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"IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM! LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET HER CUNNING."—*Ps. 137, v. 5.*

EXPOSITION OF MATTHEW XVI. 13—20.

"Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build my Church."

From an acute and vigorous tract recently published, entitled "'Thou art Peter;' a discourse on Papal Infallibility and the causes of the late conversions to Romanism." By Robert Lee, D.D.

In what respect or sense was Peter the rock? Was it something Peter was, or should be? or something that he professed, or should afterwards proclaim? In opposition to the Papal hypothesis, that Peter is here declared to be the rock on which Christ's Church should be built, because he was, in these words, constituted by his Master Prince of the Apostles, Primate of all Bishops, Chief Pastor and Ruler under Christ himself. Protestants have generally maintained that not Peter, either personally or officially, but the confession which he had just made, is the rock of which our Saviour speaks, and that Simon received this honorable cognomen because he first of all the disciples gave articulate expression to the mighty truth, that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of the living God." Now every one must feel that the matter is left in a very unsatisfactory condition, when it has been shown that the rock here spoken of MAY be the confession of Peter, and not that Apostle himself; for this proves only the uncertainty, not the erroneousness of the Papal notion. They can still reply, the words may indeed refer to Peter's confession, but they may also, and more naturally, apply to Peter himself. It appears to me, that the generality of Protestant commentators and

divines have hardly done justice to their own cause, when they have satisfied themselves with maintaining that the words of our Lord MAY apply to Peter's confession, and not to Peter himself. The following pages are intended to show that they *must* apply to Peter's confession, if the New Testament be consistent with itself.

As Christianity is a great system of truths, it must, like every other system that is symmetrical and self-consistent, spring out of some great germinant truth. Or if we conceive of it as a temple, the superstructure, however elevated, the parts, however many, must rest upon some great truth as their basis. The foundation of Christianity, then, or of the Church, which is merely the concrete form of Christianity, has for its foundation some doctrine or truth. What is it? This is indeed the whole question.

Now it is impossible to believe that the first teachers of our holy religion should have left undetermined or obscure so vital a matter as this. The pages of the New Testament must return a perpetual answer to a question so indispensable. They may keep silence on many subjects regarding which we desire information, and even think it probable that they would furnish it; but on such a subject as this, what is that truth which lies at the foundation of Christianity and of the Christian Church? they can neither be supposed to remain mute, nor to speak obscurely. Do they, then, every where alledge the primacy or infallibility of Peter as the foundation? If the Papal view of the passage before us be