

refuse to receive the ignorant or the wicked into its membership, it has no warrant for exercising discipline by excluding from the Sacrament those members guilty of immoral conduct. Thus he resisted all attempts made for the purification of the Church. The principle which led him to hold this remarkable view was, "that the State and the Church are one, and that, as a judicial and executive body, it lies with the State to judge and punish all such offenders." So far did Erastus go in holding this principle, that he looked upon ministers and office-bearers in the Church as officers of the State, and was not willing to deny to the civil magistrate the power to preach and to administer the Sacraments, if he had time for such duties in addition to his ordinary business.

All Erastians have not held, and do not hold, with the apostle of their doctrine in the lengths to which he was prepared to push it. Those who bear this name agree, not so much in making one institution of Church and State, similar, as Erastus thought, to the Jewish theocracy, but in subordinating the Church to the State. This manner of treating the Church is in reality far more degrading to it, and far more secularizing to the State, than any system that Erastus would have allowed. By it the Church is left in possession of peculiar powers, which, as an *imperium in imperio*, it may exercise by authority of the State; being liable at any time to the interference of the *imperium* from without.

The Church of England was Erastian from the beginning. When young Lieber was only ten years old, the English Parliament made Henry VIII. head of the Church, instead of the Pope, deposed; and that worthy head at once proceeded to carry out Erastian principles by bringing religious offenders before the ordinary law-courts and punishing them in accordance with his own will. The various branches of the German Protestant Church, where they hold the position of establishments, have been subordinated to the State from Reformation times, although little Free Churches exist here and there in Germany and in other parts of the Continent of Europe. The most purely Erastian Church in the world, however, is the Greek Church, of which the Emperor of Russia is the head; a Church of which much that is flattering has been said of late, but which will bear comparison with the Roman Catholic Church, in regard to the intelligence and religious character of its members, equally well or equally badly as in regard to its principle of government. The subordination of the Church to the State is more likely to be subversive of good than that of the State to the Church; and so long as an earthly head be given to the Church, while it may matter little whether he wear the papal tiara or the imperial crown, it is at least more seemly that he should be primarily and essentially of the Church. It was doubtless a revulsion from the usurpation by the Romish See of the prerogative of kings, and its arrogant pretensions to universal empire, that at first induced wise and good men to submit to and even to counsel Erastianism.

Although the leaders of the Reformation in Europe, such as Zuingli and Luther, with Bullinger and others, were guilty of incautious statements that seem to favor Erastianism, no such charge can be brought against the founders of the Scottish Church. Its great struggle was against this error from the very beginning. The Stuarts magnified the royal prerogative, and would not have its exercise bounded by law either in State or Church. James I. devoted his pen to support Erastianism in connection with the divine right of kings. The Puritan party in England struggled side by side with the Presbyterians of Scotland for religious liberty,