


THE SUPREMACY OF THE POPE

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PART from Scripture and tradition it seems reasonable to suppose that Christ's infinite wisdom would have established some secure means of preserving the deposit of revelation He had with Him—that He would have established some centre of unity and authority to secure His society from the moment of its birth. As a matter of history, it is certain that the Papal authority was recognized in all the ages from Peter's day down to the present time, and we defy anyone to show a period or occasion when that authority was first assumed, or was "usurped" as it is now called, by the Pope. If any Pope had assumed such authority and claimed it for himself, there would have been an outcry all over the Christian world. But there is not the slightest trace of such a usurpation, or of any opposing outcry, in all the records and documents of these nineteen centuries. Is the Papal authority from Christ? Was it instituted by Christ? If so, then you and I must obey that authority. The truth that the Bishop of Rome, as he is called, has absolute jurisdiction over the conscience of the world rests on the fact that the Pope is the successor of St. Peter. We must, therefore, first show that Christ appointed St. Peter to be head of His church. Before conferring the authority on St. Peter, our Lord promised that He was going to choose Peter as the head of the church, and did so under solemn and remarkable circumstances. He gave Peter a change of name, saying, "I say to thee that thou art Peter, and that on this rock I shall build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I give thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven." From this it is evident that Christ intended to make Peter head of the church. Non-Catholic commentators of Scripture have twisted and contorted