

## WHAT A DISTURBANCE MAY DO

"A disturbance or alarm in a hospital or asylum might prove fatal to some of the inmates. An elderly gentleman in a benevolent institution amused himself awhile by beating a drum before sunrise. The authorities finally requested this "lovely brother" to remove his instrument to a respectful distance. This illustrates the reason why earnest pastors grow serious when a disturbance arises in the church. The church is like a hospital where are gathered sin-sick persons who in a spiritual sense are fevered, leprous, paralytic, wounded and half dead. A disturbance, like the present cruel distraction which emanates from some of our Theological Seminaries, may destroy some souls who are now passing through a crisis. Will Prof. Briggs please walk softly and remove his drum?"

– *Rev. C. E. Edwards,*  
*in Presbyterian Banner.*

The above is a remarkable statement, whose force consists chiefly in the fact that the writer is a Presbyterian minister who ought to know of its truth; and its publication by the *Presbyterian Banner* shows that the editor of that journal, feeling the pulse of the patients, agrees with the diagnosis.

Let us examine the patient (Presbyterianism) carefully, and no doubt we shall find that its ailment more or less affects other systems called by men churches, and let us then thank God that *the* Church, the one Church, which is the body of Christ, has no such symptoms.

"The [Presbyterian] church is like a hospital where are gathered sin-sick persons who in a spiritual sense are *fevered, leprous, paralytic, wounded* and *half dead.*" In what a dreadful

condition it is! We knew it was bad enough, but did not suppose that its own Doctors of Divinity appreciated the case so fully as this diagnosis would indicate. We are not even yet prepared to conclude that the diagnosis fits *every* individual member of Presbyterianism, though, alas! it undoubtedly well describes the spiritual state of the vast majority.

In view of the facts, can we wonder that Presbyterians fear any commotion or discussion of Biblical, scientific or other questions? Is it not their *sympathy* for the afflicted and weak among them that causes this alarm? And what are the Presbyterian Doctors doing for the sin-sick denomination which places itself under their care? Are they busily engaged in preparing and administering remedies to cure these dreadful troubles? No! the only prescriptions compounded are *anaesthetics* to produce slumber! The cry is Peace, Peace! Let us have quiet! Stop beating any drum which [R1476 : page 360] might arouse the people to thought! Suggest and answer as few questions as possible. If any one blows a trumpet in Zion or cries aloud that the patients are being drugged and stupefied to death instead of being cured with the balm of Gilead – the truth – hound him down; crush him; destroy his voice and influence if he does not understand that the Presbyterian church is a hospital. Under present methods it will always be a hospital; or perhaps more properly it may be termed a "Home for Incurable;" for none are encouraged to hope for a realization of full forgiveness of sins, and some of the oldest of its Doctors disclaim a cure for even themselves, and still cry out, "Lord, have mercy upon *us miserable sinners!*"

But how different is the condition of the true Church of Christ, whose names are written in heaven! It is not a hospital full of wounded, sin-sick, leprous and half-dead people. On the contrary, it is a band of cured ones, healed ones, dead indeed to the world, but alive toward God. They were indeed as others, sin-bitten and dying, but, having looked unto the crucified one, they

were healed, justified freely from all things, "made whiter than snow;" and thus made ready, they were invited to become the companions and representatives of the Great Physician, and to be co-workers with him in curing the sin-sick world.

We are glad to believe that the Presbyterian church contains some few of the members of the one true Church; but the sin-sick, palsied, leprous and half-dead are only so many yet in their sins, who, instead of finding the Great Physician and receiving the balm of Gilead, and obtaining a cure, have been the subjects of professional malpractice. They were put to bed (Isa. 28:20) and to sleep in the Presbyterian church after the manner usual in all other denominations.

If Dr. Briggs and some others in the great Hospital Presbyterian will blow their trumpets and beat their drums effectually, they will certainly do somebody good; for even though they give very discordant and uncertain sounds, they may at least awake the sleepers. And though the confusion may annoy the patients, and especially the Doctors, the results cannot fail to benefit the truth-hungry among them.

Let us who have it hold up the light! Sound the trumpet of truth! "Cry aloud; spare not: lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions." – Isa. 58:1.

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