

## THE SPECTACULAR IN PREACHING.

The Christian preacher, in his public ministration of the Word, has to solve a most difficult problem: how, in the same address, to be interesting and instructive to those of all ages, to those at every point in the scale of mental equipment, and to those who represent an endless variety of moral and spiritual conditions. Theoretically he may see how to do this, but to do it effectively is one of the hardest tasks any man ever tried to perform. Some men are noted as preachers to children, some as preachers to the intellectual classes, and some as having influence with the masses of the common people. Tillotson may have suited his sermons to illiterate old women, and Luther may have had no regard for the doctors and masters in his audience, but the ideal preacher is the man who can touch and influence for good those of all ages, classes and conditions. The wise pastor will, of course, do work for classes as such. He will conduct children's meetings, young people's meetings, and various other meetings; but at least twice on Sunday he stands before the people when no class distinctions can be recognized. Even if his sermon is addressed to only one part of the audience, it must be profitable to all. Who is sufficient for these things?

In most congregations only a limited number have received any very special mental training. Children are caught with pictures, and preachers have realized that the masses are for the moment caught with the spectacular. The conclusion has been hastily drawn by some that here was found the way of true preaching; and so we are in danger of being turned from the right path because of the undue emphasis put upon something that is at best only of incidental value. We are allowing ourselves to be drawn into a spectacular current. In every department of education we are magnifying the *show*. Let me point out some evidences of this.

Froebel did a great service for the children of succeeding generations in the working out of the Kindergarten system. But some would-be teachers, drawing unwarranted conclusions from his scientific work, think if they place any kind of rude picture before children and talk about something else, they are