

Soliloquy of the Old College Bell

I BEGAN service way back in the fifties from the forks of the old beech tree just north-east of the 'old brick.' A rope connected me with a room on the third floor, and for years I rang out the hours to the faithful and to the unfaithful. I supposed I had not an enemy in the world, until one bitter cold winter night, sometime in the sixties, I was turned upside down, securely propped, filled with water and left to my fate. The next morning there I stood, throat heavenward, dumb, speechless, voiceless, my body cracked from top to bottom. Years came and went; I was subjected to the gibes and missiles of the students, but continued faithfully to do my duty from that same old tree. Sometime in the seventies, kind hands, appreciating the insults to which I was subjected, and fearing my dangers, took me to the top of the 'old brick,' where I continued for several years longer to ring out the hours, calling, as before, the faithful and the unfaithful, the godly and the ungodly, to duty, though not, I confess, in those beautiful tones I possessed before that awful winter night.

"One beautiful night in the spring of 1878, about the hour of one, I heard a suspicious noise at the foot of the stairs which led to the top of the building. Fear and trembling came over me, for I was still apprehensive. I shall never forget that night. The stars were out, the moon was refulgent, the air was balmy, and nature was just ready to burst forth in all her glory. First one, then another, then another, then another and another strange form appeared. I thought of that awful night of twenty years before. They talked in whispers and used mysterious and fictitious names. Tools and implements of destruction were drawn from their person, and I was carefully cut from my moorings. Quietly they stole away. All the next day I continued to ring out the hours. Oh, how I wanted to proclaim something else, but could not! The next night, at about the same hour, the very same culprits gently lifted me out, carried me down four flights