cash that goes therewith!
But the souls of Christian peoples . . .
 —Chuck it, Smith!

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