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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—THE PREACHER AND SECULAR STUDIES.

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LIFE seems sometimes to be made up of extremes; and history to be but the long record of reactionary movements. The pendulum swings over a wide area, from thrift to parsimony, from zeal to fanaticism, from prudence to time-serving, from self-respect to self-idolatry, from asceticism to luxury. The classical student sinks into the mere philologist, the scientific man becomes a materialist, the political thinker lapses into a partisan and gives up to party what was meant for mankind. Nowhere indeed is the tendency to extremes seen more than in the ecclesiastical domain. In theology we have the hyper-Calvinist at one pole and the Arminian at the other. In polity, the Pope confronts the Independent. The extreme of sacramentarian views is counterbalanced by the nominal observance of the two sacraments. Every church has in its own borders these opposing extremes. Rome has her Jansenists and Jesuits; the Church of England her High and Low party; the Presbyterian divides into Old and New School, the Baptists are found in two camps, Calvinistic and Free Will.

It is hardly to be expected that the Christian ministry would escape the working of this tendency. The preachers are not cast in one mould. The modern pulpit, at least, shows great divergence of method. Look over the list of Sunday advertisements of the pulpit, noting topics of discourse, and it will be clear that our city preachers are working in very different ways to publish the Kingdom of God. It may be said in general that modern preaching follows two well-marked types, either of which is an extreme. One of these types is bred from old scholastic methods. Preachers of this type are bookish men. Their sermons are redolent of commentaries and systems of theology. They have an air of monkish seclusion about them in their isolation from all living interests. They talk about "sanctification," instead of about being better men or leading a better life. They seem unreal,