

that we are to use ridicule in such sacred matters. But setting aside this matter, let us come at once to the class of proofs which I propose to adopt, to the facts of history rather than texts from Holy Scripture or from the Fathers.

Suppose you did not believe in the divine origin of bishops, and spoke upon the subject to one who regarded Christianity as divine, his best method of convincing you of your error would not be to lay open the Bible and point out certain texts, (for the Holy Bible has been read alike by those who hold, and who deny, Episcopacy;) but he would naturally go to history and point to historical facts, and put the matter in some such shape as this—"After 300 years of persecution and suffering under the Roman emperors, the Church, who had hitherto, as it were, been burrowing in the Catacombs, gained a respite from her troubles: God gave her rest and peace.—She stretched them into parts distant beyond any thing which, with our modern ideas, we can now conceive—from Spain in the west to the Indus in the east; from the icy north to the tropical climate of Africa; and as soon as she was at peace errors and heresies one by one arose within her bosom. What did she do? Guided by the presence of God's Holy Spirit she met in a Council at Nicæa, in the year A.D. 325; and when she met there, every part of the globe was duly represented—England and Spain, Gaul and Africa, Egypt and Armenia. And who were these representatives who met there from every part of the world? They were all bishops; it was found that at that time there was no part of the Catholic Church which was not under episcopal rule; they were all bishops with sees and dioceses; there was no exception; and they all had one faith, one worship, one altar; one form of doctrine; it was found, too, that in ecclesiastical rule, no less than in faith, they were all one. Now how can you account for so many Churches, from so many quarters, being each and all found to have one and the same form of government? There was no dispute at Nicæa on this head; there was no need of settling any such question; you can account for it only in one way—by believing that episcopacy is part and parcel of the Christian system; and that as the seed was scattered far and wide, the Christian Church grew up not only one in faith, but in outward form as well. Now go to Holy Scripture and ask what did the apostles mean by bishops? You will find that one person was established by them in each diocese, with supreme authority in matters of faith; that he was consecrated by them to be one of their own body, and that they delegated to him a portion of their own powers and commission; and that for the first 300 years of the Christian Church the episcopal line of the succession was kept unbroken, is a fact witnessed by letters describing the martyrdom of Christian bishops, and the fate of bishops driven from their sees and again restored to them. And this series of facts is enough to prove that no other form of government but that of bishops ever prevailed; and so that episcopacy has come down from the apostles."

Such would be the Episcopalian's line of proof.—You see thus how facts give us the key to the true meaning of Holy Scripture. Extend this reasoning somewhat further. As soon as the Church has had time to breathe after her long centuries of persecution, she judges it expedient that her bishops should all be convoked in Council at Nicæa in A.D. 325. Who shall do this? Who shall summon them?—God, in His inscrutable purposes, had brought nearly the whole known world under one visible head—the Roman Emperor. That emperor, Constantine, is now a Christian; and as such he can convoke Christians. But is he the first to move in the matter?—no; he is at Constantinople. Then is it the Bishop of that great city?—oh, no; there is another city in the West, just beginning to sink in material glory, but in spiritual glory the same as she has always been. That city is Rome. It is the Bishop of that city, Pope Sylvester, who asks the Emperor to convene the Bishops of Christendom. This surely looks as if he assumed to himself some right and share in the matter, and was possessed of some authority. The Bishops assembled at Nicæa in Asia Minor. Among them are the Patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria. Who then shall preside? Surely the greatest of the Eastern prelates; no, it is not so. Is it then the Pope of Rome himself? No, he cannot come in person; but he sends as his legates, Hosius, Bishop of Cordova, and his priests, Vito and Vincentius, in his place. They sit first as his legates in the Council, and as such they first subscribe the documents and resolutions of the Council. And is not this strange and uncommon, if the claim of the Pope of Rome be, as some would tell us, a thing unheard of up to this time? And is it not an insolent and arrogant thing to put forward such a claim?—to send priests to sit above bishops at the great council where the Catholic faith is about to be defined? But did not some bishop protest against this claim as a novel and unheard-of thing? Not one. Then what shall we conclude? Plainly that all the bishops present did acknowledge the Bishop of Rome as lawfully supreme in the persons of his legates. Again, in A.D. 431, the council of Ephesus was convened by the Emperor, at the request of the then Pope, because of the error of Nestorius. And who presided there? St. Cyril and three priests, as delegates of Rome.—They all speak in the very plainest terms; and, what is more, all who are present joyfully recognise their authority. Again, at Chalcedon, in A.D. 451, Pope Leo the Great, we find, sends two bishops and a priest as his delegates, who take the lead in the Council, and direct what is to be done. And so, if the general prevalence of episcopacy be a standing proof of its divine antiquity, then also the acknowledgedness of the power of the See of Rome proves that the authority of that See is ancient and divine. The Church, too, is compared to a body. The child is but the germ of the man; all the physical organs

exist within the child in their undeveloped state.—The child grows and expands; but each organ was there from the very first moment of birth; the hand and the foot are no novelty in its form. Why, then, shall we recognise all this analogy as existent in the Church, with one single exception? Why should we think that God gave to His Church from the very first a body complete in every part except the head, and imagine that the head is a mere after-growth? Surely, my brethren, this is contrary to the whole analogy of growth in nature. If, together with the Episcopate, the Primacy, comes forth into being, then there must, I say, be from the first some living speaking head, without which the whole body is speechless and lifeless. If converts were held without some one binding link to hold them together, or without some one supreme authority to rectify and to confirm their acts, then there would immediately arise a thousand contests for pre-eminence, and nothing would be brought to accomplishment. Thus we see, from history and from analogy, that when the Christian body first came forth to view, she came forward complete, Episcopal, and with a head.

But, perhaps, it may be urged that the Bishops submitted to this claim from its very boldness and novelty, and that the boldest carried the day. But surely this is rash judgment to pass upon the Church of the Living God, and it is contradicted by facts; there is no sign of any usurpation being felt. Listen to those who preside, and to those who give ear to them. At Nicæa was passed a Canon, declaring that "The See of Rome has always had the Primacy." Here is a plain proof that such Primacy was nothing novel. Again, as to the keeping of Easter, it was ordered that the Bishop of Alexandria, even the great St. Cyril, should send to Rome the calculation of that festival made in the schools of Alexandria; and for what purpose? in order that the Bishop of Rome may enforce uniformity of practice throughout the entire length of Christendom. Here then the Council of Nicæa acknowledges both the primacy and jurisdiction of the See of Rome. Again, in A.D. 347, the Council of Sardica, which was but an appendix to that of Nicæa, decrees in a canon that "When any bishop feels himself aggrieved he may appeal to the Bishop of Rome, who shall appoint judges to hear and decide the cause." At Ephesus, too, the language used is most remarkable—"No doubt," says the holy Council, "that St. Peter received from Jesus Christ himself the keys of the Church, and authority to bind and loose sins on earth, and that Peter lives in his successors." Here is the gist of the claim: it is as St. Peter's successor that the Pope acts. The Legate of Rome had already said that—"Peter was the head of the faith of the Apostles." All, then, acknowledged the Papal right to preside: all acquiesced in the claim of one common Head. The same was the case at Chalcedon: there letters from the Pope were read, condemning a certain heresy; what did the prelates say?—"The cause is at an end; Peter has spoken through the mouth of his successors—there is no more need of deliberation." These facts, my brethren, are strong facts, to say the least; and they show, that as soon as the Church spoke with united voice, the belief in Episcopacy was inseparably joined with a belief in the supremacy of the See of Rome, as having been the See of St. Peter.

The next question now goes a step further. There is no doubt as to what has been the belief of modern times; and we need not to stay to prove what is confessed even by our adversaries. What we need to establish is, that such was the belief of very primitive antiquity. Besides, the newest work written against the Catholic Church confesses to the unity of belief on this head from the time of the Council of Sardica, until it gradually rose to its full development under Leo the Great, in A.D. 450. You, who are at all versed in antiquity, know well that the ante-Nicene period of the Church is wrapped in considerable obscurity. What we know and read of, for the most part, is the martyrdom of the Church's saints and bishops: the ecclesiastical acts are rare and few before the time of Constantine. Eusebius, indeed, quotes the remains of Fathers and other records and documents which then survived. The bishops, who met at Nicæa, had witnessed a variety of occurrences, explicable only on the supposition that the Papal supremacy was universally acknowledged. Thus, for instance, Dionysius of Rome summoned Dionysius of Alexandria to answer for his faith. Did he refuse or protest against the claim? No; he went to Rome, pleaded his cause, and came off triumphant. Origen, too, was accused of heresy. The Pontiff of Rome charges him with the sin of heresy: Origen sends off to Rome straightway his profession of faith. A hundred years earlier there had arisen, in the Church, a controversy as to the re-baptising of those who had been baptised by heretics. Pope Stephen pronounced judgment, and threatened excommunication even to the African bishops.

Again, in the second century, Victor, Bishop of Rome, calls to account the Bishops of the East as to their mode of keeping Easter, though they declared that they kept it according to a tradition handed down from St. John. Victor orders a council to be held in the East, in Judea, and threatens to excommunicate those who do not submit to its decrees. And why did not the other bishops laugh to scorn his words as idle threats? just as the Anglican Bishops did a year or so ago, when they declared that the Bishop of Rome was no greater than any other prelate? They knew better. Let us go even a step earlier. There is a certain Clement, mentioned by St. Paul in one of his Epistles, as having "his name written in the Book of Life." This Clement was Bishop of Rome in the first century; and while he was bishop there, a schism arose at Corinth. Clement takes upon himself to send letters and delegates to Corinth to remedy the disorders, and demands that peace be restored. Now, Corinth was situated very

far from Rome, but it was very near to Ephesus; and at this very time the Apostle St. John himself was alive, and living at Ephesus. On what possible ground could Clement have done this, while St. John was alive, the "beloved disciple" of our Lord, had he not claimed and possessed divine jurisdiction? I have now carried you back to apostolic days, my brethren, and you see that the acknowledgment of the Roman or Papal supremacy at Nicæa was nothing new or strange: the bishop there could trace it backwards to the very first, as well as, nay, far better, than we have done. But I have another argument to bring forward. Socrates gives a list of bishops deposed from, and restored to, their sees by the Popes of Rome, especially by one Pope, Liberius. Another bishop brought back to a provincial council a letter from Rome demanding his restoration. The council obeyed at once. Heresies, too, were often checked or extinguished by the Popes, without the intervention of a council; and hence we see the meaning of the spontaneous exclamation of all the Bishops at Chalcedon, "the cause is ended; Peter hath spoken." The bishop, to have said this, must have believed the Pope to possess the right of defining doctrine, and of being in all respects a pastor after God's own heart. In the second century arose a heresy in Asia. Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons in France, writes to the Pope against the Montanists, and urged him to take into consideration their heretical tenets. The Pope did so; and we have in this fact a clear recognition of the Roman claim. And just so it was with the Novatians, the Apollinarians, and the Donatists.—Every where they were condemned by the voice of the Popes, and the Christian world acquiesced in their condemnation. These facts, then, serve to connect the Papal claims and prerogatives, as they existed in the days of the Church's peace, with the same in apostolic days.

Next follows the question—Did this authority come from Christ himself? I reply—you allow, my brethren, that the conduct of the first Christians, after all, the best comment on the words of our Blessed Lord. They are, confessedly, the best comment on the question of episcopacy; and therefore, they are also, in all probability, the best comment on the question of the Papal supremacy. In the case of episcopacy, you naturally ask for some proof of some public commission actually bestowed—not merely empty titles and compliments, but real and permanent powers, forming an actual part of the great Christian scheme. Now, it is most easy to multiply passages where the Fathers of the Church ascribe to St. Peter the plenitude of authority. But did Peter receive anything greater than merely special authority, differing in degree only from that which was given to the other apostles? The answer is very simple. Yes; thrice at least did Christ speak to this effect; and when he spoke, he either meant to give what he said that he bestowed, or he did not mean it. If the latter, then his sacred lips uttered words in vain, and this I term blasphemy to suppose. For why were his words spoken and recorded if they had no meaning? It is sheer blasphemy to say that Christ meant nothing when he opened his lips. And besides is this the way in which we are accustomed to interpret other like passages? St. John was the beloved disciple—were not the other disciples "beloved?" And yet was not he "beloved" in a peculiar way? St. Paul was "the Apostle of the Gentiles;" but so were Peter, and Bartholomew, and others also. Yet, was he not, in an especial sense, "the Apostle of the Gentiles?" Surely, this is true. And surely our Blessed Lord intended to convey the idea of some pre-eminence, when he said to St. Peter—"Thou art Peter" (i.e., "a rock;" for in the original language the words are one and the same, though in Greek there is a slight variety of inflection). "Thou art Peter," or a rock, "and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven." Now had these words been spoken to all the apostles—"Ye are a rock," &c., would you not have inferred that something special and peculiar was conferred by them—what else mean the "keys," and the "rock," as a foundation? Again, three times our Blessed Lord says to St. Peter—"Feed my sheep." And once, after Peter's fall, he tells that apostle to "strengthen his brethren," because he, our Lord, and his own, had "prayed for" him.—Surely, then, if this be indeed so, Peter was made something more than the other apostles in point of "spiritual jurisdiction."

We next come to the common objection of Protestants—that the above words mean only a dignity and precedence, though they admit that whatever it was, it was to be handed on to Peter's successors.—All good Protestant commentators admit that some pre-eminence was given to St. Peter, and that it was transmissible. Now, was this prerogative bestowed merely as an honor, or was it power, authority, and jurisdiction? The words surely import the latter, and we find the best comment on their meaning in the history of the church. And this is the Primacy: this is all I ask you to allow. You are often told about papal infallibility, and how that if the Pope were to say that black is white, all Catholics are bound to believe him. Now let me tell you here, as a Prelate of the Church, and as one, as it were, nearly incorporated with the Roman Pontiff, that such a doctrine as the infallibility of the Pope is not an article of the Catholic faith at all; but an opinion; which many Catholics hold and many do not hold. That the Pope is kept, by the promised Spirit of God, from ruling any point of doctrine contrary to the faith of Christ, is what we are taught to expect, and what I for one heartily believe; but more than this no one is called upon to admit.

There are many popular objections to be answered,

but one I must notice as the boldest of all. It has now become a favorite topic to sap the foundations of the faith by denying that St. Peter was ever at Rome. Now I say that whoever can believe this, can believe that William the Conqueror never came into England, and that no such person as Julius Cæsar ever lived. Learned works ere this have been written to prove that the twelve Cæsars are all fictions; and learned infidels have even gone so far as to say that there never were any such persons as the twelve Apostles—nay, as Jesus Christ himself. And how do we answer such people? Disgusted, we turn aside and say, if such doubts are once begun, no historical fact can stand.—Now when was this idea first started? Not even three centuries ago. No historian listens to so wild a vagary. The learned Protestant writer, Cave, referring to Calvin's objection, says, "We believe, with all antiquity, that St. Peter was at Rome, and lived at Antiquity." Now, for proof, I will not confine myself to the monuments still existing at Rome, every stone of which is connected with that apostle's life and death. Clement, the fourth Pope of Rome, says that "St. Peter and St. Paul suffered martyrdom at Rome under his eyes." St. Ignatius writes to the Roman Christians entreating their prayers, and says, "I will not command you, as Peter and Paul used to do." Papias, a disciple of St. John, says expressly that "St. Peter was martyred at Rome;" and another writer, Caius in Eusebius, declares thus—"I can show you everywhere in our city the trophies of those two founders of our church; that of St. Peter on the Vatican Hill, that of St. Paul in the Ostian Way." There is another interesting way of answering this objection. Many fathers give complete lists of the descent of the Roman Pontiff from St. Peter, in order to show that there is no other Church than that of Rome to which Christians must go to learn the faith. This is done at length by Irenæus, by Tertullian, by St. Optatus of Milevis, and St. Augustine himself argues in a like strain, to show that all men ought to adhere to the communion of the See of Rome; and all those lists presuppose that St. Peter was Bishop of Rome and lived at Rome. But I would refer you also to a modern work which is above suspicion, written by Protestants of deep research and learning. It is called "Rome, Sacred and Profane;" and one of the authors who compiled the work (the Chevalier Bunsen) holds now a high diplomatic situation in this kingdom; and he, a learned a candid Protestant, proves and establishes historically that the relics of the Apostle St. Peter, which now lie under the high altar of St. Peter's Church of Rome, are the genuine remains of his body.

Again, it is objected against us, that many Popes have been bad men, and have disgraced their high calling by sinful lives; and 'could these have been God's vicegerents?' I answer, the characters of the most malignant Popes, as Boniface, and Gregory, and Innocent III., have been recently vindicated by learned Protestant historians, and especially by German writers. Do not take on trust all that you hear said against the Popes. I admit that the objection holds good against a certain number. But did God ever promise to them a spotless life or unblemished virtue? Was such the case under the old law with God's rulers and vicegerents?—with Samson?—with David?—with Solomon? The priests of the kingdom of Judah were the very first to violate God's honor; yet they, and they only, could offer acceptable sacrifices to His name. Well has our blessed Lord defined between the sacred office and the sinful man when He says, "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses's seat; and therefore that they say unto you, observe and do; but do not ye after their works." Their lives are to be eschewed: their words are to be followed. Jesus Christ himself chose twelve Apostles; He knew from the first who should betray Him; yet He sends a Judas to preach to others the Gospel of Penance. Shall it then be an argument against the divine commission of the See of Peter, because a few unworthy individuals have sat in it? Christ promised to be with them always, as teaching in them and through them; but he never promised to keep them from sin. Divine guidance is not impeccability; but bad as the lives of some Popes have been, not one has ever betrayed God's sacred and revealed truth; no one Papal decision has ever had to be set aside by the Church. And further, we may ask, did England, in rejecting the authority of the Papal See, do so because of the wickedness of the Popes themselves, when she transferred the headship in things spiritual to a monster and a murderer such as Henry VIII. ? Was he so worthy and immaculate? Weigh well the comparative goodness of the Popes, and the first few individuals who called themselves "Head of the Church" in England. Their history will not bear too close a scrutiny. It was because the Papal jurisdiction stood in the way between a bad man and the gratification of his evil passions, that it was set aside in England. It is objected here that the Roman See was guilty of political encroachments. But we reply, supposing such to have been the case, will you cut away the authority which Christ gave, because an authority is assumed which he did not give? Will you in surgery cut off the sound limb, because of the diseased tumor upon it, which can be removed by itself in safety? If Christ has given to the See of St. Peter, a spiritual jurisdiction here, a day will come when England must answer for disowning it. Many countries now-a-days, though jealous of temporal interference, such as Austria, Spain, and the American Republics, own the spirit-sway of Rome as completely as I do myself; and hence it is clear, that the two can exist separate; and their separation here in England was but a shallow plea.

I touch not to-night on the ground of expediency; I only give you the necessary consequence of what is stated above. If you are asked why you believe in episcopacy, you will say, "I see the need of some such order, to unite a diocese in one; where there is no such government, there is no order." We say the same of the Papacy. Christ came, as we all confess, to give unity to the nations of the world; and unity can never be realised except under one head. The existence of one such head is necessary in order to keep even a diocese together; but Jesus Christ looked wider than a diocese. No other method of preserving unity can be found, except that one which is confirmed by the experience of 1800 years; for where there is no visible head, there has never been unity; but towns and villages have been broken up, and whole bodies of Christendom are mutually estranged. Wherever the great schism of the Reformation has taken effect, these General Councils have been at an end. Since the Nestorian and Eutychian heresies were cut off, in the fifth century, from Catholic communion, no Councils have been held among their professors. No Council has been held among the reformed sects of the North, while the Catholic Church, since that time, has met in council at Trent, and yet may meet again.