

**THE CHOICE. FIVE LECTURES
ON CONFIRMATION,
DELIVERED IN ST. GEORGE'S
CHURCH, BLOOMSBURY**

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The Choice. Five Lectures on Confirmation, Delivered in St. George's Church, Bloomsbury by
Emilius Bayley

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EMILIUS BAYLEY

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FIVE LECTURES ON CONFIRMATION,

DELIVERED IN

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, BLOOMSBURY,

BY THE

REV. EMILIUS BAYLEY,

RECTOR.

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve."—*Joab. xxiv. 15.*

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INTRODUCTION.

THE great error of man's mind, and the cause of all his errors of life, is the diverting of the soul from God, and turning downward to inferior confidences and comforts; and this mischoise is the very root of all our miseries: therefore the main end of the holy word of God is to untie the hearts of men from the world, and reduce them to God as their only rest and solid comfort.—LEIGHTON.

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And they said, We are witnesses."
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I.

The Choice : its Nature.

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve."

JOSH. xxiv. 15.

THESE words form part of the last address delivered by Joshua to the Israelites. The occasion was a very solemn one. The conquest of Canaan completed, and the land portioned out amongst the tribes, Joshua, feeling that his work was finished, and his end near (xxiii. 14), summoned the people together at Shechem; and there, probably upon the very spot where the first covenant had been made with Abraham (Gen. xii. 6, 7), and where, upon the

entrance of the Israelites into Canaan, Joshua had himself called upon the people to give their solemn assent to the blessings and cursings of the law (Josh. viii. 30—35), he uttered his dying charge; and after recalling to their memories the countless mercies which they had received from the call of Abraham to that day, he exhorted them to yield themselves up unreservedly to the service of that Lord who had so richly blessed them. “Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood (river), and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood (river), or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me

and my house, we will serve the Lord" (xxiv. 14, 15).

We are not to suppose that this was the first occasion upon which the people had been called upon to make their choice. They had made it many times before, sometimes for good, more frequently for evil. Now however, upon this public occasion, when standing amid scenes hallowed by the recollections of centuries, and listening for the last time to their chieftain's well-known voice, the alternative is once more placed before them, and they are invited to make a public profession of their allegiance to Israel's God.

It is so with us, my friends; through life we are continually making our election between good and evil. At times determining strongly for the one or for the other: at times nicely balancing their claims, seeking to effect a compromise between God and our own consciences, and