

The Arcane Formulas

William Walker Atkinson

INTRODUCTION, ANNOTATION AND STUDY
GUIDE
BY M.C. MESEN

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ABOUT WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON

Born in Maryland in 1862, he began working life at 15 in his parent's grocery store. He married at age 27, and became an attorney in Pennsylvania.

While he gained material success as a lawyer, the stress and over-strain brought him to a complete physical and mental breakdown that ended in a financial disaster. He looked for healing and in the late 1880's he found the principles of New Thought, and in applying them he restored his health, mental vigor and material prosperity.

Atkinson then began to write articles on the truths he felt he had discovered. His "A Mental Science Catechism," appeared in Charles Fillmore's *'Modern Thought'* in 1889.

By the early 1890's Atkinson moved to Chicago, then a major centre for New Thought, and became an active promoter of the movement as an editor and author. In 1900 he wrote his first book, *Thought-Force in Business and Everyday Life*, a series of lessons in personal magnetism, psychic influence, thought-force, concentration, will-power, and practical mental science. Soon after he met Sydney Flower, a well-known New Thought publisher and businessman, and in December 1901 he became editor of Flower's popular *New Thought* magazine (until 1905), and a very prolific writer of dozens of well appreciated articles in the magazine; and later on, he was

a regular contributor to Elizabeth Towne's Magazine, Nautilus.

Throughout his subsequent career, Atkinson wrote and published over 100 different books, some under his own name and many under pseudonyms such as Yogi Ramacharaka, Theron Q. Dumont, Theodore Sheldon, Magus Incognito, Edward Walker, Three Initiates and Swami Bhakta Vishita.

Among the first to develop the concept of Law of Attraction, Atkinson is considered, together with Orison Swett Marden and Wallace Wattles, the masters of self-development and positive thinking, and the real promoters of New Thought, a movement that came very much to life again with the Millennium. He died November 22, 1932 in Los Angeles, California at the age of 69, after 50 years of successful career in business, writing, occultism, and the law, and a life surrounded by mysteries, including his own death.

Introduction

The Arcane Formulas is the second volume in the Arcane series, a set of occult teachings that originated within early twentieth-century Western esoteric circles. Unlike many contemporary spiritual manuals that remain abstract, this book is relentlessly practical: it presents a sequence of graded exercises designed to awaken the student to the reality of Egohood—the conscious awareness of oneself as a distinct centre of consciousness and will within the universal Cosmic Life. The author, who writes under the collective persona of "The Arcane Teachers," assumes that some readers are ready to discard the confining sheaths of personality and insists that only those who feel an inner hunger for the methods will benefit. The result is a terse, almost surgical manual that avoids doctrinal elaboration in favor of direct instruction.

The book is structured around a clear progression. Early lessons focus on "Establishing the Ego" by systematically divorcing the sense of self from the physical body, then from the mental habits of personality. The Neophyte learns to see the body as an instrument, the personality as a costume, and the "I" as the unchanging actor behind both. Later chapters introduce the concept of Will as the underlying essence of the Ego, drawing on Western philosophers such as Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Wundt, as well as Eastern teachings mediated through writers like Rudyard Kipling

and Professor William Sturgis Bigelow. The discussion of the "Excluded Middle"—a term borrowed from logic and repurposed—proposes that by excluding the illusory paraphernalia of personality, the individual can complete the "Circle of Will" and regain conscious unity with the Cosmic Will.

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of *The Arcane Formulas* is its emphasis on applied Mentalism. The final chapter, "Mentalism in a Nutshell," reduces the entire art of mental projection to a single vivid metaphor: the magic lantern, with concentrated Will as the light and the mental image as the painted slide projected onto the objective world. The author explicitly refuses to pad the book with detailed applications, urging students to think and experiment for themselves. This confidence in the student's own creative power—combined with the blunt rejection of ready-made "occult nostrums"—sets the book apart from much of the period's popular esoteric literature.

Modern readers may find the author's tone authoritative and occasionally dogmatic, but the underlying discipline remains relevant to anyone interested in the psychology of self-transformation. The exercises, though couched in an early twentieth-century metaphysical idiom, anticipate some of the techniques of modern visualization and cognitive reframing. For the student willing to engage seriously, *The Arcane Formulas* offers a rigorous mental training that aims to

liberate the individual from the automatic patterns of personality—a goal as valuable today as it was a century ago.

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Lesson I. Egohood.

In the “Arcane Lessons” you have seen that the individual is but a Centre of Consciousness and Force in the great Life Principle, Cosmic Will or Spirit. As Aphorism XII has informed you: “There is but One Life and not Many Lives. Separateness is but relative and partial—illusory—the creative fiction of the Cosmos... In the Cosmic Will there is but One Life in which, and by which, is manifested the Many.”

You have also seen that Egohood¹ is evolved and earned—not given as a universal birthright, or general natural right of the race. As Aphorism XII²I³ has informed you: “The Ego is evolved from the Personal Self. Every living thing possesses a Personal Self⁴, but, even among men, many fail to reach Egohood. Egohood is earned, not bestowed as an universal natural gift. Many personalities are born, but few Egos are evolved.”

¹ A state of conscious realization of the Ego as a distinct centre of consciousness and force within the Cosmic Will, distinct from mere self-consciousness or personality.

² One of a series of concise statements from the preceding volume, 'The Arcane Lessons,' which this book assumes the reader has studied. The aphorisms summarize core teachings about the One Life and the illusion of separateness.

³ Another aphorism from 'The Arcane Lessons' stating that Ego is evolved from the Personal Self and is earned, not universally given.

⁴ Distinguished from the Ego, the Personal Self is the bundle of inherited and acquired characteristics, feelings, and habits that form the 'me.' The Ego is the permanent centre beyond this.

Egohood is the state of Realization of the Ego—the Perception and Realization of the I am. As an old English writer once said: “Whether we try to avoid it or not, we must face this reality some time—the reality of our own Egohood—that which makes us say ‘I,’ and in saying ‘I’ leads to the discovery of a new world.”

The average person is surprised, incredulous and even indignant when he is informed that but very few of the race really have this *awareness* or consciousness of the I am within them. He will insist that *he* is fully aware of the existence of the “I,” and cannot imagine that anyone can have the audacity to dispute the proposition. But a little self-examination will reveal the fact that he has but the first glimmering of Self-Consciousness, which is far from being the Consciousness of Egohood. We have no desire or intention of entering into an extended metaphysical inquiry in these pages, but we *must* point out to you what Egohood is *not*, as the first step toward showing you what it *is*, and how it may be acquired.

The very elementary life-forms have merely the consciousness of “something outside” evidenced in sensation or feeling. The atoms manifest a faint degree of awareness (consciousness) of other atoms, which is evidenced in attraction and repulsion.

There is in chemical affinity a higher degree of elementary consciousness. The crystals manifest a still higher degree in their activities of building-up form. The

cell-forms of the lowest animal and plant life show an awareness of objects of food and of other forms which seek them for food—and consequently they move toward the first, and away from the second. Rising in the evolutionary scale we find constantly increasing degrees of consciousness. Among the higher animals, and the lower forms of men, we find what science has called “simple-consciousness,” by which is indicated that *awareness* of outside objects, accompanied by a greater or lesser degree of reasoning regarding them. The dog, horse, and other higher animals give us a typical example of this form of consciousness, which degree is but little surpassed by the less developed of the human race, many of the latter not having advanced further in the scale. Simple-consciousness may be described as a state of *knowing, but not knowing that one knows*. It is a consciousness of outside things received through the senses, and also of the physical sensations arising in one’s own body.

But, as man advanced in the scale there came to him the degree of consciousness which is known as “self-consciousness,” in which the sense of “I” comes to him—he differentiates between the Self and the Not-Self, as he understands it. He not only *knows*, but he begins to *know that he knows*. He begins to understand that he has a “knowing machine” by means of which he knows, thinks and is conscious. The mental gaze, in this stage, begins to turn itself *inward* as well as outward. But

the majority of the race possess this self-consciousness to but a limited degree. As a leading psychologist has well said: "Many persons never have more than a misty idea of such a mental attitude. They take themselves for granted, and never turn the gaze inward." Self-consciousness, like simple-consciousness, has many degrees on its scale. One has but to study his fellow men in order to perceive these varying degrees. We cannot pause here to consider this stage in detail—our concern is with higher degrees.

In a general way, and in order that you may make the clear distinction between simple-consciousness and self-consciousness, we suggest that you think of the former as *an awareness of the outside world, and one's own physical being*, and of the latter as *an awareness of one's own mind*. Or, the former may be thought of as *physical consciousness*, and the latter as *mental consciousness*.

But, here and there among the multitude of men are evolved a few who have attained a higher stage of consciousness—the Ego-Consciousness, or consciousness of Egohood—which surpasses the physical-consciousness and the mental-consciousness, just alluded to, may be styled *spiritual consciousness*. For the Ego-Consciousness is really the consciousness of Spirit, in an elementary degree—there are many other and higher degrees.

Ego-Consciousness, or Realization of Egohood, is more than an awareness of the outside world, or of

one's own body as distinct from the bodies of others and other things. It is more than even the awareness of one's own mind, even when this awareness is carried to a high degree of development. It is difficult to describe this plane of consciousness to those who have not attained it, but it may be stated as *an awareness of Individuality*, rather than *an awareness of Personality*.

Personality is but the *character* in which the One Life is playing a certain part. As we have said in The Arcane Lessons, the very word "person" is derived from the Greek word *persona*, meaning "a mask used by actors."

Your personality is merely the part in life you are playing—"the John Smith part of you." And, consequently, the awareness of Personality is merely an awareness or consciousness of your own personal character, *just as an actor is aware and conscious of the character of the play he is enacting*. If you can imagine the actor forgetting his real Self, and becoming so earnest and wrapt in the play that he imagines that he really *is* Hamlet or Richard III, or Mephistopheles, you may gain a clearer idea of the state of consciousness of the man on the plane of Personal Consciousness. When he shakes off the illusion, and realizes that he is something more than the assumed character—when *you* awaken to the fact that you are something more than "John Smith,"—then the personality is seen to be in reality but an assumed character, or "mask used by actors."

The Consciousness of Individuality is an awareness by man that he is above the limits and character of Personality—that he is a Centre of Consciousness and Force in the One Cosmic Life.

This awareness must, however, be more than a mere *intellectual* acquiescence in the teaching to that effect, or an agreement with some teacher. Important as these steps are in approaching the realization, they are but foot-hills above which tower the mountains of the real Cosmic Knowing. The individual must *know* that he is an individual—just as he knows anything that he has experienced. For indeed, he must really *experience* the fact that he is an Ego-Centre in the Cosmic Life or Spirit. He must realize that *he is* more than body and mind—that he is, indeed, Spirit in Spirit. No mere intellectual acquiescence or understanding will supply the real experience of Egohood.

It is not necessary for one to have experienced Cosmic Consciousness—or the awareness of his identity with the Cosmic Spirit as a whole—to gain Egohood. This experience belongs to a higher stage. The Individual must, however, experience the realization that he is an Ego—a spiritual entity, before he attains Egohood. Many grow into this stage naturally and by slow and gradual steps—in fact all development must be along natural lines. One cannot be dragged or pulled up into this stage—one must grow into it naturally, as the plant develops and blooms into flower.

But—and here is an important point, and one upon which depends the usefulness of these lessons—there are many who are ready and prepared to throw off the sheath of personality and to enter into the fuller life of Egohood, who are struggling with the confining bonds of Personality which they find hard to throw off. To these, and to these only, the methods and exercises, herein given, will appeal. If they appeal to *you*—if they attract you and you hunger to put them into effect—then know that *you* are ready for them, and ready to throw off the confining sheaths that are binding you and holding you back.

As we proceed, you will see that in this Realization of Egohood lies the Secret of Attainment—the Key of Power. Before you can exercise the Power of Spirit, you must realize that you *are* Spirit. Spirit is the Essence of the Cosmos. The Ego is a focal point or centre in that Essence.

Lesson II. Establishing the Ego I.

To “establish” is “to settle or fix firmly; to make steady, firm, or stable; to place upon a firm foundation; to ordain permanently and with authority;” etc. Therefore is this Formula—one of the oldest known to Occultism—called *establishing* the Ego. Its mastery imparts the sense and power of firm settlement and steady foundation of the consciousness of the Ego—the identification of the self with the Self.

The Arcane Teachers instruct the Neophyte that he must first of all develop this awareness of the Ego, by degrees, until at last the Ego-Consciousness may become the habitual and natural consciousness, at all times and under all conditions. Once firmly fixed, the Ego-Consciousness never leaves one. Once found, it becomes a Tower of Strength in which one may ever take refuge from the trials of the personal life—and from which one may safely defy the things of personality.

The first step of the Formula is that of acquiring a clear, distinct, positive and absolute realization that the Ego is *not* the body or physical organism, but is superior to and master of them. Even those students who have entered the plane of Mental-Consciousness require additional drilling in order to escape completely and fully from the bonds of the physical body. The following exercise is recommended for this purpose:

Exercise.

Let the Neophyte place himself in a quiet place, away from the disturbances and distracting influences of the outside world. Let him assume a position of rest, relaxing the tension from muscles and nerves.

Then, let him fix his attention upon his physical body; first the body as a whole, and then beginning at the feet let him move the attention upward until the whole body has been included in attention, step by step, until the brain is reached.

During this process the Neophyte will become aware, by degrees, that he is a Something inside of the body, viewing and considering the latter in all of its details, *instead of being identical with the body*. There will be found a dawning realization that the body is but the physical envelope or sheath in which the Ego dwells—or a garment which the Ego has assumed for the conveniences of physical life. This realization will not come all at once, but will gradually dawn upon and in the consciousness, increasing by practice. When a degree of proficiency and realization of this stage has been acquired, then may the Neophyte proceed to the next stage, as follows:

Let the Neophyte now concentrate his attention upon his feet, until he is able to regard them as but tools or instruments whereby the Ego may walk in physical form. Then let him, using his imagination, realize that even if his feet were not there, attached to the body, the

Ego would still be fully existent and in being—that, although deprived of useful tools, the Ego would *still be the Ego*, unimpaired and undisturbed in its real being.

Then bring the entire lower limbs into attention, and after fixing them firmly in consciousness, let the Neophyte realize that these limbs are but instruments for physical progress—useful and important, but not indispensable to the being and reality of the Ego. Let him see that if these limbs were not there that the Ego would still *be*, complete and fully existent.

Then, let the Neophyte bring into attention the pelvic organs (the reproductive organism, etc.) and, after realizing their uses and purposes—important to physical life—let him realize that the integrity and being of the Ego is in no way dependent upon them. Let him, in imagination, separate himself from them in consciousness, and thus realize that even if that part of the body were removed, and missing, nevertheless the Ego would be fully existent in its entirety of being.

Then let the Neophyte, in a similar manner, consider the abdominal organs—the stomach, liver, etc.—and while realizing their value and utility in physical life, let him also realize that they, too, are but physical *instruments* of the Ego for certain purposes, and that the Ego would dwell unimpaired in being, existence and reality, were they absent.

Then let the Neophyte likewise consider the chest organs, the lungs, etc., and while respecting and realizing

their usefulness and wonderful adaptability to purpose, also realize that the Ego would be fully existent and real even if these organs or parts of the body were absent.

Then let the Neophyte pass on to the consideration of the head, with its various organs of sense; its brain centres and convolutions—the machinery of thought, and then realize that although it would be impossible to live as a physical being in the body without these organs, still if they were absent the Ego would still be the Ego—complete, existent, in reality, with integrity unimpaired.

Then let the Neophyte again consider the whole body, as one organism—the wonderful instrument of the Ego, adapted for physical life. But let him fully realize that this wonderful machinery is but *a created machine* in and through which the Ego manifests physical life and activity. And, that the Ego is above, independent of and apart from the physical body, in the true sense—for it may dwell apart from, and out of the body.

After performing these mental exercises, throw the mind into and over the entire body and into and through all of its parts—the purpose of this concluding process being to re-energize the physical organism which has, in a measure, become devitalized during the analytical process. You will find that you will be able to re-charge the body with vitality and make it stronger and more virile than it was before the exercise, after you once realized that it is but an instrument, or machine, which

is used by and directed by the Ego. The realization of the Mastery of the Body by the Ego brings with it a new power of energizing and vitalizing the body or any part thereof. Throwing the attention to parts of the body, after this realization has been gained, tends to direct to the particular parts an increased supply of Vril⁵ or Vital Energy.

After having mastered the above exercise to a satisfactory degree, let the Neophyte pass on to the following exercise:

Exercise.

Let the Neophyte, in imagination, leave the physical body and gaze upon the latter. A little mental practice will enable one to do this in imagination, thus bringing fully to the mind the realization that it is possible for the Ego to leave the body and dwell apart from it. When the mind has once grasped this possibility, the body will ever after be recognized as merely a physical machine, sheath or covering, of the Ego—and one will never again commit the folly of identifying the “I” with the physical body.

To those who may object that this is merely an exercise of the imagination, proving nothing, for the reason that “one may imagine *anything*,” we suggest the

⁵ A term coined by Edward Bulwer-Lytton in his 1871 novel 'The Coming Race,' referring to a universal life-force that can be controlled by the will. Later adopted by occultists as a synonym for vital energy.

trial of the old Occult Test⁶ whereby the Neophyte was instructed to try to imagine himself as *dead*. A trial will show that this is impossible—all that can be imagined in this direction is that the *physical* body is dead, while the soul either (1) stands apart, fully alive, viewing the body; or else (2) inhabits the dead body—in either case it being the physical body alone which is dead, the Ego being always alive.

Then let the Neophyte imagine himself as leaving behind his physical body, until, as Holmes⁷ says: “...Thou at length art free, leaving thine outgrown shell by life’s unresting sea.” Let him then imagine himself as occupying other and different bodies, one at a time, in different phases of life and condition, in different ages, etc. This will bring about a realization that the Ego is something higher and independent of the particular physical shell or machine that it is now using, and which it may have at one time considered identical with itself. Then will the particular body occupied seem, in reality, “*my body*,” instead of “I,” or “Me.”

The Neophyte is cautioned against learning to despise his body when he realizes that it is not his “self.”

⁶ An exercise in which the Neophyte tries to imagine himself as dead. The author claims it is impossible to imagine one's own death because the Ego always remains conscious, either observing the dead body or inhabiting it.

⁷ Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. (1809–1894), American poet and physician. The line “Thou at length art free, leaving thine outgrown shell...” is from his poem “The Chambered Nautilus,” which uses the nautilus shell as a metaphor for spiritual growth.

The body is to be respected and well cared for, for it is a necessary instrument for expression at this period of the evolution of the Ego. Do not make the mistake of so many who have grasped half-truths, and who *despise* their bodies. This is a great mistake, and we would warn all Neophytes against it. The physical body is the bridge which is carrying you over a wild stream—do not undervalue it—treat it well, with loving regard and care. The physical body is the Temple of the Spirit—make it a worthy one. Keep it clean and in good condition. Let it be a worthy dwelling place of the Most High.

Lesson III. Establishing the Ego II.

The practice of the exercises indicated by the Formulas described in the preceding lesson, if carefully and faithfully practiced, will give to the Neophyte a new sense of existence. He will realize by actual mental experience that he—the Ego—is an entity having its existence on a plane higher than that of the physical body, and superior to the latter. He will also experience a realization of the power of mastery over the physical body, which he may employ in the direction of mentally treating the latter for physical wrong functioning, weakness, or irregularities of any and all kinds. With a little practice he will be able to make his physical body a most responsive instrument of his mind and will, and may build it up and strengthen it as he may desire. This power, once acquired, will also enable him to treat the physical bodies of others to excellent advantage. When the Neophyte actually realizes that he is independent of, and superior to, the physical body, he will realize that he has the power to command his physical functions, and those of others who have not attained the realization.

But let not the Neophyte make the natural mistake at this point, of considering that he has escaped the bonds of Personality—for he has not. The Arcane Teachers first free their Neophytes from the trammels and retarding influences of the physical body, and in thus doing build up a still higher sense of Personality. Later, this higher sheath is, in turn, discarded, and the

Ego focalizes upon its spiritual nature—its individuality. But the step of building up the incorporeal higher Personality must be attained before the next higher is possible. Therefore, O Neophyte, be not in too much haste to pass on to the next step. Master each step as you proceed—thus do you rise naturally and easily on the Ladder of Attainment.

Following the exercises indicated in the preceding lesson, the Neophyte may now proceed with the work of Establishing the Ego, in its first stages, as follows:

Exercise.

Placing himself in a position and condition of ease and repose, let the Neophyte meditate on the incidents of Incorporeality, or Life independent of the Physical Body. Thinking of oneself as a physical being, one naturally and properly takes into account the incidents of corporeality or life in the body. For instance, he realizes that he may be hurt by fire, water, earth, air or ether. He may be burned by fire, drowned by water, smothered or bruised by earth, swept away by air, or injured by ethereal vibrations such as electricity, etc. And, again, he may be wounded, meet with physical accidents, laid low by sickness, etc. These are the incidents of Corporeal Life.

But, in meditation, by using the imagination intelligently, he is brought to a realization that none of these incidents are in effect upon the plane of the Incorporeal Life. Meditation and intelligent imagination

will show the Neophyte that in his Astral Body he might pass through fire unscathed— through water untouched—through earth without hurt or interference—through air without being swept off his feet— through the ether without regard to ethereal vibrations. None of these things of the physical plane have any effect upon the Astral Body⁸, or disembodied Ego. In some of the ancient occult initiatory rites the Neophyte was taken out of his physical body, and in his Astral form was bidden to plunge himself in the flames of the hottest fiery furnace; to throw himself from the highest precipice; to drop into a bottomless lake. Not realizing that these things could not affect him in his Astral form, and being bound up with the memory of the Corporeal Life, the Neophyte would often shrink from the tests. But after being encouraged by example and precept he would submit to the test, joyfully, with a laugh on his lips, as he realized that to him in his Astral form these corporeal things were nonexistent— mere dreams of the physical plane.

Of course the actual experience in the Astral is far more convincing than is the mere realization of the truth in meditation, but the latter must not be despised for it gives one an intuitive realization of the truth, which, once attained, tends to destroy fear and to impart a new

⁸ In occult philosophy, a subtle body that can separate from the physical body and travel independently. The author mentions it in the context of the Neophyte learning to leave the physical body in imagination.

sense of courage, invincibility and invulnerability and mastery, which permeates the entire being and causes one to radiate power and strength.

Likewise will come the realization that the Ego, in itself, is incapable of hurt, harm, wounds, or sickness. These things belong to the Corporeal Life, and have naught to do with the Higher Self.

The Neophyte is enjoined to persevere and practice until he gains the *actual experience* and recognition that his Higher Self—his Real Self—is superior to all the incidents and accidents of the Corporeal Life, and that let come what will to his physical covering he, *himself*, is unhurt, whole, untouched, undisturbed.

An old Arcane Teacher, over two thousand years ago, was once told that the world was coming to an end. “Well, what is that to me!” he replied, resuming his study. He realized fully his invincibility. A similar tale is told of Emerson, who was halted in the street by an excited Millerite⁹, who informed him, in strained tones: “Mr. Emerson¹⁰, the world will be destroyed in ten days!” “Well, *what of it?*” replied Emerson, calmly, “I

⁹ A follower of William Miller, who predicted the Second Coming of Christ in 1843–1844. The anecdote about Emerson and the Millerite is well-known in Transcendentalist lore.

¹⁰ Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), American essayist and leader of the Transcendentalist movement. His reported calm response to the Millerite prophecy exemplifies the detachment the book teaches.

don't see but what we shall get along just as well without it."

The Nineteenth Century Transcendentalist voiced the truth as clearly as did his predecessor in Ancient Greece. The sense and realization must be experienced before it can be understood. It may be realized by practicing the Formulas, as given herein.

The next step indicated by the Formulas, is that of Focalizing the Consciousness on the Ego. This is still within the realm of Personality, but on a very high plane of that realm—a plane which gradually blends into the higher plane of Individuality. It consists of bringing about an acute realization of one's existence as a Centre of Consciousness and Force. It tends to gather up the dissipated sense of personal existence, and bringing it to a focal point, into vivid and actual conscious realization, preparatory to it being transmuted into the higher sense of individual existence. The following exercise will tend to bring about the desired realization:

Exercise.

Let the Neophyte place himself in a position, and condition, of rest and calm. Let him then meditate upon the great Ocean of Life in which the individual entities are but focal Centres of Consciousness and Force. Let him picture himself, in imagination, as being an actual Centre, with all the universe revolving around him. Let him see himself as the pivot around which the universe moves—the Central Sun around which the infinite

world and planets circle in their cosmic flight. Let him feel himself to be the Focal Centre of the Cosmos. And this is indeed, in accordance with the centuries old occult axiom which informs us that “The Cosmos is infinite—its circumference is nowhere—its centre is everywhere.” Let the Neophyte lose all thought of the outside world, in this meditation,—let him regard it as totally unmanifest if he likes—but see himself in Actual Existence and in Full Power. Let him realize “I am” to the fullest extent of his power of imagination and conception.

A student of the Arcane Lessons has written us of his experience in this stage of Realization. We quote from his letter, for it affords a typical instance of the phenomenon of the Establishing the Ego-Centre. He says: “On first reading, the Arcane Lessons appeared to ‘wipe out’ my ‘I,’ and to cause it to disappear within the One Life¹¹ when it resolved itself into the Infinity of Nothingness, at the end of the Cosmic Day. Right here, I began to ‘sit up and take notice,’ with the result that my ‘I’ in a fierce effort to preserve itself from going to sleep, shone with such fierceness, clearness, and determination, that all was an Infinity of Nothingness right then. *There was nothing remaining but just ‘I.’* Then I fully understood how the One Life could go to rest at

¹¹ The teaching, stated in Aphorism XII, that there is only one Life or Consciousness manifesting through many forms—a core principle of the Arcane system.

the end of the Cosmic Day, and how ‘I’ would be the awful *lone* witness of its rest. I had made the separation of the One Life and the Real Life, or distinguished the Manifested Life from the Unmanifest.” We quote this testimony because it brings out several steps in the evolution of the “I am” conception.

This student passed through the several stages at one leap—attaining in rapid succession the realization of the Centre, and then, immediately following, the realization of the impersonal or Individual Ego, or Real Self, this latter stage forming the subject of our next lesson. The now familiar occult statement of “I am!” should be used freely in practicing these exercises, for it tends to bring out the actual realization of Real Egohood which is the aim and goal of the Formulas. The statement has been used by the Arcane Teachers, and other advanced Occultists in all lands, for thousands of years. Its recent use is but a revival of the ancient initiatory exercises and rites. It is a tremendous Statement of Being—and should be used reverently and with awe.

Lesson IV. Establishing the Ego III.

In the preceding lessons we have directed your attention to the process of mentally freeing oneself from the restrictions imposed by the illusory identification of the Self or Ego with the physical body—the Corporeal Self. If the Neophyte has caught the spirit of the Formulas, and has put the same into practice, he will have at least evolved into a partial consciousness or realization of the Incorporeal Self.

But even this is but the first step toward Freedom and Attainment. Even with the highest conception of the Incorporeal Self, when the latter is bound by the illusion of Personality, one fails to realize his true Egohood. Only when the bonds of Personality are loosened, does the Ego begin to realize its true nature.

Just as one is bound by the illusion of the corporeal nature of the “I,” so is it further bound—and even more closely bound—by the illusion of the *personal* nature of the Ego. The Ego is not only more, and greater, than the physical body it uses—but it is also more, and greater, than that part of the mind, consisting of a series of inherited or acquired impressions which constitutes the “Me.” There is a great difference between the “Me and the I.” *The “Me” is the individual as he thinks he is—a bundle of prejudices, tastes, ties, etc. The “I” is the Individual as he is in reality—free from mental ties of all kinds. The “Me” is the character being played by the Ego—the “John Smith” part of him. The “I” is the real*

player of the part. It is often very difficult for one to disentangle and free himself from the overwhelming force of Personality, so completely is the average person self-hypnotized and race-hypnotized with the “John Smith” idea.

The Arcane Teachers have several Formulas for unloosening the bonds of Personality. Let us consider them.

Let the Neophyte place himself in a position, and condition, of restful, calm repose. Then let him take mental stock of himself. Let him ask himself the question: “What am I?” He will find, upon self-examination, that he considers himself to be a certain person—“John Smith,” for instance, “aged 45, grocer, of Cincinnati, Ohio.” This “John Smith” has a “character” of his own, which he supposes to be *himself*. Laying aside the illusion of the appearance, shape, form, etc., of the body, he will still find that he has decided personal characteristics. He *likes* certain things—he *hates* certain others. He is tied tight by his likes and dislikes, his loves and hates, his tendencies, his general “nature” and “characteristics” in short. He imagines that these things are *himself*, and that if they were taken away from him, he would cease to exist.

Then let him proceed as he did when divorcing himself from the illusion of the Corporeal Self. Let him set aside first one like, and then another—first one hate, and then another. Let him, in imagination, visualize

himself as being divested of first one “characteristic” and then another. As the process continues, the Neophyte will find, much to his surprise, that notwithstanding that his most cherished and firmly rooted “characteristics” are sheared away from him, he himself remains. He finds that when all his mental feelings, as well as the objects thereof, are removed from his mental vision, he, himself, remains. He will find a Something remaining that is back of, underneath, and at the centre of all these “feelings” and “characteristics,” and which persists in full vigor when they have been stripped away from him.

Then let him, mentally, in imagination, see himself as *acting out other characters*. He will find that he is able to play out Hamlet, Richard III, Mephistopheles, Micawber, and a host of other characters, as well as he has been playing the old “John Smith” part, which he has been imagining was Himself. He will then see that just as the body was but an instrument and covering, so is this habitual “character” but an instrument and mental covering—useful but not essential to his being—something that can be put on, and taken off—something that could be exchanged without affecting the “I.” He will realize that this “character” is but his “Me”—and that he may have other “Me’s” at will. But the “I” remains the same in each case.

But, try as he may, he will never be able to shake off or discard the “I.” He will find that this “I” is

unchangeable, and cannot be gotten rid of—for it is Himself, his Real Self. He will find this same “I” always at the centre of every “character” he assumes— always behind every mask he places before him. He will find that it will always be the same old “I,” of which he can always, and *must* always, say “I am.” No one can truthfully assert of his Real Self, “I am not.” Such a statement is always a lie upon the face of Truth. One may say “I am not *this*, or I am not *that*”—but he can never say of that Central “I,” that it is *not*.

This “I” is always the Actor—the Doer—the Seer—the Thinker. It is always the Centre. Divest it of every characteristic and there will always remain that Something that is.

This “I” is absolutely subjective, or inner—all else is objective, or outer, to it. It cannot be classified with any mental state—for all mental states are objective to it. It cannot be described in terms of objective consciousness, for these terms denote things subordinate to it. We are conscious of it, not through any channel of sense or feeling,—it impresses itself upon us directly. We cannot separate ourselves from it—for it is the Self, itself. We cannot stand off and examine it, nor set it off for examination—for where *it* is so must *we* be, for the two are one. It is never objective to anything else in us—but everything else in us is objective to *it*. It may, in our ignorance, be influenced and moved by our feelings, emotions, etc.—but when

we know the Truth it turns on these feelings and emotions, and changes, kills, or creates them. It is at the basis of all activities—it is identical with the will.

Divorce this “I” of all its mental “characteristics,” feelings and emotions—and instead of seeming weakened, it is increased in strength. It then appears as untrammelled, and unrestricted will. It gives and can give, but two reports of itself: (1) it must always, and does always say of itself: “I am”; (2) it must always say, and does always say, of itself: “I do.” This is all. This is what the “I” is—the Something that is, and Something that does. All the rest of the mental furniture belongs to the “Me,” and is changeable, inconstant, and shifting. The “I” is always the same—there is nothing else for it to be.

By practicing this “mental stock-taking,” and self-examination, the Neophyte will soon be able to at least partially divorce his “I” from his “Me”—at least he will be able to do so in imagination, sufficiently to testify to the different elements of the two. Other Formulas, in this book will aid him in this attainment. For this is the Centre and Heart of all Attainment. It is the one thing, which, when found, gives us the key to all the rest.

The following exercise is also taught by the Arcane Teachers and other advanced Occultists. In connection with the others given in this book, it will serve to loosen the bonds and ties of Personality, and enable the

Neophyte to spread the Wings of the Self, and soar in the free ether of Individuality.

Exercise.

Let the Neophyte place himself in a position and condition of calm, restful repose. Then let him meditate upon his own identity, as distinguished from the outside objective world. Let him reach mentally into the very centre of his being—the inner recesses of his soul, until he meets his Real Self face-to-face. Let him, in this meditation, repeat softly to himself *his own name*—that is, the name which he applies to himself at times when he thinks of himself in the third person. Or, else, his favorite “short name” or familiar “nickname,” such as “Jim,” or “Will,” or “Jack,” etc.—in short, the name which he most familiarly identifies with himself. Let him repeat this name over and over again, softly, to himself, throwing into it his earnest attention *as if in that name, or word, were contained the Secret of His Existence*. In many cases the Neophyte will find that he is lifted up to a higher plane of being or consciousness, in which he sees more clearly the Light Within, and hears a few strains from the great Song of Life. If the experiment succeeds, he will realize, as never before, the reality of the “I” the Secret of the Ego.

Rudyard Kipling, in his great story of Hindu life, entitled “*Kim*,” speaks of this practice familiar among Oriental people. He describes his hero, “*Kim*,”

attempting to gain this state of consciousness. We quote from this book, as follows:

“A very few white people, but many Asiatics, can throw themselves into amazement, as it were, by repeating their own names over and over again to themselves, letting the mind go free upon speculation as to what is called personal identity...

“‘Who is Kim-Kim-Kim?’

“He squatted in a corner of the clanging waiting-room, rapt from all other thoughts, hands folded in lap, and pupils contracted to pin-points. In a moment—in another half-second—he felt that he would arrive at the solution of the tremendous puzzle, but here, as always happens, his mind dropped away from those heights with the rush of a wounded bird, and passing his hand before his eyes, he shook his head.

“A long-haired Hindu *bairagi* (holy-man) who had just bought a ticket, halted before him at that moment, and stared intently. ‘I also have lost it,’ he said sadly. ‘It is one of the gates of the Way.’

“‘What is thy talk?’ said Kim, abashed.

“‘Thou wast wondering there in thy spirit what manner of thing thy soul might be. ... I know. Who should know but I?’”

Tennyson, the great English poet¹², in his letters to and conversations with his intimate friends and relatives, testified to having experiences of this kind, occasioned by repeating his name to himself in a manner resembling the practice of the ancient occultists, and of the Hindus of to-day, as mentioned in “*Kim*.” He stated that he was lifted into another world in which he was given a positive assurance of his spiritual nature and immortality—a condition in which the fear of death became laughable. He also stated the same idea in the following verses:

*“And more, my son, for more than once when I
Sat all alone, revolving in myself
That word which is the symbol of myself,
The mortal symbol of the self was loosed,
And passed into the Nameless, as a cloud
Melts into Heaven. I touched my limbs, the limbs
Were strange, not mine—and yet no shadow of doubt,
But utter clearness, and through loss of Self
The gain of such large life as matched with ours
Were Sun to spark, unshadowable in words,
Themselves but shadows of a shadow-world.”*

¹² Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–1892). The verses quoted are from his poem “The Ancient Sage,” which describes a mystical experience of losing the self and gaining a larger life. Tennyson wrote about similar experiences in his letters.

Lesson V. Will-Focalization¹³.

The Neophyte who has advanced to the stage in which, in the ancient Occult parlance, he “has *found himself*,” has discovered that his Real Self is something far different from anything that he ever had imagined it to be. Instead of being an entity with distinctly marked characteristics and personal peculiarities, he discovers that it is a something the *nature* of which can be stated only in the sense of Potentiality. We do not mean for a moment that the Ego is existent only in a potential sense—on the contrary, it is actually existent in the most extreme and positive sense. In fact, its existent being is endowed with such a degree of actuality that all else seems to fade into relative non-existence. There is no question of “I Am Not” about the Ego—it is first, last and always a Something of which the positive “I am” can, and must be, asserted. It is only when we come to examine the nature, attributes and qualities of this “I am” Ego, that we are forced to use the terms of Potentiality instead of actuality. Let us consider this a little further, for in its understanding lies the solution of many occult paradoxes.

In the first place, if we are keen analysts, and understand the precise terms of philosophical psychology, we will see that the Formulas for

¹³ The process of concentrating the Will into a conscious, positive force. The author equates the Ego with Will and teaches that by focusing one's Will, the individual can master emotions, thoughts, and external conditions.

Establishing the Ego, and the practice of the exercises arising therefrom, have divorced from the Ego the usual attributes, characteristics and personal peculiarities which are popularly supposed to belong to, and to be inseparably connected with it. Setting aside as the “Not I” first one feeling and then another; first one emotion and then another; first one characteristic and then another; first one personal peculiarity and then another; and placing them in turn in the “Not I” category—the Neophyte finds that after he has stripped the Ego of all the attributes of Personality, there is still a Something left—an irreducible element—an insoluble residuum—a *surd*, or something which while actually existent yet is incapable of being described, expressed or designated by rational terms—a final algebraical x , or Unknown Ultimate Element. As to the existence of this Unknown Element, or Ego, there is no doubt in the Occult Teachings, differ as the modern philosophies may about the matter—moreover, it is a matter which may be determined by the conscious experience of anyone who will practice the exercises of the Formulas, in the proper way. The “I am” will always be found at the centre of the self, and will always respond “*I Am!*”

But when we attempt to *describe* this Ultimate “I”—when we attempt to endow it with attributes, qualities, or peculiarities, then do we find ourselves at sea, for these things all belong to the plane of Personality, while the “I” transcends Personality, and cannot be expressed

or designated in the terms of the latter. But, nevertheless there is found a way of identifying the “I.” Philosophical psychology, both occult and popular—both esoteric and exoteric—gives us a term whereby we may discuss and consider the “I,” or Ultimate Element of Self. This “I,” which we have stated as the final algebraical x , or unknown ultimate element of the Self, is found to be identical with the highest philosophical and psychological conception of what has been called the *Will*. Thus the x equals The Will. Let us then try to understand the “I” by considering what the highest human thought reports regarding the Will. By studying the *symbol* we may understand the *reality*.

Brushing aside as unworthy the popular conception of the Will, we find that the highest philosophical and psychological thought uses the term “The Will” to designate the underlying Essence of Being—the fundamental life-mind-spirit principle of the Self. The Ancient Greek Philosophers so used the term; the original Buddhist philosophy so employs it; we find it so used by eminent thinkers all through the history of philosophical thought; Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Wundt¹⁴ used the term in this sense. The Arcane Teachers identified the Principle of Will with Spirit—the Essence—the “beingness” of Being. The Will is that

¹⁴ Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), and Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920) all gave the concept of Will a central place in their philosophies. The author aligns their ideas with occult teaching.

Essence or Spirit, in the Cosmos and in the individual, which is ever moving, changing its manifestations, flowing, evolving, proceeding, desiring, attaining, seeking, accomplishing. It contains within itself the potentiality of Everything, but it itself cannot be said to be any of the things it manifests.

Prof. William Sturgis Bigelow¹⁵, in his lecture on “Buddhism and Immortality,” delivered at Harvard University, 1908, (Published by Houghton Mifflin Company, New York), beautifully states the esoteric conception of Will, in describing the Buddhist conception of life and immortality. We take great pleasure in calling your attention to the following quotations from the said lecture. Prof. Bigelow says:

“We are all, as we familiarly say, conscious of our own existence. Under this statement we habitually include, in more or less confusion, several distinct elements. First, the existence of our material bodies as objects of sensory perception. ... Second, of certain sensations, pleasurable or painful, originating not outside but inside the body itself. Third, of certain disturbances... that we classify as passions or emotions. Fourth, of what we call aptitudes and their opposites. Fifth, of desires or inclinations and their

¹⁵ William Sturgis Bigelow (1850–1926), an American physician and Buddhist, delivered the Ingersoll Lecture on 'Buddhism and Immortality' at Harvard in 1908. The author quotes extensively from this lecture to support the identification of the self with Will.

opposites. Lastly, of something of a wholly different character, consciously closer to the centre than anything else, and differing from the other forms in being the only form of consciousness to which we are not passive. This we call Will.

We say, I feel sensation, pain or emotion; but we never say, I feel my Will. It is always subjective and active. ... This Will is a part of the normal consciousness of each one of you, yet it is neither a part of sensation nor emotion, but, on the contrary, is capable of dominating both. What is it? Ask your own consciousness. Sensations originate outside and inside the body; emotions, inside. But the Will is deeper than either, and they are both objective to it. We cannot classify it with anything else. We cannot describe it in terms of any other form of consciousness. We are conscious through our bodies and of our bodies, but the consciousness of the Will is direct. We cannot separate ourselves from it. We cannot stand off and examine it. We cannot modify it by anything else. It itself modifies everything within its scope. Other forms of consciousness are objective to it, but it is never objective to them. It may be overpowered by sensations, emotions, or passions, through its own weakness or their strength. It often is. But its attitude towards them, whether resisting or directing them, is always essentially and necessarily active. It exists in no other form than the subjective form. It is inconceivable in any other form. If

it is not active, it is not Will. There is nothing in our consciousness deeper. It underlies and overlies and permeates all other forms, and, moreover,—what is of immeasurably more importance,—it can if need be, *create them*. ... Will is the assertion of a form of consciousness from the centre outward. When this is opposed by another form of consciousness, intruding from the circumference inward, we recognize a hindrance to the free action of the Will, and we talk of ‘necessity.’ But such intrusive forms ... come from or through ... the material, separate personality. If it were not for these the Will would act freely. The separate personal consciousness with its offshoots is, therefore, the only obstacle to complete freedom of the Will. Complete freedom of the Will is complete freedom of consciousness, and complete freedom of consciousness from the habitual and empirical limitations of personality is complete freedom of the Will. The terms are interchangeable. The only Will that is not free is the *personal* Will. Descartes said, ‘I think, therefore, I am.’ It is an imperfect formula at best, but it would have been a better statement... had he said, ‘I Will, therefore I am.’

Thus do we find that the Ego, or “I” is, in its last possible human analysis, Will. And, thus do we find that Will is in the nature of Potential Infinite-Manifestation of All-Activity—the Essential Beingness of all Being—the Plastic Essence which may mould itself into any and

all forms—the Essence of Activity which may manifest how and as it pleases, under The Law always.

As we said in Lesson XII, of The Arcane Teaching: Running back from cause to prior cause, and to still more remote precedent causes of his desires, the Individual finds himself at last confronting the Cosmic Will. Retracing his path back to the present, he finds himself confronting his Personal Will which is moved by Desire. In other words, he finds a Chain of Desire extending from the Cosmic Will to the Personal Will—a chain of countless links, having a beginning in Will, and ending in Will—an Endless Chain, because it is a Circle. Thereupon he learns the first lesson of the Arcane Secret of the Excluded Middle, and thenceforth strives to realize *the union of the two ends of Will*. From the realization of this Union arises the Individual Will—the Positive Will of the Ego. In this process the Law of Cause and Effect is not violated, but Will is made the Cause of Will—the Cause and Effect merge. When this is attained—then does Man indeed become the Master!

Lesson VI. The Excluded Middle¹⁶.

In closing the preceding lesson, we referred to the Secret of the Excluded Middle. This is one of the most ancient and fundamental formulas of the Secret Doctrine or Arcane Teaching of the ancient occult fraternities. It was regarded as the Keystone of the Mystic Arch. Those who grasp the inner spirit of this Secret are, as the Aphorism informs us, “well on the road to Mastery.” Let us refer you to Aphorism XX, at this place.

The Aphorism informs us that: “When a man attains Individuality-Egohood—he enters upon the plane of Will, and rises above the plane of Desire. Desire and Will are the opposite poles of the same principle—the Centre of Balance being Reason. On the plane of Will, though one remains under Law, yet he may learn to use Law instead of remaining passive to it.

He may learn to oppose Law to laws. He may learn to create Desire by Will. Furthermore—and this is the greatest of all—he may learn to Will to Will. He may learn to complete the Circle of Will. He may learn the Secret of the Excluded Middle. When this last Secret is learned, man is well on the road to Mastery.” We have seen, in the Arcane Teaching, that from the Cosmic

¹⁶ A term from logic and philosophy (the law of excluded middle: a proposition is either true or false). Here, it is used metaphorically: by excluding the 'middle' of personality, the individual directly connects the personal Will with the Cosmic Will.

Will, which is the Principle of Will, the Cosmos has been evolved. We have seen how this evolution has progressed under the Law of Orderly Trend and Logical Sequence, the active principle of which has been Desire, which is but the negative pole of Will. We have seen that there is an unbroken chain of Sequence extending from the Cosmic Will to the “I” which latter is but a focalized Centre of Will in the great Cosmic Will.

At the personal or individual end of this unbroken chain, we find the “I” or Individual Will. But we find that this Individual Will is conditioned, restricted, bound and hampered by the accumulated sheath of evolutionary growth, to the extent of even doubting its own identity or nature. The idea of separateness has crept in, and the “I” fails to realize that it is identical in nature and substance with the great Cosmic Will, in which it is a Centre or Focal Point. So entangled is it in the bonds of Personality—so deluded by the illusions of the “John Smith” nature and characteristics; that it imagines itself to be a thing apart. It feels the personal consciousness on all sides, and actually imagines that it, the “I,” *is* really this bundle of mental states, impressions and ideas that belong to “John Smith.” It has exchanged its Cosmic Birthright for the humble Mess of Pottage of Personality.

The Hindus tell a tale of one of the great gods—Indra¹⁷—who, following a caprice, incarcerated himself in the body of a pig. He took unto himself a pig mate, and raised a brood of little pigs. He lost all sense of his own identity, and was thoroughly hypnotized with the idea that he *was* a pig. The fellow-gods, grieved at his illusion and his pitiful state, called upon him to come out of the pig-state, telling him that he was a great god and not a swinish creature wallowing in the mud. He grunted out a denial, saying: “I am a *pig*, not a *god*—let me alone!” They persisted, and he continued to repel them. They killed his pig-mate, and his little pigs, but he squealed out his sorrow and rage, and tried to destroy the gods in his wrath. Finally they killed his pig-body, as a last resort, and lo! Indra, the god, stepped forth in all his glorious power, and laughed in astonishment when he realized the extent and degree of his late illusion.” By this parable, the Hindu teachers impress upon their *chelas* the fact of their Real Self.

A well-known occult writer, in her little compilation of the ancient teachings, entitled “Light on the Path¹⁸,” says: “Seek in the heart the source of evil (the illusion of Personality) and expunge it. It lives fruitfully in the heart

¹⁷ The king of the gods in Hindu mythology. The parable of Indra becoming a pig illustrates the soul's forgetfulness of its divine nature when entangled in bodily and personal identification.

¹⁸ An influential esoteric text by Mabel Collins, first published in 1885 under the auspices of the Theosophical Society. The book consists of aphorisms and commentary on the spiritual path.

of the devoted disciple, as well as in the heart of the man of desire. Only the strong can kill it out. The weak must wait for its growth, its fruition, its death. And it is a plant that lives and increases throughout the ages. It flowers when man has accumulated unto himself innumerable existences. He who will enter upon this path of power must tear this thing out of his heart. And then his heart will bleed, and the whole life of the man seems to be utterly dissolved. This ordeal must be endured; it may come at the first step of the perilous ladder which leads to the path of life; it may not come until the last. But, O disciple! remember that it has to be endured, and fasten the energies of your soul upon the task. Live neither in the present nor the future, but in the eternal. This giant weed cannot flourish there; this blot upon existence is wiped out by the very atmosphere of eternal thought. ... Each man is to himself absolutely the way, the truth, and the life. But he is only so when he grasps his whole individuality (personality) firmly, and, by the force of his awakened spiritual Will, recognizes this individuality (personality) as not himself, but that thing which he has with pain created for his own use, and by means of which he purposes, as his growth slowly develops his intelligence, to reach to that life beyond individuality (personality). ... Seek it by making the profound obeisance of the soul to the dim star that burns within. Steadily, as you watch and worship, its light will grow stronger. Then you may know you have found the

beginning of the way. And when you have found the end, its light will suddenly become the infinite light.”

The Paraphernalia of Personality is the “Middle”—the connecting links between the Cosmic Will and the Individual Will—the One Being and the “I.” By excluding it, the “I” is merged in consciousness with the Cosmos—he attains Cosmic Consciousness. But this *exclusion* is only relative—it is merely an exclusion in consciousness, but a realization that this middle is fictitious and illusory in reality. When it is so regarded, then the “I” while remaining an individual, yet realizes its real nature and identity with the Cosmic Will, and is able to act according to the degree and strength of the recognition. This process of exclusion is slow and gradual—it begins with an intellectual conception of the Truth, which then gradually evolves into a greater and broader experience and realization as the Neophyte progresses along The Path of Attainment.

By excluding the Middle or Personality, it is not meant that the Individual should cease using his personal instruments of expression and life. On the contrary, *he only then begins to use them*. For, previous to this realization, the things of Personality *have used him*, instead of he *using them*. As the old occult Aphorism informs us: “All things are good for the Individual to use—but none of them are good enough to *use the Individual*.” The advanced occultist first learns to set aside the things of

Personality—learns to do without them—learns that he does not need them to remain “I.” Then, having freed himself, mentally, from them, he returns and uses them, intelligently and properly, and positively. This is the difference between Mastery and Slavery. As Carpenter¹⁹, the English poet, sings:

“To die—for this into the world you came.

Yes, to abandon more than you ever conceived as possible:

All ideals, plans—even the very best and most unselfish—all hopes and desires, ...

Modes of life, habits, predilections, preferences, superiorities, weaknesses, indulgences, ...

in one word: To die— For this into the world you came.

All to be abandoned, and when they have been finally abandoned,

Then to return to be used—and then only to be rightly used, to be free and open for ever.

Be not torn by desire: ...

Slowly and resolutely—as a fly cleans its legs of the honey in which it has been caught—

So remove thou, if it only be for a time, every particle which sullies the brightness of thy mind

Return into thyself content to give, but asking no one, asking nothing;

¹⁹ Edward Carpenter (1844–1929), English socialist poet and philosopher, known for his writings on a simpler, more spiritual life. The long poem quoted is from his work "Towards Democracy."

In the calm light of His splendor who fills all the universe, the imperishable indestructible of ages,

Dwell thou—as thou canst dwell—contented. . . . In place all are to be used.

Yet in using be not entangled in them; for then already are they bad, and will cause thee suffering.

When thy body—as needs must happen at times—is carried along on the wind of passion, say not thou, ‘I desire this or that’;

For the ‘I’ neither desires nor fears anything, but is free and in everlasting glory, dwelling in heaven and pouring out joy like the sun on all sides.

Let not that precious thing by any confusion be drawn down and entangled in the world of opposites, and of Death and suffering.

For as a light-house beam sweeps with incredible speed over sea and land, yet the lamp itself moves not at all,

So while thy body of desire is (and must be by the law of its nature) incessantly in motion in the world of suffering, the ‘I’ high up above is fixed in heaven.

Therefore I say let no confusion cloud thy mind about this matter;

But ever when desire knocks at thy door,

Though thou grant it admission and entreat it hospitably, as in duty bound,

Fence it yet gently off from thy true self,

Lest it tear and rend thee.”

The Formulas already given to the Neophyte, in connection with the intellectual perception of the Truth of the “I,” and the Secret of the Excluded Middle, as well as the Formulas to follow, will bring about a gradual unfoldment of the realization of Cosmic Consciousness, and Recognition of the Identity of the “I” with the Cosmic Will. The following exercise, and others akin to it, will aid the Neophyte in unfolding into this consciousness.

Exercise.

The Neophyte, placing himself in a restful, calm, peaceful position and condition, should then *meditate* upon the great Cosmic Will, Essence, or Spirit. He should picture it as a great Ocean of Spirit, upon which and in which he rests as an Established Focal Point or Centre. He should picture the resistless force and power of this great Ocean of Spirit, and feel its waves and movements. He should realize that its thrill is perceptible in his inner being, and that in every way he is *of* it, and *in* it. Realize that you are Spirit (Will) and nothing but Spirit (Will). Realize that there is no real separation between you and the great Ocean of Spirit—and that there can be no such separation. In your meditation, mentally wipe out the paraphernalia of Personality—Exclude the Middle of Personality and let Spirit join Spirit—Will join Will. Realize that you are a Centre of Force in the great Ocean of Will—a channel for the expression of as much Cosmic Will as your

growth and capacity will allow. Realize that as you grow and unfold, you will become a greater and still greater and grander channel for the inflow and outpouring of the Cosmic Energy and Life. Complete the Circle of Will. Bring about the Union of Spirit. Learn to Will to Will, by realizing that you *are* Will.

Lesson VII. Mastering the Opposites.

The manifestation of Egohood by the individual who has learned the Secret of the Excluded Middle—who has learned to Will to Will—evidences itself in a variety of forms and phases. In the Mastery of The Opposites, however, we find one of its most important phases, and one which also influences other forms. The individual who wishes to mould his mind by his newly awakened Will, and thus acquire Poise and Balance, must first learn the art of mastering the Opposites in the instinctive and emotional regions of his mental being. In acquiring this art he also does much in the direction of gaining Poise and Balance, and in neutralizing Rhythm.

We have seen in The Arcane Teaching that “every quality, attribute or condition has its opposite.” We have seen how these Pairs of Opposites are, in reality, but the different and contrasting poles of the same thing. Just as Heat and Cold are the same thing—just as Hard and Soft are the same thing—so Love and Hate are seen to be but the contrasting poles of the same thing. And, in the same way, and from the same reason, all contrasting emotions, states and feelings are but the opposite poles of a fundamental emotion which depends upon the Will for its expression and outward activities.

All activity proceeds from and through the Will. The Will is involved in all action. There can be no action without Will.

Through the stimulus and incentive of desire, feeling and emotion, the Will is called and directed into activity. But the Will itself must not be identified with the desire, feeling or emotion which inspires it to action. Just as the water in a glass may be colored by a chemical dissolved in it, and yet in itself remain as much pure water as it was in the beginning, so is the Will colored and apparently changed by the influence of the emotion or feeling operative in and through it. The Will is clear and colorless like the water—its emotional color being not of itself. The Will experiences the color of the emotion or feeling, but never is the latter. The Will is always the vehicle for the emotion or feeling—its vital energy so to speak. The Will is the body of action, which clothes itself in the garb of emotion and feeling in order to make itself manifest.

To the ordinary person, it would be an impossibility to divorce feeling and emotion from the Will—for if that were attempted there would be nothing left apparent or manifest in any way. The residuum would be like the abstract conception of motionless, cold, unmoved, pure intellect, independent of any object of thought. To such persons pure will is merely a name corresponding to nothing in their experience. This is because in such persons *the Will is unconscious of itself*. When the Ego-Consciousness is attained—when the “I” knows that itself and the Will are identical, then *the Will becomes conscious of itself*. In this latter state, instead of

its consciousness remaining centred on the emotional and feeling plane—the instinctive plane of the mind—it is raised up to its rightful seat, upon the throne of the Real Self, and it assumes the sceptre of power and authority which really belong to it.

When the Ego-Consciousness is acquired to a certain degree, the “I,” realizing that it is in its inmost nature nothing more or less than Will, sees that the Opposites of Emotion and Feeling are but things *belonging to*, but not *of* itself, things objective to its subjective Self. It sees them as but garments which it may put on and off, as it suits its fancies or interest. It sees them as but the several masks of character which it may place before its face, and then take off and exchange for another, as may seem best or desirable. From the moment when this realization comes to the individual, even in the faintest degree, then that individual has begun to move toward Freedom, and has started on the road to the Mastery of The Opposites.

Contrast the condition of the man who is still hypnotized with the belief that his emotions and feelings are *himself*—that he *is* the character he is playing, with its emotions and feelings and incidents of personality, on the one hand; and on the other hand, the individual who realizes that he, himself, is Will in his real nature, and that the character assumed by him, together with its incidental qualities, feelings and emotions, is but an objective something which he may put on or off,

destroy or change, as he may see fit. Can you not see that there is a difference as wide as the poles in the contrasting being of these two men? Can you not see that one is the Master of the Opposites, and the other the obedient Slave?

The Liberated Ego—the Emancipated Self—knows its real nature, knows that it is no emotional creature bent now this way and then that by the power of inherited or acquired feeling—knows that it is the Lord of its own being, capable of using emotion as a means of expression when it suits itself, and likewise repressing it when it is best to do so; of using or discarding feeling when it suits its purpose. Nay, more—capable of *changing* the feeling or emotion from one of its poles to the other—changing love to hate, like to dislike, pain to pleasure, sorrow to joy—backward and forward, at will, and solely because it Wills to do it, and it suits its Will so to do. When the Ego realizes that it is the Lord of itself, instead of a subordinate and slave to its feelings and emotions, or personal traits and characteristics, then alone is it Free. It then feels the spirit of the “Kasidah²⁰”:

“Do what thy manhood bids thee do, from none but self expect applause; He noblest lives and noblest dies who makes and keeps his self-made laws. All other Life is living Death, a world where none but Phantoms

²⁰ A long poem by Sir Richard Francis Burton, 'The Kasidah of Hâjî Abdû el-Yezdî,' first published in 1880. The lines quoted urge self-reliance and the making of one's own laws.

dwell, A breath, a wind, a sound, a voice, a tinkling of the camel-bell.”

The following exercise will tend to bring about a heightened realization in consciousness of the Mastery of the Opposites. It is adapted from an ancient Arcane Formula, modern figures-of-speech being used.

Exercise.

Let the Neophyte place himself in a condition and position of rest, calm and repose. Let him meditate upon the real nature of the “I.” Let him cast off the illusion of the personal self, and its attributes, as indicated in previous exercises. Then let him imagine himself as rising above the lower planes of personality toward the higher planes of Egohood—as in a balloon which is rising above the surface of the earth into the higher regions of purer rarefied air. Let him then throw overboard from the mental balloon all the likes and dislikes; loves and hates; prejudices for and against anything and everything whatsoever, either good or bad; in short the entire collection of inherited or acquired feelings and emotions which have formed the garment or body of personality for so long. As the mental balloon rises higher and higher let him throw off even the more subtle feelings and emotions, until finally he finds himself divested of every iota of personal character he ever possessed, and his Ego is as naked as a new-born babe. Then, after a few trials of this exercise, will come to him a new sense of power and might—a

new realization of his real nature in Will. Then will he realize that the Pairs of Opposites of the Personality are but masks and clothing of the character he has been playing. Then will he feel like the Hindu god when he emerged from the body of the pig whose personality he had assumed. Then he may gradually return to the earth and resume the garments he has thrown off—but as a Master and Owner, not as a Slave to them as heretofore. This exercise will quicken the perception of Egohood, and will aid in the Mastery of the Opposites. The following exercise will also be found very useful in the same direction.

Exercise.

Let the Neophyte place himself in a position and condition of calm, restful repose, and then meditate upon the fact that contrasting and opposing feelings and emotions are in reality but the opposite poles of the same thing. Let him, in imagination, try the experiment of changing the polarity of some emotion—of inducing the state of love where hate has been dominant, or vice versa. Let him shift the polarity of his feelings and emotions at will, backward and forward. He will thus discover that the feelings and emotions are far from being fixed and constant, as he had supposed, but are capable of being shifted about at Will. This exercise will result in giving the individual a wonderful power over his feelings and emotions, and preventing them from dominating or ruling him. By shifting the polarity one

may change a painful feeling or emotion into its opposite. Distressing feelings may be changed in polarity, or balanced with their opposites, and much pain may be obviated. It is not necessary always to shift entirely to the opposite pole of the emotion or feeling—many adepts merely change the polarity to the opposite in a sufficient degree to establish a balance and thus create a condition and state of poise and equilibrium, which results in peace of mind—which quiets the stormy sea of passion, emotion or feeling. This condition of Poise and Balance is the true state of the advanced occultist. Equally balanced between the Pairs of Opposites one finds a peace unknown to those who polarize in either extreme. When one fully realizes that he is Master of the Opposites, and may shift the polarity of emotion and feeling at Will, then he himself is able to establish the condition most conducive to his satisfaction and happiness.

Such a one is well on the road to Mastership.

Lesson VIII. Neutralizing Rhythm.

In the Arcane Teaching we have seen the evidence of the universality of the Laws of Rhythm, Cyclicity and Balance. In the realm of the emotion and feelings these laws are as fully manifest as in the physical world. The Arcane Teachers instruct their Neophytes in the art of mastering, controlling and applying these laws, instead of assuming a negative attitude toward them. Instead of meekly bowing and yielding to these laws, the advanced individual either neutralizes such activities as he deems to his disadvantage, or else transmutes or applies the laws to his own advantage and progress. Instead of allowing himself to be overwhelmed by the laws, as by a great ocean wave, he rises on the crest of the wave and rides to safety on it.

The laws may be harnessed and made to work for the individual, instead of being allowed to overwhelm and master him.

The general principles stated in the preceding chapter on Mastering the Opposites are equally applicable to the Mastery of Rhythm, Cyclicity and Balance. When the Ego realizes that its real nature is centred and focalized in Will, then it is able to neutralize the opposites. And, in the phenomena of rhythm, cyclicity and balance the underlying principle is that of the Opposites. For, in rhythm we find a movement to-and-from between the two poles of the opposites. In cyclicity there is a circular movement imparted by

reason of the poles, or opposites, of centre and circumference, in fact many cyclic movements are merely forms of rhythm, as we have seen in the Arcane Teachings. And, in Balance there is evidenced the presence of the two poles or opposites, the weights of each tending to maintain the balance or compensation. And, Poise, that great attainment, is accomplished by preserving the right relation between the poles or opposites. So, you may see, that in the Mastery of the Opposites the Neophyte really acquires the mastery of Rhythm, Cyclicity and Balance. The principle of Polarity underlies everything.

The Law of Rhythm is best described in the words of the Aphorism, which informs us that: “Everything moves to-and-from in Rhythm, between its two poles. Everything rises and falls in Rhythm, within the limits of its nature. Everything advances and retreats in Rhythm, within the limits of its power.”

On the plane of emotion and feeling the Law of Rhythm is constantly in evidence. We find that we swing like a pendulum between the extremes or poles of our feelings or emotions. To-day we are sad—tomorrow we are joyful; today we are gloomy—tomorrow we are bright and hopeful; today we are slothful—tomorrow we are active and energetic. A study of our emotions and feelings will reveal to us the fact that these mental states are like the ocean and have their tides, in and out, high

and low, flood and ebb. We find action and reaction ever evident in our emotional life.

Moreover we find that when we indulge in an extreme degree of any emotion or feeling we have a tendency to fly to the opposite pole of that feeling or emotion. The law of reaction follows the action. The reaction may arise either from a revulsion occasioned by a sense of impotency or powerlessness to attain the object desired or hoped for; or else from a satiety resulting from the attainment of the object of the desire and the discovery that it was not what we had expected of it. We need not point to special examples of this, for the experience of every one who reads these words will supply the necessary examples.

Love, hate, or anger, if carried to an extreme point, have a tendency to fly back to the opposite pole with a startling rapidity. And, likewise, extreme elation is very apt to bound back to its extreme opposite and cause us to experience extreme depression. This is so common that the mere mention of the fact is sufficient to prove it to anyone. In the same way many know that fear and courage have a tendency to react into each other, if either be carried to an extreme. Many a man manifesting extreme courage will find himself swung suddenly back to a state of dire fear. In the same way, and from the same law, many have found themselves in a state of extreme fear, and then suddenly when they could proceed no further they would experience a sudden

bound of desperation carrying them to a state of extreme recklessness and daring. The experience of soldiers has shown the bravest men suddenly possessed of a pitiful fear—the reaction from the courage; and, likewise, we see the manifestation of occasional bursts and spurts of reckless daring and startling foolhardiness from notorious cowards. We, personally, know of a case in which a man who was a self-confessed coward, was suddenly overcome with such a revulsion at his own lack of courage that he sprang to the fore and performed a deed so startling, daring, and reckless that he won a special mention in the report of the battle and was ever afterward regarded as a man of the highest courage.

Persons who dwell principally on the plane of the emotions live in a state of alternate heaven and hell. Now enjoying to the fullest the upward swing they revel in the ecstasies of emotional feeling until they feel as if they were indeed gods.

Then comes the backward swing which plunges them into the hell of depression, melancholy, remorse, regret or feeling of impotence and uselessness. The more emotional the person, the higher and lower in the scale of feeling does he travel. Those who are willing to pay the price of these extremes—the toll of feeling—are of course free to do so. But the individual who finds himself resting on Will, his real nature, grows impatient and restless under the force of the play of his emotive nature, and is forced to take steps to master and rule that

part of his being. Instead of swinging backward and forward between the poles of emotion and feeling, he seeks and acquires the balance and poise of the focalized will.

The first step in the direction of neutralizing rhythm lies in the realization of the existence of rhythm itself. When one comes to realize that the hot fit is certain to be followed by the cold—the high by the low—the exaltation by the depression—the courage by the fear—the activity by the slothfulness—and *vice versa*, then does he cease to identify himself so closely with either of the poles, and, on the contrary, grows to regard them as mere natural incidents of his mental nature. He values them at their true worth, and *refuses to allow his Will to become involved* in his emotion and feeling. He knows that his depression will be followed by a stage of reaction, and so he refuses to take his depression seriously. Likewise, knowing the truth, he refuses to allow his exaltation to excite him unduly. In short, he centres more and more upon his Will nature, and from that position he stands aside, as it were, and watches calmly the swing of his feelings and emotions between their two poles. In a way, *he detaches himself* from the swing of the rhythmic emotions, and lives on the plane of Will. This mental state may be figuratively pictured as the individual resting on the plane of Will, and watching the swing of the emotional pendulum beneath him, on a lower plane, without allowing his Will to become involved.

The Neophyte may acquire this immunity from the effect of emotional rhythm by *focalizing on his Will* when he is threatened adversely by the emotional feeling. He will acquire a mental “knack” of rising above the plane of emotional feeling, or to the plane of Will, and there calmly watching and observing the storm of emotion, without being influenced by it. It is like one sailing in a balloon above the storm clouds which are thundering, and flashing lightning, beneath him. On the plane of Will there is Peace and Power undreamt of by those still on the emotional plane.

But this immunity to rhythmic emotion does not come to the Neophyte all at once. It is a matter of time, practice and growth. It is aided by the steady practice of *refusing to take the emotional swing too seriously*. Refuse to admit it as being *yourself*—deny away its reality. See, and think of it, always, as something connected with your mental being but *not in any real way You, yourself*. Stand aside and watch the play of your emotional nature, and before long you will be able to laugh at its antics. You will see how essentially unreal it is when compared with the mental life on the plane of Will. Once even partially freed from the bondage of emotion and feeling, you will never willingly return to the old thralldom.

This does not mean that you should never *use* your emotional nature. On the contrary, you will find it advantageous to *play out the part* often, for the energy aroused by the emotions is strongly motive, and will

enable you to accomplish much if it is properly applied. But, remember always, never allow yourself to become enmeshed and involved in the emotional storms or activities. Handle the emotions as a Master does an instrument but never yield yourself up to your emotions as a passive slave or instrument, any more than you would yield yourself up to the power and influence of some entity outside of yourself.

You have a part to play in the world—a part which is as much of a “character” as that assumed by the actor. And, in order to play it *well* you will find it necessary to throw into it feeling and emotion, just as the actor throws these into his part. But the best actor always maintains a basic knowledge that he is merely *acting*, and his emotional activity is merely the result of previous thought and trained art. *Art in the management of the emotion consists in selecting the emotional activity adapted to the accomplishment of the task or work on hand, and the restricting of all other emotions.* Instead of being a blind tool and instrument of the emotional nature, you should use the latter rationally—selecting that which is desirable and helpful, and restraining the rest. Beware always of the reaction and return swing of the emotional pendulum of rhythm. When it swings back from a desirable emotion, do you then mount to the plane of Will, and from there view it smilingly and with equanimity.

Take what you want, and neutralize the rest.

Lesson IX. Cyclicity and Balance.

The swing of the rhythmic pendulum is always at right angles to its central line of suspension—always to-and-fro, backward and forward, from a fixed center of gravity which is directly under its point of suspension. A similar law is evident in the movements of a body revolving in a circle, in which is manifest the power of the central point which holds the body from flying off into space, and also the power which causes the body to continue in cyclic revolution instead of falling toward the centre. In fact, the cyclic motion is merely another form of rhythm and is dependent on the latter, just as rhythm, itself, is dependent on the existence of the Law of Opposites, or Polarity.

Polarity, or The Opposites, is the fundamental cause of both Rhythm and Cyclicity.

All active movement expresses itself in rhythmic motion, between its two poles or opposites. But this rhythmic motion is not necessarily always in a straight line, as in the case of the pendulum. In fact, the motion of large bodies, and also of races, history, events, etc., is generally in a circle. This results from the attraction and repulsion of objects and forces outside of the swinging thing, which tends to draw it out of its backward and forward swing, and which gradually converts the straight line of the swing into a circle. Consequently, on all sides, and in all things we find the Law of Cyclicity in full operation.

As the Aphorism states: “Cyclicity is akin to Rhythm, and arises by reason of it. All events tend to move in Cyclic Trend—in constant circular movement of continuous recurrence. The only escape from Cyclicity is found in the process of transmutation into Spirality. This is accomplished by *advancing the Central Point of Motion*. The conversion of the Circle into the Spiral is one of the highest forms of mental Alchemy.”

It is evident to all who will examine the subject that the mental life of the average person is merely the constant traveling 'round and 'round in a recurring circle—the circle gradually widening from childhood to the prime of life, and then narrowing from that time to old age and death. The average person is held firmly bound by this Law of Cyclicity, and while he finds the circle widening or narrowing as the case may be, he never makes any real progress. It is always a constant swing around the same old central point—a process similar to the travel of the squirrel in the treadmill of his cage—a constant traveling which results in his getting nowhere.

It is only when the individual is able to convert the circle into the spiral, that he is able to advance. All real advance is accomplished in this way. Many acquire Spirality “by accident,” as it were. They find that by the assertion of the Ego—by the use of the inner Will, they are able to advance the Central Point of Motion. Advanced Occultists are able to *consciously* advance their

Central Point of Life Motion, and thus to do intelligently that which the average person does to a lesser degree under the unconscious influence of circumstances.

It is most difficult to render simple and plain the Arcane Formula regarding this form of Mental Transmutation, for it is so bound up with the conscious use of the Will that it cannot be understood except by those who have felt the realization of the Will Consciousness. It may be described in this way, however: The average person merely *desires* to advance. This desire exerts more or less influence on the Will. When, however, a person has learned to Will to Will, he is able to accomplish far more than he could by the mere power of plain desire. By his conscious Will he is able to project his Ego a step or more in advance in the Cosmic scale, and thus establish a new Centre of Cyclic Motion. By the increasing power which comes to him gradually by this conscious use of the Will, the individual establishes a habit of Spiralic Progression which replaces the old simple Cyclic movement.

The Neophyte by cultivating the habit of constantly *willing an advance at each circle*, will find that though his life still maintains its circular movement, yet at each return to a given point will he advance a little higher in scale and plane. Just as a traveler ascending a mountain must needs go round and round it, each time a little nearer the peak, so will the traveler along The Path of

Attainment find that at each circling the old paths will be below him.

The study of the succeeding chapters of this book will give the Neophyte additional instruction and suggestions in the direction of the use of the visualizing power of the mind to bring about desired conditions. Visualization may be employed in this matter of converting the Circle into the Spiral, as well as in the minor matters of life.

The distinguishing mark of the advanced Occultist, or individual who has found the Real Self, is Poise or Balance. This is always a mark of power, just as its opposite is always a mark of weakness.

As the Aphorism says: "Poise is Power. Poise results from Balance. Balance is secured by adjusting and maintaining the Centre between the Pairs of Opposites. By Balanced Poise the Master neutralizes Polarity and Rhythm, by resolving them into Unity. In the Heart of the Storm is Peace. In the Centre of Life there is Poise and Power. Seek it ever, O Neophyte—for in it thou shalt find thy Self."

The old Occult Masters were wont to illustrate the Balanced Life of the Advanced Ego by the figure of the acrobat walking the tight-rope, a feat which has descended to us from antiquity.

They would picture the Initiate traversing the Razor-edge Wire of Life, balancing himself by the Balancing Pole of the Opposites. Now shifting the weight on one

side, and now on the other, he is able to walk the Path in safety. Having the confidence of the Awakened Ego he trusts to his own power and the use of the Balancing Pole. The untrained person attempting the feat would be borne over by the pull of one emotion or feeling, or another, and would be dashed to ruin. But the Balanced Ego walks in confidence and safety, because of his mastery of the art of Balance. Pitting one emotion against another he neutralizes the one which threatens to pull him down. By Mental Alchemy or Transmutation, he is able to transmute a dangerous pull into a part of his balancing process. His axiom is “Action and Re-Action are equal,” and this principle he applies in all the emergencies and crises of life. He always manages to have a push or a pull to counteract a push or a pull in a different direction, and thus balance and poise are maintained.

Balance and Poise may be attained by entering into a realization of the real nature of the Ego—that the Ego is based and focalized in Will—that the Ego can, and should, always act from the plane and position of Will rather than from the plane and position of Emotion and Feeling. In fact, the entire instruction of this book, up to this point, has been in the direction of leading the individual to a consciousness of his real nature, which, if once acquired, must inevitably result in perfect Balance and Poise.

The facts stated, the instruction, the exercises, all will aid in the acquirement of Balance and Poise. Toward this goal, all of our efforts have been directed.

Balance results from Mastery. Mastery results from Knowledge and Practice. You have been told the truth. Make it your own. Realize what you are. Practice the methods of the Formulas.

Then, and then only, will you enter into that consciousness of Peace, Poise and Power, which comes to him who hath acquired Balance. As we have said in the Arcane Teaching: Oh, Neophyte, in the Centre of Life shalt thou indeed find Poise and Power. In the Heart of the Storm shalt thou find Peace. In the Centre of the Cosmos shalt thou find thyself. He who finds the Centre of Himself, finds the Centre of the Cosmos. For, at the last, they are one!

Lesson X. Mentalism in a Nutshell.

In the Arcane Teaching we have shown that the fundamental principle of Mentalism, in all of its forms, is the fact that the Cosmos itself is One Universal Mind, and that the Manifested Cosmos may be likened to a great Universal Brain, in which the forms of things and life are but as thought-forms in the human brain. There is Mind in everything, and everything is in Mind. Consequently, just as Thoughts become Things in the Cosmic Brain, so is it possible for a strongly concentrated and focalized Mind (Will) to materialize into objective form things and conditions on the material plane.

Just as the Cosmic Will manifests the Cosmic activities and forms, so may the Individual Will materialize activities and forms on its own plane. There is but one difference between the Cosmic will and the Individual Will—the difference in degree. All Will, from the Cosmic Will to the feeblest Individual Will is identical in nature, although widely differing in degrees of power. In fact, the Individual Wills are but *focalized centres* in the great Cosmic Will, varying greatly in power and manifestation. This being so, it follows that the same laws, and principles are applicable in all manifestations of Will, from the highest to the lowest.

In the Arcane Teaching we have described the principles and laws underlying the manifestation of Mentalism, and there is no occasion for entering into

this phase of the subject in this little book. Instead, we shall proceed at once to give you the Formulas for the actual demonstration and manifestation of these principles. We refer you to the Arcane Teaching for the explanation and the theory. In this chapter we shall give you “Mentalism in a Nutshell,” condensing into its limited space the essence and substance of what could be expanded into several books.

Formula for Positivity.

In the laws of Mentalism there is a fundamental principle that the positive always dominates the negative—the negative is always subordinate to the positive. Everything has its keynote of positivity. And that keynote depends upon the degree of Will-Consciousness. When one becomes well polarized in Will Consciousness he is intensely positive to those around him— not only to persons but also to environment and conditions.

This positivity is, of course, dependent upon the degree of Will manifested by the individual. Remember, we say the *degree* of Will, not the amount or quantity of Will. The average person, when he thinks of Will Power is apt to think of a large amount of Will which must be manifested by the individual in order to produce its effect. This is erroneous. There can be no such thing as *quantity or amount* of Will. This is a fact known to all advanced occultists. Will is not a material substance occupying space in the way that matter or force occupies

space. It cannot be measured by spatial dimensions. One cannot think of a yard or pound of Will. Nor can he conceive of Will being measured by the units used in the measurement of electricity or other forms of force. There is a standard of measurement of Will, but not a measurement of quantity or amount—it is altogether a matter of *degree*.

The degree of Will manifested by the individual depends upon his degree of focalization or polarity in the Cosmic Will itself. The greater the realization of one's relation to the Cosmic Will the greater is his capacity for manifesting Will Power. Consequently all efforts toward developing positivity in Will Power must be based upon the fundamental realization. The Formulas given in the earlier chapters of this book will give to the Neophyte the key to the Secret of Mentalism.

The Arcane Formula for the manifestation of Will Power consists simply in the development of the realization of Egohood—of the fact that the individual is a *focalized centre of force and Will in the great Cosmic Will*. The higher the degree of this realization the higher degree of positivity will the individual possess. Fasten this truth in your minds: *The Will Power of the individual is not something created by him, but is, in reality, the power of the Cosmic Will in which he lives and moves and has his being. The individual has no Will Power in himself, but all the will he manifests must flow through his organism from the Cosmic Will. The individual is merely the focal point of Will—a channel*

through which the Cosmic Will may act. Ponder well these words, O Neophyte, for in them is contained the whole Secret of Mentalism.

Will Atmosphere.

The Neophyte should create for himself a Positive Will Atmosphere, or Aura, which will tend to serve as a protective armor shielding him from adverse influences from outside, and also tending to render his positive power felt by those with whom he comes in contact. The Positive Atmosphere is occasioned by the vibrations in the Mind Stuff with which all space is filled just as the brain is filled with mind-stuff of its own particular quality. The Cosmos is a World Brain, remember, and the Cosmic Mind Stuff is everywhere. Vibration in the Mind Stuff is just as real as vibration in the ether, or in the air, or in matter of any and every kind.

The Positive Atmosphere is created by a pure act of Will, aided by Visualization. The Neophyte should first realize that he is Will itself. Then he should Visualize (mentally imagine or *see*) the Mind Stuff in his immediate vicinity becoming charged with the positive power of Will. It will aid him to think of himself as surrounded for a distance of about three feet with an egg-shaped aura or atmosphere of highly charged Will, radiating from him and vibrating with an intense energy. As a matter of occult truth, this phenomenon is really

existent, although the ordinary senses cannot perceive the vibrations or aura. Treat yourself every day, or oftener, with the intent to increase the degree of your Positive Atmosphere. The more clearly you can *visualize*, or imagine, the existence of this aura or atmosphere, the greater will be your degree of positive personal atmosphere.

The Neophyte must not allow himself to be deceived in regarding the Imagination as an unreal, fanciful thing—*it is a mental activity of wonderful occult power*. The Neophyte will soon discover that he has acquired a new positive personal atmosphere, and that those with whom he comes in contact will *feel* a something peculiar about him, and will tend to become negative to him, unless they, too, understand the principles involved. As time passes, and practice renders him more perfect the Neophyte will move about among ordinary people just as a highly charged magnet or electric wire. It is difficult to describe this, but those who will practice to acquire it will soon become conscious of their newly found strength. In order to focalize more fully, the Neophyte may hold in his mind the mental image, or statement of “I am a Centre of Positive Will.”

Personal Positivity.

The Neophyte may occasionally find that he is in the presence of persons more positive than himself, owing to their past training or experience. In such cases he should at once determine that they shall not “overlap”

him (the occult term used in such cases). He should determine at least to meet the positive persons “*edge to edge*,” if not indeed to “overlap” *them*. This is accomplished by at once *denying* the positivity of the other person (silently and mentally, of course) by the assertion “I deny your Positivity over me.” At the same time the Neophyte should focalize on his own Will-Consciousness, seeing himself as a focal centre of Will, and having the Cosmic Will back of him. He will soon find that he will rise in the scale of positivity, and the other will sink a degree below him.

If he finds himself oppressed by a sense of negativity while mingling with a crowd, he should assert his Egohood in the same way. The greater the realization of one’s self as a Focal Centre of Will, the greater the degree of Personal Positive Atmosphere will be manifested.

Visualization.

In this chapter we shall speak of Visualization, in a number of places. Visualization is the creative process employed by occultists desiring to manifest Mental Images on the Mental and Material Planes. Visualization consists in *forming and holding a Mental Image of things and conditions as you wish them to be in actuality*. The Mental Image tends to create for itself a material and objective form and existence—it is the mental pattern around which the material conditions tend to group themselves. It is, in fact, the seed-form of the thing itself.

The prime factor in Visualization is to endeavor to create as clear as possible a Mental Image of the thing or condition desired, *as if it were actually existent at that moment*. These three rules of Visualization should be observed: (1) *See yourself as you wish to be*. (2) *See others as you wish them to be*. (3) *See conditions as you wish them to be*. Around these visualized ideals, do the material realities form and crystallize.

Statements.

All occultists have recognized the value of Statements, or “affirmations” as some call them. These Occult Statements are positive assertions of the existence of the conditions which you wish to bring about. They tend to aid the Visualization to a great degree, and besides have a power of their own. There is an occult power in the Spoken Word which is not necessary to explain here—the assertion that the power exists is sufficient for the particular purpose before us. Always use Statements as in the present tense. Do not say to yourself, “Such and such a thing will be by and by,” but boldly assert “Such and such a thing is existent and in actual being, now, this moment.”

There is also a good occult reason behind this, which it is not necessary to discuss in detail. The power of the Positive Occult Statement must be experienced in order to be appreciated. Make your statements *earnestly and positively*—avoid all halfhearted statements, for they result in half-hearted results. In making your statements,

do not use a tone of entreaty, or of asking a favor—speak in a tone of command. Of course, these statements should not be made aloud to other people. They have the best effect when made in a state of meditation and concentration. Use them in connection with visualization, and you will find that they will tend to energize and vitalize your Mental Images.

Denials.

Occult Denials are a form of Occult Statements. They have a most positive effect when rightly used. With the individual focalized in Will, he is able to exert much occult power by boldly *denying out of existence* the obstacles and difficulties which beset his path. It is marvelous, at times, to see how the obstructing things evince a tendency to disintegrate and disappear from one's mental world, which is followed later by a response of like kind and degree in the material world. Do not be afraid to say: "I deny this or that obstacle. It has no power over me. I deny it out of my world. For me it does not exist." Make your denials as positive as your statements. Command, not beg or entreat.

Mental Alchemy.

Mental Alchemy or Mental Transmutation bears a striking analogy to Material Alchemy or Transmutation, in the sense that in both there is a marked change in form and nature of the substances or things operated upon. Conditions and things, like material objects, may be transformed and transmuted at the Will of the

Alchemist. Mentalism, in its most striking forms, is Mental Alchemy. In the crucible of the Cosmic Mind or Brain things may be, and are transmuted and changed in their outward form and character. Nothing in the Cosmos can be destroyed—but everything is capable of *change*. Remember, first and always, that Mental Alchemy means change. You do not destroy things—you merely *change* them.

Mental Vibration.

In all forms of Mentalism there is in evidence the phenomenon of Mental Vibration. Vibration is not confined to the gross material substance of the universe, but is equally in evidence in the Mind Stuff with which all space is filled. Mind Stuff is the elementary material of which the great Cosmic World Brain is composed. When one thinks, feels, or wills, there is manifest vibration just as truly as in the vibration of the atom or the tuning-fork. Each kind of thought, feeling or emotion has its own rate of vibration, or keynote.

When a certain rate of mental vibration is manifested it tends to reproduce similar vibrations, and consequently similar mental states in the minds of those coming within its field of induction. Just as a tuning-fork will cause similar vibrations in the objects in the room, so will a mind sending forth vibrations tend to reproduce those vibrations in other minds in its vicinity, or under certain circumstances, at long distances.

This being so, it follows that if an individual will carry, in his mind a positive, persistent idea, backed up with an application of his Will, he will be able to impress that idea upon others, with more or less effect. He will be aided in this by the practice of Statements and by Visualization, for both of these practices tend to send forth mental vibrations of a high degree of strength and power.

Thought Waves and Currents.

There are waves and currents in the great ocean of Mind Stuff, just as there are waves and currents in the ocean or in the air.

Thoughts, feelings and emotion manifested by an individual will tend to create waves or currents in the Mind Stuff, which will flow out in all directions influencing and affecting others in their field of force, particularly if those others happen to maintain a degree of mental vibration corresponding to that of the traveling wave or current. Every one sends forth these thought waves or currents, usually unconsciously and without direct intention, and consequently with comparatively slight effect. Those who understand the laws of Mentalism are able to consciously direct, concentrate and focus the Will upon those whom they wish to influence, and consequently their thought waves and currents travel direct to their mark, and create a much greater effect.

Thought Forms.

Thought-forms are concentrated thought waves or thought bodies usually projected from the mind by concentrated thought and Will, and which, when coming in contact with others, have almost as great an effect upon them as if the sender were present in person exerting his Will and mind upon the person or persons. Occultists who have acquired concentration and focalization are often able to send forth thought-forms of so high a degree of power and strength that they produce upon others the mental impression that the sender, himself, is actually present in person, so strong is the impression created. In some of the methods which we shall now describe, the production of these thought-forms will be described.

Practical Methods.

We have said but a few words in describing the above mentioned various phases of Mentalism. We have not thought it necessary to go into detail regarding the theory of the phenomena. Those who read this book will have read elsewhere much of theoretical detail, and besides will have grasped the fundamental and underlying principles of Mentalism from what we have said in *The Arcane Teaching*. We think it preferable to pass on directly to the practical methods contained in the Formulas, rather than to dwell upon the theoretical side of the subject.

In connection with the methods herein described, we would say that while anyone may obtain some degree of success by practicing them, still in order to obtain any marked degree of success it is necessary for one to have first developed the Will-Consciousness, or some degree of Egohood. The Will being the motive power back of all forms of Mentalism and Mental Alchemy, it follows that he who is able to focalize and polarize his Ego in Will itself will be able to bring to bear the very highest degree of power in the phenomena of Mentalism.

Therefore, we have devoted the greater part of this book to pointing out the methods whereby one may develop the Will-Consciousness and Egohood within him. For when this one thing is attained, the rest is but a matter of detail. Let us now proceed to a consideration of the Practical Methods. We shall condense these in as few words as possible. The student must read carefully every word so that he will enter into a full understanding of the subject and methods.

Concentration.

The Neophyte must develop and cultivate the art of Concentration. Concentration means “bringing to a centre”—and Mental Concentration is really a focusing of the Will by means of attention. Concentration may be developed by practice. Learn to shut out distracting thoughts and ideas for a few moments, holding the mind “one-pointed” upon the thing or idea before you. Then, after an interval, concentrate upon something

else. After you have subdued the wandering tendency of the mind, gradually, you will find that you have acquired a new power of mind which will enable you to direct and apply a focalized mental power upon whatever idea or thing to which you may direct it. We could fill page after page with detailed exercises in concentration, but after reading them you would find that the essence of the whole thing consists *in fixing the attention upon anything*, and being able *to hold it there*. This is attained only by practice. And the practice may be had by fixing and holding the attention upon *anything*, for a few moments at a time, until you grow more and more proficient by practice. Remember, concentration does *not* mean “*staring*” at a thing—it consists of fixing and holding the *mind*, not the *eyes*. Begin practicing, and you will soon acquire the knack. It is altogether a matter of the use of the Attention, by means of the Will. All the rest is mere detail and “trimmings.” It will do you far more good to *invent* methods for yourself, than to blindly follow some set lesson mapped out by others. Use your own minds, and you will gain thereby.

Mental Imaging.

The Secret of Mental Alchemy may be stated as consisting first, last and always, of the Art of Mental Imaging, reinforced by the Will. Take up your lead-pencil and mark the above statement, so that you will see it easily when turning over these pages. While to the beginner the subject of Mentalism may seem a very complicated one, the

advanced occultist knows it to be the extreme of simplicity. *Mental Alchemy, under whatever name it may masquerade, may be found to consist, at the last, of simply the power to create strong, clear Mental Images, and to project them into the outer world by means of the concentrated Will.*

Read over the above italicized words several times, and fix them firmly in your mind. You will find that all that you ever have read on the subject may be “boiled down” to the above stated principle. The rest is a mere matter of detail. This single statement is “Mentalism in a Nutshell.”

Whether in the matter of the effect of Mentalism upon persons with whom you are in direct personal contact; or else in the case of persons or bodies of people remote from you in distance; or in the case of the changing of material environment and circumstances—the principle is ever the same, *i. e.*, the projection of your Mental Image into objectivity, and the materializing of that picture by the operation of the Law of Attraction.

The ancient teachers used, as a material object-lesson to their pupils a simple contrivance which we now know in a perfected form as the “Magic Lantern,” either in its simple form, or else in the “moving picture apparatus.” The teachers would project upon a plane surface the reflection of a design or picture which was passed in front of a concentrated light—the reflection

being reproduced on a large scale on the plane surface, at a greater or lesser distance.

The teachers would explain to the Neophytes that the concentrated light represented the focused Will; the slide containing the picture represented the Mental Image held in the mind; the plane surface represented the objective world. As a matter of fact, the analogy between the Magic Lantern²¹ and the phenomena of Mentalism is almost exactly parallel, to a certain degree and extent. The pupils of the ancient teachers were bidden to fix this symbol firmly in their minds, and to recall it *always* when practicing or manifesting any of the phenomena of Mentalism. And we, likewise, urge all of our students to fix firmly in their minds this symbol of the Magic Lantern, and always to recall it when they practice Mentalism. *By holding this idea in the mind, the student will be able to give an increased force, power and reality to the projection of mental images.* Do not pass this by, lightly and carelessly—it is most important to you. If this book contained merely this one bit of instruction, it would be well “worth your while” to study it.

With this symbol still in mind, we see that the power and strength of the projection depends materially upon the strength and focused force of the light in the lantern. If the light be weak, or dim, or flickering, the reflection

²¹ An early image projector that used a light source and painted glass slides to cast enlarged pictures onto a screen. The author uses it as a central analogy for how the mind projects thoughts into reality.

will be likewise. And, if the rays of the light be not focused and concentrated properly, the force and power of the light will not be properly directed and applied. Therefore, in Mentalism, you must rest as fully in the Will-Consciousness as possible, and also must hold the Will firmly concentrated upon the task before you.

Likewise, if the slide containing the picture—the Mental Image—be poorly and faintly drawn, the reflection will also be faulty; in fact, the fault will be more apparent, for it will be magnified according to the distance it is projected. Therefore, cultivate the art of Mental Imaging, and endeavor to train your imagination to see clearly that which you wish to project into the objective world for the purpose of materialization. Train your imagination to form and hold *plain, clear pictures of the things and conditions which you wish to materialize in the objective world*. Upon this one thing depends much of the efficacy and success of the processes of Mentalism. *If you cannot fill in the details of your Mental Picture at first, at least draw firm, strong general outlines, and as you begin to materialize objectively you will be able to add the details.*

Materialization of Thought.

There are certain laws in operation in the Cosmos, by reason of its very nature, which tend to *materialize thought-images*. The very Cosmos, itself, is a materialization of the *ideas* in the Cosmic Brain. And, by the Law of Analogy, the same thing is true on all planes.

“From one, know All”—“As above, so below²²”—these are the axioms. There is a force in operation which has been called “The Law of Attraction,” by which “like attracts like” on all planes. And on the mental plane, the “likes” are materialized into corresponding “likes” on the material plane. *Everything that is, first existed as an idea or Mental Picture*, either in the Cosmic Brain, or in the brain of some living creature as well.

There is always a mental plan behind and in every material form, shape or condition. The student should know this fact from a study of the Arcane Teaching, and by submitting the idea to the test of experience and reason. And, when this principle is clearly understood, the process of Thought Materialization through Mentalism becomes quite plain and understandable.

When the truth of Thought Materialization becomes fully understood, the student learns to *avoid making Mental Images of the things which he does not wish to materialize*, on the one hand; and *to make Mental Images of the things which he does wish to materialize*, on the other hand. When he realizes that mental things tend to materialize objectively, he has grasped a fundamental and important occult truth, *and he governs himself accordingly*. We urge every student to fix this idea firmly in his mind, for until he realizes that Mental Images and the Materialization

²² A fundamental Hermetic axiom, first found in the Emerald Tablet, stating that the macrocosm (universe) and microcosm (human) correspond. The author uses it to justify the analogy between Cosmic and individual Will.

thereof, *are but stages of the one process*, he has not grasped the working principle of Mentalism. When this fact *is* grasped, then the rest is merely a matter of practice, development and application.

Aids to Mental Imaging.

The careful student doubtless will have recognized by this time that the process of Statements and Denials is but a form of aids to Mental Imaging. When the Occult Statement is used, there is created a Mental Image, consciously or subconsciously, and consequently there is given an additional urge to materialization. And in the same way, the Occult Denial tends to erase or wipe out the Mental Picture in one's own mind; in the minds of others; or in circumstances and environment; of conditions or things which are not desirable. (We have stated that in addition to the above effect there are peculiar virtues and properties in the Spoken Word, of which we shall not speak further in this work, as it belongs to another phase of the general subject.) Do not undervalue the Occult Statement and the Occult Denial—they are powerful factors in Mentalism, in the direction of strengthening and *vitalizing* the Mental Images.

General Application.

The average student reading this book will doubtless expect that we will now enter into a detailed description of the various forms of the application of Mentalism, in the form of Mental Imaging and Thought

Materialization. But we have no such intention. If this work were to be extended into several volumes for the sake of money-making and humoring the popular taste and demand, we might do so. It would be easy to fill several volumes with detailed description of various forms of application—but to what purpose? The keen analytical student would soon discover that what had been done was simply to build various structures around the one vital and underlying principle of Mental Imaging and Projection. We prefer that our students shall *think and work* for themselves, and not be mere blind followers of any teacher or teachers—even of ourselves. *There is no room for lazy minds in the ranks of true occultism.* Mentalism cannot be given or taken in sugar-coated capsules, one before each meal, like quack medicines. It must be thought out, *and worked out* in actual practice. So, if you wish your Mentalism in capsules, tabloids, or sugar-coats—you must go elsewhere for it—the field is full of occult nostrums, as many of you have found out.

What we shall do, in place of the above, is to give you a Formula by which *you can work out and manifest every form of mentalism for yourself*. No matter how complicated the form may be, it may be worked out by this Formula. We shall not attempt to prove this to you—you can best prove it by actual practice in your own experiments or occult work. We cheerfully stake our reputation as practical occultists upon its efficacy. Try it for yourself, and see what you can accomplish by it. The Formula has

borne the test of ages, and the experiments and practice of many of the best occultists of the past and present.

Consequently we do not hesitate to stake our reputation upon it.

The Arcane Formula.

The first thing in applying this Arcane Formula of Mentalism, is for the student to lay aside all other theories of Mentalism, for the time being. Forget all about Thought-Force, Mind-Waves, Mental Currents, and the rest of it—these are mere details, and are of no value in the real work of Mentalism. Forget all about theory, for the time being, and then proceed to get down to actual work.

Then, fix firmly in your mind the symbol of the Magic Lantern, with its concentrated light of Will, and its painted slide of the Mental Image. Regard the objective world, or persons, things, and circumstances, as the great plane surface upon which you wish to throw or project your Mental Images that they may materialize objectively. Get this picture clearly in your mind. See your “I” as the Light in the Lantern—with its concentrated Will focused directly upon the Mental Image slide of the Lantern. *Hold this idea in mind whenever you practice Mentalism.* Always stand behind your mental images, as the Light in the Lantern.

Then, having your Mental Image impressed upon your imaginative lantern slide, direct and *point your lantern tube upon whatever object in the outside world you wish*. If it is a person whom you wish to impress with your thought, mentally direct and focus your mental Magic Lantern upon him, just as you would upon a plane surface—*whether he be far or near*. All “treatments,” as they are called in certain circles, are based upon this principle. The Mental Image is projected by means of the highly concentrated Will. If a number of persons are to be impressed, they may be considered as present in a group, or else the lantern tube may be turned first upon one and then upon another, and so on. If general conditions or environments are to be “treated,” image them as a whole, and focus your lantern tube directly upon them, producing a projection of gigantic proportions. Surely, these directions cover the whole process. Read them over, again and again, until you grasp them thoroughly and fully.

In the cases of persons whom you may wish to impress, you will find that better results may be obtained by either imaging them as seated or standing before you, in full short-range of your mental Magic Lantern; or else, by imaging yourself as in the other person’s presence, in his own place, turning your mental lantern full upon him. In the case of persons actually in your presence, proceed in the same way. **Places**, present or absent, may be “treated” in this way, in order to dispel

undesirable conditions or vibrations. The vibrations of places may be entirely changed in this way. **Conditions** may be “treated” successfully by turning upon them a strong Mental Image of the changed conditions you wish to bring about. The entire category of the phenomena of Mental Transmutation or Mental Alchemy may be successfully undertaken by the use and application of this Formula. You will find that this Formula is applicable to all manner and kinds of condition. A little analysis of each and every case will show you that the Formula is applicable to it.

Let not the simplicity of this method cause you to discard it in favor of some more technical, complicated or metaphysical theoretical method. This method overrides all theories of the metaphysical schools—and analysis of the latter, divested of the surrounding theories, will show the underlying principle of this method in full operation in each and every one of them.

Why not discard and tear off the encumbering theories and “explanations” and avail yourself of the advantage of employing the essential method underlying all of the forms and theories.

Truth, at the last, is always found to be simple. And, in the case of this Formula, the very simplicity of the operation is a convincing proof of its truth, particularly when a little experiment and practice will prove its availability in all cases. Analyze all other forms of “mental treatment,” or Mentalism, and see whether the

principles of this Formula are not involved in them, and form their very essence. The beauty of this Formula is its simplicity and its capacity for universal application. It may be applied under a thousand forms or disguises, but the principle remains unchanged.

In conclusion, remember that “Mentalism in a Nut-Shell” is the idea conveyed by *the symbol of the Mental Magic Lantern, with Concentrated Will as the Light; Mental Image as the pictured slide; the Projected Idea as the picture thrown on the screen; and the Objective World, of persons, things and conditions as the plane surface on which the picture is thrown. Add to this the fact that Mental Images Materialize in response to the Law of Attraction, and you have the entire story of Mentalism.*

Re-read your books on this subject; listen to the teachings of the cults and the schools. Then when you have finished with them, ask yourself calmly if the Mental Magic Lantern does not give you the best symbol of the best methods of each and all of them, reduced to the ultimate analysis and divested of useless fringe, trimming, theory and detail.

Then, practice Mentalism along these lines. The rest is a matter of patience, practice and persistency. We have given you the first and the last word in the practice of Mentalism.

FINIS.

THE ESOTERIC COLLECTION

STUDY GUIDE

THE ARCANES FORMULAS

*A practical guide for turning reading into observation,
reflection, and inner training.*

By M.C. Mesen

Introduction

The Arcane Formulas, attributed to William Walker Atkinson as the Three Initiates, is much more than a collection of occult principles or mental exercises. This book invites the reader to move from mere curiosity to the specific art of self-recognition and self-work: knowing about Egoism is not enough; it must be lived and realized.

The central aim is neither mere study nor acquisition of powers, but to learn the subtle difference between personality and deeper consciousness. This guide treats the text as a mirror: each chapter is an opportunity to observe the layers of mind and the ways we usually identify with the 'mask' instead of the living center of being.

How to use this guide

Read slowly and take notes. The guide is meant to activate the reading, not replace the book.

Work with a journal. Copy the questions that make you pause: they are often the most useful.

Do not try to do everything in one session. Choose one practice and repeat it for several days.

Study path

1. Understanding the Ego: Beyond Personality

Core teaching: Atkinson differentiates between personality—the role we play, the social mask—and the true consciousness of the Ego, which involves recognizing the deeper 'I' beyond habits and labels. The work begins by noticing the difference between acting and experiencing the living center of self.

Working question: In what situations do you notice yourself merely playing your 'role', and when does silent authenticity emerge?

Practice: Throughout the day, each time you sign your name or say 'I', pause briefly and ask: Who is speaking? From where am I acting?

2. The Evolution of Consciousness: From Attention to Self-Inquiry

Core teaching: The book traces levels of consciousness—from basic sensitivity to self-consciousness and, finally, Ego-consciousness. The latter is not just knowing that we think, but the direct experience of being the center and witness of existence.

Working question: What mental habits keep you from feeling present and bring you back to automatic patterns?

Practice: Upon waking and before sleeping, spend two minutes watching your thoughts without judgment. Ask yourself: Who observes? Can I follow the movement of consciousness back to its source?

3. The Illusion of Separation: Practicing Unity

Core teaching: The Arcane Formulas emphasize that the sensation of being an isolated individual is only relative and partial. The true task is to see the shared background—the One Life—that animates all form.

Working question: When do you most feel separate from others? What experiences have allowed you glimpses of unity beyond your habitual sense of self?

Practice: Choose one daily interaction and silently experiment by noticing: 'The same life inhabits us both.' Observe any changes in the quality of the interaction.

4. From Theory to Blossoming: Gradual and Integrated Growth

Core teaching: According to Atkinson, the realization of Egohood is not forced or sudden—it grows naturally, much like a plant slowly flowers. The key is to maintain small daily practices of self-observation and inner honesty.

Working question: What small, concrete change can you commit to today in order to move towards greater authenticity and presence?

Practice: Pick a ritual gesture for self-affirmation (a word, a touch to your chest, a conscious pause) and use it every time you notice yourself slipping into personality inertia. Review your experience after seven days.

Closing

The Arcane Formulas do not demand extraordinary beliefs, but rather the courage to look inward honestly and to practice distinguishing mask from center. Treat each day as a laboratory for self-inquiry; the real results show up in daily life, not just on the printed page.

More guides and information at MauricioChavesMesen.com