

Helps for
Sermons.

LORD BACON'S advice that an exceedingly valuable commentary might be furnished from the sermons of great preachers, has nowhere been carried out so helpfully to the preacher as in *The Sermon Bible* (1), now in course of publication. In the *Biblical Illustrator*, no doubt, more matter is given. But for arrangement of material, editorial skill, and due proportion, the importance of texts, viewed as to their homiletical uses, *The Sermon Bible* carries off triumphantly the palm. If the former is voluminous, the latter is luminous. Perhaps more care might in future be given to making the framework of sermon-sketches more symmetrical and suggestive. The art of making skeletons useful to another mind is but yet in its infancy. The homiletical writer who brings it to perfection has an open and large field for his literary energies.

FROM even an incorrectly constructed outline of *one's own*, a good sermon may be preached; but for an outline of another's to help a preacher the prime necessity is that its structure be scientifically correct. Though *The Weekly Pulpit* (2) is decidedly above the average of such periodicals, still the construction of the sketches are often faulty; so they sometimes fail to make complete sense, and rarely obey the laws of symmetry.

The Lord's
Prayer.

A NEW work upon *The Lord's Prayer* (3) surely needed a preface to show how far it occupies any independent ground of its own. We fail to discover in its matter and style anything very special which justified its publication. Here and there the writer deftly turns to good spiritual account some memorable saying, and he has the virtue of knowing when to "leave off," and not to bore the reader.

The Lord's Prayer (4), by Dr. A. Saphir, consists of eighteen lectures, in which the subject matter of the prayer and many ancillary subjects are treated with great fulness, deep reverence, and hearty earnestness. The work has reached a ninth edition, which proves that it has been appreciated; and it deserves appreciation.

(1) *The Sermon Bible*: Genesis to 2 Samuel; 1 Kings to Psalm lxxvi. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1888.

(2) *The Weekly Pulpit*. A Series of Suggestive Sermons, Outlines, Critical and Homiletical Notes, Illustrations, and Addresses, for the Use of Preachers. Vol. IV. Elliott Stock.

(3) *The Disciple's Prayer*. Being Notes of Sermons on our Lord's Prayer. By Rev. J. M. Gibbon, 1888. Elliot Stock.

(4) *The Lord's Prayer*. Lectures by Rev. A. Saphir, D.D. Ninth Edition. Price 5s. London: J. Nisbet & Co.