

records the short and simple annals of the poor ; while up in Fifth Avenue or over on the Back Bay, no end of wealth in the pews, but nothing to do with it all, no poor to be found.

Now just for a moment picture to yourselves a church in New York City of the primitive type, "the Church of New York," with meeting places wherever they might be wanted—north, south, east, west—suited severally to the several needs of these varying localities ; with a strong college of presbyters and deacons and other officials, enough for all ; each naturally ministering to his own proper field, but all forming one church, with one wise management, one comprehensive plan of work, one plan of campaign, and one purse—above all, one purse.

I have called your thoughts back to the days of the Church's primitive simplicity, a favorite field of study for all our denominations, the days of the first love, the days of marvellous growth, the days of apostolic oversight, or undisturbed apostolic tradition ; the days when the whole Church was Congregational, some say ; Presbyterian, some say ; Anglican Episcopal, others say ; the days when "the historic episcopate" of that fourth Lambeth article, if there be any such thing, took its start.

Many of you have been reading with profound interest the fruits of the study of a great Anglican explorer of that period, the lamented Dr. Hatch of Oxford, who has shed so much light on the organization of the early Christian churches, or rather has enabled us to see more clearly the light that was always there in the writings of the early fathers. Of course we have all believed that, not long after the beginning of the second century, there came to be an officer in the church known as bishop, in distinction from his brethren of the presbyterial college. But have you taken to heart what Dr. Hatch has now made clear as to the real meaning of his title, as marking the most important distinction of his office ? Let me quote

a few sentences. He proves, first, that, not only in private assemblies, but also in municipalities, the officers of administration and finance were known by one or other of two titles *ἐπιμελητής* or *ἐπίσκοπος* ; and then he says, "When the president [of the presbyterial body] became a single permanent officer, he was, as before, the person into whose hands the offerings were committed and who was primarily responsible for their distribution. He thus became the centre round which the vast system of Christian charity revolved. His functions as supreme almoner tended to overshadow his functions as president of the council. The title which clung to him was that which was relative to the administration of the funds, *ἐπίσκοπος*, or bishop. . . . He had, no doubt, other important functions, . . . he was the depository of doctrine, and the president of the courts of discipline ; but the primary character of these functions of administration is shown by the fact that the name which was relative to them thrust out all the other names of his office."

"The historic episcopate" some of our friends insist on. That term has seemed to connote certain sacerdotal heresies against which we shall not yet give over protesting ; but I am beginning to think that perhaps the spirit of truth has prompted this demand for a "historic episcopate as a bond of Christian unity ;" for what is the historic episcopate, stripped of all later inventions and imaginations of men ? It is one single administration of funds for the churches of a whole city. The good man might be, and do other things ; but his name proves that he must by all means be, and do that. The Church of Rome, however many preachers and congregations it might have, was sure to remain to all essential purposes one church, so long as it had one treasurer, or bishop ; and in the still earlier days, when all the presbyters were bishops, still they formed one college, exercised one administration, and thereby kept the Church one.