

they cause some one to fall." "Blessed is the man," says the Psalmist, "who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scorner; but his meditation is in the law of the Lord, and on his law doth meditate day and night."

DEACONS.

There are two extremes with regard to the external organization of the New Testament Church, into one or other of which men are apt to fall; and either of which is very productive of injury. The one is, when, from certain allowed proceedings which cannot easily be explained in consistency with the principle of a fixed order, it is concluded that no order has been prescribed; but that men are left to modify it according to their own views of expediency. The other is, when, from clear evidence that there is a prescribed order, it is inferred that there is no case in which we are at liberty to depart from that order—that forms must be observed, at whatever expense to the real object for securing which these forms have been instituted. We are persuaded that a careful and unprejudiced study of God's Word will leave the conviction that, though the rules with respect to the external order to be observed in the New Testament Church are not laid down with the minuteness and precision which characterized the Levitical dispensation, which had a special typical import, rules nevertheless are laid down; and that, whatever departure from them may be allowable in certain emergencies, it will be our wisdom to keep these rules steadily in view, and to see that they are duly enforced whenever the emergency that might have warranted a departure from them may have passed away. Our Saviour's reference to the case noticed in the beginning of the twelfth Chapter of the gospel by Matthew shows that, in the emergency in which they were involved, David and his men were excusable in taking of the shewbread, "which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests;" but "certainly is very far from implying that they would have been guiltless, had they continued to use that as their ordinary food.

We make these remarks at present with a special reference to the mode in which the financial affairs of our congregations through these Provinces are ge-

nerally managed. Whatever allowances may be made for the emergencies of a Church just starting into existence in a newly settled country, and whatever gratitude may be due to men who in her difficulties may have rendered valuable service to the Church under the character of Managers or Trustees, or by whatever name they may have been called, it is very evident that their modes of acting, converted too into something like a system, are coming to be extremely injurious; and that it is high time for the Church to look to the Bible for instruction, and to endeavour to bring her machinery, as speedily as possible, into a conformity with the rule which is there laid down.

When we look then to the Bible we find that the affairs of the Church, whether of a directly spiritual nature, or having a more immediate bearing upon her secular interests, were entrusted to men who were solemnly set apart to the discharge of their respective duties by ordination. This was the case with the apostles, who were directly ordained by Jesus Christ himself. This was the case with the elders whom the apostles ordained in every Church (Acts xiv. 23), whether these elders were appointed simply to rule, or, besides ruling, to labour also in the word and doctrine, 1 Tim. v. 17. This was the case with the deacons. These office-bearers were thus set apart to the discharge of their official duties as acting under the authority of Christ, and for the benefit of his Church. Whether these duties might be of a more spiritual, or of a more secular character, they were to discharge them not for their own worldly ends, but for the benefit of the body of Christ, under a sense of their responsibility to him, and looking for his blessing on the use of his own appointed means. The more closely they adhered to the instructions of his word, the more full would be their scriptural warrant for expecting his blessing.

The apostles and elders, for a time, administered the whole affairs of the Church; but when it was found that the secular matters, in order to their due administration, would have required such an amount of their time as would have trenchd very materially upon their spiritual duties, deacons were appointed to assist them in the administration of these secularities. We have an account of this in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the apostles. From that narrative, it