

Infinito harm has, we believe, been done to the Church by not attending to Divine teaching on this, a matter which lies at the boundary line between the Church and the World. In the early centuries the Bishops usurped the almsgiving of the Church of which St. Chrysostome and St. Jerome complain, and the Deacons instead of "serving tables" were appointed as preachers and ministers of the Word. In this way the Church became grievously corrupted, and avarice and luxury became the characteristics of the clergy.

In later times, as may be noted in the Church of Scotland of twenty years ago, the State made provision for the maintenance of the ministry without the interposition of the Deacons, the evils of which system are well known and may be observed in the unseemly conflicts which from time to time have arisen regarding the Annuity Tax in Edinburgh and other places, and in regard to the augmentation of livings in the Court of Tionds. The State besides made the Church Session the legal guardians of the poor, and thus also led to the conversion of the Eldership from a *spiritual* office to that of ministering only or chiefly at the money-tables of the Church.

In still more modern times an equally grievous corruption is, we do not hesitate to say, creeping *per incuriam* into the Church and threatening, even in the professed Free Church of Canada, to take the Erastian attitude of the European States towards the Church. Under the name of Temporal Committees, Committees of Management, and Trusteeship, the Godless world is getting into the very government of the Church. We know a case in which a man known to be an infidel held almost unlimited sway over the management and the government of a Church, much to the grief of its minister, and the vexation of the better disposed people. We know of another instance in which men, many of whom are not members, nor fit to be such, control the whole administration of a Church under the designation of a Committee, and, although wealthy, keep their minister in positive penury. We have seen too, Church Deeds so thoroughly Erastian in their character, that we are persuaded our Lord would have said to their framers, as he once said to Peter, "thou savourest not the things that be of God but those that be of men." Such instruments, we were about to say of *torture*, and perhaps we should be right in saying so, are, we have reason to believe, not uncommon in the Church of Canada, and it is high time our Christian people were warned against them, and that our Church Courts should see to it that no Church be admitted into our fellowship whose trust Deed and constitution, so called, are not in perfect harmony with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, and will not by any of their articles impede the exercise of her Scriptural discipline.

It will not do to tell us that Trusteeships sometimes *work well*, and in many cases are no injury to the peace or piety of the Church. We receive such statements with much suspicion. It must be an injury to the piety of the Church to find men holding office therein who are not members of the Church of Christ at all, or who, if members, are neither qualified by their piety, their prudence, or their christian temper, to hold office in the Church. And even if forms of management unknown to the constitution of the Christian Church, do sometimes *work well*, this surely is no reason why the wisdom of man should be substituted for the wisdom of God. Many bad things *work well*,—despotism in Russia may *work well*,—slavery even in America sometimes *works well*,—Episcopacy and Congregationalism and Methodism sometimes *work well*, but is that any good reason why we should adopt either the one or the other? God makes the wrath of men to praise Him, but on this account should we indulge in impious wrath? So we say that although the human expedients of Committees and Trusteeship for the management of the Church's *alms* may sometimes *work well*, yet seeing that