

Circular Letter.

MINISTERIAL FAITHFULNESS.

It is a very awful charge that is brought against false teachers of old when it is said, Isaiah ix. 16. "The leaders of this people cause them to err, and they that are led of them are destroyed." There are various ways in which those who profess to be public teachers may be chargeable with this guilt:—

1. They may first cause men to err by false doctrine,—this was the case with the Judaizing teachers in the churches of Galatia; they preached "another Gospel," as Paul expresses it. When we read the solemn curse which the Apostle, under the influence of inspiration, denounces upon such, surely all who occupy the situation of public teachers ought to tremble at the thought of preaching any thing else than the unadulterated Gospel of Christ.

2. Preachers may cause men to err by not fully bringing forward the truth. There are many of whom you cannot say that they state what is directly wrong; but there is a great deficiency,—a want of a full and explicit representation of the most important parts of revealed truth. It is not enough that preachers do not bring forward what is directly false: their hearers have a right to expect from them that nothing profitable shall be kept back; nay, that while they declare, so far as they know it, the whole counsel of God, they chiefly dwell on those truths which hold the most distinguished place in the revelation of mercy.

3. How much open immorality in public teachers leads men to err has often been the subject of animadversion. It is a remark in the mouth of many, and how far it has contributed