

**THE CLOCK STRUCK  
ONE, AND CHRISTIAN  
SPIRITUALIST; PP. 1-205**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649551040

The Clock Struck One, and Christian Spiritualist; pp. 1-205 by Samuel Watson

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

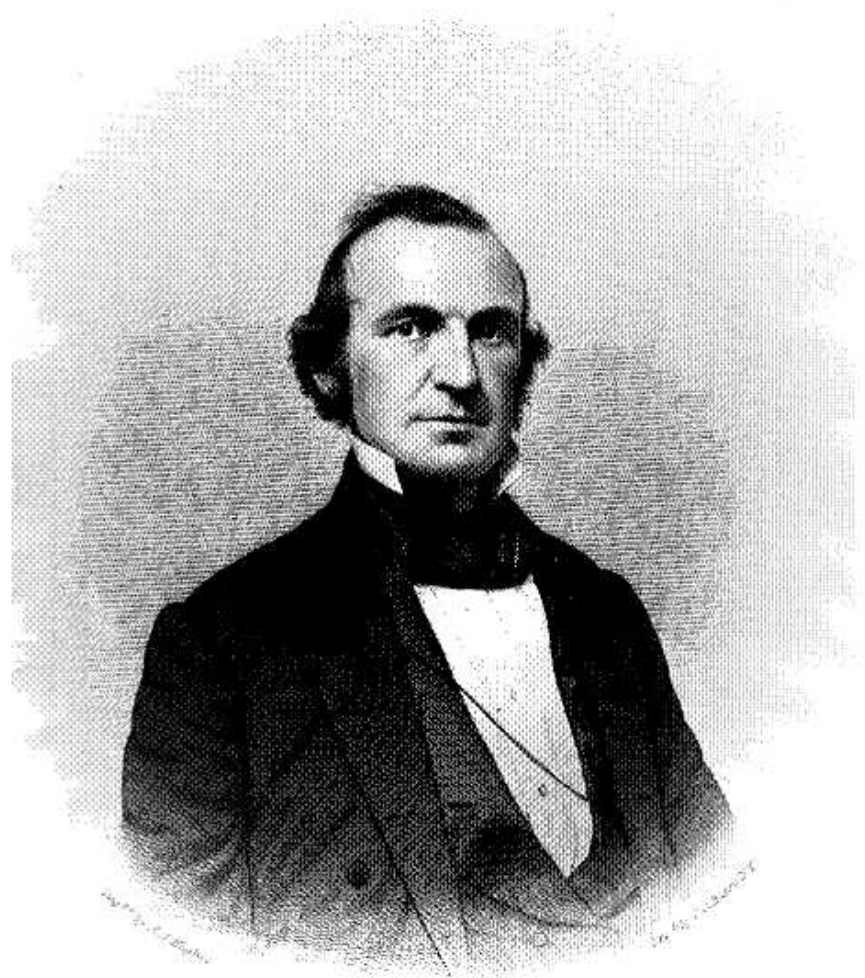
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**SAMUEL WATSON**

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*Samuel Watson*

REV. SAMUEL WATSON.

*Engraved by J. G. Thompson.*

THE  
CLOCK STRUCK ONE,  
AND  
CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST:

BEING

A SYNOPSIS OF THE INVESTIGATIONS OF SPIRIT INTER-  
COURSE BY AN EPISCOPAL BISHOP, THREE MINISTERS,  
FIVE DOCTORS, AND OTHERS, AT MEMPHIS, TENN.,  
IN 1835;

ALSO, THE OPINION OF MANY EMINENT DIVINES, LIVING AND  
DEAD, ON THE SUBJECT, AND COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED  
FROM A NUMBER OF PERSONS RECENTLY.

BY THE

REV. SAMUEL WATSON.

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be  
heirs of salvation?—St. PAUL.

“TRUTH IS MIGHTY, AND WILL PREVAIL.”

LOUISVILLE, KY.:  
JOHN P. MORTON AND COMPANY.

1873.

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Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1872,  
By SAMUEL WATSON,  
in the Office of the Librarian of Congress in Washington.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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### THE CLOCK STRUCK ONE.

(From the *Memphis Appeal*.)

"SINGULAR PHENOMENON VOUCHERD FOR BY A PROMINENT DIVINE.

"'There are more things in heaven and in earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy.'"

I FIND the following in the last issue of that magnificent paper, the *St. Louis Christian Advocate*. It is not about the extract copied in that paper from the *Lexington (Va.) Gazette*, but the little editorial notice of five lines, to which I wish to call attention :

#### "A VERY SINGULAR AND MYSTERIOUS OCCURRENCE.

"The *Lexington (Va.) Gazette* publishes the following, asserting that it has received the 'facts' upon undoubted evidence: 'Mr. Z. J. White, whose death occurred last week, was stricken on his return from our last court to his home in Brownsburg, with the disease that proved fatal. On the day of his return he had occasion to go into a room where was kept a clock belonging to his father, the late Robert White. This clock is of the old-fashioned, high kind, and has been stopped for years, not even having the weights attached, being merely kept as a family relic. When Mr. White entered the room, the clock, which had been silent so long, distinctly struck 'one.' He at the time paid no special attention to it, and not being of superstitious turn of mind, thought it was a mistake, or an illusion of his fancy. The next day, or the day after, he again had occasion to enter the same room. Again the clock struck 'one.' He immediately went out, telling his wife of the circumstance, and remarked that he felt assured he was going to die soon. His premonitions, as we have stated, proved true, and in a few days his spirit passed away.

"There is nothing singular nor mysterious in it. Such results of panic in persons of superstitious imagination are familiar to all who have paid any attention to the morbid relations of mind and brain."

I will give some facts which have come under my own observa-



tion and that of others, which no doubt will, in the estimation of the author of those lines, place me, and others in the category of persons of "superstitious imagination." It is popular with some people to ridicule facts when they have no evidence of disproving them, or argument to overthrow them. It is the easiest way to dispose of many things that occur which can not be accounted for upon any hypothesis or theory with which they are familiar.

Five years since I was at my place with my family, in Woodruff county, near Augusta, Arkansas. My wife's health had been feeble for a long time. Her physician had told me, before we went over there, that she might die in twenty-four hours. Her health was partially restored after a few months residence there. She was, however, taken with her old disease, and after a few days' illness she died. On the mantel in her room was an old clock which had not run or struck for years, only once, which was the day before she died. A little over a year afterward, a noble boy of about four years, named after Robert E. Lee, was taken sick, lived a few days, the clock struck one, and the next day he died.

The following summer my daughters visited my brother, Dr. K. P. Watson, near Memphis, and took with them their youngest brother, Durell. He had always been a very healthy child, but was taken sick at my brother's, and in few hours died. The clock on the mantel in Arkansas struck once again, and in a few hours we received a dispatch that Durell was dead.

The next autumn the clock struck again, and our Lillian, a babe of six months of age, passed away from us to join those who had gone before.

One more case. My father died in that neighborhood about twelve years since. Brother Coleman, the preacher on the Augusta circuit, lived that year on the place. There was about such a clock as is described by the *Gazette*. "It is of the old-fashioned, high kind, and has been stopped for years, not even having the weights attached," but was packed away up stairs with some lumber ever since the death of my father. Brother Coleman's child was sick, the clock struck "one," the child died soon after.

I have given you the facts, Mr. Editor, even at the risk of being called superstitious. I need not give you my explanation or theory, but I would like to have yours. All of these times, were in the daytime that the clock struck, and it was heard by different members of the family every time.

Were you not in Dr. A. H. Redford's office, when we were together in Nashville recently, when he told us of the glass breaking over

the picture of Bishop Andrew? You remember he has a fine likeness of all the Bishops hanging against the wall in his office. It seems—it may be superstitious to believe it, but Dr. Redford told it to quite a number of preachers—that about the time the Bishop was attacked with what produced his death, the glass broke over his picture. I then told them what I have written of the clock striking, etc.

Yesterday evening, as I was going home, I met a friend at the door of a music store on Main Street. A gentleman came in just then with his arms full of picture-frames. I mentioned the fact of the glass of Bishop Andrew's picture breaking. He said he had known of a number of similar cases. There are many things occurring equally "singular and mysterious," but people do not like to be called "superstitious," and hence rarely mention them, for fear of it. I ask the question, are these "results of panic," or "the morbid relations of mind and brain?" as you said of the Virginia case. Or are they given us to demonstrate one of the most consoling doctrines taught in the Bible? I leave my friends of the *St. Louis Christian Advocate*, or any one else, to answer to the satisfaction of many anxious inquirers after truth, was it "panic" that caused the clock to strike when the child was over a hundred miles distant, and we had not the slightest knowledge of his having been sick.

SAMUEL WATSON.

I propose to give Dr. Bond's editorials and my reply to them, that the public may see this matter from the beginning. He introduced some things which I considered irrelevant to the subject under consideration. I have therefore omitted them and my reply to them, because they have no bearing on the subject under discussion.

(From the *St. Louis Christian Advocate*.)

"THE CLOCK STRUCK ONE.

"The root of all superstition is, that to the nature of the mind of all men it is consonant for the affirmative or active to effect more than the negative or privative; so that a few times hitting or presence countervails oftentimes failing or absence."—Bacon: *Adv. of Learning*.

"In our paper of June 13th we read, at our home in Maryland, a letter from Rev. Samuel Watson, occasioned by a few remarks we had appended to a story about the supernatural relations of the bell of an old clock to a divination of death. As we understand Christianity to require us to defend society, as much as we can, against the powerful, natural tendency to magic, which from the days of Moses we have authority to recognize as the most vivacious of the

enemies of the truth, we wrote a few lines to deny the inference of the supernatural in the matter. Bro. Watson comes valiantly to the defence of the miraculous in the clock, and in the full assurance of his faith in its premonitions, rebukes us as belonging to a class 'who ridicule facts when they have no evidence disproving them, or arguments to overpower them.' We certainly manifested no such disposition. We did not *ridicule the facts*, nor even deny them. We admitted that the old clock struck, and that the man who heard it subsequently died. These were the only *facts* in the statement. What we *denied* was, the unjustifiable inference that the clock struck because the man was about to die, and *struck* by miraculous interposition of the power and prescience of God. If it did, that old clock is as awful as the burning bush in which God appeared to Moses. It is an oracle of death, more terrible than the Ark of God, which did *not* foretell the death of men. We denied the miracle, and suggested a rational explanation. Bro. Watson, no doubt, thinks that explanation improbable. Suppose it is, at least it is *possible*, and *any possible explanation of a physical phenomenon is more probable—in other words, more entitled to belief—than a miracle; for it is the very essence of a miracle that it is absolutely improbable in nature.* We would not be justified in believing any miracle recorded in Scripture if we could account for the facts stated upon natural principles. The overwhelming force of the miracles that attested our religion, is secured to us only by insisting upon this inexorable canon of criticism.

"We are sincerely anxious to avoid giving offense to Bro. Watson. He is very sensitive to the charge of being superstitious. He need not be so sensitive. He has the great majority of people with him—perhaps there are a few who could show themselves clear of superstition upon close examination. The term is offensive, but the condition is almost universal. The greater part of the Christian world are but little freer from it than the worshippers of the *first* deities whose busts filled the Pantheon.

"Among the most educated, the blood is yet infected with the virus of the old magic. Dr. Johnson went through the streets touching posts, and was careful to put the safe foot foremost in leaving a house. The late Emperor and Empress of France consulted witches and mediums. Queen Victoria, and her ladies, followed her just-married daughter to her carriage, and sent good luck after her in a shower of old shoes. We think few ladies would be married on Friday. Countless omens and magical formulas are in activity every day in the houses of Protestants, who seem utterly