

grant or promise to St. Peter, of supremacy over them ; for would they have contended for the chief place, if they had understood whose it of right was, by our Lord's own positive determination ? Would they have *disputed* about a question which, to their knowledge, by their Master was already settled ? Would they have troubled our Lord to enquire of him who should be the greatest in his kingdom, when they knew that our Lord had declared his will, to make St. Peter viceroy ? Would the sons of Zebedee have been so foolish and presumptuous as to beg the place which they knew, by our Lord's word and promise, fixed on St. Peter ? Would St. Peter, among the rest, have fretted at that idle overture, whereas he knew the place, by our Lord's immutable purpose and infallible declaration, assured to him ? And if none of the Apostles did understand the words to imply this Roman sense, who can be obliged so to understand them ? Yea, who can wisely, who can safely so understand them ? For surely they had common sense as well as any man living now ; they had as much advantage, as we can have, to know our Lord's meaning ; their ignorance, therefore, of this sense being so apparent, is not only a just excuse for not admitting this interpretation, but a strong bar against it."

There is just one other argument which I shall employ at present to show that Peter could have had no such supremacy in the Church as Romanists contend for, and which to my mind would of itself be sufficient to settle the whole question. In those passages where Paul enumerates the different office-bearers whom Christ has appointed in the Church, there is no mention made of Chief Apostle, or Pope, or Patriarch. "And he gave some Apostles," it is said, Ephes. iv. 11., "and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." And again, it is said by the same Apostle, "And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." In neither of these passages is there any office mentioned which bears the slightest resemblance to the Papacy of the Church of Rome, and in both of them the apostolic office occupies the chief place. It was the highest office known in the Church ; and the grand peculiar qualification of an Apostle being, that he should be able to bear personal testimony to the resurrection of Jesus, the office terminated with the lives of those who had seen the Lord, and could personally bear testimony to that grand fundamental truth. And far from there being any precedence or supremacy granted to any of the Apostles, our Lord manifested extreme disapprobation, when any of them aspired at any thing of this sort. "The kings of the Gentiles," said he, "exercise lordship over them ; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so ; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger ; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve." (Luke xxii. 25-26.) Here, then, our Saviour denounced all ambitious aspirations at lordship or supremacy among the Apostles, and instituted a perfect equality of rank and privilege amongst them. No doubt there was a difference of personal qualifications amongst them ; and that the most highly gifted would naturally take the lead seems to be implied in the text we have just quoted ; but this leadership was such as arises from superior abilities, not from superior rank, and such are commanded to assume no superior airs, but to manifest the humility of spirit which becomes a servant. How unlike the spirit recommended by the Saviour, is that which all along has been manifested by the Bishops of Rome, who, while affecting humility in their language, claim and exercise the most despotic and oppressive power. Whatever might be the diversity of gifts among the Apostles, it was obviously the Saviour's determination that there should be an equality of rank among them, and that they should be united together by the bonds of fraternal affection ; and wherever the ministers of Christ do not manifest this spirit, they give too much ground to believe that they are none of his.

Time and space will not permit me to enter at any length upon the exposi-