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STIRLING TRACTS

First Series.

THIRTY-FOURTH MILLION.

PRAY FOR YOUR MINISTER.

“Brethren, pray for us” (1 Thes. v. 25).

“Ye have not, because ye ask not” (James iv. 2).

WHATEVER difference of opinion exists respecting the *present state* of the CHRISTIAN MINISTRY in these lands *as a whole*, we, THE PEOPLE, are woefully culpable in not constantly pleading with the Lord on behalf of the professed ambassadors of Christ, the importance of whose position and work can never be over-estimated, and who, above all others, need continual supplies of divine grace. Do not our closets, family altars, prayer-meetings, and the sanctuary, bear terrible testimony against us in this respect?

Need we then expect, or do we deserve an increasingly holy, devoted, and successful ministry? Need we wonder at the deadness of many pulpits and of many pews—at the scarcity of revivals and of con-

versions to God? It is high time to retrace our steps—humbling ourselves in the dust, confessing this our sin; and in dependence on the Spirit of all grace through Christ, persevering in “crying mightily unto the Lord” for a REVIVED MINISTRY, and, with it, for a quickened people.

*The following heads may suggest suitable topics for such prayer:—*

1. That none may be permitted to aspire to the ministry without first seeking and having some reason to think that they have undergone a saving change, or at all events, earnestly desiring preparedness of heart from the Lord.

2. That our students of divinity may in reality be “born again;” be made to feel the solemn responsibility of their position, and that a knowledge of Christ, and of themselves, is infinitely superior to all learning they may acquire.

3. That the Lord, in great mercy, would convert unconverted ministers, and so prevent their perishing and dragging others along with them to destruction.

4. That godly ministers may themselves habitually seek and experience divine grace to renew, quicken,



and preserve them as vessels unto honour, sanctified and made meet for their Master's use.

5. That the Holy Spirit may so apply their studies to themselves, that they may be always humble learners, as well as able instructors.

6. That they may never trifle with the Word of God or precious souls—concealing, qualifying, distorting, neutralizing, compromising, or corrupting the truth, to suit the taste of the *unsaved*, who are on the brink of hell.

7. That being full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, they may be enabled, from love to Jesus and to immortal souls, to portray every character, and meet every case in their congregations, that on the great day they may be free of their blood, whether they be saved or lost.

8. That they may be diligent pastors, exemplary and self-denied in their walk, and taking a special oversight of the lambs of the flock.

9. That they may realize and diffuse, in public and private, such an unctional spirit as may be at once salutary and profitable.

10. That through grace they may be raised above the fear of man—denouncing flagrant sins—speaking

to their people as in full view of the judgment-seat and shuddering at the thought of seeing them driven into the bottomless pit.

11. That they may be blessed with great encouragement and success in their labours, winning souls to Christ; and be led to ascribe any success vouchsafed not to themselves, but to the divine purpose, mercy and power, and that they may have said to them at last—"Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

"Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matt. ix. 38). "Now I beseech you brethren, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me" (Rom. xv. 30). "Pray for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel; that I may speak boldly as I ought to speak" (Eph. vi. 19, 20).

"NOT BY MIGHT, NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS" (Zech. iv. 6).

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