

THE LAY PRIESTHOOD.

NO. IV.

At a recent meeting of the Congregational Council in San Francisco, California, the Rev. Dr. Freelon said that the number of Protestants habitually attending public worship in that city is but three per cent. and that the whole number, including Roman Catholics, is but five per cent. of the whole population, and that the ratio has been the same for the last ten years.

Whilst, through the ministry of the laity, free-thinking and infidelity are blatant on every side, and Secularism has banished from the statutes of California the law for Sunday observance, and is strong enough to prevent its re-introduction, it is surely high time that the christian laity should exhibit an equal zeal for—not only the defence—but the propogation of gospel truth and purity. When the very foundations of society are being loosened by impure and unchristian laws of marriage and divorce, and public sentiment, to say the least, does not ostracise legalized concubinage, it is plain that not only the clerical but the lay priesthood have a great work before them. When the spirit of evil is thus coming in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall raise up a standard against it, and God's priesthood, clerical and lay, male and female, must be the willing and valiant standard-bearers.

The Church in California is repre-

sent by old and zealous clergymen who are now availing themselves more and more of a system of co-operation in their work on the part of the laity. Prominent amongst the young men is the Guild of St. Andrew, who in imitation of the Evangelist whose name and example they adopt and follow, strive continually to bring others to Christ. To quote the object of their society,—“The sole object of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew is the spread of Christ's Kingdom among young men.” To this end their 1st Rule is to pray daily for the spread of Christ's Kingdom among young men, and for God's blessing upon the labours of the Brotherhood. The 2nd Rule is to make an earnest effort each week to bring at least one young man with-in hearing of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as set forth in the services of the Church and in young men's Bible Classes. This Brotherhood “does not trouble itself with petty differences of opinion as to detail, but retraces with ever-increasing earnestness and unanimity the fundamental principles of Christ's Kingdom, and their application to the solution of the problems of Christian life to-day.”

This Brotherhood, originating in Chicago, and yet but in its infancy, has already so manifested its usefulness that its branches have spread through the United States and Canada. Its fifth annual Convention was held in Philadelphia last Oc-