

Some books have gone from threshold to threshold before finding a publisher ; and now what struggled so for existence is as a perennial fountain in the garden of literature. Many books never get written for want of a publisher, who often in this way becomes a public benefactor. Books written for mercenary compensation are frequently our best, like Johnson's "Rasselas" and Scott's novels. Some men have written great books and died in rags, like Camoens, the Portuguese. The ambition to be known has prompted many a man to write a good book. And so there is no absolute canon for the making of books. If a man has anything to tell that is worth telling, let him write a book. So I say to my children : "If you have anything worth saying, speak."

An eminent physician has spoken more

than once in my hearing of his strong desire to give up active practice and to retire to a laboratory where he might direct his undivided attention to the study of the nature and properties of herbs. "What a vast world there is of them," he has exclaimed, "and all made for the use of man !" The man of literary culture often longs for the day when he may turn from the din of the street and the distractions of daily living to the quiet pursuit of the books which contain the thoughts of many ages. Books attest the life above the larynx ; and most valuable to us are those which lead us through the chambers of this earth of ours and open our eyes to behold its wonders, and which bring us out to the ledges from which we look up into the azure peopled with the stars and warm with the breath of the great Creator.

PREACHERS EXCHANGING VIEWS.

Conference. Not Criticism—Not a Review Section—Not Discussions, but Experiences and Suggestions.

Does It Pay ?

Is it wise for the minister in the pulpit to dwell frequently and severely upon the failings of Christians ? A week since a young man came to tell me that his church was becoming very restless under the pastor's habit of preaching as if all disciples of Christ were defaulters, rogues and hypocrites. The next day I heard a popular minister hold the Church up to ridicule as grossly unfaithful. Two days after I heard another preacher produce a laugh by flippantly telling the story of the converted Jewess who wanted to study Church history "in order to discover when Christians ceased to be like Christ." All this pleases unbelievers, and perhaps wins a momentary popularity for the preacher, but does it advance the cause of Christ ? Surely it is not true that the majority of Christians are utterly unlike their Master. They have their treasure in earthen vessels,

but conspicuous unfaithfulness is the exception. Moreover, the best Christians are grieved and disheartened by uncharitableness and sneering criticism from the pulpit. They ask if there are not multitudes of noble Christian lives, whose example might be cited for the inspiration of the elect and the edification of the world. They question whether it becomes a preacher to discredit the Gospel which he recommends by belittling its power over those who have taken it to their hearts. They inquire if it would not be well, as a rule, to reserve severe rebuke for the time when pastor and Church are met together for private counsel and communion. Does it pay, brethren ? Does not the world carp at Christians enough without help from the pulpit ? Making this their excuse for impenitence, do unbelievers need any encouragement in this direction ? Paul never castigates the early disciples in his public discourses. And when, in private epis-