

authority, *voluntary*. This is the evangelical, but not the Roman Catholic, view. Priests who claim the power of the keys may assume to command and threaten. They claim the right to define individual duties, and to denounce eternal sanctions. They bind and loose the conscience. Consequently, they know how to put on the screws and to extort what the Church requires. But it is not so simple and easy a matter with Protestant leaders, whose authority is purely "ministerial and declarative." They must persuade men, appealing to the constraining love of Christ. If men will not hear, they are powerless. Each one stands or falls to his one Master, even Christ. "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."

Acting on this principle, the writer, in common with many another pastor, has found it a helpful method of getting church members to work in the customary channels of ecclesiastical organization, to send out, early in the Fall, a circular letter, addressed to each member, and accompanied by a schedule of questions which intimate various lines of activity. These questions are grouped with reference to the existing machinery of the church, under such general heads as "Devotional Meetings," "Sunday Schools," "Ladies' Work," "Young People's Work," etc. The letter is couched in some such form as this :

"DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIEND :

"Believing that you have a mind to work for the Master, the Session send you this Schedule, inviting you to help us in organizing the activities of our Church by undertaking specific duties.

"We do not for a moment forget that holy living, secret and family prayer, private study of the Bible, liberality in giving as God prospers us, regular attendance upon the preaching services, and personal labor for the conversion and sanctification of souls, are among the supreme duties of our Christian life. But leaving such duties for the present to the promptings of the individual heart and conscience as quickened by the Holy Spirit, we cordially and urgently request you now to unite with us in this scheme by declaring in which of the indicated forms of organized work you are willing to engage.

"We sincerely hope that this Schedule may not become a burden to you. It is not expected that any one will undertake all the forms of work suggested. While we should all be stimulated to do what we can, the willing ought not to be overworked, nor ought those who are hard pressed by home duties to feel discouraged because their Church activities are necessarily few. The Schedule is intended to increase the usefulness of the Church and to enhance the privileges of Christ's fellow-servants. If it incidentally gives a gentler reminder of our responsibilities, it is designed chiefly to secure two practical objects : (1) To afford us all a choice of activities ; (2) to render the organization of our work easy and convenient. Consequently, these questions are not to be understood as calling for unalterable pledges. With a willing mind and a consecrated heart, let each one promise provisionally to do what he can, and sincerely try afterwards to fulfill his promises as God gives him opportunity. It is agreed that any necessary interruption which comes to us in the line of duty shall absolve us from every conflicting promise made in the Schedule.