

THOMAS ALLIES

ST. PETER, HIS NAME
AND HIS OFFICE, AS SET
FORTH IN HOLY
SCRIPTURE

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Forth in Holy Scripture

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PREFACE

The present work took its rise, and is largely drawn, from the very learned Father Passaglia's "Commentary on the Prerogatives of St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, as proved by the authority of Holy Writ," which was published in Latin, in 1850. The eighth and ninth chapters are, indeed, translations, respectively, of the twenty-seventh of his first book, and the first of his second book. And as to the rest, my obligations are more than I can specify. I owe, on the other hand, many excuses to Father Passaglia, for while I have only partially observed his order in treating the subject, I have considered his whole work as a treasure-house of learning, whence I might draw at my pleasure "things old and new," adapting them, as I thought good, to the needs of the Protestant mind, as familiar to me in England. Thus I have not scrupled to translate, to omit, or to insert matter of my own, according to my judgment. It seemed to me of paramount

importance to present to the English reader the whole chain of scriptural evidence for the Primacy and prerogatives of St. Peter. This chain of evidence is so strong, that, when I first saw it completely drawn out, it struck my own mind, brought up in the prejudices of Protestantism, with the force of a new revelation. I put to myself the question; is it possible that they who specially profess to draw their faith from the written Word of God, would refuse to acknowledge a doctrine set forth in Holy Scripture with at least as strong evidence as the Godhead of our Lord itself, if they could see it not broken up into morsels, like bits of glass reflecting a distorted and imperfect image, according to the fashion of citing separate texts without regard to the proportion of the faith, but presented in a complete picture on the mirror of God's Word? This picture is thus complete and perfect in Father Passaglia's work. Yet the form of that work, no less than its bulk, the scrupulous minuteness with which every opposite interpretation of so many adversaries in modern times is answered, as well as the fulness with which every part of the subject is treated, made me feel that a simple translation would not be tolerated by the impatience of a population, which has little time and less mind for studies of this character. I have pursued, therefore, the humble task of *popularising*, so far as I could, Father Passaglia's work, omitting, as I trust, no essential part of the argument, and grouping it under different combinations, each of which might be in turn presented to the eye, and so more readily embraced.

The importance of the argument, as it affects the Papal Supremacy, which is but a summary of the whole cause at issue between Protestantism in every shape, and the Church of Christ, cannot be overrated. If St. Peter be already set forth in Scripture as the Head and Bond of the Apostolic College, if he be delineated as the supreme Ruler who succeeds our Lord Himself in the visible government of His Church on earth, there becomes at once the strongest ground for expecting that such a Ruler will be continued as long as the Church herself lasts. Thus a guiding clue is given to us among all the following records of antiquity. Tradition and history become illuminated with a light which exhibits all objects in their due proportion and true grouping, when they are shown to be but the realisation of what the Incarnate Word, His Church's one only Lawgiver, decreed from the beginning, set forth not only in prophetic image, but distinct command, and stored up in words of such exceeding power, that they bear the whole weight of the kingdom of God, stretching through all ages and nations, without effort or pressure. And if ancient writers speak in no doubtful tone of St. Peter's prerogatives, yet clearer, more emphatic, and soul-piercing, as we should expect, are the words of God Himself, appealing in man's form to the mind and heart of man, whom He had created, and was come to redeem, and to knit into one eternal monarchy.

A subsequent part of the argument, namely, that the Bishop of Rome *is* successor of St. Peter, has been treated by the author in another work, "The See of St. Peter the Rock of the Church,

the Source of Jurisdiction, and the Centre of Unity," specially in the fifth section, which ought, logically, to be preceded by this treatise. It is there proved that not only the Christian Fathers, as individual writers and witnesses, but the ancient Church in her universal Councils, did, with one voice, from age to age, regard the Pope as sitting in St. Peter's chair, which is proof enough, and all that can in reason be demanded, that the prerogatives given to St Peter as Head of the Church were, in the belief of the Church, and in full accordance with our Lord's own promise,¹ continued on to his successors, and are as imperishable as the life of the Church herself.

21, North Bank, Regent's Park, September, 1852.

¹ Matt. xvi. 18. – "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," *i. e.*, as founded on that rock. The foundation and the superstructure coexist for ever.

CHAPTER I.

THE NAME OF PETER PROMISED, CONFERRED, AND EXPLAINED

Our Lord tells us that He came upon earth to "finish a work;" and He likewise tells us what that work was, the setting up a living society of men, who should dwell in Him and He in them; on whom His Spirit should rest, with whom His presence should abide, until the consummation of all things. For, the evening before His passion, "lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said: Father, the hour is come. * * * I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. * * I have manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou hast given Me out of the world. Thine they were, and to Me Thou gavest them; and they have kept Thy word. * Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, whom Thou has given Me; that they may be one, as We also are. While I was with them I kept them in Thy name. – And now I come to Thee. – I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from evil. * * As Thou hast sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for them do I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. And not for them only do I pray, but for those also who through their word shall believe in Me; that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may

be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. And the glory which Thou hast given to Me, I have given to them, that they may be one, as We also are one. I in them, and Thou in Me; that they may be made perfect in one; and the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me. * * And I have made known Thy name to them, and will make it known; that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them."²

In these terms the Eternal Word condescends to declare to us that the fruit of His Incarnation, the "finished work" which His Father had given Him to do, was the establishment of a society whose unity in "truth" and "love" should be so perfect, that He exemplifies it by the indwelling in each other of the Divine Persons; which should be perpetual and visible for ever, so that the world by it and in it should recognise His own mission, and believe in the Sender; and that the dowry of this society, thus perpetually visible, should be the equally perpetual possession of truth – the revelation of God's will – and of love, which is conformity to it. And He based these unexampled promises on no less a guarantee than the Almighty Power and ineffable Goodness of His Father, witnessed by His own dwelling amongst us in our flesh.

Elsewhere He termed this society His Church, declared that He would ³build it on a rock, and that the gates of hell should

² John xvii.

³ Matt. xvi. 18.

not prevail against it."

He told those whom He had set over it to go forth in His name, and to teach all nations whatsoever He had commanded them, adding the solemn engagement on His own part, ⁴"Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."

His whole teaching is full of reference to it, setting forth its nature with every variety of illustration, enfolding it, as it were, with an exuberance of divine charity.

But two conceptions run through every illustration, and are involved in its primary idea, nay, as this was the finished work of His Incarnation, so are they found in His adorable Person, from which His work springs. These conceptions are Unity and Visibility.

As the mystery of the Incarnation consists in the union of the divine and human natures, in one Person, and in the assumption of a body, that is, matter, by the one uncreated, incomprehensible, and invisible Being, whereby He becomes visible, so Unity and Visibility are the unfailing marks of His Church, and enter into every image of it, in such a manner that without them the image loses its point and significance.

Accordingly He proclaims the Church which He was founding to be "the Kingdom of God," and "the Kingdom of Heaven," thus bringing before us the conceptions of order, government, power, headship on the one hand, dependence on the other, and a host of mutual relations between the Sovereign and the people,

⁴ Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

significantly remarking that "a kingdom which is divided against itself must fall." Now, a kingdom without unity is a contradiction in terms, and a kingdom of God on earth, which cannot be seen, would be for spirits and not for men.

So He calls it a ⁵"city seated on a mountain," which "cannot be hid," answering to His prophet's words, "the city of the great King," "His rest, and His habitation for ever." Here again are embodied the notions of order, government, conspicuous majesty, impregnable strength.

Thus He inspires His apostle to call it ⁶"the house of God, the pillar and ground of the truth." The house must have its head, the family their father; the knowledge of that father's will is the truth which rests upon the family as its support and pillar. Outside of the family that knowledge may be lost, together with the will to obey the father and to love him; but within it is a living tradition, "familiar to the ear as household words." As long as the Master and the Father is there, a perpetual light from His face is there too upon His children and His servants. Divide the house, or corrupt its internal life, and the idea of the house is destroyed; while an invisible house is an absurdity.

Again, the Lord, calling Himself ⁷"the Good Shepherd, who giveth His life for the sheep," terms His Church the sheepfold, and declares that as there is one shepherd, so there must be one

⁵ Matt. v. 14; Psalm xlvii. 2; cxxxi. 13, 14.

⁶ 1 Tim. iii. 15.

⁷ John x. 11-16.

fold.

But, rising yet in nearness to the Divine Person of the Word Incarnate, from whose side sleeping on the cross she is moulded, the Church is called His Spouse, as united to Him in eternal wedlock, ⁸"a great Sacrament," or mystery; and even yet more, His Body, as supported by the continual influx of her Head; and all her members are called "flesh of His flesh, and bone of His bones."

It is evident, then, that in these promises and illustrations are set forth, as belonging to their object, a visible unity, a perpetual possession and maintenance of the truth, and the closest union with God, founded upon a most supernatural indwelling of the Godhead in a society of men on earth, the founding of which was the "finished work" of God the Word Incarnate. *Were these promises to fail in any respect*, which is utterly impossible, for while heaven and earth shall pass away, no word of their Maker can pass away —*it is plain that our ground for trusting in any promises of Holy Writ whatsoever would be demolished*. The whole Christian revelation rests on the imperishable life of the Church; because the corruption or division of the Church would falsify the written records of our faith, in which, after the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, and the Godhead of our Lord, no truth is so deeply embedded as the perpetual existence and office of the Church.

We have seen the idea of King, Lord, Master, Father,

⁸ Eph. v. 32, 30.

Shepherd, Husband, and Head, running through the delineation of the Church. And no society is complete without its ruler. Such was our Lord, while on earth – the *visible* ruler of a *visible* Church. "While I was with them I kept them in Thy name." He went forth from His baptism to win souls. The water became wine in His presence. He bade men follow Him, and they followed. Power went forth from Him, and healed diseases. Grace flowed from His lips and conquered hearts. An innumerable multitude surrounded Him, of all ages and conditions. ⁹"And going up into a mountain He called unto Him whom He would Himself; and they came to Him. And He made that twelve should be with Him, and that He might send them to preach."

Here, then, the true Israel chooses the future princes of His house, who should sit with Him on thrones, judging the twelve tribes. Already, while yet with His Church, He is preparing for her future government, when His visible presence shall be taken from her. In three years all should be accomplished, but when ¹⁰"the covenant should have been confirmed with many in one week, and in the half of the week the victim and the sacrifice should fail;" when His Apostles should see Him no longer; was any one ordained to take that all-important place of supreme ruler which He had filled? For upon earth He had been in two relations to His Church, her Founder, and her Ruler. The former

⁹ Mark iii. 13.

¹⁰ Dan. ix. 26.

office belonged to His single Person; in its nature it could not pass to another; the work was finished once and for ever. But the latter office was, in its nature likewise, perpetual. How, then, should the charge of visible ruler, as man among men, be executed, when His Person was withdrawn, when He ascended up on high, when all power in heaven and earth was indeed given into His hands, and so the headship of spiritual influence and providential care; but when, nevertheless, that sacred Body was withdrawn into the tabernacle of God, and the Bridegroom was taken away for a time, and the voice and visible presence ¹¹"what they had seen, and heard, and handled, of the word of life," "was with them and kept them" no longer. Should His Church, which had been under one visible ruler from the beginning, now have her government changed? Or had He marked out any one among the Twelve to succeed to His own office of visible headship, and to be ¹²"the greater," and "the ruler" among His brethren. His own special representative and vicar?

To answer this question, we must carefully observe and distinguish what is said and what is given to the Apostles *in common*, and what to any one of their number *in particular*; the former will instruct us as to their equality, the latter as to the pre-eminence which any one enjoyed over the rest, and in what it consisted.

Just, then, as at a certain period of His ministry, our Lord,

¹¹ 1 John i. 1.

¹² Luke xxii. 26.

out of the multitude who followed Him, selected twelve, to be His special attendants upon earth, and, when He should be taken up, to be the heralds of His Gospel among all nations, so out of the twelve He from the beginning distinguished one, marked him out for a peculiar and singular office, connected him with Himself in a special manner, and after having through the whole of His ministry given him tokens and intimations of his future destination, at last expressly nominated him to take His own place, and preside among his brethren. His dealing with this Apostle forms one connected whole, in which there is nothing abrupt or inharmonious, out of keeping, or opposed to what He said to others. What is at first obscurely intimated is afterwards expressly promised, again in fresh terms corroborated, and at last, in yet other language, but of the like force, most significantly¹³ conveyed, while it is attested by a number of incidental notices scattered through the whole Gospel history. Thus¹⁴ it becomes necessary to consider each particular, as well as the whole sum of things said, *proper* and *peculiar* to this Apostle; to weigh first their *separate* and then their *joint* force, and only at last to form an united judgment upon all.

We are searching into the will of the Divine Founder of our faith, which He has not only communicated to His Church in a living tradition, but in this case likewise ordered to be set forth in authentic written documents. These alone we are here

¹³ Vid. John i. 42; Mark iii. 16; Matt. xvi. 18; Luke xxii. 32; John xxi. 15.

¹⁴ Passaglia, p. 35-7.

considering, and the point in question is whether He decreed that all the Twelve should share equally in that divine mission and authority which He had received from the Father, or whether while bestowing on them all very high and distinctive powers, He yet appointed one, namely Simon, the son of Jonas, to preside over the rest in His own place. We have, then, to consider all in these documents which is said peculiar to such apostle, pointing out singular gifts and prerogatives, and carrying with it special authority of government. And we must remember that where proofs are numerous and complex, some which in themselves are only probable and accessory, yet have their force on the ultimate result. But this result must be drawn from a general view of the whole, and will collect in one the sum of proof both probable and certain.

Again, where many various causes concur, some more and some less, to produce a certain effect, the force of such effect is the force of all these causes put together, not of each by itself alone. Or where many witnesses are examined, whose evidence differs in value, although the testimony of some be in itself decisive, yet the verdict must be given after a consideration and review of all.

Now the first mention which we have of the Apostle Simon is full of signification. Our Lord had only just begun His ministry; he had been lately baptized, and as yet had called no disciples. But two of John the Baptist's disciples hearing their master name Jesus "the Lamb of God," follow Him, are kindly received by

Him, and one of them being Andrew, Simon's brother, finds Simon, and says to him, ¹⁵"we have found the Messias. And he brought him to Jesus. And Jesus looking on him said, Thou art Simon the son of Jonas; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter: " as if He would say, by birth thou art Simon, son of John; but another and a higher lot is in store for thee. I will give thee another name which thou shalt bear, a name in itself signifying the place which thou shalt hold in my Church. Thou shalt be called, and thou shalt be, the Rock.

For why, when a vast multitude of our Lord's words and actions have been omitted, was this recorded for us, save that a deep meaning lay in it? Or what could that meaning be when our Lord, for the first time looking on Peter, promised to him and to him alone, a new name, and that a name given in prophecy to Himself, a name declaring by its very sound that he should be laid by the builder, as a foundation of the structure about to be raised? So in the fourth century S. Chrysostome comments on the text, calling him "the foundation of the Church, he that was really Peter" (the Rock) "both in name and in deed:"¹⁶ and a little after S. Cyril, of Alexandria, "with allusion to the rock He transferred His name to Peter, for upon him He was about to found His Church." The Creator of the world does not give a name for nothing. His word is with power, and does what it expresses. Of old, "He spake and they were made; He commanded and they

¹⁵ John i. 35-42.

¹⁶ S. Chrysostome on the text. S. Cyril on John i. 42.

were created." Now, too, He speaks, at the first dawn of His great spiritual restoration. When as yet nothing has been done, and not a stone of the divine building reared, He who determines the end from the beginning looks upon what seemed a simple fisherman, and at first beholding him, He takes Simon, the son of Jonas, out of the roll of common men; He marks him for a future design; He wraps him in a prophetic title; He associates him with His own immovable power. Of Himself it had been said,¹⁷ "Behold I will lay a stone in the foundation of Sion, a tried stone, a corner stone, a precious stone, founded on the foundation. He that believeth, let him not hasten." And again, "the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is wonderful in our eyes." And again, "A stone was cut out of a mountain without hands; and it struck the statue upon the feet thereof that were of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." And again, "Behold the stone that I have laid before Jesus: upon one stone there are seven eyes; behold I will grave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of Hosts; and I will take away the iniquity of that land in one day." In reference to which S. Paul said of Christians, that they are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building, being framed together, groweth up into a holy temple in the Lord." It is plain, then, that our Lord "both by the Old and

¹⁷ Isai. xxviii. 16; Ps. cxvii. 22; Dan. ii. 35; Zach. iii. 9; Eph. ii. 20.

New Testament,¹⁸ is called a stone."

But this which He had of Himself, and by virtue of His own divine power, as the Word of God, He would communicate in a degree, and by dependence on Himself, to another. This is no modern interpretation, but the very words of St. Ambrose, "Great is the grace of Christ, who bestowed almost all His own names on His disciples. I, said He, am the light of the world, and yet He granted to His disciples the very name in which He exulted, by the words, Ye are the light of the world. Christ is the Rock, but yet He did not deny the grace of this name to His disciple, that he should be Peter, because he has from the Rock firm constancy, immovable faith."¹⁹

In the third century, Origen, on this very text, observes: "He said he should be called Peter, by allusion to the Rock, which is Christ, that as a man from wisdom is termed wise, and from holiness holy, so too Peter from the Rock." And in the fifth, S. Leo paraphrases the name thus: "While I am the inviolable Rock, the Corner-stone, who make both one, the foundation beside which no one can lay another; yet thou also art the rock, because by My virtue thou art established, so as to enjoy by participation the properties which are peculiar to Me."²⁰

Here, then, we have three facts: i. That our Lord having twelve Apostles whom He chose, loved, and honoured, above all His

¹⁸ Theodoret on Dan. ii. 34.

¹⁹ Ambrose on Luke, Lib. 6, n. 97.

²⁰ Serm. iv. 2.

other disciples, yet promised to one²¹ only a new name; and, ii., this a name in the highest degree significative, and most deeply prophetic of a particular office; and, iii., a name peculiar to Himself, as the immovable foundation of the Church. This happened in the first year of His ministry, before, as it would appear, either Peter or any other apostle was called.

The promise thus emphatically made to Simon, "Thou shalt be called the Rock," our Lord fulfilled in the second year of His ministry, when He distinguished the twelve Apostles from the rest of His disciples, giving them authority to teach, and power to heal sicknesses and to cast out devils. Then, says S. Mark "to²² Simon He gave the name of Peter;" and S. Matthew, "the names of the Twelve Apostles are these; the first, Simon, who is called Peter;" and S. Luke, "Simon whom also He named Peter." And by this name He marked Him out from amongst all his brethren, and united him to Himself. "He changes, too," says Tertullian, "Peter's name from Simon, because also as Creator He altered the names of Abraham, Sara, and Oshua, calling the last Jesus, and adding syllables to the others, but why did He call him Peter? If for the strength of his faith, many solid substances would lend

²¹ For the name Boanerges, which in one place is given to the two sons of Zebedy, is in the first place a joint name; secondly, it is nowhere else referred to, and does not take the place of their birth-names; thirdly, it indicates not an official dignity, but an inward disposition. We cannot doubt that such a name bestowed on the two brothers was a mark of great distinction, but, for the above reasons, it cannot come into competition with the name of Peter. See Passaglia, p. 44, n. 38.

²² Mark iii. 14; Matt. x. 1; Luke vi. 14.

him a name from themselves. Or was it because Christ is both the Rock and the Stone? Since we read that He is set for a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence. I omit the rest. And so it was His pleasure to communicate to the dearest of His disciples, in a peculiar manner, a name drawn from the figures of Himself, I imagine, as being nearer than one drawn from figures not of Himself."²³

It is, then, setting a seal on His former acts, drawing out and corroborating their meaning, that He once more, and in the most emphatic way of all, recurs to this name, attaching to it the most signal promises, and establishing its prophetic power. In the third year of His ministry our Lord "came into the quarters of Cesarea Philippi: and He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that the Son of Man is? But they said, Some John the Baptist, and others Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. Jesus saith to them, But whom say ye that I am? Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answering, said to him, Blessed art thou Simon Bar Jonas, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."

²³ Cont. Marcion. L. 4, c. 13.

When we reflect that the first act of our Lord to Peter was to look upon him, and to promise him this name, a token of His omnipotence to Simon yet knowing him not, as that seeing him under the fig-tree was to Nathaniel of His omniscience; and that when He chose His twelve apostles, it is said markedly "to Simon He gave the name of Peter," the force of His reply cannot well be exceeded. The promise of our Lord answers part by part to the confession of His apostle. The one says: "Thou art the Christ," that is, the anointed one; the other, "Thou art Peter," that is, the Rock, the name which I gave thee myself: my own title with which I invested thee. The one adds, "the Son of the living God;" the other, "And upon this rock I will build my Church," that is, as it is true what thou confessest, that I am "the Son of the living God," so my power as such shall be shown in building my Church upon thee whom I have long named the Rock, "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Not only this, but I will unfold to thee the full meaning of thy name, and declare the gifts which accompany it. "And²⁴ I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." That is, "The root and the offspring of David," "the holy one and the true one, He that hath the key of David; He that openeth and no man shutteth; shutteth and no man openeth;" as He gave to thee to share His name of the Rock, so He shall give to thee to bear in His name His own symbol of supreme dominion, the key which opens or shuts the true city of David; all ages shall own thee, all nations acknowledge thee, as *The Bearer*

²⁴ Apoc. xxii. 16; iii. 7.

of the Keys; as long as my Church shall last, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, thy office shall last too; as long as there are souls to be saved, they shall pass by thy ministry into the gate of the Church. And further, as long as there need in my spiritual kingdom laws to be promulgated, precepts issued, sins forgiven, "whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."

Who, indeed, can adequately express the gifts which the world's Creator and Redeemer here promises to His favoured servant? Thus in the fourth century S. Chrysostome labours to set them forth. "See how He raises Peter to a higher opinion of Himself; and reveals and shews Himself to be the Son of God by these two promises. For what belongs to God alone, to loose sins, and to render the Church immovable in such an assault of waves, and to make a fisherman more solid than any rock, when the whole world was at war with him, these are what He promises to give him; as the Father addressing Jeremias, said: 'I have made thee an iron pillar and a wall,' but him to one nation, whereas the other to the whole world. Willingly would I ask those who wish to diminish the dignity of the Son, which are the greatest gifts, those which the Father gave to Peter, or those which the Son. For the Father bestowed on Peter the revelation of the Son; but the Son disseminated that of the Father and of Himself through the whole world; and *put into the hands of a mortal man power over all things in heaven, when He gave the keys to him who*

extended the Church through the whole world, and showed it to be firmer than the heaven."²⁵ And not many years later S. Leo says, "That which the Truth ordered remains; and blessed Peter persisting in that strength of the rock which he received, has not deserted the guidance, once undertaken, of the Church. For thus was he set before the rest, that while he is called the Rock, while he is declared to be the foundation, while he is appointed the door-keeper of the kingdom of heaven, while he is advanced to be the judge of what shall be bound and what loosed, with the condition that his sentence shall be ratified even in heaven, *we might learn through the very mysteries of the names given to him, how he was associated with Christ.*"²⁶ This association passed, indeed, into the very mind of the Church, for among all the titles given by fathers and councils and liturgies to Peter, and expressing his prerogatives, the one contained in this name is the most frequent. Thus he is termed,²⁷"the rock of the Church,"²⁸ "the rock of the Church that was to be built,"²⁹"underlying the building of the Church,"³⁰"receiving on himself the building

²⁵ S. Chris. on Matt. 16, Hom. 54.

²⁶ S. Leo, Sermon. 3 on his anniversary.

²⁷ Hilary of Poitiers on Matt. xv. n. 6; on Ps. cxxxi. n. 4; on the Trinity, L. 6, n. 20. Gregory Naz. Orat. 26, p. 453. Ambrose in his first hymn, referred to also by Augustine, Retract. lib. 1, c. 21, and Epiph. in ancor. n. 9.

²⁸ Tertullian de monogam. c. 8. Origen on Ps. 1, quoted by Eusebius, Hist. I. 6, c. 25. Cyprian, Ep. 71, and Firmilian, among Cyprian's letters, 75.

²⁹ Basil cont. Eunom. lib. 2, n. 4. Zeno. lib. 2, tract. 13, n. 2.

³⁰ By the same.

of the Church,"³¹"the immovable rock,"³²"the rock which the proud gates of hell prevail not against,"³³"the most solid rock,"³⁴"he to whom the Lord granted the participation of His own title, the rock,"³⁵"the foundation second from Christ,"³⁶"the great foundation of the Church,"³⁷"the foundation and basis,"³⁸"founding the Church by his firmness,"³⁹"the support of the Church,"⁴⁰"the Apostle in whom is the Church's support,"⁴¹"the support of the faith,"⁴²"the pillar of the Church," and by an authority sufficient alone to terminate all controversy, the great Council of Chalcedon,⁴³ "the rock and foundation of the Catholic Church, and the basis of the orthodox faith."⁴⁴

Thus, then, we have the name of Peter first promised, next

³¹ Epiphan. hær. 59, n. 7.

³² August. in Ps. cont. par. Donati. Leo, serm. 98.

³³ Theodoret, ep. 77.

³⁴ Maximus of Turin, serm. pro natali Petri et Pauli.

³⁵ Greg. Nazian. in hom. archieratico inserta.

³⁶ Origen on Exod. hom. 5, n. 4.

³⁷ Gallican sacramentary, edited by Mabillon, T. I. Mus. Ital. p. 343. Synod of Ephesus, act. 3.

³⁸ Peter Chrysologus, serm. 154.

³⁹ Ambrose on Virginity, c. 16.

⁴⁰ Ambrose on Luke, lib. 4, n. 70.

⁴¹ Chrysostome, hom. on debtor of ten thousand talents, Tom. 3, p. 4.

⁴² Philip, legate of the Apostolic See, in Act. 3 of Council of Ephesus.

⁴³ Council of Chalcedon, act. 3. in deposing Dioscorus.

⁴⁴ For the above references see Passaglia, p. 400.

conferred, then explained. And further light will be shed on this by the consideration of the purpose for which names in Holy Writ were bestowed by divine command on individuals, or their former names changed.

Now⁴⁵ of names imposed in Scripture there would seem to be three classes. The first and most common are *commemorative*, and are for the purpose of recording and handing down to posterity remarkable facts. Such are Peleg, "because in his days the earth was *divided*;" Isaac, from the *laughter* of his father and mother; Issachar, a *reward*; Manasseh, "God hath made me to *forget* my labours;" Ephraim, "God hath made me to *grow*;"⁴⁶ and a multitude of others.

The second class may be termed *significative*, being imposed to distinguish their bearers from others by some quality. Such are Jacob, the supplanter; Esau; Edom, the red; Moses, the taken or saved; Maccabæus; Boanerges.⁴⁷

The third and highest class are *prophetic*, and as such evidently can be imposed by God alone, who foresees the future. They are two-fold: i. Those which foreshadow events concerning not so much their bearers as others; such are Shear-jashub, "the remnant shall return;" Jezrael "I will visit;" Lo-ruhamah, "not pitied;" Lo-ammi, "not my people." ii. Those which point out the office and destiny of their bearers; such as Noah, rest; Israel,

⁴⁵ Vid. Passaglia, p. 54, note 47.

⁴⁶ Gen. x. 25; xvii. 19; xxx. 18; xii. 51, 52.

⁴⁷ Gen. xxv. 26; xxvii. 36; xxv. 25; xxv. 30; Exod. ii. 10; 1 Macc. ii. 4; Mark iii. 17.

a prince before God; Joshua, Saviour; Sarah, princess; John, in whom there is grace; and, after the divine name of Jesus, "who saves His people from their sins,"⁴⁸ Abraham, and Cephas, or Peter, which two neither commemorate a past event, nor signify a quality or ornament already possessed, but are wholly prophetic, inasmuch as they shadow out the dignity to which the leaders of the two covenants are divinely marked out by the very imposition of their name.

For it will perhaps bring out the pre-eminence and superior authority of Peter, if we consider the very close resemblance and almost identity of the dispensation into which God entered with Abraham, and that which Christ gave to Peter. But first we must observe how the more remarkable things occurring in the New Testament were foretold by types, images, parallelisms, and distinct prophecies in the Old. How⁴⁹ both our Lord, the Evangelists, and the Apostles, take pains to point out the close agreement between the two covenants; how the ancient ecclesiastical writers do the like in their contests with early heretics, or in recommending the truth of the Christian faith either to Jew or Gentile. They considered scarcely any proof of the Gospel superior to that which might be drawn by grave and solid inference from the anticipation of Christian truths in the old covenant. Now, among such truths, what concerns Peter is surely

⁴⁸ Isai. vii. 3; Os. i. 4, 6, 9; Gen. v. 29; xxxii. 28; Numb. xiii. 17; Gen. xvii. 15; Matt. iii. 1.

⁴⁹ Passaglia, p. 51.

of signal importance, as it affects the whole judgment on the form of government which our Lord instituted for His Church.

Again, it may be taken as an axiom that, as a similitude of causes is inferred from a similitude of effects, so a resemblance of the divine counsels may be inferred from a resemblance of exterior manifestations. As effects are so many steps by which we rise to the knowledge and discernment of causes, so divine manifestations are tokens which unfold God's eternal decrees. Thus if the series of dealings which constitute God's dispensation to Abraham be very much like that other series in which the Scriptures of the New Testament set forth the dispensation given to Peter, we may conclude, first, that the two dispensations may be compared, and, secondly, that from their resemblance, a resemblance in the divine purpose may be deduced.

First,⁵⁰ then, "God at sundry times, and in divers manners, speaking to the Fathers" of that covenant of grace, into which He had already entered with our first parents, said to Abram, "Go forth out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and out of thy father's house, and I will make of thee a great nation." But when in the last days He began to fulfil that covenant, and to declare His will by His Son, Jesus said to Simon and Andrew, "Follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men," and to Simon specially, "Fear not, for henceforth thou shalt catch men."⁵¹

Abram hearkened to God calling him: "So Abram went out

⁵⁰ Passaglia, p. 52.

⁵¹ Gen. xii. 1; Mark 1. 16, 17; Luke v. 10.

as the Lord had commanded him;" and Simon as readily obeyed Christ's vocation: "And immediately leaving their nets they followed Him."⁵²

God rewarded Abraham's obedience by the promise of a new name: "Neither shall thy name be called any more Abram, but thou shalt be called Abraham." So Christ honoured Simon, saying, "Thou art Simon, the son of Jonas, thou shalt be called Cephas."⁵³

No sooner had God unfolded the dignity shadowed forth in the promised name, and bestowed that dignity on Abraham, than He required of him a signal instance of faith and love: "God tempted Abraham, and said to him, Take thy son, thine only begotten, whom thou lovest, and offer him for a holocaust." So Christ required of Simon a proof of faith and of superior love before He either unfolded the excellence of the promised name, or adorned him with that excellency: "He saith to them, Whom say ye that I am?" "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?"⁵⁴

And both were no less ready to show the fortitude of their faith and love than they had been ready to follow the divine calling. For, "Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the sword to sacrifice his son;" and "Simon Peter answering, said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;" and again, "Yea, Lord,

⁵² Gen. xii. 4; Mark i. 18.

⁵³ Gen. xvii. 5; John i. 42.

⁵⁴ Gen. xxii. 1; Matt. xvi. 15; John xxi. 15.

Thou knowest that I love Thee."⁵⁵

Then, as the bestowal of the new name was the reward of the obedience with which each had followed his vocation, so God, moved by their remarkable ensuing faith and charity, explained the dignity contained in that name, and bestowed it when so explained. The following refers to the explanation; "By myself have I sworn, because thou hast done this thing," and "Because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say unto thee."

But as to the dignity bestowed, it should be remarked that it is divine, and communicated to each with this resemblance: *First*, that Abraham thereby becomes the source and parent of all the faithful, and Peter their base and foundation; the one, the author of a seed which should equal in number the stars of the heaven and the sand of the sea; the other, the Rock of the Church, which should embrace all nations, tribes, and languages. God says to Abraham, "And multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the sea-shore." But Christ to Peter, "and upon this rock I will build my Church." *Secondly*, the blessing thus bestowed from above upon each was not one which should rest in their single persons, but from them and through them should be extended to the universal posterity and society of the faithful; so that all who should believe, to the consummation of time, should gain through them blessing, stability, and victory over the assault of enemies and the gates of

⁵⁵ Gen. xxii. 10; Matt. xvi. 16; John xxi. 15.

hell. The promise to Abraham is clear: "thy seed shall possess the gate of their enemies, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed: " nor less so to Peter, "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

But the high excellence of this dignity, embracing, as it does, the whole company of the faithful, was presignified in the very meaning of the name imposed. For of Abraham's name we read, "And thy name shall be Abraham, for a father of many nations have I made thee." Exactly resembling is what is said of Peter's appellation, "Thou art Peter, the Rock, and upon this rock I will build my Church."

Nay, we may put in parallel columns the two promises, thus —

1. Thy name shall be	1. Thou art Peter,
Abraham,	
2. For a father of many	2. And upon this rock I
nations have I made thee:	will build my Church.

And just as in the former, the second clause contains the reason of the first, so in the latter likewise the two clauses cohere, as the name and its explanation. Again, the dignity of the one is expressed as that of the Father; of the other as that of the Rock. Further, those alone can share the blessing of Abraham, who are born of his spirit: and those alone the stability divinely granted to Peter, who refuse by any violence, or at any cost, to be separated from him.

But Abraham was thus raised to be the friend of God, associated in the divine Fatherhood, and made the teacher of posterity; and therefore, as being such, God would show him His counsels, that through him they might descend to his children. "And the Lord said, Can I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? for I know that he will command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord." In a precisely similar way, when God would call the Gentiles to the light of the Gospel, He shewed it by a special revelation to Peter alone: "There came upon him an ecstasy of mind; and he saw the heaven opened; and this was done thrice." And the reason of so preferring Peter was God's decree, that through him all other Christians, even the Apostles themselves, might be informed, and convinced. "You know that in former days God made choice among us that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the Gospel and believe." "And thou, when thou art converted, confirm thy brethren."⁵⁶

Finally, as God pronounces Abraham blest, so Christ pronounces Peter; and as He made Abraham the source and fountain-head of blessing and strength to all others, so no less did Christ make Peter. Of the first we read, "I will bless thee, and will make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing;" of the second, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jonah; – and upon this rock I will build My Church."

In one word, the parallel is as follows between Abraham and

⁵⁶ Gen. xviii. 17; Acts x. 10; xv. 7; Luke xxii. 32.

Peter. Both receive a remarkable call, and follow it; both are promised and receive a new, and that a prophetic name; of both signal instances of faith and love are required; both furnish these, and therefore do not lose the increase of their reward; to Abraham his prophetic name is explained, and to Peter likewise; Abraham understands his destination to be the Father of all nations, and Peter that he is made the Rock of the universal Church; Abraham is called blest, and so Peter; to Abraham it is revealed that no one, save from him, and through him, shall share the heavenly blessing; to Peter that all, from him, and through him, shall gain strength and stability; it is only through Abraham that his posterity can promise itself victory over the enemy, and only through being built on Peter, the Rock, that the Church will triumph over the gates of hell; in fine, if Abraham, as the teacher of the faithful, is instructed in the divine counsels with singular care, not less is shown to Peter, whom Christ has made the doctor and teacher of all believers.

The gifts thus bestowed on Abraham and Peter are *peculiar*, for they are read of no one else in the Holy Scriptures; they are not only *gifts*, but a *reward* for singular merit; and in their own nature they cannot be *general*. As by them Abraham is put into a relation of *Fathership*, so that all the faithful become his children, so Peter being called and made the Rock and *Foundation* of the Church, all its members have a dependence on him.

And if these gifts are *peculiar*, no less do they convey a singular *dignity* and *pre-eminence*. For it follows that, as S. Paul

says,⁵⁷ that all the faithful are children of Abraham, being heirs not of his flesh, but of his spirit and faith; so no one is, or can be, a part of the Church's building, who rests not on Peter as the foundation. For the same God who said to Abraham, "Thy name shall no longer be called Abram, but Abraham shall be thy name," said also to Simon, "Thou shalt not be called Simon, but Cephas;" the same God who said to the former, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," said to the latter, "Upon this Rock I will build my Church."

What is the source of this pre-eminence in both? To both the same objection may be made, and for both the same defence.

How should blessing and adoption be propagated from Abraham, as a sort of head, into the whole body of the faithful? Because Abraham is considered as joined with that mighty Seed his offspring, whence *in chief* and *primarily* the salvation of all depends; because Abraham is made by *participation* partner of that dignity which *naturally* and *substantially* belongs to the Seed that was to spring from him. God Himself has told us this, and His Apostle S. Paul explained it. For as we read that it was said to Abraham, "In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed," so God Himself has told us that *in thee, by thee*, means *in, by thy seed*. Hence S. Paul:⁵⁸ "To Abraham were the promises made, and to his seed. He saith not, seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." So that the divine words, "In

⁵⁷ Gal. iii. 7.

⁵⁸ Gal. iii. 16.

thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed," give this meaning: "As thou shalt give flesh to my only begotten Son whom I cherish in my bosom, whence He shall be called at once 'the Son of God and the Son of Abraham,'⁵⁹ so He makes thee a partner of His dignity and excellence, whence, if not the source and origin, yet thou shalt be a broad stream of blessing to be poured out on all nations."

Now just in the same manner is Peter the Rock of the Church, and the cause next to Christ of that firmness with which the Church shall remain impregnable to the end. For therefore is he the Rock and Foundation of the Church, because he has been called into a sort of unity with Him of whom it is said, "Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious, and he that believeth on it shall not be ashamed: " and in whom, as Paul explains, "the whole building fitly framed together increaseth unto a holy temple in the Lord."⁶⁰ Therefore is he the Church's Rock, because as he, by his own confession, declared the Godhead of the Foundation in chief, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," so from Him, who is the chief and substantial Foundation, he received the gift of being made partner in one and the same property: "And I too say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church;" one with Me by communication of My office and charge, My dignity and excellency. Hence the stability of Peter

⁵⁹ Matt. i. 1.

⁶⁰ Is. xxviii. 16; Eph. ii. 21.

is that of Christ, as the splendour of the ray is that of the sun; Peter's dignity that of Christ, as the river's abundance is the abundance of the fountain. Those who diminish Peter's dignity may well be charged with violating the majesty of Christ; those who are hostile to Peter, and divorced from him, stand in the like opposition to Christ.

Now this parallel is an answer⁶¹ to those who object to Peter's supereminence as the Foundation, that this dignity is entirely divine, surpassing by an almost infinite degree the capacity of man. For is not that a divine dignity which consists in the paternity of all the faithful? Is not that prerogative beyond man's capacity by which one becomes the author of a blessing diffused through all nations? Yet no one denies that such a dignity and such a prerogative were granted to Abraham. In divine endowments, therefore, their *full* and *natural possession* must be carefully distinguished from their *limited* and *analogous participation*. The one, as inherent, cannot fall to the creature's lot; the other, as transferable, may be granted as God pleases. For what further removed from man than the Godhead? Yet it is written, "I have said, ye are Gods."⁶²

Not weightier is the other objection, that the office of being the Foundation is too important to be entrusted to human care. Was there less difficulty in blessing being diffused from one man among all nations? Rather we must look on man not as he is by,

⁶¹ Passaglia, p. 58.

⁶² Ps. lxxxii. 6, with John x. 34.

and of, himself, apart from God, and left to his own weakness, but as upborne by divine power, according to the promise, "Behold, I am with you all days, until the consummation of the world." Who can doubt that man, in union with God, may serve for a foundation, and discharge those offices in which the unity of a structure consists? It is confidently and constantly objected, that "other foundation no man can lay beside that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."⁶³ As if what has been laid by Christ Himself, and consists in the virtue of Christ alone, can be thought other than Christ; or as if it were unusual, or unscriptural, for things proper to Christ to be participated by men. Therefore the chief difficulties against Peter's pre-eminence, and character as the Foundation, seem to spring from the mind failing to realise the supernatural order instituted by God, and the perpetual presence of Christ watching over His Church.

Thus it is no derogation to Abraham's being the Father of the faithful, or to the hierarchy of the Church instituted by Christ Himself, that our Lord says,⁶⁴ "Call none your father upon earth, for one is your Father who is in heaven;" inasmuch as Scripture abundantly proves that divine gifts are richly conferred upon men. What more divine than the Holy Spirit? Yet it is written,⁶⁵ "And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever." What a higher

⁶³ 1 Cor. iii. 11.

⁶⁴ Matt. xxiii. 9.

⁶⁵ John xiv. 16.

privilege than filial adoption? Yet it is said, ⁶⁶"Ye have received the spirit of filial adoption, by which we cry, Abba Father." What a greater treasure than co-inheritance with Christ? Yet we read, ⁶⁷"but if children, also heirs: heirs of God, but joint heirs with Christ." What higher than the vision of God? Yet S. Paul bears witness, ⁶⁸ "We see now through a glass darkly, but then face to face." What more wonderful than the power of remitting sins? Yet this very power is granted to the Apostles, ⁶⁹"Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them." What further from human weakness than the power of working miracles? Yet Christ establishes this, ⁷⁰"Amen, amen, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me, the works which I do, shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do." Indeed, the participation and communion of heavenly gifts have the closest coherence with that supernatural order, which God in creating man chose, and to which He called fallen man back through His only begotten Son; with that dispensation of Christ by which He loved the Apostles as He Himself was loved by the Father, by which He called them, ⁷¹"not servants, but friends," and gave them that glory which He had Himself received from the Father. And the tone of

⁶⁶ Rom. viii. 15.

⁶⁷ Rom. viii. 17.

⁶⁸ 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

⁶⁹ John xx. 23.

⁷⁰ John xiv. 12.

⁷¹ John xv. 9, 15.

mind which denies Peter's prerogative as the Foundation of the Church, under pretence that it is an usurpation of divine power, tends to deny some one or all of the privileges just cited, and, as a fact, does deny some of them. It is ⁷²wonderful to see how only common and vulgar things are discerned by modern eyes, where the Fathers saw celestial and divine gifts. Those without the Church have fallen away as well from the several parts and privileges, from what may be called the standing order, of the Incarnation, as from its final purpose and scope; and it is much if they would not charge with blasphemy that glorious saying put forth by the greatest of the Eastern, as by the greatest of the Western Fathers, "that God became man, in order that man might become God."⁷³

Was, then, S. Chrysostome wrong when he said that our Lord, in that passage of Matthew, showed a power equal to God the Father by the gifts which He bestowed on a poor fisherman? "He who gave to him the keys of the heavens, and made him Lord of such power, and needed not prayer for this, for He did not then say, I prayed, but, with authority, I will build my Church, and I will give to thee the keys of heaven."⁷⁴ Was he wrong when he called him "the chosen of the Apostles, the mouth-

⁷² Passaglia, p. 442. n. 38.

⁷³ [Greek: O tou Theou Logos enênthrôpêsen H hina hêmeis theopoiêthômen.] St. Athan. de Incarn. Factus est Deus homo, ut homo fieret deus. St. Aug. Sermon. 13, de Temp.

⁷⁴ S. Chrys. Tom. vii. 786. Hom. 82, in Matt.

piece of the disciples, the head of the band, the ruler over the brethren?"⁷⁵ Or where he saw these prerogatives in the very name of Peter, observing, "When I say Peter, I mean the impregnable rock, the immovable foundation, the great apostle, the first of the disciples?"⁷⁶

To sum up, then, what has been hitherto said, we have advanced so far as this; first the promise, and then the bestowal of a new name, expressing a singular pre-eminence, and in its *proper* sense befitting Christ alone, have distinguished Simon from the rest of the apostles. But much more the power signified by that name, and explained by the Lord Himself, carries far higher Peter's privilege, and indicates him to be the possessor of authority over the Apostles. For if Simon is the Rock of the Church, and if the property of Foundation, on which the structure of the Church rests, belongs to him immediately after Christ, and analogously with Christ, there arises this relation between Christ and Simon, that as He is first, and chiefly, and by inherent power, so Simon is secondarily, by participation and analogy, that which underlies, holds together, and supports the Apostles and the whole fabric of the Church.

Now such a relation carries with it not merely precedence of honour, but superior authority. The strength of the Apostles lay in their union with Christ, and subordination to Him. The like necessity of adhering to Peter is expressed in his new name.

⁷⁵ Tom. viii. 525. Hom. 88, in Joan.

⁷⁶ Hom. 3, de Pœnitentia. Tom. ii. 300.

Take away that subordination, and you destroy the very image by which the Lord chose to express Peter's dignity; and you remove, likewise, Peter's participation in that property which the Lord communicated to him in the name of the Rock. For if the Apostles needed not to be joined with him, he had no title to be called the Foundation; and if he had no coactive power over the Apostles, he did not share the property by which Christ is the Rock and Foundation. Thus the name, and the dignity expressed by the name, show Peter to have been singly invested by the Lord with both honour and power superior to all the Apostles.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Passaglia, p. 48, 9.

CHAPTER II.

EDUCATION AND FINAL DESIGNATION OF PETER TO BE THE RULER WHO SHOULD CONFIRM HIS BRETHREN

Having promised⁷⁸ and bestowed on Simon a new name, prophetic of the peculiar position which he was to occupy in the Church, and having set forth the meaning contained in that name in terms so large and magnificent, that, as we have seen, the greatest saints and fathers have felt it impossible to exhaust their force, our Lord proceeded to *educate* Peter, so to say, for his especial charge of supreme ruler. He bestowed upon him, in the course of His ministry, tokens of preference which agree with the title thus solemnly conferred; and He instructed him with all the care which we should expect to be given to one who was to become the chief doctor of Christians. Such instruction may be said to consist in two things, a more complete knowledge of the Christian revelation, and a singular apprehension of its divine proofs.

Now, innumerable as are the particulars in which the Christian

⁷⁸ Passaglia, p. 68.

revelation consists, they may yet be gathered up mainly into two points, which meet in the Person of our Lord, and are termed by the ancient fathers who have followed this division, the *Theology*, and the *Economy*. There is the Divine Nature, that "*form of God*," which our Lord had from the beginning in the bosom of the Father; and there is the human nature, that "*form of a servant*," which "in the economy or dispensation of the fulness of times" He assumed, in order that He might purchase the Church with His blood, and⁷⁹ "re-establish all things in heaven and on earth." All, therefore, in the Christian faith which concerns "the form of God" is termed the Theology; all which contemplates "*the form of a servant*," the Economy.

But the heavenly origin and certain truth of both these parts of Christian faith are proved partly by the fulfilment of prophecy, and partly by the working of miracles. To both our Lord perpetually appealed, and His apostles after Him, and those who have followed them. One, then, who was to be the chief ruler and doctor of Christians, needed especial instruction in the Theology, and Economy, especial assurance of the fulfilment of prophecy, and the working of miraculous power. Now Peter was specially selected for this instruction and that assurance.

The whole teaching of our Lord, indeed, and the innumerable acts of power and words of grace with which it was fraught, were calculated to convey these to all the Apostles. But while they were witnesses in common of that teaching in general, some parts

⁷⁹ Eph. i. 10.

of it were disclosed only to Peter and the two sons of Zebedy. Perhaps there is no incident in the Gospel history, which set forth in so lively a manner, and so convincingly proved, the mysteries concerning the union of "the form of God" and "the form of a servant," as the Transfiguration. The retreat to the "high mountain apart," and in the midst of that solitary prayer, "the face shining as the sun," and "the robes white as light," the presence of Moses and Elias, conversing with Him on the great sacrifice for sin, "the bright cloud which encompassed them," and the voice from out of it, proclaiming "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear Him;" so impressed themselves on the great Apostle, that after long years he appealed to them in proof that he and his brethren had not taught "cunningly devised fables, when they made known the power and presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, but had been eyewitnesses of His majesty, when He received from God the Father honour and glory, this voice coming down to Him from the excellent glory, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I have pleased myself: hear ye Him.' And this voice we heard brought from heaven, when we were with Him in the holy mount." Among all the Apostle's experience of the three years' ministry, by the shore and on the waves of the lake of Galilee, in the cornfields, or on the mountain side, in the noon-day heat, or midnight storm, even in the throng which cried 'Hosannah!' and 'Crucify Him!' this stood out, until "the laying aside of his fleshly tabernacle," as "the Lord had signified

to Him."⁸⁰ For⁸¹ what indeed was not there? the plurality of persons in the Godhead, the Father and the Son, the true, and not adopted, Sonship of the latter, His divine mission unto men; the new order of things resulting from it, and the summing up under one head of all things in heaven and in earth; the sealing up and accomplishing of the law and the prophets, by the presence of their representatives, Moses and Elias, a most wonderful and transporting miracle; and the command implicitly to obey Him in whom the Father was well pleased. Thus the Transfiguration may be termed the summing up of the whole Christian revelation.

But now of this we read that "after six days Jesus taketh unto Him *Peter*, and James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart." These three alone of the twelve. Yet does He not associate the sons of Zebedy with Peter in this privilege? Needful no doubt it was that so splendid an act should have a suitable number of witnesses, and that as His future glory should have⁸² three witnesses from heaven, and as many from earth, so this, its rudimental beginning, should be attested by three as from heaven, God the Father, Moses, and Elias, and by three from earth, Peter, James, and John. Dear to Him likewise, next to Peter, and most privileged after Peter, were the sons of Zebedy; yet a distinction is seen in the mode in which they are treated even when joined together in so great a privilege. For in

⁸⁰ 2 Pet. i. 14.

⁸¹ Passaglia, p. 69.

⁸² 1 John v. 6, 7.

all the three accounts Peter is named first; "He taketh to Him Peter, and James, and John." They likewise are called by their birth-name, he by his prophetic appellation of the Rock; they are silent, but he speaks; "Peter answering, said;" nor only speaks, but in the name of all; "It is good *for us* to be here," as if their leader. And, fifthly, he is named specially, they as his companions; "but Peter, *and they that were with him*, were heavy with sleep."⁸³ Thus even when three are associated in a special privilege above the Twelve, Peter is distinguished among the three.

But if there was one other occasion on which above all "the form of the servant" was to be set forth in the most awful, and the most endearing light, it was on that evening, "the hour" of evil men and "the power of darkness," when "the righteous servant who should justify many" was about to perform the great, central, crowning act of His mediation. Then we read that "He said to His disciples, Sit you here, till I go yonder and pray."⁸⁴ And then immediately "taking with Him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedy, He began to grow sorrowful and to be sad." Yet here again, even in the association with the sons of Zebedy, Simon is distinguished, for he is named first; and by the illustrious name of Peter, the Rock; and as the leader of the others, for, says Matthew, Christ after His first prayer, "comes to His disciples, and finds them sleeping, and *says to Peter*, What, could *ye* not watch with me one hour?" Why the change of number, Peter in

⁸³ Luke ix. 32.

⁸⁴ Matt. xxviii. 36.

the singular, *ye* in the plural? Why the blame of Peter, involving the blame of the rest? Because the members are censured in the head.

In these two signal instances our Lord, while preferring Peter and the two sons of Zebedy to the rest of the Twelve, yet marks a gradation likewise between them and Peter. And these two set forth the Theology and Economy, in the most emphatic manner.

And as the supreme preceptor must not only be acquainted with the truth which he has to deliver, but with the evidence on which it rests, so is Peter specially made a witness of his Lord's "power and presence" and "the works which no other man did." In that remarkable miracle of raising to life the ruler of the synagogue's daughter we read, "He admitted not any man to follow Him, but Peter and James, and John the brother of James;"⁸⁵ where, as before, and always, Peter is mentioned first, and by the prophetic name of his Primacy.

From⁸⁶ all which we gather four points; 1. Several things are mentioned in the Gospels which Christ gave to Peter, and not to the rest of the Apostles: 2. But nothing which He gave to them together, and not to Peter with them. 3. What He seemed to give to them in common, yet accrue to Peter in a special manner, who appears among the Apostles not as one out of the number, but their destined head, by the name, that is, of Peter, so markedly promised, bestowed, and wonderfully explained by our Lord, of

⁸⁵ Mark v. 35.

⁸⁶ Passaglia, p. 72.

which, as we have seen, S. Chrysostome, an eastern Patriarch, as well as a great Saint and Father, observed, "When I say Peter, I mean the impregnable Rock, the immovable foundation, the great Apostle, the first of the disciples." 4. Either we are not to take Christ's dealing as the standard of Peter's dignity, and destination, or we must admit that he was preferred to the rest, and made the supreme teacher of the faithful.

S. Matthew records the incidents of the officers asking for the payment of the didrachma which all the children of Israel were bound to contribute to the temple; and his words show us a fresh instance of honour done to Peter, and a fresh note of his superiority. "When they were come to Capharnaum, they that received the didrachma came to Peter and said to him, Doth not your master pay the didrachma?"⁸⁷ But why should they come to *him*, and ask, not if *his* master, but "your" master, the master of all the Apostles, paid the census, save that it was apparent, even to strangers, that Peter was the first and most prominent of the company? Why use him rather than any of the others, for the purpose of approaching Christ? "As Peter seemed to be first of the disciples," says S. Chrysostome, on the text, "they go to him." The context naturally suggests this reason, and the ancient commentators remarked it. But what follows is much more striking. Peter answered, Yes, that is, that his master observed all the laws of Moses, and this among the number. As he went home he purposed, no doubt, to ask our

⁸⁷ Matt. xviii. 23.

Lord about this payment, but "when he was come into the house Jesus prevented him," having in His omniscience seen and heard all that had passed, and He proceeded to speak words involving His own high dignity, followed by a singular trial of Peter's faith, and as marked a reward of it when tried. "What thinkest thou, Simon? The kings of the earth, of whom do they receive tribute or custom? of their own children or of strangers? And he said, Of strangers. Jesus said to him, Then the children are free." Slight words in seeming, yet declaring in fact that most wonderful truth which had formed so shortly before Peter's confession, and drawn down upon him the yet unexhausted promise; for they expressed, I am as truly the natural Son of that God, the Sovereign of the temple, for whom this tribute is paid, as the children of earthly sovereigns, who take tribute, are their sons by nature. Therefore by right I am free. "But that we may not scandalize them, go to the sea and cast in a hook; and that fish which shall first come up, take; and when thou hast opened its mouth, thou shalt find a stater; take that and give it to them for Me and thee." Declaring to His favoured disciple afresh that He is the true, and not the adopted, Son of God, answering his thoughts by anticipation, and expressing His knowledge of absent things by the power of the Son of God, He tries his faith by the promise of a fresh miracle, which involved a like exercise of divine power. Peter, in proceeding to execute His command, must make that confession afresh by deed, which he had made before by word, and which his Lord had just repeated with His own mouth. How else could

he go to the lake expecting to draw at the first cast a fish in whose mouth he should find a coin containing the exact amount due to the temple for two persons? But what followed? What but a most remarkable reward for the faith which he should show? "Take that and give it to them for Me and thee." There are looks, there are tones of the voice, which convey to us more than language. So, too, there are acts so exceedingly suggestive, that without in any *formal* way proving, they carry with them the force of the strongest proof. And so, perhaps, never did our Lord in a more marked manner *associate* Peter with Himself than here. It was a singular distinction which could not fail to strike every one who heard it. Thus S. Chrysostome exclaims,⁸⁸ "You see the exceeding greatness of the honour;" and he adds, "wherefore, too, in reward for his faith He connected him with Himself in the payment of the tribute;" and he remarks on Peter's modesty, "for Mark, the disciple of Peter, seems not to have recorded this incident, because it pointed out the great honour bestowed on him; but he did record his denial, while he was silent as to the points which made him conspicuous, his Master perhaps begging him not to say great things about him." Indeed, *how* could one of the disciples be more signally pointed out than by this incident, as "the faithful and wise steward, whom the Lord would set over His household, to give them their portion of food in due time?"

Other fathers, as well as S. Chrysostome, did not fail to see such a meaning in this passage; but let us take the words of

⁸⁸ On Matt. Hom. 58, n. 2.

Origen as pointing out the connection of this incident with the important question following. His words are: "It seems to me that (the disciples) considering this a very great honour which had been done to Peter by Jesus, in having put him higher than the rest of His disciples, they wished to make sure of what they suspected by asking Jesus and hearing His answer, whether, as they conceived, He judged Peter to be greater than them; and they also hoped to learn the cause for which Peter was preferred to the rest of the disciples. Matthew, then, wishing to signify this by these words, "take that and give it to them for Me and thee," added, "on that day the disciples came to Jesus, saying, Who, thinkest thou, is the greater in the kingdom of heaven?"⁸⁹

For, indeed, why should they immediately ask this question? The preceding incident furnishes a natural and sufficient cause. The Apostles, it seems, were urged by the plainness of Christ's words and acts to inquire who among them should have the chief authority. Who will not agree with S. Chrysostome: "The Apostles were touched with a human infirmity, which the Evangelist too signifies in the words, 'in that hour,' when He had honoured him (Peter) before them all. For though of James and John one of the two was the first-born," (alluding to an opinion that the tax was paid by the first-born,) "He did nothing like it for them. Hence, being ashamed, they confessed their excitement of mind, and do not say plainly, Why hast thou preferred Peter to us? Is he greater than we are? For this they did not dare; but they

⁸⁹ Origen on the text, in Matt. Tom. xiii. 14.

ask indefinitely, Who is the greater? For when they saw three preferred to the rest, they felt nothing like this; but when one received so great an honour, they were pained. Nor were they kindled by this alone, but by putting together many other things. For He had said to him, 'I will give to thee the keys,' and 'Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona,' and here 'Give it to them for Me and for thee;' and also they were pricked at seeing his confidence and freedom of speech."⁹⁰

Thus their question, if it did not express, at least suggested this meaning, "Speak more plainly and distinctly whether Peter is to be the greater and the chief in the Church, and accordingly among us," and so they seem to have drawn from our Lord's act a conclusion which they did not see in the promising or bestowing the prophetic name of Peter, nor even in the promises conveyed in explaining that name, and were vexed at the preference shown to him.

And if ⁹¹any be inclined to conclude from hence that our Lord's words and acts to Peter had not been of any marked significancy, they should be reminded that the very clearest and plainest things were sometimes not understood by the Apostles, before the descent of the Holy Spirit on them. This was specially the case with the things which they were disinclined to believe. Thus our Lord again and again foretold to them His passion in express terms, but we are told, "they understood none of these

⁹⁰ S. Chrysostome on the text, Hom. 58, Tom. 7, p. 587.

⁹¹ Passaglia, p. 77, note 38.

things."⁹² He foretold, too, His resurrection, yet they did not the least expect it, and they became at length fully assured of the fact before they remembered the prediction. Strange as these things seem, yet probably everyone's private experience will furnish him with similar instances of a veil being cast upon his eyes, which prevented his discerning the most evident things, towards which there was generally some secret disinclination.

But ⁹³how did our Lord answer their question? Did He remove at once the ground of their jealousy by declaring that in the kingdom of heaven no one should have pre-eminence of dignity, but the condition of all be equal? On the contrary, He condemns ambition and enjoins humility, but likewise gives such a turn to His discourse as to insinuate that there would be one pre-eminent over the rest.⁹⁴ "Jesus calling unto Him a little child, set him in the midst of them, and said, Amen I say unto you, unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Then He adds, "whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven." Thus He did not exclude the pre-eminence of that "greater one," about which they asked, but pointed out what his character ought to be. But this will be much clearer from a like enquiry, and the answer to it, recorded by S. Luke.

For even at the last supper, our Lord having told them that

⁹² Luke xviii. 34.

⁹³ Passaglia, p. 78.

⁹⁴ Matt. xviii. 2.

He should be betrayed, and was going to leave them in the way determined for Him, there was not only an enquiry among them which of them should do that thing, but also, so keenly were their minds as yet, before the coming down of the Holy Spirit, alive to the desire of pre-eminence, and so strongly were they persuaded that such a superior had not been excluded by Christ, but rather marked out and ordained, "there was a strife among them which of them should seem to be greater." Now our Lord meets their contention thus: "The ⁹⁵kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and they that have power over them are called beneficent. But you not so; but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is the leader, as he that serveth. For which is greater, he that sitteth at table, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at table? But I am in the midst of you as he that serveth. And you are they who have continued with Me in my temptations; and I dispose to you, as My Father hath disposed to Me, a kingdom; that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom; and may sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Now ⁹⁶in this speech of our Lord we may remark four points:

1. What is omitted, though it would seem most apposite to be said;
2. What is affirmed, if not expressly, yet by plain

⁹⁵ Luke xxii. 25.

⁹⁶ Passaglia, p. 77.

consequence;

3. What comparison is used in illustration;

4. What meets with censure and rejection.

1. First, then, though the Apostles had twice before contended about pre-eminence, yet our Lord neither there, nor here, said openly that He would not prefer any one over the rest, nor appoint any one to be their leader. Yet the importance of the subject, His own wisdom, and His love towards His disciples, as well as His usual mode of acting, seemed to demand, that had it been His will for no one of them to be set over the rest, He should plainly declare it, and thus extinguish all strife. No less a matter was at issue than the harmony of the Apostles with each other, the peace of the Church, and the success of the divine counsel for its government. Moreover, the Gospels represent Him to us as continually removing doubts, clearing up perplexities, and correcting wrong judgments among His disciples. Let us recall to remind a very similar occasion, when the mother of the sons of Zebedy with her children came before Him asking "that these my two sons may sit the one on thy right hand and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom." He rejected their prayer at once, saying, "To sit on My right or My left hand is not mine to give to you, but to them for whom it is prepared by My Father."⁹⁷ The silence, therefore, of Christ here, under such circumstances, is a proof that it was not the divine will that all the Apostles should be in such a sense equal that no one of them should hold a superior

⁹⁷ Matt, xx. 20.

authority over the rest.

2. But eloquent as this silence is, we are not left to trust to it alone, for our Lord's words point out, besides, the institution of one superior. "The kings of the Gentiles," He says, "lord it over them; and they that have power over them are called benefactors. But you not so: but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is the leader, as he that serveth." *A greater and a leader, then, there was to be.* Our Lord's words contain two parallel propositions repeated. 1. There is among you one who is the greater, let him, then, be as the younger. 2. There is among you one who is the leader, let him be as he that serveth. Thus our Lord's meaning is most distinct that they should have a superior.

But in the very similar passage about the sons of Zebedy, lest any should conclude that no one of the Apostles was to be superior to the rest, He called them to Him and said, "You know that the princes of the Gentiles lord it over them, and they that are the greater exercise power upon them. It shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be the greater among you, let him be your minister; and he that will be the first among you shall be your servant. Even as the Son of man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a redemption for many." Where He tells them His will, not that no one of the Apostles should be "great" and "first," but what the type and model should be which that "great" and "first" one should imitate, even the Son of man who came to minister.

3. For to make this quite certain, there, and here too, He directs us to a particular comparison, by which He explains and concludes His discourse, "For who is greater, he that sitteth at table, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at table? But I am among you as he that serveth. – And I dispose unto you as My Father disposed unto Me, a kingdom." Here our Lord sets Himself before His Apostles as the exemplar both of the rule which the superior was to exercise, and of the temper and character which he was to shew. As He had been speaking of the kingdoms of the Gentiles, so He now points out to them in contrast the true kingdom which He was disposing unto them. The Church as it had been from the beginning, was to be the model of what it should be to the end. Now all confess that in that Church Christ had held the place of "the First," "the Great one," "the Ruler." And now He explains that one of His Apostles should occupy that place of His, and occupying it should be of a like temper with Himself, who had been the minister and servant of all. And it may be remarked that the same word is here applied to him who should *rule* among the disciples, which expresses the dignity of Christ Himself in the prophecy of Micah, quoted in Matt. ii. 6, "Out of thee shall go forth⁹⁸ *the ruler*, who shall be shepherd over my people Israel." For Christ says, "He that is the greater among you let him be as the younger; and *he that ruleth* as he that serveth. *For*, who is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he who serveth? But I am among you as he that serveth." "I dispose

⁹⁸ [Greek: Hêgoumenos.]

to you a kingdom: as My Father disposed to Me: " let him who follows Me in place, follow Me in character.

But, 4, what does our Lord censure and reject from His Church? It is plain that He compares kingdom with kingdom, and the kingdom of heaven, which is the Church, with human kingdoms, and, moreover, that the negative quality as to which, in the clause, "But you not so," the two are compared, is, *not* the fact that there is pre-eminence and rule in both, but a certain *mode* of exercising them. This is, the pomp and ambition expressed in the words, "lording it," "exercising authority," "are called benificent." As again is shewn in the repeated declaration that what had been most alien from the spirit of His own ministry, should not appear in the ministry that He would establish after Him. Now He had shown no pomp and pride of dominion, but yet He had shown the dominion itself in the fullest sense, the power of passing laws, enjoining precepts, defining rites, threatening punishments, governing, in fine, His Church, so that He had been pre-eminently "the Lord." Lastly, this is shown in the words recorded by S. John, as said shortly after on this same occasion. "You call Me Master and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet: *for I have given you an example*, that as I have done unto you, so you also may do."⁹⁹

Now nothing can show more strongly than this discourse the pre-eminence and authority which our Lord was going to

⁹⁹ John xiii. 13.

establish in one of His Apostles over the rest. For here we have His intention disclosed that in His kingdom, which is the Church's, some one there should be "the Great," "the First," and "the Ruler," who should discharge, in due proportion and analogy, the office which He Himself, before He returned to the Father, had held. But before we consider further who this one was, let us look at the subject from a somewhat different point of view.

And ¹⁰⁰here we must lay down three points, the *first* of which is, that our Lord, during His life on earth, had acted in two capacities, the one, as the Author and Founder, the other, as the Head and Supreme Ruler of His Church. His functions in the former capacity are too plain to need enlarging upon. He disclosed the objects of our faith: He instituted rites and sacraments: He provided by the establishment of a ministry for the perpetual growth and duration of the Church. It was in this sense that He spoke of Himself to His apostles, as "the Master," who could share His prerogatives with no one: "But be not you called Rabbi, for one is your Master, and all you are brethren."¹⁰¹ Thus is He, "the Teacher," "the Master," throughout the Gospel.

But He likewise acted as the Head of His Church, with the dignity and authority of the chief visible Ruler. He was the living bond of His disciples: the person around whom they grouped: whose presence wrought harmony: whose voice

¹⁰⁰ Passaglia, p. 82.

¹⁰¹ Matt. xxiii. 8.

terminated contention among them: who was ever at hand to solve emergent difficulties. Thus it is that prophecy distinguished Him as "the Lord," "the King," "the Shepherd;" "on whose shoulders is the government," "who should *rule* His people, Israel." And His Church answers to Him in this capacity, as the family, the house, the city, the fold, and the kingdom.

Thus His relation to the Church was twofold, as Founder, and as Supreme Pastor.

Secondly, the Church shares her Lord's prerogative of unchangeableness, and as He is "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," so She, His mystical Body, in her proportion, remains like herself from the beginning to the end. The Church and Christianity are bound to each other in a mutual relation; the Church is Christianity embodied; Christianity is the Church in conception: the consistency and identity which belong to Christianity belong likewise to her; neither can change their nature, nor put on another form.

But, *thirdly*, the Church would be unlike herself, if, having been from her very cradle visibly administered by the rule of One, she fell subsequently, either under no rule at all, according to the doctrine of the Independents, or under the rule of the multitude, according to the Calvinists, or under the rule of an aristocracy, as Episcopalians imagine. A change of government superinduces a change of that substantial form which constitutes a society. But this holds in her case especially, above all other societies, as she came forth from the creative hand of her Lord,

her whole organization instinct with inward life, her government *directly* instituted by God Himself, in which lies her point of distinction from all temporal polities.

For imagine, that upon our Lord's departure, no one had been deputed to take the visible headship and rule over the Church. How, without ever fresh revelations, and an abiding miraculous power, could that complex unity of faith, of worship, and of polity, have been maintained, which the¹⁰² Lord has set forth as the very sign and token of His Church? A multitude scattered throughout the most distant regions, and naturally differing in race, in habits, in temperament, how could it possibly be joined in one, and remain one, without a powerful bond of unity? Hence, in the fourth century, S. Jerome¹⁰³ observed, "The safety of the Church depends on the dignity of the supreme Priest, in whom, if all do not recognise a peculiar and supereminent power, there will arise as many schisms in the Church as there are priests." And the repentant confessors out of Novatian's schism, in the middle of the third century, "We know that Cornelius (the Pope) has been elected Bishop of the most holy Catholic Church, by Almighty God, and Christ our Lord. – We are not ignorant that there is one God, one Christ the Lord, whom we confessed, one Holy Spirit, and that there ought to be one bishop in the Catholic Church."¹⁰⁴ And these words, both of S. Jerome, and of the

¹⁰² John chps. x., xiii., xvii.

¹⁰³ Dialog. cont. Lucif. n. 9.

¹⁰⁴ St. Cyprian, Ep. 46.

confessors, if they primarily apply to the diocesan bishop among his priests and people, so do they with far greater force apply to the chief bishop among his brethren in the whole Church. Now, as our Lord willed that His Church should do without fresh revelations, and new miracles, such as at first accredited it, and that it should preserve unity; and as, when it was a little flock, which could be assembled in a single room, it had yet one visible Ruler, how can we doubt that He willed this form of government to remain, and that there should be one perpetually to rule it in His name, and preserve it in unity, since it was to become co-extensive with the earth?

Again, we may ask, was the condition of fold, house, family, city, and kingdom, so repeatedly set forth in Holy Scripture, to belong to the Church only while Christ was yet on earth, or to be the visible evidence of its truth for ever? Do these terms exhibit a temporary, or a perpetual state? Each one of these symbols by itself, and all together, involve one visible Ruler: therefore, so long as the Church can be called with truth, the one house, the one family, the one city, the one fold, the one kingdom, so long must it have one visible and supreme Ruler.

But once grant that such a one there was after our Lord's departure, and no one can doubt that one to have been Peter. It is easier to deny the supreme Ruler altogether, than to make him any one but Peter. The whole course of the Gospels shows none other marked out by so many distinctions. Thus, even those who wish to refuse a real power to his Primacy, are compelled by the

force of evidence to allow him a Primacy of order and honour.

But nothing did our Lord more pointedly reject than the vain pomp of titles and honours. In nothing is His own example more marked than in that He exercised real power and supreme authority without pomp or show. Nothing did He enjoin more emphatically on the disciple who should be the "Great one," and "the Ruler," among his brethren, than that he must follow his Master in being the servant of all. A Primacy, then, consisting in titles and mere precedency, is of all things most opposed to the spirit and the precepts of our Lord. And so the Primacy which He designated must be one of real power and pre-eminent authority.

And this brings us back to the passage of S. Luke which we were considering, where four things prove that Christ had such a headship in view. First, the occasion, for the Apostles were contending for a place of real authority. The sons of Zebedy expressed it by sitting on His right hand and on His left, that is, holding the second and the third place of dignity in the kingdom.

Secondly, the double comparison which our Lord used, the one negative, the other affirmative: in the former, contrasting the Church's ruler with the kings of the Gentiles, He excluded pomp and splendour, lordship and ambition; in the latter, referring him to His own example, who had the most real and true power and superiority, He taught him to unite these with a meekness and an attention to the wants of his brethren, of which His own life had been the model.

Thirdly, the words "the First," "the Greater," and "the Ruler,"

indicate the pre-eminence of the future head, for as they appear in the context, and according to their Scriptural force, they indicate not a vain and honorary, but a real authority, one of them being even the very title given to our Lord.

And, fourthly, this is proved by the object in view, which is, maintaining the identity of the Church, and the form which it had from the beginning, and preserving its manifold unity. As to its identity, and original form, it is needless to observe that Christ exercised in it not an honorary but a real supremacy, so that under Him its government was really in the hands of one, the Ruler. As to the preservation of its unity – and especially a unity so complex – the very analogy of human society will sufficiently teach us that it is impossible to be preserved without a strong central authority. Contentions can neither be checked as they arise, nor terminated when they come to a head, without the interference of a power to which all yield obedience. And the living example of those religious societies which have not this power is an argument whose force none can resist. Where Peter is not, there is neither unity of faith, nor of charity, nor of external regimen.

No sooner ¹⁰⁵then had our Lord in this manner pointed out that there should be one hereafter to take His place on earth and to be the Ruler of his brethren, expressing at the same time the toilsome nature of the trust, and the duty of exercising it with the spirit which He, the great model, had shown, than turning His

¹⁰⁵ Passaglia, p. 89.

discourse from the Apostles, whom hitherto He had addressed in common, to Peter singly, He proceeded to designate Peter as that one, to assure him of a singular privilege, and to enforce upon him a proportionate duty.

And first a break in the hitherto continuous discourse is ushered in by the words, "And the Lord said," and what follows is fixed to Peter specially, by the reiteration of his name, "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat: " to have *you*, that is not Peter alone, but all the Apostles, the same you, whom in the preceding verses He had so often repeated, "you not so," "but I am in the midst of you," "but you are they that have continued with Me," "and I dispose to you a kingdom," "that you may eat and drink with Me;" and what follows? What was the resource provided by the Lord against this attack of the great enemy on all His fold? "But I have prayed for *thee*, that *thy* faith fail not: and thou being once converted confirm thy brethren." Not "I have prayed for *you*," where all were assaulted, "that *your* faith fail not," but I have prayed for *thee*, Peter, that *thy* faith fail not! Nothing can be more emphatic than this change of number, when our Lord throughout all His previous discourse had used the plural, and now continuing the plural to designate the persons attacked, uses the singular to specify the person for whom He has prayed, and to whom He assures a singular privilege, the fruit of that prayer. Nothing could more strongly prove that this address was special to Peter.

Nor less evident is the singular dignity of what is here promised to him. First of all, it is the fruit of the prayer of Christ. Of what importance must that be which was solicited by our Lord of His Father, and at a moment when the redemption of the world was being accomplished, and when His passion may be said to have begun? Of what importance that which was to be the defence of not Peter only, but all the disciples, against the most formidable assault of the great enemy, who had¹⁰⁶ demanded them as it were to deliver them over to punishment? And this was "that thy faith fail not." How is it possible to draw any other conclusion here than what S. Leo in the fifth century expressed so clearly before all the bishops of Italy? "The danger from the temptation of fear was common to all the Apostles, and all equally needed the help of the divine protection, since the devil desired to dismay all, to crush all; and yet a special care of Peter is undertaken by our Lord, and He prays peculiarly for the faith of Peter, as if the state of the rest would be more sure, if the mind of their chief were not conquered. In Peter, therefore, the fortitude of all is protected, and the help of divine grace is so ordered, that the firmness which through Christ is given to Peter, through Peter is conferred on the Apostles."¹⁰⁷ And if such is the importance of the help secured, no less is the charge following: "And thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren." To confirm others, is to be put in an office of dignity and authority

¹⁰⁶ [Greek: *exêtêsato*]. The word in classic Greek has this force.

¹⁰⁷ Sermon 4, c. 3.

over them. And his brethren were those whom our Lord till now had been addressing in common with him; to whom He had just disclosed "a Greater" and "a Ruler" "among" them; that is, the Apostles themselves. Among these, then, when our Lord's visible presence was withdrawn, Peter was to be the principle of stability, binding and moulding them into one building. For one cannot fail to see how this great promise and prophecy answer to those in Matthew. There our Lord, as Architect, promised to lay Peter as the foundation of the Church, against which the gates of hell should not prevail: here, being about to leave the world, when His own work was finished, to ascend unto His Father, and to assume His great power and reign, He makes Peter as it were the Architect to carry on the work which was to be completed by *His* grace and authority, but by human co-operation. So exact is the resemblance that we may put the two promises in parallel columns to illustrate each other:

Thou art Peter, and upon	But I have prayed for
this Rock I will build My	thee that thy faith fail not;
Church; and the gates of hell	and thou, being once converted,
shall not prevail against it.	confirm thy brethren.

But light is thrown on the greatness of this pre-eminence thus bestowed on Peter of confirming his brethren, if we consider that the term is applied to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as bestowing by inherent power what is here granted

by participation. Of the Father it is said, "To Him that is able to *establish* you according to my Gospel – the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be honour and glory." And again, "Now He that *confirmeth us* with you in Christ, and that hath anointed us, is God;" and again, "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little, will Himself perfect you, *confirm*, establish you."¹⁰⁸ Of Christ likewise: "As therefore you have received Jesus Christ the Lord, walk ye in Him, rooted and built up in Him, and *confirmed* in the faith." And "waiting for the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who also will *confirm* you unto the end without crime." And again: "Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself exhort your hearts, and *confirm* you in every good word and work."¹⁰⁹ And the Holy Spirit is continually mentioned as the author of this gift, when, for instance, to Him is ascribed "the teaching all truth," "the leading into all truth," "the bringing to mind" all things which Christ had said. And S. Paul prays "that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be *strengthened* by His Spirit with might unto the inward man."¹¹⁰

What, therefore, is proper to the most Holy Trinity, and given in the highest sense by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, it was the will of Christ should be shared by Peter, according as man is capable of it. That is, it was His pleasure that the

¹⁰⁸ Rom. xvi. 25; 2 Cor. i. 21; 1 Pet v. 10.

¹⁰⁹ Col. ii. 6; 1 Cor. i. 7; 2 Thess. ii. 16.

¹¹⁰ John xvi. 13; xiv. 16, 26; Eph. iii. 16.

same man, whom He had intimately associated with Himself by communicating to him His prerogative to be the Rock, should be closely joined with the Blessed Trinity by participating in that privilege, whereby, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, He is the confirmation and stability of the faithful. But if any rule there can be whereby to measure pre-eminence and dignity, it is surely that which is derived from participation of divine properties and offices. And the closer that by these Peter is shown to have approached to God, the higher his exaltation above the rest of his brethren, who, as it has been observed, are the Apostles. To them he is the Rock, and them he is to confirm. Thus Theophylact, in the eleventh century, commenting on this text, says: "The plain meaning of this is, that, since I hold thee as the ruler of My disciples, after thou shalt have wept over thy denial and repented, confirm the rest. For this belongs to thee as being after Me the rock and support" (literally, confirmation) "of the Church. Now one may see that this is said not only of the apostles, that they are confirmed by Peter, but also concerning all the faithful until the consummation of the world."

But looking more closely into the nature of this dignity, since Christ, by the bestowal of heavenly gifts, caused Peter to be conspicuous through the firmness of his own faith, and through the charge of confirming the faith of his brethren, we can call it by no fitter name than a Primacy of faith. For it has these two qualities: it cannot fail itself; and it confirms others. And for the authority which it carries, such a Primacy of faith cannot even

be imagined without at the same time imagining the office by which Peter was bound to watch over the firmness and integrity of the common faith. In this office two things are involved; first, the right to, and therefore the possession of, all things necessary for its fulfilment; and secondly, the duty by which all were bound to agree in the profession of one faith with Peter. So that Peter's dignity, rightly termed the Primacy of faith, mainly consists in the supreme right of demanding from all an agreement in faith with him.

It¹¹¹ remains to explain the proper force of the word *confirm*. Now this is a term of architecture, and as such is joined with other terms relating to that art, as by S. Peter, "the God of all grace – Himself fit you together" (as living spiritual stones,) "confirm, strengthen, ground you."¹¹² It means, to make anything fit so firmly that it cannot be shaken. Thus in Holy Writ it frequently bears metaphorically a moral signification, such as encouraging, supporting, as we say, confirming the resolution, as in the passage just quoted; and again, "Be watchful, and *confirm* the things that remain, which are ready to die."¹¹³ Now it cannot be doubted that the phrase "confirm thy brethren," carries a moral sense very like that in which the word *confirm*, when applied to the spiritual building of the Church, is used of

¹¹¹ Passaglia, p. 563.

¹¹² 1 Pet. v. 10.

¹¹³ Apoc. iii. 2.

God and of Christ,¹¹⁴ from whom the Church has both its being and its perseverance to the end, and again of the Apostles, who strengthen the flock entrusted to them by the imparting spiritual gifts, as S. Paul says, "I long to see you that I may impart unto you some spiritual grace to strengthen you;"¹¹⁵ or, again, of Bishops, who, as sent by the Apostles, and charged by the Holy Spirit with the government of the Church, are bid to be watchful, and see that those who stand do not fall, and those who are in danger do not perish.¹¹⁶ Accordingly, when it is said to Peter, "And thou in thy turn one day confirm thy brethren," *the charge and office are laid upon him, as an architect divinely chosen, of holding together, strengthening, and keeping in their place, the several parts of the ecclesiastical structure.*

But what are these *parts* to be confirmed, and what is the *nature* of the confirmation?

As to the first question there can be no controversy, it being determined by the words, "confirm *thy brethren*:" and it is plain from what is said above, that, by brethren, are meant the Apostles. He had, therefore, the Apostles committed to his charge *immediately*: but likewise, the rest of all the faithful, *mediately*. When a person has been named by Christ to confirm the Apostles expressly, the nature of the case does not allow that the whole congregation of believers be not in their persons

¹¹⁴ Rom. xvi. 25; 1 Thess. iii. 13; 2 Thess. ii. 17; 1 Pet. v. 10.

¹¹⁵ Rom. i. 11.

¹¹⁶ Apoc. iii. 2.

committed to him. The care of the flock is manifestly involved in the care of the shepherds: and no one in his senses can doubt that the man who is charged to support the pillars, is charged to keep in their place the inferior stones.

And as to the *nature* of the confirmation, it is for protection against the fraud of the great enemy. And the danger lay in losing the faith. Peter, then, is charged to confirm, in such sense that neither the pillars of the Church, nor its inferior parts, may, by the loss of faith, be moved from their place, and so severed from the Church's structure. No charge can be higher than such an office of confirmation; nor for any thing need we to be more thankful to our Saviour; but, particularly, nothing can more distinctly shew the divinely-appointed relation between Peter on the one hand, and on the other, the rest of the Apostles, and the whole company of the faithful; nothing define more clearly the special authority of Peter; that is, to protect and strengthen the unity of the faith, and to possess all powers needed for such protection.

This charge was given after that by the prayer of Christ the privilege had been gained for Peter's faith, *that it should never fail*. Hence, that faith is become, in virtue of such prayer, the infallible standard of evangelical truth: as S. Cyprian expressed it of old, "that faith of the Romans, which perfidy *cannot* approach."¹¹⁷ It follows that all the faithful owe to it obedience. And Peter's authority rests on a double title, *external* of mission,

¹¹⁷ S. Cyprian, Ep. 55.

internal of spiritual gift: the former contained in the words of Christ the legislator, "And thou,¹¹⁸ in thy turn, one day confirm thy brethren: " the latter, in the words of Christ, the bestower of all gifts, "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

More than a thousand years ago two Easterns seem to have expressed all this, one the Bishop Stephen, suppliantly approaching Pope Martin I., in the Lateran Synod of a. d. 649, and speaking of "the blessed Peter, in a manner special and peculiar to himself, having above all a firm and immutable faith in our Lord God, to consider with compassion, and confirm his spiritual partners and brethren when tossed by doubt:

¹¹⁸ As far as the *words* by themselves go, it is the opinion of the best commentators that they may be equally well rendered, "And thou, when thou art converted," or, "And thou, in thy turn, one day," &c. But as it is impossible to bring a discussion turning on a Hebrew idiom conveyed in a Greek word before the English reader, we must here restrict ourselves to the proof arising from the *sense* and *context*. And here one thing alone, among several which may be urged, is sufficient to prove that the sense preferred in the text, "And thou in thy turn one day confirm thy brethren," is the true one. For the other rendering supposes that the time of Peter's conversion would also be the time of his confirming his brethren; whereas this was far otherwise. He was converted by our Lord looking on him that same night shortly after his denial, and "immediately went out and wept bitterly." But he did not succeed to the charge of confirming his brethren till after our Lord's ascension. It must be added that the collocation of the original words [Greek: kai su pote epistrepas stêrixon] is such as absolutely to require that the joint action indicated by them should belong to the same time, and that an *indefinite* time expressed by [Greek: pote]. Now this would be false according to the rendering, "And thou, when thou art converted, confirm thy brethren," for the conversion was immediate and definite, the confirmation distant and indefinite; whereas it exactly agrees with the rendering, "And thou in thy turn one day confirm thy brethren." Those who wish to see the whole controversy admirably drawn out may find it in Passaglia, b. 2, ch. 13.

inasmuch as he has received power and sacerdotal authority, according to the dispensation, over all, from the very God for our sakes incarnate."¹¹⁹ And Theodore, Abbot of the Studium, at Constantinople, addressing Pope Paschal I., a. d. 817, in the midst of persecution from the state, as if he were Peter himself. "Hear, O Apostolic Head, O shepherd of the sheep of Christ, set over them by God, O door-keeper of the kingdom of heaven, O rock of the faith, upon which the Catholic Church is built. For Peter art thou, who adornest and governest the See of Peter. To thee, said Christ our God, 'and thou, in thy turn, one day confirm thy brethren.' Behold the time, behold the place, help us, thou who art ordained by God for this. Stretch forth thy hand as far as may be: power thou hast from God, because thou art the chief of all."¹²⁰

Now let us¹²¹ view in its connexion the whole scope of our Lord's discourse. We shall see how naturally the contest of the Apostles arose out of what He had told them, and how well the former and the latter part of His answer harmonize together, and terminate that contest. We learn from S. John's record of this divine conversation, that our Lord besought His Father, saying: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name – but now I come to Thee: " that is, so long as I was with them visibly in the world, (for invisibly I will always

¹¹⁹ Mansi. Concilia, x. 894.

¹²⁰ Baronius, Annal. a. d., 817, xxi.

¹²¹ Passaglia, p. 545.

be with them, and nurture them with the spiritual influx of the Vine,) I kept them united in Thy name: "but now I come to Thee," I leave the world, I relinquish the office of visible head. It remains, that by the appointment of another visible head, Thou shouldst entrust him with My office, provide for the conspicuous unity of all, and preserve them joined to each other and to Us. So S. Luke tells us, that no sooner had our Lord declared to the Apostles, "the Son of man indeed goeth according to that which is determined," than they began to have a strife among them, "which of them should seem to be the greater." For they had heard that Christ would withdraw His visible presence, and they had heard Him also earnestly entreating of the Father to provide for their visible unity. Accordingly, the time seemed at hand when another was to take this office of visible head; hence their questioning, who should be the greater among them. Now our Lord does not reprove this inference of theirs, but He does reprove the temper in which they were coveting pre-eminence. For, engaged as they were in this strife, He warned them that the person who should be "the Greater and the Ruler" among them, must follow in the discharge of his office the rule and the standard which *He* had set up in His own conduct, and not that which the kings of the Gentiles follow. Thus, setting these in sharp contrast, He proceeds. "The kings, indeed, of the nations, lord it over their subjects, and love high titles, and to be called benefactors: but I, though Lord and Master amongst you, have dealt otherwise, as you know. For I have exercised, not

a lordship, but a servitude: I have not sat at table, but waited: I have not cared for titles, but called you friends and brethren. Let this example then be before you all, but specially before him who is to be the greater and the ruler among you. For I appoint unto you, and dispose of you, as My Father hath disposed of Me; of Me He hath disposed that through humiliation, emptying of Myself, ignominy, and manifold temptations, I should gain the kingdom, reach the joys of heaven, and obtain all power in heaven and on earth. So likewise dispose I of you, that, through humility, sufferings, reproaches, hunger, thirst, and all manner of temptations, you may reach whither I have come, being worthy, after your hunger and your thirst, to eat and drink at My table in My kingdom; after being despised and dishonoured, to sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Now, hitherto you have trodden with Me this royal way full of sorrows, and have continued with Me in My temptations. But little will it profit to begin, if you persevere not to the end. None shall be crowned, save he who has contended lawfully; none be saved, but he who perseveres to the end. Will you remain with Me still in your temptations to come, and when I am no longer present with you visibly, to protect and exhort, will you preserve your steadfastness? Simon, Simon, behold! I see Satan exerting all his force to overcome your purpose, and to destroy the fidelity which you have hitherto shewn Me. I see the danger to your faith and your salvation approaching. But I, who, when visibly present with you, left nothing undone to guard, protect, and strengthen

you visibly, so, too, when separated from your bodily sight, will yet not leave you without a visible support. Wherefore, Peter, I have prayed for thee, that thou fail not, and thou, in thy turn, one day confirm thy brethren. Remember that thou hast to discharge that part visibly towards thy brethren, which I, while yet mortal, and visible, discharged: remember, that I therefore had special care of thee, because it was My will, that thou, confirmed by My prayers, shouldst confirm thy brethren, My disciples, and My friends."¹²²

Now from¹²³ what has been said, it appears that Peter in Holy Scripture is set forth as the source and principle of ecclesiastical unity under a double but cognate image, as Foundation, and as Confirmer. Of the former we will here say nothing further, but a few consequences of the latter it is desirable here to group together. I. The unity, then, which consists in the profession of one and the same faith, is conspicuous among those¹²⁴ modes of unity by which Christ has willed that His Church should be distinguished. Now, first, S. Paul declares that the whole ministerial hierarchy, from the Apostolate downwards, was instituted by our Lord, for the sake of obtaining and preserving this unity. "He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and other some Evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfecting" (literally, the fitting in together, the same word

¹²² Passaglia, p. 547.

¹²³ Passaglia, p. 571.

¹²⁴ For which see hereafter, ch. 7.

which S. Peter had used in his prayer, ch. v. 10,) "of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; until we all meet into the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ."¹²⁵ To this living hierarchy he expressly attributes preservation from doctrinal error, proceeding thus: "That henceforth we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive." And, secondly, this hierarchy itself was knitted and gathered up into a monarchy, and its whole force and solidity made to depend on association with Peter, to whom *alone* was said, "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not;" to whom alone was enjoined, "And thou, in thy turn, one day confirm thy brethren."

II. Accordingly the pre-eminence of Peter is well expressed by the words,¹²⁶ "Primacy of faith," "chiefship of faith," "chiefship in the episcopate of faith," meaning thereby a peculiar authority to prescribe the faith, and determine its profession, and so protect its unity and purity. This is conveyed in the words of Christ, confirm thy brethren. Thus¹²⁷ S. Bernard addressed Innocent II., "All emergent dangers and scandals in the kingdom of God,

¹²⁵ Eph. iv. 11.

¹²⁶ Petrus uti audivit, vos autem quid me dicitis? *Statim loci non immemor sui, primatum egit*; primatum confessionis utique, non honoris; primatum fidei, non ordinis. Ambros. de Incarn. c. 4, n. 32, Tom. 2, p. 710.

¹²⁷ Ep. 190, vol. 1, p. 649.

specially those which concern the faith, are to be referred to your Apostolate. For I conceive that we should look especially for reparation of the faith to the spot where faith *cannot*¹²⁸ fail. That indeed is the prerogative of this see. For to whom else was it once said, 'I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not?' Therefore what follows is required of Peter's successor: 'And thou in thy turn one day confirm thy brethren.' And this is now necessary. It is time for you, most loving father, to recognise your chiefship, to approve your zeal, and so make your ministry honoured. In that you clearly fulfil the part of Peter, whose seat you occupy, if by your admonition you confirm hearts fluctuating in faith, if by your authority you crush those who corrupt it."

III. All who have received the ministry of the word, and the charge of defending the faith and preserving unity, and are "ambassadors in Christ's name," have a claim to be listened to, but he above all who holds the chiefship of faith, and who received the charge, "Confirm thy brethren." He therefore must be the supreme standard of faith, which is just what S. Peter Chrysologus, in the fifth century, wrote to Eutyches: "We exhort you in all things, honourable brother, to pay obedience to what is written by the most blessed Pope of the Roman city; for S. Peter, who both lives and rules in his own see, grants to those who ask for it the truth of faith."¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Observe the exact identity with S. Cyprian's expression nine hundred years earlier, quoted p. 55.

¹²⁹ Twenty-fifth letter among those of St. Leo.

IV. And in this prerogative of Peter, to be heard above all others, we find the meaning of certain ancient expressions. Thus¹³⁰Prudentius calls him, "the first disciple of God;"¹³¹S. Augustine, "the figure of the Church;"¹³²S. Chrysostome, "the mouthpiece of the disciples, and teacher of the world;"¹³³S. Ephrem Syrus, "the candle, the tongue of the disciples, and the voice of preachers;"¹³⁴S. Cyril of Jerusalem, "the prince of the Apostles, and the highest preacher of the truth." In these and such like continually recurring expressions we recognise his chiefship in the episcopate of faith, his being the standard of faith, and his representing the Catholic faith, as the branches are gathered up in the root, and the streamlets in the fountain.

V. Our ¹³⁵Lord has most solemnly declared, and S. Paul repeated, that no one shall be saved without maintaining the true and uncorrupt faith. Of this Peter's faith is the standard and exemplar. Accordingly by the law of Christ unity with the faith of Peter is necessary to salvation. This law our Lord set forth in the words, "Confirm thy brethren." And to this the Fathers in their expressions above quoted allude.

¹³⁰ Con. Symmachum, Lib. 2, v. 1.

¹³¹ Sermon 76.

¹³² Hom. 88, on John.

¹³³ Encom. in Petrum et cæteros Apostolos.

¹³⁴ Cat. xi. n. 3. [Greek: ho prôtosthatês tôn Apostholôn kai tês ekklêsias koryphaïos khêryx.]

¹³⁵ Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 18; Rom. iii. 3, &c.

VI. The true faith and the true Church are so indivisibly united, that they cannot even be conceived apart from each other, faith being to the Church as light to the sun. But the true faith neither is, nor can be, other than that which Peter, "the first disciple of God," "the teacher of the world," "the mouthpiece of the disciples," and "the confirmer of his brethren," holds and proposes to others. No communion, therefore, called after Christ, which yet differs from that faith, can claim either the name or dignity of the true Church.

VII. If any knowledge have a special value, it is surely that by which we have a safe and ready test of the true faith and the true Church. It is of the utmost necessity to know and embrace both, and the means of reaching them are proportionably valuable. Now that test abides in Peter, by keeping which before us we can neither miss the true faith nor the true Church. For no other true faith can there be than that which he delivers, who received the charge of confirming his brethren, nor other true Church than what Christ built, and is building still. Hence the expression of S. Ambrose,¹³⁶ "where Peter is, there is the Church;" and of Stephen¹³⁷ of Larissa, to Pope Boniface II. (a. d. 530.) "that all the churches of the world rest in the confession of Peter."

VIII. With all these agrees that famous and most early testimony of S. Cyprian,¹³⁸ that men "fall away from the Church

¹³⁶ Ambros. in Ps. 1. n. 30.

¹³⁷ Mansi, Tom. viii. 746.

¹³⁸ De unitate Ecclesiæ, 3.

into heresy and schism so long as there is no regard *to the source of truth, no looking to the head*, nor keeping to the doctrine of our heavenly Master. If any one consider and weigh this, he will not need length of comment or argument. It is easy to offer proofs to a faithful mind, because in that case the truth may be quickly stated." And then he quotes our Lord's words to Peter, Matt. xvi. 16, and John xxi. 17, adding, "upon him being one He builds His Church." Therefore that Church can neither be torn from the one on whom she is built, nor profess any other faith, save what that one, who is Peter, proposes.

CHAPTER III.

THE INVESTITURE OF PETER

Our Lord has hitherto, while on earth,¹³⁹ ruled as its visible head that body of disciples which He had chosen out of the world, and which His Father had given Him. And this body He for the first time called the Church in that famous prophecy¹⁴⁰ wherein He named the person, who, by virtue of an intimate association with Himself, the Rock, should be its foundation, and the duration of which until the consummation of the world, He pronounced at the same time, in spite of all the rage of "spiritual wickedness in high places" against it, because it should be founded upon the rock which He should lay.

Secondly, He had, at that period of His ministry when He thought it meet, the second year, selected out of the rest of His disciples, after ascending into a mountain and continuing the night long in prayer, twelve whom He named Apostles – as before and above all sent by Him – for "He called whom He would Himself, and they came to Him," to whom "He gave authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every weakness," whom He chose also "to be with Him," His personal attendants, "and to send them to preach;" to whom,

¹³⁹ Passaglia, p. 93.

¹⁴⁰ Matt. xvi. 16.

moreover, He subsequently made a promise that whatever they should bind on earth, should be bound in heaven, and whatever they should loose on earth should be loosed in heaven.¹⁴¹

Thirdly, as at a certain time in His ministry, that is the second year, He had selected twelve to be nearer His person than the rest of His disciples, so at a yet later time, the third year of His ministry, He had set apart one out of the twelve, to whom from the very first, and before either he, or any one, had been called to be an Apostle, or even, as it would seem, a disciple, He had given a prophetic name; whom by word and deed, in correspondence with that name, He designated to be the future Rock of His Church, to be the Bearer of the keys, which opened or shut the entrance to His mystical Holy City, to be endued with power *singly* to bind and to loose; and whom at last, on the very eve of His being taken away from His disciples, He pointed out as the future "First one," "Greater one," or "Ruler," among them, having, as such, had given to him a *special* and *singular* charge, after the departure of the Head, to "confirm his brethren."

It is manifest that this was all which, before His offering Himself up for the sin of the world, and the withdrawal of His visible presence thereupon ensuing, He could do for the government of His Church. For as long as He was there, the Son of Man among men, seen, felt, touched, and handled, the sacred voice in their ears, and the divine eyes gazing bodily upon them, He was not only the fountain of all headship and

¹⁴¹ Matt. x. 1; Mark iii. 13-15; Luke vi. 12-13; Matt. xviii, 18.

rule, but He exercised in His own person the highest functions of that headship and visible rule. He daily encouraged, warned, corrected, taught, united them; in short, to use His own words, "while He was with them, He kept them in His Father's name."¹⁴²

But now another time, and other dangers were approaching. The sword was drawn which should "strike the shepherd," there was a fear that "the sheep would be scattered," not only for a moment, but for ever. To meet this the care of the divine guardian was necessary in a further disposition of those powers which He received at His resurrection from the dead. For henceforth His visits, as of a risen King, were to be few and sudden, when He pleased, and at times they expected not, "for forty days appearing to them and speaking of the kingdom of God," and as soon as His final injunctions had been thus royally given, "the heavens were to receive Him till the time of the restoration of all things." The Apostles could no longer "be with Him," as before, nor He "keep them," as in the days of His flesh.

How, then, does He complete the ministerial hierarchy which sprung from His own divine Person on earth, and which is to rule His Church and represent that Person from His first to His second coming?

Now, first, we must remark, that while great care is taken to make known to all the Apostles the resurrection of the Lord, yet a special solicitude is shown with regard to that one who was to be "the Ruler." Thus the angels, announcing the fact to

¹⁴² John xvii. 12.

the holy women at the sepulchre, "He is risen, He is not here, behold the place where they laid Him," add, "but go, tell His disciples *and Peter*, that He goeth before you into Galilee."¹⁴³ The expression indicates his superior place, as when Peter, himself delivered from prison, recounted to the disciples at the house of Mark his escape, and added, "Tell these things to James and to the brethren," where no one fails to see the pre-eminence given to James, by such a mention of him, that apostle being the Bishop of Jerusalem, and so put over the brethren, and, with himself, one of those who "seemed to be pillars." Again, to Peter our Lord appeared first among the Apostles. S. Paul exhibiting a sort of sum of Christian doctrine, as he says "the Gospel which I preached unto you," begins, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures; and that He was seen by Cephas, and after that by the eleven." By him alone, first, then by them in conjunction with him. And further, St. Paul's words seem to express a sort of descending ratio, "Then was He seen by more than five hundred brethren at once, of whom many remain until this present, and some are fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the Apostles. And last of all He was seen also by me, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the Apostles."¹⁴⁴ And

¹⁴³ Mark xvi. 6.

¹⁴⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 1-9.

while they were yet in doubt, and for joy could not receive the marvellous tidings, when brought by the women, as soon as our Lord appeared to Peter, their hesitation was removed, and the two disciples returning from Emmaus – themselves full of His wonderful conversation with them – "found the eleven gathered together and those that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon," as the Church in her exultation repeats, where philologists tell us that the Greek *and* bears what is often the Hebrew meaning, and signifies "for," as if no doubt could remain any longer of their happiness, when Peter had become a witness of it.

These are indications of superiority, slight perhaps in themselves, if they stood alone, but not slight as bearing tacit witness to a fact otherwise resting on its own explicit evidence. If one of the Apostles was destined to be the head of the rest, this is what we should have expected to happen to that one, and this did happen to Peter, who is elsewhere made the head of the Apostles.

But now we come to those most important injunctions which our Lord gave to His Apostles after His resurrection, concerning the government of His Church. And here it becomes necessary to mark with the utmost accuracy what He said and what He gave to all the Apostles in common, and what to Peter in particular.

First of all, then, we may remark our Lord's care to redeem the promises which He had made to the Twelve, and to convey to them their legislative, judicial, and executive powers. These

are mentioned by each of the four Evangelists, in somewhat different terms, but alike involving the distinctive apostolic powers of immediate institution by Christ, and universal mission; as Apostles they are *sent*, and they are sent *by Christ*. The form recorded in S. Matthew is, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."

The form of S. Mark is, "Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

S. Luke refers specially in two passages to the descent of the Holy Ghost, as being Himself as well the Divine "Gift," and the immediate worker of all graces in man, as the principle of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. "And I send the promise of My Father upon you, but stay you in the city till you be endued with power from on high." And again, "Eating together with them, He commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but should wait for the promise of the Father, which you have heard," saith He, "by My mouth; for John, indeed, baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." "You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth."

The form recorded by S. John is, "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you. When He had said this, He breathed on them; and He said to them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."¹⁴⁵

Now, it may be remarked that these passages of the several evangelists are *identical* in their force; that is, they each convey all those powers which constitute the Apostolate. These are received by all the Apostles in common, and together; and in the joint possession of them consists that *equality* which is often attributed by the ancient writers to the Apostles, as notably by S. Cyprian, "He gives to all the Apostles an equal power, and says, 'as the Father sent Me, I also send you.'" And again, "Certainly the other Apostles also were what Peter was, endued with an equal fellowship, both of honour and power."¹⁴⁶

And these Apostolic powers, legislative, judicial, and executive, are afterwards referred to as exercised; as in Acts ch. xv., where the first council passes decrees which bind the Church, nay, which go forth in the joint name of the Holy Ghost, and the rulers of the Church, "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us;" – which are delivered by S. Paul to the cities to be kept: Acts xvi. 4 – as in Acts xx. 28, where bishops are charged to rule the Church, each over his flock, wherein the Holy Ghost has placed him – as in 1 Cor. v. 1-5, where S. Paul, "in

¹⁴⁵ Matt. xxviii. 18; Mark xvi. 15; Luke xxiv. 49; Acts i. 4-8; John. xx. 21.

¹⁴⁶ De unitate ecclesiæ, 3.

the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," excommunicates – as in 2 Cor. x. 6, where he sets forth his apostolic power – as in the Epistles to Titus and Timothy, where he sets them in authority, enjoins them to ordain priests in every city, and commands them to "reprove," or "rebuke."

And all these powers S. Peter, of course, as one of the Twelve, had received in common with the rest. The limit to them would seem to lie in their being shared in common by twelve; as, for instance, universal mission dwelling in such a body must practically be determined and limited somehow to the different members of that body, or one would interfere with the other. But there is nothing in these powers which answers to the images of "the rock," on which the Church is built, the single "bearer of the keys," and "confirmer" of his brethren, which Christ had appropriated to one Apostle.

In like manner, then, as our Lord fulfilled His promises to the Twelve, so did He those to S. Peter, and we find written the committal of an authority to him exactly answering to these images; an authority, which expresses the full legislative, judicial and executive power of the head, which can be executed by one alone at a time, and is of its own nature supreme, and responsible to none save God. It remained for our Lord to find an image setting forth all this as decisively as that of the Rock, the Bearer of the keys, and the Confirmer of his brethren.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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