

# THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

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## REVIEW SECTION.

### I.—THOUGHTS ON SOME PRACTICAL USES OF THE RELATION OF THE NATURAL TO THE SPIRITUAL.

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THE treatment, within the compass of a few pages, of a subject which embraces all earth and heaven, must necessarily be merely suggestive. But for this kind of treatment we have ample warrant in the teaching of Him of whom it was said, "Never man spake as this man," and who suggests all things, but expands and elaborates nothing. Paul assures us that if there is a natural body there must also be a correlative spiritual; and in like manner the most eminent physicists of our time are convinced that the laws of conservation and dissipation of energy require us to believe in the existence of an unseen universe corresponding to that which is visible to us. The greatest of English poets, whose insight was more profound than that of ordinary men, puts the same truth in the form of a question: "What if earth be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein, each to the other like, more than on earth is thought?"

But our knowledge of the natural comes to us mainly by observation and experiment, and is based on the evidence of our senses, on which we are accustomed implicitly to rely. Our knowledge of the spiritual comes to us chiefly by divine revelation, and therefore in some sense at second-hand, though it can appeal as evidence first to our intuitive conceptions, with which it is in harmony, and secondly, to the natural facts which corroborate that testimony. It is instructive to note that our Savior fully acknowledges this in His teaching, and in His appeals to those who disbelieved His divine mission. For instance, in John vi: 45, He quotes a sentiment, more than once ex-