

It was not till the 6th Century that the title of Universal Bishop was ever assumed by any one, and then it was first claimed by the Bishop of Constantinople. And here let us observe how the Church of Rome testifies against herself; it is a remarkable fact, that on this very occasion two Bishops of Rome in succession protested against him, not on the ground that they themselves had the exclusive right to that dignified title, but because it was unwarranted and impious for any Bishop to arrogate to himself authority over others. Gregory 1st. of Rome protested in this memorable language. "My fellow Priest John, attempts to be called the Universal Bishop; I am compelled to exclaim,—O times! O manners! Priests seek to themselves names of vanity, and glory in new and profane appellations. Far from the very hearts of Christians be that very name of blasphemy." "To consent to the adoption of that wicked appellation, is nothing less than to apostatize from the faith." "I indeed confidently assert, that whoever calls himself, or desires to be called 'Universal priest,' that person, in his vain elation, is the *precursor of Antichrist*." Surely no Protestant could have spoken in stronger terms against the Supremacy of the Pope, than this Bishop of Rome himself; and yet his successor next but one accepted this same title at the hands of an ungodly Emperor, and the unscrupulous successors of the honest Gregory have ever since claimed it.*

Such, Brethren, are some of the many thoughts suggested by a consideration of one of the essential doctrines of Romanism, when compared with the testimony of God's Word. Many plausible arguments are adduced, many sophisms employed by those who are themselves decoiced by the bold pretensions, or ensnared by the captivating allurements, the pomp and pageantry of the Church of Rome. They tell us, notwithstanding the obvious inconsistency, the utter variance between its whole system and requirements, and the pure and simple spirit of the religion of the Gospel;—notwithstanding its doctrines are unsparingly condemn'd, and not, even by themselves, attempted to be proved by the plain sense of Scripture:—notwithstanding this, that it is a Church over which the Apostle Peter, as 'Christ's Vicar upon earth,' and his equally

* Pope Boniface III. received the title of Universal Bishop from the Emp. Phocas, A. D. 666.