

## CHRIST'S PRÆROGATIVE IN THE CHOICE OF HIS SERVANTS.

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ACTS i., 24, 25.—And they prayed, and said, thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship.

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Thankful would the preacher have been, had the duty of addressing you on the present occasion, reverend fathers and brethren, been intrusted to one better qualified than himself, by attainments of learning and gifts of eloquence, and endowed with the experience and authority of riper years. Gladly would he have sat at the feet of many now present to have heard from their lips the words of exhortation and admonition befitting this solemn occasion. Such an occasion, doubtless, all who are present feel it to be. We have met for the discharge of a momentous duty, a duty which brings the most serious responsibility upon all who are concerned in it, and on the fidelity with which it is performed will the well-being of this portion of the Lord's vineyard be greatly dependent for all time to come. The effects of what we shall this day do will last long after we ourselves have passed from the present scene; they will be felt by remote generations. And, therefore, O that a deep and holy awe may now rest upon us; that both in the duty in which we are more immediately engaged, and in that to which this solemn act of worship is the introduction, we may realise the presence of our God and Saviour; and that the power of the Lord, the Spirit, being present to enlighten our understandings, to strengthen our weakness, and to unite us all in the bonds of love and peace, we may "by the same Spirit have a right judgment in all things, and evermore rejoice in His holy comfort."\* If such a spirit pervade this assembly, the preacher may hope that what is about to be advanced, being received, not with captious suspicion, a disposition unprofitable to those who indulge it, but with candour and brotherly confidence, will tend to the edification of all. Then

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\* Collect for Whit-Sunday.