

PREFACE.

THE author, on assuming the pastoral charge of a church in a thrifty and intelligent inland city of New England, found in the community a large number of young men not exactly sceptical, but a good deal unsettled in their views of religion. They were graduates of Grammar and High schools; intelligent young men, who, though employed as clerks or apprentices, found time to read the papers, the magazines, and occasionally a book. They had caught the drift of one section of popular thought. They asked for some book which should meet briefly and yet fairly the difficulties which they felt. There were plenty of scholarly volumes, suited to men who had received a liberal education and who were masters of their own time. But a small, popular, and at the same time accurate volume, suited to this demand, the author could not find. It occurred to him to invite these young men to state to him