

SECULAR AND SENSATIONAL PREACHING.

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It seems as if we were living in an age which has an eager desire for sensations. Perhaps in this respect, however, it differs but little from every other time, for the children of men have always desired to have their pulses stirred by something out of the usual. Existence on common days is, for the most of men, a hum-drum affair; and, just as there is a craving for some form of entertainment after the breadwinning routine of the day is over, so there is a widespread desire to break up the monotony of life by news of a startling character, fiction of a piquant, high colored type or gossip of a spicy flavor. The novelist feels this craving of the time and often seasons his productions too highly for moral health. The newspaper reporter understands it well and when the telegraphic dispatches are meagre and tame he draws on his inventive genius to furnish the necessary number of sensational headlines which will keep his paper abreast in the mad race to please men by exciting them. The retraction has to be published in small type in some obscure corner a few days afterwards, but the lie has accomplished its mission. The jaded pulses of listless readers were stirred for the moment and they care nothing about the matter now.

It was inevitable that this state of things should affect the pulpit sooner or later. Some communities in the United States think that it is the correct thing to support a minister, only they do not want him to deal with their social sins or their financial shortcomings, but to appeal to their esthetic, sentimental or humorous faculties. And if he be strongly tempted to hold his place in their favor he knows only too well what is expected of him. Among ourselves the Church is attracting to her services a large number of people who have no real love for the Saviour or desire to serve Him, but who wish to obtain certain social or business advantages which they think their