

Presbyterians utterly unworthy of the cause, and worthless as evidence. But perhaps some weak brother may feel relief, when he knows that the exclusive definition of Episcopacy even does not cut off from the pale of *the Church*, the historical Presbyterian Church, and it ought certainly to stop the pretentious mouthing of our Episcopalian brethren, who are for ever prating in their ignorance about "a line of descent unbroken from the Apostle Peter" who also was a Presbyter"—1 Peter 5-1.

A proper interpretation of Matt. 16: 15—19, the passage so persistently claimed by Romanists and Puseyite Controversialists, settles the whole question. Nor is it necessary to refute their erroneous interpretation, as to give the correct interpretation is to settle the matter.

Two views, apparently antagonistic have principally been dwelt on. We dismiss as untenable on grammatical or common sense principles, the interpretation which makes Christ the 'Rock,' of this passage. Then we have,—

1 The Popish view—viz. The rock on which the Church is built, is Peter and his successors—that is, say they, 'The Pope and the priesthood.'

2. The common Reformed view—viz. The rock is the *doctrine* of the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ; or the *confession* of that doctrine.

The true interpretation however seems to *embrace and require both these ideas, and to exclude neither.*

Peter was declared to be the rock, and to him the promise is given. But was it to Peter *as a private individual*? Certainly not, as he was not to live for ever. It was made to Peter then "as a representative"; and it remains to enquire, whom did Peter represent? And to whom as thus represented in all time to come is the promise made?

1. Peter was a living man, a person, who represented living men or persons. He spoke thus for the Apostles, who also were persons.

2. Peter was taught by God—Our Lord lays particular stress on this, verse 17. He was taught by the Holy Ghost.

3. Peter was confessing Christ, as the Son of the living God. These three ideas seem to constitute Peter's representative character; a living man; taught by God; confessing the God-man Redeemer, and he represents the apostles, and all others who like the apostles are living men, taught by God and confessing Christ the Son of God. On Peter, in this representative character, the Church is built, and to him, as such, the promise is made.

Hence in like manner, on those in all ages who were represented by him the church is built, and to them the promise is given. In other words *LIVING MEN, taught by God, confessing and proclaiming the Gospel of the incarnate Son of God*, are the Rock on which the Church is built.

This view of the representative character of Peter as contrasted with his private individual character finds corroboration from verse 23. There Peter is called Satan. Was then Peter and all those who succeed him in Peter's chair Satan? No, but Peter and all who like him "savour the things that be of men," and oppose Christ, are Satan, *so far as they* are led by Satan and do his work. Just so, Peter, and all, in all ages, who like him are taught of God, and do God's work in confessing the Son of God, are the Rock.

Taking this view of the passage we have therein,

1. An answer to the dogma of Apostolic Succession—viz. That there has always been a living ministry, God taught, and orthodox—the true successors of the Apostles—who in the darkest ages of ignorance and superstition saved God's Church. They may have been priests of Rome, or Waldensian Barbs, but through them, as instruments, God maintained his Church and pre-