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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—HOW CAN THE PULPIT BEST COUNTERACT THE INFLUENCE OF MODERN SKEPTICISM?

NO. VII.

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WHATEVER be the difficulties of the modern pulpit, there is no reason to fear its discomfiture. People seem to speak of Modern Skepticism as though it were a Colossus, or a dragon, before which Christian teachers must quail. But this is an entire misconception. It is difficult to argue with doubt; but in so far as assaults have been made in recent times on the Christian faith, they have been met at every point, and have only served to show what an able and well equipped band of scholars and dialecticians is at the service of the Church of God.

Occasionally a sort of crow of triumph is sounded forth by some very superior gentleman, who assumes that the whole civilized world steps meekly behind him and his skeptical associates. He announces that, as a system of doctrine resting on history, "Christianity" is exploded, and it is now on its last trial as a system of ethics. He hints not obscurely that in this respect also, its failure is certain; so that its doom is settled. Poor old Christianity must take its place among the effete superstitions of mankind. But all this imposes on none but those who wish to have it so. Probably it passes for the voice of intellectual illustration and independence. Nevertheless, calm observers of the time are quite assured that it is mere "bounce;" and that although skepticism may be growing and spreading, faith also is growing and spreading with a quite phenomenal earnestness.

At such a time, the occupant of the pulpit is bound to be wide awake to the questions and "oppositions" that are in the minds of men, ay, and of women also; and he is most likely to encounter them with effect when he takes no explicit controversial notice of them, but carefully states and calmly argues the positions which are impugned. I purposely insert the word "argues," being of the same opinion with an old critic who liked a fair proportion of "therefores" in a sermon. And yet more important than any argument in aid is the skillful statement of