

usual, taken for granted, without any further proof than the bare assertion; having made which he hastens to justify her monopoly by stating some of the grounds on which she refuses the world the liberty to "expound" the book that has been sent to it. "It was not," says he, "the mode in which Christ instructed her to evangelize the world?" Can we deduce a momentous doctrine from what Christ did *not* say? Surely His will is more clearly seen from the way in which it was understood and acted on by his inspired apostles. Yet they "reasoned" and "disputed" with the Jews out of the Scriptures, and commended the Bereans, as even my motto tells us, for searching these sacred writings to judge for themselves respecting the things they were told. But, further, the church knows by 'Divine instinct' (not, certainly, by the Divine Word) that "if such a practice were permitted there would be neither the 'unity of the spirit,' nor the 'bond of peace.'" Did not the apostles, then, desire both, as much as the church can or does, when they commended the Bereans for this very 'practice,' or wrote to the Thessalonians to "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good." (Douay vn 1 Thess. v. 7.) In what does real unity consist? Does a family in order to enjoy it, and to have cast round their happy circle the 'bond of peace,' need to be in every particular of exactly the same opinion?

It is Paul who tells the Roman Christians, when they were making points of conscience about clean and unclean meats, and holy and common days, and striving to get a dead uniformity introduced—that they should each do as he thought was his duty and not judge his brother, for 'the kingdom of God was not in meats and drinks; but justice and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.'—(Douay vn. Rom. xiv.) The former were things indifferent—the latter made the Unity of the church or 'kingdom of God.'

Again, the "unlearned and unstable would pervert the Scriptures to their own destruction". But why go further than St. Peter himself? He does not breathe a word about withholding them on this account. It is even clear from the very words he uses that the sacred writings, including those of St. Paul, were in the hands of the people at large, else how could they pervert them?—Nothing is said about an infallible interpreter of any kind. Nor is it of men in general he speaks, but only of the 'ignorant' and 'unstable,' and, surely, when it is not enjoined or even recommended to withhold the Scriptures even from them, it is not just, on account of their mistakes or abuses, to take it from all. The best way to prevent error is not to perpetuate ignorance, but to remove it, and the most effectual means of securing the truth from the crude and changeful fancies of the 'unstable' is to diffuse correct views of its meaning.

Dr. Walsh's next proof is from the words, "no prophecy of Scripture is made by private interpretation." But why establish a great doctrine on a text which has been more variously understood than almost any other?—As quoted by him, from the Douay version, it seems to speak of the 'making' of prophecy at first by the prophets themselves, not our use of it after, and to mean that what they revealed was not 'made' or disclosed by their own power in finding out what was future—not by their 'private interpretation' of what was to come, but that they spake only 'as they were moved by the Holy Ghost'

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