

THE LAY PRIESTHOOD.

NO. II. 8

In the "downward grade" of sectarianism, the losses of christian people are very many and very great. In last month's No. we drew attention to "Laying-on-of hands," the ancient and apostolic method of preparing and ordaining the lay members of Christ's Body for their momentous work as partakers of the Lord's offices, namely—those of a prophet, priest and king.

We showed that whilst without faithful participation in this work the members of Christ can have no share in His everlasting rest, with its welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant," they cannot, amidst the temptations of this life, fulfil this threefold work as prophets, priests and kings without the strengthening influence of the Holy Spirit. All members of Christ are thereby made—as St. John in the Apocalypse declares, "Kings and priests to God," and therefore a due ordination to this high and holy work is provided for them at the time when they can intelligently receive it, in the Laying-on-of-hands, with its accompanying most necessary anointing with the seven-fold gifts of the Holy Ghost.

So important is this Divine gift to the members of Christ that St. Paul classes it amongst the six principles or most important matters in the doctrine of Christ, viz.: Repentance,

Faith, Baptism, Laying-on-of-hands, Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment (Heb. vi, i.) Yet, although orthodox christians of all denominations admit and practice to a greater or less extent five of those great doctrines or first principles, with their deep responsibilities, all the modern sects who have rejected the Historical Episcopate, reject also with it the rite or first principle of "Laying on-of-hands," the administration of which, since the times of the first apostles, pertained to them and their successors.

Thinking people who have come over to our Church from the modern denominations around us, after due study and earnest conviction, always—especially if they have been pastors in their late connection—tell us how deeply they felt the want of the rite of *Laying on-of-hands* or *Confirmation* as a means of enlisting the young as working members of the denomination at that period of life when in so many cases the turn towards Christ or the world is made for time and eternity. Seeing so often the self-deceiving and transitory nature of the modern revival system, with its antimonian tendencies, they prize by its want among themselves that which is too often neglected amongst us, viz.: the gathering of the young into instruction classes to be duly and carefully prepared for Confirmation, a rite to which they come the more readily from having been taught to look for-