

**MINISTERIAL  
POPULARITY. A LECTURE  
ON THE POPULARITY OF  
CHRISTIAN MINISTERS**

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Ministerial Popularity. A Lecture on the Popularity of Christian Ministers by James Kendall

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**JAMES KENDALL**

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MINISTERIAL POPULARITY.

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A Lecture

ON THE

POPULARITY OF CHRISTIAN MINISTERS,

BY

THE REV. JAMES KENDALL.

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MDCCKLVII.

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.



## PREFACE.

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THE reader is respectfully informed that in preaching and subsequently revising and enlarging the following Lecture, the writer imposed on himself severe restraint.

He could have introduced a great mass of additional observations, arguments, and illustrative facts. But he recollected that he was going to publish, not an octavo volume (such as the subject discussed in all its bearings would require), but a *lecture*—a long one truly, but yet brief, considering the importance of the subject. The popularity of christian ministers, is often *referred to* by eminent writers, in voluminous dissertations on the christian ministry; but we have not seen in any of their publications the causes and effects of popularity discussed in a separate and distinct form. But the time is now “fully come” when a serious regard for the true dignity of the British pulpit, and the mighty interests of the christian religion demand such a discussion. Delicate and difficult as the subject is to manage, so as not to give offence, it must be undertaken, and the

writer devoutly wishes it had long since been undertaken by men of greater leisure and abilities than himself. He can well afford to sustain the charge of imprudence, should such a charge ever be preferred. Deeply conscious that *somebody* should publicly suggest a *medium* between the unbounded extravagance of some preachers, and the deadening accuracy and coolness of others. In the fear of Almighty God he humbly makes the suggestion himself.

In the "supplementary particulars" and notes which were written after the preaching of the lecture, the reader will observe "great plainness of speech." He will perceive an honest declaration of opinion, and particular familiarity of expression. But as his freedoms in all his other publications have been as kindly entertained by a *discerning* public, as they have been kindly intended, he trusts that no offence will be taken.

"Liberty to *think*" said Andrew Fuller to Earl Grey "is no liberty at all! The greatest despot cannot deprive the meanest slave of liberty to *think*; what we want is liberty to *every* man to *disseminate* his thoughts." This commendable saying is inserted with approbation in the Wesleyan magazine for October, 1846. We approve of it, and act accordingly.



And we have endeavoured not to *abuse* this liberty by printing, without first ascertaining the opinion of superior men.

The manuscript of the lecture was read on behalf of one of the first public institutions for religious literature in the kingdom; and the writer received a very courteous and official communication, declaring "the subject to be important in itself, and that it was discussed with good ability."

With a sincere wish that all things immediately connected with the christian ministry may be discreetly managed, and that, in reference to the qualifications of preachers, and the results of their labours, the community at large may be assisted to "judge righteous judgment," the writer commends his little book to the discrimination and candour of the christian public.

*Madeley- Wood, Shropshire,  
Feb. 1846.*



## SECTION I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

#### MATT. IX. 31.

*"But they when they were departed spread abroad his fame in all that country."*

THE word "they" refers to two blind men to whom our Saviour had mercifully given sight. These men had earnestly implored his attention and sympathy. He had said to them, "believe ye that I am able to do this?" And they assured him that they did believe. He then immediately touched their eyes, and said, "according to your faith be it unto you." And their eyes were opened. Our Lord then particularly charged them not to let any man know of the circumstance. But in direct opposition to this injunction they made it known. So very powerful, so overflowing, was their gratitude, that they found it impossible to keep the fact secret. It was (to use a homely phrase), obliged to "come out." Wherever they went they gratefully spoke of the happy removal of their disease, and of their good and divine physician.