

WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON



THE INNER SECRET

— or That Something Within —



KNOW
THYSELF



AWAKEN



DISCOVER



TRANSCEND



WISDOM



INNER LIGHT



PURPOSE



TRUTH



COLLECTION CURATED AND ANNOTATED BY
M.C. MESEN

THE ESOTERIC COLLECTION 454

The Inner Secret, Or That Something Within

A novel of awakening,
enlightenment and initiation

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."
—Hamlet: Act I; Scene 5.

WRITING UNDER THE PEN NAME

"X"

William Walker Atkinson

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

©2015 TIMELESS WISDOM COLLECTION

©2026 THE SUCCESS AND PROSPERITY LIBRARY

This is a collection of classics, and a product of its time.

It does not reflect the same views on race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity,
and interpersonal relations as it would if it was written today.

Contact @ THE SUCCESS AND PROSPERITY LIBRARY.com

Contact @ TIMELESSWISDOMBOOKS.COM

THE ESOTERIC COLLECTION #454

For free eBooks, guides and general information visit:

THE SUCCESS AND PROSPERITY LIBRARY.COM

TIMELESSWISDOMBOOKS.COM

MAURICIOCHAVESMESEN.COM

CONTENTS

ABOUT WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON	2
INTRODUCTION	1
ORIGINAL PUBLISHERS' STATEMENT	5
I. THE QUEST	7
II. THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER	18
III. THE REVELATION	30
IV. THE THIRD DEGREE	37
VI. THE SOMETHING WITHIN	55
VII. THE SECRET OF "LUCK"	64
VIII. THE INNER SECRET	74
IX. THE AFTER-WORD	85
STUDY GUIDE	95

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

First published in 1922 under the enigmatic pen name "X," *The Inner Secret or That Something Within* has circulated for nearly a century as a clandestine classic of spiritual self-help.

This novel -or real story, you be the judge, has been in circulation for over a century, and has developed quite a following, because of its insights and intensity; the 'secrets' and wisdom it contains; and the mystery that has forever surrounded it.

It is the story of a man on a journey of self-discovery, of trying to make sense of the world and its mysteries, of trying to unveil that "something" which is the key to success in every aspect of life; only to realize that the power is within; that the secret is inside each and every one.

This profound and illuminating book was written under the pseudonym "X". Since the copyrights belong to "Edward E. Beals", it has long been attributed to him.

However, since first publishing this work in 2012, we stated that, after an investigation on Beals, we found nothing on him except in relation to "his work" with William Walker Atkinson and the "Personal Power Series". We concluded before, and sustain again, that **Edward E. Beals is William Walker Atkinson, using an alias.**

Therefore, now we are ready to advance the theory that this book was written by Atkinson. This thesis is new. But after editing all of Atkinson books, we cannot help but noticing the similitude in the styles, the use of certain key words and phrases, and the citing of the same authors. Even the concluding poem of the book, by Charles Orr¹, is used in a dozen of Atkinson books. Also, knowing Atkinson and his love for aliases (he wrote over 70 books, under a dozen different names) it actually makes a lot of sense. He did write other books as "Anonymous"; as "Magus Incognitus" or as "The Three Initiates", so, the name "X" would not be strange.

It is worth noticing that the book was published by Atkinson's publisher! Also, if you analyze the story of the main character, it has so

¹ Charles Orr was a poet whose work appears in several of Atkinson's books. The concluding poem in this volume is by Orr. This helps identify Atkinson as the real author of the 'X' pseudonym.

many similitudes and coincidences with the real life of Atkinson (a successful young man who lost everything, had a breakdown, then, all of the sudden, “found the path” and became an “illuminated”; or the fact that the writer wrote at “almost 60 years of age”, -Atkinson was 59 in 1922), that we can arrive at this conclusion with no hesitation.

The Inner Secret is a hybrid work: part confessional autobiography, part philosophical dialogue, part practical manual. Its narrator recounts a lifelong search for an elusive Inner Secret of success—a “something” that allows certain individuals to accomplish what others cannot. He investigates conventional teachings, studies successful men, explores metaphysical cults, and delves into occult schools, only to find that all of them are grasping at symbols rather than the reality itself. When he is struck by a catastrophic series of losses—business failure, social ruin, family alienation, and physical collapse—he reaches his nadir. It is at this point that he meets Colonel Forbes, a retired English army officer who becomes his guide. Forbes is neither a guru nor a priest but a “practical mystic,” a man who has integrated transcendent insights into worldly affairs.

The Colonel's central teaching is deceptively simple: the Something the narrator has sought “about” or “above” himself is actually within him—the “I Am I,” the real self that is a focal point of the Infinite Presence-Power. Atkinson frames this discovery as a three-stage process: Recognition, Realization, and Manifestation. The first two stages culminate in a transcendental experience of “Sat-Chit-Ananda” (Being-Wisdom-Bliss), which the narrator compares to a flash of illumination. Yet Atkinson is careful to distinguish this from psychic phenomena, which he dismisses as “moon-path” distractions. The true path is “sun-path”: natural, practical, and verifiable through results.

The remainder of the book demonstrates how the recognition of the Something Within transforms every dimension of life. The narrator rebuilds his health through mental control of bodily functions, trains his memory and imagination, masters his emotions, and harnesses his will. He applies the same principles to business, achieving growing success, and develops a leadership philosophy that elevates those around him. Atkinson also devotes substantial space to what he calls the narrator's “Religion”—a non-dogmatic faith grounded in immanence, security, and joy, which he sees as inseparable from the secret itself.

This is an amazing book. It is written as a novel or “story”, but it has deep insights, almost a compendium of several of Atkinson’s previous works, and definitely, one of his masterpieces.

For modern readers, *The Inner Secret* offers a fascinating window into the New Thought movement at its peak, blending practical success psychology (drawn from figures like Samuel Smiles and P. T. Barnum) with the metaphysical vocabulary of Emerson, the aphorisms of the Upanishads, and the emerging language of psychology. Its insistence on the “polarity” of being—shifting from the negative pole of the petty self to the positive pole of the true I—anticipates later human potential movements. At the same time, the book carries an unmistakable watermark of personal experience: the narrator's pain and recovery feel authentic, and the Colonel's counsel is rendered with a restrained warmth that avoids the breathless hype of many self-help works.

The study and annotations that accompany this volume aim to illuminate the many references—from Henley's “Invictus” to the similes of Simla, from Herbert Spencer's “Infinite and Eternal Energy” to the symbols of the alchemists—while leaving the central truth to speak for itself.

As the author insists: “Those for whom it is intended... will recognize and accept that Truth without further assurance.” Yet even for those who approach it with skepticism, the story of one man's journey from despair to mastery is both compelling and instructive, and its principles have proven durable enough to serve generations of readers.

A book for enjoyment, learning, enlightenment and, if you pay close attention and open your eyes and your mind, for initiation.

Mauricio Chaves-Mesén

Author of the sagas “The Knights of Nostradamus” & “Atlantis”

Free Atkinson eBooks, info and guides at:

Mauriciochavesmesen.com

ORIGINAL PUBLISHERS' STATEMENT

Anticipating certain quite natural questions on the part of some of the readers of this unusual book, we have felt it to be proper to make some sort of statement concerning the actual nature of the experiences forming an important portion of its subject. When accepting the manuscript for publication, we asked the author whether the story should be announced as biographical, autobiographical, or as allegorical in treatment and character; whether it was a statement of the actual experience of a certain actual individual, the composite actual experiences of several such individuals, or merely pure fiction, or perhaps an allegorical representation of certain deep truths of human experience and life; whether its statements were actual facts, or merely "based and founded on facts". We asked these questions because we felt that the readers, like ourselves, would feel that while the story is set forth in the ordinary narrative form of fiction written from the assumed viewpoint of the "first person", nevertheless, there is a certain unescapable air of sincerity and actual experience pervading it which gives to one the feeling that "this surely is fact, or based on facts".

The following somewhat cryptic statement is the reply of the author, in his own words: "I prefer that you let the story speak for itself. Those for whom it is intended, and who are prepared for the reception of the Truth expressed in its lines, will recognize and accept that Truth without further assurance on your part, or on mine; those for whom it is not intended, and who are not as yet prepared to receive that Truth, will see nothing but idle fancy and imagination in the story, and would fail to be convinced to the contrary by any possible claims of authority, 'proof,' or assurances from yourselves or from myself.

"Whether the story represents the actual experience of some one certain individual, or of several such individuals, is not essential; neither is it necessary to indicate the identity of such person or persons, assuming that he, or they, are actual individuals. It is enough to state that the experiences related in the story are actual human experiences—experiences which (in whole or in part) have come to many persons, and which will be recognized as real and actual by many who read the story.

"If it suits better the purposes of publication to announce the story under the classification of fiction, by all means do so—but here I make the distinction between the terms, "fiction" and "fictitious", respectively. In the

form and arrangement of its presentation, this story may be technically classified as fiction—but in its essential substance it is fact, actuality, truth. Again, some portions of the story may be regarded as allegorical rather than as literal—but, as the transcendentalists ever tell us, there are certain high truths, and certain deep human experiences, which are capable of expression only through symbols and the forms of metaphor and allegory; many an allegory is the expression of actual human experience in the form of symbols. Once more, I suggest that you let the story speak for itself. Those who recognize Truth in whatever form it may present itself will know just how true is this story; those who do not know Truth even when it is in plain sight—who fail to see the forest because of the presence of the trees—they will see naught but mere fiction in this narrative. This is as it should be—it does not matter in the least."

So, you see, there is not much more for us to say in the case. We can add only that we feel convinced that the author of this story is well informed concerning the subject of which he writes, and that he is earnest and sincere in his presentation of it. We have the general impression (and we think that most of the readers of the story will also have it) that, apart from the technical form and arrangement of the narrative, there is involved in it the actual experience of some actual human being, or of several such; and that, at least, the story is founded on fact and based on the real human experience of someone, somewhere, at some time. But inasmuch as we possess no certain, definite information on this point, and as our "general impression" is rather more a feeling than actual knowledge, we believe that we would do well to accept the suggestion of the author, and, accordingly, proceed to "let the story speak for itself".

The Publishers

1922

I. THE QUEST

Looking backward over the space of nearly sixty years, and reconstructing in my memory the thoughts and incidents of my boyhood from the age of ten until I was well advanced into my "teens", I can now see that I was always a seeker after a something but dimly defined in my mind but which represented a distinct "want" of my nature. That something so early sought after may be said to have been of the nature of an "Inner Secret" of successful achievement and personal power.

Just why I should have come to the conclusion that there really existed an Inner Secret of Success and Personal Power—a something which when once known enabled one to achieve successful results in whatever was undertaken by him—I do not know. Perhaps it was the manifestation of an intuition; perhaps it was the result of a suggestion which I had absorbed from reading. At any rate I now see that the idea had become fixed in my consciousness, and that it colored all my youthful thought.

I soon noticed that certain men seemed to possess some secret power which enabled them to "do things" and to step out from the crowd. I noticed that men lacking this power never were able to accomplish anything worthwhile, and were apparently doomed to remain in the crowd of those of mediocre attainment and commonplace achievement. I inquired diligently of my elders concerning the subject of this secret power, but my inquiries were answered either by sage reproof or else by suggestive shrugs of the shoulders. My mother assured me that success was the reward of honesty and morality. My father assured me that success was the reward of perseverance and hard work. One of my uncles told me that it was "something about" some men that made them successful, but that that "something" was beyond human knowledge—said he: "You either have it, or you haven't it, and that's all there is to it". My uncle was not in the ranks of those who "had it", I may add.

Applying my mother's standard, and measuring the successful men I knew, as well as the unsuccessful ones, I soon came to see that honesty and morality, while quite excellent things, were not the infallible causes of success. I saw that there were some very honest and quite moral men who were far from successful—there must be something else needed, thought I. In the same way, I discovered that while perseverance and hard work

were important personal characteristics, nevertheless, they did not always bring success; I knew many persevering and hard working men who were cursed with poverty and failure—here, again, thought I, the Inner Secret must be looked for elsewhere.

So, finally, I came to accept, at least partially, my uncle's notion that the Inner Secret was to be found in that "something about" individuals which destined them for success. But, try as I would, I couldn't get over the idea that that "something about" such individuals might be acquired even when not originally possessed by the seeker after success. This idea, also, must have been more or less the result of intuition, for it was contrary to all that I was told by those around me who asserted the existence of that inner "something" in persons which made for success. So I began to read the popular accounts of the lives of successful men, in hopes of stumbling upon that Inner Secret.

I remember very well that about this time I was greatly attracted by a book which one of my cousins had bought at a circus—it was entitled "The Life of P. T. Barnum²", and was in the nature of an autobiography of that once very well-known showman, who was really something more than a mere showman. As I now remember the book, it was much better than many of the later books written for the purpose of pointing out the Road to Success. It told of the successive rises and the several falls of that capable man; of how he won success and lost it afterward—lost it several times, in fact—only to win new success by the power of faith in himself and by intelligent hard work.

Barnum included in this book his celebrated lecture upon "The Art of Money-Getting", which, in its way, was an excellent treatise upon worldly wisdom. But of far greater value, in my eyes at least, was the expression of an inner faith and belief in himself on the part of old "P. T." (as we boys called him). It seemed to me as if this man had in some way tapped a vein of something savoring of an Inner Secret, which carried him on to

² Phineas Taylor Barnum (1810–1891), American showman and businessman, founder of the Barnum & Bailey Circus. His autobiography, 'The Life of P. T. Barnum' (1854), included the lecture 'The Art of Money-Getting' and was a popular success manual. The narrator's visit to Barnum and their exchange illustrates the perennial quest for a hidden secret beyond conventional advice.

Success—though he seemed unconscious of that fact and attributed all the credit to himself and his traits of character.

I remember that I was so impressed by this idea that, about a year later, when the big show was in our town, I called upon Mr. Barnum at his hotel and asked him about it. He disclaimed any such "something", however, although somewhat confusedly admitting that there "might be something to it, if we knew more about it"; he urged me to "work hard, save your money and use your wits". As I left him, glancing backward over my shoulder, I saw a strange expression on his face, and a wistful look in his eyes. "That man knows more than he is willing to tell", thought I.

I read Samuel Smiles "Self Help"³, and other books of that kind; all of these preached excellent sermons on Thrift, Work, Economy, etc., accompanied by convincing illustrations drawn from the lives of successful men. All this advice was good—some of it I afterward greatly profited by—but my missing Inner Secret was not to be found there. Afterward, I read accounts of the lives of great statesmen, warriors, and merchant princes, and obtained useful information from them—but there was no mention of the Inner Secret there, either.

All that I could get out of the subject from my reading seemed to be that certain habits and characteristics made for success—self-confidence being one of the most important of these. But, nevertheless, I seemed to have even more clearly fixed in my mind the fact that there was, indeed, a "something about" these individuals which, if one could but also acquire it, would make him successful.

By this time I was in my early twenties, doing reasonably well in the way of working my way up the ladder of business success as an employee. My quest for the Inner Secret was unabated. In spite of all the sage advice concerning the rules of success which was freely bestowed upon me by older men—principally by my employers—I still clung to my belief in the existence of such an Inner Secret, although at times my reason reproved me for so doing. The ordinary rules did not seem to account for the results, although they were useful adjuncts, I thought. Neither would I for a

³ Samuel Smiles (1812–1904) was a Scottish author and reformer. His 1859 book 'Self-Help' became a Victorian classic, advocating thrift, hard work, and perseverance as the keys to success. The narrator finds Smiles' advice sound but insufficient—the Inner Secret remains absent.

moment accept the conclusion that "it is all luck" which was the final report of many of my associates in social and business life. I still believed in "that something about" certain persons, and I felt a keen desire to learn the Inner Secret of that something.

As I grew older I came in contact with a number of comparatively successful men, and I lost no opportunity of tactfully sounding them concerning this subject. Most of them, at least at first, pooh-poohed the idea; but afterward, in moments of unusual confidence, a number of them somewhat reluctantly and almost shamefacedly acknowledged to me that at times they were convinced that there was "something about" them, or rather "something outside or above" them, which aided and assisted them in their success—something which inspired and guided them often in spite of their own previous ideas and convictions concerning their course of action. This was rather a new idea to me, or, at least, a variation of my old idea. I determined to investigate the matter further.

As I grew still older, and was thrown more and closer in contact with men of affairs and of prominence in the world, I found that in the secret heart of most of them there existed a silent, indefinite, but still strong feeling that there was a "something outside" which was "on their side", and which was always working silently in their behalf— a brooding Something which was a fount of strength and an unfailing resource. This seemed to be the fundamental idea—the essence of the thought or experience; but nearly all of these persons had each his own interpretation of the essential fact.

Those of strong religious convictions held that "the Lord is on my side; He has been good to me, and always has responded to my call". Others seemed to believe in a Favoring Destiny, or even a "lucky star". Others spoke vaguely of "higher powers", or "beings on the other shore", who were working in their behalf.

Others had rather gross superstitions concerning the case—incredible superstitions they seemed, considering the standing of the men holding them. One and all, however, held that "that something about" them was really a "something above" them in which they had come to believe and to trust, by reason of their own experience in the matter. A few points, however, were impressed upon my mind, in connection with these cases, namely, that (1) the greater the degree of faith in the "something above" held by the individual, the greater seemed to be his degree of success attributed to such influence; (2) that it seemed to make but little difference

just what the person believed to be his beneficent and powerful "something above", provided that he believed in it—whether it was Divine Providence, Destiny, or a Magic Charm, it seemed to "work" provided that he believed in it "hard enough"; and (3) that the more faith and belief the person had in that "something", the greater grew his faith and belief in himself.

When the person got to believe that the "Something" and himself were in partnership, the former as silent partner, and himself as active partner, then the firm became a mighty one, and he, himself, as the outward front of the combination became filled with self-confidence and self-reliance. It was all merely the variation of the old theme of "Gott und Ich"⁴, "Gott mit uns"⁵, or "The Lord is on my side", notwithstanding the fact that the idea of the helpful Supreme Being was absent in the conception of many of these firm believers in the "Something".

I sometimes thought that if one of these persons firmly believed that "Something" to be an old brass door-knob, and provided that he believed in it implicitly just as the others believed in Providence, or in Destiny, or in "My Lucky Star", then that door-knob would "do the work" for him in like manner.

In short, I came to the conclusion that the "Something" was Unknown—perhaps Unknowable—and that the verbal, ideal or physical symbols employed by various persons to represent it, and by them believed to be the thing itself, were really what might be called "points of contact" with that Transcendent Reality, by means of which there was established a sort of condition of "rapport" between the individual and that "Something".

But, in spite of all of my speculations and theorizing about the matter, the thought never occurred to me that this "Something" might be found within the being of the individual himself, rather than "about" or "above" him. I seemed to have a mental or spiritual "blind spot" which caused me

⁴ German for 'God and I'. This phrase reflects a personal relationship with the divine, sometimes associated with Lutheran Pietism. The narrator uses it to illustrate how individuals view themselves and the 'Something' as partners in success.

⁵ German for 'God with us'. Historically used as a motto by the Prussian monarchy and later by German military forces. In context, it serves as another example of a belief formula that channels a sense of divine backing.

to ignore that immediate source of Reality and Power—that Something Within.

I don't know how I happened to miss this important point, but miss it I did.

I was like the man who fruitlessly sought all over the world for many years for a certain buried treasure, only in the end to find it in the garden around his own home to which he had returned in his old age. Or, like the shipwrecked crew, parched with thirst and dying for want of water, who had unknowingly entered into the extended current of a great sea-flowing river, and who perished though they had but to dip their pails over the side of their boat.

So, accordingly, I sought on all sides and from all sources to obtain a knowledge of this mysterious "Something" in which was vested the Inner Secret of Success and Personal Power. I investigated the various "new" metaphysical cults which were coming into prominence even at that early day, but I found in them merely a more or less fantastic and fanciful application of the principle of which I have spoken. They obtained results, of course—all of them, in spite of their conflicting dogmas and theories. Each claimed to possess the Inner Secret, and to have the one and only truth—yet all obtained results in about the same measure.

It seemed to me here, as in the other cases mentioned, that these people were but employing symbols by means of which, to some degree, they managed to "contact" the Something—they were employing different kinds of brass door-knobs, that's all, it appeared to me.

I could have obtained a measure of good results by adopting the methods and beliefs of some of these folks, just as I could have obtained the same by adopting some of the various methods and beliefs of some of the successful business men, and men of affairs, whom I have mentioned. But these (to me) mere "brass door-knobs" were not sufficient. I refused to temporize or to compromise with Truth—I wanted the Truth, the Whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth, and would be satisfied with nothing short of that. I was stiff-necked and stubborn—but I was unable to act otherwise.

And so, I continued my Quest for the "Something"—for the Inner Secret.

From the "new" metaphysical schools, and the quasi-religions or pseudo-religions based upon the same general principles, I passed on to the numerous so-called "occult" and "mystic" cults which were even then

found in considerable number, though not in the great variety manifested in after years. I found that these were for the most part mere re-hashes of the philosophies of Ancient India or of Ancient Greece, often garbled and distorted by reason of the ignorance of their founders or teachers. Brushing aside the superficial coverings, I found in them also but the effort to "contact" a "Something" by means of verbal or formal symbols. "Merely some new varieties of brass door-knobs", thought I. I could have obtained benefit by employing the methods of some of these schools, or cults—for undoubtedly they had "gotten hold of something", as a practical business friend of mine once brusquely stated it. But I felt that while this was probably so, still even the "head ones" seemingly did not know just what it was which they had "gotten hold of"; and in their endeavors to build up a philosophy or an organization upon the results obtained by their methods, they often lost entirely the original spirit of the Something, and buried the whole thing under a heavy rock of form and dogma, upon which they took the exalted place of the "marble figure" of claimed absolute authority. I was not satisfied with this—I wanted to get back to the Original Source! I took up the study of the leading philosophies, ancient and modern, oriental and occidental; here I found much to exercise my intellect, and to enable me to know that I did not know, and why I did not know, and how to discover philosophical error and fallacy.

But, otherwise, there was no awakening of Intuition, and no arousing of Inner Experience—all was on the surface of Intellect. I had failed to find my "Something," of which an ancient sage said: "When THAT is known, all is known."

But, all the more, I became convinced that such "Something" existed, and might be found by him who knew how and where to look for it. I felt that its doors were capable of flying open in response to "The Right Knock." I had looked everywhere but Within—and I did not know the talismanic Right Knock. All the time, however, as I now see it, I was preparing myself for the Truth when it should be revealed to me. All the time, I was treading the Path which led to Truth. I do not regret a single incident or stage of my journey, or a fact of my experience.

As the years passed by, and while I was pursuing the investigations of which I have spoken, I was far from neglecting my material or "worldly" affairs. I was regarded as an intelligent worker along the lines of my

vocation—and a hard worker as well. I applied all of the accepted and tested rules of Worldly Wisdom—all the Rules for Success announced by the "practical" men of the world—or at least the essence and substance of them separated from the non-essential and incidental. I had met with a fair degree of success, as such is usually measured. I had my "ups and downs", always coming "up" after a "down", I am glad to say. In short, I was the fair average of the reasonably successful ambitious man nearly forty years of age.

But, in my heart I knew that I had failed, inasmuch as at the best, I was only a fair, average, commonplace successful man of affairs—there were thousands of others like me, some a little better and some a little worse. I had done nothing which seemed to me to be worthy of the powers which I felt should be innate within me.

I was still in the crowd—I had never been able to step very far out of it, never more than a foot or two at the most. The dreams of my youth were unrealized. My secret ambitions were still nothing more than hopes. While I was spoken of as a worthy example of reasonable success, and though I was favorably regarded by those "higher up", yet I knew in my heart of hearts that I had done nothing really "worthwhile"—that according to my own standards I was a failure. Worst of all, I had failed to find that "Something" which was "about" or "above" persons which served as their inspiration and touchstone of success—I had failed in my Quest of the Inner Secret.

About this time, shortly before I had reached the age of forty years, the Deluge overtook me. I seemed to be the victim of a malicious fate, and at the mercy of sardonic, cruel supernatural forces. Everything that I valued in the material world was swept away from me by a series of avalanche-like happenings. By reason of circumstances apparently beyond my control, and through causes seemingly beyond inclusion in any possible previous calculation on my part, there were set into motion a series of events which when they reached the field of my interests had attained the force and destructive motion of a tornado. It seemed like the happening of the impossible. All circumstances seemed to conspire for my destruction.

My business prospects were ruined. My investments were wiped out. My social and business standing was destroyed. My business passed into other hands. By reason of quite unfounded and unjust accusations, seemingly supported by an almost diabolical chain of circumstantial

evidence, my good name was almost lost, and the respect of my business and social associates was seriously jeopardized.

My family was alienated from me; my children felt that I had disgraced them; my life-companion believing the slanderous tongues of those who were arrayed against me, and refusing to allow me to explain away the ugly appearances and circumstances connected with my downfall, insisted upon a legal separation which afterward was made permanent.

Yet I was as innocent as a babe concerning the offenses charged against me. Time has since fully vindicated me in the eyes of the public, and in the courts of the law—the mills of the gods have ground to dust my enemies and unjust accusers. But, at that time, I seemed destined to utter ruin.

My health broke under the strain, and I became a mental and physical wreck for the time being. I was eventually forced to seek employment at a meagre recompense in a distant city, under most discouraging circumstances and with most unattractive prospects for the future. In the eyes of my former friends and associates I was "down and out", a "has been", a man "all in" and "through".

Looking back over the period of thirty years which intervenes between that time and the present, I can see that I was then a living example of the condition expressed in the lines of Henley's "Invictus"⁶. For surely the scroll was charged with punishments, and I was covered with the night that was "black as the pit from pole to pole"⁷; truly I was in the "fell clutch of circumstance", and my head was bloody "under the bludgeonings of chance".

Yet in the darkest hour I felt within me that there was a way out, and that I should find it.

Strange as it may seem in view of the circumstances, I felt within me a still stronger conviction that there was really an Inner Secret of Success and

⁶ William Ernest Henley (1849–1903) wrote 'Invictus' in 1875. The poem's lines 'I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul' are echoed in the narrator's description of his dark period. The narrator quotes 'the scroll was charged with punishments' and 'bludgeonings of chance' which are from the poem.

⁷ Another phrase from Henley's 'Invictus' ('Out of the night that covers me, Black as the pit from pole to pole'). The narrator uses it to describe his state of despair after his ruin.

Personal Power —and that I should find it. Indeed, it was this conviction alone which enabled me to bear the burden, and to keep my soul alive. Without this I doubtless should have sunk deeper and deeper into the mire, never to rise therefrom.

I was not as yet the possessor of "the unconquerable soul"—not yet "the master of my fate, the captain of my soul": certainly not consciously so, at least. Yet, under the debris which had accumulated on the surface of my nature, the spark of "That Something Within" was still glowing, and was ready to burst into a blaze of manifestation when the air of understanding was allowed to penetrate to it. I know this now; but at that time I merely "sensed" it in a faint glow of intuition.

Before leaving this disagreeable stage of my story, however, I wish to state positively that notwithstanding the pain and torture of that experience, my humiliation and the tremendous price demanded of and paid by me, I do not now regret even a single incident of it. I consider the price well paid for that which has come to me through the experience and all connected with it. Though it caused me to walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, yet it brought me safely through the pass which leads out of that valley into the wonderful region lying on the other side of the mountains which encompass that "vale of doubt and fears". I paid, and paid in full; but I have been repaid a thousand-fold, and the price now seems but a mere bagatelle when compared with what I have gained.

Rather than to lose my present consciousness of Truth, and to return to my old condition of half-truths, bondage, and ignorance, I would gladly pay this price not merely once but many times. I seemed at that time to have lost everything that made life worth living; yet through losing this I found all that constitutes Real Life, the light of which makes all that went before now seem pitifully weak and mean.

Not every one who discovers "That Something Within"—the Inner Secret—is called upon to pay this price; many, indeed, seemingly escape this ordeal entirely, while others experience it in merely a slight degree. But, with some, like myself, who seemingly are blind to the Truth so near to them, and who apparently are determined to "escape their own good", there seems to be needed the interposition of forces which first destroy in order that other forces may build on the vacated site—of the interposition of the Unseen Hand which, often roughly, picks up the individual and removes him from his old environment and condition, despite his cries and protests,

only later to deposit him gently but firmly in a new environment and condition more nearly in accord with his heart's desire.

It would seem that that "Something Within", determined to be free and active, sometimes is compelled to tear asunder the enshrouding and confining chrysalis of circumstance, in order that the living entity may bathe in the sunshine and breathe the air of freedom. Or, perhaps, it is the "labor pains" of the spiritual birth, which, though so painful to undergo, are so easily forgotten in the joys of the after experience. At any rate, whatever may be the final cause or explanation, it sometimes seems necessary for the "I Am" to descend into hell in order that it may ascend to the heaven of its being and expression.

II. THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

What has been related in the preceding pages is merely the prelude to my story. The story itself really begins with the account of my meeting with that remarkable individual whom I at first, half lightly but still half-earnestly, thought of as "the mysterious stranger". This wonderful individual came into my life apparently by chance, but I now know that I had attracted him to myself, and that I had been attracted to him, by the operation of that strange and potent law of Nature known as "The Law of Attraction".

How little does the average person realize that this wonderful law is constantly manifesting in and concerning him. He notes from time to time that "things happen" in strange ways, bringing remarkable results; but he usually thinks that this is but the operation of Chance, never realizing that it is the logical result of a fixed law proceeding with an unerring and inevitable rule of action, bringing results in strict accordance with its nature— results mathematically exact and logically perfect. Chance, in the sense of the manifestation of uncaused effects, does not exist. Chance, in the light of strict logical reasoning, is seen to be but the operation of causes unknown, and perhaps beyond knowledge, but nevertheless actually and certainly existent and operative.

I had journeyed to a far-distant city, where, unknown and a stranger, I was endeavoring to start life anew, hoping eventually to obtain a foothold in the business world by means of which I might by hard work and diligent endeavor finally mount the ladder of success. I was frightfully handicapped, however, by my state of ill-health which had resulted from my financial, social, and mental troubles. The physicians consulted by me gave me but little encouragement; they warned me against overwork, and seemed to regard me as one who had but scant chance of ever again becoming efficient and vigorous.

I was filling a subordinate position, receiving but a nominal recompense for my work, and the opportunities for my advancement were but slight. The memory of my former position in the business world acted as a weight around my neck, rather than as an encouraging factor. Often I was tempted to rash action which would have ended it all—for at times the fight seemed almost hopeless, the odds all against me.

Looking back in memory to that time, I now sometimes wonder how and why I made the effort at all. It now seems to me that the tiny spark of that Something Within must have even then been glowing brightly, though hidden by the rubbish of the outer self, and that its radiations penetrated through the encumbering accumulation and inspired me with at least a glimmer of faith and of hope—I must have had an unconscious or subconscious intuition of the Truth even then. It is hard to smother with rubbish, or to quench with the water of discouragement, this tiny spark of the Real Self when once it has been kindled into superconscious awareness of itself, its powers, and its destiny.

I was living in a small "court room" in an unpretentious boarding house which sought dignity by assuming the title of a "family hotel". The establishment consisted of several large, once-fashionable, dwelling houses which had been thrown into one by means of the cutting of doors between the several houses. The neighborhood, though still respectable, was now "run down", its former fashionable occupants having long since removed much further up-town. The whole atmosphere of the hotel was that of "has been" —even the guests occupying the larger and more pretentious of its rooms or suites being those who "had been used to better things".

I had been living in this place a few months when I first heard a mention of this "mysterious stranger" of whom I have spoken. It came about in the following way. One evening I was sitting in the basement smoking-room and men's lounging place which was one of the most popular features of the place and which was really quite comfortable, all things considered. I heard one of the "old timers" among the guests say to another: "Well, I hear that Colonel Forbes is coming back from Washington." The other replied: "Is that so? Queer old dick, the Colonel is, to my notion. That man has had an interesting past, if I'm any guesser".

The first guest rejoined: "Yes, I guess you're right. He's an odd one, all right; but he's far from being a fool. In fact, he is one of the keenest observers, and most practical thinkers I have ever run across; yet, at times, he seems to be but an idle dreamer. I wouldn't wonder but what he has been a somebody in his time, but that the hot sun and the climate of India touched him and made him a little off on some subjects".

"Yes", said the other, "but one time when a fellow in the house was sneering at some Writer whom he called 'a mystic', the Colonel said with considerable force and earnestness, "A practical mystic is a man to be

reckoned with in any walk of life—he is a dreamer who has found out how to make his dreams come true, and who is able to make his ideals become real”. I have since thought at times that that is just what the Colonel himself is — A 'practical mystic', though I am not quite sure just what that may be. At any rate, that man certainly is no fool, and I wouldn't be surprised to learn that he had been a somebody in his time, and that he could tell some interesting tales if he had a mind to—but we have never been able to get him to talk about himself or his past, nor, for that matter, of his present affairs".

"Yes", said the first speaker, "he is like a clam when it comes to talking about himself, though he talks freely about everything else. Still, he's an Englishman, and Englishmen of his type don't talk much of themselves; besides which, he lived in India many years, I understand, and that often makes men reticent, at least so I have heard. I heard a woman once say that the Colonel reminded her of Marion Crawford's 'Mr. Isaacs'⁸ in his story of that name. A man who heard her said that his thoughts had been running along the same lines, only, to his mind, the Colonel was like 'Lurgan Sahib', in Kipling's story, 'Kim'. I haven't read either story, however, so can't say just how that is. But, for all that, I believe that a good writer, who could draw out of the Colonel some of the facts of his past life, could build up an exciting tale by using the material which the old man could furnish if he only would open up a little. Gee Whiz! wouldn't that be a cracking good title for a novel?—"Colonel Forbes, of Simla"! And both of them laughed at the suggestion.

What I had heard of the discussion interested me. I inquired of the two men, and later of others in the house, concerning this person who had proved such an interesting topic of conversation. From them I learned that Colonel Forbes was a retired English army-officer who had served many years in India, living at Simla⁹ during the latter years of his service and after his retirement; he was now visiting America on matters of personal business

⁸ A novel by Francis Marion Crawford (1854–1909), first published in 1882. The title character is a Persian gem merchant and mystic living in India. The comparison highlights Colonel Forbes's enigmatic, orientalist mystique.

⁹ The summer capital of British India, located in the Himalayan foothills. Retired British officials often settled there. The narrator's associates speculate that Colonel Forbes lived in Simla, associating him with the Raj's elite.

of some unknown nature, and he intended returning to England, and later to Simla, before very long.

He was said to be a cultured, refined individual of very quiet tastes, and was believed to have chosen that hotel as his place of sojourn because of his distaste for the more pretentious houses, rather than from the usual reasons of economy or of limited means. All those consulted seemed to like and to respect him, but to all of them he seemed "somewhat different", odd, and "a little queer", though, as the old guest had mentioned, "far from being a fool". All agreed, also, that "he knows a whole lot, but you can't get him to tell it to you". Evidently a very interesting personality, thought I.

About ten days later, I had my first sight of Colonel Forbes. I was sitting with the others in the smoking-room when the door opened and the Colonel entered. I was conscious from the first that I was in the presence of a remarkable personage. Again, I was distinctly aware that he had that unmistakable, though indefinable, characteristic known as "personal atmosphere". That is to say, when he entered a room you "felt" that he was present; moreover, when and where he was present that "atmosphere" manifested itself in some subtle manner in the direction of causing a change in the general mental atmosphere of the place. I noticed that after his entrance to the smoking-room the tone of the conversation changed for the better, and the mental atmosphere became clearer and cleaner. This without any apparent effort on his part, and without any conscious desire to please him manifested by the occupants of the room. He "raised the vibrations", as it were; that's all.

Do not gather from this that the Colonel was a prig, or a puritan—no one could have thought of applying those terms to him. He was rather a refined, cultured, thorough "man of the world". Apparently, nothing in life was alien to him, and, like the sun, he had evidently gazed upon the good and the bad, alike. But there was an essential and fundamental cleanness about his mind—you could feel that. He would freely discuss matters which ordinarily are the subject of ribald jest, but which to him seemed to be but facts of scientific interest—his mind was as clean as that of a surgeon or a mathematician engaged in his chosen work. While he showed an intimate knowledge of all phases of life, many strange phases for that matter, yet there was always the implication of a curious detachment therefrom—a strange impersonal view concerning them.

Well, to get back to my story: I gazed with interested attention upon Colonel Forbes as he entered the smoking-room of the hotel. I think, however, that he would have awakened interested attention in almost any human being of average intelligence. Interest and attention attached to him as readily as bits of steel attach themselves to the magnet. He did not demand attention, however, for he was very unassuming, modest, and absolutely lacking in "pose" or "strut". His presence did not shout, "Here I am, a somebody of consequence, look at me!" Nothing of the sort, I assure you. But, just as truly, it said in quiet, firm tones, "I am here, a real being, an individual!"

His personality was unobtrusive; his individuality was attention-compelling and interest-arousing: I trust that you will make the distinction and differentiation between these two respective terms, "personality" and "individuality", for such is important. Personality, at the best, is concerned with the outer aspect of the human being. Individuality, at the last, is concerned with his inner aspect. Personality is the garments worn by one; Individuality is that one "in himself", or "in herself". Personality is the expression of the "Me". Individuality is the expression of the "I".

Colonel Forbes, as he entered the room, seemed to be about sixty years of age. His hair was thick though fine, abundant in quantity, and of an iron-grey color. He was tall, rather slender, muscular and wiry, with wide shoulders and full chest. His arms and legs were long, though so well-proportioned to the trunk that their length was not especially noticeable. His skin evidently had been originally fair, but was now tanned to a deep brown by reason of his years of exposure to the sun of a warm country. His forehead was high and wide; his chin was firm and broad, yet not aggressively so. His mouth was evidently firm, though partially concealed by an iron-grey mustache. He was well-dressed—so well, in fact, that one did not think of this at first, nor was one's attention caught by any particular part of his apparel by reason of its color, cut, or texture.

I remember now that my interest and attention were especially attracted by two particular features of his general appearance, namely, his powerfully piercing eyes, and his somewhat wistful, certainly inscrutable, smile as he entered the room. In thinking of him now, my memory brings to me the picture of those eyes and that smile—for I afterward grew to know both of them very well, and to discover an ever new interest in them. Even his well-modulated, vibrant voice, well-remembered as it is, is less strongly

impressed upon the tablets of my memory than are those wonderful eyes and that strange smile. These features of the outer appearance of this good and great man were the first to attract my interest and attention; the ones which most strongly held that interest and attention during my association with him; and the ones which now are strongest in my memory.

His eyes were of a clear blue-grey color, and possessed that quality of depth or distance which reminded one of peering into a deep well filled with the clearest water, or of gazing at the clear, deep-blue summer sky from the mountain-top. They indicated mastery—but rather a mastery of his own physical and mental nature than over the will of others, though that last power seemed to be there, also, lurking in the background. They indicated power—but rather the power over the forces of Nature, within and without, than over subordinate human beings. They indicated knowledge—not alone the knowledge contained in books, but also the knowledge of the hearts and souls of men, and the knowledge of the secrets of Nature. One felt that those eyes were capable of reading and knowing the inmost secrets of one's soul—but one did not resent this, for the reading seemed to be the act of a friendly, not an alien, mind; their earnest gaze brought peace, and not fear or unrest.

His mouth, showing itself to be firm though rather well covered by the grey mustache, had a trick of moving at its comers into a little smile which may be expressed only by the word "wistful", though it was that and more. At times the wistfulness was tinged with a certain pathetic quality, as though the memory of pain and suffering clung to it. At other times it showed the presence of a quaint, whimsical spirit within the soul of which it was the expression. It showed a kindliness, mingled with a certain sternness; and it plainly denoted a subtle, keen, and active sense of humor—it seemed to laugh with mankind, rather than at men; it laughed at their foibles, but not at the real man back of these outward expressions. It had something of the inscrutable quality of the smile of the Mona Lisa¹⁰, yet there was present

¹⁰ Leonardo da Vinci's painting (c. 1503–1506) is famous for its subject's elusive expression. The narrator compares Colonel Forbes's smile to it, adding a layer of inscrutability and depth.

also a certain kindness, understanding, and patience which are lacking in the portrayed smile of La Giaconda¹¹.

It may interest you to be told at this point (though I did not learn it until long afterward), that Colonel Forbes (to use the name which he had adopted at that time for the purpose of avoiding that attention and public notice which the mention of his real name would have brought upon him), was an important figure in the public affairs of the country of his nationality, particularly those concerned with India and other oriental lands. He was the son of a distinguished Englishman, his mother being a brilliant American woman who had been one of the first of her kind to marry an Englishman of high rank and position.

Keeping well in the background, he had played an important part in the affairs and destinies of his native land. In fact, at the time of my first meeting with him he was engaged upon a delicate diplomatic mission in our country, and was in constant touch with important affairs and high personages of our government. His retirement to the unimportant hotel where I met him was deliberately designed, for in this way he was able to keep away from those whom he sought to avoid, or at least those whom he did not care to meet, while remaining close to those with whom his negotiations were concerned.

In addition to his diplomatic work, he was the writer of important books along the lines of science, philosophy and metaphysics, and was quite well known by reason of this. Though this was not nearly so well known, he was also a leading member in several of those esoteric centres and societies which are generally known as being of an "occult" or "mystic" character—the real societies, however, not the cheap and base imitations which are conducted upon a commercial basis, and whose prime object seems to be the aggrandizement of ambitious leaders. He was also "very high up in Masonry", and was an authority upon the esoteric aspects of that order.

Some ten years later, he was reported to have perished in Upper India, by reason of an accidental plunge into a fathomless abyss, and history now records him among the dead. A few chosen ones, however, know him to be living in seclusion in a remote region of the Himalayas, at an advanced

¹¹ The Italian name for the Mona Lisa, referring to Lisa Gherardini, the supposed sitter. The narrator uses this synonym.

age but in unimpaired physical and mental health and vigor. It may be that he is destined again to play an important part in the affairs of this troubled world. Be that as it may, his influence upon many men has lived on after his disappearance from the scene—and will live on, and on, and on.

As the Colonel entered the room upon the occasion of my first sight of him, as I have related, there was manifested a feeling of general interest on the part of those seated around the place, most of whom had made his acquaintance during his previous sojourn in the hotel. Room was made for him in the centre of the group who had gathered around the large table at one end of the room, which was the favorite gathering place of the "regular guests" of the place, the other parts of the room being left for the newer comers. I afterwards noted that room was always made for him in the centre of things wherever he was present, although there was nothing in his manner which indicated a desire or determination that he should be so recognized as an important member of the gathering.

The conversation was resumed, but it took on, as I have said, a somewhat higher and broader scope, and a cleaner and clearer expression. I noticed that the Colonel soon became the centre of all the discussions and arguments. Although there was no trace of self-assertion or dogmatism in his manner or speech, it soon became evident that he was uttering the final and conclusive word regardless of the subject discussed. This because he seemed to possess the unusual gift of being able to brush aside the non-essential factors and elements, and to place into bold relief the two opposing fundamental propositions or premises of the matter under consideration.

These "pairs of opposites", or antithetical ideas, he soon managed to harmonize and to reconcile, the result being that there always appeared the Golden Mean, or Balanced Truth, resting between the two extremes. The respective two extremes usually were then seen to be but half-truths—different sides of the same general truth—the Truth itself being the result of the reconciliation and harmonization of the "pair of opposites". This does not mean that he was a weak-kneed compromiser, or a trader of one advantage in argument for another; on the contrary, on matters of positive principle he was quite determined and unwilling to surrender even an inch of what seemed to him to be the truth. But he was the most consistent possible example of the conviction that "Truth lies in the Middle-of-the-Road".

During the course of the evening, one of the most interesting and instructive evenings I had ever spent up to that time, someone introduced me to the Colonel. He courteously acknowledged the introduction with a grave nod accompanied by a kindly smile, at the same time bestowing on me a keen, searching glance. I felt that that glance was penetrating into the very depths of my soul, and yet I was not disturbed. As his attention and thought seemed to focus upon me in the glance, I was certain that I perceived in his eyes a somewhat surprised flash of recognition of something within myself, though I had no idea of what that something might be.

This impression seemed to abide with him for when he left the room shortly afterward, he laid his hand on my shoulder in passing, and said with what to me seemed to have a special emphasis and meaning, "I would like to see more of you while I am here, Mr. X"

Then, after making a half-turn away from me, he added, "Better look me up, soon".

After the door had closed behind him, one of the old guests of the house said to me, "You have evidently made an impression on the old boy; I never knew him to say anything like that to anyone before". Another of the old guests added, flippantly, "Yes, that's right. Better make love to the old chap, Mr. X. He looks like money to me, and he might make you his heir". Everybody laughed at this, but I felt that there might be something more in it than appeared in the words. I had a strange conviction that the "mysterious stranger" had something for me, but something worth more than money—though money was an important item of my thought in those days, for I had but little, and needed much of it.

That night I had a strange dream—something different from anything in the way of dreams that I had ever experienced—though, to tell the truth, I was not much of a dreamer, and took but little interest in them, and certainly attached no importance to them. I mention this last fact because I do not wish you to jump to the conclusion that I was (or am) one of those unpleasant individuals who are always "seeing things" in their dreams, trying to interpret their dreams, and, worst of all, boring their friends with the recital of them.

In my youthful days I had never bought a "Dream Book", and I never had much respect for those who did. I never have been able to listen with patience to a person who wishes to tell "what a strange dream" he had last

night; or how one of his dreams came true; or anything else of that sort. I even now feel an impatience at the over-emphasis placed on dreams by the followers of Freud. Notwithstanding this, I am now about to ask you to listen to my account of the dream I had that night after I had met "the mysterious stranger"—Colonel Forbes, of Simla.

In my very vivid dream that night, I seemed to be walking hand in hand with the Colonel, traversing a bleak and barren plain covered with what seemed to be the ancient lava-deposits of an extinct volcano. It was a region of desolation, a veritable wilderness, with no signs of life apparent to my gaze. Neither the Colonel nor I spoke a word, but I seemed to know that he was leading me somewhere for my own good; and I trusted him and felt glad to have him to guide and lead me on the journey. The touch of his hand seemed helpful to me, and filled me with confidence and courage.

Finally, we reached a place at the foot of a high mountain. Then the Colonel unclasped his hand from mine, and said to me, "Go to your trial. Be fearless, for there is nothing to fear!" Then I seemed to be taken up to the mountain-top by an invisible host. The air seemed to be vibrating with a strange force, and there seemed to be a rosy glow all around me, as if the world was on fire.

Then the invisible host, having led me to the top of the mountain, and then to the brink of an abyss of seemingly infinite depth, said, "Plunge into the Abysmal Abyss!" Then, strange to say, all fear dropped from me, and I leaped into the space of the abyss with joy in my heart, and a laugh on my lips. I seemed to know that it was all a part of a play—a sort of game of initiation of some unknown secret order. Fear seemed to be a laughable illusion which I had left behind me for ages of time. After I had been apparently falling in the Abysmal Abyss for an Eternity, without even a vestige of fear, the whole scene disappeared in a flash. A new scene presented itself. This time I was commanded to plunge into the Fiery Furnace—an enormous mass of flame apparently of unbearable heat. Again I felt the illusion of the whole thing—the make-believe nature of it; and I plunged into the mass of seething fire with joy in my heart, and a laugh on my lips. After what seemed to be another Eternity of time passed in the Fiery Furnace, the scene again changed for me.

I was successively subjected to the test of the Infinite Ocean, into which I was ordered to plunge; to the test of the Invincible Sword which seemed destined to cut me to pieces; but from all these tests I emerged a victor,

unafraid and unharmed. In fact, the whole thing, from beginning to end seemed like a huge joke to me, so convinced was I of the unreality of the dangers which seemed to threaten me. It was not that I felt that I was superior to these apparently dangerous things; rather it was that they seemed unreal to me, mere illusions, phantasmagoria of a dream-state. At least, that is as near as I can describe my feelings and mental states in this dream.

Finally, I heard a supernal voice utter these words:

"You have discovered the Illusion. Henceforth you are free from the burden of fear of it. Know you that YOU, your Real Self, is beyond harm, hurt, or destruction. Fire cannot burn it; water cannot drown it; space has no power over it: neither can spear pierce it, nor sword cut it. This is the prophecy: that when you know the "I" for what it is, then will the fears of the world seem as illusory as the fears of the magic-show which you have just witnessed. Your greatest good now consists of the discovery of your Real Self; bend everything to that end. That is the one thing which, when known, all is known; which, when found, all else is within your reach!"

Then, I found myself back on the plain with Colonel Forbes, but this time he did not clasp my hand so as to guide and direct me—I seemed to be able to stand alone and to find my own way home. But he turned to me, and said in gentle but firm tones, "So far, well! May it continue to be so with you!" Then the dream came to an end, and I awoke to find myself safe in my bed in my hotel "court room".

Then I became conscious of a strange fact. Just before dropping to sleep and into the dream, I had heard the clock sound the first stroke of "two"—I knew it was two o'clock, because I had been awake an hour before when it struck "one". Now, as I awoke from my dream, I distinctly heard the second stroke of "two". The whole dream had been compressed into the time elapsing between the first and the second stroke of the "two", I remember saying to myself, "Well it seems that Time as well as Space was annihilated for me in that dream".

That was all that there was to it. The dream was finished. I am not claiming that it was more than a dream—but it certainly was an unusual dream, I thought, and still think. Whatever may have been its cause, nature or meaning, it certainly worked for good in me. The next morning, I found that a certain change had come upon me. I cannot say that I felt stronger or more real than before—rather, I may say that I felt that the difficulties, dangers, trials and troubles of life were less real than I had before thought

them. I began to feel more and more that the hideous dragons in my path were but lath-and-plaster creations, with phonographic attachments in them shouting "Boo!" at me.

I first found myself able to look back at my late series of misfortunes as something like the lath-and-plaster dragons—then I ceased looking back at them at all. I was through with the past illusions; and the present and future fantasies I would be able to recognize as being just what they were. Never again would I mistake them for realities—I could never again be fooled by those bugaboos. Finally, I remember the parting advice of the unseen host—the advice to find my Real Self. I determined to act upon it at once. I determined to accept the invitation of Colonel Forbes to “look me up”. So that very night after the dream found me knocking at the door of his suite in the hotel. As I knocked, I remembered the words: "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you; ask, and you shall receive". I determined to give the Right Knock.

III. THE REVELATION

"Come in!" came the message sounded by the firm, well-modulated voice of Colonel Forbes.

I entered the room and took the comfortable chair pushed forward for me by my host. The room seemed in some strange way to be, as it were, an extension of his own personality, so saturated was it with his unusual mental atmosphere. One would need no further evidence of the fact that the spirit of strong individuals is reflected in some subtle way by the places in which they spend much of their time. Places have their characteristic atmospheres which result from the mental vibrations of those who abide in them; modern science is re-discovering this ancient truth.

In a few moments after entering I felt perfectly at ease, and I may say, also at home, in the Colonel's room. Although I had met him for the first time only the previous evening, and even then had been with him only for a short time, yet I felt that I was in the presence of one who knew me even better than I knew myself, and one in whom I might repose the utmost confidence without any fear that it would be abused. Although there was nothing of the priest about Colonel Forbes, one could not help feeling that he would make an ideal father-confessor.

Although nothing could have been further from my thought and intention when I entered the room, nevertheless, in a few moments I found myself telling him without embarrassment the story of my strange dream of the night before, and asking him whether in his opinion there was really anything in the experience more than exuberant fantasy of dreamland. Ordinarily, a question of this kind concerning such a subject would have been the last possible one which I would have addressed to any man, even one whom I had known intimately for years. But, nevertheless, there I was doing this particular thing.

The Colonel listened patiently, and then, speaking just as he would about the most commonplace subject, replied: "No; I do not think that there was anything more to your dream than a symbolic representation of certain truths and facts known to that part of your being which functions on planes of mentation other than those of the ordinary consciousness—those planes which are now commonly known as 'the subconscious', or, more properly, 'the superconsciousness'. It happens at times that truths and facts held in the knowledge of 'the superconsciousness' are represented in

symbolic form in dreams, or even in day-dreams. As a rule, however, the occurrence of such experiences indicates that the knowledge is passing downward to the field of ordinary consciousness, and may be expected to manifest on that plane before very long".

"I should say", continued the Colonel, "that you are destined to undergo a certain experience well known to advanced students of the subtle forces of Nature, in which a wonderful truth of your own being will be revealed to you. I am inclined to think that this fuller experience will not be long in coming to you. When it comes, you will practically enter into a new phase of conscious existence on this earth-plane, and you will never afterward be the same as you have been up to this time. It will be literally a 'new birth'—a birth into a new and higher consciousness.

"In some cases this dawn of a new consciousness is preceded by unusual experiences similar to those of your dream of last night, and is often followed by another and even more remarkable experience of a similar nature; but this does not always happen, and many pass into the new consciousness just as the little child at some time in its early years easily passes from the 'third person' stage into the 'first person' stage—from the stage in which it thinks of itself as 'Johnny' or 'Mary', into that in which it thinks of itself as 'I'.

"So far as concerns the part played by myself in your dream, I would say that I had no actual personal participation therein, though it might appear otherwise to the amateur occultist who has been dabbling in teachings concerning 'the astral plane'. Your dream experience was of an entirely different order, however, and is purely symbolic. I would say that the appearance of myself in the dream experience was a symbolic expression of the superconscious idea that I might be of assistance to you in the way of directing you toward the object of your coming 'new birth' in consciousness; if so, I am very glad, and will be only too pleased to be of service to you in the matter.

"As to the statement concerning the invincibility of the Self, or "I", which you heard at the conclusion of your experience, I would hazard the surmise that this was but the unconscious recollection of a similar aphorism of the ancient oriental sages, with which I am quite familiar, and which you have probably happened across in some of your past reading. Your superconscious mentality evidently recognized its appropriateness in your

case, and so caused your memory to reproduce it for you in the form of a symbolic message from supernatural authority.

"So, you see", continued the Colonel, "there is a perfectly natural explanation of the experience of your dream, in all of its incidents. Men are far too apt to seek supernatural explanations where perfectly natural ones are sufficient and are at hand. This is a mistake: Nature is so filled with wonderful things that we have no need to drag in the supernatural by the horns in order to account for strange and unusual experiences. It is true that these natural explanations take away something of the mystery and fascination, but to the true student of Truth these things do not count; to them, Nature is quite as interesting and as fascinating, and fully as mysterious, as anything in the realm of the Supernatural that the imagination of man has yet conjured forth.

"Now", suddenly said the Colonel, "tell me about yourself. You are evidently seeking something very earnestly, and your superconscious mentality has caused you to seek out myself as a probable agent capable of helping you to attain the object of your quest. From all the indications, I think it probable that I may be able to assist you; in fact, I really experienced a feeling of this kind when I met you last night—I am seldom mistaken in such intuitions or instincts. What is it you seek? Tell me the story of your past experiences in life".

I then told "the story of my life" to the Colonel—much the same story that I have related to you in the foregoing pages. But, strange as it may seem, I found myself passing rapidly and lightly over the tale of my late downfall and misfortune—this seemed to have lost its former importance to me, and to be but an inconsequential incident of something of far more importance. Likewise, I found myself dwelling at length, and with earnestness, upon my life-long search for the Inner Secret of Success and Personal Power. This one idea shone forth with such strength that all the others were dimmed by its power.

The Colonel again listened silently and attentively. A few questions asked from time to time, in the course of my narrative, sufficed him. When I concluded, he said:

"You were quite right in your intuition and instincts. There is, indeed, an Inner Secret of Success and Personal Power—and to much else beside. There is in existence and power that Something which you have sought; but you have not sought for it in the right place. You have sought afar for that

which really lies nearer to you than does anything else. You have sought for the 'something about', and the 'something above', but you have failed to search for that Something Within—this last is that wonderful 'Something' which is the object of your quest, and in which is to be found the Inner Secret of Success and Personal Power.

"That Something Within is the quintessence of that which you experience in consciousness as the conviction of 'I Am I'. But this 'I Am' is not the petty thing of personality, built up and composed of the personal physical, mental, and emotional qualities and states which you usually regard as yourself. These compositive parts, elements and factors of your personality may be said to constitute your 'Me'—your 'I Am I', however, is something much higher, much greater, much more essential, much more fundamental than the aggregate of the qualities and attributes of your personality. When you have discovered the Inner Secret of the 'I Am I', then you become the Master of those compositive elements of your personal being, and, consequently, of all the things of the outside world which are influenced by them—and this field of outside things, so possible of being thus influenced, is far greater than you now imagine.

"From now on", said the Colonel, "the chief aim and purpose, end and intention, of your thought, desire and will, should be that of the discovery or unfoldment of that Something Within—this Real Self—this 'I Am I'. Maintain firmly and continuously the definite idea to achieve it—an ideal strongly and clearly defined in your mental pictures. Let the flame of your desire burn fiercely for it. Manifest full hope, faith and confident belief in the successful outcome of your efforts in that direction. Manifest toward it the persistent determination of your will-of-wills—continue to will-to-will it so persistently, determinedly and strongly that all Nature will come to your aid and assistance".

I was amazed by this revelation of the Colonel, but I felt within me the assurance that he spoke the truth. I felt immeasurably nearer to the successful termination of my quest. I determined to follow his instructions to the letter, from that time on. But I first sought to obtain answers to the many questions which were then arising in my mind.

The Colonel, however, kindly but firmly declined to proceed further in the instruction at that time. Rising, he dismissed me courteously, saying: "That is enough for this lesson. Let what I have said sink deep into your mind. I have planted the seed; it is for you to water and to care for it—if

you do this it will take root, sprout, put forth leaves and blossoms, and finally bring forth fruit. Come to see me tomorrow evening".

During the following day I found myself inspired by the glimpses of the Truth which had been furnished to me by my good friend and teacher, the Colonel, in our conversation of the evening before. My mind, however, instead of being distracted from the duties and task of my daily work, seemed to have taken on an increased keenness and activity and, indeed, I managed to solve several perplexing questions which had heretofore baffled me in the course of my work. The mental activity which was concerned with the matter of the discovery of the Something Within seemed to be manifesting beneath the level or plane of my ordinary consciousness, though I was in a way aware of the process. While the surface activities were operating with even greater proficiency and efficiency, I was keenly aware that something was taking place below the surface—in the depths of my mental being.

After dinner, I again sought the room of the Colonel, and was as before cordially greeted by him. After telling him of the experiences of the day, I was informed by him that he felt that I was now prepared for the second of the three fundamental lessons which he intended to give to me—as he smilingly expressed it, "You are now ready for the second degree".

He proceeded as follows: "You are aware that the entity which you call 'I'—your Self—is the same entity which you have experienced as "I" from the first days of self-consciousness. It is 'the same old I', and not the successor or descendent of the 'I' which you first knew, and have since known. This entity is your 'identity'—your 'identity' or 'same entity'. This identical 'I' has persisted, notwithstanding that your body, your thoughts, your beliefs, your feelings, and your courses of action, have constantly changed from time to time since you first became aware of this "I" in self-consciousness. It is the identical, changeless, constant, persistent Something which has remained intact and unaffected by the process of change in your physical, mental, and emotional personality.

"Your body is not the same body as that in which your 'I' dwelt at the beginning; there is not a cell, part, or portion of your body at the present time which was there even a few years ago. You are dwelling in a new body which is but one of a series of bodies composed of constantly changing parts which you have used during your present life on earth. Clearly, then,

your physical body is not You—not the 'I' entity or identity which is your Real Self.

"In the same way, you have experienced a constant change of thoughts, ideas, beliefs, feelings, desires, emotions and will-activities, all through your life. Your mental being, your intellectual being, your emotional being, —all of your personal being, in fact—is different from that possessed by you in the beginning. Your physical, mental and emotional personal being is but the present stage of a constant process of change and becoming. It is clear that this changing series, and its present stage, is not You—not your entity or identity which is your Real Self.

"Consequently, your physical, mental, and emotional being is akin to the jack-knife of the boy in the story—the knife had three new handles and seven new blades replaced in it during the years of his ownership of it, yet he called it 'the same old knife'. But it wasn't 'the same old knife' at all—it was simply the successor or descendent of the original knife owned by the same boy. The boy was the only 'identical' factor or element—the only 'same old' thing in question. Now, your I Am is like the boy—your physical, mental, and emotional being is the renovated and revamped old knife employed by him as his instrument or tool. YOU are the only identical real thing—your physical, mental, and emotional being is but your instrument or tool employed by you in your work and expression of personal life. Things which constantly change are merely processes—not entities. You—your 'I Am I'—has not changed: it is your Real Self, that Something Within, your actual entity and identity. Fix this well in your mind.

"When you are able to set aside in self-analytical thought all that composes your physical body; all that constitutes your intellectual and emotional being; and to see these in consciousness as being merely tools and instruments to be employed by your 'I Am I' in its individual expression and manifestation—just as the boy could distinguish between himself and his jack-knife—then, and then only, will you become 'I-conscious' in truth. In such consciousness, you will undergo the 'new birth'—you will 'be born again', this time into the world of Real Selfhood, Egohood, and Conscious Identity. When you are able to see yourself as your Real Self—your 'I Am I'—existing in identical being, and surrounded by its physical, mental, and emotional tools and instruments of expression, then you will have discovered that Something Within."

With these words, which sunk deep into my inner consciousness, the Colonel again dismissed me, bidding me return on the following evening for my "third degree".

I lay awake that night, unable to sleep by reason of the intense activity of my mind. I was conscious of a gradual clearing-up process underway in my mentality. I employed the process of self-analysis, and discrimination between my 'I Am I' and my mental and emotional faculties and states of consciousness—I had already learned to discriminate between my Self and my body. I plainly saw that it was the same 'I Am I' which had experienced the changing series of mental and emotional processes and states during the past years of my life. I saw that the things of personality were but as garments worn by the individual, identical "I Am I". I saw, by the exercise of my imagination, that I might even act the parts of different personalities, in different bodies—one at a time, however—but that the "I Am I" playing each and all of these parts would be the same, identical Self.

Try as I did, however, I was unable even in imagination to think away this "I Am I", or to exchange it for another similar to it. It refused to be thought away, or to be exchanged for another.

IV. THE THIRD DEGREE

The day passed rapidly. Although there was an unusually large and heavy accumulation of important work to be performed by me, I found myself manifesting a new and marked efficiency and capacity for performing my tasks. My mind seemed to function with a smoothness and rapidity unknown to me for many years. Plans flashed into my mind, and the means of carrying them out followed with a machine-like regularity. Certain ideas connected with the improvement of some of the operations of the business arose in my mind, and when these were mentioned by me to those persons in charge of the business they attracted immediate attention and brought a promise to investigate the matter with a view of adopting my recommendations. I instinctively felt that I had begun to awaken an interested attention toward myself on the part of those in whose employ I was. There was a subtle change in my position in the concern, and my experience taught me that I had taken a distinct step forward in my journey to success.

As I now remember it, I became vividly conscious of a new relation between myself—my "I Am I"—and my mental faculties, states, and machinery. I no longer seemed to be inextricably "mixed up with" these, but, rather, I seemed to exist as an independent entity in the centre of my mental, emotional, and physical world of personal being, having my hands on the various levers of my mental machinery and being endowed with the power to operate the same with a new and higher degree of efficiency. Moreover, I became aware that I was setting into operation certain activities on those planes of my mind and will which were below the plane of ordinary consciousness. These under-the-surface powers or faculties seemed to be busily engaged in performing work for me, and to be preparing reports which would later be raised to the plane of my ordinary consciousness. Finally, I was also at least faintly aware that these subconscious mental forces were beginning to exert an undefinable but positive influence on my environment, and were acting so as to bring me into a new relationship with the individuals with whom I was associated, directly and indirectly, in my business life.

Evening came, and with a feeling of deep emotion I again knocked at the door of the Colonel's room. Without this knowledge the individual is

apt to be led astray by his new-found power; without it he often tends to attribute to his personal self, and derivative character, the power which really is vested in a much higher part of his being. One must know how to recognize the real gold of his being, else he may be deluded by the glittering imitations and counterfeits which abound in the realm of personality

Here the Colonel paused, and rested for a few moments as if striving to find words fitted to describe the tremendous truth which he wished to convey to me; or, perhaps, to choose simple words capable of being understood by me rather than those terms employed by him in his own advanced and exalted thought on the subject—this, as I now know, was no easy task. After a few moments of deep, concentrated thought, he said:

"Let us begin at the beginning. The beginning of all thought concerning the Truth is Truth itself. The first and last Truth concerning Existence or Being is this:

There is present and active a SUPREME PRESENCE-POWER from which all things proceed, directly and indirectly, and which is the Base, Ground, Support, Cause, Correlator, Coordinator, Essence, Substance, Life, Principle, Presence and Power of the entire World-of-Things.

All intelligent human thought reports this conclusion; all awakened intuition sustains and corroborates it; all philosophy finds in it its first and last facts.

"All attempts to identify this Supreme Presence-Power with things of the phenomenal world must meet with failure, for it transcends all of these." Speculation upon its essential nature is futile, and worse than useless, for it is far beyond the power of human representation in words. The finite cannot explain the Infinite; the relative cannot define the Absolute; the conditioned cannot diagram the Unconditioned. Yet all human thought, speculation, reason, intuition, imagination and instinct affirm the necessary presence and action of this Supreme Power.

"Human reason, extended to its utmost limits, and corroborated by intuition, however, is able to furnish the following report concerning its concept of the Supreme Presence-Power, namely: The Supreme Presence-Power must be Absolute, Infinite, Unconditioned; it must be Eternal and Uncaused; it must be Absolutely Identical, Immutable, and Unchangeable in its Essence; it must be Absolutely Integral, Indivisible, and Inseparable. Moreover, all philosophy worthy of the name holds that it must be SPIRIT,

in the sense of being the Essence of Life, the Essence of Consciousness, the Essence of Will.

"It is very clear that this Infinite Presence-Power must contain within its essential presence and power everything that is—for there is no place outside of its infinite presence and power. Likewise, its presence and power must abide in everything that is—for its presence and power, being infinite, must be everywhere, and consequently in everything that is anywhere. Thus, you see, this Supreme Power must not only be that from which all things proceed, but also that in which all things live, and move, and have their being, and, finally, that which is immanent and abiding in everything.

"Fix well in your mind this triple conception of the Supreme Presence-Power, viz.,

(1) its Infinite Presence, in which all things must abide and be contained;
(2) its Infinite Power, from which all activities must proceed and flow;
and

(3) its Infinite Immanence, by reason of which it is present and active in everything that is.

If you will hold fast to these three elemental and fundamental facts, you cannot go very far astray in your thinking on the subject.

"In your former thinking you came to see that there was 'something about' some people which gave them special power; this was, of course, this Infinite Something (or one of its expressions or manifestations). Later, you saw that many considered this Something to be a 'something above' them; this, likewise was this Infinite Something (or one of its expressions or manifestations). Finally, you now have learned that the Something you have sought is that Something Within; this likewise must be this Infinite Something (or one of its expressions or manifestations). The Infinite Something is that Something sought in each case, though it may be looked for in three different directions.

"The superstitious person prefers to identify this Infinite Something with a 'something about' individuals. The religious person prefers to identify it with a 'something above' him—which view is all right so far as it goes, but which is usually in error in refusing to admit that the Infinite Something is also within the being of each and every individual. The wise thinkers of the past, and of the present, while freely acknowledging that the Infinite Something is ever 'about' persons, and is always 'above' them, also

know that it is also certainly 'within' themselves—and they prefer to seek for it there, for reasons which I shall now explain to you.

"The 'something about' can only be viewed from the outside—you can never get into the actual presence of it, but can only view it from afar. The 'something above', likewise, exists chiefly as an abstract conception in your mind, and is never directly contacted in this way. You may feel inclined to dispute this last fact, but if you will inquire closely of persons of deep and sincere religious experience, you will find that their real conviction arises by reason of an 'inner experience'—a conviction of the Divine Presence-Power within themselves, in their 'heart' as they express it. Though the devoutly religious person may 'think about' the Supreme Presence-Power as 'above' him, yet his supreme experience is obtained by reason of the fact that he 'feels' within himself the glow of an Abiding Presence and Power. Many of the orthodox religionists seek to deny this, yet in their hearts they know that the 'religious experience' is always really an 'inner experience'—that it is an experience of the 'heart', rather than of the 'head'.

"The esoteric occult teaching has always been that the Supreme Presence-Power may be immediately contacted by directing the consciousness into the depths of one's own being—there to discover that Something Within. The most profound practical philosophers have taught likewise, though in different terms. The reasoning in both cases proceeds as follows: If there is a Something 'in which we live, and move, and have our being', and 'from which all things proceed'; and if, as must be, that Something is immanent within the being of each and every one of us; then, logically, that Something must abide as the essence and fundamental substance of the being of the individual, and must be discovered there, if anywhere.

"The next step of the mystics, and of the practical philosophers as well, is that of actual experimentation along these lines. The result is that all of the great mystics, and all of the great practical philosophers, have each reported that at the very centre of his being—at the very kernel of his consciousness—he has discovered a Something which is different from anything else about himself, and which cannot be described in terms applicable to the latter. In fact, that this Something Within, when questioned, seems unable to define or explain itself in words other than these: 'I Am I', or where the individual has advanced still further in his new experience, as 'I Am THAT I Am'

"This experience, and the application of severe logical thought, has led the deep thinkers of the race to hold that the Inner Secret of Being is to be found only in this inner experience of that Something Within.

'Why', ask they, 'should one seek in outer experience or in the experience of others that which may be found in the direct experience of oneself? 'Why', ask they, 'should one seek in distant lands, and over strange seas, for the treasure that lies buried in one's own garden?' Say they, 'If this Truth lies everywhere, it lies within myself; and within myself is the only place in which I can find it, for my direct knowledge is confined to the discovery of my own states of consciousness.'

"Now", said the Colonel, "if you admit that the Infinite Presence-Power really abides within your own being (as in all else), where would you expect to find it there—and what must it seem like when you have found it. A little thought will show you that if it is there at all it must abide at the very centre of your individual being—and at the deepest place of your consciousness. Now, then, what do you find when you determinedly explore your consciousness and your being? At the very centre of your being, and at the extreme depths of your consciousness, you find—what? You find this 'I Am'—your Real Self—standing as a Central Sun around which whirl the lesser planets of your mental and emotional nature. This is the fixed and final fact within you— this fact of 'I AM', and 'I Am I'.

"No matter how your mental and emotional, as well as your physical, attributes of personality change and become different, your 'I Am I' remains ever the same—immutable, unchangeable, fixed, certain, constant. No matter how you may change your opinions and feelings about other things, you can never think and feel otherwise than 'I AM', and 'I Am I'. You can never say with truth and conviction, 'I Am NOT', or 'I Am Not I'— the very idea is ridiculous. Moreover, you cannot think back of or under the "I Am I" —it is the final report of your conscious experience, just as it is its first report. In finding the 'I Am I', disentangled from its surrounding sheaths and its garments of personality, you have found the Fundamental Fact of your individual being—and that, if anything, must be the focal point or focal centre of the Infinite Supreme Presence-Power which is immanent in presence and power within you. It is the Indwelling Spirit—the Real Self— that Something Within.

"Now", said the Colonel, "here is a stage of the journey at which many who tread the path stumble and fall. They sometimes seek to identify that

Something Within with the 'personal self', instead of the Real Self—the superficial personality of 'John Smith, grocer, aged 49 years', with the 'I Am I', above-all-personality, which is the individuality. This leads them away from the main road of Realization. Or, again, they may cease all efforts to express and manifest that Something Within, and to enter into a fuller consciousness of identity with it, but, instead, they devote their thought to vague and futile speculations as to 'just why' the Supreme Presence-Power seeks to express and manifest its presence-power in the World-of-Things. In the first case, the mistaken person wanders off into the pitfalls and quagmires of Delusion and Error; in the second case, he proceeds to run 'round-and-round' in circles, or like the squirrel in the cage, he travels the whirling wheel of speculation, ever moving but never arriving anywhere.

"The sane course is to strive earnestly to enter into a fuller and fuller recognition of that Something Within as the 'I Am I', or Real Self; to proceed to a fuller and fuller realization that this 'I Am I' is not a part of your intellectual or emotional machinery, but is its Master; and, finally, to endeavor to express and manifest more fully and more effectively the power which flows into your conscious field of mentation as the result of your recognition and realization just mentioned. You are now a Cause, not merely an Effect; you are now a Creator, not merely a Creature; therefore, proceed to Cause and to Create effectively, efficiently, and worthily.

"This then" said the Colonel, "is what the 'I Am I', or that Something Within, or Real Self, really is—a focal point or centre of the Infinite Presence-Power from which all things proceed, and in which we live and move and have our being. The Infinite Presence-Power is expressed and manifested through that focal point or centre which is your 'I Am I'; your understanding of the 'why and wherefore' of this will increase—but be not over anxious about this, for the understanding follows only upon the heels of the expression and manifestation, and never precedes it. You learn by doing. Your "I Am I", as it expresses and manifests itself through you, will be much like a person awakening from a deep sleep—perhaps still under the influence of a dream of the night. It will 'find itself' only gradually, so mingled with its waking realities still are the illusions of its dream-state. It will 'come to' only gradually—its attainment of knowledge of itself will be much like the recollection of knowledge previously had by it. Do not perplex yourself concerning the 'just why' of this at this time—you have

work before you to do, and increased knowledge will follow the performance of that work.

"And, now", said the Colonel, "I have given you as much as you can mentally digest at this time. I do not wish you to suffer from spiritual indigestion or mental dyspepsia. I have more to say to you; but this will all come in due time. Desire insistently your unfoldment in consciousness; confidently expect its realization; and determinedly will its attainment. Desire, Faith, and Determination will win the day for you. To some this unfoldment comes quite gradually, and without special phenomenal experiences. In your case, however, the tremendous pressure of the unfolding flower of your 'I Am I' may end in a sudden, tremendous effort which will bring to you a strange experience—symbolic in character, as was that one of the other night—in which in a flash of intense superconsciousness there will be given to you a glimpse into the Promised Land, but which will last only for a moment—but for a moment that will never afterward be forgotten by you. In fact, I feel that you are on the very eve of such an experience. See me again when you feel deeply impelled to seek me—but not before."

With these words, the Colonel rose and indicated that the interview was at an end. With a strange feeling of exaltation, and with the intuition that I was about to undergo a transforming experience from which I would emerge as a new individual—or, rather, as the same individual endowed with a new and fuller insight, consciousness, and power—I proceeded to my room and sought my pillow. Shortly after, my transcendental experience began.

I could not be said to be "thinking"—rather did I seem to be immersed in a world which was all Idea. In this new world all the things were ideas—the "thoughts were things" therein, in actual fact. My mind was perfectly clear—I was not in a dazed or perplexed state of mind. It seemed to me, rather, that my mind had escaped its former limitations, and had attained infinite transcendental powers. I seemed to have attained the power of thinking with infinite power and with absolute logical accuracy.

Dwelling in this realm of Pure Ideation for a time—I do not know now whether it was but for a moment, or else for hours, so rapt in the experience was I—I then passed into a state of mental and emotional quietude, calmness, and joy. All finite thought seemed stilled. The "I Am I" seemed to be dwelling in the Infinitude of Space, and in the Eternity of Time. This

Infinite Space seemed to be filled with a wondrous rosy light, vibrating with an awful intensity and rate of speed. In it, I seemed to be abiding undisturbed and unaffected. I had the conviction that my Self was eternal—that it had always existed and would always exist, in its essential identical being; death or interruption of its life seemed like a laughable impossibility. I seemed to have taken on Infinite and Eternal Life.

Accompanying this conviction, was the realization of what I can describe only as Infinite Wisdom. I seemed to know everything—from the highest Truth to the most trivial fact of experience. There was "no great and no small" to me—all was included in the content of my consciousness and knowledge. The Riddle of the Ages—the Mystery of Being—were clearly understood by me. But greatest of all this knowledge was the knowledge of my own being—I knew the inner truth that "I Am THAT I Am!"

With this also manifested the consciousness of Infinite Joy, of Absolute Bliss—I seemed to have concentrated and condensed within me the Bliss and Joy, the Happiness and Content, of all time and all places. Yet, I seemed to realize that all this happiness, bliss, joy and content, came from within myself, and not from things external to me.

Looking back at this experience, in the light of my after acquired knowledge and understanding, I now see that in that flash of Illumination—for such it was—I momentarily contacted or "tapped" the transcendental planes of consciousness which the ancient oriental sages described as "Sat-Chit-Ananda"¹², or "Being-Absolute; Wisdom Absolute; Bliss-Absolute". It was doubtless largely, or entirely, symbolic; it was very far from being what is popularly known as a "psychic experience"¹³.

I now know this to have been a perfectly natural experience, though a comparatively uncommon one. Many others have undergone it—many others will undergo it. The accounts of its experience tally closely, in the

¹² A Sanskrit compound from Hindu philosophy: Sat (Being/Truth), Chit (Consciousness/Wisdom), Ananda (Bliss). It describes the ultimate nature of Brahman. The narrator uses this to label his transcendental experience.

¹³ The narrator distinguishes his illumination from popular psychic phenomena such as mediumship or clairvoyance, which he later dismisses as 'moon-path' distractions. This reflects Atkinson's stance that the true inner discovery is natural and superconscious, not supernatural.

reports of the ages. Yet, be it remembered, many who attain the very highest recognition, realization, and manifestation of that Something Within, have not undergone this experience. It is merely incidental, and not essential—let there be no mistake about this point.

The transcendental experience passed. The reaction was at first most painful and distressing, I felt that I had dropped from the highest heaven down to the barren earth. Gone was my knowledge of everything—but there still persisted the firm conviction that I had so known it, and it was at least comforting to know that it was knowable. Gone were my bliss, joy, and happiness unspeakable—though the memory of them has served to comfort and bring happiness and peace to me ever since. I had ascended to the heights, but great had been my subsequent fall. Yet, the resulting memory of it all was worth the price of the disappointment which followed.

I would rather give up all that I have since attained, in material possessions, achievement, and knowledge, rather than now to have erased from my memory the recollection of that experience. The mere thought of its incidents and facts gives to me a thrill far beyond that produced by any other thought of past, present, or future. This is a faint idea of what this experience meant, now means, and shall always mean to me.

I must have afterward dropped into a deep sleep, for I awoke in the morning greatly refreshed in mind and in body. I was conscious of a new spirit animating my physical and mental being. I must have reflected this inner state, for I now remember that for several days afterward my associates, and others, persisted in asking me if I had heard good news, had come into a fortune, had fallen in love— or had experienced something else of a most gratifying nature. I had, in fact—but something different from what they supposed.

I can see from photographs of myself, still in my possession, that my physical appearance began to change for the better from the time of that experience; I am sure that I took on a new expression of countenance. My body began to take on new strength and vigor, and the years seemed to drop away from me. The Spirit of Youth seemed to have descended upon me, and I reflected this in physical appearance and energy, and in mental vigor and efficiency. Moreover, material conditions began to change rapidly, and in my favor; of these things I shall have more to say as I proceed with the story.

I wish to be clearly and positively understood here, however, that all of the benefits which followed this transcendental experience have been practically duplicated by others of my subsequent acquaintance, even though many of these persons had no sign of such experience. As the Colonel said, the transcendental experience is merely incidental, and not essential. It arises by reason of the existence of certain conditions; these conditions not being present, the experience does not arise.

But, in all cases of the "new birth", however, there is always to be found a dawning, and heightening recognition and realization of the reality of the presence-power of the "I Am I" —that Something Within—and at least a certain intuition, instinct, or realization that this is in some intimate way or manner connected with, in contact with, or closely related to the Infinite and Eternal Supreme Presence-Power from which all things flow, and in which we live and move and have our being. This intuitive consciousness is the essential element —the rest is largely non-essential and merely incidental. The gist of the matter is the Discovery of the "I Am I", and the intuitive conviction that this is based upon the Infinite and Eternal Reality.

Some who have read this story in manuscript form, have advised me to omit the account of the above recited experience of the flash of Illumination, and also of the symbolic dream experience which accompanied my awakening to the realization of the presence-power of the "I Am I". They have been moved to this suggestion by reason of their fear that the message contained in the whole story might perhaps be weakened by the inclusion of the recital of these experiences, on account of their being mistaken for the common "psychic" experiences of which we have heard so much, far too much, of recent years. They felt that the story ran the risk of being mistaken for a record of "psychic" or supernatural phenomena. In short, they feared that the story might be misunderstood as being concerned with the "moonshine" experiences of abnormal psychology, rather than with the "sunshine" experiences of supernormal psychology—with certain valueless phases of subconscious mentality, rather than with certain high phases of the super-conscious mentality.

I have carefully weighed these objections—and have overruled them. This, because, in the first place, these experiences have a rightful and proper place in the narrative; and, secondly, because there are many persons who are now beginning to experience the unfoldment into consciousness of that

Something Within, and who are having certain "bits" or flashes of this super-conscious experience without realizing their true nature. In some cases, indeed, such persons have been led by others to believe that they are "psychics", or have been encouraged in "developing psychic powers", instead of realizing that they were but beginning to become conscious of their own real, inner nature, and that they should but allow the process to proceed naturally. I am no follower of the Moon-path¹⁴—the Sun-path¹⁵ is the one upon which I have set my feet; and I wish to encourage others to refuse to be attracted by the baleful rays of the Moon, and, instead, to face the Sun fearlessly and confidently.

Once more, then, this is not a story of "psychic" or "supernatural" happenings; it is a narrative of perfectly natural experiences and of their results.

V. THE MANIFESTATION

From this point of my story I shall content myself with relating my actual personal experience in living the new life into which I was born through my dawning consciousness of the Something Within, its identity with my Real Self or "I Am I", and the realization of the fundamental and essential nature of this supreme fact of my individual being.

I shall not relate in detail my further conversations with Colonel Forbes, for these gradually extended to those features of the Inner Teaching which are rather too technical and too complicated for presentation in a recital of this kind designed, as it is, for "all kinds and conditions of men", many of whom may not be familiar with the terms of philosophical or metaphysical reasoning, and the forms of such specialized thought. I shall from time to time quote an occasional statement made by the Colonel, and shall refer constantly to the general principles of the instruction given me by him, but I shall let the story tell itself from this point through the presentation of my own experience in the practical application of these principles and of the basic truths which have already been set forth in my recital of the first three interviews with that remarkable man.

¹⁴ A metaphor for the pursuit of psychic powers and otherworldly phenomena, contrasted with the 'Sun-path' of natural spiritual development. The narrator warns against being led astray by fascination with the occult.

¹⁵ The narrator's term for the direct, natural realization of the inner self, akin to spiritual enlightenment that does not rely on supernatural or psychic crutches.

From the Colonel I learned that the initiation into the new life of the conscious perception of that Something Within consisted of three distinct stages or steps, namely: (1) the stage of Recognition, or the perception of the "I Am I" as that Something Within; (2) the stage of Realization, or the perception of the tremendous fact that that Something Within, the Real Self, or the "I Am I" is the focal point or centre of expression of the Infinite Power from which all things proceed; and (3) the stage of Manifestation, or the actual expression in active everyday life of the presence and power of that Something Within, the Real Self, the "I Am I".

Said the Colonel to me in a conversation held shortly after the remarkable experience related in the preceding chapter: "You have experienced the full Recognition, you have experienced a goodly degree of the Realization; now it remains for you to experience the Manifestation, and this you can do only gradually and progressively in active everyday life. The Manifestation is the demonstration of the truth of that which you have previously recognized and realized in a measure; in that demonstration there will also come to you a constantly increasing and progressively unfolding degree of further Realization."

The Colonel here quoted for my benefit an ancient esoteric aphorism—that paradox which has perplexed many who have read its words without having been given the key of its understanding: "You have now reaped; henceforth you must sow".

This, he explained to me, meant that I had reaped the rich gain of the new consciousness, and I was now required to sow its seeds that they might manifest as work along the same line; that I was now to manifest in actual work the principles of Truth which I had gained. After this sowing would come another reaping, and so on; each reaping being followed by a sowing, and each sowing by a reaping. Here, as everywhere, Nature proceeds in cycles and according to rhythm.

Acting under the Colonel's instruction and advice, I began to build up my physical body, and, indeed, this was sadly needed, for my physical instrument had been greatly run down by reason of my general breakdown. He had said: "The physical body is the external instrument of the 'I Am I', and must be made a fitting one in every respect. The body is not a base thing to be reviled as a hindrance to the expression of the spirit, as the ascetics have mistakenly supposed. Rather is it the instrument of the effective expression of the spirit, and it should be perfected, developed, and

maintained in health and vigor to that end." In this understanding and belief I undertook the work of building up my physical instrument of the expression of that Something Within.

Proceeding upon the principle outlined to me by my teacher, I set to work manifesting the power of that Something Within upon the "mind" which presides over the physical processes, and which has its subordinate centres in every organ of the body—yes, even in every cell of the body. It was a revelation to me to be told that the vital and physical processes are essentially mental processes, and not merely chemical or mechanical physiological activities. I saw at once that the secret of the Mental Cure of Disease is not that of a manifestation of the power of "mind over matter", but that of mind, or spirit, over the "mind" subordinate to it. This principle, once thoroughly grasped, produced remarkable and practically immediate results when scientifically applied.

I found that by first fixing in my mind the ideal concept or mental image of the normal functioning of the organs of the body, and then by forming a strong, definite mental picture of my organs functioning in this way, this being accompanied by a confident expectation of the materialization of my ideal picture or concept, the subconscious mental faculties presiding over the physical functions at once set to work reproducing in actual material and physical form those ideas and pictures which existed in ideal form in my mind. The ideal became real—the ideal picture took on objective material reality.

Moreover, I found that each and every organ of the body has its own particular "mind", or, if you prefer, its own centre of subconscious mentality. I discovered that by directing my attention to any organ of my body, I could, as it were, attract or awaken its attention, and thus place it in a receptive mental attitude. I would then proceed to "talk to" that particular organ, just as I would to a child; I would explain to it the importance of its normal functioning, and would firmly but kindly demand that it should proceed to act in that manner. All this may sound rather silly, but those who have "treated" themselves in this way will know the truth of the underlying principle, and practical value of the method employed in applying it.

I avoided the error of denying the material reality of my body, and of asserting that it was an illusion—that fallacy of certain schools of so-called metaphysics. On the contrary, I admitted the comparative reality of the physical body in all of its parts, but held that it contained "mind" in every

part and in every cell, and that its functions were under the control of this "mind"—the latter, in turn, being under the influence of the general "physical-mind" of the body, which, in turn, was subordinate to the "I Am I." I also discovered the part played by the "auto-suggestion" of the conscious mentality in the matter of influencing beneficially or adversely the general "physical-mind" controlling the physical functions.

I was helped in my self-healing work by the study of certain simple works upon physiology, by means of which I ascertained just what were the normal processes and functions of the various organs and parts of my body. In this way I was enabled to form clearer, stronger, and more efficient ideal pictures and concepts which served as the "patterns" to be reproduced in the physical processes themselves, as I have just stated. I discovered just what constituted a normal, healthy, efficient human body, and I built up a strong, positive, clear, definite mental picture of such a body. Then I proceeded to make my thought take form in action, and to cause my mental states to reproduce themselves in physical form. I presented my mental pictures to the general "physical-mind" of the body, and also to the several organs themselves. I have now given you the essential substance of my method—you may employ it as effectively as did I, provided that you go about it earnestly and faithfully.

I also discovered that I could effectively employ physical exercise in this way, the added factor of the mental or ideal pattern greatly increasing the effect of the physical motions. I perfected a system of Psycho-Physical Exercise which "made over" my physical body in a comparatively short time.

The results of these manifestations of the Something Within in and upon my physical body were remarkable. I began to improve rapidly from the very start. In a comparatively short time I had recovered all of my lost ground, and in a little longer time I was in far better health and physical condition than I had ever been before. I had created in my mind the ideal of a strong, healthy, vigorous man, and my subconscious mentality faithfully reproduced this ideal in physical and material form and activity. My business associates remarked the wonderful change and marveled at it. They were agreed in the belief that I had found some wonderful physician—and indeed I had.

I am now, at the age of about seventy years, in vigorous health and strength—far better than that of the average healthy man of forty-five. I

see no reason for doubting that this will continue to be the case, for I live according to the principles which brought renewed health and vigor to me. I believe that these principles really compose the essence of all forms of mental, spiritual, or metaphysical cures, although each of their different schools usually insist that to its own particular dogmas must be given the credit—though each school makes about the same percentage of cures, notwithstanding that their dogmas often mutually contradict each other.

I know it to be a fact that the "I Am I" can control, direct, and command any part or faculty of the mind belonging to it—even that part of its mind which presides over the physical functions. This latter accomplished, the physical effect follows as inevitably, invariably, and infallibly as any other given effect follows its logical cause. It is purely a matter of cause and effect. Every individual has the power within him or her to set these causes into operation.

While manifesting physical efficiency, I did not neglect the work of building-up, developing, and unfolding Mental Efficiency. I remembered the old adage, "A sound mind in a sound body", and I determined to attain this. Here, also, I supplied myself with an identically correct ideal pattern, by means of studying the simple, scientific principles of psychology and of logic. In this way I learned what the great minds of the race have discovered to be the effective principle of the operation of the mind, and of its efficient employment. Having supplied myself with this pattern, I proceeded to re-educate my mind so that it might reproduce in itself the efficient activities which were clearly indicated and pictured on the ideal pattern.

I started with the conviction that the Intellect was not my "I Am I", but merely a part of the intricate machinery at the disposal of the latter. Equipped with the map or pattern acquired by study, as aforesaid, I determined that my intellectual faculties should actualize their processes and activities in accordance with that ideal. I proceeded along the same general lines as those which I employed in reeducating the "physical-mind" controlling my physical processes.

Both of these great divisions of the mind are but important instruments of mental machinery, and both are subordinate to the direction, control and mastery of that Something Within, the Real Self, the "I Am I". Both will respond to control and direction properly applied. One general principle underlies the two cases.

I do not wish to convey the impression that I supplanted the natural and normal processes of my intellectual faculties with an artificial system of functioning. On the contrary, I carefully avoided this, for I believed that such a course would result in taking all of the natural "life" out of my thinking. Instead, I encouraged the regular, natural processes by means of which the intellect manifests and expresses itself in thought, cogitation, and reasoning. I developed its ability by scientific exercises by means of which every part of the thinking-mind was employed and given the strength which comes to both mind and body only with use and activity in proper amount. Mental faculties are much like muscles in this respect, and an understanding of one brings an understanding of the other.

My chief work, however, was in the direction of "re-educating" the intellectual faculties. I proceeded to this by first acquiring a clear, definite idea and concept of the action and processes of the well-developed and well-trained intellect.

This gave me the right pattern, mold, or map, which I then proceeded to reproduce by actualization. This right pattern was gradually impressed upon the mind, and once there it began to manifest its creative power by reconstructing my mental machinery so as to serve the purpose I intended to achieve.

First, I did work on the lines of Memory.

Memory is primarily a function of our subconscious mentality. In the great subconscious region lies the great store-house of Memory. From the moment we receive an impression, until the moment when it is again brought into the field of consciousness, the subconscious faculties are at work. We receive and store away an impression—where do we store it? Not in the conscious region, else it were always before us—down in the depths of the subconscious store-house is it stored, placed among other impressions, often so carelessly that we find it almost impossible to find it when again we need it.

Where is it kept during the years that often intervene between the storing away of an impression and its subsequent revival? In this great store-house of the subconscious. What process is employed when we wish to recall an impression? Simply an order going forth from the Will, bidding the workers in the subconscious warehouse to find and bring into the light the impression laid away so long ago. And in the degree that these workers have been trained to do their work and accustom themselves to their task,

do they succeed in intelligently obeying the orders of the Will. And in the measure that they have been taught to carefully store away the things committed to their charge, and to carefully note the locations of the treasures committed to them, are they apt and quick in bringing them to light when they are bidden.

By understanding that the functions of the memory are chiefly performed along subconscious lines and that the subconscious mentality is readily influenced and directed by efficient suggestions and instruction, I was able to develop a wonderfully efficient memory-machine. This, however, I employed only ultimately, and not for "showing off". I used it in my business of life, and not for spectacular performances. I discovered that the memory never really loses or forgets anything once placed in it properly, and that remembrance and recollection depend chiefly upon proper methods of indexing and cross-indexing. But I found that chief of all methods, and one essential to an efficient memory, is that of re-educating the memory, and of training it in the habit of performing its work properly.

Following the same general rule, I greatly developed my powers of perception and observation, and, as a consequence, was able to observe and perceive important things which were overlooked by the average individual. Perceptions constitute the "raw materials of thought", and I managed to keep my mind well supplied with the best kind of material to be worked over and made up into ideas, concepts, and plans. Much of my subsequent success was due to this acquired power.

Along almost precisely the same lines, I trained my imagination to perform that wonderful creative work known as Constructive Imagination, instead of wasting its energies upon day-dreams or fanciful picturing. In the realm of the imagination is to be found the mental machinery of all creative work along mental lines. Here invention has its home and workshop. The imagination properly trained will readily and efficiently plan, design, construct, build, improve, and generally perform creative work for anyone. My subsequent success in building and carrying-out the great undertakings of my later life was due largely to the development of this part of my mentality. I so trained my imaginative faculties that I could, figuratively, drop into one end of my mental machine the idea of the need, necessity, or requirement, and lo! in time out of the other end would come the general outlines of the plan, design, or undertaking. The details were afterwards added in the same manner.

In the same way, I obtained the mastery of my emotional nature, with its feelings, emotions, and desires. Instead of being a slave to this part of my nature, I made it my willing and obedient slave. I harnessed Desire, and set it to work for me; and good work it has done for me. Insistent Desire is one of the great elements of the effort toward Attainment. It supplies the flame and heat whereby the Steam of Will is generated. A strong will is largely due to a strong desire. Desire-Power is an important factor in Success and Personal Power. Desires are not to be killed out, but rather to be transmitted when necessary, and directed into the proper channels. All this I learned from the Colonel, and afterward demonstrated through actual experience.

Finally, in the same way, I learned the Mastery of Will. I learned how to "Will to Will," I entered into the inner consciousness of Will Power, and learned its innermost secrets. Then I employed the knowledge so gained in the carrying out of the plans evolved in my Creative Imagination, and afterward passed upon by my Intellect. I would say here that this element of Pure Will is the one nearest and closest to the "I Am I"—so close, indeed, that it is most difficult to differentiate between them for a long time. But even the Will is subordinate to the "I Am I", and may be mastered by it, and rendered a most valuable and faithful helper.

All these important achievements resulted from the manifestation of that Something Within, following my recognition and realization of its presence and power. My mastery of circumstances, of things, of men—all this has come to me largely through this development and power so obtained. But this is but the beginning; that which follows is equally important, and perhaps far more wonderful, for it deals with forces not so commonly recognized and realized as are the mental faculties and activities which I have just considered. There are wonderful realms and planes of mental power within every individual, which but few learn to explore and the powers of which still fewer learn to manifest. Of these I shall now proceed to tell you. In the recital you will realize more fully than ever that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy". Yet even the greatest of these powers are in the realm of Nature, and belong not to the supernatural; they may be acquired by anyone who will do as I have done.

VI. THE SOMETHING WITHIN

The manifestation of that Something Within in the direction of the development and maintenance of physical efficiency and mental efficiency, as related in the preceding chapter was accompanied almost from the very beginning with a marked and striking improvement in my business affairs. I became aware of the fact that the inner forces which make for success were at work, and that their effects and results were beginning to show themselves. Moreover, I became quite keenly aware that beneath the surface of the present activities there were developing certain tendencies which in the due course of time would manifest in actual events which would be conducive to my general success and well-being.

My increased efficiency, showing itself in an improved grasp upon the general and special conditions of the business in which I was employed, received favorable attention from those in positions of authority in the concern; as a result I was promoted rapidly, indeed so rapidly that the working-force of the concern conceived the idea that I had secured some sort of a "pull" with the management. But in spite of the jealousy always aroused in such cases, there arose a gradual general recognition of the fact that I was a good person to consult when difficulties arose in any branch of the business; the other employees soon found it to their advantage to consult me when their work got into a snarl or tangle. I was always glad to render such assistance, not only because it was good policy for me to do so but also because there was a positive pleasure in employing my mind, particularly my creative imagination and faculties of construction, in this way.

I conceived an improved selling plan to be employed in increasing the distribution of a certain line of merchandise manufactured by the concern. This line for some reasons had "dragged", and finally seemed to be destined to be a failure, although the goods themselves possessed positive merit. The sales-manager was glad to shift this irksome responsibility to the shoulders of another, and the management felt that as all else had failed there was little to be lost in allowing me to try out my plan. From the very start the sales of this line of goods jumped in great leaps and bounds, and as a consequence I was placed at the head of a special department in control of the sale of these goods and some associated lines. Before very long I had made my department the best paying branch of the business, and I was

asked to assume a new position as general adviser directly under the control of the chief executive.

This was but the beginning. Seeing new opportunities for the sale of our product, I planned the enlargement of the plant and the increase of the selling force; this necessitated an increase in the capitalization of the business. The directors had confidence in me, by reason of my past record of successful achievement, and they finally agreed to all of my plans. The enlarged business met with great success, and our concern afterward absorbed several smaller plants in the same line. The corporation became one of the largest in the country, and I was placed at the head of the active management of its extended affairs. I became a national figure in the world of that particular line of business, and began to attract the attention of leading financial powers in the large cities.

I will pause for a time in this recital of the bare outline of my rapid rise to business success and financial independence and power. Before proceeding further in that recital I must call your attention to a remarkable condition of affairs which, almost from the very first, seemed to manifest itself. I find it difficult to make an intelligent statement of this thing, for it is of such a subtle and intangible nature that ordinary terms are inadequate to express it properly. However, I shall endeavor to explain to you "just how the thing worked"—to present to you the effects and results of this hidden cause or series of causes which operated in such a wonderful way in my career.

Perhaps the first conception of this strange condition of affairs which came to my mind was that, in addition to my own conscious mental efforts and powers, there was "something else at work" in my affairs—something below or above the surface of things which seemed to be working in my behalf and to my interests. I remember distinctly once saying to myself: "There seems to be a Something or Somewhat taking a hand in this game, and playing as an invisible partner, backing up my own play, furnishing advantageous leads, and playing trumps in response to my own leads". It seemed that I had a skilled partner in the game, and I soon grew to have confidence in him, in his skill, and in his desire to help me to win.

There was at first something almost uncanny about this condition of things. There was no mistaking the presence and activity of this invisible helper—but who or what was that Something? I almost became convinced that I was for some reason the recipient of some sort of supernatural

assistance. I began to see why the successful men whom I had formerly questioned had grown to believe that they were backed in this way. But I remembered what Colonel Forbes had told me concerning the strange and wondrous powers of that Something Within, and how remarkably efficient it was in furthering the interests of the individual after it had been properly awakened. I determined to write the Colonel, who had by that time returned to India.

In due course came a short note from the Colonel, saying, in substance: "Your 'invisible partner' and 'unseen helper' is none other than that Something Within, manifesting its power below the surface of things. It has made your desires, its desires; your aims, its aims; your general plans, its general plans. Trust it implicitly, and always count on its aid. It will never fail you, even though at times it may seem to have deserted you. But you must always play your own hand to the best of your ability, while depending upon this 'invisible partner' for backing, support, and assistance. Do your part properly, and it will do likewise".

From the letters of the Colonel, and from information gathered by me from other sources, as well as from my own experience, I finally "figured out" this thing as follows: That Something Within seems to be desirous of action, manifestation, and expression—of actualization, in short. To this end it cooperates with the ideas, desires, and plans of the relative aspect of the Self. It takes over the ideas, desires, and plans of the individual and then proceeds to work steadily and persistently toward their actualization and materialization. It seems to be like a great Will—a Power with the Desire to Act, or a Desire with the Power to Act.

But it evidently requires the material or stuff of Ideas fed to it, in order that it may proceed to Actualization. Therefore, before it will act for one, it must have the pattern of idealization presented to it. Its business is that of making real one's ideals—of actualizing that which he has idealized. This is the way I "figured it out," and, although I now smile at the naive, crude form of my expression of it, I still hold to the general fundamental truth of that primitive conception.

The strange thing about the operation of this silent force was that it would sometimes bring about results entirely unexpected by me, and often apparently quite opposed to my desires at that time; but in the end, its way was perceived by me to be far the best—sometimes really the only right way. That Something Within sometimes seemed to know, far better than

did I, just what was best for the development of the general plan or desire held by me. It would even seem to block my game at times, and to force me to make a move in an entirely different direction from that originally contemplated by me.

It would lead, or force, me away from the end I was trying to achieve, and all would seem to be lost. But, lo! sooner or later it would lead me back to that thing, by means of a circuitous route, and success would be mine. When these things happened, sooner or later I was forced to admit that the way chosen and followed by it was really "the only way". That Something Within evidently had perceived dangers and obstacles not apparent to me, and so led me around them. It pursued strange roads and by-paths, but in the end "it got there". Sometimes, when I became too much inflated with the sense of my own personal powers of perception and judgment, it would literally pick me up by the back of the neck, and then after holding me for a time suspended over the brink of the precipice of Ruin, would then gently deposit me in a good safe place, in a new environment—in just the place (as I afterward saw) in which my best interests would be served, and my deepest hopes and desires would be made possible of realization. My road to success was at times quite a rocky one—one very hard to travel. At times the setbacks seemed like failures—but later on were seen to be the best things that could possibly have happened at the time.

I frequently slipped back several feet, but I had advanced many more feet previously, and so was really just that many feet ahead— subsequent rapid advancement far more than made up the temporary lost distance moreover. All this required Faith—but I had this. In the current phrase of the present time, it was a case of: "It is a great game, if you don't weaken"! I didn't weaken—for under all I knew that "I Am I", and that that Something Within was there helping me to play the game, and often playing the leading part in it. Faith Power is an important factor in Personal Power.

As time progressed, I gradually made the important discovery that "wealth" is largely a matter of consciousness. Many persons who want money, and who are striving for money, actually tend toward driving it away from them by reason of their tenseness of thought and their failure to realize the "money consciousness". In order to handle millions, one must learn to think in the terms and ideas of millions. My old friend Harriman once expressed this pregnant truth when he said:

"It is just as easy to think and to talk in millions as in single dollars. This wizard of finance, whose feats were regarded by the public as closely approaching those of legerdemain, made this adage one of his cardinal principles of thought and action. He "thought and talked in millions, and his thought took form in action—his mental states took on material form—his ideals became realities.

There are many men in this country—in every city in this country—who have within them the germ-powers which, if allowed to develop and grow, would cause these men to become second Harrimans, or second Morgans, or even second Rockefellers. But practically none of these persons ever will really develop into this stage; in fact, the probability is that they will evolve merely into successful small shopkeepers, small news-stand keepers, or even small peanut-stand men—successful, in each case, but always on a small scale. They are content to think in single dollars—even in dimes—instead of thinking in millions. They manifest realities in the direct ratio of their ideals. Their thought takes form in actions of like calibre. Their mental states are reproduced in material form, but they are the same size in both subjective pattern and objective form.

The small-bore man will think that I am uttering nonsense when I say this; but the "big fellow" will know that I am right—he has proved it in his own case and realizes the truth of the principle, though he may not know just how or why it works out in this way. Many a man is manifesting the same energy thought, and business sagacity in running a news-stand or a peanut-stand, that others are employing in conducting great enterprises. One thinks in dimes, or in single dollars—the others think in thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions. There is such a thing as "money consciousness"; I know it to be a fact. Wealth must be created in thought before it may be created in material form. Money must exist in the Ideal, before it appears in the Real—sometimes I even think that the Ideal is the true 'Real', and that the so-called "Real" is but the reflection of the Ideal-Real!

Another of the important things I learned concerning the powers and activities of that Something Within was that strange course of action proceeding under what has been called "The Law of Attraction". I soon learned that there is a mental power of attraction corresponding to the physical law of gravitation. This law of mental attraction tends to coordinate and correlate the thoughts, ideas, and desires of the individual with the

external things associated with them. This law operates in all individuals to some extent, but when one becomes consciously aware of the presence-power of that Something Within, and his identity with it, then the law acts with greatly increased power. The Law of Attraction tends to "draw to" the individual the things, persons, or conditions in harmonious relation to his strongest thoughts, ideas and ideals. Or, quite often, instead of this, it tends to "push" the individual into the environment, conditions, or the presence of the persons or things which will tend toward the actualization of his idealizations. It often brings the mountain to Mohammed, but at other times seems to find it easier to push Mohammed to the mountains—the end attained is the same in either case, you see. When that Something Within "gets busy" in "working the Law", then things, persons, and conditions begin to move rapidly. It often astonished me greatly (though I was now becoming familiar with remarkable happenings) to note how things and persons would be drawn into my field of attention in response to my thoughts, ideas, and ideals—or how I was drawn into the field of attention of others in the same way. The persons I needed were drawn to my notice; and I was drawn to the notice of persons who needed me. If I needed additional information concerning a certain subject, then the whole world seemed desirous of pouring such knowledge into my mind. Books, magazines, overheard scraps of conversation, newspaper articles—all these gave me either the desired data or facts, or else furnished a hint as to where they could be found.

I have walked into bookstores, and, picking up a book at random, I would find in its pages either that which I wanted to know, or else a reference (possibly in a foot-note) to some other book or work containing the desired information. I have picked up a stray magazine, or an old newspaper, and have received just the particular items of knowledge needed, in the same way. The essential idea of one of my most successful plans was first given to me in an item printed in a faded and dirty scrap of old newspaper which I picked up on a seldom-used path through the forest near by the place where I was spending a summer vacation. An old book picked up carelessly from the stall of a second-hand book shop, the price of which was fifteen cents, gave me the suggestion of a new and striking name for a manufactured article which I was then pushing—a name which once heard could never be forgotten, and which stuck in the mind like the burr in the wool of the sheep.

I have "bumped into" men in turning corners—men whom I needed or who needed me. Ideas, names, plans, concepts, places, individuals—all these I have drawn to myself by the Law of Attraction, or else I have been drawn to them. Business associates have spoken of my "luck", and of the important part played by Chance in my career. But I tell you, positively, there is no such thing as Chance, in the sense of an uncaused happening.

Chance is but the name applied to "unknown" or "unperceived causes". Everything happens by reason of Cause; and all Cause operates under Law. The Law of Attraction is the great mother of Causes. "Nothing ever happens" without Cause. All events proceed according to Natural Law—and the Law of Attraction is one of the greatest, though one of the least understood, of all Natural Laws. I have also discovered that this Law of Attraction, operated by that Something Within, employs in its work the power of mental-currents, thought-waves, or mental vibrations—call these what you will. These currents or waves or vibrations emanating from the active mind of the individual extend far beyond his immediate vicinity. When employed by the Law of Attraction they often assume the form of gigantic whirlpools, drawing to the central focal point of that individual many things which are correlated to his ideas or ideals. Again, they often maintain a "swirl" motion—an outward circular motion away from the centre; these circling waves carry the ideas, or ideals, of the individual to great distances, bringing them to the attention and consciousness (or subconsciousness) of persons far and near who are in more or less harmonious correlation to them. These phenomena, however, are quite as natural as are those concerned with the law of gravitation—they have naught to do with the supernatural. While these subtle forces of Nature were being employed by that Something Within in my behalf, I was at the same time hard at work. I did not "fold my hands and calmly wait" for "mine own to come to me", as the good poet suggests. I worked hard and tried to wait as calmly as I could for the result that I definitely purposed and persistently determined should come to me. This "calmly wait" idea has been misunderstood by many. Burroughs really meant that the mental attitude should be that of calm, confident expectation, while at the same time both body and mind were busily active in work. Certain earnest teachers of "New Thought" were at one time noted for their insistent and persistent advice to "hold the thought"; but it remained for another—that strange genius, Elbert Hubbard—to express better the essential idea in the aphorism, "Hold the Thought—and Hustle"!

The operation of these finer forces of Nature, of which I have spoken, are far more common than is generally supposed; though their underlying principles are seldom rightly understood, and are frequently grossly misinterpreted. I am satisfied that very many persons have in some degree experienced happenings along the same lines as those which I have just mentioned. Certainly, practically all successful men and women have at times been conscious of "the invisible partner", and of the strange workings of the Law of Attraction. It is true that they usually attribute these to other causes, or else regard them as "strange happenings" beyond all explanation; this is one reason why they seldom mention them, even to their closest friends or members of their family. Many a man or woman who reads these lines will smile reminiscently at this point. They will know what I mean—just what I mean. They "have been there", if I may be permitted to use this expressive slang term in this connection.

The reason why more men and women have not had greater manifestations of this great natural power, and why those who have had "flashes" and occasional instances of it have not been able to reduce the operation to a science, is this: They have not as yet recognized and realized that Something Within—and this full recognition and realization is necessary for the full manifestation of this power. Some of the power "leaks through", or "breaks through" like the scattering rays of the sun obscured by heavy clouds. But only when the clouds pass away are the rays of the sun received in full power and quantity. The clouds are those of Ignorance—they must be brushed away from the face of the Sun of your being, the "I Am I", the Real Self, that Something Within.

Many strong individuals have attained a partial realization of the "I Am I", but still fall short of the complete experience. They "believe in themselves", have self-reliance, self-confidence, and know the Self to be a source of Personal Power; but their Self is entangled in the web of personality, and is hampered thereby. Personality is a valuable asset and instrument: but, before it may be employed with the greatest efficiency, the Individual must disentangle himself from it—then, free, he may return to it and employ it as his instrument of expression. The average man of self-reliance is more or less entangled in and caught up by his own mental machinery, and to that extent is a prisoner, hampered in his free action. When he tears himself free from his machinery, then, and then only is he able to operate that machinery as a true Master.

The individual must fully and completely, certainly and positively, recognize and realize that his "I Am I" is not a composite of his thoughts, feelings, and actions: but that it is that Something Within which has, with infinite pains, through the long ages, built up by the process of evolution that wonderful and intricate physical and mental machinery which is now at its disposal. He must realize that just as the consciousness of the plant is higher than that of the mineral; that just as the consciousness of the animal is higher than that of the plant; that just as the consciousness of the average human being is higher than that of the animal; so is there dawning upon certain of the human race a still higher consciousness than the ordinary self-consciousness of the average human being. This new consciousness of the reality of the presence and power of the "I Am I" is the consciousness of true and full Selfhood—a consciousness as much higher than that of ordinary self-consciousness as the latter is higher than that of the animal, or as that of the animal is higher than that of the plant, or as that of the plant is higher than that of the mineral.

Man's fundamental consciousness of himself may be said to consist of three different stages, viz., (1) The consciousness of "I", as distinct from other things; (2) the consciousness of "I Am", which brings with it an increased awareness of real existence; (3) the consciousness of "I Am I", or the certainty of one's true and real existence as a true and real Entity, apart from its incidental machinery of personality. Then there is another stage — the stage of full realization of the Id-Entity of that Entity with the Infinite Power from which all things proceed—where the "I Am I" intuitively recognizes itself as being a focal point and centre of expression of that Infinite Reality—this consciousness is expressed only in that tremendous and awful Statement of Being, "I Am THAT I Am"!

To this last and highest stage of consciousness and realization your "I" is proceeding. It is like the gradual awakening to waking consciousness of the person who has been asleep, or perchance dreaming strange dreams. Little by little comes the awakening. First, comes the consciousness of "I"; then that of "I Am"; then the "I Am I"; and, finally, wide awake, and with flashing eyes, the Self exclaims in triumphant tones, "I Am THAT I Am"! It has awakened fully to its essential identity with "THAT"—the Infinite Reality, the Universal POWER, from which all things proceed, and in which all things live, and move and have their being. This is the Soul's Awakening —the Self coming into its own.

VII. THE SECRET OF "LUCK"

From my own experience, as well as that of others whom I have observed, and in view of the operation of the expressive powers of that Something Within in the light of the additional knowledge concerning it which has come to me through the teaching of Colonel Forbes and from my own studies concerning this subject, I am firmly convinced that the remarkable "luck" which is perceived to attend the careers of most of the really successful men and women of all times is in reality not mere "luck" at all, but is rather the operation of natural laws set into operation by means of a conscious or unconscious drawing upon the resources of the Infinite Power from which all things proceed, through the channel of that Something Within.

Moreover, I am quite as firmly convinced that the "upsets" and "downfalls", or the "changes in luck" of individuals who have been remarkably successful up to a certain point, is due to the fact that these individuals, intoxicated by the success that has come to them, have ceased to depend upon and to draw upon this source of All-Power. Many individuals of this kind seem to lose their sense or intuition which caused them to draw upon this Universal Fount for their inspiration, guidance and power, and accordingly they become entangled in their own mental machinery and lose their original grasp of the Reality which has carried them upward and onward to their high position.

Instead of depending upon their intuition of that Something Within, that channel of the Infinite Power, they become obsessed by the sense of their own personal importance and powers, unduly attached to their own creations, and unduly impressed by the conviction that their success has been due to the special merits of "the John Smith part of themselves", rather than to the power inherent in their "I Am I" by reason of its being the focal point or centre of expression of the Infinite Power. In short, instead of being Egoistic, they become "egotistical". They mistake the comparatively insignificant "Me" for the all-powerful "I Am I". Or, stating it otherwise, they become so much impressed by their little "i" that they cease to place their dependence upon their great "I".

These individuals become so carried away by the incidents of the part which their "I" playing that they lose their consciousness of the Reality itself—the Real Self—which is the actor wearing the mask and the garments

of personality. They attach so much reality to the things with which they are surrounded, or to their possessions and achievements, that they lose sight of the importance of the only Reality involved in the play—the Real Self, or that Something Within. They take far too seriously the petty things of the manifestation; they undervalue (or even entirely ignore) the real things of THAT which is the cause of the manifestation. We say that these men "lose their grip", and so they do, but in a way different from what the world means when it employs this term. They "lose their grip" on Reality—that is what happens to them!

Carried away by Success, many persons lose that intuitive faith in that "Something" which inspired them in the beginning. They begin to smile at their old ideas and notions concerning this matter, and they say to themselves, "What a wonderful person I am"! It is true that they are often carried along the road of Success after this occurs—for a time, at least; the momentum acquired in the past, the imparted motion which has been given them by their original influx of power, causes them to run along for a time—then comes the smash-up.

It is as if the trolley-car were to withdraw its trolley-pole from the overhead cable—or the electric railway car to break its contact with "the third rail"—under the belief that its wheels were the true source of its motive power, instead of being merely the mechanism by means of which the car has run over the rails through the electric power imparted to it from the central power station. The "John Smith" is the trolley-car, its wheels are part of the mechanism furnished it; the Infinite Power is the central power house; the trolley-pole is the instrument of contact with that Infinite Power. The Self of the car knows itself as "I Am I", or possibly even possesses the deeper knowledge of "I Am THAT I Am" which is the inner consciousness of the power which makes it "alive". Woe unto him who depends only upon the various parts of his personal mental machinery, or upon his body and its furnishings, and who loses his perception of the spiritual trolley-pole and the power cable above it, and, worst of all, of the Power flowing through that cable.

The truly wise man escapes this common mistake. Never for a moment does he forget that in POWER—the All-Power—is to be found the source and fount of all his dynamic Personal Power. He manifests a true "humility"—not the negative, counterfeit humility which generally is given that title, but the true humility of the Finite facing the Infinite, of the

Microcosm contemplating the Macrocosm. He feels that humility which prompt him to give grateful thanks to "the powers that be" for making possible his success. I am not ashamed to confess that in some of the moments of my greatest triumphs I have paused to meditate upon the source and fount of my powers, and to murmur a heartfelt "Thank You; Thank You!" An old friend of mine, a victorious general in a great war, once told me that when the news of his great successes came to him he always withdrew into a quiet place, there silently to give a formal military salute to the Great Commander.

So far as that is concerned, the operation of "luck" by means of the application of the power of that Something Within, I would here say: It is my firm belief and conviction that the individual may have anything he wants, provided always (1) that he knows exactly what he wants; (2) that he wants it hard enough; (3) that he confidently expects to obtain it; (4) that he persistently determines to obtain it; and (5) that he is willing to pay the price of its attainment. I believe that I have here given you the Secret of Luck—it is for you to apply it in practice.

Some persons have very hazy and indefinite ideas concerning just what they want. Their wants are too indefinite, general, and hazy to create that strong, positive idealization which is the first requisite. If you ask them just what they want most in the world, you will find that they do not know, or at least cannot tell you with certainty. One moment they think that they want this thing, and the next moment another thing. Even when they think that they have arrived at a final decision, they usually will have but the most general ideas concerning it. You cannot get them pinned down to a clear-cut, definite, certain idea. You cannot "get them down to brass-tacks", as the current slang phrase expresses it.

They are like the two folks in the old fairy-story who were given three wishes by the good fairy. You will remember that one of those folks first wished some foolish thing; then, in anger, the other person wished another foolish thing in connection with the first choice; and then both persons had to employ the third wish in order to get rid of the results of the first two silly ones. Very few persons know either that which represents the "summum bonum", or greatest good, of their desires, nor just what constitutes the exact nature and character of the things that they believe that they want most. The first step is to know positively, clearly, definitely and certainly just what you do want most.

The next step is "to want it hard enough". Here, also, most persons "fall down". They do not know what it is to want anything "hard enough". They are feeble "wanters", when the matter is investigated. They are "pink-tea" wishers, instead of red-blooded, virile, "demanders". They would "like" this or that—they haven't the faintest conception of the "I've just got to have it" degree of desire which animates the real individual who goes after the thing he wants. Unless the Flame of Desire is aroused and be kept fiercely burning, there will be no Power set into operation by that Something Within. The Flame of Desire supplies the heat for the Steam of Will, and for much beside.

Again, very few persons begin to appreciate or to realize the efficacy of Faith Power. Faith is one of the great mental forces. This is taught in all religions and in many practical philosophies—but few understand it, few know just what it means, few take it in earnest. Faith is not blind belief or acceptance of the dogmas of assumed authority, as most persons believe; rather it is the earnest conviction and belief that comes from intuition. It is possessed by all persons who accomplish anything, and has been one of the principal factors in their attainment. Faith in that Something Within, when once you have recognized its presence and realized its nature, will set into operation its forces with great effect; lack of Faith will inhibit its operations.

Many persons lacking Faith in the successful outcome of their Desires and Ideals really are manifesting Faith in the opposite outcome; and by so doing they set the forces into operation in the wrong direction. The man who believes in his lack of power, and who confidently expects the failure of his efforts, really is exercising Faith in the direction of failure instead of that of success. Many persons, by reason of this unfortunate and erroneous mental attitude are really actively employing Faith Power against their own interests.

The Faith in failure, inspired by Fear, is equal in force and power, in result and effect, to that Faith in success which is inspired by Hope, and confident expectation of the actualization of that which has been idealized. The idealization accompanying Fear is as effective as is the idealization arising from Hope, provided that the degree of Faith or confident expectation be the same in each case. Verily, many a man could truthfully say, with Job, that "the thing I feared hath come upon me". It is as true as that, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he".

Likewise, few persons know what it is to pursue an idea or ideal with persistent determination. They have not learned how to "Will-to-Will". The

tremendous forces of the Will are not called into efficient activity by them. "They will but feebly", as it has been said. They do not know what it is to have a purpose firmly fixed in mind, insistently desired, confidently expected, and then persistently followed with indomitable determination and resolution to the end. Well did the ancient occultists say that "In Imagination and Will is to be found the Secret of Attainment". The Imagination to form and to hold the Image, and the Will to actualize it into material objective form and reality: there is a great truth in these words, if one has sufficient insight to perceive it.

Will Power, that indefinable but powerful weapon of the Self, is the sword firmly grasped in the right-hand of the "I Am I" which has awakened to a consciousness of its real essential nature and its innate powers. The Will lies closer to the "I Am" than any of the other mental instruments or tools. It operates along the lines of subconsciousness as well as of those of consciousness; it works while you sleep, as well as in your waking moments, once you have set it into operation. Its influence extends far beyond the petty limits of your physical presence, and it produces results at a distance when properly applied. Only those in whom the consciousness of that Something Within, the "I Am I", has been awakened, can begin to understand what is meant by the old esoteric aphorism: "Let the Will will itself into willing."

Finally, very few persons are content to "pay the price" of attaining that which they think they want. If they "want it hard enough" they are willing to pay the full price—otherwise they will "fall down" on this point. To "pay the price" of the attainment of that which you want, you must not only be willing to exercise your full mental and physical powers toward accomplishing the tasks and work lying along the path of attainment—you must do far more than this. You must pay the price of relinquishing the minor wants, wishes, and desires—you must sacrifice these on the altar of the Great Desire! You cannot spend your penny, and still keep it; you cannot have both the pie and the dime. You must be willing to pay, and to pay in full, for what you get. The Law of Compensation is in full force in Nature.

As the ancient saying informs us: "Said the gods to man, "What will you have? Take it, and pay for it" Nature and the Law of Things-as-they-Are do not demand sacrifices as gifts—they are quite willing to repay, and to repay generously. Equally insistent, however, are they that you, too, shall pay and

pay in full. You are required to sacrifice the minor and subordinate things for the major and essential ones. Few are willing to do this. They protest when they are told that they must throw aside their rag-dolls and tin-swords and face the realities of life. They hug their childish playthings to their breasts, and cry aloud when asked to surrender them for things far more valuable to real individuals. They are wedded to their idols—and as a consequence they never attain the realities of life.

The woman who wishes to get rid of her surplus "fat"—who desires to escape being "a mountain of tallow, a tub of lard"—must "want to hard enough" to "pay the price" of giving up the tempting French fried potatoes, the flaky and delicious cream pies, the appealing French pastry, the delightful bonbons, the crisp Vienna rolls, and the rest of the obesity-producing family of foods. She must give up in order to get. The man who desires to attain business success must "want to hard enough" to "pay the price" of diligent application and faithful work; of the sacrifice of many pleasures which would interfere with his main object and end; of foregoing many indulgences which would tend to "sidetrack" him; of rendering service and "value received" for what he gets. In one way or another—often in many ways—the price must be paid, the balance maintained, the Law of Compensation observed. Even when one endeavors to escape the workings of this Law, nevertheless he "pays the price"—the price of failure.

The individual who "knows just what he wants"; who "wants it hard enough"; who confidently expects it; and who insistently and persistently determines and demands to have it; such a one is quite willing to "pay the price". He is not deluded by the counterfeits of life, the pinchbeck imitations, the paste-diamonds, which are offered him as substitutes for the real things. He knows the value of that which he wants, and which he is determined to get; and he is quite willing to pay the full price demanded for it by the Law of Compensation. He demands to be given "his money's worth", however—he is not a spendthrift or waster. He makes a bargain with Destiny, and he demands that it be lived up to by both sides. Only the best is good enough for him—he refuses to accept less from Life—he knows that he is paying, and must pay for this, and he is quite content. This is the difference between the Superman and the ordinary run of men.

It has often occurred to me that the explanation of these things which I am relating to you is to be found in some fundamental fact which may be

stated somewhat as follows: 'The Infinite Presence-Power from which all things proceed, and of which that Something Within is a focal point or centre of expression, has as one of its essential and fundamental attributes that which has been described as "A Power with the Desire to Act; or a Desire with the Power to Act". In short, that it is a Spiritual Power, which, by the laws of its own free and unconditioned nature, tends toward outward expression and manifestation in action. It seems to find content and satisfaction in creative activity—its inner nature seems to want to express itself in creative activity. It must "want to" express itself in action, else it would not do so, for we cannot imagine it to be compelled to do so by any other power—for there is no power higher than itself, and it must be conceived as being absolutely free, independent, and unconditioned.

Looking back over the history of Creation, as such is revealed to us in the records of the earth, we see that this Creative Power is seemingly evolving ideas, forms, and ideals, which it then seeks to actualize in material and objective form—mounting from lower to higher in the course of evolution. Looking at the processes manifested in the worlds and solar systems around us, as revealed by astronomy, it would seem that the same law governs the creation and evolution of the worlds. Everywhere this Creative Evolution is seen to be underway. Moreover, advanced Science informs us that there is Life, Consciousness, and Will in everything—in the atoms and minerals, as well as in the plants, animals, and human creatures. This Life, Consciousness, and Will of this Spiritual Power seems to be ever pressing forward into expression and manifestation—evidently inspired by the Creative Urge in and back of all things.

It would seem that in Man this Creative Evolution, or Creative Process, has reached a new stage. Here, alone in the world of living things as known to us, is found a creature which is able to exercise Creative Power on its own account—to reproduce, as a microcosm, the creative work of the Whole which is the macrocosm. Man, it would seem has been creating his environment, to at least some extent, principally, along unconscious or subconscious lines. He has met with some degree of success, and with a large share of failures.

Now, it seems, Man is in the stage of evolution into the condition or plane of the Superman. He is beginning to recognize the real nature of his "I Am I"—that Something Within; and also to realize its essential identity with the Infinite Power from which it has proceeded, and of which it is the

focal point or centre of expression along at least certain lines of activity—to realize the consciousness of "I Am THAT I Am" With the dawn of this new consciousness comes the knowledge of the innate and inherent power of conscious creation of environment and conditions on the part of the awakened individuality. The personal "Me" being superimposed by the individual "I"—that "Something Within"—the individual begins to play an active part in the general process of Creative Evolution.

Man's part in the creative work seems to be chiefly (1) the furnishing of the ideals or mental pictures of that which he desires to become actualized in material objective form; (2) to focus the other powers of his mental being, i.e., his Desire, his Faith, his Will, toward the work of actualization, so that his whole being becomes, as it were, crystallized in the form of the Ideal to be realized in actualization; and (3) to open the entire channels of his individual being to the inflow of the Creative Forces of the Infinite Power, which will pour through him with the end of actualizing themselves in objective, material form.

I do not offer the above as the ultimate conception or final hypothesis of my philosophy. All that I claim for it is that it furnishes at least an understandable statement of "the way the thing works" It may be at least tentatively adopted as a "working hypothesis" to serve the purposes of convenience in thought and application, until a more complete, clearer, and more adequate one is presented. Moreover, I did not invent this hypothesis, nor did I reason it out originally for myself. While I long felt that it furnished a reasonable working hypothesis for the observed facts, I afterward discovered that the same idea had been thought and taught by many ancient philosophers and sages, of many lands and races.

If this idea seems to conflict with your faith and belief in your favored religion—though, rightly understood, it need not be essentially antagonistic to them—you may by a simple change in terms manage to retain the spirit of this idea and at the same time to adhere to the forms of your religious faith. You may do this by lifting the whole matter out of the theological realm, and gently depositing it in that of science and philosophy. You have but to substitute the term "Nature" for that of "the Infinite Power", and conceive Nature as being the manifestation of the Supernatural Infinite Power—being created by the latter— certain laws or "ways of working" being imposed upon it, and then being left to run according to such laws

without supernatural interference or assistance, or with only an occasional interposition of such supernatural power.

Many thoroughly orthodox theologians are quite content with such an adjustment of this hypothesis, and the employment of such terms. The existence and ultimate power of the Deity once admitted, they are content to have the rest explained in terms of scientific thought concerning Nature. Thus, my hypothesis should be acceptable to all such persons, if interpreted in this way in accordance with their religious beliefs and theological doctrines. The employment of the term "Nature" obviates many obstacles to thought along these lines. As my old friend, John Burroughs, once said: "To say that man is as good as God would to most persons seem like blasphemy; but to say that man is as good as Nature would disturb no one."

But, first and last, I am engaged here in no theological discussion or dogmatic assertion. I am merely stating that, to me, Nature seems to "work in this way". If Nature is but the manifestation of a Super-Natural Power, then that Power must have established these ways of Nature's workings, and must be responsible for them. More than this, this Power must be immanent in all Nature, and involved in her workings—otherwise she could not and would not work at all. I am dealing only with the scientific, not the theological explanation of things; and, at the last, there is probably but a difference of terms, and not of essential meaning, between my ideas and thought and that of the theologians who have attained the modern broader view of the New Theology. The scientific view of the Immanent Infinite and Eternal Principle of Being, and the advanced theological view of the Infinite and Eternal Immanent Creative Being is very slight—the reconciliation of their terms would probably mean a reconciliation of the remaining differences between them.

Once admitted that there is an Infinite and Eternal Power from which all things proceed, and in which all things live and move and have their being—that All is in the ALL, and the ALL in All—then the rest is merely a matter of choice of terms and the non-essential differences of interpretation of the One Reality and its Creative Manifestation. As the ancients were wont to say: "The TRUTH is one, though men call it by many names"; and "ALL roads lead to the One." The Faith of the advanced scientist who sees Life, and Mind, and Will in all things—all a manifestation and expression of the One Life, One Mind, One Will—is as earnest and as firm, as devout and as truly religious, as that of the most orthodox

theologian of any of the many differing schools of religious thought. God is in Nature, just as truly as Nature is in, of, and from God. "Some of us call it Nature; others call it God." Use your own terms in your own way, just so you adhere to the essential working principles.

VIII. THE INNER SECRET

The Inner Secret which I sought for so many years, and which was finally revealed to me in my recognition, realization and manifestation of that Something Within, I now find difficult to express in ordinary terms, although my understanding of it has grown, increased and developed continuously from the moment of my first experience of its presence and power. The difficulty probably arises by reason of the fact that this knowledge is essentially an inner experience, whereas our common terms are adapted merely to the relation of experiences arising from our contact with the outside world of things.

As near as I can express it in understandable words, the Inner Secret may be said to consist of the consciousness that the "I Am I" —that Something Within—is a focal point or centre of presence, consciousness, and power, in and of the Infinite and Eternal Creative Presence-Power from which all things proceed, and in which all things live, and move, and have their being. This consciousness, however, is more than the mere intellectual assent to the proposition—again, it is more than the mere "feeling" that the premise is a true and valid one. It is, rather, a deep-seated realization that this is the very truth— truth no more to be doubted than the truth that one's self is in existence. In fact, it is an evolution of that elemental conviction: first comes the conviction that "I Am", then that "I Am I", and then that "I Am THAT I Am". And the last stage is as certain in its conviction as is the first one.

This conviction that "I Am THAT I Am" is really a conscious certainty that the "I", being the focal point or centre of expression of the Ultimate Presence-Power, is essentially and actually identical in substance and essence with that Ultimate Presence-Power. One in this consciousness feels no doubt whatever of the truth of this tremendous conviction. He "knows" it just as he knows that he "is"—that he is in existence as a living being at that moment. He not only experiences this fundamental consciousness of identity, but his intellect agrees that there is nothing else for his "I" to be, and nothing else to be his "I", except this focal point or centre of expression of the Ultimate Presence-Power. His Intellect and his Intuition are in full agreement upon this point.

It will be seen by any careful thinker that such a fundamental report of consciousness must exert a tremendous vitalizing, animating, and inspiring

effect upon the individual. It brings with it a sense of eternal existence, of invincibility, of certainty, of security, before which all fears, doubts, and distrust fall back in defeat. The old fears and doubts now seem to be but the fantastic imaginings of an unpleasant dream; the soul seems to have awakened from a troubled sleep in which everything was distorted and unreal. If you can imagine a Napoleon, a Plato, an Edison, a Darwin, a Newton, a Shakespeare, awakening from a dream in which he had imagined himself to be an ignorant, stupid swineherd, then perhaps you may get a faint idea of the consciousness of the individual who has found the Inner Secret.

As the new consciousness asserts itself more and more—and this it does when the individual is prepared for the experience—then the individual gradually lives more and more in the sense of this identity with his Source and his Base of Being. Or, to put it otherwise, he lives less and less in his "Me" consciousness, and more and more in his "I" consciousness—less and less in his Personal Self, and more and more in his Real Self. Or, stating it in still other terms, it is as if the individual continues to lose more and more of the imaginings of his late dream, and to gain more and more of his consciousness of his real identity and character. All these illustrations, however, are far too feeble symbols of this wonderful consciousness of identity with Reality which comes to those who have entered into the recognition, realization, and manifestation of that Something Within.

In the foregoing pages, I have called your attention to the effect of this new birth of consciousness upon the physical and mental instruments of the "I Am I"—of its wonderful "quickening" power upon their activities. But there are other strange changes which came to me, and which come to all who enter into this new life of the soul—those who are "born again".

Among these other changes, one of the most striking is that which may be called the "positivation" of the individual. This term is a clumsy one, but I know of none other to use in its place. By "positivation", I mean "being made positive". The individual thus "made positive" becomes all that the term "positive" means in ordinary thought and speech. His "negative" qualities and characteristics gradually disappear, and are replaced by their positive opposites. If you will think of the term "positive" as meaning "that which makes the individual stronger, better, and more efficient" —and of

the term "negative" as the exact opposite of this conception—you will grasp my thought.

I soon became aware of this process of "positivation" which was under way in me. Without any effort on my part to impress my personality or individuality upon others, I found that there was now "a something about me" which made other persons respect me, defer to me, give me their interested attention, and to fall in with my ideas and suggestions. I was far from being domineering, yet I dominated those with whom I came in contact. I was not egotistical, yet I was given that respect and interested attention which is as food and drink to the egotist. I was not "bossy", yet my right to authority was granted readily. In short, without any striving to be "positive", I was accorded all that which comes to the truly "positive" character in all walks of life.

I have sometimes thought that perhaps this "positivation" arose from the subconscious perception on the part of the other persons that I was in contact with the Source of All-Power—that I was, indeed, a focal point or centre of expression of that POWER. Or, to state it otherwise, it has seemed to me that the slumbering and dreaming Something Within —the Real Self—of others, in some subconscious way at least dimly sensed that that Something Within myself had awakened into consciousness and power. It was as if the "slumbering god" in the others had sensed the presence of the "awakened god" in myself, and was endeavoring to come in contact with it —perhaps it is akin to the dim perception of the voice of an awakened friend on the part of one who is dreaming. At any rate, this is the way that "the thing seemed to work".

As I developed in the new life and new consciousness, I became aware that everything savoring of bluster, brag, boasting and desire to impress other persons, was rapidly leaving me. I became aware that, in place of these there was coming to me a subtle but powerful atmosphere of "spiritual class". By "spiritual class", I mean that indefinable something which sets in a class by themselves certain men and women—yes, even certain animals—as higher in the scale of individual character than are their associates. A man, or an animal, of this kind is instinctively recognized as a leader by his or its associates, even by strangers, and is given his or its class without any visible effort. If you will remember what I have said about the personal atmosphere of Colonel Forbes, you will see more plainly just what I mean by "spiritual class".

While I was fully cognizant of this new "class" which had come to me— of the new personal atmosphere which surrounded me— and while I fully appreciated the value of the same in my dealings with other men, yet, I assure you, I never exerted even the least conscious effort to create or maintain this impression upon the minds or feelings of others. Instead, I knew with certainty that it existed, and that it would be felt—just as a strong and powerful animal knows just what it is and how others will regard it—and I devoted my attention entirely to the main objects of my plans and purposes. Just as I knew that the crowd of more negative persons would sense my real character and powers, so I knew that the positive individuals with whom I came in contact would recognize me as one of their own kind—and they did so.

I progressed rapidly, rising from high places to those still higher. I became known nationally—then internationally—as a "great captain of industry", and as one who had "arrived" and had "done things". I became one of those who combined and concentrated separate industries into what were called "trusts". I became a great organizer—a builder of industries — a creator of organizations. I have been lauded as a world benefactor, and I have been abused as an enemy of the race—all depending upon the point of view of those making the criticism. Personally, I do not regard either of these descriptions as correct; I think rather that I was an impersonal dynamic force building and creating things and conditions which, while serving a useful purpose and service in the evolution of things, will eventually be torn down and their foundations employed as the base of far better things and conditions.

I neither seek credit, nor do I fear adverse criticism, for what I have done. In truth, I sought neither to advance the freedom of mankind nor to bind it in chains. I thought but little about such things, in fact. I have tried to cause as little distress as possible; I have endeavored to help individual men, and the race in general, as much as I could—this simply because I "felt that way", and not from a sense that such was my mission.

My "mission" has always seemed to me to be that of manifesting the Creative Energy of which I am a focal point or centre of expression. I built, I created, I put-together—sometimes I was compelled to tear down in order to build better things on the old foundations. Men have sometimes called me ruthless—I may have been so, but, if so, only because the Creative Energy of that Something Within insisted that its work was to be done, no

matter what stood in its way. Most positively, I have never maliciously or revengefully worked harm to anyone. I have been as impersonal and as elemental as a natural force, both in my constructive and my destructive activities. But, while I mastered—I also served. The Law of Balanced Compensation decrees that "The Master must render Service." Service is the "other side" of the shield of Mastery.

Men have accused me of being avaricious, greedy, mercenary—a selfish, a rapacious money-grabber—and, indeed, I do not doubt but that I appeared as such to them, for they could see only the outside of things and not the inner motives. In truth, I have met but few men to whom money as money, or possessions as possessions, were of as little consequence as to myself. Beyond the comparatively small amount of money required to keep me in comfort—to furnish me with reasonable necessities with a moderate admixture of luxuries—money and possessions have meant nothing to me. Money I have regarded as but the counters of the great game which I have played so successfully—the game itself was the real thing to me. I was like the boy who earnestly plays the game for the sake of the game—not for the cheap marbles which are the apparent objects for which he plays.

You doubt this. Well, think a moment and you will understand it better. On all sides you will see men exerting their energies, mental and physical, in playing games. Golf, tennis, baseball, cricket, polo, and the rest—all these furnish examples and illustrations of the principle. The zest of the playing is the chief reward for the work—the other rewards are merely symbolic. There is but one keener joy than the joy of Playing the Game—and that is the joy of Winning the Game! I played the Great Game, and have experienced the keen zest of the play; I have been victorious in the Great Game, and I have enjoyed the victory. My joy, however, came from the inner consciousness of power and efficiency—not from the applause of the crowd. He who depends upon the applause of the crowds for his pleasure and satisfaction is a slave—I am a master, for I expect applause from none but myself; my keenest joy comes from the approval of the Something Within.

Strange as it may seem, I have verified the ancient esoteric doctrine of Non-Attachment. I am not "attached" to things or conditions—I am not bound by them. They are but counters in my game—incidents of my play. I am "attached" only to that Something Within, and to THAT of which it is the focal point or centre of expression. I make things and

circumstances—I play with things and circumstances—but I am tied by neither things nor circumstances: I am Free, for I Am THAT I Am! I am not deluded by my creations—I do not let them own me, control me, or master me. All things are good for me to use; but nothing is good enough to use me. If anything, or even all, that I have won and now possess, began to master and dominate me, I would hasten to part with that thing or things, even though I were utterly impoverished by doing so, and I would consider the price well paid for my freedom. Thus do I regard money, things, and possessions—merely things needed to Play the Game, but never to be mistaken for the Game itself, and, still less, for the Meaning of the Game!

I have retired now from active business life, though I retain a control of the great enterprises in which my wealth is invested. I watch things carefully, and I direct when direction is necessary. I have many men—good men—working for me now; but my spirit pervades their work and is immanent in their activities on my behalf. I take recreation in other creative work—creative work to which I devote large sums of money each year. Many are the schools, colleges and libraries which have been assisted financially by me. Many are the "charities" largely supported by me but in which my name is not known—there is great sport in the "Anonymous" game of giving, I have found. I do not give from a sense of duty, or of charity, but because I "feel like it"—because it gives me pleasure and affords an outlet for my Creative Energy.

I devote much time to study—principally along the lines of Science. I take a lively interest in Philosophy, also—that is to say Practical Philosophy. Abstract Metaphysics has but little interest for me—why should it? I have seen the course of Philosophy turned in my direction, during the past thirty years. Bergson's "Creative Evolution" is in practical accord with some of my fundamental ideas; the new doctrine of "Pragmatism" with its emphasis upon Action, and its test question: "Will it work?" is akin to my thought. Moreover, all philosophical and religious thought seems to be moving toward my basic postulate that "There is an Ultimate POWER, from which all things directly or indirectly proceed, and of which all things are forms and phases of manifestation and expression."

Likewise, I devote reasonable time and attention to the activities of Play. I have learned the truth of the old adage concerning the fate of Jack who had "all work and no play"; and long since I determined to escape a like

ending. I believe that a busy man, particularly a middle-aged business man, should have certain times in which he is able and willing to throw aside all cares and all problems, and to become once more a boy in heart and in action. Every man is really a boy at heart, and he should give that boy an opportunity to express himself once in a while—the man will be all the better for giving the boy a chance. I play golf, take long walks in the country, go to "shows"; I take vacations whenever possible, and I make a practice of going to Florida or to California every Winter. Moreover, I travel widely and take an interest in what I see and hear during my journeys. Thus, I keep young in body, in mind, and, above all, in spirit.

"Are you happy?" I fancy I can hear you ask. Yes, I am as happy as any human being has ever been and yet remained a human being. I believe that there are higher stages of happiness than that of the human being, and it may be that somewhere, somewhen, I shall experience such. But, I believe that the saying of the dying philosopher—"One world! at a time, brother"—is a sane aphorism. And while I am here I am extracting the full meed of happiness from the desirable things of this world. "From all of life's grapes I press sweet wine". I find that this is best accomplished by observing the rule of the Golden Mean, viz., "Nothing too much". Balance, Poise, and Moderation—that is the safe rule. I have also discovered that making others happy is one of the greatest sources of my own happiness.

Happiness, however, I have found, comes largely through effective expression of all that is in oneself. Manifestation and Expression of the Creative Power constitutes one of the highest forms of happiness. It is not the mere "getting" of things that furnishes happiness—it is rather the "doing" of things. It is true that the "getting" follows the "doing", provided the latter be properly performed; but the real zest is in the doing, the getting being but the acquirement of the symbols of the deed. I believe that the Creative Urge in Nature—or in God, if you like better that term—is a source of great happiness and content to the Ultimate Presence-Power known to us by either (or both) of these names. Moreover, as I have said, I believe it to be the chief source of man's possible happiness.

I feel keenly the spirit of Kipling in his inspiring words concerning that Heaven in which:

"And only the Master shall praise us, and only the Master shall blame;
And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work for fame.

But each for the joy of the working, and each, in his separate star,
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things as 'They are!'"

"But, have you no Religion; does Religion play no part in your life?" I also hear you ask.

I will say that Religion plays a very important part in my life—but Theology plays practically no part therein. To me, Religion means a firm belief in a Supreme Presence-Power; a faith in the beneficence of that Supreme Presence-Power; a dependence upon that Supreme Presence-Power; and a desire to manifest and express the activities of that Supreme Presence-Power through the channel of my individuality. If such be Religion, then I am filled with it to overflowing—I am fairly drunk with its spirit. If, however, as some would have us believe, Religion has Fear as one of its essential elements, then I am lacking in that essential element, for Fear has no place in my spiritual make-up. I fear neither man nor God: I fear not men, because I am a Master among men; I fear not God, because to me God is not an object of Fear, but one of Love, Faith, Trust, Confidence. My God is not a cruel, tyrannical slavedriver—my God is my best friend.

I believe in the Supreme Principle of Being —the Infinite, Eternal Presence-Power, from which all things proceed, and in which all things live and move and have their being. I believe in that Infinite Presence-Power even as I believe in my own existence; for I believe that my own existence is based and grounded in that Supreme Existence. Every report of my reason, and every report of my intuition, is to the effect that such Supreme Presence-Power exists, has always existed, and will always exist in infinite presence, power, and identity—One unchangeable, indivisible Reality. I do not base my belief upon dogmas nor upon the claimed authority of books or persons: I base it upon the inevitable, invariable, and infallible report of my own reason and intuition, from which all real belief must proceed. Reason is no foe to my Faith—it is rather one of its staunchest friends and allies.

My Faith is not merely a faith and belief in the existence of the Supreme Presence-Power, however, but is also a firm faith and inner assurance of the beneficence of that Infinite Reality. I not only rest thereupon my hope of future welfare in other realms of being, but also my hope of present welfare in this world of being. My faith is a living faith, dealing with the Here and Now, as well as the Then and There. I hold that if Religion has

any practical, pragmatic value, it must be capable of being employed in the present life, as well as in the future one; of being used in the business of everyday life, as well as in the enterprises of the life beyond. I believe that Religion may be used effectively in even the smallest affairs of life, as well as in the great ones. I have demonstrated in my own life the truth of this conviction.

My Religion is a source of the greatest joy to me, moreover. When I indulge (as I frequently do) in thought concerning the infinite manifestation of the Supreme Power—its expression in the infinitely great and the infinitesimally small—its expression in the infinitude of infinitudes of worlds and planes of existence—then I am filled with a deep joy arising from a conscious certainty that I am included in the content of that Infinite Presence and a partaker of its Infinite Power—that in it I live and move and have my being, and that it is immanent and abiding within myself. I know of no greater joy than that of a consciousness of being "In Tune with the Infinite", and that which comes from "The Practice of the Presence of God", as an old writer once called it.

My Religion brings to me a sense of Absolute Security. I feel that I am safe and secure on the bosom of the Infinite Ocean of Presence-Power, rising and falling with its waves, and never in danger of being destroyed or harmed. In the words of the old song, "Then, calm and peaceful do I sleep, rocked in the Cradle of the Deep". The conviction of security which came to me as a symbol in my early dream (as I have related to you) has now become a fixed, constant, and inalienable fact of my mental and spiritual being. Fear has departed from me: Faith has made me whole.

As to the future life, or lives, which I feel to be before me, likewise I experience no fear. I am convinced that the Power which has me in charge Here and Now, will have me in charge Then and There. As for the survival of my personal self, I feel that though the incidental and temporal aspects of Personality may be, and probably will be, eventually washed away by the tides of Time and Change, yet my Individuality, my "I Am I", will persist and will take on a still higher sense of identity with its Infinite Source. I can conceive of the limitations of its apparent separateness being broken down, so that it may expand in its consciousness of identity with the ALL. I can conceive of it, like Holmes' "Chambered Nautilus," building "more stately mansions," from time to time. The idea of Eternal Progress is attractive to me: but even this I am content to leave "in the laps of the gods"—to the

will of the Infinite—I cheerfully accept the decision, whatever it may be. Like Margaret Fuller¹⁶, like John Burroughs¹⁷, "I accept the Universe."

As to my "salvation," I have no doubt. I know that all that is real about me—all that is worth "saving"—will be "saved." The rest, I am willing to part with. The Real in me—the Real Self—being of the very essence and substance of the Infinite Presence-Power—cannot be destroyed, cannot be "lost." By its very nature, the Real Self must be eternal and immortal, beyond fear of hurt or destruction. The Infinite is indivisible, and cannot part with portions of its own essence and substance—it is eternal and indestructible in all of its parts. Therefore, if my "I Am I" is a part of the Infinite Presence-Power, it cannot be destroyed or "lost." I feel the essential truth of the intuition of the uneducated man who once experienced this conviction of Truth, and who attempted to express it in the following remarkable utterance: "O Lord, you cannot lose me!"

As for formal creeds and religious organizations, I may say that I have found no need for them, although I recognize their service to those who have not as yet outgrown them. I have studied all religions; and I believe some of all of them, but all of none of them. I see in each and all of them the attempts of man to discover the Inner Secret; each useful in its time and place, but none final, ultimate, or absolute in its interpretation of the Truth which intuition reports to be underlying them. To me, "all roads lead to the mountain-top" and "the Truth is One, though men call it by many names." I feel at home in every temple, and before every shrine; but I swear allegiance to none of them. I am inclusive; not exclusive, in my Religion.

I am in full spiritual sympathy with these very true words of Emerson:

"I laugh at the lore and the pride of man. At the sophist schools and the learned clan. For what are they all, in their high conceit. When man in the bush with God may meet?"

To those who may object that this mention of my Religion has no place in a work of this kind, the subject of which is the revelation of the Inner

¹⁶ Margaret Fuller (1810–1850), American journalist, critic, and women's rights advocate. She reportedly said, 'I accept the universe!' John Burroughs later echoed this. The narrator cites both as exemplars of cosmic acceptance.

¹⁷ John Burroughs (1837–1921), American naturalist and writer. He was known for embracing a pantheistic acceptance of nature. The narrator links him with Margaret Fuller.

Secret of Success and Personal Power, I would say that I am utterly unable to divorce my Religion from my Science, my

Philosophy, my Principles of Everyday Life, my Rules of Success, my formula of Personal Power. All these are so intermingled and intertwined that I cannot separate them. All of these things seem to me to be but varied aspects of the Truth of that Something Within, of that essential Truth which constitutes the Inner Secret of Success and Personal Power, and of much else besides.

I do not insist, however, upon your accepting my particular interpretation of Religion. If you desire to do so, you may take my basic principles and blend and harmonize them with your own particular religious conceptions:— they often blend and harmonize very well in such cases. There is one point which you must not eliminate, however, the point which may be expressed as the Immanence of the Infinite Power—the Presence and Power of the Something Within which is the focal point and centre of expression of that Something Without! The Indwelling Spirit is the very essence of the Inner Secret.

IX. THE AFTER-WORD

In the foregoing pages of this narrative I have endeavored to bring out the essential features of the Inner Secret of Success and Personal Power which have been revealed to me as Truth, and which I have first recognized, then realized, and then manifested in my own life work. I have mentioned certain general features of my own manifestation of this wonderful principle in order to illustrate its workings, but I have thought it better to dwell principally upon the essential features of the principle itself rather than upon the details of my own manifestation.

At the last, as you must admit, the important thing to know is that there exists a principle which may be applied by anyone and everyone in actual life experience. My own experience is merely illustrative of the practical application of that principle. This experience may be duplicated, or even surpassed by anyone who will recognize, realize, and manifest the Presence-Power of that Something Within, which latter is the focal point and centre of expression of that Infinite Presence-Power from which all things proceed, and in which all things live and move and have their being.

I wish to emphasize especially this fact, viz., that anyone who knows what I know may do what I have done. My effort has been to awaken in you that "knowing", so that you may achieve the "doing". The steps follow in logical order, as follows: (1) the Recognition; (2) the Realization; and (3) the Manifestation.

I have demonstrated the universality of the principle of the Inner Secret, and of its successful application, by careful experiments upon certain of those whom I have gathered around me as associates in my business enterprises. In fact, my great and general success has been greatly augmented by the fact that I have been able to arouse the Something Within in many of my leading associates and employees. My enterprises have been veritable incubators of "men who can do things". Many of these men are still associated with the enterprises founded by me, and many others of them have forged ahead for themselves and have made names for themselves in the business world, and have attained wealth and position, in their own enterprises and those of others with which they have associated themselves.

I wish to say here, however, that I have found a great difference in the various individuals to whom I have sought to impart this Inner Secret.

Some of them, many of them in fact, have seemed unable to grasp even the faintest idea of what I am talking about. They have listened respectfully, but I have been able to see at once that no recognition has been awakened in them; they have afterwards talked among themselves of the "queer notions the old man has in his brain"—the seed has failed to take lodgment in their minds.

Others have caught a faint glimpse of recognition, and have been benefited thereby, but they have failed to proceed to the stage of realization. Of these, however, I still have hopes—the seed will begin to send forth roots and sprouts in due time. Others have had a fair amount of recognition, and even a faint degree of realization, but though they have been rendered more efficient thereby, they have not as yet been able to proceed to manifestation. Others, again, have developed as does a seed and plant in rich soil, with a kindly sun, and with warm rains. Some of these I feel will eventually surpass even my own degree of manifestation, for they have grasped all that I know of this great subject and, in addition, are now building new structures upon that foundation.

I feel, on the whole, that the general scattering of this seed of knowledge will be helpful to all upon whose mental soil the seed may fall—even though that soil be not as yet ready to receive and nourish it. I feel that I will have "started something" in every mind into which this seed falls. No one can have this Truth presented to him, and afterward be the same as before the presentation. Even though the Truth be rejected, the memory of it will remain to haunt the consciousness, until, finally, the matter will be again considered and the subject further investigated. I feel that, as Emerson said, "My words will itch in your ears until you receive them". Once presented to you, you will never be able to get rid of this Truth—you "cannot escape your own good".

I firmly believe that the human race is entering into a new and advanced stage of the evolution of consciousness. While many of the race have but the most elementary "I" consciousness, and still fewer the full "I Am I" consciousness, there are many who are now beginning to enter into the "I Am THAT I Am" stage of consciousness of which I have spoken in this book. These advanced individuals are the leaven which I believe will raise the mass of the race by their influence and suggestive thought—thought is contagious, you know. In time, the new consciousness will become the

common and ordinary one of the race. In the meantime, the individuals who have it are like the pioneers in a new country, breaking ground, blazing trails, and preparing the path over which their successors will travel in the future.

I believe that this is the secret of that intuition had by many great minds concerning the Coming of the Superman. I believe that the Superman will be the man of this new consciousness—the man who recognizes, realizes, and manifests the Something Within—the man who has discovered the Inner Secret. The sun of the Superman is rising—in time it will be Mid-Day, and High-Noon, for him. The Superman will be the Inheritor of the Earth. It has been said that "The meek shall inherit the earth"¹⁸, but this "meekness" has been mistakenly supposed to be submissiveness, negativity, and spiritlessness. True meekness is not this: it is rather the awareness that the egotistical, vain-conceit of Personality is absurd, but that the true pride and "spiritedness" of Individuality alone is proper and warranted; and that true Mastery carries with it the obligation of Service. There is a world of difference between the negative, meek "Me" and the positive, poised, restrained, well-balanced "meekness" of the "I". The truly meek individual may say: "my 'i' is as naught, but my 'I' is glorious, for 'I Am THAT I Am!'"

I believe that the great men of history, present as well as past, have had at least a glimpse or a flash of this Inner Secret, and that their success has been due to it. I think that this may be proved by a careful study of the lives of such men and women. In all of such individuals there will be found to have been present a strange, indefinable, sense and awareness of a "Something", and a reliance thereupon. Sometimes this conviction seems to have been in the individual from the time of his birth, though unfolding itself gradually as the years passed. In other cases the Truth seems to have come in a flash of Illumination, leaving the individual almost dazed by the discovery. Reading the lives of the great men and women of history, one often may actually discover the exact period when this Illumination was experienced, and when the "new life" was begun; the moment of "the new birth" may be recognized in the history of the case.

¹⁸ A saying from the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:5). The narrator reinterprets meekness not as submissiveness but as the poise of the true self that has transcended ego.

All this, while interesting and instructive, must be subordinated to the question in your mind, "How does all this affect me? What use can I make of this Truth, if such it be? To this question I answer: "This affects you in that degree in which you open your mind and soul to the influx of the Light which is now beating upon you. Let it enter, and flow through the channels of your being; then the dark places of your soul will be illumined by the Light, and that Something Within will awaken from its slumbers and its dreams of the night. Once awakened into self-recognition and self-realization, it will pass gradually, though rapidly into the stage of self-manifestation. Then you will need only to see the 'one step at a time', which the Kindly Light will reveal to you; as for the rest, you may calmly and serenely say 'Lead thou me on'. Each step taken, the next will be revealed to you. Step out boldly, confidently, and with a sense of infinite security. The Kindly Light is the Light Within—the Light of the Spirit, which is also the Light of the World. Have Faith! Let your slogan be: "I Can, I Will; I Dare, I Do"

To those who may feel themselves hampered in this perception by the terms and forms of thought of orthodox theology, I would say: Turn over the pages of the Scriptures, and you will find therein the statement that God created man in His own image. You need not be told that this "own image" is not that of the physical body—such an idea is grossly anthropomorphic, and is worthy only of savages. Again, a little thought will reveal to you that this "own image" cannot be that of the finite, imperfect, petty personal "Me" or "I"—not the "John Smith" personal aspect of your Self; that, indeed, would be a thought degrading the character of the Infinite One. Then what is left to be this "own image"? Naught but the Real Self, that Something Within—the "I Am THAT I Am". There is nothing else in you to be this "own image", and nothing else in you for this "own image" to be. Your Scriptures (and all other Scriptures, as well) are filled with veiled and guarded references to the Inner Secret—read them anew in this new light, and you will find therein "the Truth which shall set you free".

If, on the other hand, you are one of those who have "cut loose from" all revealed religion, and who incline to the scientific aspect of Philosophy, I bid you to remember that the final dictum of such Philosophy is that: "Reality is Power; a thing is Real in the degree in which it has Power". Again,

remember that such Philosophy is best expressed in Herbert Spencer¹⁹'s celebrated statement that: "We are ever in the Presence of an Infinite and Eternal Energy, from which all things proceed". A little further thought will make it clear to you that there is nothing else for your "I Am I" to be other than an expression of this Infinite Power—this Infinite and Eternal Energy; and that just as in it you must live and move and have your being, so must it ever be present and active within yourself —immanent within your individual being. In other words, that you are the Microcosm of that Power or Energy, the Infinite Power or Energy being the Macrocosm. You are, and must be, a focal point or centre of its expression in manifestation.

"So, you see, whether we call that Infinite Presence-Power by the name of God, or Supreme Being, or by that of Infinite Power, or Infinite and Eternal Energy, it must be conceived of as THAT from which all things proceed, and in which all things live and move and have their being, and which must be immanent and abiding within all of its expressions and manifestations. So that, at the last, YOU must be THAT in your essential being and nature, and THAT must be in that which you call YOURSELF. Therefore, you are compelled to state that "I Am THAT I Am". There is nothing else but THAT to be your Real Self; and nothing else for your Real Self to be except THAT. Your intuition tells you that "I Am I", and your intellect (when extended to its final report) tells you that

"THAT is the ALL". When your Intuition and your Intellect combine their reports, and come in contact with each other in a common report, then in a flash of illumination the magic circle of thought is completed, and the Awakened Soul cries out joyfully: "I Am THAT I Am"

This, then, is the Inner Secret, i. e., the discovery that "I Am THAT I Am". This is the recognition and the realization, upon the heels of which the manifestation of Success and Personal Power follows. This is the Magic

¹⁹ Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), English philosopher and sociologist, known for his concept of the 'Unknowable' and the phrase 'an Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed.' The narrator uses this to bridge his spiritual insight with scientific language.

Key, the Magic Wand, the Magic Touchstone, the Philosophers' Stone²⁰, which men have sought for in the past ages. This is the Universal Solvent, the Alkahest²¹, of the ancient alchemists. This is the Ultimate Truth, "which when known all becomes known". This is "That Something", my brothers and sisters, for which you have been seeking in the past. This is that, ye seekers, to the possessor of which "all things shall be added",

Take this little seed of Truth which has herein been presented to you. Afford it hospitable lodgment in your mind and soul. Let the sun of your intuition shed its kindly rays upon it. Water it with the warm rains of your interested thought and attention. Give its roots room in which to spread and to plunge still deeper into the soil of your mentality. Confidently expect the appearance of its shoots above the surface; these to be followed by its leaves, its blossoms, its fruit. Here is the prophecy: "In the degree that you recognize the Truth in thought; in the degree that you realize the Truth in feeling; in that combined degree will you be able to manifest the Truth in will-action."

"The individual who enters into the recognition, realization, and manifestation of the Something Within passes from the Plane of Effects to the Plane of Causes; he is no longer a mere Creature, but becomes an actual Creator. He moves from the negative pole of Causation to its positive pole. He ceases to be a Slave of Circumstances and Environment; he becomes a Master of Circumstances and Environment. The Finer Forces of Nature are subconsciously and superconsciously set to work in his behalf. He expresses all that is within himself, and he attracts to himself that outside of himself which tends toward his successful expression of that Something Within. Things and conditions assume a new polarization toward him—they become the negatives to his positive polarity.

²⁰ The legendary alchemical substance said to turn base metals into gold and grant immortality. The narrator equates the Inner Secret with this ultimate transformative power.

²¹ In alchemy, the hypothetical universal solvent capable of dissolving all substances. The narrator uses it as a metaphor for the Inner Secret as a key that unlocks all doors.

YOU, the individual who are now reading these lines, what are you going to do about this Inner Secret. You have heard the "call of the wild"—the roar of the old lion on the hill which awakens the leonine nature in the lion-cub which had been reared among the sheep—the call of the wild duck which bids the domesticated wild-bird to use its wings and forsake its barnyard environment. You have heard "the deep calling unto the deep" in your soul. You feel within you the stirrings of that awakening Something Within, which has been aroused from its dream-state. What are you going to do about it?

Are you merely going to stretch your limbs a little, give a few yawns, smile fatuously, and then settle yourself for another spiritual nap, content to dwell in the land of dreams of negativity and weakness, of illusion, of distorted images, of fantastic imaginings? Or are you going to open wide your eyes, to breathe in the invigorating air of the New Day, to bathe in the sunlight of the New World which has been opened to your vision; casting behind you forever the grotesque imaginings of the dream of negativity and weakness, of slavery and bondage, of fearthought and dread, and stepping forward in the glorious spirit of positive existence, facing the world as a Master? The decision must be made; and it must be made by yourself, and not by others. You must work out your own salvation. "You are bound by yourself, naught else compels". Freedom comes only from within, and by means of the expression of that Something Within.

You have before you now this choice: to remain dwelling on the negative pole of your personality, or to move over to the positive pole of your individuality. In that one word, "Polarity", rightly understood, there is a whole volume of wisdom. You have two poles of being, one negative, the other positive; you may abide upon either—many shift from one to the other, at times, without knowing just what it means. The negative pole is that of the "Me", or the little "i"; the positive pole is that of the great "I", or the "I Am I". When the "I" knows positively that "I Am THAT I Am", it takes its position permanently upon the positive pole of its being, and is never thereafter dislodged from it. From which position do you expect to manifest and express the rest of your life—on the positive pole or on the negative? Will you be a Creature, or a Creator; an Effect or a Cause; a Slave or a Master? Which shall it be?

*"Lord of a thousand worlds, I AM;
I've reigned since Time began;
And night and day, in cyclic sway,
Pass by while their deeds I scan.
Yea, Time shall cease ere I find release,
For I AM the Soul of Man!"*

FINIS

Glossary

The eye of a needle: A biblical allusion to Matthew 19:24: 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.' It has been determined that "camel" is a mistranslation, as the original words were really talking about the rope that ties the ships to the pier: that understood, the reference finally makes sense.

The Law of Attraction: A principle popular in New Thought and modern self-help literature, holding that like attracts like—thoughts attract corresponding circumstances. The narrator explains his meeting with Colonel Forbes as an instance of this law.

Lurgan Sahib, in Kipling's story, 'Kim': A character in Rudyard Kipling's novel 'Kim' (1901). Lurgan Sahib is a mysterious dealer in jewels and a trainer of spies, possessing arcane knowledge and a calm, penetrating demeanor. The simile reinforces Colonel Forbes's aura of hidden wisdom.

"I Am THAT I Am": A phrase echoing the biblical revelation of God to Moses (Exodus 3:14). The narrator adopts it as the ultimate statement of self-realization, identifying the individual self with the Infinite Presence-Power. It is the core formula of the Inner Secret.

Holmes' "Chambered Nautilus": A poem by Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. (1809–1894) that uses the nautilus as a symbol of spiritual growth, building 'more stately mansions' for the soul. The narrator references it to express his belief in progressive expansions of identity.

The Superman: A concept popularized by Friedrich Nietzsche in 'Thus Spoke Zarathustra', referring to an ideal human who transcends conventional morality. The narrator suggests that the coming Superman is the individual who fully realizes the Something Within.

STUDY GUIDE

THE INNER SECRET OR THAT SOMETHING WITHIN

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

By M.C. Mesen

Introduction

This unusual book by Atkinson, written under a pseudonym, weaves personal narrative, allegory, and a manual for seekers. The "inner secret" is not posed as a remote riddle, but as a universal human longing: the felt sense that there is something deeper beyond everyday life, intermittently glimpsed and always calling.

This guide is not meant to reveal grandiose theories or promise hidden powers, but to help you recognize that "something" in your own lived experience. Reading will become valuable if you reflect, journal, and observe your days with candor, searching for signs of the inner urge, intuition, or strength that Atkinson so sincerely describes.

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. Recognizing Inner Longing

Core teaching: The book begins with the persistent search for an undefined "something": a deep need for meaning and inner power. Atkinson insists that this longing is not rare—it is woven into the structure of all conscious life.

Working question: How does this longing for 'something more' show up in your life today? When do you feel it most clearly—and when does it fade into forgetfulness?

Practice: For three days, set aside ten minutes to sit quietly with a notebook. Unfiltered, write down any phrases or images that arise when you think of "that" which you sense is missing, sought, or intuitively exists within you.

2. Listening to the Inner Voice

Core teaching: A central teaching is that the "secret" expresses itself as an inner voice or impulse: a whisper of guidance, warning, or reassurance. This "something" grows more perceptible when the mind is quieted.

Working question: Can you remember times you followed a hunch and it proved right—or times when you ignored intuition and regretted it?

Practice: For the day's small decisions, try to notice any inner feeling of guidance or caution. Afterwards, note your experiences and whether you acted upon them.

3. Balancing Skepticism and Openness

Core teaching: The text encourages healthy doubt, steering between blind belief and total cynicism. The inner secret unfolds gradually, in line with our attention and genuine readiness.

Working question: Do you lean more toward skepticism, gullibility, or neglect of subtle things? Which stance helps you experience more depth without self-delusion?

Practice: In uncertain situations, pause and affirm: "I don't have to know everything right now; I can remain open to deeper signals and meanings." Notice any shift in how you perceive events.

4. Living the Secret in Daily Life

Core teaching: The work suggests the true inner secret is less about extraordinary events and more about daily choices that construct meaning and purpose. Discovering that something within is a beginning, not an end.

Working question: What everyday actions help you live more in tune with that inner something? Which habits distance you from it?

Practice: Choose a simple practice that feels aligned with your inner voice: gratitude, silence, mindful helping, or meditation. Stick to it for a week and journal shifts in your mood or clarity.

Closing

As you finish the book and this guide, return to those moments of genuine contact with your inner secret. Try to recreate those conditions of listening and honesty. True discovery rarely comes as a single epiphany, but as small flashes, patiently nurtured, that can gradually transform a life.

More guides and information at MauricioChavesMesen.com