

very insecure foundation for the Church to be built upon. What a libel on the wisdom of Christ to represent him as saying, that he would build his Church upon one to whom he immediately afterwards applied the name of Satan.

Again, neither in his general epistles, nor in his intercourse with his brethren, did Peter assume any of that lordly superiority, which the consciousness of supreme power might have been expected to lead him to manifest. Neither did he ever exercise that authority which, in certain circumstances, it would have been his duty to employ, had he been possessed of supremacy in the Church. In exhorting the dispersed brethren, mark the humility and tenderness with which he speaks, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed." And when he urges them to be "mindful of the words which were spoken by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of *us the Apostles* of the Lord and Saviour," he lays no injunction of his own upon them, which, had he been invested with supreme power in the Church, he might very properly have done. And when the brethren in Jerusalem contended with him, and blamed him, because he had associated freely with the household of Cornelius, the Roman centurion, preached the Gospel to them, and received them into the Church; he did not vindicate his conduct, on the grounds of his supreme authority in the Church, which he might have done had he possessed it; much less on the ground of his infallibility, but he stated fully the history of the case, and justified his conduct by satisfactory reasons.

Again, his brother Apostles conceded no supremacy to Peter, and were obviously altogether ignorant of any such thing. He was blamed by the brethren at Jerusalem, in the matter of Cornelius, till they knew the grounds upon which he acted. "And when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John." Here there is an exercise of power on the part of the Apostles, who were at Jerusalem, who treated Peter, not as their Sovereign, but as the servant of the Church, and sent him upon a missionary expedition. "The apostles *sent him*," observes Barrow on this passage, "*that*, had he been their Sovereign, would have been somewhat unseemly and presumptuous; for subjects are not wont to send their prince, nor soldiers their captain; to be sent, being a mark of inferiority, as our Lord himself did teach. A servant, said he, is *not greater* than his Lord; nor he that is *sent* greater than he that *sent* him. St. Luke, therefore, should at least have so expressed this passage, that the Apostles might have seemed to keep their distance, and observed good manners. If he had said, they beseeched him to go, that had sounded well; but *they sent him* is harsh, if he were our Lord the Pope, as the modern Apostles of Rome do style *their* Peter."

Farther, when a dispute arose among the brethren at Antioch, about Jewish ceremonies, they referred the matter to the Apostles and elders at Jerusalem, where Peter did not attempt to settle the matter by an exercise of his supreme authority, but it was referred to the consideration of a general assembly of the Church; in which Peter merely appears as one of the speakers. He does not appear to have occupied the president's chair, and it was James who proposed the resolution which seems to have been carried unanimously; and the letter to the Churches, which was founded on this decree, did not run in the name of Peter, but simply of the apostles, elders, and brethren.

Once more, when Peter acted unworthily at Antioch, and dissembled, for fear of the Jews, Paul withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. The same great man says elsewhere that he was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the Apostles; and that "they who seemed to be somewhat," obviously meaning, James, Peter, and John, "in conference, added nothing to him."

"It is very evident," I again quote the words of Dr. Barrow, "that the Apostles themselves did not understand those words of our Lord to signify any