

# THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

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## REVIEW SECTION.

### I.—SYMPOSIUM ON THE PULPIT: "IS THE PULPIT DECLINING IN POWER? IF SO, WHAT IS THE REMEDY?"

NO. III.

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THIS is not a question of mere theoretical interest or speculative curiosity; it is of profound significance in its practical bearings. It may involve a challenge of Christianity's one distinctive method of conquest. It certainly lifts an interrogation point right in front of the Church's chief agency for securing the coming of the Kingdom of God.

The question not only concerns the pulpit, but the pulpit at the point of its excellent glory. Were it a question of decline in learning or oratory or fervor or tact, it would not be of such wide and vital moment. But we are asked to consider whether the pulpit is declining in *power*. And power is the one attribute crowning all a minister's accomplishments. Power the pulpit must have, or be put aside as something neither the Church nor the world has any use for.

Let us define our terms; for in discussion like this we want exact limitations. We need to know just where we are placing our feet.

By "the pulpit" we are to understand the stated and orderly ministry of the Word. Not a John-the-Baptist prelude, nor a spasmodic burst of evangelism; but the established preaching of the gospel in the presence of organized congregations.

"Power" may be defined capability of producing an effect; intelligent power, the ability to produce a designed effect. As "the pulpit" is conspicuously designed for "salvation," in the broad, deep sense of that word—*i. e.*, for reaching and rescuing men, and building them up in Christ Jesus—the power of the pulpit is its ability to produce this single and supreme effect. Its power in any other direction is subordinate, and chiefly, if not wholly, determined by its weight of spiritual transformation. The pulpit is educational and reform-