

# THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

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## REVIEW SECTION.

### I.—THE CHRISTIAN A TRUSTEE.

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WITHIN the last few years it has become clear that the thoughtful men and women of our country are applying a higher standard to the use of wealth. The rapid accumulation of vast fortunes, rendered possible through corporations and the organization of capital, has led society to ask itself very seriously the question, "Is the titanic power conferred by these vast fortunes exempt from that law of unselfish service which governs all other forces in the social life of man?" Past generations of men have seen the tacit assumption on the part of the rich that a man was perfectly free to use his own property as he might choose to use it, merely for his own selfish indulgence if he wished. Even in those periods of the world's history when the moral responsibility for the use of wealth was least clearly felt, the underlying law that the possession of money carried responsibility with it found occasional expression in the demand that the man of wealth spend freely for luxurious living, that he might thus employ much labor, and indirectly make his wealth of service to his fellow-men. Such free spending of wealth for personal luxuries was an evasion of the dimly seen law that a man is morally responsible to God and to society for the full use of all the powers of service at his command. Yet the maxim, "The rich man should spend freely," carried in itself a standing protest against the assumption that a man is free to use his property solely for selfish ends. When the closer study of the principles that underlie political economy had made it evident that the free spending of money for luxuries and in luxurious wastefulness impoverished society as a whole, the obligation attaching to wealth became clearer in men's eyes, and could no longer be considered in any sense discharged by the mere spendthrift squandering of the wealth at one's disposal. Men learned that "consumption" in political economy means not the destruction, but the utilization of the products of labor. Society has come to see clearly that men can no longer be left