

Miscellaneous. *Colloquies on Preaching* (1) are interesting reading. The author brings all sorts and conditions of men, and of some women too, to give their ideas on one of the most serious subjects of the day. It is often asked why sermons should have such little influence as they seem to have. And it is difficult to give a satisfactory reply, though the probability is that they have more influence than people think. Mr. Twells inclines to the idea that extempore preaching is that which is most influential, and he seems to think that in the future that style alone will be prevalent. We are quite ready to admit that, when well done, an extempore sermon is the most impressive. But "there's the rub." It so seldom is well done, because it requires special gifts and capacities. Anything drearier than an extempore sermon badly prepared and badly delivered can hardly be imagined. An extempore discourse requires really more preparation than a written one; but this preparation must almost of necessity be put off to the latest moment, and it is almost sure to suffer from haste, as it will also from a variety of accidents from which a written sermon is free. The young ladies' colloquy is very amusing, and in the colloquy between the squire and his guest Mr. Twells points out how a most estimable clergyman may be overlooked if to all his other virtues he adds that of modesty, and that between the rector and the vicar shows what a preacher may be really doing even when the results, so far as he can see, are by no means satisfactory.

Present Day Tracts on Man in Relation to the Bible and Christianity (2) is a collection into a volume of a series of small treatises on the most important points of religious controversy at the present time. The former special volumes issued by the Religious Tract Society have been found useful and popular, and this volume is a very worthy successor. In it we find such subjects as "The Age and Origin of Man," "The Antiquity of Man," "The Physiology of Man," "The Responsibility of Man," "Man's Moral Nature," "Revelation and Natural Science," "Christ and Creation," treated in a concise and yet by no means in a perfunctory manner. The volume cannot fail to be helpful towards strengthening the faith of all who read it; and we sincerely hope that its readers will be numerous.

(1) *Colloquies on Preaching*. Rev. H. Twells. Longmans & Co. 1889. Price 5s.

(2) *Present Day Tracts*. Vol. iv. Religious Tract Society. Price 2s. 6d.