

especially in matters pertaining to doctrine and administration. But, for hundreds of years, the trouble was to locate the infallibility. It was a sort of sheet-lightning commodity, spread all over, but somewhat thin everywhere. It was a beast of many heads, consisting of priests, bishops, archbishops, cardinals and popes, and some of the wisdom resided in each head; hence it was necessary, in order to focus their infallibility on any given point, to put all their heads together in a general council. But at their last general council, in 1869-70, they agreed to take all the infallible brains out of all the subordinate heads and put them into one supreme head at Rome. This was a good idea. It obviated the necessity of gathering the subordinate heads together for the exercise of their infallibility, hence it economized time, saved trouble and lessened expense. But, as Protestants, we cannot endorse the infallibility doctrine at all, whether in one head, or many heads. The theory which more readily commends itself to us is the one which teaches a gradual communication of light, and truth, and knowledge, and spiritual understanding, varying in degree according to the conditions of human capacity, study, faith, obedience, etc., much on the same principle as we increase in everything else. Persons with open eyes and ears and hearts, asking, knocking, seeking, investigating and reasoning, would naturally increase in wisdom more rapidly than those who were indifferent and listless, just as they do in temporal or earthly things. And I humbly think that this is our only safe principle of interpretation. Any other will inevitably lead us into fanaticism and error, and cause division and alienations among us. In support of this view, I submit the following considerations:

Christ had been with His disciples for some time, He had called them to follow Him; He had been their spokesman; He had confounded and silenced all gainsayers; He had proved more than a match for all cavillers; He had instructed the disciples themselves, and greatly won their hearts. But the time came when He talked of leaving them and going to the Father. This greatly troubled them, but He endeavors to comfort them. This comforting address begins with the fourteenth chapter of John's Gospel: "Let not your heart be troubled," etc. In verse 12, He promises them that the works He did they should do, and greater works than He did, "because He was going to the