

I propose to day, with God's blessing, to take up the consideration of one of her fundamental dogmas, the Supremacy of St. Peter over the other Apostles ; upon which she founds the Supremacy of the Pope or Bishop of Rome over all other Bishops, Ministers and People in the Christian world. The doctrine of the Church of Rome is simply this :—That our Lord appointed Simon to be the centre of union and supreme head of His universal Church ; that He made him chief Pastor over the other Apostles, and gave him the keys of His heavenly kingdom ; that accordingly He changed his name into that of Peter or Rock, adding, "on this Rock I will build my Church"; that thus dignified Peter established his See at Rome as its first Bishop, and here left his prerogative, as Vicar of Christ, to his successors ; and that hence all the Churches in the world are subject to them, so that if any do not submit to their jurisdiction, they cannot be Churches of Christ at all, nor possess His true faith and doctrine.—This is the position which the head of the Papacy has for ages assumed, and claimed to be recognized by the whole Christian world. Let us now endeavor to bring this claim to the test, not of *oral tradition*, for that, as a Rule of Doctrine, we know nothing about, but of the *only infallible guide* which the Spirit of truth has given us, *the written Word of God*. Let us then impartially examine the words before us, upon which, as I have before stated, the chief Scriptural proof of that doctrine, so essential to the Papal system, rests.

Reserving the subsequent portion of the passage for a future consideration, the chief matter that we shall now endeavor to ascertain is, who or what is the Rock, upon which Christ here declared He would build His Church. The Romanists say it is Peter. But here we may observe, how very doubtful, according to their own creed, the proof of this must be. They are solemnly bound, not to receive the interpretation of any passage of Scripture "otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the *Fathers*",* as the learned Divines, who lived and wrote in the early ages of the Church, are called ; and yet, even on this very passage, so important to this essential doctrine of Romanism, the Fathers themselves are at variance with each other, and give differ-

* The 14th Art. of the Creed of Pope Pius IV.