

THE CEREMONY OF CONFIRMATION,

&c. &c. &c.

REVEREND SIR :

It will, perhaps, excite your surprise, that I should venture to call in question the existence of a scriptural authority for the ceremony of confirmation, as practised in the church of which you are a minister. Yet a paramount sense of duty compels me to address some thoughts to you in reference to it, through the medium of the press ; especially as the ceremony has been so lately attended to in this town, where, in the providence of God, we are respectively called to exercise our ministry.

Happy, indeed, should I have felt, to have been relieved of this duty by the non-existence of this rite in the Church of England. It is, however, not only practised, but much zeal is evinced in bringing forward candidates for it ; and so much importance is attached to its celebration, that till it has been attended to, no one, however eminently pious and devoted to God, is allowed to obey the Saviour's command, by partaking of the Lord's Supper.

You will feel assured, I hope, that this Letter does not originate in any sectarian or unchristian feelings ; but that its intention is to correct what may be wrong, and advance that which coincides with the word of God ;—an intention I know that you will appreciate.

Episcopalians writers define confirmation to be “ the laying on of hands, for the conveyance of the Holy Ghost, a rite by which persons, arrived at years of discretion, undertake the performance of the baptismal vows made for them by their sponsors.” Now, sir, let us examine whether this solemnity has any sanction in the word of God : for says Jehovah, “ to the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Here I submit that as we look through the Holy Scriptures, we do not find a single passage which tells us that it was either commanded or practised by Jesus Christ, who alone has a right to make laws, and enforce observances in his Church. This seems plainly acknowledged in the 25th article of the English