

because they are matters of curiosity or information, or mere critical niceties of no practical value; for you will see how close a bearing they have on the subject on which I am speaking now. They shew that there was even from the earliest times a definite organization, a central fund; that from this fund widows were pensioned and clergy paid, and other expenses of missionaries or messengers doubtless defrayed. And though the epistles or letters which have come down to us from the Apostles' times are but few and written with other objects than to explain these points to later generations, yet they by incidental allusions, which are specially valuable, afford a good deal of information as to the fact that in the Apostles' time there was order and method, and systematic arrangement of the funds and expenditure. Thus, observe how St. Paul in the epistles to the Corinthians indirectly tells us the same. He had with a desire to relieve this fund in the Corinthian Church, avoided taking wages of them, though he had done so from other churches, and had wrought with his hands (as we read in Acts, 18,) with Aquila and Priscilla, his occupation being that of a tent maker. Some of his enemies wishing to depreciate him and make him contrast unfavourably with others, objected that one who took none of the church's wages was not the church's servant, that he could have no claim to be an Apostle, for that if so he would draw his support from the church's fund. The Apostle, therefore, in explaining his reasons for waiving his claim, takes care to shew that he was foregoing a *right* "I only and Barnabas," (1 Cor. iv. 6,) are we the only ones who have power to forbear working with our hands, we have a right to the regular pay as well as others. And in vindicating his claim to the Apostolic office he beseeches them in terms which under an irony convey the severest rebuke, that if this were all they had against him they would "forgive him this *wrong*," (2 Cor. xii. 13,) as if he would say, that by not accepting wages from them as from others he had wronged *them*.

This fund moreover was a liberal one, for the