

A

# REVIEW

OF

DR. DODS' INVOLUNTARY THEORY

OF

*Spiritual Manifestations.*

BY

W. S. COURTNEY.

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# REVIEW OF DR. DODS ON SPIRITUALISM.

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## Chapter One.

It is a very pleasant exercise to review the work of an author who is a candid and able investigator of science, clear in his analysis, comprehensive in his synthesis, logical in his deductions, and who has the merit of at least *some* originality in his ideas. To be brought thus into contact with a mind stored with accumulated research, impartial in its tendencies, of great generalizing powers, divested of all educational prejudices, free and noble in its thought, and lucid and logical in its argumentation, can not but be invigorating and exalting. Contact with such minds sets you ahead in the realms of philosophy and science, makes you feel strong and healthy and courageous, and furnishes you new views and ideas, or places your old ones in new relations and lights. They spread a moral and mental aroma around them, and impart a vital sustenance to the moral, intellectual, and scientific world. I love to dwell in the sphere of their emanations; and my greatest intellectual delight is to study their thought, test their conclusions, try the principles they disclose, and if, in my matured judgment, they are con-

sonant with what I conceive to be truth and fact, commend and enforce and illustrate them to the world. Believing it to be each and every one's duty to think for himself, to investigate and analyze, to the extent of his powers, all the problems of life which in any way affect his destiny, and work out his own conclusions, so I, as far as in me lies, endeavor not to yield my judgment to any author, or become irretrievably entangled in any speculative system. If the train of my thought, the burden of my experience, and the rational conclusions I draw are coincident with another's, it is a pleasant reflection; but they have thence no greater authority over my mind, simply because of that coincidence. I see it to be the plainest duty of a man to strictly conserve his own individuality in all that concerns his well-being, now and in the future—to be *himself* and nobody else, in all the manifold relations which his destiny here and hereafter involves. But if it be pleasant, exalting, and exhilarating to dwell and remark upon the works of an author who stands up, in the integrity of his soul, free from all bigotry, partiality, and domineering vanity and conceit—who loves the truth and the righteous life it admonishes better than himself, and who has pursued his investigations with a single eye to that truth and that life, so, on the other hand, it is irksome and humiliating to be brought into contact with an author haughty and despotic in his thought, overcome with vanity, ridden down by an *ism* or favorite theory, by which he tries all men and all things, stone-blind by hereditary and acquired prejudices, a panderer to the largest influence, and who, under a hypocritical show of fairness and impartiality, seeks your confidence only to betray it. Such minds are bold, unscrupulous, and obtrusive. Loving themselves better than the truth, its rays never melt away their prejudices, which become stereotyped, and blockade all the channels of free thought. They are dogmatic, illiberal, and aggressive, and almost always im-

movably attached to the hoary but yielding and sinking errors of the past. They are the most unsafe and uncandid of all investigators of scientific truths. They can not bring to the work, as in the case we are about to review, an impartial and unbiased judgment. Their minds are preoccupied by speculative theories in philosophy and dogmatic creeds in theology and religion. Their hereditary prejudices and canonized errors are outraged at every step by the phenomenal evolution of hitherto undiscovered scientific principles. Their vanity will not suffer them to yield their anointed dogmas, and the unsubstantial philosophy elaborately built up on these dogmas, nor will their bigotry allow them to yield to or even see the truth when plainly presented to them in their investigations. When facts and principles accumulate upon them, at open variance with their orthodox standards, they resort to the vainest and idlest and most stupid modes of explaining them consistently with those standards. Under the delusive fantasy of their creeds, they will accept and believe the wildest absurdities, apparently reconciling the new discoveries, phenomena, and principles with their preconceived notions. Free from those prejudices and influences, they would laugh at their own folly and hoot at their absurdity. If by any machinery in the brain the turning of a screw would instantly dispel their fantasies and purify the polluted and fatuous vision which in them transposes wisdom into folly, and *vice versa*, they would be abashed at their own superlative nonsense. Such men are not the proper investigators of scientific subjects. They do science more harm than good. They mix it up and involve it with error interminable. They can not move a peg without compromising the truth. They can not be fair and honest. They are overruled every instant in their investigations by the *afflatus* of creed and prejudice. They pass all facts and laws through an orthodox alembic. Their gravest efforts, in nine cases out of ten, amount but to pleas

for their own prejudices and errors. Science suffers more at the hands of such men than from all its other enemies. I feel fully warranted in placing the author of the work I am about to review in this category. He is a bigot. He loves himself better than the truth. He is neither candid nor honest. He tortures facts and principles into conformity with his blundering and improbable theory, and those that can not be thus deduced he complacently denies. He entered upon the investigation of the subject of "Spiritual Manifestations" (if, indeed, he investigated it at all) full of prejudices against the spiritual theory, and with the feeling and conviction that it was not true, could not be true, and that, at all hazards, it must be met and overthrown. He did not bring to its consideration an open and impartial, free and candid thought. He prejudged it from beginning to end. It was ridiculous and absurd. He conceived it as heretical, wicked, and diabolical—as abolishing Christianity, superseding the Bible, and destroying all religion. He felt, like the inquisitors of Galileo's day, that something must be done to check and crush this tremendous heresy that was spreading over the land like the morning light. In his estimation it overthrew all orthodox standards to which he was given over, and subverted the fundamentals of "*our holy religion*."

That this was the state of mind in which he commenced and carried on his investigations is apparent from the following extracts, taken from the first pages of the work, while yet introducing the subject and stating the *motives* which impelled him to write on it:

"The great mass of the Christian community have as yet remained indifferent to these things, contenting themselves with the belief that as the whole is the work of trick, deception, or collusion, it must and will come to naught. And it is moreover believed that it is confined to the low and ignorant class of society, and is therefore unworthy of serious

consideration, as it can do little or no harm. But let us not deceive ourselves with such fallacious hopes—such groundless expectations.”—(Page 21.)

“These and other wonders, too tedious to enumerate, are stated to have been performed, and yet the public mind, and even the ministers of the Gospel, are silent or carelessly slumbering on while the advocates of this new and startling theory are gathering tremendous and fearful force by continual accessions. Periodicals are already established, edited with no mean ability, and some purport to receive, not only their subject-matter, but the very words in which it is expressed, from immortal Spirits in a future state of existence! (Just think of that.) Yes, periodicals are published, meetings and conventions are held, and even clergymen are already in the field, who profess to preach as they are instructed by the spiritual-rapping and spiritual-writing mediums; and yet clergymen are securely slumbering on while these fearful elements are in motion throughout the land.”—(Page 23.)

“And what, I ask, are the grand objects to which these movements are tending, and in what will they result? They certainly portend a future revelation, because they are calculated, if true, to supersede the teachings of the prophets and of Jesus Christ and his apostles by a new and, as some believe, a higher and far more superior revelation than that contained in the Scriptures of truth. And yet the lovers of the Bible and the ministers of Christ are slumbering on in security, while the Spirit-rappings and Spirit-writings, as a new mode of communication from heaven to earth, are gaining new and continual accessions of adherents, and gathering force and power.”—(Page 24.)

Here the *animus* fully discloses itself. Here the secret and determined purpose of uncompromising opposition to the theory, true or false, shows its cloven foot. The question evidently with him was not whether it was intrinsically true or false, or how much truth it involved, but how to successfully oppose it; how to check its rapid growth; how to defeat its purposes which he misconceived; how to defeat the orthodox faith against its encroachments; how to reconcile it with “*gospel truths*,” how to contravene its bearings, and how to conserve and defend his creed against it. He assumes the

falsity of the spiritual theory brought to explain all these various modern phenomena before he even enters upon its investigation. His whole efforts are directed to the demolition of the theory, without regard to the great truths that obviously underlie it. What sort of man is this to investigate and resolve any scientific problem? Is it at all likely that he will see things in their proper light? Would he state them candidly and fairly, if he did? Would he not torture, garble, misconstrue, misrepresent, and deny the facts and laws to suit his foregone conclusions and preestablished theory? Would we not hope in vain for the truth from such a mind? He has a creed to defend, prejudices to guard, and a favorite theory to support and enforce. The man who has taken sides, declared for a party, and enlisted his influence, prejudices, zeal, and advocacy in the issue, is utterly incapacitated for adjudging impartially and declaring where the right is. It is an inexcusable impertinence in him to assume the right of deciding the dispute. But our author is not perhaps accustomed to such nice forensic distinctions. He has, notwithstanding his partisanism, understood to hear and determine; and has emphatically decided the question for *one side* at least, viz., the orthodox, which is no longer the scientific world. This is quite an easy task, that may at any time be satisfactorily performed by any shallow pretender to science. It was quite efficiently attended to, as successive occasions and the growth of truth required, in turn by the knee-joint-snapping scheme of the renowned Buffalo doctors; then by Reverend Chauncey Burr and his brother of toe-joint memory; then by Professor Faraday's muscular contraction, and now it is again satisfactorily explained by our author's "involuntary powers!" What the next explanation will be it is impossible to divine, because the last gives us no indication of what the next will be. These repeated explanations, coming at intervals, are a great relief to the clergy and the orthodox

and conservative press. They give them time to breathe and wipe away the perspiration, and perchance a sweet night's rest. They dispel the agony for a time, and give back to the unhappy devotees again a little while their idols to be loved and worshiped. But this respite is of brief duration. Soon the fallacious support sinks beneath them, and they are again in trouble. The danger thickens, and doubts accumulate, and they are again obliged to invent some new mode of explaining and defending themselves, which is again perfectly satisfactory of course. It is pitiable to see with what greedy avidity and confident assurance the orthodox and conservative press seize upon these fallacious and ephemeral supports, and with what desperate tenacity they cling to them. It is wonderful the cohesive retentiveness of life these aged errors exhibit; and the subtle talent they employ to retard the progress of the science that lays bare their enormities, and to eke out their existence a little longer. It is the law of error, if error has any law, to fight like a hero, hang on to the last, and die hard.

Any one who will read the first twenty-five pages of the work now under consideration, will be at no loss to discover the condition of mind in which the author commenced his investigations. He there sets forth the rapid increase and spread of this heresy—the number of mediums and advocates. How it embraces in its fold some of the best minds of the times. How it has invaded the bench and the bar, the pulpit and the legislative halls, and numbers among its adherents judges, lawyers, preachers, governors, senators, representatives, etc. Then he discourses of its unheard-of pretensions, deprecates the mischief it is producing, and concludes that something must be devised and done, and done effectually and forthwith to forestall, counteract, and defeat this grand latter-day development of infidelity. No suspicion seems to have insinuated itself into his mind that it *may* be what it pretends. That is

wholly out of the question. It is utterly impossible that it should be true. God would never make such a use of his power as to establish in the laws of his universe any conditions, or principles, or potencies that would, in the revolution of ages, tend to and develop such intercommunication between the upper and nether worlds as is now pretended. He is not such a trifler as to permit the "raptured inhabitants" of the eternal world to "tediously dole out their intelligence by rapping for letters to spell out words!" In addition to this alarum, the reader will not fail to observe in those early pages some considerations of *policy* in the treatment of this subject—how it could be most effectually met and defeated, and at the same time preserve a show of consistency, philosophy, and fairness. Accordingly the author assumes the character of the diplomatist and goes off on *expediency* in this wise :

"I am well aware that those who are in reality skeptical, have never paused to reflect whether the manifestations made through mediums might not after all be true and in accordance with the soundest principles of philosophy, even if departed Spirits had nothing to do with this matter. They have never paused to reflect that mediums might after all be in reality sincere and honest, and yet not understand how these communications are made. I am perfectly satisfied that they are honest. And now suppose that we, skeptics and all, for a moment suppose them to be so. This being admitted, do you not clearly perceive that if you call them impostors, and charge them with performing all these things by trick, deception, or collusion, *that your charge has no other tendency than to make them more firm in the belief that it is all done by the agency of Spirits?* They know and feel that they are honest; you have given them no rational cause for the effect produced; you even deny that there is a rational cause, and *hence they remain confirmed.* You give them to understand that there can be no natural cause assigned for the phenomena, that they lie far beyond the realms of philosophy. You give them to understand that they are indeed honest, and do not perform these things by trick; then they must be ascribed to supernatural agents or Spirits, and this you are yourself in such case ready to believe.



"Now, as the medium knows that he is honest, do you not perceive that you confirm him more and still more in the belief of its being Spirits in the same ratio that you oppose him by questioning his sincerity and honor? Indeed, I am not acquainted with any person who is a decided unbeliever in these manifestations but what attributes them to trick and deception in the mediums through whom they are made. He looks upon the whole as an arrant humbug. Nor do I know an individual who is a decided believer in these manifestations but what attributes them to a supernatural agency exerted by departed Spirits in a future state of being through mortal mediums, by which they hold converse with the friends on earth. I know of no one who has assumed the middle ground between the two and contended for a philosophical cause, and who is a *rational* believer."—(Pages 18, 19.)

What impression do we get from this language? Do we see in it the single purpose of the discovery and evolution of the truth, regardless of questions of policy and expediency? Does it affect us with an idea of devotedness to that truth independent of all extraneous considerations? Had not the author in view when he penned these paragraphs the cunning policy of making the theory he was about to pronounce popular with his readers and efficient to overthrow the spiritual theory? His end and aim, as above disclosed, was *not truth*, but victory—was not a candid and impartial investigation of the whole subject for the purpose of eliminating the truth, but to furnish the anxious and feverish conservative world with, as he thought, a rational alternative expedient to repose upon in security. There can be no question about the motives which impelled him to investigate (?) and write. His bias and consequent recklessness and unfairness show themselves all along through the volume. Moreover, like all the bigoted adherents of modern traditionary mythology, he is constantly assuming the knowledge of the things, laws, and conditions of the future world, about which he really knows little or nothing—a realm where their imaginations are allowed to expatiate at pleasure

and give back their revelations as realities. They people this *terra incognita* with the mythological creations of their fancy, and build up in its dim and shadowy regions all the heavenly hierarchies which stand upon and are the efflorescences of their earthly creeds! They have no scientific knowledge of the other life—no accurate information touching its economies. They resist the influx of its light, and mock at the demonstrations of its laws and realities. All with them is mere assumption and vague dreaming. Witness the following extracts :

“ It (the rationale of these manifestations) exists in the realms of reason, and is therefore susceptible of a philosophical investigation and solution without appealing to the Spirit-world, or *disturbing the repose of its raptured inhabitants*. They have finished their earthly career, and are susceptible of nothing but the impressions and feelings that appertain to a future world, while we are swift on our journey to meet them in *that country where the sun never sets*.”—(Page 14.)

“ The instinctive powers which are implanted in his mysterious nature for a noble end, and are principally intended and reserved for a higher and more glorified state of action in that world *where death and pain and change shall be no more*.”—(Page 65.)

These are but specimens of his continued assumption of the knowledge of the things of the spiritual world, about which he really knows nothing. They appear all through the volume, which is redolent of such cant. How does he know that the inhabitants of the future world are in a state of “*repose*?” How does he know they are “*raptured*?” How does he know that the sun never sets in that country? How does he know that there is a sun there at all? How does he know that there is no death there? That there is no pain? That there is no more change? Whence does he derive the knowledge of these things? Are they the demonstrative results of scientific researches, or the traditionary tales of Christian mythology, woven into the texture of his soul while yet he was in his

cradle, and which grew up with him, nourished by education, inculcated by precept, and enforced by example, until they hardened into the mature bigot? Now I submit that such a mind is utterly incompetent to investigate and adjudge any scientific or philosophic question that even remotely infringes upon any of his manifold dogmas. I submit that he will and has prejudged the question; that we have no right to expect fairness and honesty and truth at his hands. The chances are against the truth ten to one, and accordingly throughout the volume we see the most shameful garbling of the facts, the most unwarrantable constructions and explanations, and the flat denial of all the phenomena that his ingenuity could reduce and torture into consistency with his theory.

## Chapter Two.

BUT it is time we should pass to the consideration of this theory, which our author adduces to cover and explain all those wonderful phenomena, of all kinds, that have been attributed to the agency of departed Spirits—this “middle course,” which he thinks will be effectual to silence the rappings, dispel the mania, and put an end to the vulgar credulity of the deluded Spiritualists—this “Compromise Bill” which he seeks to introduce as a “*finality*.” What is it? Why, on page 27, he says that “there are but TWO GRAND POINTS to be considered. The first is INVOLUNTARY MOTION—such as *rapping, writing, and moving of furniture*. And the second is, the INTELLIGENCE connected with these manifestations.” Then, on page 29, he brings forward his formula, under which, by all the subtilty and ingenuity he can command, he brings the multifarious phenomena, physical, intelligent, emotional, prevoyant, etc., etc., and which are referred to the agency of Spirits—viz.: “*The entire passivity of the voluntary powers of the mind and of the voluntary nerves is the cause of unduly charging the involuntary powers with too great an electro-nervous force, and the result is those singular manifestations that are so confidently attributed to the agency of Spirits!!*” He further proceeds to say that: “After being thus charged, the voluntary powers have doubtless some agency in producing the sounds, by a concentrated expectation, thus aiding the involuntary powers to produce an equilibrium, for there is a sympathetic connection between the two forces.” He goes on to detail, with consid-

erable prolixity, where the seat of the voluntary nerves and powers is, namely, in the front brain, or cerebrum, where reside conscious thought, reason, intelligence, etc., and that the seat of the involuntary nerves and powers is the back brain, or cerebellum, where reside all the involuntary, instinctual, intuitive, and motor energies of the organism. He takes to himself great credit as the original discoverer of the involuntary powers of the human mind. Hear him:

“No writer, at least to my knowledge, has ever contended that *mind* has also its *involuntary powers*, acting through the *involuntary nerves*, to move the heart and carry on all the functions of life, till I brought it forward. I am the first, so far as my knowledge extends, who, in mental philosophy, has ever contended that *involuntary powers* belong to the mind of man.”—(Page 34.)

But after all, this glory don't belong to him. The voluntary and involuntary powers of both the human mind and body were discovered and announced by Swedenborg years before Bovee Dods was born. He fully and minutely traces their connection, and clearly shows how the voluntary and involuntary powers of the human soul are functionized in the cerebrum and cerebellum, and thence indefinitely ramify in their corresponding nerves in the physical organism. *Vide* Sp. Diary, 3,860, and A. C., 4,325 to 4,329. This completely takes the wind out of the painted sails of our self-glorifying author, and leaves them in a mournfully collapsed condition.

He elsewhere repeats his theoretical formula, giving it a little more breadth and complication, and including a few more elements, etc., thus:

“All the so-called Spirit-manifestations are produced by the involuntary powers of the human mind, through the nervous force of those persons only who are either in the *electro-psychological state*, or in the *mesmeric state*, or in an entire or partial *cataleptic state*—these three.

All my arguments center here, and hinge on the involuntary powers of the mind."—(Page 81.)

Then he exhausts a lecture in stating, illustrating, elucidating, and enforcing this formula, and two or three more lectures in bringing all the phenomena under it, admitting, of course, only those which *can* be thus brought under it, and unscrupulously denying all the others; the plain English of all which is, that if you are born an electro-psychological subject, and sit down, and lay passive your voluntary mental powers and nerves, your involuntary powers and nerves become, by-and-by, over-charged with electro-nervous force, and according to your "expectations," or psychological impressions, it is given off in raps, in involuntary writings, in table-tipping and turning, in furniture-moving, etc., etc., provided there is contact of your body with the object; for he ignores and denies all that numerous class of cases of the movement of furniture without contact! This is the whole theory and *modus operandi* in brief! How much is it in advance of the Faraday hypothesis? If you are subject to electro-psychologic impressions or states, and you sit down to a table in a quiet and passive mood, very soon your involuntary apparatus bloats up with a redundant electro-nervous fluid, and you are ready for an explosion, in pursuance of your expectations or impressions! Hear him:

"It is asked how the table is tipped or moved, if not by Spirits! Answer: It is done in one of *two ways*, if done honestly. The first is by the medium's own physical force, exerted through the involuntary nerves from the back brain, and without the medium's knowledge. By placing her hands tightly upon the table, and keeping the voluntary powers of her mind entirely passive, as regards the motion of her hands, keeping her mind calmly and steadily fixed upon the expected result, then the involuntary powers of her mind residing in the back brain send out their electro-magnetic force, gradually and imperceptibly stiffen and

convulse the arms, and bear them down with a force sufficient to move it. This is done without her knowledge, because her hands and arms, being at that instant cataleptic, have no more feeling than in a fit. But on being asked if she is not tipping it, the moment she turns her attention to examine the state of her hands, her voluntary powers, quick as lightning, equalize the forces between the two brains, the rigidity is gone, and the feeling returns, and she answers, 'No! I am not tipping it.' This is the most common mode of tipping and moving tables, when one or two mediums are seated alone. The *second* way in which it is done is by electro-magnetically charging the table from a living battery of many human hands, and then attracting or repelling it without contact, or raising it as high as their heads, by a concentration of their minds upon the object, and the slightest touch from the entire circle. This is by far the most mysterious, yet the noblest and most interesting mode, and can not but strike the mind with astonishment and delight. Though far more difficult than the raising of a balloon, because the table is more solid, yet it is equally simple. The millions of pores in the tables are filled with electro-magnetism from human brains, which is inconceivably lighter than the gas which fills the balloon. And as it possesses also the power of attraction and repulsion in itself, the table will follow the human hands and brains from whence it was charged, and with the slightest united efforts from the fingers of the surrounding circle it can be raised as high as their heads, but no higher. And what, I ask, is better calculated to produce a united effort of minds and bodies to act in unison than to say: 'Will the Spirits raise the table?' 'Will they tip it?' 'Will they move it from the medium?' 'Will they move it toward the medium?'—(Pages 87, 88.)

What ridiculous nonsense this is! Can any man of plain, practical common sense, who is at all familiar with those various phenomena, be for a moment deluded by such absurd subterfuges? Such a crude and inadequate explanation of the mystery may serve to satisfy the orthodox and conservative press and party, who incessantly hunger and thirst for such garbage, and who know nothing practically or observantly of the multiform phenomena attributed to the agency of Spirits; but any man of good, hard, practical every-day sense, who knows something of the

phenomena, will shake his head and laugh as soon as the theory is propounded to him. It leaves the most striking and wonderful class of phenomena wholly unexplained, namely, the movement of chairs and tables, books, articles of furniture, etc., without any physical contact whatever, and without even the knowledge of the medium or the will of any one present. Pens or pencils are taken up without any visible hand or finger, and messages written out that no one present anticipated nor guessed until they were read. I have seen a common mahogany card-table, with a semi-revolving leaf, drawn out from the wall by some invisible power, into the center of the room, the leaf turned round and folded down, then the table turned, with care, completely over, with the pedestal upward, then again turned back, the leaf spread and turned round, and the table ran back to its place. And all this repeatedly in an evening. I have often heard the piano played with skill and readiness when no one was within three feet of it, and the medium totally ignorant of the first principles of music. I have seen objects taken up and thrown in various directions by an invisible power, unexpectedly and without any request or thought of it being done. I have been unexpectedly grasped by an invisible hand, pushed and pulled, and felt the nimble fingers of the invisibles in my side-pocket, and *saw* abstracted thence articles which were flung upon the floor. But why rehearse my experience? There are thousands of such demonstrations in all parts of the Union, and within the experience of almost any one who has taken the trouble to patiently and candidly follow up his investigations. If we can repose any faith at all in human testimony, and in the evidence of our senses, we must accept these as undoubted verities. They have accumulated within the past year to a surprising extent. He who ignores them is willfully blind and obdurately stupid. To say that all the witnesses who testify to these things,



yourself perhaps included, were psychologized, and that the furniture did not move thus and so in reality, but it was only a psychological impression, is to insult our common-sense. When you succeed in convincing men that their faith in the ordinary occurrences of human life, and the testimony of their senses, is only psychological impressions, and that we live in a dream-land, and every step we take is a phantasy, then you may delude them into the belief that these phenomena were only the unsubstantial, floating projections of their own imaginations. To explain them in this way would tend to make phantasy the normal life—tend to make our existence here a hallucination, and the *real* occurrences of life the strange, abnormal exceptions! But our author has unwittingly made no other provision in his politic theory for this class of cases than, like Faraday, to deny them or explain them thus. It seems to me that this should at once demolish his theory, and end the dispute. Listen to him:

“I now seriously and decidedly challenge any medium in the United States to raise the lightest stand from the ceiling to the floor, without contact, or to sit down alone, and place his hands upon the end of a table that has four legs at the corners, and make it tip from him. I believe that persons have seen *apparently* a table rise from the floor to the ceiling, but they were in the electro-psychological state—and I have produced that impression upon hundreds—yet the table never stirred from the spot where it stood!”—(Page 90.)

“Let mediums step into a room, and not touch the table at all, and then cause it to be tipped, raised, or moved, and their work is done. For one I am a convert, and will unflinchingly face a sneering and scoffing world.”—(Page 93.)

But suppose they *did* step into an adjoining room, and without touching the table at all, it tipped, moved, or raised up from the floor in the presence of Dr. Dods, is any one so stupid as to believe that *that* would con-

vince him? Would that end the controversy, and convert him? By no means. A man whose unyielding bigotry and indomitable self-conceit, when his creed or opinion is questioned, drive him to subtilize, equivocate, and deny and explain away the most undoubted physical phenomena, would have a *salvo* at hand to cover and explain it. He would, no doubt, say that his senses were deceiving him, that he was in the electro-psychologic state, and that it was the projected image of his impressions. He would say that, entering the room with the strong expectation of seeing the table rise, and in a state of entire passivity as to his involuntary powers, he lapsed into a psycho-magnetic condition, and apparently saw the table rise!—that it was only a phantasy, a mere appearance!

These lectures, it seems, were written out some three years ago, delivered at various times in the *interim*, and only lately published. At the time they were written out, the movement of heavy physical bodies by these invisible agencies, without contact of the mediums, had not become so general, striking, and undeniable, and our unscrupulous author may have been *then* comparatively safe in positively denying them. But the lapse of three years has immensely accumulated the phenomena and the testimony, and the recent publication of his lectures without emendation in this respect, is a virtual reiteration of his denial of them. What shall we say of it? Has he investigated the subject with any degree of care, patience, and diligence? Has he sought to inform himself at all on this branch of the facts? Although they have been loudly importuning him for the last three years to note and explain them, yet he has voluntarily closed his eyes and stopped his ears to their solicitations. To such wild extremes of unfairness and falsity will a man's bigoted assurance and determined opposition carry him, when engaged in the investigation of a scientific problem. If these *be* facts, then they completely knock the

noise out of the Doctor's theory; and that they *are* facts I submit to the decision of all who sincerely seek to know the truth. They are attested daily by thousands whose testimony, by all the rules of evidence, we are imperatively bound to accredit. No fact or phenomenon in the physical universe is much better substantiated. How shall our author extricate himself from the awkward predicament in which they place him? Will he continue to deny them? Will he longer equivocate? Will he declare that the tens of thousands who have witnessed these phenomena, at various times and places, and under every shade of circumstance, throughout the length and breadth of the land, were in the electro-psychologic state, and that they were mere fantasies or the projected images of their surcharged involuntary powers aided by their expectation? This, I repeat, is sheer absurdity and nonsense. Those phenomena have been witnessed by men in their clear, waking, natural conditions, in the full and normal possession of all their faculties, as they witness the ordinary daily occurrences of life. It is ten-fold more probable that the Doctor was in this electro-psychologic state when he conceived and penned that hypothesis, and that *it* is the unreal and fantastic projection of his hallucinated brain. It is far more probable that he was psychologically impressed to believe it true, and that his denial of all those striking phenomena came from his psychological state, self-induced by an intense desire, "*concentrated expectation*," and hope. If these phenomena are not the real, outside, *bona fide* demonstrations they purport to be, but only electro-psychologic impressions and appearances, then we have no assurance that our whole lives, with all their teeming events, are not also electro-psychologic impressions; that we do not tread a fairy world, that we do not live in enchanted houses, that we do not travel on dreamy railroads, drawn by phantom locomotives! This hypothesis destroys the distinction be-

tween the real and the unreal, confounds the normal and abnormal conditions of man, and discredits all human experience and testimony. For I insist, that if you hold that all these things were merely psychological impressions, there is no valid ground for any distinction between them and the ordinary every-day occurrences, so far as they can be attested by our senses, and proved to exist by human testimony. They are seen, and felt, and heard in the same manner; they occur without any "concentrated expectation," and without the will of the witnesses, and unexpectedly, like numerous other ordinary phenomena. There is nothing to distinguish them from other physical occurrences, either in themselves or in those who observe them. There is every thing to indicate in their production an invisible and independent force, wholly outside of, and apart from, all will-force, passivity, or psychical conditions of those present in the external; and no man who plants firmly on common sense, and refuses to subtilize the question, and get inveigled and deluded in the labyrinths of a crazy hypothesis, can have any other belief. This dreamy and utopian hypothesis, that requires such a refinement of learning and subtilty to make it go, may satisfy the scholastic recluse, who knows little of practical life; but when it is submitted to the thought and analysis of the actors on the stage of human existence, who try its intrinsic worth, it forthwith perishes in the ordeal. It is the rigid common sense of practical man that corrects the vagaries of philosophers. The reductions of theories to practical tests, and the submission of abstract questions to matter-of-fact men, abrades them of their imaginary virtues, limit their scope, and if wholly speculative and visionary, dissipate them at once. Facts in linsey-woolsey, and theories tried by common sense, and reduced to practice, are worth more than all the philosophy of the schools in broad-cloth and buckram. The speculative excogitations of the stu-

dent and the philosopher, to be good for any thing, must be revised and corrected by constant appeals to the ordinary, every-day good sense of practical minds. The common mind is better qualified to observe and attest *facts* and *try* principles, while the abstract intellect is better adapted to discover and trace out those principles. The common mind is subject to no dreaming or hallucination, and promptly rejects all theories that do not fully cover, consist with, and explain all the facts. You can not subtilize it into an affirmation of a theory that tortures and mangles some of the facts, excludes others, and misconceives or perverts the principles that govern them. In this respect the Doctor's theory is notoriously discrepant. It does not cover one half the facts, and those it does assume to cover and explain, are garbled and misrepresented in the most shameful manner.

But the Doctor may exclaim, "Show me these things! I have never seen them. Bring on your mediums and your tables now, and perform these wonders, so and so, for me, and I will believe. Come here with your mediums and move *my* table, without contact with it, and let me see the wonders that are said to be performed," etc. I do not know that the believers in the spiritual theory are under any obligations to accommodate you. I would not walk five steps to gratify you; nor, were there no one but you and I concerned, would I argue five minutes on the subject with you. He who is either too indifferent or lazy to *go after* the truth is not ripe for it, and would not receive it when *brought* to him. He who would possess its silver ore, must dig for it. It is attained only through labor, with an ardent heart and willing hand. If you do not take sufficient interest in the subject to start you from your easy-chair, you deserve to remain in darkness and ignorance. The sincere seeker after truth, himself hastens with alacrity to the search, in eminent contrast to the tardy steps of

a jealous self-conceit, and a bigoted suspicion. I conceive it to be every man's duty to seek out the truth for himself, and *at his own cost*. Why should he burden others with the labor? Go yourself and seek out the phenomena, witness them, analyze and classify them, and draw your own conclusions. This it is every man's duty to do, and not impertinently to call upon another to come and evangelize you. Feeling that I can never be excused from noting and investigating phenomena for myself, and exercising my own reason and judgment in drawing my conclusions and forming my opinions, inasmuch as no one else can tell the cost of my errors, myself being alone responsible, I accordingly ask no man to come and do my work for me, or to become responsible for my opinions; nor do I care whether another individual in the universe agrees with me. It is a prerogative I have as high as heaven, to seek truth for myself, to observe, investigate, analyze, and conclude for myself, free from all authority and influence, tradition, revelation, gubernatorialism, ecclesiasticism, law, custom, or Mrs. Grundy; and if you, John Bovee Dods, had undertaken to investigate these phenomena, analyze and classify them, and draw your own conclusions free from these authorities and influences, and deeply feeling your own responsibility to yourself and to the truth, you would never have denied some of the facts, misconceived and tortured others, and begotten a theory which requires the whole body of humanity to be put into the electro-psychologic state to believe in it! You would never have sought with a persuasive voice, a seducing smile, and a honeyed tongue to perpetuate your bigoted notions, and by a hypocritical profession of fairness and candor to delude the people into a belief of your impartiality and honesty.

## Chapter Three.

BUT we must hasten on to the consideration of our author's explication of the *intelligence* everywhere displayed in these phenomena. We have hitherto only animadverted upon his explanation of the physical display of power made by these agencies. The subject of their intelligence involves far more important results, and more unequivocally evinces a spiritual origin. We now pass to this part of the subject.

The fourth lecture of our author is devoted to the statement and explication of his theory touching the *intelligence* displayed in these manifestations. We must get it fully before the reader, so that he may have a clear apprehension of its merits and demerits, its plausibility or inadequacy, its ingenuity or stupidity. It may be well to state first, in general, that he refers this intelligence also to the *involuntary powers* of the human mind.

I shall endeavor to give his position, and its explanation and application, in as brief a compass as possible. I would quote him at length, but he is so discursive, prolix, and dilative, and takes such a wide space to explain a very small meaning, that I think I can do him some service in clearing up his ideas by a brief and perspicuous statement of them as I conceive he wishes to be understood.

Every part of the human system is double: the brain is double, and the mind that pervades and actuates it is double. Positive and negative forces respond to, balance each other, and pervade all nature. The first brain, or cerebrum, is double, and is the organ of *voluntary motion, volition, thought, understanding, and reason*. The back brain, or cerebellum, is also

double, and is the organ of *involuntary* motion, and of that part of the mind that exercises involuntary power (?). This part of the mind contains all the instincts of our nature. It does not *will*, *understand*, and *reason* as the voluntary department of the mind in the front brain does. It *intuitively* knows or *involuntarily reasons*. "Under certain circumstances and conditions, like the mesmeric or psychologic state, it takes the throne, compels reason to bow to its mandate, and with the brightness of its blaze throws all the voluntary powers of the soul, residing in the front brain, into comparative darkness, and pours out the eloquence of Truth like a river of life, clear as crystal, from its throne." When thus roused to action, the front brain knows nothing of its doings, its intuitive powers, and instinctive energies. The brains may act independently and unknown to each other, yet there is a harmony and sympathetic connection between them. The front brain manifests itself by the voluntary power of *thought* and *reason*, while the back brain manifests itself by the involuntary power of *intuition* and *instinct*, and while the back brain acts, the front one has no knowledge or remembrance of its acts (?). Then he proceeds to show that "instinct is a certain power or disposition of mind by which, independent of all instruction or experience, animals are unerringly directed to do, spontaneously, whatever is necessary for their preservation;" an inborn desire or aversion: it is an intuition: it *knows* without *willing* or *reasoning*, illustrating it by the infant's sucking the moment it is born; the duck as soon as hatched betaking itself to the water; the young bird just hatched, and with its eyes yet closed, holding up its beak for the food at the approach of the dam; the bee selecting its storehouse safe from rain and storm, his unerring course over the flowery fields, the geometry of his cell, etc.; the swallows avoiding building in barns that are afterward struck by lightning; the toad, taken from the north to the south and put in battle with a big, poisonous spider, with whom he had never the pleasure of an acquaintance, when wounded, will



directly hop to the nearest plantain, eat the antiseptic leaf, and renew the onset, etc., etc. Then he quotes what Pope says about instinct in his "Essay on Man;" discourses on its superiority to reason, and concludes with some *à priori* arguments tending to show the existence of this instinct in man. All this is detailed with great parade and prolixity, and it does not seem to me that he has made it a bit clearer than a single proposition or well-digested formula would set it before a reader of ordinary ability and learning, or added one iota to our information. Then he proceeds further to show the clearness, depth, and strength and extent of this faculty in man; clairvoyance is to be referred to it.

"Our involuntary power of mind is the grand magazine in which are stored up all the intuitions of our instinctive energies. All the germs of truth that the never-ending ages of eternity will unfold, and stamp upon our ever-expanding intellectual and reasoning faculties, are there. A finite portion of all substances in being is in man, so that he bears about him, wherever he moves, the impression of infinity and eternity."—(Page 68.)

This involuntary power of mind or instinctive nature is developed in the magnetic trance, but may and does exist in all degrees without it.

Mediums being impressible, or electro-psychologic subjects, in them it is developed or exercised to a high degree, without their being aware of it. The application of this philosophy to the solution of the intelligence disclosed in these manifestations is in this wise, namely, the passivity of the voluntary powers of the mind and nerves charges the involuntary powers and nerves, excites them to action, and develops their powers, while in the same proportion it renders quiescent the front brain, and throws into a rigid cataleptic state the voluntary nerves, etc. This enables the medium, without her conscious will, or thought, or knowledge, or remembrance, to rap or write out intelligent messages, to reveal thus the secret thoughts and wishes of those present or distant, to answer

mental and test questions, to prevoiy the future and rehearse the past, so far as the same is cognizable by the instinctive powers of her mind. Listen to him :

"The medium, for instance, sits down and resigns all power over the voluntary nerves, under the impression that some immortal Spirit will move the hand to write, and thus make some communication through him. He assumes a state of entire passivity, and, so far as the motion of his hand is concerned, he remains perfectly indifferent. He does not *will* nor exercise the slightest mental effort to move his hand. But soon the hand does move, and a sentence is produced, the medium having really no conscious volition in the matter.

"How, then, it may be asked, did he form letters without thinking? I answer that it was *intuitively* produced by the involuntary powers of the mind through the nervous force of the arm, and by a nervous sympathy they would produce such letters *only* as by long-established habit he had uniformly written by the *voluntary* powers of his mind. Hence it would be impossible for the medium, on the principle I am arguing, to write Hebrew or Greek letters, who had never practiced forming them. If it be said this has been done in one instance at least, and a fac-simile of it published, I reply that it is a sheer hoax, and has no foundation in truth. If it be asked, Why are the letters not in the medium's own handwriting? I answer that they are, if he writes with the same speed, be that slow or fast, that he usually does in his business matters."—(Pages 68, 69.)

Thus he disposes of the question of intelligence disclosed in these manifestations, namely, that all the revealments, answers, tests, messages, communications, and all the intelligence of whatsoever kind, displayed, is from the *instinctive, intuitive, or involuntary powers* of the mind of the medium, in an electro-psychologic state. This is an ample and clear statement of his position. Let us examine it.

It is somewhat difficult to assign the true limits, and point out the legitimate province of the *instinctive* faculties of the human, or the involuntary powers of the mind; and perhaps more difficult to draw the line of demarkation between those powers and the legitimate province and use of Reason. But it has never hitherto been pretended that our intuitional powers

could not only answer every purpose of reason, thus virtually abolishing it, but supersede and transcend it in all ordinary and extraordinary matters cognizable by our intelligent rational powers. We shall shortly see that our author has not only mistaken the natural province of intuition, but confounded it with reason ; and so amplified, refined, and exalted it ; so built upon, extended, misconceived, and perverted it, in order to make it explain the intelligence of those phenomena, as to make his theory not only harmless, but decidedly ludicrous with men of even ordinary sense.

There is a well-grounded distinction between Instinct and Intuition. Instinct relates to our sensational perceptions and our physical appetites and wants ; whereas Intuition occupies a higher plane, and relates to our intellectual perceptions and wants. The former relates to us as a physical being—the latter to us as an intellectual being. We will make this plain. Instinct guards our physical existence ; it directs or leads us to the objects of our physical appetites and passions. It tells us to eat when hungry and drink when thirsty, else we might feel hunger and thirst and not know what was the matter with us ; and in an unperverted state it shows us what it is healthful for us to eat and to drink. It instigates us to provide for all our material wants in the future, like the bee and ant ; it stimulates us to procreate and nourish with care our offspring ; it scents danger at a distance, and seeks pleasure, and flies from pain, etc., etc. These instincts, and numerous others that might be mentioned, are cognate and necessary for our self-preservation and happiness as an animal or physical being, before and independent of knowledge or reason. They operate continuously, just as the laws of gravitation do, or the instincts of the lower animals. But, in order to conserve man's existence as an intellectual being, it is also necessary that he should *know* some things before he can reason, and *independent* of it, such for instance as the *first principles* or *axioms* of life, etc. Thus he *intuitively* discerns his own

existence ; perceives his own identity ; perceives the relation of cause and effect, and the relation and succession of events in time ; perceives that the whole is larger than the parts ; that things that are equal to the same thing are equal to one another ; that equivalents are the measure of justice ; that rights, like parallel lines, consist with each other and harmonize, and that wrongs or errors cross and destroy each other, etc. It is strictly to be borne in mind that neither instinct nor intuition reasons, or reflects, or debates, or considers about any thing ; they simply *know*. They are incapable of ratiocination or argumentation ; they give you no reasons ; they do not draw inferences ; they do not deal in logical deductions ; they do not conclude from premises ; they do not compare things and events ; they do not analyze or combine, etc., all of which is the province of reason. Their discourse is simply Yea, yea, and Nay, nay. This, then, is the distinction, pretty clearly stated, between Instinct, Intuition, and Reason. They are in different degrees of strength and development in different individuals. Some have a large development of the intuitive faculty, others of the rational powers, etc. These faculties run out into many branches and details in the human organism ; but I have neither time nor space to follow and illustrate them. It will be seen, however, that intuition deals with that which is fixed and determinate in the constitution of things—with *absolute* knowledge. It deals with what may be called the *physical, mental, and spiritual mathematics of the universe*. We have no intuition of a false proposition or axiom. All our intuitions are true and correct, otherwise God would have constituted us innately to believe a lie. Reason, on the other hand, deals with arbitrary and fortuitous things, with phenomena, events, epochs, things of memory, histories, facts, opinions, polity, customs, contingencies, and, indeed, with every thing cognizable by its powers. When, therefore, Dr. Dods undertakes to refer the intelligence of these phenomena to intuition, or the involuntary

powers of the human mind, he shows, in the very first instance he gives, namely, the formation of *letters* by the medium's hand, that it is not intuition, but a thing of reason and memory. Letters are arbitrary, and belong to the memory, and intuition has nothing whatever to do with them. We therefore most emphatically deny that intuition, or the involuntary powers of the human mind, have the scope, power, and wonderful comprehensiveness and perfection he attributes to them. He has given them an imaginary breadth, and depth, and extent, and confounded them with reason, in order to get up an explanation of the mysterious intelligence of those phenomena which undeniably are the work of reason, memory, inference, etc. They show the exercise of the rational powers in every phase of their nature. It is a cunningly devised scheme, without foundation in philosophy or fact, to solve this troublesome and threatening problem. Mediums, according to him, write and rap out intelligent sentences, and speak messages or communications wholly from their intuitive faculty, or the involuntary power of their minds while in the electro-psychologic state! What is not traced on their own inner nature from what they have seen, heard, felt, experienced, or imagined in their past life, although long forgotten, is got by sympathetic *rapport* with the minds of those present or absent, even in distant parts of the globe, and is given forth, as occasion demands, by raps, writing, speaking, etc., and attributed to Spirits! But here again we find our disingenuous author denying a class of facts which, rightly construed, puts an end to this theory. He says that mediums produce such letters only as by long-established habit they had uniformly written by the voluntary powers of their minds; and that it is impossible for them to write Hebrew or Greek letters if they never practiced forming them; then denounces as a hoax and imposture any such pretension. (*Vide* page 69.) Again, page 70:

"Why, I ask, does the medium not write in Greek when he consults

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the Spirits of Homer or Socrates? or in Hebrew when he consults Moses or any of the prophets? How happen they all to be familiar with the English language, and to move the medium's hand to form our letters only? It is pretended that through English mediums communications have been written in various languages, some of which are *obsolete* or *dead*, and most difficult to write both as regards the composition and the letters. Was this a freak of fancy in the Spirit? It looks very much like an effort artificially made. True, I have no confidence that this has ever been done by fair means, as other experiments have. But if Spirits have any hand in the matter, this would be the most natural and convincing mode. If Homer, the prince of song, uniformly breathed his living verse in classic Greek, and Virgil poured out his unrivaled eloquence in Latin, through all mediums, and if Moses and the prophets communicated in Hebrew, and the Indian's Spirit in his native tongue, the world would soon be converted to a belief in Spirit manifestations."

Perhaps this is now one reason why the world is fast being converted to a belief in Spirit manifestations. Instances are of daily occurrence where the communications are in the various obsolete and living languages, through mediums who are wholly ignorant of the language adopted. To cite instances so common would be to unnecessarily encumber this paper. I will recount a few within my own knowledge, merely as samples. At a circle, one evening, the medium, who was unacquainted with any language but her own, wrote off the same message, occupying about half a foolscap page, in quick succession, in German, French, English, and Latin. At the time there was no one present who understood German. By-and-by, however, a gentleman entered whose native tongue it was, and rendered it for us. While attending another circle at another time, the medium, toward the close of the evening's experiments, arose and commenced speaking in a strange, unknown tongue. This was repeated evening after evening, and no one could interpret it or divine what language it was. The impression was, however, that it was an Indian tongue. Finally, there casually came, one evening, a gentleman who detected it to be the Sioux language, or the

tongue of the Sioux tribe of Indians, away up north in the region of Lake Superior, he having been among them some years as a trader! Once more: at a private circle where there were but two gentlemen present besides the medium (a plain, honest-thinking, uneducated man), just as he had risen and put on his hat, and got his cane to leave, he found himself unable to move or speak; then his vocal organs seemed to be convulsed and strangely exercised; his tongue commenced to twist and turn and roll in his mouth, and finally he got to speaking, and recited, accented, and articulated accurately a short *Greek poem*!

Now, indigent reader, what does Dr. Dods do with such cases as these? Why, in the first place, he most religiously and orthodoxically denies them; and in the second place, the medium, in the first instance, was in electro-magnetic *rapport* with some German in Germany, some Frenchman in France, and some Latin professor some place else! In the second instance, she was in electro-magnetic sympathy with some naked Sioux in the Lake Superior regions; and in the last instance, the medium was in magnetic sympathy with some Greek poet on the other side of the globe! All these remote influences and individualities were, through sympathy, moving these mediums' "involuntary powers" to these utterances! This is all perfectly satisfactory and clear as meridian light! Beat that philosophy who can!

There is a numerous variety of cases proved, if human testimony is good for any thing at all, beyond the vapor of a doubt or cavil, which tend unequivocally to show that the intelligent source whence they flow is an outside, independent, and foreign agency—that it does not in any way inhere in the minds or bodies, voluntary or involuntary, of the medium, or those present in the circle. Nor is there any available reasons to show that they are the unconscious, clairvoyant, or mesmeric revealments of the medium in sympathetic *rapport* with an absent or distant person. This is sheer assumption on the

part of the Doctor, and destitute even of remote probability. Because, forsooth, his mesmeric subjects have been made to detail the secret thoughts, and read the memory of others and of himself, he therefore *infers* that mediums do likewise and unconsciously read the thoughts of others, when rapping, writing, or speaking. This is a naked assumption, and the facts will by no means justify such an inference. To give it a show of probability he has, as is his way, to *assume a certain state of facts*, or to *assume certain conditions*, which do not really exist, and deny and exclude from his consideration others which are repugnant to his hypothesis, and which do exist. Accordingly he claims that all mediums are in the electro-psychological state, or involuntarily pass into and out of it; that they are all mesmeric subjects and capable of the cataleptic trance. "And all who are not in the peculiar psychologic condition, and nervously impressible, are impostors and arrant pretenders in every sense of the word. They intentionally, and by their voluntary power, write, move furniture, tip tables, and produce the raps by deception and trick."—(See pages 75, 76.)

In the nature of the Doctor's case, it seems absolutely necessary that he should make this alternative charge of fraud. That there are harlequin mediums as there are harlequin doctors, I have no doubt; but that all mediums who are not in the electro-psychologic condition are *therefore* impostors, I positively deny. I have known good mediums who were in no way impressible that I could discover. I believe the Fox girls were never mesmerized, nor the least subject to the mesmeric influences. If it be said that they were *naturally* in the psychologic state, I demand the proof. I see no indication of it. There is certainly nothing in their compound of temperament, appearance, or manner to indicate it. When they sit at a table in a circle for communications, there is no tremor, no excitement, no change of condition, nor appearance of mesmeric or cataleptic influences. They are as *normal* as



when they sit to eat their dinner. This charge of fraud, therefore, against all such mediums is wanton and reckless, yet necessary to support the Doctor's theory, and he has of course made it.

## Chapter Four.

IN the investigation of a scientific subject such as this, apart from the main phenomena which control our researches and experiments, there are numerous collateral and minor phenomena, occurrences, coincidences, and circumstances, unitedly pointing to the true cause and result, which demand our scrutiny. There are numerous surrounding details and accompanying circumstances and conditions which illustrate and enforce the grand truth that underlies them. These casual and incidental occurrences, these unexpected coincidences and significant circumstances, all concurrently tending to one solution of the phenomena, are by no means to be overlooked. They are the "circumstantial evidence" of the case, and are often more potent in enforcing conviction than the positive and main demonstrations. They are not ambiguous and circumlocutory, but unequivocal and direct. They can not be pre-arranged and counterfeited, or explained away. Yet all these abundant items and elements of proof our author complacently ignores! Perhaps if he *was* reminded of them he would have the assurance to deny them. All these things taken into account with the main phenomena, and the experiments continued until the evidence accumulates to the point of irrefragability, no sane man, who has not an opinion or creed to support or favorite theory to advocate, can fail of being convinced of an invisible, separate, outside, independent, and intelligent agent as the cause of these phenomena. I have frequently been in circles when the experiments and transactions which engaged our attention would be unexpect-

edly and abruptly broken off by the advent of another *will*, in a manner as though an *invisible* stranger had suddenly entered the room and commenced a different series of transactions, or changed the communications to something else. Often those strangers' agencies or wills, wholly unknown to any one in the circle, suddenly announced themselves, give their names, histories, families, etc., and upon subsequent inquiries the information is confirmed. Often they announced correctly the transpiring events of distant places, without any desire, thought, or even knowledge of such persons and places by the medium or any one in the circle. Often they reveal family histories, names, dates, places, events, deaths, burials, records, etc., when the subjects of them were wholly unknown to any in the circle, and who died long years before they were born. Once a medium, a lady of most sweet and amiable disposition, and a sincere and unsophisticated lover of truth, disclosed to me that she could often feel the different influences struggling at once for her arm. One influence would have a nervous and excitable nature, another would have a sad and melancholy sphere, another a most soothing, gentle, and happy effect, while another perhaps would come with a furious, overpowering, and domineering influence and effect. Her will had no power to bring them, and little power to resist them. Another medium, while intent upon her daily household duties, would unexpectedly have her arm seized upon, and, notwithstanding her resistance, would be wrought upon and annoyed until she would go and gratify the agent or influence by lending her arm to it to communicate, etc. There are thousands of such cases as these, and much more striking, of common occurrence. In fact, they have now become uninteresting to me. The only things that interest me now in the whole business of spiritual manifestations are the new phases and higher developments they are constantly putting on.

The plain, practical, common-sense conclusion of every

man who impartially and patiently examines the subject, and is able to take strong views of great questions is, that it is what it purports to be—the work of disembodied Spirits. This explanation makes the least draft upon his credulity, is consistent with all the developments, and supported by the soundest philosophy. All other theories, of which we have a varied abundance, are miserably discrepant in adequately covering and satisfactorily explaining the phenomena—mere idle and learned hallucinations. The phenomena are incessantly giving them the lie. No sooner are they propounded than they explode like a soap-bubble, and with as little noise. The Buffalo theory lived about three weeks; Chauncey Burr's toe-cracking has ceased; Doctor Somebody's "detached vitalized electricity" has gone back to the great reservoir of such elements; Professor Faraday's theory fell like a bomb-shell in a mud-hole; and Doctor Dods' learned exposition, like an impending meteor, will throw a fatuous glare over the land for a little while, then go out in all-enduring darkness. The only theory, in my humble judgment, which is destined to immortal life, is the spiritual theory, which has the omnipotence of truth on its side.

Of all the theories which have hitherto been devised to solve these mysteries, the Dods' hypothesis seems to be the most subtle, ingenious, and expert. Yet it is equally fallacious and unsatisfactory, and in the hands of a cunning and unscrupulous man can be adroitly applied to bewilder and confound the honest seeker after the truth, if he forsakes his own common-sense judgment and goes into its subtilities and finesse. No one who is unbiased and preserves the least independence of thought, and is even ordinarily acquainted with the phenomena, can be deluded by its fallacies. His end and aim was not to elicit the truth, but to defend Christianity and the Bible from what he conceived to be an innovation and denial. His mind was fatally bent upon putting down the heresy. He looks forward to and regards this

end in all he says and does. It is the *motive* of the book, never for a moment lost sight of, and the reason why it is so plethoric with sermonizing and cant about "gospel truths" and "our holy Redeemer." Accordingly, for all the mysteries he has a solution, and by dint of denial, subtilizing, misrepresenting, charging fraud, explaining away, confusing and confounding the phenomena, he bewilders the impressible and unwary reader with doubts when it is all an *ignis fatuus*—a mere show of consistency, logic, and plausibility. If the table tips or moves, it is done by the involuntary powers of the mind acting unconsciously through the involuntary nerves. If it rises from the floor it is done in the same way, and with contact of the medium's hands or fingers. If they say that material objects are moved, raised, thrown about, carried, etc., without physical contact, the witnesses were in an electro-psychologic state, and saw only the fantastic projections of their own brains. If it is said that ignorant and unlettered mediums write in Greek and Hebrew, it is a hoax. If it is said these communications that are written and rapped out disclose intelligence, it is the involuntary thoughts of the medium. If it is said that things she was wholly ignorant of were communicated, then she was in sympathetic *rapport* with some one in the circle. If it be said that things unknown to all present are transpiring, or transpired, at distant places or times, then she was in magnetic *rapport* with the minds of those who did know, though on the opposite side of the globe. If any wonderful thing is testified to that his philosophy can not explain, then it either did not happen, or if it did, the witnesses are all disqualified by being in the electro-psychologic condition, and that it was a psychologic impression, etc. All these explanations he refines upon, details, illustrates, and enforces by a revelation of the wonders of mesmerism, electro-psychology, mesmeric *rapport*, clairvoyance, involuntary powers, somnambulism, catalepsy, nervous impressibility, the power of will, double consciousness, "Kentucky jerks," etc.,

until the subject and phenomena almost wholly disappear in the haze of his learning.

Dr. Dods seems to be one of those persons of such subtle and attenuated brains, that it is utterly out of the question to reason with them on any given subject. They abound in inexhaustible objections. They are so fugacious and slippery, that it is impossible to get a fast hold on them. Their reasoning is a sort of legerdemain, which you *know* is all false, but which the honest common sense of sincere investigators can not easily detect and expose. With their subtle tactics, they vaporize, confound, and dissipate the plainest facts and truths. For every why they have a wherefore. Propound the plainest proposition to them, and they immediately start interminable objections to it, subtilize it, cast doubt and ridicule upon it, torture and twist it, pull it to pieces, draw it out and dilute it, until it is no longer palpable to common sense. One grain of golden truth they beat out with the tiny hammers of their ethereal logic, until it is so attenuated as to disappear from the eyes of common men. It matters not a whit which side they take : they can defend and prove the proposition either way. Their refined sagacity instantly perceives multitudes of resources, and they, in the most dextrous and fluid manner, unite and bring them to bear to suit them. *They are the wily enemies of all integral truth.* Argument and evidence are lost upon them. With their fine-spun objections, exquisite wit, and attenuated ratiocinations they can explain them all away, and make "the worse appear the better reasoning." They can confirm the false as easily as the true. They are mental jugglers or sleight-of-hand men in all the realms of intellect ; and when biogtry supervenes to give them a permanent set or fast anchor, to throw their polemic wit into one channel, they are far beyond the reach of reason and demonstration. Swedenborg gives full accounts of those subtle and dilutant ratiocinators in the world 'of Spirits, where he says they are called "*confirmators*." He relates of

one, who was about writing a book to prove, either that the center was from and dependent upon the circumference, or that the circumference was from and dependent upon the center, the corollary being, whether God was from and dependent upon Nature, or Nature from and dependent upon God? He said he could abundantly prove it either way, but he thought that it would be most *popular* for him to confirm that the circumference was from and dependent upon the center! In another of his "memorable relations" he saw at a distance a crowd, where they were vociferating, "O how wise! O how wise!" and when he came to them, he found that they were of those "who are altogether unable to see whether truth was truth or not, and yet who could make whatever they wished to be true." In the midst of the crowd were some of "noble pedigree, who, when they heard all things confirmed which they said, turned themselves about and said, 'O how wise!'" He called one out and "spoke various things to him; and he confirmed each, even so that they appeared altogether as true;" and he asked him whether he could also confirm the contraries, and he said he could just as easily and as well. He then said, "What is truth? Is there given any thing true in the nature of things other than what man makes true? Tell me whatever you please and I will make it true." He then proposed to him to make it true that darkness is light and light darkness. He said he would, and reasoned, *à la Dods*, thus: "What is light and darkness but states of the eyes? Is not light changed into shade while the eye is coming from a sunny place, as also while it looks intently upon the sun? Who does not know that the state of the eye is then changed, and that the light thence *appears* as shade, and, on the other hand, while the state of the eye is returning, that shade appears as light? Does not an owl see in the darkness of night as though it was the light of day? and in the light of day as the darkness of night, also the sun itself as an opaque and dusty globe? If any man had

eyes as an owl, what would he call light and what darkness? What; then, is light but a state of the eye? And if it is only a state of the eye, is not light darkness and darkness light?" This is precisely the way in which Bovee Dods disposes of the spiritual manifestations. He was further requested to make it true that a crow was white, and he replied he would easily, and proceeded thus: "Take a needle or a razor and open the feathers or quills of a crow; are they not white within? Also remove the feathers and quills and look at the skin: is it not white? What is the black which is around but shade, from which it is not to be judged concerning the color of a crow: that the black is only a shade, consult those acquainted with the science of optics, and they will tell you it is no color at all; or grind black stone or glass to powder and that you will see that it is white, etc." But he was reminded that a crow *appears* black, to which he replied, "Are you, who are a man, willing to take any thing from appearance? The sun rises, progresses, and sets from appearance; but it is not true. So with a crow; appearance is only appearance; say what you will, the crow is white—he also grows white when he grows old." He was then asked if he could confirm that he was *insane*. He answered, "I can, but will not; who is not insane?" Then Swedenborg tells us that "that universal confirmator was sent to the angels, who explored him as to what his quality was, and they said that he possessed *not even a grain of understanding*, because all that which is above the rational, and which is in heavenly light, was shut up, and only that which was beneath the rational was open; and this light is such that it is able to *confirm whatever one likes*." *Vide C. L. N.*, 283.

I should like to have the verdict of those exploring angels upon Dr. Dods' case.



## Chapter Five.

WE have shown that *instinct* belongs and relates to our physical appetites and tendencies—that it is intended to conserve and protect and continue our physical existence—that it is identical with the instincts of the lower animals, and that those instincts attach to us, and operate independently of all mental or intelligent effort. We have also shown that *intuition* belongs and relates to our mental organism, as instinct does to our physical organism—that its office is to supply an immediate and indubitable knowledge of *fundamental principles*, or the primary axioms of man's objective and subjective existence, without which he would have no rational nature. These are the physical, moral, and spiritual mathematics of the universe, such as we call self-evident truths. They are not logical deductions nor rational conclusions. They rest on no inferences or arguments. You can not make them any clearer by explanation, or enforce them by illustration. They are perceived to be so and so, and not otherwise. Some men have a large intuitive development, while others have it very dimly and feebly. Some are capable of putting together, in long series, proposition upon proposition, which are the clear and undoubted perceptions of their intuitive powers, while others, who lack strength and development in this respect, are unable to perceive the truth of any but a few of them. Touching these powers there is every variety of development. But intuition, as I have already said, gives us the knowledge of that which is fixed and determinate—gives us the knowledge of *universal principles*—of the fixed and im-

mutable laws of Human Nature, and the universe. Whereas Reason, on the other hand, deals with *things and facts* which are arbitrary, considered in relation to principles and laws. Its province is that of collating, digesting, analyzing, comparing, compounding, tracing out, inferring, ratiocinating, etc., of and upon the *phenomenal* universe. It deals with the things of memory, facts, histories, conventionalities, fortuities, customs, politics, events, epochs, etc., etc. These are the materials which Reason employs, and it is within its power to argue, ratiocinate, and reflect upon them, or not, just as it pleases. Hence it is a *voluntary* power of the mind. On the other hand, Intuition does not reason or reflect, deduce and conclude; but as soon as its attention is invoked, it can not help but see and believe. Hence it is an *involuntary* power of the mind. Our author calls intuition "involuntary reasoning." This is not correct, and moreover it is a contradiction; but intuition may be called *involuntary knowledge*; the very term meaning *inborn knowledge or wisdom*. Every man who is not sophisticated or demented by a delusive theory, or some modern scholasticism, will see the eminent truthfulness of this distinction between Intuition and Reason. In a superior plane of existence, where all the faculties of the soul are exalted and perfected, Reason may there and then be bright and quick in concluding, or tracing remote conclusions from intuitive premises, and be as superior to our present rational capabilities, as intuition now is to them. It may be able in a twinkling to see through long series of intellectual evolutions to the distant and indubitable result, yet the exalted and perfected *intuition* of that existence will still preserve its distinctive province and use. They will never commingle, but immortally preserve their separate functions; the one forever dealing with the *principles* of things or the *axiomatical* universe, and the other with the *phenomenal* universe.

But Dr. Dods, in order to cover the intelligence disclosed

in those manifestations, and manufacture an explanation of the mystery that will countervail the spiritual theory, gives this intuitional power of the human mind an unwarrantable and extraordinary compass, and confounds it with the operations of Reason. Then, accordingly, he claims that all the intelligence displayed by the rapping, writing, and speaking manifestations is the offspring of the intuitive powers of the mind of the medium unconsciously exercised while in the electropsychologic state. But the absurdity of this pretension abundantly appears from the fact, that the messages and communications that are given are not the formulas of intuition or the evolutions of inbred knowledge, but the work of all the *rational voluntary powers*—as much so as the proceedings, speeches, debates, etc., of Congress, or one of our Legislative Assemblies. The invisible agencies reveal facts, postulate premises, argue to conclusions, illustrate and enforce; they draw inferences and deductions; analyze, compare, classify, and generalize; they remember events, dates, names, persons, and places; they regard circumstances, conditions, and proprieties; they have an enlightened sense of the fitness and propriety of things; they are wise and foolish, sad, melancholy, risible, gay, and desperate; they disclose all the affectional sentiments: friendship, benevolence, love, familism, parentism, conjugalism, etc. In fact, they evince the exercise of all the rational faculties and all the sentiments, as well as the intuitive powers, properly understood, just as men and women do here. To say that the intuitive powers of the human mind, no matter how developed and excited, will cover all this ground, is an unparalleled transcendental absurdity! The involuntary powers of the mind by no means extend to this degree. Dr. Dods has egregiously blundered in assuming *all the inner*, and what I may call the *spiritual powers* of the human mind “developed,” quickened, and exalted in the mesmeric trance, for *involuntary powers*. For instance, if you place a mesmeric subject in a state of trance, or render rigid

and paralyze the *exterior* organism, you eliminate the *interior* powers; and *all* the faculties of the mind and sentiments of the heart then reveal themselves in a more refined and excellent state. The eye is clairvoyant, the ear clairaudient, and all the faculties of the mind, *both voluntary and involuntary*, and all the feelings of the soul, are correspondingly exalted and perfected. He is still a complete integral man, with all his powers, mental, intuitive, instinctive, and emotional, existing on an inner discrete plane from the external, whither his *consciousness has been transferred*. He is comparatively dead to the external, and proportionably alive to the internal. If he is not *en rapport* with the mesmerizer or any one else, *then he is as integral and independent as though he was in full wakeful external life*. If he is *en rapport* with the mesmerizer, then he is, in all things, subject to his will, ideas, sensational feelings and perceptions and emotions. Now Dods' mistake *lies in his grouping all these inner faculties and powers together*, and denominating them "the involuntary powers of the human mind." Whereas we know that the independent somnambule reasons, reflects, judges, remembers, perceives, and feels. We see that she has the full possession of all her voluntary powers, and exercises them, or not, just as she chooses. She indeed possesses them in a more excellent degree, but both her faculties and consciousness are removed from the external to the internal, in the degree of her trance. Her faculties do not all become *involuntary* by this transference of consciousness from the external to the internal and by this exaltation of her faculties. Yet this is what is claimed by Dods, and his hopes and his theory are built upon it. Even clairvoyance, the most obvious voluntary power of the mesmeric cataleptic; he disposes of as follows: "All mesmeric clairvoyance, and all that this clairvoyance has ever indited, revealed, or written, is but an effort and result of the involuntary powers of the human mind."—(Page 100.) Again, "I say all somnambulists write and reason and move by the involuntary

power of the mind and nerves, and so do all mesmeric clairvoyants, and those in a state of catalepsy.”—(Page 108.) Now this is *not true*. The clairvoyant has a *will* about the matter: she can look and see, or not, just as she pleases, like you or I; she can exercise her discretion, and if she don't wish to look and see, she won't see; she is wholly free to exercise her clear-seeing faculty, or not: there is no involuntariness about it; so of all her other voluntary faculties, and that this is the case, I confidently appeal to all who have had any experience with lucid somnambules. This error unequivocally strikes at the root of the Doctor's theory, and demolishes it without quarter. The wonder is, that a man of his extended experience in the mesmeric art, and pretending to such profound knowledge of the subject, should commit this grand mistake. But his whole philosophy seems to be full of such blunders. It would be tedious and unprofitable for me to note them all, nor would it be practicable in a general review such as this. I can only point out the more palpable and important errors and fallacies, and leave the minor ones to be detected by the careful reader, who can not fail to see them. The man who is ruled by the pride of opinion, and who has a craving ambition to be the father of a system, has his vision filled by the big idea of self, and is consequently falling into error almost every step he takes; and the great misfortune is, that such minds make but little progress afterward in correcting their errors. If they are sagaciously cunning or insanely subtle, and can confirm a falsehood as easily as a truth to a metaphysical or scholastic ear, they generally remain firmly esconced in their dark fortresses, invulnerable to the light of truths. One error, especially if it is a fundamental one, begets a progeny of others, and calls to its aid innumerable allies and supporters from the armies of Beelzebub. Error spreads like a leprosy, and, if not speedily cleansed, covers with ulcers the fair symmetry of Truth. From the prime error of conceiving all the mental powers, moral feelings, and inner sensational percep-

tions of the somnambule or magnetic sleeper, developed in the mesmeric trance, to be the work of the involuntary powers alone, flows a great multitude of other errors, which branch out and ramify in almost every detail of the Doctor's ill-starred theory. Thus, for instance, he locates these powers, or rather their organic development, in the little brain, or cerebellum, whereas, if there is truth in phrenology at all, the organ of *intuition* is located in the frontal region. This is the conclusion of Dr. Joseph R. Buchanan, of Cincinnati, a shrewd analyzer of scientific questions, and whom I quote as the highest modern authority on the subject. But I must not here delay in remarking upon those manifold errors and discrepancies of the Doctor's theory of involuntary powers. Every one who is familiar with mesmeric and psychologic experiments sees that the front brain, the seat of all our voluntary powers, is active and operative in the mesmeric trance. That the somnambule consciously reasons, sees, recollects, and wills, in all manner as though normally, with the difference that the faculties are quickened, exalted, and intensified, and consciousness transferred from the external to the internal. He sees, too, that the faculty of intuition, also located in the frontal region, is cleared and strengthened, and that the *animal instincts*, which reside in the back brain, are sharpened and purified.

Notwithstanding the confident manner and arrogant assurance with which the Doctor puts forth his fallacious theory, and the dogmatical style in which he elaborates and enforces it, yet there are occasional glimpses of uneasiness and fear lest it should be successfully impeached and overthrown, either by the true philosophy of the matter or the accumulating and varied phenomena. He seems to have been conscious that his investigations were not thorough and complete, and that his theory was inadequate to explain all the facts. He has the uneasy feeling inspired by the suspicion that he *may* be wrong, just like the agonies of the tyrant who fears

righteous revolution and dethronement by his deluded, oppressed, and plundered subjects. To be under the necessity of surrendering the labored and beloved theory of a vain-glorious scholastic *exploitean*, is like the haughty king's compulsory surrender of his usurped crown. To one whose pride of opinion is his ruling passion, the thought that it may be exploded is a sore reflection. Accordingly, the wakeful strategy of our author has seen the necessity of providing for such a contingency, and on page 103 he says :

“ Now convince me that the Spirit manifestations *are* true, and my philosophy is still correct. In such case, it would only be necessary for me to move my position one step farther back, and say that departed Spirits influenced the involuntary powers of the mind in the back brain, and moved into action the instinctive energies of our being.”

This wise provision he gives great prominence on his page by placing it in small capitals, intending, I suppose, to appeal to it when the day comes in which he may be driven to acknowledge a spiritual agency at the bottom of those manifestations. Was it not a suspicion that all was not right that foreshadowed this subterfuge ? Does it not betray a want of confidence in his own theory ? Does it not clearly show that the annunciation and upholding of a system was his main idea ? It was his evident design to save his theory, even though spiritual manifestations *were* true. The extract above, however, shows a palpable concession to the Truth. After all that he has been battling about in favor of his theory and against Spirit manifestations, he gives up that they are *not inconsistent*—that the spiritual theory may and can be in harmony with his, and his yet be true ! We now learn, for the first time, that his philosophy is not in *opposition* to Spiritualism, but only the mode, manner, and condition under and by which Spirits *may* or *might* communicate with man ! We are very much obliged to you, Doctor, for explaining this intricate branch of the new philosophy ! But I don't know that

we stand much in need of your learning to solve this mystery. I think we have a much better, though a little more homely way of satisfying ourselves on this subject.

Furthermore, we were led to believe from the assurance with which the Doctor declared in the outset of the book, that Spirits had nothing to do with all these wonderful phenomena, and the positive and dogmatic manner in which he follows up this announcement, that he had thoroughly investigated the matter, and indubitably satisfied himself that he was in the right. On page 14 he says :

“This duty (investigating the subject) I have endeavored to perform by giving the subject a candid investigation, and have succeeded in tracing its mysterious manifestations to a philosophic and *rational cause*, entirely satisfactory to my mind, as regards the result of my investigations. I must candidly confess that the Spirits of our departed friends in a future world have nothing to do with this matter.”

This certainly looks as though he knew what he was about. It looks as though he had probed the mystery to the bottom, ascertained the truth, and set his mind at rest about it. He gives us here to understand that he *knows all about* the mystery, and that he has a clear conviction of his having found out the *whole* truth in regard to it. Yet on page 151, after vigorously opposing, denying, torturing, and explaining away the spiritual theory, and the facts upon which it rests, he says :

“If they (the believers in Spirit manifestations) *knew my sincerity, and how anxious I am to know the truth, they would feel a sympathy and interest in my favor, and a charity as deep at least as I have exercised toward them,*” etc.

Why, Doctor, I thought you had settled the matter long ago ! I thought you had no more anxiety about it, and that you *did* “know the truth !” Ah, sir ! you have mistaken the pride of opinion for philosophy, confidence for candor, and the ravings of an insensate bigotry for argument. In your lucid intervals



you show that your investigations have been shallow and partial, your philosophy doubtful, and your mind by no means at rest on the subject. You have only an ardent *hope* that your theory may prove true, and that the spiritual manifestations may turn out to be what you vainly wish they should. You have no certain knowledge, not even a remote probability, that things will turn out what you anticipate and desire. •You are doomed to utter disappointment, mortification, and shame. Better for your name and fame that you had let the subject altogether alone, and left it to Time, the great and infallible analyzer and inquisitor of all such questions, from whose final verdict there is no appeal.

## Chapter Six.

THE publication of "Spiritualism by Judge Edmonds and Dr. Dexter," seems to have quite astonished our author. He had not bargained at least for such an array of facts. But, nothing daunted, he sets to work to demolish both *them* and the Judge's philosophy. He makes the same show of candor and impartiality which characterize his previous pages. He wishes to be considered fair and honest in his treatment of the book and its authors; and accordingly he pronounces sundry fulsome encomiums over the Judge, and much abounds in commendations of both him and Dr. Dexter. There is an unnecessary amount of this sort of compliment. When a man comes at me with abundant honors and multiplied assurances of his regard, he excites in me a suspicion that he has some sinister purpose or ulterior design in view, or that he wishes to commend *himself* by a sort of reaction on my part. It is in most cases but a begging for compliments. He endeavors first to show that the Judge is, or was at the time he commenced his investigations, very little acquainted with the laws and phenomena of mesmerism, sympathetic clairvoyance, electro-psychology, etc., and hence incapacitated for scientific inquiry into the subject, and for drawing correct conclusions. He impeaches his ability to examine the question, denies his philosophy, and endeavors to disqualify him as a witness when he testifies to facts. The protest against the Judge's ability to learnedly examine the subject is a matter of course, for, in the Doctor's estimation, no one is so admirably qualified for the task as *himself*. This is apparent from the

hasty, supercilious, and dictatorial demeanor he assumes. This arrogant behavior is softened down a little, however, when he comes to treat of Judge Edmonds' book. The reason of this, as also of his repeated professions of esteem and cordiality, is perhaps because the Judge "has given his sanction to the great moral truths contained in the Inspired Book, and the testimony he has borne to the magnanimity of Christ as the Son of God."—(Page 129.) That is, in plain English, because he flattered his religious prejudices—because he did not disturb his educational dogma. This is sufficient ground for *his* esteem, and to entitle the Judge to some favorable considerations.

He quotes some of the more striking and convincing facts which the Judge relates, and tries to explain them away by all the subtle objections, learned quibbles, and equivocations for which he has a special talent. The Judge testifies, among numerous other things, that he has known a dinner-bell taken from a high shelf in a closet, rung over the heads of four or five persons in that closet, then rung over the heads of twelve or fifteen persons in the back-parlor, and then borne through the folding-doors to the farther end of the front-parlor, and then dropped on the floor, etc.; that he has known a mahogany chair thrown on its side, and moved swiftly back and forth on the floor, no one touching it, through a room where there were at least a dozen persons sitting, yet no one was touched, and it was repeatedly stopped within a few inches of him when it was coming with a violence which, if not arrested, must have broken his legs.—(Page 149.) In the Doctor's lectures, which form the first part of the book, and which were written out before Judge Edmonds' book was published, it will be recollected that the movement of physical bodies, without contact of the medium, was denounced as a "sheer hoax," "mere trick and imposture," etc. Or, if such was the case, then the mediums and witnesses were all in the electro-psychological state, and testified only

to the delusive appearances of their impressions. But in Judge Edmonds' case the sincerity and honor of the witness preclude hoax, trick, or imposture, at least so far as he is concerned ; and the Doctor is consequently thrown on to the latter alternative, and accordingly he declares that all these wonderful phenomena of the movement of heavy material bodies, without contact, such as the bell case and chair case above quoted, were psychological illusions ! He says the Judge is naturally impressible, and passes into and out of the electro-psychologic condition instantly and unconsciously. Such, also, he says, was the case with the mediums and persons present, who concurrently testify to the same occurrences ! He says that when a violin was placed by these so-called Spirits into the Judge's hand, and rested on his foot, and played upon ; when another one was placed in the other hand, and likewise played upon, and another around his neck, and he frequently struck with the fiddle-bow, etc., and had his person repeatedly touched, and his chair pulled from under him, etc. (page 148), it was all a psychological delusion induced upon the Judge by the imagination, by self-mesmerism, or by a "strong expectation" that such and such things would be done ! Then he goes on at great length to illustrate and enforce this explanation by a revelation of the wonders he has himself performed on impressible subjects ; how he can make them believe that they are some one else ; that he could make them believe just what he imaged and willed for them to see, hear, feel, and believe ; that he could make them see all these strange phenomena testified to by the Judge and others, just as they did, and just as apparently real, so that they would go into a court of justice and swear to them, etc. ! all of which are the familiar experiments of every itinerant mesmeric vendor of psychological wonders, and which almost every schoolboy understands. The Doctor, however, in his flaring recital of these wonders, which he has and is able to produce, places every sentence, paragraph, and page on tiptoe by ex-

clamation points, and talks as though these psychological feats of his were unknown to the world until now, whereas every carrot-headed, drab-coated lecturer on mesmerism in the West is as familiar with them as he is! But who will rest satisfied with this mode of disqualifying the witnesses and explaining away their testimony to facts? What honest, unbiased, and healthy jury of twelve men would believe it for a moment? Does it not insult our plain, practical, every-day sense? Is it not a greater imposition upon our credulity than to *bona fide* believe in the reality of the facts? Are we not required to accept and believe in a more marvelous phenomenon than the one it seeks to explain? Such a subtle and improbable exposition will never take with the *normal* part of mankind, will never satisfy the shrewd common sense of practical men, which is the great regulator and balance-wheel of the mental and moral worlds. They can be deluded by no such phantasms. They may serve to satisfy the peripatetic ratiocinator or psychological juggler, who is able to confirm that darkness is light, light darkness, and that a *crow is white*; but they will never get currency in the normal practical world. If this theory, by which Dods endeavors to disqualify the witnesses, and explain away the facts they testify to, was valid, it would destroy all faith in human testimony, unsettle our belief in the reality of ordinary occurrences, and dismiss us into an unreal and phantom world! I say that, that if it is taken to apply to and explain such cases as Judge Edmonds, and thousands of others of every variety, all over the United States, again and again testified to, then no extraordinary fact or phenomenon, no unusual occurrence, nothing out of or beyond the ordinary and common course of events lying within our experience, can ever be proved by human testimony, no, not even by the testimony of our senses! It completely checks the progress of the race, and stereotypes the world of observation and experiment at its present point! It stamps all unusual phenomena as mere psychological delusions, as

the play and sport of a hallucinated brain! Take, for instance, the solar eclipse of the 26th ultimo. Who can say that that was not a psychological delusion induced by a "strong expectation" and universal impression that such an astronomic phenomenon was about to occur? Who can say that the sun itself is not an illusive appearance, a psychologic phantom perpetuated on the human family from age to age by "strong expectations," hereditary and educational "impressions," and by an unconscious, universal, electro-psychological state? I see no argument that applies to a half-a-dozen or a dozen persons of different organizations, ages, individualities, etc., privately observing and noting some unusual occurrence in a room or in a particular place, that *may* not also apply to the world at large, when you take into consideration the number, the kind, the continued experiments and observations, and the universality of these private circles. It is just as likely that the whole world is laboring in a psychological delusion when it witnesses and testifies to an eclipse, an earthquake, or a comet, as it is that thousands upon thousands of every variety of persons, at numberless times and places, and under every shade and configuration of circumstances, and uniformly testifying to phenomena infinitely less out of our common experience, should all be spell-bound, hood-winked, and hallucinated by psychological impressions! I should say that the latter was, by all odds, the most reliable, as being the testimony of numbers of *separate individuals* in moments of coolness and deliberation, converging to one point, while the former is the agglomerate testimony of masses, who are more subject to *mania*, rabidness, and delusion. But Dods, after instituting a rigorous cross-examination of the Judge, for the purpose, of course, of casting doubt upon his testimony, says that all these things should be done and performed before a promiscuous audience of at least five hundred persons, to entitle them to any credit. Now this is a rule of evidence that, in my legal reading, I have never yet come across. It is not found in the

books, neither is it in reason or common sense. I deny its validity, reasonableness, and propriety, and, on the contrary, say that the various phenomena in question are *better* proved by the separate testimony of five hundred, or five hundred thousand, bearing witness to those phenomena, at various times and places, with various different persons, and under every contingency and change of circumstances, than they ever could be by a promiscuous audience of five hundred passive observers, for this reason among many others, because the public exhibition of those phenomena would leave out all the innumerable, collateral, incidental and coincidental, confluent, and apparently fortuitous tests and circumstances which attend and characterize a *great number* of separate and individual experiments; nor would the phenomena be half so varied and numerous. This rule of evidence is a piece of impertinence, and we repudiate it as without foundation in reason or common sense. It may be accepted by the ultra-skeptic, whose bigotry determines him to deny and oppose all philosophy and fact that he conceives militates against his darling creed or his labored theory. Such immovable conservatives as these are in the habit of very wisely and complacently dictating terms and conditions to law and phenomena, and proscribing with anathema all investigators, facts, and philosophies that do not come within their formula. They imperiously assume the prerogative of dictating *how* such and such experiments shall be conducted, what *conditions* shall be observed, and *how* and *what kind* of phenomena shall occur, or else *they* will not believe; etc. Any thing else is delusion, "hoax, imposture, and trick." This, of course, leaves Ephraim to his idols. That this is the case, I appeal to all men of free thought who have taken any interest in the reformatory ideas of the current times. The bigoted conservative always undertakes to prescribe the conditions, dictate the experiments, and adjudge the phenomena, for this insures the safety of his own dogmatic creed or his system of philosophy.

But if this psychological way of disposing of the facts Judge Edmonds and others testify to, is good for any thing, it is good for a little too much. It clearly disposes of all the miracles and miraculous occurrences recorded in the Old and New Testaments in the same way. There is no valid ground for any distinction. The philosophy applies with equal and even more force to them, for there are many big stories there that can *only* be explained on the ground of hoax or psychological illusion, such for instance as the plagues of Egypt, Aaron's rod turning into a snake, the division of the Red Sea, the water flowing from the rock, the showers of manna, the quails, the sun stopping and returning at the command of Joshua, the falling of the walls of Jericho at the blast of trumpets, etc. No man of independent thought and clear head any longer believes in *miracles* in the common acceptation of that term. They are out of the question, out of date, and out of fashion. These so-called miracles, the staple of the old theology, which so abound in the Testaments, can only be accounted for on three grounds, viz.: *spiritual manifestations*, psychological delusions, or hoax, trick, and imposture. Dods, by showing up the spiritual manifestations as electro-psychologic delusions, has unwittingly taken the ground that *they* are to be included in the two latter categories! By his vigorous and determined onset, his ingenious and subtile theorizing, his denying, torturing, explaining away, and denouncing the modern spiritual phenomena, he has been all along unconsciously advocating "Bible Infidelity," and furnishing the strongest refutation of all those Bible *miracles* which can not be adequately explained by the spiritual manifestations, and which are not referable to imposture and hoax. Thus he is found advocating the electro-psychologic appearance of Aaron's rod as a snake, the psychologic trip through the Red Sea, the phantom quails and manna, the psychologic delusion of the sun's standing still and returning, the psychologic residence of Jonah in the whale's belly, the psychologic chariot of



Elijah, the psychologic appearance of Moses and Elias on the mount, the psychologic eloquence of Balaam's ass, and all the psychologic visions of John the apocalyptic revelator, etc. This is undoubtedly more than Dods bargained for, but it is undeniably embraced in his theory, and he will be obliged to take it along with it.

The Doctor has devoted a long lecture to the overthrow of Von Reichenbach's discoveries and system of dynamics, or the theory of the odic force or element, inasmuch as Judge Edmonds adopts that as explaining the *mode* employed, and as the *element* used, by Spirits in manifesting themselves and communicating. He says it is all a psychological delusion ! that there is no such thing as od force or element ; that he can't imagine any use for it, or why there should be such an element or force ; that Reichenbach has been misled by his ignorance of psychologic phenomena ; that his experiments are unsatisfactory and fallacious ; that his subjects were all highly impressible, and in the electro-psychologic state ; that they say and see what he *imagined* or *desired* they should see or *expected* they would see ; that he transferred his impressions to them, and they accordingly saw the luminous, flaming, and subtile element ; that all the experiments made by means of these sensitive magnetic subjects, only show the *expectation*, *anxiety*, *will*, or *determination* of the operator's mind ; and on page 198 he says :

"I have no more doubt than I have of my existence, that all of Reichenbach's experiments, with one or two exceptions, were the result of his own impressions on his subjects. I have only to say that I can perform the whole, and even reverse his experiments, by mental impressions."

Well, who denies that you can perform them all by impressing your subject with the ideas, etc. ? No one doubts that when by your positive relation to and *rapport* with the subject, by your controlling will and your ardent determination, you

can absorb or "*obsess*" his *individuality*, and make him the mere instrument of your own will, to reflect all your thoughts, impressions, theories, fancies, etc. But there is a fact and a law in the magnetic science you seem to have overlooked or denied, notwithstanding your boasted knowledge of the subject, namely, a state of lucid clairvoyance *independent* of your will, independent of all sympathetic *rapport* or extraneous influence and control. In *this* state the subject preserves her *individuality*, her independent integral existence, and the voluntary control of all her faculties and feelings; and in this state is qualified to analyze the interior constitution of things and reveal their essential elements and properties; and, in my estimation, you have utterly failed to show that the revelations of Reichenbach's clairvoyants, or a majority of them, are not independent of his mind and referable to sympathy, etc. But I do not here undertake to defend Reichenbach's book or Judge Edmonds' position as to *how* Spirits do these things. I only give Doctor Dods' conclusions on the matter to show how ductile, useful, and all-comprehending this electro-psychologic hypothesis is in the hands of a subtile, bigoted, and dogmatic disputant. It can be made to cover almost any phenomenon, and explain almost any fact or philosophy connected with the organization, the workings, and the developments of the human spirit.

Although conscientiously resisting the claims of Dr Dods' theory to be considered an answer to and explanation of these modern mysteries, and endeavoring to show his and its many shortcomings, inconsistencies, and fallacies, and upholding the spiritual theory as the only one that will rationally explain all the phenomena, and meet the cases in all their latitude and longitude, yet I am not unmindful of the fact, that a large percentage of the manifestations, as also of the miracles, so called, of the Old and New Testaments, are referable to psychological impressibility. I do not ignore the fact, that much of it all can be accounted for upon psychological principles; but to say

that *all* the phenomena, including the movement of material bodies without contact, the wonderful displays of an independent intelligence, the coincidental tests, the visible appearance of a Spirit-hand writing out messages, and all the wonders of that class, now numerous and well attested, can also be explained in the same way, is the most insane fanaticism and the wildest absurdity! Doctor Dods is deluded by his conceit, misled by his ambition, hardened by his bigotry, and under the ban of a creed which dominates and perverts his natural sentiment of justice and impartiality. His motive was not to do justice to the subject. He prejudged it from beginning to end. He is partial, unfair, dishonest, and unjust. He is intolerant, overbearing, and denunciatory; and his book is a faithful transcript of the man. His full-length portrait and dimensions appear in it. It exhibits no great ability; it is for the most part a book of monosyllables and monosyllabic ideas, trituated to a very high degree. It furnishes pabulum to the orthodox press in these trying times when Spiritualism is breaking in pieces the old theology. The orthodox editors welcome it as the giant defender of their faith, and as the scientific solution of those hated and dreaded Spirit-manifestations. I question whether one in ten of them who have puffed, commended, and thanked God for it, ever read more of it than the title-page, or fingered it through, counting the pages, and glancing here and there at its drift. Its advertisement contains a puff taken from the "*Tribune*" *before that puff was published*. The main idea of the book, namely the "involuntary powers of the mind," is founded in an error—the involuntary powers of the human mind being only Instinct and Intuition, and not *all the inner and quickened powers of the human soul developed in a state of trance*, as claimed.

## Chapter Seven.

I HAVE but a few more remarks to make on what the author says of the spread of Christianity, and the various agencies, Spirit-manifestations included, to advance or retard the ultimate and universal reign of "Gospel truths" in their purity, and the unity of all mankind under the Christian standard, and then I will dismiss John Bovee Dods and his book from my mind forever.

Every thing that exists is stamped with the laws governing its existence. Each atom, as each globe, is impressed with its constitutional laws, which regulate its existence in every period of its destiny. It bears its own order, government, or economy of existence on it and within it, and is the exponent of its own nature. Thus the stone embodies the laws of its constitution, which regulate and control its existence; such, for instance, as the laws of chemical affinity, mineralogy, cohesion, attraction, gravitation, etc., which are inseparable from it, and go to constitute its distinctive character or nature. Thus, again, the tree embodies all the laws of its being, which are its constitution of government. It is itself the incarnation of its own order of life. The laws by which it exists, and grows, and turns out its leaves, and unfolds its blossoms, and perfects its fruit, are the express revelation of God's will to it as a tree. This will of God is wrought into its nature, identified with it, and can be no more separated from it than gravitation can be separated from the stone. The laws of its existence, growth, and life are its "Holy Scriptures"—the "Revealed Word," by obedience to which it is infallibly

brought forward to beauty, use, and perfection. The laws impressed upon its constitution, and which are God's *special* revelation to it, of course *relate* to the outer laws of its existence, such, for instance, as the geologic, atmospheric, meteorologic, and climatic laws, which mutually answer or correspond to them, and are harmoniously and reciprocally adapted to each other; just as the instinctive, social, and passionnal laws of each individual man correspond and are harmoniously adapted to all the societary laws and economies. The tree looks to no *outward* revelation of God's will for the rule of its conduct—to no foreign and external code to govern and control its life and growth. Its "doctrines of life" are within itself; and these doctrines, when obeyed, are admirably adapted to, and harmoniously consistent with, all other "heavenly doctrines" outside of them. There is not the least jar, or discord, or confusion. The animal kingdom, and each genera, species, and individual of it, have the laws of *their* lives enstamped on *their* organizations. All the laws, principles, and order necessary for their life, growth, and happiness, in every period of their history, are inwrought in their constitutions; and if not ignored or suppressed, infallibly lead them forward in their true destiny, as God designed. The butterfly accepts no revelation from angel or man or any superior being, not even God himself, other than that written on its own constitution. That revelation of God's will to it is final, full, and perfect. The bee and the bird are in the order of their lives, needing no extraneous and supererogatory code to appeal to, and from whence to learn their duty and their destiny. Their constitutional laws and instincts are sufficient unto them. So of every beast of the field, bird of the air, and fish of the sea. All have the laws of their life inwrought in their constitutions, and when they are suffered to live, then their destiny is fulfilled in the completest manner.

Man is not an exception to this universal order of the creation. He is not outside of, nor above the general plan. He

has all the laws necessary to regulate and control his life, destiny, and happiness, in every plane of his existence, and in every period of his history, inwrought in his constitution. The code of his physical, passional, moral, intellectual, and spiritual existence is impressed on his organization. He is the incarnation or embodiment of a system of laws—an economy of movement perfect in itself, and sufficient to all the ends and purposes of his life. In his organization nothing has been overlooked—no law left out which was, or in time would be, necessary to his life, destiny, and happiness.

The physical, mental, moral, and spiritual laws impressed on him are God's expressed will to him, which can in no case be abrogated or superseded, and the obedience to which is virtue, and the disobedience vice. No one denies, not even the petrified orthodox bigot, that the physiological, neurological, and pathological laws, inwrought in man's organizations, are the decrees of the Most High. It is surely God's will that I should eat, and drink, and walk, and sleep; that I should feel the sentiments of joy, love, benevolence, etc. It was surely His intention that I should observe and exercise the intellectual powers and laws of my being, and think, and reason, and conclude for myself. It was surely His intention that I should observe the laws of my *moral* being, and follow duty as dictated to me by my moral organization, and its relations and adaptations. It was evidently intended, that man should be *sufficient unto himself*; that his physical, moral, and spiritual destiny should be completely embodied in his own complex organization. And accordingly, all the laws necessary to effectuate that destiny are indelibly engraven on his nature. As the study of our physiological structure is perpetually disclosing its wonderful economy and use; its admirable adaptation of means to ends; its relations, dependencies, beauties, and harmonies; so the study of our *moral* organization, or that part of our nature which regards our relations to others and to God, is incessantly revealing to us

all the individual and social harmonies of our natures. To suppose that there is, was, or will be a revelation from God out of heaven to us of moral truth, besides what he has declared to us in our creation, and organized us to behold within us, and which we can attain by the study, development, and exercise of our moral feelings, perceptions, and institutions, is just as absurd as to suppose that he has made or will make a revelation to us of anatomical and physiological truths, which we can attain by the study of our anatomy and physiology. It is just as likely, and just as necessary, that He should reveal to us from heaven how our osseous structure is adjusted, and how to use it; how our muscular system is devised, and why; how our nervous and circulating economies are arranged and adapted; and how all our functional harmonies are organized and adjusted, related and dependent, as it is that he should reveal from heaven what our *moral* constitution is, its relations and dependencies, uses and ends, and how to use and exercise it, and what are its objects and purposes. It is just as likely, and as necessary, that He should reveal *passional* laws, and health laws, as that he should reveal moral laws. I take it that God has done already, in the organization of man physically, mentally, morally, and spiritually, all that it was necessary for him to do, to enlighten him in his whole duty, if he will but apply himself to the study of God's will as exhibited in his own nature. His intellectual powers are adequate to furnish him with all knowledge and science, necessary for his highest development, as an intelligent being; and his moral faculties are adequate to furnish him with all the moral truths necessary for his highest development as a *moral* being. All the faculties and powers with which he is endowed are fully adequate to the highest glory and happiness of man. *And a pure and orderly life, according to the true intent and meaning of those faculties and powers, is the only true morality and religion—is strict conformity to the will of God.* God not only disregards, but inexorably punishes with

pain and sickness, malformation, disease, discord, and death every attempt to depart from this life of rectitude and holiness, no matter whether it comes in the name of God or "his only begotten Son," or in the name of Dr. Dods, or any other system maker or nostrum vender. The world has been for centuries awfully afflicted with these false and spurious lives, antagonizing these innate powers and faculties, or perverting them, contradicting the will of God—and yet imposed in his name—pretending Christ, but really anti-Christ, atheistical and diabolical. They have, for long ages, covered the body of humanity with consuming cancers; while the normal, vital energies of man's mental, moral, and spiritual constitution have been, through immemorial time, striving to purge away his leprosies.

Now Dr. Dods, whom I take as a type of a large species still extant in the world, holds that the Bible, especially the New Testament, is a revelation of *moral* truth to mankind (!), which as such could never have been attained by man, and can never be improved upon or superseded. This, he says, was part of the mission of Christ. I make some few extracts to show his drift and meaning :

"A moral truth once given by the unerring Creator, through his Son, to man, as a moral and religious being, can never be improved."  
 \* \* \* "All the moral truths adapted to beings such as we are, have been revealed by prophets, Jesus Christ, and his apostles. They involve all the moral duties we owe to our God, ourselves, and all our fellow-men, in every possible condition of moral life, even down to the silent grave. And this is enough for human joy." \* \* \* "The living Son has revealed the moral absolute perfections of the living Father for our imitation." \* \* \* "He has set before us all the moral duties and obligations that constitute in their performance human happiness on earth, and involve all the light of moral splendor to which human beings can ever attain through the wasteless ages of eternity." \* \* \* "And can any improvements be made, I ask, on such moral truths as these?" \* \* \* "No improvements can be made on the truths of the Bible as a rule of moral life, nor can they now be superseded," etc.



But what are those all-important, everlasting, and glorious moral truths, that heaven has been opened, and God's only begotten Son sent to reveal to mankind? Why! Here is a specimen, page 115:

"We are, for instance, commanded to love, forgive, and bless our enemies; to be kindly affectioned one to another, tender-hearted and forgiving, industrious, peaceable, and sober-minded; to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us, and to be followers of God as dear children (!) In a word, to visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, to love one another, and to do good unto all men, as we have opportunity. And here, I ask, can this be improved? It is impossible."

And these are the "*moral truths*" heaven has been opened to reveal to man! Is there any thing extraordinary about them? Are they very profound and abstract—surpassing the moral ability of man to normally attain? Could not any well-disposed, friendly, and benevolent man or woman, though they had never heard of a Bible, feel, and announce, and practice these admonitions? I see nothing in them that a well-disposed and tender-hearted Pawnec, or the "kindly affectioned" Hindoo, could not, and does not, easily attain. Besides, they are not *moral axioms*, but mere friendly *exhortations*. They are not *abstract axiomatical moral truths*, but the merest *admonitions* to be good, and loving, and peaceable. They have none of the intuitive or rational certainty, none of the definiteness, universality, and accuracy which renders them applicable at all times and places, and under every variety and contingency of circumstances to entitle them to be called *moral axioms*. Many of them are puerile and childish, and lack that dignity and manliness which characterizes many modern writers on moral philosophy. They are, in the main, little better than the fraternal advice, exhortations, and admonitions of a pious New England schoolmaster to his confiding pupils. There are many of them "*moral truths*" which Dods says Christ was sent into the world to reveal to mankind, which, if they were

implicitly adopted and literally carried out, *not as admonitions*, but as *axiomatical moral truths*, would lead society into discord, confusion, and strife. For instance, the one above quoted, of doing unto others as we would that they should do unto us, would constitute me the standard of other people's tastes, inclinations, pleasures, and attractions. I might wish them to do unto me what they might knock me down for attempting to do to them. It is evident, to adopt this as a maxim, each one would be incessantly offending and outraging the tastes and attractions of others, and getting himself perpetually into bad odor and broils with his neighbors. So the precept, that if a man slap you on one cheek, you are to turn up the other to him, if adopted as a maxim, is an outrage upon justice, and contrary to every sentiment of right and equity. It is servile and debasing, and licenses aggression, tyranny, and oppression. So also the advice, that if a man ask you for your cloak, you are to give him your coat also; and if he ask you to go a mile with him, you are to go two, if regarded as a moral maxim, to be literally followed, disregards all rules of equity and propriety, is a surrender of all individual right, encourages imposition, robbing, and plunder, and makes menials and slaves of nine tenths of mankind! You go two miles with the man who asked you for the favor to go one with him, and the next time you will have to go all the way home with him, and the third time, perhaps, have to carry him on your back! You give the man who had the meanness to ask you for your cloak, your coat also, and the next time you will have to hand over your pantaloons, your watch, your vest, your boots, etc., and go naked; and by-and-by you will find him shearing your sheep and milking your cows! So likewise the principles inculcated in the various parables of the capricious father, whose feelings overpowered his sense of justice, treating a drunken and profligate son with more consideration than his other sober and industrious children; of the unjust employer who paid the same wages to

the laborers who had worked only one hour that he did to those who worked hard all day, and who even preferred the ones who came last ; and many other parables that were never intended to embody a *practical moral principle*, but simply *admonitory* in their nature, and intended to exhort the people to do good, and be "kindly affectioned one to another." These boasted "moral truths," which Dods gives out as wholly beyond the attainment of man's moral perceptions, and which were accordingly revealed from heaven, are but the mere commonplace admonitions and exhortations of some good old grandpapa, accompanied with gingerbread, and sundry pats on the cheeks and heads to the "*dear children*," to be good boys and girls ! Very few, if any of them, are axiomatical, and by far the greatest number puerile and childish. They suited the times and people, and answered the purpose for which they were intended.

But this coming after man with a revelation of moral truths for the rule of his life, implies a defect in man's original constitution. It implies that his moral organization is imperfect, and was imperfect *ab initio* ; that his moral faculties are congenitally incapable of discharging their functions ; that they are incapable of intuitively perceiving or normally excogitating their legitimate objects, the moral truths of life ; and that they have to be aided and assisted by revelations from heaven. It is the same as saying that God failed to lay down, in the original organization of man, all the laws and principles necessary to his completeness and destiny ; or that he escaped from him before he was finished, or that God has ever since been importunately after him with a statute book trying to make amends for the default ! It is the same as saying that man was not created *sufficient unto himself*, but stands in daily need of a foreign support and rule of life. It announces the atheism of an imperfect God, and authenticates the ancient myth of his human weakness and fallibility. The true morality is a matter of *scientific demonstration*, growing out of the

moral nature of man, just as the true physiology, or pathology, or phrenology is purely a matter of science; and the good God is more honored, exalted, and adored and glorified by the representation of his moral attributes in the moral organization of his creature man, and its adaptation to all the moral fields and planes of life he is destined to pass through, than by any supplementary and emendatory revelation, no matter how given. He has endowed man primordially and potentially with every excellence, virtue, and law necessary to govern him in every stage of his development, and necessary to his highest happiness, perfection, and glory. It is his indispensable duty to use his powers and faculties in the development of his destiny; to use his faculties in the study of physiology, pathology, and the laws of health; in the study of his civil relations and rights, and the equitable distribution of his productive energies; in the study of his relations and adaptations to his fellow-man, to nature, and to God; and in every way intended to emancipate him from primeval ignorance, to fill him with the light of knowledge, to reduce that knowledge to science, to purify his heart, to chasten his taste, to exalt and adorn his nature, and in every possible way to administer to and advance his material, social, moral, and spiritual well-being. A revelation from heaven of any truth touching the law of man's life (already abundantly revealed in his constitution) supersedes the use of those faculties, and renders them a dead letter. It suppresses the free exercise, outgrowth, and development of those innate powers, by the imposition of an *ab extra* authority over them, which throttles every attempt at self-sufficiency and spontaneity.

But Dods says, that though mesmeric clairvoyants may visit different and distant worlds in our planetary system, and accurately and minutely describe the various vegetable tribes, and the animated inhabitants of their vast dominions, and make many scientific and philosophic revealments, yet, he says, in such revealments there is not a single moral truth to

perfect human virtue (page 116). This, in the first place, is *not true*; for our best clairvoyant writers, such as Davis for instance, have perceived, formulized, and uttered more scientific and philosophic moral axioms than Dods will understand and digest in a lifetime. And, in the second place, what difference does it make whether they reveal scientific and philosophic knowledge and principles, or moral truths? Have not all science and correct knowledge a direct bearing upon human life and happiness? Is not all truth co-related, connected, and dependent? And what is moral truth without so-called scientific and philosophic truth? It would be like the figure four, for instance, out of its series, nothing at all. It is like a section of the human body, good for nothing without the rest of the organism. And if a revelation from heaven of moral truth, why not of astronomical, cosmological, and geological truth? why not of any and all scientific truth? of chemical law, optical law, acoustic law? of social law, industrial law, political law, and civil law? of health law, passional law, and generative law? We need the knowledge of the one just as much as the other; and the attainment of the one is just as much within the compass of our powers as the other. But I have already said enough on this branch of the subject. The perusal of the lecture now under review, if any one of free thought, analytic mind, and comprehensive judgment can have patience to read it, will show for itself what a despicably narrow view of the Divine Nature the author has, and how blind, incongruous, and shallow his philosophy, and how riveted he is in his bigoted notions.

## Chapter Eight.

OUR author further says, on page 119, that—

“As regards the understanding the peculiar doctrines of Christ and his inspired companions—such as the atonement, or in what sense he died for us as a sacrifice to take away the sin of the world—his being the resurrection and life of the world—his immortal reign—and in what sense that he, as judge of quick and dead, is to reward and punish all mankind according to the deeds done in the body—and even in what sense he is the Son of God, distinct from any of the human race, I am satisfied that new revelations, through clairvoyance or some other source, are to be made to the world. I do not mean new revelations of any doctrinal truths as additions to what are already in the Bible, but a revelation of the *true meaning intrinsically involved in those doctrines already recorded in the Scriptures*, and concerning which the whole Christian world are divided and split into sects.”

Well, I think it is time that something *was* done to clear up those dark and trebly involved mysteries of “*faith*.” I think their case is suffering for the want of a “*revelation*” of their rationale and science. It is of great importance to have a correct understanding of those matters. The sooner the better, for many souls may, in the mean time, “die in their unbelief.” If it had been done some time ago it would have saved much bloodshed, burning and flaying alive, war, persecution, and butchery! It would have been common humanity to have seen to this in time. But this *ex post facto* Deity, however, is now to come with still *another* revelation, through clairvoyants or other sources, to supply the discrepancies and defaults of the former one, after millions of his creatures have, by reason of them, “perished in their sins!” We are to have it all

now made plain to us. It will be exceedingly gratifying indeed to have a rational and scientific exposition of that "miraculous conception," of the divine justice of imputing to the righteous and holy the sins of the guilty, of salvation by proxy, or by "*faith alone*," and of election and reprobation, and of eternal punishment for the ignorant defaults and blunders of time. I would like to have that mysterious arithmetic of three persons being only one, and of one person being three, also fully cleared up and explained. I would like, too, a little more light on the subject of the final burning up of the world, and the "day of judgment." A scientific solution of the resurrection of the material body would also improve our faith. A little more full biography of his Satanic lordship, the leader of the opposition, would dissipate some profane doubts, and remove the carnal suspicion of his superior fidelity, honesty, and consistency of character. As to the miracles, we have them pretty well explained already; for what are not scientifically solved by the modern spiritual manifestations, which cover a majority of them, can be satisfactorily accounted for as *electro-psychological delusions*.

Another sage conclusion that our author has arrived at is, that the different Christian sects are all *tending to unity and brotherhood on all doctrinal points*; that by various instrumentalities they are all converging to one common center, and that they will finally all be united in harmony, love, and peace. He says that as to the "moral preceptive truths of the volume of revelation, all denominations are agreed;" that is, if I understand him aright, that the various sects, all drawing their moral codes from the Bible, agree in and adopt the *same* morality. This assertion is wide of the truth, and is evidently made without the least reflection or consideration. He never stopped to think whether it *was* true or not, but wrote at random just as he fancied. The proposition is notoriously untrue. The various sects inculcate and profess the most opposite and diverse systems of morality, and all drawn from

the same divine source, the Bible, just as they do their various creeds and opinions. Catholic morality differs from Protestant morality, Episcopalian morality from Presbyterian, Seventh-day Baptist morality from Quaker, Mormon morality from Methodist, Christian Perfectionist (Free Love) morality from Unitarian morality, etc. The most incongruous and antagonistic systems of morality, as of "doctrines," are everywhere drawn from and justified by the Bible ; and the more the Bible is studied and taken as an authority, the more divergent and multiplicatory are these systems of morality and religion. This every one who is capable of the least reflection, and will look around him over the sectarian world, can see for himself. But it is on doctrinal points that they are said by him, in the same superficial and inconsiderate manner, to be convergent and tending to harmony. On page 137, he says that "all doctrines are approaching a common goal—a center where they will one day meet, embrace, and mingle into one *harmony and beauty*." Tell me, reader, *Is this* proposition true? *Are* all doctrines approaching a common goal or center? Do you see any indications of it? Where and what are they? Is not the very reverse the truth? Ever since the birth of Christianity, and especially since the Reformation, it has been nothing but schism after schism, and sect begetting sect. There is a greater variety of doctrines and dogmas, of theologies and religions, and of a more diverse and heterogeneous kind now than ever were in the world before! It is an undeniable fact, that as governments have become more liberal and tolerant, awakening free thought and inquiry, and spreading abroad knowledge and science, that, in the same ratio, sectarian dogmas have increased and sects multiplied. The reason is obvious, namely, free thought and inquiry cast doubts upon these doctrines, make men dissatisfied with them, open their eyes to their absurdity, and schism is the consequence. One party holds on to the old notions, another party modifies them, another party repudiates



the more signally absurd and retains the more rational, and another party repudiates all and takes up some new system instead. The march of intelligence thus splits up the old churches and creeds into fragments, which again form into other sects and parties. The more enlightened modern intellects can not digest the crude old material of mythologic times, and so they break it up into pieces and work them over again into new forms. The press, which Dods says is the great agent which has contributed thus far, and which will finally secure the unity and harmony of all doctrinal differences, has had, and will continue to have, the very opposite tendency and effect. This is another of his blundering, inconsiderate, and notoriously false assertions. Who does not know that, although the press has taken the Bible from the monasteries, and circulated it through the world, it has not, at the same time, multiplied and propagated sect upon sect, and doctrine upon doctrine, and spread that infidel science and free thought throughout almost every land, which dares to criticise all doctrines, and which will eventually put an end to all these airy nothings of traditionary mythology? Who sees not that it has bred, nurtured, and brought up science—that cruel and relentless enemy of speculative dogma and religion? So far from the press being the great instrument of doctrinal reconciliation and harmony, it is the potent engine of sectarian schism, division, disintegration, segregation, and integration. One of the grandest mistakes of the orthodox world is the supposition that, by any agency whatever, the prevailing, diverse, and antagonist doctrines of theology and religion will ever be reconciled into harmony with each other. The elements of harmony are not in them; they are essentially incongruous and discordant; and the more they are studied and analyzed the more at war with each other will they be found. Moreover, questions of this kind are of such an intrinsic nature as to forever preclude a harmony of belief and unity of action with regard to them. The reason is, because

they are **SPECULATIVE**. They are not capable of *scientific demonstration*. They cannot be tested and reduced by actual experiment and induction to an exact science. They are hypothetical, visionary, and theoretical ; and accordingly, each one being left to his own reflection and imagination, believes in his own way, according to his peculiar organization, genius, habits, associations, and education. Of course on all speculative subjects men will *always* differ in virtue of their different individualities ; and it is their nature and the will of God that they should differ. To expect unity and harmony of belief therefore on *these* subjects, or doctrines purely speculative, or on any purely speculative philosophy, is expressly contrary to the nature of man and opposed to all experience. How great, therefore, is the mistake which the deluded Dr. Dods and all that class of philosophizing sectarians make, in looking for ultimate harmony and unity of belief on doctrinal questions ! I look for harmony directly in the opposite direction. I see that there never will be harmony and peace until men *agree to disagree* on all speculative creeds or opinions, be they theological, religious, or philosophical—till every man is let alone to believe or disbelieve, just as he chooses or is affected. If any of those doctrines should take the form of *science*, and be ratified and affirmed by it, then sectarian discord would be at an end, and an enlightened harmony of belief the inevitable result. Just in the proportion that men are educated, enlightened, and acquire the courage to think for themselves on all those doctrinal points, they break away from the old notions, strike out new paths, amend and modify the old creeds, excogitate new theories and doctrines, get up new speculative creeds, parties, and sects, to be again, under the operation of free inquiry and private judgment, dismembered, divided, and subdivided into other parties and sects. When the individual becomes able, and dares to exercise his thought, reason, and analysis upon these doctrines, he soon becomes a “heretic,” if not a total skeptic, and an “infidel,” breeds disunion in his

church, collects and organizes a party in his favor, who are reprimanded, sessioned, and excommunicated; then go off and build up a new sect which, by-and-by, shares the same fate. The same causes, namely, free inquiry, the right of private judgment and liberty of conscience, that originated the first disaffection and schism, still at work, produces more dissensions, secessions, and schisms, thus multiplying doctrines, and parties, and sects in a compound ratio. This is the true explanation of the multitudinous and multifarious denominations, with their vast variety and diversity of doctrines and creeds. The very same causes, the right of private judgment and liberty of conscience, free from all ecclesiastical and civil authority, which produced in the hands of Luther the Protestant Reformation, and which was its platform and glory, has produced all the multiplied schisms, sects, creeds, and doctrines, that have since appeared and do now exist. That very formula of civil and religious freedom which Dods no doubt extols to the skies, instead of harmonizing all doctrinal and sectarian differences, will, just as surely as time rolls on, continue its schismatical work of analyzing creeds, testing doctrines, questioning their origin and validity, denying their authority and disintegrating the sects, until the individual thought and conscience is free from all external ecclesiastical association or rule, and every man becomes his own sect or church. This is the course that it must inevitably run, and this is the result it is undeniably tending to produce. It commenced by resisting all church authority over the individual thought and conscience, and dismembering the vast ecclesiastical dynasty against which it was pointed. It did not cease when Luther died, but has ever since continued its "*Protests*" and its dismembering policy. All the church dissensions, heresies, and schisms it has ever bred, are but "*Protestant Reformations*" on a smaller scale, produced and carried on by the operation of the same principle. It is wasting away by sure dissolution and disintegration all those iron hierarch-

ies of the past, which have gloried in a rampant tyranny over the thoughts and consciences of men, and is ultimating in the complete individuality of opinion and belief on all questions that are not scientifically demonstrated. Church divisions, religious and theological controversies, ecclesiastical insubordination, and the multiplication of sects and parties is, therefore, an undoubted *evidence of progress*—is a demonstration of the continued triumph of the great principles of the Reformation, in impeaching and overthrowing *all* organized religious despotisms over the free thought and conscience of the individual. So long as any organized dogmatical religion or ecclesiastical hierarchical association, resting on the basis of a speculative creed remains, the *Protestant* Reformation is still unfinished, and its all-conquering principle still successfully operative, demolishing it into the dust. The work goes bravely on in our time. There never was such a breaking up of old religious dynasties, and such a universal questioning of creeds and consternation of bigots! When, through the agency of this great principle of liberty, men are at last freed from all manner of tyrannies developed in popes, kings, priests, bishops, ecclesiastical organizations, odium theologicum, anathema, etc., and their thought and conscience emancipated from their thralldom, then they will be ready and qualified for, and will naturally come into, the true religion, viz., THE SCIENCE OF LIFE BOTH HERE AND HEREAFTER, AS REVEALED BY GOD TO MAN IN HIS OWN PHYSICAL, PASSIONAL, MENTAL, MORAL, AND SPIRITUAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND THEIR ADAPTATIONS AND USES.

Thus I have done with Dr. Dods and his book forever. I feel sensible that my time might have been much better employed. The task has been exceedingly distasteful to me; and I have written thus much with but little care as to how I expressed myself. My readers may, however, find something in it to interest and instruct them. I do not suppose that any thing I have said will have the least

weight with Dr. Dods, nor do I care that it should. It is not for him I have written. He will no doubt think me an arch-infidels and blasphemer, and console himself with the assurances of his creed, "in such cases made and provided." I only hope that his cool, haughty, and self-complacent bigotry will not allow what I have said to mortify his vanity in the least.

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