

**ANOMALIES IN THE ENGLISH  
CHURCH NO JUST GROUND FOR  
SECEDING; OR, THE ABNORMAL  
CONDITION OF THE CHURCH**

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Anomalies in the English Church No Just Ground for Seceding; Or, the Abnormal Condition of the Church by Henry Arthur Woodgate

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**HENRY ARTHUR WOODGATE**

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*ANOMALIES IN THE ENGLISH CHURCH  
NO JUST GROUND FOR SECEDING;*

OR,

THE ABNORMAL CONDITION  
OF THE CHURCH

CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO THE  
ANALOGY OF SCRIPTURE AND OF HISTORY.

BY

HENRY ARTHUR WOODGATE, M.D.,  
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*Δεὶ γὰρ καὶ ἀπέστεις ἐν ἡμῖν εἶπαι, ὅτι οἱ ἰδοῦμαι φανεροὶ γένησθεαι  
ἐν ἡμῖν.—1 COR. xi. 19.*

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TO THE  
CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE CONFIDENCE

REPOSED IN HIM

FOR A PERIOD OF SIXTEEN YEARS

AS THEIR REPRESENTATIVE

IN THE CONVOCATION

OF THE PROVINCE OF CANTERBURY

*This Treatise*

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY

THEIR PROCTOR.

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## P R E F A C E.

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### ON SECESSIONS TO ROMANISM.

THE subject of the following little treatise is argumentative and historical, rather than strictly theological. Its object is chiefly to meet the arguments drawn from the disorganized and abnormal state of the English Church, compared with the more perfect and normal system which the Church of Rome ostensibly offers, which have been, and are still, used with success in causing secessions among our own members, lay and clerical, whether as suggested by their own minds, or as brought before them by Romanists. These arguments are not, strictly speaking, of a theological character; but are rather suggested by the state of the Church, viewed externally; or if internally, viewed in relation to its practical working and inherent difficulties, rather than to doctrinal differences.

That, in the present state of the English Church, some should have deserted her communion for that of Rome, is less to be wondered at, when we consider the various causes which have been in operation to produce that result. Of the

latter, there are several which mere argument will not reach; especially those which arise from some morbid temperament, predisposing the mind in that direction, to which any trifling incident, apparently, happening at a suitable time, may give the final impulse. But there are also many circumstances which operate upon minds of a more solid and fair-judging character, especially those connected with what may be called the external view of the question,—circumstances to which Romanists triumphantly appeal, as shewing the want on our part of those notes of a Church, the possession of which they so confidently claim for their own. These circumstances, I would fain hope, may be represented in that light which would divest them of much of the force with which Romanists invest them, by assigning to them their proper place in the economy of God's dispensations,—especially by pointing out their analogy to other undeniable cases, of which we have the authority of Holy Scripture for saying that no deductions can be drawn from them analogous to those which Romanists draw from the abnormal condition of the English Church. If we have no reason now to fear further secessions, it will be something if we can allay or soften the feelings of dissatisfaction which our present condition excites in the minds of many of our members. To those who regard this abnormal

condition as of no account under any circumstances, these remarks are not addressed.

The present age has witnessed the novel spectacle of a partial revival of Romanism in this country, after an interval of nearly two centuries, and of educated members of the Anglican communion leaving their own Church and joining it. The evil effects of this have doubtless been very great. To our own members, they are calculated to create a want of confidence, and to lead to misgivings as to our own position: while to our Romanist and Protestant opponents alike, they afford a ground of exultation;—to the one, as indicating that our position is untenable; to the other, as exhibiting, as they imagine, in the principles previously held by those who have seceded, only Romanism in a more modified form. Yet nothing can be more illogical or unjust. These events furnish no just ground either of despondency on the one side, or of triumph on the other. If we consider the circumstances of the English Church for the last century and a half, we find nothing in this which need cause any surprise. No great movement can take place without excess being displayed by some party or other. When the first revival of religious earnestness took place in the Church in the last century, after the long and dreary torpor which followed the Revolution, how many who joined in it were