

**PAPAL SUPREMACY  
TESTED BY  
ANTIQUITY**

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Papal supremacy tested by antiquity by James Meyrick

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**JAMES MEYRICK**

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BY THE LATE

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'PRACTICAL WORKING OF THE CHURCH OF SPAIN.'

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## PREFACE.

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THE following Treatise was written in the early part of last year by the Rev. James Meyrick, late Vicar of Westbury in the county of Wilts. It was primarily intended to form one of the series of publications issued by the "Association for making known upon the Continent the Principles of the Anglican Church," and it has accordingly been translated into French by the Rev. F. Godfray, and published by the above-named Association in that language. But it has appeared to the Editor that it would be found useful in England as well as abroad, and the more, at this moment, because it incidentally corrects many of the statements made in Mr. R. I. Wilberforce's "Inquiry into the Principles of Church Authority," while at the same time it is written in a tone and spirit altogether different from that of controversy.

The writer's purpose was not to produce an original composition, but to express the doctrine of the Church of England, and the arguments on which that doctrine is founded, as clearly and concisely as possible, for the sake of being readily understood by Continental readers. He has therefore made use of the labours of other English Churchmen who have preceded him in the discussion of the same subject, and has been especially indebted to Mr. T. W.

Allies' "Church of England cleared from the charge of Schism,"—a work which, notwithstanding some exaggerations, is of considerable merit, and has fallen lower in general estimation than it deserves, owing to the after conduct of the Author. The words of Mr. Allies have been in many places adopted, and his references, after verification, employed.

The Editor has exchanged the French title of *L'Eglise Anglicane n'est point Schismatique*, for the name of *Papal Supremacy tested by Antiquity*, and he has here and there altered a few expressions, as he had been authorized by the writer to do. The main use of the English edition of the Treatise will be, he believes, to supply a short and trustworthy sketch of the Government of the Early Church to readers perplexed by the various accounts given by unscrupulous controversialists. There is another purpose which in a more limited sphere it will also serve. It will shew to those who knew the writer, that the same loyalty and affection to the Church of England which was displayed during health in winning souls to Christ by earnest and active parochial ministrations, remained undiminished in illness: and it will not be uninteresting to them to see, that the last efforts of the writer's mind were directed towards the defence of the position of that branch of Christ's Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, in which he shortly afterwards fell asleep in the peace and hope which the Christian's death-bed alone knows.

F. M.

*Trinity College, Oxford,  
Lent, 1856.*



## PAPAL SUPREMACY

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### ANTIQUITY.

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[THE FOLLOWING BRIEF TRACT PRETENDS ONLY TO BE AN  
ABSTRACT OF SOME PORTIONS OF THE GREATER WORKS  
OF ANGLICAN DIVINES.]

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OF all the charges made against the Anglican Church, none is more prominent than that of *Schism*. Her isolated position lends apparent weight to the charge; and the majority of Roman Catholics are in the habit of assuming it as an axiom, that any Church not in obedience to Rome is necessarily and *ipso facto* in schism.

It is evident, that in the present case the question of Schism depends upon a further question, viz. the Supremacy of the Pope. If the Pope be by divine commission the supreme governor and head of the Church, then the Anglican Church is in a state of schism. But if it can be shewn, that this claim on behalf of the Pope rests on no divine right, nor on any just canonical authority, then,

on these grounds, at least, we are not in schism, and the whole charge against the Anglican Church falls to the ground.

If the Papal Supremacy rests on divine right, then we say, that it must have been constantly acted upon in the universal ancient Church in the East and in the West, and that we cannot fail to find clear evidence of the same in her undoubted records. If it rests on canonical right, let the Canons be produced.

We maintain, and it is the purpose of this tract to shew, that the whole history of the Church for the first 500 years runs counter to the Papal claims, and that we can produce Canons of the ancient undivided Church which are in direct contradiction to them, and which clearly point out another system of government in the universal Church which cannot be reconciled with the present Papal monarchy.

Let it be clearly understood then in the outset, what it is that we purpose in the present tract to maintain.

(1) We do not purpose here to argue against the Primacy *of order* of St. Peter among the Apostles, nor against the Primacy *of order* of the Bishop of Rome among Bishops; but

(2) We do most earnestly and totally deny any *supremacy* of St. Peter *over* the other Apostles; we do deny that the Pope is in such sense the

Vicar of Christ, and the supreme governor and head of the Church, as that the other Bishops derive their jurisdiction from him; that all authority resides in him, and from him is derived to the rest.

Bellarmino\* says, "The ordinary jurisdiction of Bishops descends immediately from the Pope." "The government of the Church is monarchical, therefore all authority resides in one, and from him is derived unto the rest."

"There is a great difference between the succession to Peter and that to the rest of the Apostles; for the Roman Pontiff properly succeeds Peter, not as Apostle, but as ordinary Pastor of the whole Church; and therefore the Roman Pontiff has jurisdiction from Him from whom Peter had it; but Bishops do not properly succeed the Apostles, as the Apostles were not ordinary but extraordinary, and as it were delegated Pastors, to whom there is no succession."

"Bishops are first under the Roman Pontiff, after them Priests, then Deacons."

"If the Supreme Pontiff be compared with the rest of the Bishops, he is deservedly said to possess the plenitude of power, because the rest have fixed regions over which they preside, and also a fixed power; but he is over the whole Christian world, and possesses in its completeness

\* De Pont. Rom. lib. iv. cap. 24, 25. et lib. i. cap. 9.