

CHAPTER IV.

LIFE HERE AND HEREAFTER HAS A COMMON DEVELOPMENT AND A COMMON PURPOSE.

It is with an increasing interest that the writer turns to the third and final proposition upon which this philosophy rests.

It is with this final proposition that this present work is mainly concerned. However interesting may be the mere enumeration of the cold facts of Nature, the deeper interest always attaches to man's relation to those facts and to the ethical principles involved.

Reference to the scientific course of self-development is introduced in this work for one purpose only. The ethics of life are built upon this scientific foundation.

That brief outline contains but a necessary hint as to the scientific method of personally proving the spiritual facts of Nature and personally demonstrating the ethical principles underlying all activity.

This work is not intended as a purely scientific treatise. It does not include either the chemical formula or the ethical code for self-development. It does not embrace definite instruction as to the control of spiritual elements nor give direction as to the development of the mental forces.

Instead, the reader at this time is asked to consider mainly the ethical effects which flow from the operation of these principles, elements and forces which the student of the law demonstrates for himself. He is asked to consider the ethical effects rather than the scientific processes.

When the student of natural law demonstrates the fact of life after physical death, his education is only begun. He is now

confronted by other problems. He has pushed himself into a new and unfamiliar world of matter, life and intelligence. He is now in the midst of those conditions of which he had formerly only speculated. He is now called to study and analyze this new world under the laws which directly govern spiritual phenomena. He finds analogies to physical life everywhere. However, he finds no conditions that are identical with earthly life.

He finds instead a world of superior material refinement, whose vibratory activities respond to the spiritual senses only. He is oblivious to the physical side of matter. This new world appears to be wholly independent of the old. There is nothing in it that would impress the physical senses. The suddenly liberated student is very like the man born blind and deaf suddenly restored to the normal use of those senses. He sees that which he has no language to describe. He finds it difficult to comprehend those new conditions, and he has neither words nor ideas by which he can report the effects even upon himself. He is simply dazzled, delighted, bewildered. He confesses that all efforts to translate that experience to man in the body are necessarily inadequate. He finds, as literal truth, that statement which declares "It hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive" what this higher world means, either as to its appearance, or its intelligence, or its activities.

The first great fact that forces itself upon the intelligence is the universality of matter. In this one fact he corrects the common error of regarding the spiritual world as an immaterial world.

This dogma of an "immaterial world" is one of those absolutely unthinkable propositions which discredits theology. It is also one that naturally offends modern science.

The spiritual world is as truly material as our own. It is simply a world of matter finer in particle and more rapid in vibratory action than our physical world. Because of this fact Natural Science uses those distinguishing terms "physical material" and "spiritual material." The spiritual world is just as real and tan-

gible and visible to a spiritual man as is the physical world to the physical man.

Finite intelligence has never yet succeeded in passing the limitations of matter. As far as science has penetrated (thus far) it finds both matter and intelligence in their natural relations. That is, it finds intelligence everywhere manifesting itself as the positive force in Nature acting upon matter. It finds everywhere matter as the negative property of Nature being acted upon by intelligence.

When the student is able to consciously and intelligently release his own spiritual body from the physical he proves another fact. He proves that statement of St. Paul which has been the subject of controversy for nearly nineteen hundred years. He proves that there is a "natural" or physical body and that there is also a "spiritual body." He finds that this spiritual body is a material body which in form and expression is but a finer representation of the physical organism he has temporarily quitted.

Whether the ego, or intelligent soul, ever discards this spiritual body is a question not germane to this present writing. It is a question, however, that is much debated in spiritual life.

Another important fact reveals itself to the investigator. This spiritual world has locality. It encircles this planet like a vast girdle. How far outward and upward it extends is a question not involved in this discussion. In appearance that world is analogous to this. That is to say, it has a similar distribution of land and water. There are oceans and continents. There are mountains, valleys and plains. There are forests, lakes and rivers. The same activity in the material world exists there as here. There is movement of all waters. There are magnetic changes of matter. There is growth in vegetation.

Whether there are other spiritual worlds than the one correlated to our planet is another question beyond the limitations of this work.

That world is inhabited just as this world is, by intelligent beings capable of moral improvement. They are real people; in

fact, the same people who have previously lived here. They are simply spiritually embodied intelligences instead of physically embodied individuals. They preserve their identity as certain individuals from this plane. They continue to follow in the same general lines of intellectual and moral activity which engaged them in this world.

The student who learns these facts for himself demonstrates the correlation of two worlds of matter and the continuity of life, intelligence and activity.

The spiritual plane is divided into many planes or spheres of life and action. The divisions are local as well as intellectual, social and moral. Scientifically speaking, the spiritual material of this higher plane is subject to the law of polarity or vibration. By reason of this law its several zones or spheres are regulated by what is known as the spiritual law of gravitation. The coarser material moving at lower rates of vibration very naturally constitutes the immediate stratum encircling the coarse physical earth. By the same law of spiritual gravitation the remote regions of the spiritual world are those whose material substance is finest and whose vibratory action is highest.

The physically released inhabitants of the spiritual plane occupy the several zones or belts composing the spiritual world. They find their spiritual homes in one or another of those strata representing lower or higher states of refinement and vibratory action. They select as their homes that particular sphere or locality to which their own vibratory condition impels them. This means that spiritually embodied men differ in degree of material refinement and vibratory action just as do men in the physical body. It means that spiritual people, like earthly people, seek those localities and that social environment which correspond to their own stages of development.

The spiritual law of polarity or vibration is again illustrated by the separation of spiritual beings into many social castes.

For example, the spiritual plane immediately surrounding this earth consists of the least refined spiritual material moving

at the lowest rates of vibration. Hence that zone is the negative state of spiritual material. It therefore does not reflect light. It appears (to spiritual vision) darker than those localities above and beyond.

Another important fact confronts the traveler. He finds that mere liberation from the physical body does not in the least change man in his essential nature. He finds that it does not mean an instantaneous absorption of universal knowledge. It does not effect a sudden revolution in the moral nature. In fact, the change called death leaves a man very little wiser and morally no better than he was immediately before. He finds himself somewhat in the same position of an ignorant American who has been suddenly transported to the center of some European civilization. Certain additional facts of Nature are literally thrust upon him. He cannot, however, obtain any definite information as to the nature of those facts without study and investigation.

His own limitations, spiritual, mental and moral, curtail his comprehension and enjoyment of that which confronts him, just as ignorance curtails a man's enjoyment in this world. He finds in the spiritual world, as in the physical, that a man enlarges his store of knowledge and capacity for enjoyment through the slow processes of education and self-development. If ignorant and vicious when released by physical death, such a man will follow the same impulses and passions which governed him in earthly life. He neither appreciates nor seeks that which is refined, intelligent and noble. Instead, he seeks that which is in natural or vibratory sympathy with himself.

The physically disembodied man discovers that it is his own acts, thoughts and motives, which have conditioned his spiritual body to one or another of the spiritual zones or localities. If his earth life has been intelligent, chaste and purposeful he finds himself attuned to the higher planes and the higher circles of spiritual life. Under such conditions he passes outward from the earth plane by the law of spiritual gravity and dwells in that sphere and among such people as are harmonious to himself. If,

on the contrary, his life has been vicious, ignorant, criminal and impure he finds that the "spirit" has been coarsened by that previous life in the body. He finds, therefore, that he is in touch with only the lower stratum of spiritual material and spiritual society.

Under these conditions the spiritual body cannot rise. It remains in the negative regions of spiritual existence. It is therefore an integral part and natural representative of negation or darkness. It cannot rise to the light. It appears, therefore, as darkness to itself and to others.

By reason of this natural law and this actual condition in the spiritual world have arisen those well-known but mysterious allusions to "earth-bound spirits," to "angels of darkness," to "regions of darkness," to the "outer darkness" and to the "darkness of ignorance."

In this physical world darkness and evil and ignorance are linked rather in a figurative sense. In the spiritual world they are linked in a literal as well as in a figurative and ethical sense.

What we term the law of spiritual gravity is, in fact, that universal spiritual principle of polarity which governs evolution upon both planes of matter. This is the principle which underlies all of the propositions of Natural Science. It is the principle of spiritual affinity which constitutes the text of this present writing.

Reducing this principle of polarity to a general proposition it would read as follows:

There is in Nature a universal principle which impels every entity to seek vibratory correspondence with other entities of its kind.

Under this universal principle the spiritual world divides itself into many material and social regions. By the same principle spiritual beings seek that zone or locality whose material refinement and social development correspond to themselves. It follows, therefore, that the wise and the ignorant, the good and the evil, the active and the idle, group themselves in the order of their affinities.

When the student sees these conditions as facts in Nature he proves for himself that Nature embraces a principle which continually tends to bring together all things of the same degree of refinement and vibratory activity.

This same principle of polarity operates in human society upon the physical plane. While caste in this world appears to depend almost wholly upon external advantages and physical conditions, this is not the fact. In reality all human organizations and social integrations are dominated by the spiritual sympathies rather than the physical conditions, professions or advantages. A common expression in our own society illustrates this principle. We hear it said that such or such person is "out of his sphere," meaning that the individual is not mentally or morally equipped for fellowship in a certain circle.

There is one radical difference between the physical and spiritual worlds in this respect. On the physical plane we only know by intuition when a person is spiritually out of touch with his social environment. In the spiritual world, however, the law of vibration sets its ineffaceable sign upon every man. That is to say, one who remains in the lower stratum of the spiritual world is himself in that negative state which causes him to appear dark. On the contrary, he who rises by reason of his own refinement vibrates at a higher tension. He is in a positive state of activity which may appear first as color and next as light.

"Hell" and "darkness," therefore, are not mere figures of speech. The word "heaven" has a literal significance. Darkness is both locality and condition, as well as appearance. Light is both locality and condition, as well as appearance.

Every individual, whether physically or spiritually embodied, throws off spiritual magnetism. During earthly life those magnetic waves are invisible to the physical eye.

In spiritual life, however, they are distinctly visible to the spiritual eye. The spiritual man appears to his fellow men as veiled in darkness, or he gives off magnetic waves so rapid in vibratory action as to produce the effect of either color or light to

the spiritual eye. Thus a spiritual man appears in an aura of darkness, or of color, or of light, according to his degree of development, viz., according to the degree of his material refinement, vibratory action and magnetic power.

Persons familiar with the seance room will recall how frequently a clairvoyant medium will refer to the "aura" of certain visitors. At one time the medium may allude to a physically embodied visitor, at another time to a spiritual visitor. In both cases the medium sees spiritually those waves of spiritual magnetism thrown off by the person in the physical body or out of it, as the case may be.

In this we find explanation of the "halo" or the shining cloud surrounding "angels" that have for all ages been written about or reported by mediums or pictured by artists. The finer the spiritual condition the more brilliant and magnetic becomes this aura.

Saul of Tarsus was prostrated by what he could only describe as "a burning bush." There was a very excellent reason why Moses' spiritual visitors were concealed by a cloud, from the uninstructed Israelites. The effect of sudden contact between a highly developed spiritual being and a physically embodied man wholly unprepared for such contact is a dangerous encounter for the earthly man. It would be as fatal as the live electric wire.

Thus the law of vibration governs the material conditions of the spiritual world. It is a natural law that assigns man to darkness or envelops him in light in accordance with his own essential nature.

It must be understood, however, that it is the intelligent soul itself which controls the vibratory action of both bodies, physical and spiritual. The vibratory action of the spiritual body is, in fact, but the reflex action of the soul itself. It is, therefore, the soul or the ego which is coarse or fine, weak or forceful, dull or active. To be dull and heavy of soul is to be coarse in material texture, slow in vibratory action, negative in condition, dark in

appearance. To be active of soul or intelligence is to be fine in material particle, rapid in vibratory action, positive in condition and luminous in appearance.

Thus, after all, it is the soul which drags the body down. It is the activity or inactivity of the intelligent soul which determines the local habitation of the spiritual body and thus its own social environment.

Caste in the spiritual world means more than it does here. People there are not so often found out of place. In a literal sense, men show their "true colors" in the spiritual world. The natural spiritual law leaves the individual little opportunity for simulation. He appears as he is, stupid or active, dull or intelligent, evil or good. He appears selfish or cowardly, noble or exalted, just as he is in fact. He is clothed in darkness or light according to his own self-made conditions. In short, he is "known" in the spiritual world.

At the hour of physical death the released ego, invested with its ethereal body, may rise rapidly from the earth or it may cling indefinitely to its former earthly haunts. It may condition itself to the coarser and darker regions close to the physical plane, or it may be able to rise rapidly to those finer, lighter and more positive regions lying far from the physical world. It is the soul of man which holds his spirit earth-bound, or impels it to higher planes when once released from the physical body.

Except a man knows this law he can form but the faintest conception of earth's immediate spiritual surroundings. It is only the student who realizes that humanity as a whole is in closest touch with the lowest stratum of spiritual life and intelligence. He perceives that mankind is assailed by evil spiritual influences more frequently than he is approached by the higher and better influences. The too often demoralizing results of the seance room are particularly due to the easy approach of vicious disembodied intelligences.

It must be understood, however, that the physically disembodied man is not permanently bound to any one locality nor

to any particular social environment. Nothing but his own condition binds him either to place or to people. When that condition changes he releases himself. In that life, as in this, the individual is the arbiter of his own destiny. He rises or sinks by and through his own efforts or his own failures. In that world, as in this, love of knowledge, together with the courage to do and the strength to persevere, will gradually raise a man from a lower to a higher plane of existence.

The spiritual man overcomes unhappy spiritual conditions through educational processes. As a result his spiritual body becomes finer in particle with increased vibratory action. He is thus changed from the coarse, negative and dark state of being to the fine, positive and luminous state.

Thus there is a basis for our popular belief in halo-enveloped angels who go down into the dark places and among the fallen.

In the spiritual world the student finds an increase of purely intellectual activity as well as of philanthropic effort. Released from the exactions imposed by the physical functions of life man finds leisure for the intellectual pursuits he may have been denied here. Release from physical life means increase of time and opportunity for higher work. When the strain of this planetary life is over, the intelligent soul is free to follow its highest aspirations.

The scholar, statesman, artist, and poet, as well as the philanthropist, is now free to move forward in his chosen lines. In that world, as in this, there are facts to be learned. There are people to govern. There are beauty and love to be translated. There is music to be written and there are songs to be sung. There are romances to be lived. There is work to do.

In short, the higher life furnishes opportunity and means which most of us vainly seek here.

In another respect that life is analogous to our own. The same differences of opinion and intellectual controversy exist there as here. It is true that men no longer dispute as to the fact of life after physical death. It is true that they no longer