

THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

VOL. XVII.—MARCH, 1889.—No. 3.

REVIEW SECTION.

I.—RICHARD BAXTER.

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THE Christian ministry of to-day can ill afford to be unacquainted with the life and works of such men as Richard Baxter. Like John Howe, he has left writings which are a store-house of suggestive thought. Like Milton and De Foe, he has enjoyed the honor of having some of his works publicly burned at Oxford. As a preacher, he has singularly demonstrated the power of the truth to mould and educate the masses. If for nothing else, the story of Baxter's ministry at Kidderminster would make him illustrious as an example of *popular* preaching in the best sense of that much abused phrase. No man more than he has illustrated the inherent moral power of a devoted Christian pastorate. And lastly, no man more than he has shown how study, close, hard study, goes to the making of an effective ministry in its widest reach and longest hold. His mistakes are profitable, for they teach very plainly what should be shunned. To reproduce his ministry would be an anachronism. Each age has its own pulpit, which must speak so as to be heard. The seventeenth century must teach that and not the nineteenth; the nineteenth must speak to that and not to the twentieth. I am not familiar with courses of homiletic training in our theological seminaries, but I can readily see how they might be the gainer from a series of lectures on such ministries as that of Baxter. He was born November 12, 1615, at Eaton Constantine, Shropshire, England. He died December 8, 1691, at London. His life was therefore passed in that stormiest and in some respects greatest period of English history which embraces the reigns of Charles I., Oliver Cromwell, Charles II., and James II. The account he has left in his autobiography of his confirmation would seem to show that he owed little to early religious training. "When I was a school-boy about fifteen years of age, the bishop coming into the county, many went to him to be confirmed. We, that were boys, each went out to see the bishop among the rest, not knowing anything of the meaning of the business. When we came thither, we met about thirty or forty in all, of our own stature and temper, that had