

WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON

THE MASTERY OF BEING

THE INNER POWER TO TRANSFORM
YOUR LIFE AND YOUR DESTINY



SELF-KNOWLEDGE



INNER
STRENGTH



MENTAL
PEACE



SELF-DISCIPLINE
AND WILLPOWER



PURPOSE
AND DIRECTION



HARMONY
AND BALANCE



MASTER YOUR MIND,
MASTER YOUR ACTIONS,
AND YOU WILL MASTER
YOUR DESTINY.

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The Mastery of Being

William Walker Atkinson

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

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ABOUT WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON

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

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

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

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

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

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

INTRODUCTION

At the heart of the world's philosophical traditions lies a single question: What is ultimately real? *The Mastery of Being*, a work of esoteric metaphysics from the early twentieth century, approaches this question with unusual rigor and ambition. It is not merely a speculative treatise but a practical guide for the seeker who wishes not only to understand Reality but to embody it. The book promises that by mastering the nature of Being, one can attain mastery in life itself.

The text opens with the fable of Yusef—a slave whose possession yields an entire estate—illustrating that Reality is the one thing that, when known, makes all known. The author then lays out a systematic inquiry, beginning with basic principles and proceeding through twelve Axioms of Reality. These cover existence, inclusiveness, identity, unity, eternity, and infinity, and are presented as self-evident truths affirmed by the highest philosophical thought. They serve as both foundation and touchstone for subsequent reasoning.

Drawing on the reports of reason and intuition, the book distinguishes between the phenomenal world of constant change (Becoming) and the noumenal Reality (Being) that underlies it. The author invokes a wide range of thinkers: Plato, Heraclitus, Gautama Buddha, Omar Khayyam, Haeckel, Schopenhauer, Bergson, and the mystics. This eclecticism demonstrates the universality of the quest. The axioms are not dogmas but invitations to test them against one's own reason. The tone is at once philosophical and devotional, challenging the reader to brave the 'steep Path of Attainment' with courage, faith, and persistency.

The middle sections explore the Nature of Spirit—its Substance, Life, Law, and Mind. The author argues that Spirit must be conceived as Infinite Mind manifesting Ideation and Will, with Pure Logic as its law. Consciousness in Spirit is explained as necessary for the expression of its 'lifeness.' This leads to a consideration of the Eternal Manifestation: an infinite series of universes arising and dissolving in the Substance of Spirit, with the Law of Change ever operative. The Days and Nights of Brahm are reinterpreted as a partial truth; the full picture is one of infinite variety across all time and space.

The latter part of the book turns to the practical: the Creative Power of Thought and the Identity with Spirit. Here the reader learns that human beings, as microcosms of Spirit, can use Ideation and Volition to create

their own circumstances. The key is conscious recognition of identity with Spirit, which leads first to the Perception of Truth (through Intellect), then to Illumination (through Intuition), and finally to Mastery (through Volition and Ideation). The author warns against becoming entangled in one's own creations—a danger familiar to all who practice mental creativity.

The *Mastery of Being* is a dense, lucid, and impassioned work. It belongs to the tradition of American New Thought and the broader occult revival of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, yet it rises above many of its contemporaries by its insistence on logical rigor and its deep engagement with world philosophy. For the serious student of metaphysics, it offers a complete system of thought—a map of the inner universe and a key to its treasures.

The book's final message is one of hope and empowerment, a feature of Atkinson's books: the lion within each of us can awaken, and the Master of the Show can take his rightful place.

Mauricio Chaves-Mesén

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

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PART I. REALITY

I. THE QUEST FOR TRUTH.

There is an ancient Oriental fable which runs as follows:

There was once a fabulously rich potentate, who died bequeathing all his property to Yusef, his favorite slave¹, with the one reservation that each of his sons was to be allowed to select some one thing of value, which should be set aside from the residue of the estate for the son to have and to hold forever, with all appertaining thereto. The sons each selected someone valuable piece of property. The eldest selected the royal palace; the second, the famed hanging gardens²; the third, the jeweled peacock throne³ bestudded with precious stones of great value, and so on. Each son made his choice, and yet each bewailed the fact that the great bulk of the potentate's possessions must pass into the hands of Yusef the slave.

Awaiting his turn sat the youngest son, a mere stripling. When his elder brothers had each made his choice, and the time of the youngest had come, he turned to the executors, saying: "*I choose Yusef the slave!*" A cry of wonder and admiration went up from the assembled judges, courtiers, and soldiery, for the stripling youth had displayed the greatest mental keenness and cunning. He had chosen as his one piece of property the favorite slave to whom the potentate had bequeathed the bulk of his estate. As the will provided that with each piece of property chosen by the sons should also go "all appertaining thereto," the owner of the slave thus became owner of the enormous possessions forming the residuary bulk of the estate. Under the law the slave's possessions became the property of the owner of the slave. By owning the slave the lad became the owner of all except the comparatively trifling things that the brothers had chosen. He had chosen the only possible thing which, when owned, made him the owner of all the rest of real and permanent value.

¹ This fable is known from various Near Eastern and Sufi sources. Yusef (Joseph) is a name often used in Persian parables. The story illustrates the principle that by possessing the essential (Reality), one gains access to all that flows from it.

² The Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, here used as a symbol of great material wealth.

³ The Peacock Throne was a famous jeweled throne of the Mughal emperors, later taken by Persian rulers. It symbolizes royal opulence.

And so, in the spirit of the allegory, the attainment of the knowledge of Reality causes one to become the attainer of All Truth, for All Truth is included in the content thereof. Reality is the “one thing which, when known, all is known.” It is the primal and elemental Truth-of-All-Truth.

The Path of Attainment.

Truth is discovered only by those who have the courage, faith, and persistency to climb the steep Path of Attainment; by those who brave the rocky, narrow footpath; by those who are appalled not when they gaze down upon the canyons far beneath them, seeing the multitude of crawling, creeping things that look like tiny ants—the world of men living on the lower planes of thought. A clear head, steady nerves, sound lungs, strong muscles, and sure feet are needed by him who would attain the heights. Do you possess these? Have you the courage to leave behind you all preconceived notions, superstitions, and prejudices of finite life? Have you the intellectual daring which alone will enable you to make foot places along the jagged cliffs in which your feet must be placed one after the other as you mount higher and higher? Have you the persistency which will cause you to proceed thus, step by step, mounting higher and higher toward Truth without becoming dizzy when you chance to look downward over the immense distances which you have traversed? Have you the constancy which will enable you to look upward and not downward, forward and not backward, on the Path, caring for naught except to reach the summit of the highest peak of the mountain of Truth?

If you have these, O Seeker! then are you invited to participate in the Quest for Truth, in the Inquiry for Ultimate Reality, which is Spirit. You are invited to pursue the quest for this underlying, fundamental, actual, enduring, absolute Truth, this Ultimate Verity—Reality. The journey is long, arduous, and tedious. Its path is strewn with jagged rocks, which torment and bruise the feet of the intellect. Its grade is steep, and the traveler oftentimes loses his breath and feels insecure of his footing. His head swims and becomes dizzy. The spiritual air is very rare, and the unaccustomed lungs of thought pant with the unusual exertion. For remember, the Path of Knowledge leading to the recognition and realization of Reality winds around the sides of the steepest and highest mountain of human mentation. He who reaches its summit—he who gains its highest peak—has found “that which, when known, all things are known.”

II. BASIC PRINCIPLES OF REALITY.

Thinking men and women have ever meditated upon the nature, meaning, and reason of the Universe and of the Self. Beneath the popular creeds, philosophies, and dogmas of his particular time and place, man has always felt there must exist an inner Truth which, if known, would make all else intelligible. Hence the endless search for Reality which has distinguished thinking men and women in all ages and all lands. Hence the ever present queries: "What am I?" "Whence come I?"

"What is the object of my existence?" Hence the eternal "Why?" on the lips of thinkers of the past and present, in every clime, in every civilization, and among every people of the race.

Reality.

"Reality" is a term used by philosophers to designate that Something which is fixed, eternal, and unchangeable, and which underlies the universe of changing forms, shapes, and conditions of things, and which is the primal cause of them. Perhaps the best and clearest definition of Reality—as the term is used in philosophy—is the following:—

"Reality is that which does or may exist by itself, and is not considered as forming part of any other thing."

Anything that does not answer the above definition is held by philosophy to be non-reality, or mere appearance.

Reason.

While there have been some who have held that man can never hope to know aught regarding Reality by the exercise of his reason, nevertheless the wise in all ages and all lands have held the inquiry to be legitimate and proper, maintaining that there is no finite limit to the reach of the human reason. This has been the report of the reason of the wisest of the race, as we may discover by a study of the philosophic thought of the past and present. *"There is no scientific problem which we may dare to say the mind of man will never solve; no mystery so deep or profound; no question has or ever will be asked but a mind or brain will be evolved capable of solving and answering."*—Haeckel.

"If it becomes essential for mankind to know, infinite nature will evolve an organ of mind that can comprehend."—Stevens.

Intuition.

In addition to reason, the faculty with and by which man forms judgments regarding phenomenal facts, there exists the faculty of intuition

or direct knowledge of the inner facts of life, which is a higher phase of perception, and by which man receives more or less clear reports regarding the inner verities of his being.

The perception of intuition is examined and passed upon by the reason, is associated and correlated to the report of the latter, and a new judgment—an intuitive-intellectual judgment—is formed and becomes a part of the “belief” of the man. Man, trusting to his intuition, and combining the perception thereof with the purely intellectual reports, is enabled to reach a higher consciousness of Being than is possible by purely intellectual processes alone, or by pure intuition alone.

Basic Principles of Reality A Glimpse of the Heights.

In these lessons we shall ask you to consider certain fundamental reports of the reason, and the conclusions arising therefrom. In order that you may understand that which the Axioms of Reality are designed to unfold into your conscious recognition,—that you may see in advance the aim and goal of the journey,—we invite you to carefully consider the following Fundamental Postulate in which is condensed the spirit of the basic teaching embodied in these lessons. A “Postulate” is “something asserted, to which assent is challenged or demanded.”

In the Axioms of Reality, and the teaching based thereon in the following lessons, the points covered by the Fundamental Postulate will be unfolded gradually, argued logically, and the reports of reason stated. In the Fundamental Postulate we are afforded a glimpse of the Path over which we shall travel, and the heights which we shall attain. In the Axioms of Reality we have the various ledges or planes of the inquiry. Step by step we shall advance on the Path. Each Axiom affords a resting place and a halt. The student should master each step, and never leave the resting place of any Axiom until he has fully acquainted himself with it and associated it with those which precede it.

Fundamental Postulate.

I. There exists an ultimate, infinite, and eternal principle of Reality which is the essence, nature, substance, and principle of All-that-is. This principle of Reality is the certain Something which abides, invariable and constant, as the essential principle in all things, all creatures, all entities, all beings, and which precedes and survives all their changes of form, shape, state, and condition. This principle ever remains itself, notwithstanding the infinite and eternal change in form, shape, state, and condition in which it

may occur, appear, or present itself. This ultimate, infinite, and eternal principle is known as Reality.

II. Reality is Absolute Unity. It is Independent and Free; Whole, Complete, and Perfect; Original and Causeless; Eternal; Infinite; Ultimate; Absolute; Formless; Indivisible; and Immutable. Reality is Infinite Substance, Infinite Energy, Infinite Life, Infinite Law, and Infinite Mind.

III. Reality is in Eternal Creation. It is the support and background for the phenomenal appearance of numberless universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing. It is the changeless reality manifesting the eternal law of change. It is the unconditioned and absolute ground for all that exists conditionally. In Itself it is All-That-Is. In its Creation it is All-that-Appears; uncreate, it is The-All. Its Creation appears as the Cosmos.

IV. The Universe, with all contained therein, is created in and by Reality considered as Infinite Mind. All Creation exists as Idea in the Infinite Mind of Reality. The Will of Reality is Universal Energy. The Pure Logic of Reality is Universal Law.

The Being of Reality is Universal Life. The Substance of Reality is Universal Substance. The Infinite Mind of Reality, in its Ideative and Volitional activities, is the Creative and Conative Power of the Universe.

V. Reality is immanent in its Creation, and in every part thereof. In the characters of its conscious creations it manifests itself as the artist in his work, the poet, playwright, or writer in his characters. The created universe is the cosmic dramatization of Reality, through which it lives and acts, moves and plays its infinitude of parts. Reality, being indivisible and immutable, is immanent in each of its creations in its Totality of Being. In and back of each conscious being is the Presence and Power of Reality. Reality is immanent in You. Hence the following message of reality.

There is one principle of Reality—the essence, nature, substance, and principle of All-that-is. This principle— Reality—always remains itself, indivisible and immutable, Basic Principles of Reality notwithstanding the infinity of apparent differences in manifestation of form, shape, state, or condition under which it occurs, appears, or presents itself in the phenomenal universe. You yourself are the Manifestation of that principle—Reality. And, likewise, You are identical with it in the totality of its essence, nature, substance, and reality. The recognition of this Identity by the Intellect constitutes the perception of Truth; the realization of it by

Intuition constitutes Illumination; the manifestation of it by Volition constitutes Mastery.

In this book you are invited to pursue the inquiry in detail, both in the examination and investigation of the Axioms of Reality, the consideration of the Nature of Reality, the Process of Manifestation, and the Facts of Immanence, Identity, and Mastery.

The Meaning of Terms.

Before proceeding to the Axioms of Reality the student is asked and advised to acquaint himself or herself with the definition of the principal terms employed in our inquiry. It is impossible for one to intelligently study the Axioms unless he or she be fully acquainted with and informed regarding the terms employed. A term is a peg upon which a thought is suspended.

The association of each thought with its own particular term is needed in order that one may reason clearly. The clear and correct understanding of terms is the first requisite of logical thought and reasoning. Therefore, we say to the student: Master the definitions before you proceed further, and then as you proceed frequently refer to them.

Fundamental Definitions.

Ultimate: Extreme, final; incapable of further analysis, division, separation, resolution, refinement, purification, or simplification.

Infinite: Without limits, bounds, or measurements; ultimate capacity and possibility of expression and manifestation in time, space, quantity, quality, and variety.

Eternal: Without beginning or ending of existence; always existing; existence without intermission; ceaseless; constant; everlasting; perpetual.

Principle: The source or origin from which anything proceeds; ultimate element or essence; the original inherent essence of a thing, and its final and ultimate essential nature.

Essence: That which is the very and actual nature of anything.

Nature: The inherent and essential “thingness” of the being of anything.

Substance: That which underlies all outward manifestations; that which constitutes anything what it is; real and existing essence, nature, or being; that which constitutes the Thing-in-Itself, as distinguished from its appearances or outward manifestations.

III. AXIOMS OF REALITY.

You are now invited to acquaint yourselves with the Axioms of Reality. An axiom is a self-evident and necessary truth—a proposition based on reason, which it is necessary to take for granted in subsequent thought; or a proposition which is so evident that when presented to the reasoning mind it requires no further demonstration but commends itself at once to the acceptance of everyone capable of thinking.

The science of logic, like that of higher mathematics, is based upon axioms. An axiom, being based upon the general and invariable report of reason of the race, is not subjected to the demand for repeated proof upon each occasion of its frequent employment as a basis for demonstration and argument. To dispute the evidence of the axioms of rational thought is akin to disputing the validity of human thought itself. In the latter case, however, even the validity of the disputation would be attacked at the same time that the axiom was attacked, for the disputation itself is a manifestation of human thought. The axioms hold ever, unless we deny the validity of reason.

In the Axioms of Reality herein given will be found the fundamental and elementary reports of the reason regarding the Ultimate Principle of Reality, which we have stated as the subject of our inquiry. These axioms should be carefully studied, considered, and committed to memory. They will be found to furnish an infallible touchstone with which to test the soundness of any philosophical or metaphysical doctrine, dogma, or teaching. They are the report of the highest philosophical thought of the ages directed to the subject. They represent the essence of the thought of the illumined of the race upon the subject of Reality. With the Axioms of Reality the student has at hand the master key with which to open the many doors of the temple of knowledge. Rightly used they will disclose the Truth-of-Truths.

We beg of the student to tarry awhile with the axioms, to dwell with them awhile before passing on. The mind that is saturated with the Truth embodied in the axioms cannot go far astray on the path of philosophical knowledge. They will serve as a constant series of infallible guideposts, pointing ever to the Truth. Do not pass them by as dull, dry, tedious, or technical, for in them you will find all the interest that is imaginable. In their

few words is to be found the essence of all philosophy and metaphysics. Make them your own, treat them well, and in the hour of mental stress and trial they will be found by your side, whispering the word of Truth in your ear, clearing away all doubts, and brushing aside all conflicting and contradictory arguments. Hold fast to the axioms,—this is our first and last advice to the student,—hold fast to the axioms!

Axiom of Actual Existence.

First Axiom of Reality: Reality is existent in truth, in verity, and in fact as the essence, nature, substance, and principle of All-that-is.

This axiom announces the actual existence of Reality; not the imaginary existence, but the real, veritable, truthful, and in-fact existence; not the temporary or temporal shadow of existence, but the *fixed, unalterable, eternal* existence, which alone constitutes Real existence; not the existence of the fleeting form, but the existence of the eternal essence. This actual existence is the “Reality” of philosophy. Only that which exists and remains unchanged, invariable, and permanent may be said to be Reality in the strict philosophical sense of the term.

On every side, and in everything, we perceive the manifestation of constant change of form, shape, and activity; everlasting and ever-manifest transmutation of substance from one phase to another; impermanence in everything; nothing stable; nothing constant; nothing persisting; everything in constant motion; everything in a state of flux; everything flowing on like a river, never the same for two consecutive moments; everything the ever-changing particles of a huge cosmic flame; nothing permanently “being”; everything constantly “becoming” or passing from one state to another; action and reaction; cycles and rhythms; the beginningless and endless sequence of events; the constant operation of cause and effect; the Law of Change ever modifying and altering the shape, form, activity, state, and condition of everything, even from the very moment of its creation or birth.

*Being's Ceaseless Tide.*⁴

⁴ This phrase is from Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia* (Book the Second), 1879, describing the Buddha's insight into the impermanence of all phenomena. The book is a poetic rendering of the Buddha's life and teachings

We are constantly aware of the chameleon-like nature and character of what Gautama the Buddha⁵ called

“Being’s ceaseless tide,

“Which, ever-changing, runs, linked like a river By ripples following ripples, fast or slow,—

The same, yet not the same,—from far-off fountain

To where its waters flow

“Into the seas. These, steaming to the sun,

Give the lost wavelets back in cloudy fleece

To trickle down the hills and glide again,

Having no pause or peace.

“This is enough to know, the phantasms are;

The Heavens, Earths, Worlds, and changes changing them

A mighty whirling wheel of strife and stress

Which none can stay or stem.”

The Quest for Principle.

Turning in despair from this contemplation, thinking men and women have sought for a fundamental principle of Reality underlying, supporting, and sustaining the universe of finite, transitory, changing shapes, forms, activities, states, and conditions,—that “unconditioned and absolute ground for all that exists conditionally,” which Plato asserted to be the real subject-matter of the inquiry of philosophy.

The wise have ever refused to accept the changing, impermanent, phenomenal universe as the ultimate verity, truth, and fact of Reality. They have always insisted upon looking behind and under the world of manifestation for the essence which they believed must lie back of it; for the infinite essence underlying the finite; for the immutable essence underlying the ever-changing; for the eternal essence underlying the transitory.

Gazing upon the universal manifestation of the law of change, the thoughtful ever have asked themselves and others the ultimate question:

⁵ Siddhartha Gautama (c. 5th–4th century BCE), the founder of Buddhism.

What is it that manifests change? What is it that is? What is it that is actually, verily, truthfully, and in fact Reality?

While the majority of the race has contented itself with creating deities, gods, demigods, godlings, and minor supernatural entities in endless variety, number, and name, the wise of the race, discarding these creations of the naïve imaginations of their brethren, and ignoring the interested dogma of the various priesthoods attending the shrine of the local deities, tribal gods, and supernatural personages, have ever sought for the principle of Reality which abides, lives, and has its existence in the infinity of manifested forms, shapes, activities, and existences of the universe, and in which *they* so abide, live, and have *their* being. Like old Omar, they have sought ever for that Abiding Presence, that Ultimate Reality,—

“Whose secret presence, throughout creation’s veins Running Quicksilver-like, eludes our pains, Taking all shapes from Mah to Mahi⁶; and They change and perish all, but he remains.”

They have perceived that Reality cannot be merely the outward forms, shapes, activities, states, and conditions of manifested existence, for the finite character of these were soon discovered. The material panorama of the manifested universe was recognized as a phantasmagoria, and all beings participating in it as mere actors on the great stage of the Cosmos. The wise have ever held that the manifested universe is akin to a cosmic dramatization of Reality; that, as Omar⁷ says,

“We are no other than a moving row Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go Round with the Sun-illuminated Lantern held In midnight by the Master of the Show.”

Noumenon and Phenomenon⁸.

The philosophic mind of the race has ever distinguished between the mere outward appearance of the universal activities and the *essence* or real

⁶ A Persian phrase meaning 'from fish to moon,' indicating the entire range of created beings. Used by Omar Khayyam to express the omnipresence of Reality.

⁷ Omar Khayyam (1048–1131), Persian mathematician, astronomer, and poet. His Rubaiyat (quatrains) were popularized in the West by Edward FitzGerald's translation.

⁸ Terms from Immanuel Kant's philosophy: the noumenon is the thing-in-itself, unknowable directly; the phenomenon is the appearance as perceived by the senses. The author uses them to contrast Reality with its manifestations.

activity manifesting in and producing the outward appearance. The universe of outward forms, shapes, activities, states, and conditions is designated by the term “phenomenal,” which means “visible; apprehended by observation; apparent; presented to the eye or senses.” In its original Greek, the term “phenomenon” has a common origin with “phantom,” “phantasm,” etc., the original Greek root of all these meaning “to appear; to show.” The phenomenal world is often called by philosophers “the world of appearances,” the term “appearance” being used as synonymous with “phenomenon” and being similar in meaning to “apparition.”

In the majority of philosophies the “world of appearances” or “the phenomenal world” indicates a “universal phantasmagoria” or “universal apparition”—a great cosmic picture show or a procession of phantasmal, apparitional shapes and forms subject to states and conditions.

Opposed to the world of phenomenal appearance, the philosophers assert the existence of that which they call by various names, such as “Reality,” “Verity,” “Truth.” Reality is conceived of as *the ultimate essence, nature, substance, and very being of All-that-is*. Philosophers sometimes employ the term “*noumenon*” to designate Reality as we use the term.

“The Master of the Show.”

Inquirers for Reality, refusing to accept the phenomenal world as ultimate reality, truth, or fact, but recognizing the phantasmal nature of the “moving row of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go,” have instituted a further inquiry. They have even denied ultimate reality to “the Sun-illuminated Lantern held in midnight” and have insisted that naught will suffice them other than the actual discovery of “the Master of the Show” himself, who holds the Lantern. But they have not failed to realize the elusive nature of that which they seek. They know full well the truth that Omar uttered when he said that Reality ever is but

*“A moment guessed—then back behind the Fold
Immersed of Darkness round the Drama rolled,
Which for the pastime of Eternity
He doth Himself contrive, enact, behold.”*

The Report of Reason.

The best philosophical thought of the past and present has ever asserted the actual existence of an ultimate principle of Reality—the essence, nature, substance, and reality of All-that-is. The wisest of the race have always

maintained the actual existence of a certain something which abides, invariable and constant, as the essential principle of and in all things, all creatures, all entities, all beings, and which precedes and survives all the changes of form, shape, state, and condition of phenomenal appearance. The only escape from this conclusion is the assumption that each change of form, shape, state, or condition is a separate, independent, and original creation; that no changed thing has a direct or indirect substantial connection with that which immediately preceded it, or with that which immediately succeeds it. This idea is unthinkable and is not advanced by any philosophy worthy of the name or having the respect of thinking men.

No matter what may be the theory of the philosopher or scientist, he will always admit that evolution is merely *a series of changing events* and not a series of separate “things.” Evolution is seen to be merely the change of the apparent form, shape, state, or condition of a certain Something *which is the essence, nature, substance, and principle* of the entire series of changing and changed “things.” It is the silken thread upon which is strung the pearls of phenomenal existence. It is the Unchanging Something which supports and holds together the universe of changing things. It is the eternal background upon the surface of which appears the endless procession of changing forms, shapes, states, and conditions of the phenomenal Universe—the Moving-Picture Show of the Cosmos.

Monism.

Professor Pringle-Pattison⁹ says: “Monism¹⁰ is, in strictness, a name applicable to any system of thought which sees in the universe the manifestation or working of a single principle. Such a unity may be said to be at once the tacit presupposition and the goal of all philosophic effort, and in so far as a philosophy fails to harmonize the apparently independent and even conflicting facts of experience, as aspects or elements within a larger whole, it must be held to fall short of the necessary ideal of thought. Dualism, in an ultimate metaphysical reference, is a confession of the failure

⁹ Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison (1856–1931), Scottish philosopher known for his work on theism and absolute idealism. He argued for a personal God within a monistic framework.

¹⁰ Monism is the metaphysical view that all of reality is fundamentally one substance or principle. The author cites Professor Pringle-Pattison to emphasize the unity underlying diversity.

of philosophy to achieve its proper task; and this is the justification of those who consistently use the word as a term of reproach.”

The Report of Intuition.

In addition to the report of reason regarding the necessity of an ultimate Principle of Reality, the intuition of man has ever informed him of the existence and presence of an abiding, unchangeable Something Within—a Something which transcends all intellectual knowledge and reasoning processes, but which is *perceived* to be ever present at the very heart of one’s being, the very soul of one’s soul. Intuition informs man that he is resting upon a great sea of Reality, that there is a Something underneath and back of him which is the supporting reality of his being and life. So universal is this perception of intuition that the reason is bound to take it into consideration and to combine and correlate it with its own reports and judgments. Moreover, it remains for the reason to interpret and announce that which the intuition inevitably perceives.

The conception of Deity—God—as immanent in his creation, and indwelling in the hearts of men, is the vague but insistent report of intuition which perceives in the center of the nature and being of the individual the existence and presence of that Something which is the essence, nature, substance, and very being of All-that-is—that which is called Reality. As an advanced teacher has said: “The being you have heard of as God exists metaphysically but as an idea of your mind, and really is an attempt on the part of your mind to grasp the nature of your own being; and it is the business and duty of every human entity to assume absolute identity with the idea of God. The idea of God is the best description in the universe, in its purity and in its perfection, of what you really are, thrown out, as it were, a thought picture upon the enterprise of the universe.”

The universal intuitive perception and conception of a God *of some kind* is the result of this inevitable report of intuition that there is a Reality in which we live and move and have our being, and which also lives and moves and has its being in ourselves.

IV. AXIOMS OF REALITY— CONTINUED.

Axiom of Inclusiveness.

Second Axiom of Reality: Reality is All that is in actual Being; all that is in actual Being is Reality.

This axiom announces the inclusiveness of Reality. Reality is perceived to include within its content and being All that actually is in Being—all that really is. Reality is perceived actually to be all-there-is. Likewise, it is perceived that all that occurs, appears, or is presented in the form, shape, state, or condition of “Becoming” is not in actual Being, and therefore is excluded from the content and being of Spirit.

Actual Being.

“Actual Being” is that which is existent in truth, in verity, and in fact; that which has a fixed, unalterable, eternal existence; that which is the same yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow. Nothing that changes in Time can be said to be in actual Being, for it does not exist in its original state even for the briefest moment of consideration in thought. Even if we reduce the period of thought-consideration to the infinitesimal point of a second of time, the phenomenal thing under consideration undergoes change during that consideration—this from the fact that Time itself is but a record of change, and the smallest period thereof must be a record of change. A thing which changes even in the infinitesimal moment of time when it is under consideration by the mind cannot be said to have been in actual Being at all. All that has been perceived as in apparent existence is *a series of changes of form, shape, state, or condition*; a procession of such and no one real, abiding thing; there has been no actual Being at all, merely a series of states of “Becoming.” The only actual Being is vested in the essence, nature, substance, and principle of the Thing.

“Becoming.”

“Becoming” is a term used in philosophy to designate the ever-changing state of phenomenal things. The term means “passing from one state to another.” Many philosophers, ancient and modern, from Heraclitus the Ephesian¹¹ (500 b.c.) to Bergson of to-day, have held that to the universe there is no Being but only an eternal “Becoming.” If the universe be

¹¹ Heraclitus (c. 535–475 BCE), pre-Socratic Greek philosopher famous for the doctrine of flux—‘everything flows’—and the unity of opposites.

conceived of as simply an eternal series of changing things, with no unchanging background or continuous essence, then this theory holds good, for there can be no Being in a series of infinite changes, for nothing would persist long enough to Be; even at the instant of its birth it would have begun to change into something else. Everything in the phenomenal Universe is undergoing this eternal change. As Bergson¹² says: "Though we may do our best to imitate the mobility of 'becoming' by an addition that is ever going on, 'becoming' itself slips through our fingers just when we think we are holding it tight." The idea of "Becoming" is that there are no things, but only actions; no fixed thingness, but only changing events. Bergson compares the universe to a great moving picture which is never in actual Being for a single moment but which is always "Becoming"— the rapid motion giving to the "Becoming" the appearance of actual Being. Unless we grant the unchanging Essence or background of Reality, then, indeed, there is no actual Being.

This axiom includes in the content and being of Reality *all that is in actual Being*. Likewise, it excludes from the content and being of Reality *all that is merely "Becoming."* Thus we see the actual existence of all "Becoming" is denied; the appearance of such must be accounted for in another way.

Axiom of Invariable Identity.

Third Axiom of Reality: Reality is always and invariably itself, and never other than itself.

This axiom announces the invariable identity of Reality. It accords with the Primary Laws of Thought which hold that *a thing is always itself, and never other than itself, in spite of the forms, shapes, states, or conditions under which it occurs, presents itself, or appears*. Reality can never, under any circumstances, be other than itself, no matter what disguises it may assume in manifestation in the phenomenal world. Neither can it change itself into something else, or become something else, than itself. Neither can it change the ultimate facts of its essence, nature, substance, and reality. Neither can it acquire characteristics, qualities, properties, or attributes not originally and essentially its own. All apparently such must be recognized as merely a part of the phenomenal world of appearances. Nothing can rob Being of its

¹² Henri Bergson (1859–1941), French philosopher who emphasized intuition, duration, and creative evolution. The author draws on Bergson's critique of intellect and his defense of intuition as a source of metaphysical knowledge.

invariable identity. Neither can it *itself* divest itself of its invariable identity. Reality and its invariable identity are inseparably bound together, and are the one and the same thing, forever undivorceable. The reason is unable to think otherwise. So long as the reason functions it must report the truth of the Axiom of Invariable Identity. Nothing can be other than itself.

Reality must ever and invariably remain itself and nothing else.

Axiom of the Negation of Nothingness.

Fourth Axiom of Reality: “Nothingness,” being the negation of Reality, does not exist.

This axiom announces the Negation of Nothingness. The conception of Nothingness is the antithesis of the conception of Reality, which alone is actual Being. The two cannot exist at the same time. Either Reality *is not*, or else Nothing *is not*. Either Reality *is*, or Nothing *is*. We have discovered the fact of the existence of Reality; therefore, we must of necessity deny the existence of Nothing. It may seem childish to assert so emphatically that Nothing has no existence. But when we meet with the assertion of Nothingness advanced by certain thinkers as an explanation of the facts of being, we shall see the necessity of either affirming or else denying its existence. Hence this absolute denial and negation of Nothing and Nothingness.

They are meaningless words and have no counterpart or reason in actual existence and being. These terms are valid only in the fact of bringing Reality into positive and clear relief by reason of the contrast. As a positive concept, “Nothing” is fallacious, fictitious, and untruthful, having no basis in verity, reality, fact, or experience. It is a mere statement of *the absence of existence*.

“Nothing” either *is* or *is not*. The reason refuses to accept the idea that it *is*, therefore it reports that it *is not*. With this report also comes the report that “from Nothing no thing can come”—“*ex nihilo nihil fit*.” And, likewise, “into Nothing no thing can go.” Anything that appears to come from Nothing, or to go to Nothing, is seen by the reason never to have been,—to have had naught but an illusory and fictitious shadow of existence.

Axiom of Absolute Unity.

Fifth Axiom Of Reality: Reality is Absolute Unity and Oneness.

This axiom announces the Absolute Unity of Reality. By Absolute Unity is meant Absolute Oneness of Being. Absolute Unity does not mean a mere

loose association or union between diversified parts or separate things, such as the union of atoms or parts of a thing; or the association of individuals, such as a congress, army, crowd, assembly. Absolute Unity means a state of absolute oneness, absolute singleness as opposed to plurality. Absolute Unity does not mean a temporary union; Absolute

Unity means an eternal, fixed, immutable, and invariable Unity or Oneness. Absolute Unity means unity absolute, without any qualification or reservation whatever.

The Absolute Unity of Reality is the report of all trained and developed reason directed to the subject. All philosophy worthy of the name has expressed the necessary report of the reason that Ultimate Reality is One and one only. Science has agreed in this report and has announced the existence of a One “infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed.” It is a mathematical and logical truism that “the infinite must be absolute unity.” Without such Absolute Unity the facts of the phenomenal universe cannot be explained. The constant change of form, the constant correlation of energy, the constant transformation and transmutation of substance—all these indicate the existence of one common and universal essence, nature, substance, and reality, from which all manifestations of form, shape, state, condition, and activity are expressed.

Denial of the Absolute Unity of Reality is the denial of the ultimate principle of Reality itself, and the assertion of the existence of *many* Principles of Reality. This, if true, would destroy all infiniteness and cause every one of the *many* principles to be finite, bounded, limited, and opposed to each other. All human thought and experience is directly opposed to this conception. Every instinct, intuition, and reason of the human mind reports the logical necessity of the existence of a One Ultimate Principle of Reality by whatever name it may be called. All philosophy, and all science, holds to this idea of the Absolute Unity of the Ultimate Principle of Reality. The trained and developed human reason inevitably reports this fact as axiomatic. A Unity which is not an *Absolute* Unity is a mere temporary and loose union, and is but the assertion of Non-Unity.

Axiom of Independence and Freedom.

Sixth Axiom of Reality: Reality is Independent and Free.

This axiom announces the independence and freedom of Reality. By “*independent*” is meant “*not dependent; not supported by, or reliant upon, others.*” By

“free” is meant “not subject to control by others; not subordinated, constrained, restricted, restrained, or subjected to others.”

There is nothing other than itself upon which Reality can depend, rely, or support itself, or by which it can be controlled, subordinated, constrained, restricted, restrained, or subjected. Reality being the essence, nature, substance, and principle of All-that-is, there can be nothing else upon which it can depend, and nothing else to which it can be subject or subordinate, nor by which it can be restrained, restricted, or controlled. The reason inevitably reports that Reality, by the very facts of its essence, nature, substance, and principle, must be and is independent and free.

Axiom of Wholeness, Completion, and Perfection.

Seventh Axiom of Reality: Reality Is Complete, Whole, and Perfect.

This axiom announces the Wholeness, Completion, and Perfection of Reality. By *“whole”* is meant *“containing the total amount; total; entire.”* By *“complete”* is meant *“finished; lacking nothing requisite to wholeness and perfection; not deficient in any respect.”* By *“perfect”* is meant *“consummated; whole; finished; nothing wanting or lacking.”*

Reality is perceived to be whole, complete, and perfect by the very fact of its essence, nature, substance, and reality. It being the essence, nature, substance, and reality of All-that-is, and there being nothing other than itself in existence, it follows that there can be nothing that could make it whole, or complete and perfect it, if it be not so already. If it is held to be not whole, complete, and perfect, then it must also be held that it can never become whole, complete, or perfect, for there is nothing which could be added to it to make it whole, complete, or perfect, and nothing that could act as the maker-whole, completer, or perfecter. It cannot be made, by change, more whole, complete, or perfect than it is, for it cannot become other than itself. If there is anything lacking in or to Reality, then such must always remain lacking, for Reality is All-that-is and cannot be other than itself. The reason inevitably reports that Reality is whole, complete, and perfect.

V. AXIOMS OF REALITY— CONTINUED.

Axiom of Originality and Causelessness.

Eighth Axiom of Reality: Reality is Original and Causeless.

This axiom announces the Originality and Causelessness of Reality. *By “original” is meant “preceding all others; first; primary; primitive; that which is the origin, cause, source, or primary root from which all else has proceeded.” By “causeless” is meant “without preceding cause, origin, root, or source; uncreated.”*

Reality is perceived to be primary, first, preceding all, the source, origin, or root from which all else has proceeded. It is also perceived to be uncaused and uncreated. As it is the essence, nature, substance, and very being of All-that-is, and as there is nothing other than itself, it must be original and uncaused, for there is nothing else which could have preceded it, nothing else which could have caused it, nothing else which could have created it. It cannot have proceeded from or been caused or created by Nothing, for Nothing is denied and is not in existence. If there is a Creator of Reality,—a Something preceding it,—then that Something is really Reality, and that which we have been considering as Reality is a mere manifestation or appearance,—in which case the inquiry is merely moved back a point and the axiom still stands in its full effect and virtue.

Reason vs. Imagination.

All human thought and reasoning, carried to its logical conclusion, brings one to the inevitable conclusion that there must be assumed to exist an Original Something, an Uncaused and Uncreated Thing. The reason cannot escape this conclusion, although the imagination may find it impossible to image or make a mental picture of an original, uncaused, uncreated thing. The imagination having had experiences only with secondary, caused, and created things, is unable to picture the contrary thereof. But the reason is enabled to transcend the imagination when trained and developed by logic.

All human thought, in spite of the imagination, eventually postulates the existence of Something original, uncaused, uncreated. This Something it may call Matter, Spirit, Mind, Being, or God—names matter not. The reason bases its entire edifice of thought upon this postulate. But the imagination, like the child, persists in inquiring, “But who made *God?*”—so hypnotized by finite cause and effect is it.

When the reason trains the imagination to picture cause and effect as merely the procession of changes which eternally passes in infinite array upon the surface of Appearance,—Reality being the eternal background of Appearance upon which the Cosmic Moving-Picture Show moves and appears,—then Reality is perceived to be original, uncaused, and uncreated. When the nature of cause and effect is perceived by reason, then the hypnotism of Causation is dispelled and the imagination is able to form the proper image.

The only escape from the conclusion that Reality is original, uncaused, and uncreated is the idea that it proceeded, arose, or sprung from Nothing. This is seen at once to be a fallacy, for from Nothing no thing can come; and, finally, there is no such thing as Nothing—it is merely a word.

The reason should be tested upon this axiom. It should be urged and encouraged to endeavor to discover the possibility of there being no original, uncaused, or uncreated thing in existence. Even if it regards the universe as a Whole Thing composed of an infinity of ever-changing parts, then it must hold that the Whole Thing is original, uncaused, and uncreated. Even if it regards the universe as a procession of ever-changing forms and shapes, permeated by a common essence, nature, substance, and principle, then the latter must be held to be original, uncaused, and uncreated. Even if it regards the universe as something created by a Supreme Being, either apart from itself or immanent in it, then that Supreme Being must be held to be original, uncaused, and uncreated. In either case the result is the same. And whatever may be the conception which serves as the premise, the original, uncaused, and uncreated Something which emerges as the conclusion of the reasoning is seen to be the Reality of our inquiry.

Axiom of Eternity.

Ninth Axiom of Reality: Reality is Eternal.

This axiom announces the Eternity of Reality. By *“Eternal”* is meant *“without beginning and end of existence; always existing; existence without intermission; ceaseless; constant; everlasting; interminable; perpetual.”*

Reality is perceived to be eternal by the very fact of its essence, nature, substance; and being. For the same reasons that it is seen to be original, uncaused, and uncreated, it is perceived to be eternal. For there is nothing else than itself from which it could have come; and it could not have come from Nothing.

Neither is there anything else into which it can change. It must always be itself; and it cannot change, proceed, or disappear into Nothingness.

If there had ever been a time in which Reality was not in existence, then it would not be in existence now, for Something cannot come from Nothing. If it is in existence now, it will always be in existence, for Something cannot disappear, proceed, or change into Nothing. And there never has been, is not now, and never can be *anything else than itself* for it to proceed from or into.

The imagination, for reasons already stated, finds it almost impossible to picture a beginningless and endless Thing. But the reason finds the report of the existence of Something Eternal at the foundation of all thought. It cannot escape the conclusion. It may call this Something Eternal by one of many names, but the recognition is universal and common to the reason. Whether the universe be considered as one in essence, or a union of diverse parts of things, the Whole Thing must be considered as Eternal. The fact of the Eternity of Reality is axiomatic, self-evident, and indisputable. The human reason must so ever report.

Axiom of Infinity.

Tenth Axiom of Reality: Reality is Infinite. This axiom announces the Infinity of Reality. By *"Infinite"* is meant (1) *"unlimited; boundless; immeasurable; illimitable; interminable; limitless; (2) ultimate capacity and possibility of expression and manifestation in time, space, quantity, quality, and variety."*

Reality is perceived to be infinite, in both of the above general meanings of the term, by the very fact of its essence, nature, substance, and very being. For there is nothing else than itself to limit, bound, or determine it. Neither is there anything other than itself to impair its ultimate capacity and possibility of expression and manifestation. There is nothing to limit it and nothing with which to limit it even in thought. The mind is unable to conceive of a limit in time, space, quantity, quality, or variety to Reality. Try as hard as we may, we are not able to place the limit on the manifestation and expression of Reality.

The reason refuses to entertain the idea of such limit. And even the imagination is unable to fix the same, although it is likewise unable to make a mental picture of the Infinite, for reasons already stated. The fact of the infinity of Reality is axiomatic; it cannot be denied.

Axiom of Ultimateness.

Eleventh Axiom of Reality: Reality is Ultimate.

This axiom announces the Ultimateness of Reality. By *“Ultimate” is meant “extreme; last; final; elemental; pure, simple, and essential; incapable of further analysis, refinement, reduction, or resolution.”*

Reality is perceived to be ultimate, in the above meanings of the term, by the very fact of its essence, nature, substance, and reality. It is conceived of and perceived as being the final, extreme, refined, pure, simple, and essential nature, substance, and reality of All-that-is. It is seen to be the ultimate source or origin from which all existence flows; the ultimate element and essence of existence; the final and ultimate fact of existence; the essential, simple, pure, and ultimate substance of existence; incapable of further analysis, resolution, refinement, purification, simplification, or perfection. Reality is the ultimate fact of existence. Further than it the conception of existence cannot go. Further than it we cannot think of existence. It is the very heart and soul of existence; it is the very center of That-which-is. It is the very quintessence of is-ness.

Axiom of Absoluteness.

Twelfth Axiom of Reality: Reality Is Absolute. This axiom announces the Absoluteness of Reality. By *“Absolute,” as the term is herein employed, is meant “sovereign; self-existing; self-sufficient; self-controlled; unqualified.”*

Reality is seen to be absolute, in the above stated meanings of the term, by the very fact of its essence, nature, substance, and reality. It being the ultimate essence of The All, there can be nothing sovereign to it; nothing to rule, govern, or control it. Being All-there-is in real existence, being original, uncaused, uncreated, independent, infinite, eternal, and ultimate, it follows that it must be self-existent, self-sufficient, and self-controlled. In Absolute Reality there must be all the presence and power there is. Just as infinity expresses boundlessness in manifestation in time, space, variety, etc., so does absoluteness express boundlessness in power and authority and being.

There is no higher term in the language. It expresses the limit of power. Reality is seen to be absolute by the very fact of its Being. There is nothing else to share or divide power, authority, or being with Reality. It is perceived

by reason to be absolute, and the imagination will offer but little objection to the idea.

Axiom of Formlessness.

Thirteenth Axiom of Reality: Reality is Formless.

This axiom announces the Formlessness of Reality. By “*Form*” is meant “*shape, mould, figure, configuration,*” all of which indicate finite dimension or measure, length, breadth, height, thickness, or circumference. “*Formless,*” of course, means “*without form; lacking determinate form or shape.*”

Reality is perceived to be Formless in the full sense of the term, as above stated, by the very fact of its essence, nature, substance, and reality. Form is an attribute of matter, and must be absent from immaterial substance. Moreover, form indicates and expresses finite limitation and determination in space. No thing that is infinite can have form. Form immediately sets up limits and bounds. Form would destroy the infinity of Reality.

It is impossible for an infinite thing to have bounds or limits in space. Form is a characteristic indication, quality, attribute, and property of material phenomena and is utterly opposed to the facts of Reality. To attribute form to Reality is akin to attributing “parts” to it. Form can no more be attributed to Reality than to the concept of Infinite Space, or Infinite Substance, or Infinite Anything. Moreover, form can no more be considered as an attribute of Reality than of Mind, or Life, or Energy, or Law. Reality cannot be thought of as having Form, Shape, or Size by reason of the very facts of its being.

VI. AXIOMS OF REALITY— CONCLUDED.

Axiom of Indivisibility.

Fourteenth Axiom of Reality: Reality is Indivisible. This axiom announces the Indivisibility of Reality. By “*Indivisible*” is meant “*inseparable; incapable of separation or division into parts; incapable of partition; the state of original, simple, and absolute Oneness.*”

From our consideration of Reality we perceive that it is indivisible, in the full sense of the term as above stated, by the very fact of its essence, nature, substance, and very being. Reality is not a composite union which may be indefinitely divided or separated into parts, but is an absolute unity which is an original, simple, and absolute Oneness, incapable of partition, separation, or division into parts of itself. Reality can no more be divided

than it can be added to, subtracted from, or multiplied. Its absolute unity cannot be attacked, defeated, or impaired by division or partition. Being ultimate, it is incapable of further analysis, division, or separation. If it could be divided or separated into parts, it would cease to be ultimate. If there were two or more ultimates, neither would be ultimate; there would be no ultimate at all. If there were two or more infinities, neither would be infinite; there would be no infinity at all. Remember the truism, "The infinite must be absolute unity."

The idea of the ultimate and infinite being transformed into many non-ultimate, finite things is absurd and unthinkable. It would defy the Primary Laws of Thought, for Reality is always itself, and cannot be other than itself.

Reality cannot be divided, separated, or parted, because (1) there is nothing to divide, separate, or part it; (2) nothing with which it may be divided, separated, or parted; (3) nothing to fill into the space between the divided, separated, or parted parts.

Even the conception of Materialism, which postulates the existence of Matter as Ultimate Principle, or that of Science, which asserts the Ether to be Ultimate Principle, does not assume that this Ultimate Principle is divisible. On the contrary, it expressly and positively holds that Ultimate Principle is indivisible, as indeed every conception of Ultimate

Principle must so hold. Materialism holds that there is an Ultimate Universal Principle, called either Matter, Substance, Energy, or Universal Ether (according to the particular school of Materialism), and that all shapes, forms, and activities are merely centers of activity or energy in that Ultimate Principle.

The Universal Principle is held to be indivisible, continuous, without parts, incapable of separation or division into parts.

The word "parts" is used merely figuratively in materialistic philosophy. To admit of divisibility, or "parts," in the Universal Ether would be to destroy its claimed ultimate nature.

The very conception of Ultimate Principle, by whatever name it may style the same, must carry with it the conception of indivisibility. Partition means "to part from"; the reason refuses to consider that anything can be parted from Ultimate Principle.

Omnipresent Totality.

It is also a logical necessity that *an Infinite Unity must be present in its totality, wherever it is present at all*. A Universal Unity must be infinite, and an Infinite must be an Universal Unity; there is no logical escape from this conclusion. Infinite Unity can have no “parts”; it is a Whole wherever it is present. And it must be present *everywhere*, being infinite. So that, again, it is seen that *the Infinite Unity must be present everywhere in its totality of being*. Reality is thus seen to be omnipresent in its totality at all times.

An Error of Pantheism.

The fact of the indivisibility of Reality also serves to refute the idea of a certain form of Pantheism now so popular under various names. The fundamental principle of this form of Pantheism is that “the One becomes the Many” by separation or division into “parts.” The expression that everything and everybody is “a *part* of God” is seen to be a fallacy when the necessary fact of the indivisibility of ultimate substance is seen. Nothing can be a “part” of that which is indivisible. By the very nature of its being, the Infinite can never become *many* finites; the Eternal can never become *many* temporalities, for the element of time, beginning and ending, is introduced into the problem by the separation. Each Infinite fact of Reality is denied by division and separation, and finite facts are substituted. From any point of view, from every aspect of consideration, divisibility must be denied of Ultimate Principle, by whatever name we may call it. Therefore Reality is perceived to be Indivisible.

Axiom of Immutability.

Fifteenth Axiom of Reality: Reality is Immutable.

By “*Immutable*” is meant “*changeless; unchangeable; incapable of change; not susceptible to change; invariable; constant; stable; unalterable.*”

From our consideration of Reality we perceive that it is immutable, in the full sense of the term as above stated, by the very fact of its essence, nature, substance, and very being. This is the inevitable report of reason. Change is the characteristic of the finite forms of the phenomenal world; it has naught to do with Ultimate Principle. Change implies subjection to the laws of Time and Causation, but Reality is eternal, causeless, and original. Change would defeat, nullify, and destroy every infinite fact of Reality the very ultimate nature of Reality itself. Change is utterly and absolutely opposed to every fact of the essence, nature, substance, and principle of Reality. It is seen to be unthinkable in connection with Reality. If Reality is

subject to Change, then it is not Ultimate Principle at all, and we must look still further for Ultimate Principle, for the very spirit of the conception of Ultimate Principle depends upon its immutability. Reason demands and will accept nothing less than a changeless ground for the changing forms of the universe.

There is nothing else than itself into which Reality can change itself or can be changed, for Reality is All-that-is. There is nothing else that could so change it. Reality can never be more, or less, or other than itself. If it were to change itself, or be changed into Something Else, then there would no longer be Reality; Reality would have disappeared. The new and changed thing would have begun in time and thus become timed and not eternal. It cannot be supposed that Reality can “change its form,” for *it has no form to change*, and cannot become formed by reason of its infinite nature.

Moreover,—and this is the final reason,—by the primary laws of thought we are compelled to hold that (1) *whatever is is always itself and never not itself*; (2) *the essential nature, substance, and very being of a thing is always the same no matter how different the forms, shapes, or conditions under which the thing occurs, presents itself, or appears*. This being so, then Reality can never be other than itself; can never change itself into something else. Consequently the infinite variety of the forms, shapes, or conditions in which Reality occurs, presents itself, or appears in the phenomenal world arise not from *actual change*; they are merely appearances, presentations, occurrences on the outer surface of things, not disturbing in the least the essence, nature, substance, and reality of Reality beneath the surface. This is a most important fact in the inquiry for Reality—probably *the* most important fact. And it should be impressed firmly upon the mind, for it determines the status of every object of manifestation—of you who read these lines. It serves to determine what you are.

Another Error of Pantheism.

It will be seen that this fact of the Immutability of Reality, when clearly conceived, must serve to confute and refute the erroneous theories of certain schools of Pantheism which hold that “God *becomes* the Universe by *changing* into the Universe.” Thus it is sought to identify Nature with God, whereby, as Schopenhauer said, “you show God to the door.” If God changes Himself into The Phenomenal Universe, then God is non-existent and we need not concern ourselves any more about Him, for he has

committed suicide by Change. In such case there is no God, no Infinite, no Immutable, no

Eternal; everything has become finite, temporal, separate, a mere union of diverse finite parts. In that case are we indeed adrift in the Ocean of Diversity. We have lost our Foundation of Reality, and are but ever-changing “parts” of physical things governed by physical laws. Then, indeed, would be true the idea of some of the old philosophies that “there is No Being; merely a Becoming.” Then would there, in truth, be nothing constant, the universe never the same for two consecutive moments, with no permanent ground of Reality to support it. But the reason of man, the very essence of his mental being, refuses to so think of That-which-is. In his heart of hearts he recognizes the existence of That-Which-Changes-Not, That-Which-Is Eternal, That-Which-Is-Reality.

The “Evolving God.”

Moreover, the idea of the immutability of Reality must serve to confute the erroneous idea of certain schools of metaphysics which assert the existence of “an Evolving God”; that is, a God which *increases in intelligence, nature, and being* by reason of the change of the universe, which is an expression of Himself.

This conception is that of a Supreme Being who is growing, developing, and increasing in efficiency, wisdom, power, and character. This is an attempt to combine the anthropomorphic deity and the pantheistic Nature-God. The conception is clearly anthropomorphic, as it seeks to attribute to God the qualities and characteristics of man. It defies every fact of Ultimate Principle of Reality. It is extremely unphilosophic and will not stand the test of logical examination.

This last mentioned conception vitiates the fact of immutability and also brings in the element of Time in the improvement, development, evolution, and changes mentioned. Moreover, it overlooks the fact that if time holds the possibility of any *improvement* of the Supreme Being, then that Supreme Being must have improved and developed to the fullest extent already. For, as it has had “all the time there is” for improvement in the Eternity behind it,—time extending back to infinity,—it cannot have *more* time for improvement in the eternity before it—the infinity of time of the future. If it can accomplish anything in the future of eternity, *then it must have been able to accomplish the same thing in the past of eternity.* It has had as much time already

as it can ever hope to have in the future. Infinite time is behind it as well as before it.

The only other alternative to the above is that the Evolving God has slept throughout all past eternity and only waked up an æon or so ago and began to grow and increase its wisdom; or that it lacked the desire or will to evolve until a few billions of years ago, when its ambition was aroused. Childish idea of anthropomorphism in a new form! Not only is the idea of the Evolving God childish, but it is also impossible. For there can be no Change or Improvement in Ultimate Reality, whether we call it God, Spirit, or Matter. Whatever is is itself and can never be other than itself. Moreover, the very idea of ultimateness carries with it the idea of perfection and completeness. If ultimate excellence is a matter of evolution in time for the Evolving God, then, reversing the process, we may imagine the Evolving God as having been in an infinitely undeveloped state and condition away back in the infinite past. The conception is scarcely worthy of a moment's serious consideration. We mention it merely because unthinking persons have been caught by the idea as advanced by illogical teachers.

By its very essence, nature, substance, and reality, Reality must be complete, perfect, infinite, and ultimate. To such Reality there can come no change; it must be immutable from the very facts of its existence. Therefore, Reality is perceived to be immutable, changeless, unchangeable, incapable of change, not susceptible to change, invariable, constant, stable, unalterable.

PART II. SPIRIT.

VII. REALITY IS SPIRIT.

Statement: Reality is Spirit; Spirit is Reality. Such is the high report of the philosophical reasoning of the human mind in its search for a fitting term for its concept of Reality.

There have been philosophers who claimed that Reality is Substance; others that it is Energy; others that it is Life; others that it is Mind; others that it is Law. But each of these conceptions is perceived to be but a partial statement of a greater fact. Reality is substance, energy, life, mind, and law—and yet is greater than any one of these by itself. It combines the nature of each and yet transcends them considered separately.

There is but one term which begins to express the concept of the nature of Reality—the term “Spirit.”

The term “Spirit,” originally clear in conception and meaning, has become more or less uncertain by reason of common and ignorant usage. We must go to its source in order to perceive it in its original purity.

It is derived from the Latin word *spiritus*, which had its origin in the Older Latin word *spirare*, meaning “to breathe.” The term “breath” (in its various forms in the different ancient languages) was always used by the philosophers, metaphysicians, theologians, and mystics in its esoteric or inner sense, and not in the exoteric or outer sense of physical respiration. The writer of the book of Genesis, whether he be Moses or some other man well versed in esoteric lore, was fully aware of this esoteric phase of the term. He says: “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and *breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*” (Genesis ii: 7). In the original Hebrew text we find this sentence terminating with the words “*neshemet ruach chayim*,” the exact translation of which is “the breath of the Spirit of Life.” In the ancient Hebrew the word “*neshemet*” meant the ordinary physical breath; while the word “*ruach*” meant “the Spirit of Life.” In the Hebrew scriptures, and those of other peoples, we find a constant repetition of the words which can be translated only into the English “Spirit,” the esoteric or inner sense always being clearly indicated. We find statements similar to “God is Spirit,” etc., in all the sacred writings of the race. Only the densest mind could imagine that these writers meant that the Supreme Being was to be considered as a *breath of air*. On the contrary, the

term “Spirit,” in its various forms and equivalents, always has indicated the essence of life and being. We find it so used in the Christian Religion, as, for instance, “The Spirit, Holy Spirit, Holy Ghost,” etc. In “Holy Ghost” the word “ghost” is used in its original sense, in which it was identical with “spirit.” In the original Greek the term “Holy Spirit” is employed, but in the translation the Anglo-Saxon term was substituted. The original sense is indicated in the passage “were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.” The Greek term “Pneuma” is equivalent to the English term “Spirit,” and, like the Latin term from which the English one is derived, had its exoteric meaning of “physical breath” and its esoteric meaning of “Spirit.”

The essence of the term “Spirit” has always been that of the idea of *immateriality*. Even in its wider and broader usage the term “spirit” is seen to carry with it the idea of “essence,” essential substance, essential energy, essential nature, essential being, Reality is Spirit, essential mind, essential life. We find the various definitions of the several usages of “Spirit,” as follows: “Life in itself; Life or living substance considered independently of corporeal existence; the immaterial part of man; the soul, in distinction from the body in which it resides; a disembodied soul, energy, vivacity, ardor, enthusiasm, etc.; temper or disposition of mind; intent or real meaning as opposed to the letter or formal statement; characteristic quality, as ‘the spirit of the enterprise,’ etc.; tenuous, volatile, airy, or vaporous substance possessed of active qualities; and, finally, *that which pervades and tempers the whole nature of a thing; the active, vital, or essential part of anything; essence, quintessence, actuating principle.*”

In this inquiry the term “Spirit” is used in the sense of the Ultimate Reality, Ultimate Being, the Ultimate Essence, Nature, Substance, and Very Being of All-That-Is. In reality “Spirit” defies definition; and yet the human mind seeks intuitively to grasp the general idea sought to be conveyed. We feel assured that each student of these lessons also will so intuitively sense the idea sought to be conveyed in and by the term.

The term “Spirit” is applied to the Unchanging Reality— this essence, nature, substance, and principle of All-that-is— not in the spirit of close or arbitrary definition. Such an attempt would be absurd and most unphilosophical, for the very facts of its being render Spirit undefinable. It is over and above comparison and resemblance to any of the things of phenomenal appearance. It can be expressed only in its own terms. It is

elusive and ever-evasive. As Spinoza said, “To *define* God is to *deny* Him.” The term “Spirit” has been employed merely because it is the one term in the language which seems to lend itself to the idea or conception of Ultimate Reality. It indicates essential substance, essential energy, essential being, essential life, essential mind, and essential nature.

As Edgar Allan Poe¹³ once said of the term: “This merest of words, and some other expressions of which the equivalents exist in nearly all languages, is by no means the expression of an idea, but of an effort at one. It stands for the possible attempt at an impossible conception. Man needed a term by which to point out the *direction* of this effort—the cloud behind which lay, forever invisible, the *object* of this attempt. A word, in fine, was demanded by means of which one human being might put himself in relation at once with another human being and with a certain *tendency* of the human intellect. Out of this arose this term, which is thus the representative but of the *thought of a thought*.... The fact is that, upon the enunciation of any one of that class of terms to which this belongs—the class representing *thoughts of thought*,—he who has a right to say that he thinks *at all* feels himself called upon *not* to entertain a conception, but simply to direct his mental vision toward some given point in the intellectual firmament where lies a nebula never to be solved. To solve it, indeed, he makes no effort, for with a rapid instinct he comprehends, not only the impossibility, but, as regards all human purposes, the inessentiality of its solution. He sees at once how it lies *out* of the brain of man, and even *how*, if not exactly *why*, it lies out of it.”

G. E. Moore says: “Common to all meanings of ‘Spirit’ is the conception of that which is conscious. Consciousness itself is not conceived as *being* Spirit, but as being an attribute of it; so that Spirit is conceived as something capable of existing even when it is not conscious. On the other hand, there is no positive conception of *what* this permanent element in Spirit is; it is only conceived abstractly as *that* (whatever it may be) *which is the substance or subject of consciousness*, and negatively as not identical with any known quality.”

¹³ Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849), American writer. The author references Poe's prose poem 'Eureka,' in which he speculates on the merging of individual identity with the universal consciousness.

So it will be seen that we use the term “Spirit” merely from its convenience and general fitness, and not from any desire to insist upon an arbitrary definition of that which defies definition. If the word “Being” seems better to fit the requirements of any individual student, by all means let him use it. We are concerned with *ideas*, not with words. For him who would ask for a synonymous concept, we suggest the association of our Reality is Spirit term “Spirit” with Herbert Spencer’s “*Infinite and Eternal Energy, from which all things proceed.*” As we go on, the idea of Spirit will be brought out more clearly by *contrast* with phenomenal appearances and qualities.

In the following chapters the term “Spirit” is employed in the place and sense of “Reality.”

VIII. THE SUBSTANCE OF SPIRIT.

Statement: Spirit is Substance; its Substance is the only Substance, and all the Substance there is, yet it is Immaterial Substance.

This statement announces the fact of the All-Substance of Spirit. We have seen that “*Substance*” means “*that which underlies all outward manifestations; that which constitutes anything what it is; real and existing essence, nature, or being; that which constitutes the Thing-in-Itself as distinguished from its appearances or outward manifestations.*” The statement also announces the fact of the Immateriality of Spiritual Substance.

The reason demands substantiality in any and every thing. It is unable to think of an unsubstantial thing. The very idea of Thingness is bound up with that of Substance. When we think of “mind” or “spirit,” we are really picturing a subtle, refined state of substance. A non-substantial thing is a Nothing. In theology the term “Substance” is used in connection with Deity, in connection with “essence, nature, and being.”

The report of the reason is that Spirit not only must be Substantial but also that it must be Substance itself. As Spirit is held to be the “essence, nature, *substance*, and very being of All-that-is,” it follows that it must be Substance and All-Substance. It is Substance by reason of the very facts of its nature. It is All-Substance because there is nothing else to furnish Substance, or to *be* Substance. Spirit being All-there-is in Reality, then if Substance is in Reality it must be identical with Spirit. The reality of Substance is reported by the reason. Therefore Substance must be

considered as of Spirit, for there is nothing else for it to be, and nothing else to be it.

Immateriality of Substance.

In the same manner the reason reports the Immateriality of Substance. The illusion of the naive mind that Substance and Matter are identical is exposed by the trained reason. Matter is perceived by science and philosophy to be naught but a form of energy. It is composed of minute atoms, which in turn are composed of infinitesimal particles called *ions* or *electrons*, which are perceived to be but centers of energy and motion, and which are held to be but “appearances” in a hypothetical Something called the Universal Ether. Matter has melted into Immateriality, and is recognized as purely phenomenal and having no existence as ultimate fact.

The Universal Ether.

The Universal Ether, which science now holds to be the basis of Matter and Material Energy, is a purely hypothetical Something-Nothing which science is compelled to postulate in order to account for certain forms of phenomena. It possesses none of the qualities of Matter, and is really Immaterial Substance. As one authority says, “It must be Matter possessing the qualities of a vacuum.” It is held to be one, continuous, indivisible, inseparable, and not composed of parts of particles.

The Substance of Spirit

Dolbear, a scientific authority on the subject, says: “If the Ether that fills all space is not atomic in structure, presents no friction to bodies passing through it, and is not subject to gravitation, it does not seem proper to call it Matter. One might speak of it as ‘Substance’ if he wants another name for it. As for myself, I make a sharp distinction between the Ether and Matter, and feel somewhat confused to hear one speak of the Ether as Matter.” Stockwell, another authority, says: “The Ether is coming to be apprehended as *immaterial*, superphysical Substance, filling all space, carrying in its infinite throbbing bosom the specks of aggregated dynamic force called worlds. It embodies *the ultimate spiritual principle*, and represents the unity of those forces and energies from which spring, as their source, all phenomena, physical, mental, and spiritual, as they are known to man....That the Ether is not Matter in any of its forms practically all scientists are agreed.”

Bigelow says: “You are all more or less familiar with that extraordinary entity upon whose inferential existence the lines of modern scientific

thought seem to converge, the interstellar Ether, which seems likely to prove the ultimate form of matter out of which everything comes and everything must eventually return. You know the seemingly contradictory qualities which the hypothesis involves—how it is perfectly rigid and perfectly elastic, perfectly dense and perfectly penetrable, hot and cold, heavy and light, and so on as far as we like to go. But antinomies cannot condition existence; and all this simply means that the Ether is unconditioned, an entity of no properties, or, more exactly, not an entity at all, but *an infinite possibility*.”

Poe says: “There can be no two ideas more essentially different than that which we attach to a metal, and that which we attach to the Universal Ether. When we reach the latter, we feel an almost irresistible inclination to class it with Spirit, or with nihility....Destroy the idea of the atomic constitution of the Universal Ether, and we are no longer able to regard the Ether as an entity, or, at least, as matter. For want of a better word we might term it Spirit.”

Matter as Ultimate Substance has been denied by Materialism itself. No educated man, under sixty years of age, to-day holds that Matter is ultimate, nor denies that it is merely phenomenal appearance. Science has retreated, or advanced, to the hypothesis of the Universal Ether, and the latter is held to be Immaterial. All schools of advanced and scientific thought are now practically agreed that Ultimate Substance is Immaterial, and Haeckel, one of the most radical thinkers of science, is reported as saying in a recent address that ultimate Substance “may as well be called Spirit as anything else.”

Solidity of Substance.

Those who have been naïvely identifying Substance with *hardness* or *solidity* are reminded here that these qualities of matter are purely relative, and depend solely upon the rate of vibration of the particles and their degree of cohesion or “holding together.” Raise the vibration and the molecules fly farther apart from each other, and the hardness and solidity depart. The most solid steel is no more substantial than the same steel when it is dissolved into gas. The invisible steam is quite as substantial as the same thing when it is frozen into a block of hard ice. In fact, the higher the vibrations of Matter, the more energy is displayed by it and the more *real* do its activities become. The universe in its former nebulous state was just as real as it is in a condition of solidity. Solidity is merely a comparative

quality of Matter, and has no connection whatever with substantiality. Electricity, magnetism, light, and heat are just as substantial as steel, granite, or diamond. And mind is more substantial than either of these, at the last.

It may be of interest to students in this connection to note that in the opinion of eminent scientific authorities any substance, no matter how rare, subtle, tenuous, or intangible it might be, if it be continuous, without particles, and non-atomic in structure, would be *absolutely rigid and infinitely more firm than the hardest steel*. This because there would be no “give” to it, no possible compression of atomic particles or parts, there being no particles or parts to compress and “give.” Such a substance would be *absolutely unyielding*. So true is this held to be that science has seriously considered the fact in its conception of the Universal Ether as continuous and non-atomic, as undivided and indivisible. It has been held that if the Universal Ether is undivided and indivisible, then the apparently solid bodies of Matter cannot pass through it, but that the latter (Matter) being atomic and divisible in structure, may allow the Ether to pass through it instead of it passing through the Ether. Thus a planet would not pass through the Ether, that being impossible, but the Ether would pass through the planet and thus allow the free motion of the latter. For the practical purposes of the motion of the stellar bodies it makes no difference whether they be conceived as passing through the Ether or the Ether passing through them. This fact, admitted by science, should give the student some new ideas and thoughts on the matter of the solidity of substance.

Spiritual Substance.

The essence of the idea of “Substance,” then, is as follows: (1) Something underlying and supporting; (2) that which is the inmost and real essence or nature of a thing; (3) that which is real, actually existing or being, as distinguished from anything existing merely in fancy, dream, or imagination, and therefore unreal and not existent in fact. Spirit is seen to agree with each of these meanings of the term.

IX. THE ENERGY, LIFE, AND LAW OF SPIRIT.

Statement: Spirit is Energy; its Energy is the only Energy, and all the Energy there is, yet it is Immaterial Energy.

This statement announces the Energism of Spirit, the All-Energy of Spirit, and the Immateriality of Spiritual Energy. “Energy” means “power, force, or capacity for acting, operating, or producing an effect.”

The reason reports that Energy exists in actual being. Without Energy there could be no manifestation or expression of the activity of Spirit. Energy being recognized as in actual being, it is perceived that All-Energy must be Spiritual Energy, and Spiritual Energy must be All-Energy. There is nothing else to manifest or be Energy except Spirit, and no phase of Energy is possible except Spiritual Energy. Moreover, Spiritual Energy must be an essential fact of Spirit, and therefore Spirit is identified with Energy and Energy with Spirit. Spirit is Energy itself.

Immaterial Energy.

The statement also announces that Spiritual Energy is Immaterial. We have seen in the consideration of the preceding statement that Matter is purely phenomenal and has no basis in ultimate fact. Therefore the Energy of Matter is perceived also to be phenomenal and without basis in ultimate fact. Material Energy springs from the vibration of the particles of Matter, the vibrations arising from the *attraction* existing between particles or masses of Matter. This attraction is held by Haeckel and others to be *mental* in nature, and to arise from semiconscious sensation and the response of the will thereto.

This would take the whole question of Energy from Matter and into Mind. Other scientific authorities hold that all forms of Energy emanate from the Universal Ether, which is held to be Ultimate Energy. In either case Energy is seen to be Immaterial in its essence and nature, although as Material Energy it manifests through and in Matter. But there also is Mental Energy to be considered—and that is clearly Immaterial. The “Infinite and Eternal Energy” of Herbert Spencer is Immaterial and is closely akin to the conception of Spirit. Energy, from any viewpoint, when examined closely, is seen to be absolutely Immaterial, as the statement announces.

Will Energy.

There have been many eminent philosophers who have held that the *one thing* which meets all the requirements of Energy in all of its forms and

manifestations is a Principle of Will. The Will is a most mysterious element of mind and action, and seems to be an ultimate principle of activity, mind, and life. It is the spirit of action in all mental and vital processes and manifestations, and Schopenhauer¹⁴ and others have demonstrated very clearly that it may be easily conceived of as the moving power immanent in the activities of Matter and mechanical processes.

The Buddhists also hold to this idea. Modern Science is rapidly approaching this position also. At the last all Energy is perceived as The Energy, Life, and Law of Spirit as Will. In this case the Will, which is Universal Energy, must be identified with Spirit, for there is nothing else to be Will or manifest Will.

Statement: Spirit is Life; its Life is the only Life, and all the Life there is, yet it is Immaterial Life.

This statement announces the Liveness and All-Life of Spirit, and that Spiritual Life is not phenomenal life. It is difficult to define Life except in its own terms. It is held to be distinguished by at least a degree of consciousness, accompanied with the power and ability to manifest voluntary movement. In short, Life is seen to depend for its existence upon Mental Powers. Mind is said to be the “liveness” of Life. There is no Life without Mind, and no Mind without Life. Life, then, is but another name for Mind.

Spirit is perceived by the reason to be identical with Life. A lifeless Spirit could not manifest and express activity of any kind. If Spirit had not Life there would be no living, acting, moving universe or any part thereof. But Spirit must be more than “alive.” Life must be an essential fact of Spirit, for it is perceived to be in actual being. Life is seen to be identical with Spirit. Spirit is Life itself. There is nothing else for Life to be but Spirit, and nothing else to be Life but Spirit. Moreover, Spirit must be All-Life, for there is nothing else but Spirit to manifest or to be Life.

But Spiritual Life cannot be material life, for the latter has its beginning and ending in time and manifests many facts directly opposed to actual being. Material life meets with none of the requirements of actual being, and is clearly phenomenal in all of its facts. Its only reality is based upon

¹⁴ Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), German philosopher who argued that the ultimate reality is Will, a blind, striving force. He held that introspection can reveal this Will within oneself.

the immanence and manifestation of Spiritual Life in its forms, phases, and activities. Spiritual Life is the support and sustaining essence of phenomenal life.

Phenomenal forms were formerly divided into two classes, viz.: (1) living forms and (2) lifeless forms. But Science now perceives that there is nothing lifeless in the universe; that the universe and everything in it is alive and vital. Life is perceived even in the atoms of matter. As Luther Burbank says: "All my investigations have led me away from the idea of a dead universe tossed about by various forces to that of a universe which is absolutely all life, soul, thought, or whatever name we choose to call it. All life on our planet is, so to speak, just on the outer fringe of this infinite ocean of force. *The universe is not half dead but all alive.*"

Statement: Spirit is Law; its Law is the only Law, and all the Law there is, yet it is Immaterial Law.

This statement announces the Law of Spirit, the All-Law of Spirit. There are many definitions of "Law," but the most comprehensive in our consideration of the term is that which is used in mathematics, which is as follows: "*Law is the rule according to which anything proceeds; the mode or order of sequence.*"

The presence of Law is recognized by the reason. It is seen in constant manifestation in the universe. It is perceived to be in actual being, in its essence. There is no other source for Law than Spirit. Law is perceived to be an essential fact of Spirit and is identified with it. Spirit is Law itself. Spirit is a Law-unto-Itself and Law-in-Itself, and its Law must govern all manifested by it. There is nothing else to manifest Law, or to be Law, other than Spirit. Therefore Spirit is seen to be Law. Moreover, by the same reasoning, Spiritual Law is seen to be all the Law there is; there is no other Law possible.

Pure Logic Of Law.

In the consideration of the processes and activities of the universe it is perceived that all sequence is orderly and regular and in accordance with Law. In short, all universal processes manifest the processes of Pure Logic. The universal processes are seen to be logical, proceeding from cause to effect with unerring and invariable direction. Given certain causes, and certain results follow. The Universal Law is seen to be a purely logical (and therefore mental) operation. Universal Law is evidence of Universal Mind. As an authority says: "Observing the uniformity, the immutability of the

processes of nature, we recognize that every fact has its antecedent, and this again its own, and soon, until in retracing the processes we lose ourselves, after fewer or more steps, in the single universal cause. We lose ourselves in infinity; we recognize the manifestations, the workings of the eternal power in ourselves as well as in nature generally. And we know from history, human, geological, and astronomical, that thus has nature manifested herself since time has recorded. The universal energy works through us. We really originate nothing, we initiate nothing. We originate no force or energy any more in the world of mind than in the world material....We are agents in the hands of the Creator; instruments of the universal energy; conscious instruments, intelligent agents, but controlled—controlled both through the mind and the body....The will of the Almighty is our will. We originate nothing, and when by our actions we modify anything, it is as links in the endless chain of nature's sequences. We are phases of the eternal energy. And the interacting circumstances of individuality and environment which determine our actions owe their existence at any given moment simply and wholly to the natural course or sequence of events."

One of the world's greatest scientists of a past generation uttered the following magnificent phrase, based upon the result of his life work and investigation: "The Universe is governed by Law!" And all thought worthy of the name acquiesces in his statement. Everything is under Law. There is nothing Lawless.

There is no such thing as Chance. Chance is but a name for "laws not recognized or perceived." The universe, and everything in it, proceeds in an eternal procession of absolutely regular and orderly sequence. There are no exceptions to Universal Law.

And all laws are seen to proceed from one Law, and this One Law is seen to be the Law of Spirit.

X. THE MIND OF SPIRIT.

Statement: Spirit is Mind; its Mind is the only Mind, and all the Mind there is, yet it is Immaterial Mind, and not Material Mind or Thought.

This is a statement of *primary importance*. It announces the Mentalism of Spirit, the All-Mindness and Inclusive Mentality of Spirit. It is impossible to define “Mind” except in its own terms. Definitions of Mind are usually seen to be but attempts to define Thought. Mind may be considered as *the Substance in which Thoughts are formed and in which they appear*. Mind has ever been recognized as something ultimate and fundamental, something at the very center of Ultimate Reality. This recognition is accompanied by the perception that Mind must be Spirit and Spirit must be Mind. Spirit divorced from Mind is seen to be a Nothing; while Mind divorced from Spirit is naught but a word. The reason inevitably reports that All-Mindness must be in Spirit and that Spiritual Mind is all the Mind there is. There is nothing else to have or to be Mind other than Spirit. Wherever Mind is then that Mind must be Spiritual Mind.

Mind and Thought.

But the statement also makes the very important distinction between Mind and Thought. *Thought, particular or universal, is but an activity of Mind*. It is important to make and understand this essential distinction between Mind and Thought. That which the majority of us have been calling Mind is really but Thought. Let us then see the distinction and difference. We can understand Universal Mind and Universal Thought only by analogy, by considering our own particular mind and thought and reasoning therefrom up to Infinity.

Man knows his mind simply by reason of its thoughts, feelings, emotions, ideas, etc. He feels, has emotions; thinks, has ideas; imagines, has mental images; remembers, has representations of previous mental images, etc. All these he recognizes as incidents and manifestations of that mysterious Substantial Something that he calls “Mind.” He is conscious of his mind (and of *himself*, for that matter) only when he is aware of these manifestations of mind. Apart from them he might as well be dead, for if *they* did not exist he would not know that *he* himself existed or had a mind. To all intents and purposes his mind is but the totality of his thoughts, ideas, mental images, mental feelings, etc. Whatever else it may be he does not know and cannot tell. He is not aware of its existence otherwise.

A celebrated German psychologist was wont to begin his first lecture of psychology by bidding his students to “Think about that wall opposite you.” They complied. Then he said, “*Now think about the thing that thinks about the wall.* That thing is the mind, and is the subject-matter of psychology, our study.”

A well-known American psychologist says: “You are obliged to say that the mind is one of three things: It is either (1) *all* of our thoughts and feelings, or (2) *part* of them, or (3) the thing that *has* thoughts and feelings—the thing that thinks and feels and wills. If you say that the mind is all or part of our thoughts and feelings, mental facts, it would be much plainer to say that psychology is the science of *mental facts.*” This gives us a very good illustration of the relations between Spirit and its Creation.

“That Which Thinks.”

The same authority also says: “What do we know about *that which* thinks, feels, and wills, and what can we find out about it? Where is it? You will probably say, in the brain. But if you are speaking literally, if you say that it is in the brain, as a pencil is in the pocket, then you must mean that it takes up room, that it occupies space, and that would make it very much like a material thing. In truth, the more carefully you consider it, the more plainly you will see what thinking men have known for a long time,—that we do not know and cannot learn anything about *that which thinks and feels and wills.* It is beyond the range of human knowledge.... It seems to me, therefore, that it would be better to define psychology as the science of the experiences, phenomena, or facts of the mind or self—of mental facts, in a word.” Again, the figure or illustration holds good. The study of the Universe—Physical Science—is but the study of the Creation of Spirit, and Spirit itself is not to be perceived through sense-impressions, although its presence is recognized and it is seen necessary as a background of “fact.”

Unknowable Mind.

Psychology, the science of mental facts or manifestations, informs us that Mind, in its essence, nature, substance, and very being, is Unknowable. We can know it only through its activities. And this is what might have been expected, for no thing can be both subject and object in itself. No thing, as subject, can perceive itself as object. The eye sees everything else, but cannot see itself. The mind cannot be both ends of the stick at once. It cannot peer into the microscope and see itself therein. It cannot gaze into the telescope and see itself at the other end thereof. The mind can examine

and analyze everything else, even its own states, thoughts, and activities, but it can never examine or analyze *itself*. It can never *perceive* itself in consciousness. Its consciousness can be only of things other than itself, including its own mental states. *Consciousness without an object of consciousness is identical with unconsciousness*. Therefore, Mind-in-Itself can never be known in consciousness by Mind itself. To itself it must always remain the Unknowable; by itself it must always remain the Unknown. Herbert Spencer uttered an irrefragable truth when he said that Ultimate Reality in itself is Unknowable. For Ultimate Reality, or Spirit, is identical with Infinite Mind and therefore must ever remain Unknowable even to itself. Mind in itself is beyond the range of mental knowledge. Efforts so to know it intellectually are akin to lifting one's self by one's boot straps.

Knowable Mental States.

But *Thought* may be known, for thoughts are mental states, manifestations, and activities. Man knows five forms of mental states or activities, viz.: (1) Sensation, (2) Feeling or Emotion, (3) Intellect, (4) Ideation, and (5) Will. Let us now consider these in detail and at the same time consider whether or not Spirit, or Universal and Infinite Mind, may be thought to manifest each or any of these.

(1). Sensation. In this class of mental states or activities are found all impressions, or consciousness of impression, made upon the mind through the medium of a nerve or one of the organs of sense. "Sense" is "a faculty possessed by animals of perceiving external objects by means of impressions made upon certain organs of the body, or of perceiving changes in the condition of the body." All sensation is held to have evolved and developed from the original sense of "feeling" or "touch." Spirit, or Universal Mind, cannot be conceived of as having sense organs or nerves whereby it might receive impressions of external objects or perceive changes in the condition of its body. There are no external objects to be sensed, no sense organs or nerves to sense them if they did exist, and no body to give rise to sensation of its change of condition. Therefore Spirit, or Universal Mind, cannot be thought of as manifesting or experiencing Sensation. This plane of mental activity belongs solely to the phenomenal world.

(2). Feeling or Emotion. In this class are comprised the feelings, emotions, desires, inclinations, etc., all of which are accounted for by psychology as results of the past experience of the individual or of the race

continued in individual memory or race memory (instinct), and which may be traced step by step from their origin along the pathway of evolution. Every feeling, emotion, desire, or inclination has its origin and evolution, its natural history. Certain experiences of the race or of the individual, continued in individual memory or racial instinct, result in the feelings, emotions, desires, or inclinations of the moment, which are awakened by the proper associations or environment or by physical and psychical reflexes. Feeling and Emotion have their origin in sense experience of the individual and of the race. This class of mental activities are seen to be purely phenomenal in their origin and nature; and reason reports that they have no place in actual being or Spirit.

Spirit cannot be thought of as experiencing feelings, emotions, desires, or inclinations. The mere idea of Spirit having emotions, feelings, desires, and inclinations is ludicrous, and yet the naive thought of the race is fond of attributing the emotions of love or hate, jealousy or love of praise, like and dislike, etc., to Deity or even to Abstract Principle of Being. The error arises from the natural tendency of the naive thinker to form anthropomorphic conceptions of Deity and Being, to make gods and principles from the materials of himself. Hence arise the popular conceptions of "personal gods," the number and variety of which are countless. Reason reports the fact that Spirit, or Universal Mind, must be without feeling, emotion, desire, or inclination, as we understand these terms. This plane of mental activity belongs solely to the phenomenal world.

XI. THE MIND OF SPIRIT—CONTINUED.

(3). **Intellect.** In this class of mental states or activities we find the processes of reasoning and understanding. Reasoning consists in “the application of the primary and fundamental truths or principles which are the conditions of all real and scientific knowledge, and which control the mind in all its processes of investigation and deduction.” Understanding consists of “the logical faculty or power of apprehending under general conceptions, or the power of classifying, arranging, and making deductions.” It will be seen that the entire and whole process of Intellect depends entirely upon the existence of phenomenal objects of sense, past or present. Sensation and perception are inactive in absence of objects of sense, for they arise by reason of these objects. The higher intellectual faculties depend upon sensation and perception for their materials of thought, and are seen to have developed from them by evolution. From simple sensation to the highest intellectual processes is seen to be but a series of steps of evolutionary development.

Reason and Understanding, the intellectual faculties, are seen to consist of but a process of comparing previously perceived impressions of sense objects, classifying and arranging them according to their perceived relations to other perceived objects, and making inferences or drawing deductions therefrom. From first to last Intellect is seen to be but a development of Sensation. The objects of Intellectual consideration are phenomenal objects; the highest forms of Intellectual activity are manifested in *discovering the relations* between these objects and drawing conclusions therefrom.

The Intellect, like the Emotion-Feeling plane of mind, is seen to originate from Sensation and to be purely phenomenal in nature and scope. It has no place in actual being, and Spirit, or Universal Mind, cannot be thought of as depending upon Intellect. Intellect has been evolved by Spirit or Universal Mind in order that certain of its created forms might exercise reason in their life and phenomenal existence. Intellect is born and perishes. That which begins in time must end in time.

Moreover, Spirit, or Universal Mind, cannot be conceived of as “thinking” in the sense of reasoning or understanding by Intellect. Why should Infinite Spirit, or Universal Mind, which *created* all phenomenal things, be concerned in comparing them and deducing Truth therefrom? It would have no need to compare these things, for it has known all about

them from their very beginning and before their beginning. There can be nothing about them that Spirit, or Universal Mind, does not know and has not always known. Their very existence is a proof that Spirit, or Universal Mind, knows all about them; without such knowing the things would not be in existence, for their only existence is in the Thought of Universal Mind, or Spirit.

The idea of Spirit, or Universal Mind, depending for Truth upon the comparison of its own created things, is laughable. There is *nothing* for Spirit, or Universal Mind, *to know*. It is Complete and Perfect and cannot lack anything. It in itself being All-that-is, there is nothing else to be known by it in Truth.

Moreover, just as we find that Mind can never make an object of itself, so Spirit, or Universal Mind, can never make an object of itself for examination or analysis. The only report of the consciousness of Mind regarding itself is, at the last, simply “I am.” The only Real Knowledge possible to Spirit, or

Universal Mind, is, likewise, simply “I am,” for that is all to be Known, and all that can be Known, for it is all that is in being.

And in this final report of “I am” from the human mind and the Universal Mind is found the proof that the former is a center of consciousness in the latter, and that the “I” perceived at the center of individual consciousness is the dim recognition and realization of the “I” of the Universal Mind, or Spirit.

The reason rejects the idea of Intellect in Spirit, or Universal Mind. There is no need for it there and its presence would rob Spirit, or Universal Mind, of its Infinity and Absoluteness, making it finite and dependent upon Intellect.

The Pure Logic of Spirit.

But before passing on let us say that although Intellect is rejected for Spirit, or Universal Mind, nevertheless reason recognizes in the Ideative and Imaginative processes—the Creative activities—of Spirit, or Universal Mind, the presence of Pure Logic. Intellect, in created things, is merely the manifestation of this original fact of Spirit, or Universal Mind; Intellect shares in it consciously only as *everything* shares in it unconsciously. This Pure Logic of Spirit, or Universal Mind, is evident in and manifest throughout the entire universe and all the parts thereof. In our

consideration of Spirit as All-Law we perceived the presence of the Pure Logic of Spirit in every manifestation of Law.

The reason reports that the series and procession of ideas, appearances, images, and forms created by Spirit cannot be supposed to proceed in a disorderly, haphazard, chaotic manner. In even the smallest event or happening in the phenomenal universe, physical or mental, there is apparent the presence and operation of invariable Law. We cannot conceive of less in the Infinite Mind of Spirit. On the contrary, we would expect the presence and operation of Absolute Law and Order. We should expect that certain laws, being ideated, they would absolutely govern and determine the procession of ideative creations. In short, we should expect that there would be apparent the existence of what we have called the Pure Logic of Spirit in the ideative processes and appearances. “Logic” means “the science or art of exact reasoning, or of pure and formal thought, or of the laws according to which the processes of pure thinking should be conducted.” When we say a thing is “logical” we mean that it is in accordance with the highest reason. Accordingly we should expect Absolute Logic from Absolute Mind, Pure Logic from Pure Mind.

In the processes of the Infinite Mind of Spirit we should naturally expect that everything would proceed with absolute order, under absolute law, from so-called “cause” to so-called “effect”; that there would be no “accidents” or “chance” or “exceptions” in such processes; in short, that if an Absolute Reason could witness the processes, it would always find everything, down to the smallest happening or thing, “according to reason and the laws of reason.” In the manifestations of Infinite Mind there must ever be operative Absolute Law and Order in the determination of the creative activities and their creations. The reason refuses to accept any other conception; it demands the presence and operation of Absolute Law and Order, not Lawlessness and Disorder. It demands a Spiritual Cosmos, not a Spiritual Chaos. The idea of Law cannot be divorced from the conception of Ultimate Reality—Spirit—even when considered in the terms of Infinite Mind.

The Pure Logic of Spirit ever proceeds along the lines of what men call “Deductive Reasoning,” by which is meant the reasoning from principle to manifestation, from general to particulars, from premise to conclusion, for so the Pure Logic of Spirit proceeds invariably, inevitably, inexorably. From principle to manifestation, from general to particulars, from premise to

conclusions it proceeds. For remember, It is the *general*, the universe the particulars; It is the *principle*, the universe the manifestation; It is the *premise*, the universe the conclusion.

Spirit, or Universal Mind, in itself never uses its Pure Logic along the lines of Inductive Reason, viz.: reasoning from particulars to general, from manifestation to principle; it does not *need* to do this, for the end of such reasoning would be merely to discover *Itself*. This form of reasoning is reserved for the Intellect of Man (or other and higher created beings which doubtless exist in other worlds). Man discovers principles in this way. Finally he discovers the Principle of Principles and finds himself in the presence of the Ultimate Principle, the Original Premise—Spirit. And in finding this he has found All—has found Himself, his “I,” his very being.

(4). Ideation. In this class of mental states or activities are found the ideative, imaging, or form-producing activities of the mind.

“Ideative” means having the mental power, faculty, or capacity to form ideas. “Idea” is “mental image or form; whatever the mind perceives in itself.” An abstract *idea* is an image of a general class of things, symbolic in nature and of but vague form. An *image* is the idea of a particular or special thing having a decided form. All mental creative work is performed by the aid of the ideative and imaginative powers or faculties of the mind. In this class of mental activities we find the greater portion of all mental work and all creative activity. Without this plane of mentation there could be no intellectual work and no progress; in its absence life would consist merely of sensation and the immediate response thereto on the part of the will.

Considering the question of Spirit, or Universal Mind, manifesting this class of mental creative activity, we find that reason reports that not only *can* we so conceive but that also we *must* so conceive in order to account for the activities, manifestation, and expression of Spirit. Unless Spirit, or Universal Mind, is conceived as having and using this mental creative power of ideation and imagination, we cannot conceive it as *creating* at all. If we deprive it of this possibility and capacity, we deprive it of all power of expression, manifestation, and activity. Moreover, the conception of this ideative and imaging power, raised to infinity, gives us the best and only adequate conception of the nature of Creation and the creation of Nature.

We must relieve Spirit, or Universal Mind, of the necessity of drawing upon past experience, memory, or sense impressions for material for its ideative or imaginative activities. Memory, or the recording and subsequent

representation of past experiences of sensation, belongs to the phenomenal world and cannot be thought of as a fact of Spirit, or Universal Mind. All phenomenal objects are believed to carry with them memories of individual and general past experience which persist for a certain time, but such memories arise and perish in time and are purely phenomenal in nature. Spirit, or Universal Mind, cannot be conceived as having memory or as being dependent upon it. On the contrary, it must be conceived as having *the infinite power, possibility, and capacity of Original Creation* by ideation and imagination of Universal Mind. Dependence upon memory or past experience would condition and limit the Infinite and Absolute, which idea is contrary to reason. Moreover, if Creation were dependent upon past experience there would never have been original Creation. Creation must be conceived of as Eternally Original. Memory belongs to phenomenal created things; original creation by ideation and imagination belongs to Universal Mind alone, which is Spirit.

XII. THE MIND OF SPIRIT—CONTINUED.

(5). **Will.** In this class of mental states or activities we find but one thing, and that a most wonderful thing—Will. We meet with a decided check when we reach the consideration of Will. We find something ultimate, basic, and elemental about it which reminds us of the difficulty experienced by the mind in considering itself. We find that Will is at the very center and in the very depths of that which we call “mind.” Will is the most elementary, and at the same time the least understood, form of mental activity. It has always defied analysis. It seems to be fundamental and basic in the mental field of activity. Schopenhauer says: “The Will is the innermost essence, the kernel of every individual thing, and equally so of the totality of existence....Intellect decreases as we descend in the animal scale, but not so Will.” The Will is the mental activity closest to the “I” of the individual. He may turn it upon perception and cause the activities thereof to quicken, become alert and active; he may turn it upon memory or imagination and cause these to redouble their activity; he may turn it upon thought and cause the thinking activities to do greater and better work. By employing the Will in the process of attention, he may cause certain ideas to occupy and keep the center of the field of consciousness. An authority says: “Will concerns itself with action....From the cradle to

the grave we are never passive recipients of anything; in other words, we are never without the activity of Will in the broadest sense of the term.”

Professor Bigelow says: “We are conscious of something closer to the center than anything else, and differing from the other forms in being the only form of consciousness to which we are not passive. This we call Will. We say, ‘I feel sensation, pain, or emotion’; but we never say, ‘I feel my Will.’ The Will is always subjective and active....This Will is a part of the normal consciousness of each one of you, yet it is neither a part of sensation nor emotion, but, on the contrary, is capable of dominating both....Sensations originate outside and inside the body; Emotions, inside. But the Will is deeper than either and they are both objective to it. We cannot classify it with anything else. We cannot describe it in terms of any other form of consciousness....We cannot separate ourselves from it. We cannot stand off and examine it. We cannot modify it by anything else. It itself modifies everything within its scope. Other forms of consciousness are objective in their relation to it, but it is never objective to them. There is nothing in our consciousness deeper. It underlies and overlies and permeates all other forms, and, moreover,—what is of immeasurably greater importance,—it can, if need be, *create them*.”

Are we not justified in asserting the existence of Will in the Universal Mind of Spirit? Cannot we conceive of Spirit manifesting Will, without destroying or affecting in any way the facts of its essence, nature, substance, and very being? Nay, more, are we not *compelled* by reason to assert the fact of Will in Spirit? Do we not find in Will the reason and explanation of the creative activities manifest in the Universe? Some of the world’s clearest thinkers have gone so far as to assert that the One Ultimate Reality is Will, and nothing but Will. We do not go so far with them, but we find it impossible to deny the fact of Will in Spirit. Will is activity, first, last, and always. It is not only the active spirit of mind, but also the *conative* spirit. By “conative” is meant “of the nature of *active power impelling to effort*.” Will is seen not only as active power, but also as active power self-impelled to effort. Considering Spirit in the light of its manifested activities,—by what it *does*,—we are justified in asserting that Will is an inner fact of Spirit.

Mentation of Spirit.

We find, then, that, after divorcing the mental activities wholly bound up with and dependent upon the phenomenal objects and Sense-Mind, there are three mental activities remaining which may be asserted as facts

of the mind of Spirit, viz.: (1) the Pure Logic or Law of Spirit; (2) the ideative, conceptive, creative fact of Infinite Mind, which has the infinite power, possibility, and capability of creating and producing ideas and mental images; (3) the active, conative fact of Infinite Mind, known as Will, which has the infinite power, possibility, and capability for manifesting active, directing, and compelling creative power. Can we not see that in the action and reaction of the two facts of Infinite Mind *the latter is capable of infinite manifestation and expression?*

Volition and Ideation.

Let us listen to the authorities regarding the action and reaction of the Will and the Ideative processes in the human mind. By carrying the principle to the plane of Infinite Mind we may be able better to grasp the idea of the action and reaction on that plane. A leading authority says: "The Will appears in perception in the form of attention, holding the mind on the object while the intellectual process is completing itself....The Will shows special activity in thought. Consciousness is not made up of isolated ideas but by ideas woven together in thought in the conscious mind. Weaving implies activity, and Will is behind that activity; hence Will is necessary to correlate the facts of consciousness. In comparison, the Will is busy fixing the attention and in dismissing and retaining ideas." And, on the other hand, "In the higher type of action the Will can go out only in the direction of an idea. Every idea which becomes an object of desire becomes a motive. It is true that the Will tends to go in the direction of the greatest motive, that is, toward the object which seems the most desirable; but the Will through voluntary attention puts energy into the motive idea and thus makes it strong. It is impossible to center the attention long on an idea without developing positive or negative interest, attraction, or repulsion. Thus does the Will develop Motives. The Will determines which motive shall become the strongest by determining which ideas shall occupy the field of consciousness."

Thus we see on the one hand that the Will may determine or even *create* the idea; and, on the other, that the Will goes out in activity only in the direction of the idea. We find that the Will is master of the situation by reason of its ability to develop ideas by attention; while it is equally true that it can be induced to do so only by the motive arising from another idea. Thus do we see the action and reaction of these two mental forces. Each exerts an influence on the other and is in turn influenced by it. Each

depends upon the other for completed activity and action. Without the other each is inactive. The action and reaction is comparable to that existing between the magnet and the steel filings. The energy in the filings is aroused only by the presence of the magnet; that of the magnet, only by the presence of the filings. The result is that the combined energies produce the shapes and forms of Creation.

XIII. THE MIND OF SPIRIT—CONCLUDED.

Spirit cannot be conceived as being *conscious* of anything but its own existence unless it first manifests ideative images, forms, ideas, etc., and thereupon becomes conscious of *them*. The Universal Mind of Spirit, in the absence of ideative images and forms, can have nothing other than its own existence of which to be conscious. Its state would be that of a man cut off from the time of his birth from all sense communication from the outside world and his physical body. Such a one would simply be conscious of his own *existence*, without a single other thought, idea, feeling, mental image, or conception. This must be true even if we raise Mind to infinity of Power and Being, for outside of Spirit there is nothing of which it can be conscious. Its only possibility and capability of being conscious lies in the creation of ideative forms and images in itself. Just as the man before mentioned could become objectively conscious only by contemplating his own mental images, so can Infinite Mind become objectively conscious only by contemplating its own mental creations, with this difference, however, that the man, by reason of his finiteness, could not create original images or ideas in his mind, while Infinite Mind must have the possibility and capability of so creating original images. *The reason reports that Spirit can become conscious of naught but its own existence except by the creation of ideative forms and images.*

Moreover, consciousness necessitates constant change in the object of consciousness. Consciousness of one invariable object soon ceases to be consciousness and fades by degrees into unconsciousness. In order to maintain consciousness it is necessary to have a constant flow of changing ideas or impressions pass before the field of consciousness. If we listen to a single note long continued, it fades from consciousness; if we gaze at a single unchanging object, we soon lose consciousness of that object. A single odor continually presenting itself to us soon ceases to be sensed consciously; a feeling or sensation continuously present soon ceases to be

noticed. Consciousness abhors monotony and necessitates constant change. The secret of this lies in the fact that consciousness is largely, if not entirely, dependent upon attention, and attention will not hold itself long upon a monotonous or unchanging object. Attention is either the focusing of consciousness or else the detention of an idea, impression, or image in consciousness. Attention soon declines if the stimulus does not vary and change, or if some new attribute is not discovered in the object or idea. There is no reason for doubting that, even when mind is raised to Infinity, and is seen to be Universal Mind, the facts of consciousness become different in nature. This being so, we should expect a continuous, ever-changing flow of ideas, images, and other products of ideation before the field of consciousness of the Universal Mind of Spirit.

Universal Subconsciousness.

Moreover, as in finite mind we recognize the great field of activities known as “the subconscious,” in which consciousness shades by imperceptible graduations into unconscious activities, so we may expect to find Universal Mind manifesting these lesser degrees of consciousness as well. We should expect to find that many of its activities are performed on the hidden planes of consciousness, to be brought into the bright light of the field of consciousness when required.

The “Lifeness” of Spirit.

Finally, we should expect to find the explanation of the activities toward consciousness, on the part of Universal Mind as well as of finite mind, in the fact that *consciousness is the essence of mind, and that mind is the essence of life*. As it has been expressed, consciousness is the “mindness” of Mind, and Mind is the “lifeness” of Life. Just as the finite Mind strives ever for consciousness in order to manifest its “mindness” and “lifeness,” so may we think the Infinite Mind of Spirit, ever expressing its “lifeness” in consciousness. Mind without consciousness is not mind in its fullest expression, and life without consciousness is not life in its fullest expression. To actually and fully “*live*,” consciousness must be manifest. We have seen that Spirit is the essence of Life. Being this, it must be regarded as *living*. Living, it must be conceived of as being conscious and thus expressing and manifesting its “lifeness.” The reason reports that the Universal Mind of Spirit may be thought of as manifesting consciousness, or conscious expression, in order to express its own “lifeness.” Of course, such consciousness and such “lifeness” must be regarded as raised to

infinity of possibility and capability, and its expressions and manifestations of consciousness must be thought of as on an infinite scale.

Spirit as Universal Mind.

Summing up the idea, we see that Spirit, considered in terms of Universal Mind, may be thought of as (1) manifesting Ideation and Will; (2) forming ideative and creative ideas, mental images, pictures, or appearances by the exercise of Ideation and Will; (3) manifesting Law and Order, or Pure Logic, in its ideative, creative activities and manifestations; (4) manifesting its ideative, creative activities and manifestations that it may express consciousness, as otherwise it would be unconscious save only in its consciousness of its own existence; (5) manifesting constant change in its ideative and creative activities that consciousness may be maintained; (6) manifesting subconscious activities and energies, in various degrees, as well as those of actual consciousness; and (7) manifesting the activities of consciousness in order that it may express its “lifeness,” for consciousness is the “lifeness” of Life.

Here we rest this phase of the consideration of Spirit in the terms of Universal Mind. Spirit may be considered as Universal Mind in its twin activities of Infinite Ideation and Will. Its Substance we may consider as Infinite Mind-Substance; its Power, as Infinite Mind-Power; its Life, as Infinite Mind-Life; its Law, as Infinite Mental-Law. But even so we run the risk of dwarfing our conception of Spirit by comparison. Raise even to Infinite Perception and Power our conception of Mind and we have but hinted at the possibilities and capabilities thereof. Reasoning with but finite minds, at the best we can expect to be but able, as Emerson says, “even by profane words, if sacred I may not use, to indicate the heaven of this deity, and to report what hints I have collected of the transcendent simplicity and energy of the Highest Law.”

PART III.

MANIFESTATION.

XIV. THE ETERNAL MANIFESTATION.

Statement: Spirit eternally manifests Creation in Its own Substance; yet It eternally remains Itself Infinite, Eternal, Immutable, and Indivisible.

The teaching of the wisest of the race, in all times and in all lands, is that Spirit eternally expresses itself in the Creation of an infinite series of universes, infinite time and infinite space being employed to produce infinite variety. It is held that in all the infinity of time and space there have never been two universes precisely the same. Infinite variety has accompanied infinite number.

The Days and Nights of Brahm.¹⁵

In many of the Oriental teachings will be found reference to the Days and Nights of Brahm—periods of Work and Rest, Inbreathing and Outbreathing, Activity and Passivity of Spirit. This figure of speech is accepted as final by many students. But it is really but a figurative expression of the activities concerning *one* series of universes. It is but a partial statement, and purposely overlooks the fact of the infinite number of universes in existence at any certain time in every stage of evolution or devolution, in every stage of the cosmic processes of birth, growth, decay, and death.

Cosmic Days and Nights.

The conception of the alternating periods of Work and Rest, Activity and Passivity, Cosmic Day and Cosmic Night, is not wholly untrue. It is a half-truth; true so far as it goes, but merely a fragment of the Whole Truth. The illumined have perceived that the rhetorical figure of the Days and Nights of Brahm is capable of fuller and wider interpretation. They have recognized that while there is this manifestation of Day and Night in all Creation, it is nevertheless but a conception of finite fact and truth. The figure, even in our own world, is seen to be capable of fuller explanation.

¹⁵ : In Hindu cosmology, the 'Days and Nights of Brahm' (the creator god) are cycles of creation and dissolution, each lasting 4.32 billion years. The author uses this concept to illustrate eternal manifestation.

For instance, while our earth life has its days and nights, it is never day everywhere nor night everywhere at the same time and place. While it is day *here* it is night *there*. While sunlight floods the Eastern Hemisphere, the Western Hemisphere is bathed in the darkness of night. When it is High Noon in one place it is Midnight in another. The Law of the Opposites—the principle of Contradiction—is met here as elsewhere.

Cosmic High Noon and Midnight.

Accordingly, when one of a series of worlds begins to wane many worlds of other series are coming into being. High Noon in one is matched by Midnight in another. So in the Cosmos there exists an infinite number of worlds, and series of worlds, rising from the Void, or receding into it. And yet each of these universes (so called because of our partial view) is but a part of the Grand Universe, the Universe of Universes—the Cosmos of Infinity. More than this, each universe is but an atom of a greater universe, and this of another, and so on and on and on to Infinity. And each atom and each particle of which an atom is composed is, in its way, a universe. Infinity extends in both directions, the infinitely large being matched by the infinitesimally small; but, at the last, All is one.

This truth has been expressed variously by the illumined of the race in veiled terms capable of being understood only by those who have learned to recognize Truth when they meet it, but which are meaningless to those who have not yet reached that point of evolution and who are content to read into the messages the half-truths of which alone they are capable of comprehension. The following, from the pen of one of the wise ones of the world, illustrates the principle: “The Universe is eternal *in toto*, as a boundless plane, periodically the playground of numberless universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing.” Gautama, the Buddha, gently reproved and cautioned his followers against the error of the Days and Nights of Brahm in these words:

“The Books teach Darkness was, at first of all, And Brahm, sole meditating in that Night: Look not for Brahm and the Beginning *there?*”

The Law of Change.

The Law of Change is ever dominant and operative in the Eternal Creations of Spirit. Worlds and Universes have their birth, their growth, their decline, their death; the same law is operative everywhere and in everything. All is under the Law.

But there is no original creation from Nothing, and no total Destruction of the essence, nature, substance, and principle of Things. Everything is “becoming” from something else and in turn is “becoming” into something else. A beginningless and endless chain of sequence is manifest. Nothing is originally created; nothing is lost. Everything is transformed. The Law of Conservation, by which every particle is saved only to be transformed again, is ever in operation. Nature is economical. Although she has all the substance there is, and all the energy there is, she wastes not a single portion of either. She gathers up her scraps and worn-out materials and transforms them into something else fresh and new.

The Law of Continuity.

There are no sudden changes in the Eternal Creation. The Law of Continuity is ever in operation and acts in the direction of blending and shading one thing into another—the cause into the effect, the preceding into the succeeding thing, the variations into each other. There is no break in the orderly sequence and procession of things. It is impossible to determine where one thing ends and the next begins. Nature’s processes are like the movement of the moving pictures, each change blending into that which follows it. There are no breaks or intermissions in the Eternal Creation. We can realize the continuity of Time. Time being but the measurement of Change, we see that the changing objects are as continuous as is Time. Like a mighty river the Eternal Creation flows on, without interruption, break, cessation, or separation.

The Law of Rhythm and Cycles.

The Law of Rhythm and Cycles also is ever constant. Everything rises and falls. Everything moves in circles. Everything swings to and fro like a pendulum. This is as true of the atom as of the Universe, as true of the great Cosmic energies as of the human emotions and feelings. Nothing remains still and unchanged, but is ever swinging between the two poles of its being, rising and falling with the energy of its being, moving in a circle around the circle of its being. The slightest examination or the most profound study of the Universe impresses this fact upon us. There is nothing to which this law does not apply. When it is understood it may be pressed into service and turned to advantage; when not understood it rules us like the arbitrary decrees of a tyrant.

Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva.

The Hindu mythology pictures deity as a Trinity: Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, Shiva the Destroyer. This idea represents the operation of the Cosmic energies of the Eternal Creation. Every moment something is being created, then held in balance and preservation, and then destroyed. The moment of activity may be but an infinitesimal portion of a second of time, or it may extend over an æon of time, but the principle is the same and the end is the same. There is ever the outward creative movement, then the suspension of balance and preservation, then the inward destructive movement of return. It is as if the One threw off from itself its Creation; then, the outward force being expended, followed a period of balance and suspense, this, in turn, succeeded by the inward movement back toward the One. This is the symbol of Creation as embodied figuratively in the various mythologies and as stated as cold fact by science.

The Reign of Law.

The Cosmos is governed by Law. Law manifests as many laws, but the latter are merely aspects of the one Law. There is nothing in the Cosmos not under Law. Nothing is over and above Law. Physical, mental, and spiritual activities, forms, shapes, and conditions are all governed by Law. Law is invariable. Those who claim otherwise err. Those who would take anything outside the realm of Law and Order endeavor but to remove that thing from the Cosmos. The very word "Cosmos," in its Original Greek, means "Law and Order." It is applied to the Universe in the sense of attributing Law, Order, and Harmony to it.

The Inner and Outer.

In the Universe we perceive all changes resulting from a twofold cause. There is ever present the inner impelling force or energy which urges the thing forward, and there is ever present the outer forces or energies of environment which serve to modify, influence, and determine the progress and direction of the inner energy or force. All change is the result of the action and reaction of these two principles of energy. This is true of the atom and the sun; of the tiniest living thing and of man; of the physical, mental, and spiritual. There is always this action and reaction. Not only is the inner force modified and influenced and in a way determined by the outer forces, but the latter, in turn, are influenced, modified, and in a way determined by the inner. Like two great giants wrestling for supremacy, the

Inner and the Outer ever act and react upon each other and the evolutionary result is the outcome of the struggle. But the result is not the final termination, for the struggle is renewed at the moment of the decision and goes on forever throughout all Eternity.

The Unity of Creation.

In all of this we may perceive the Unity of Creation—the fact that all is an expression of the same fundamental reality.

The same laws apply to the high as well as to the low, to the great as well as to the small, to the complex as well as to the simple. There is no great, no small, no high, no low, no complex, no simple in the eyes of Infinity. In Creation all is finite and comparative; nothing is absolute. There is nothing fixed or unchangeable; everything changes. There is nothing final or ultimate; everything has its degrees, with something higher and something lower. There is nothing at rest, at peace, still; everything is in constant motion, unrest, and change. For the things of Manifestation are finite; only in the bosom of the Infinite is there found that which is absolute, immutable, ultimate, peaceful, and at rest.

Surface and Depths.

Finally, we are ever brought to the realization that all this infinite variety and extent of Creation is but a surface expression of Spirit, and that deep down beneath this surface disturbance and activity there abides the eternal calm, peace, unchangeableness, and rest of the Infinite. Spirit does not change in order to Create; it does not divide itself in order to express Variety; it remains ever *itself*, unchanged, unaltered, undisturbed, while the magnificent Cosmic Dramatization goes on in Eternity. We are ever resting upon the Bosom of the Deep. There we are ever secure. We can never be thrown from its surface, and if we sink into its depths we are as secure as ever, for then we are at one with it, relatively as well as absolutely.

On the surface of Creation we are expressions and centers of activity of Spirit. Spirit is in us and we are in Spirit, and in that knowledge there is the sense of absolute security. Outside of Spirit we can never be, for there is no outside. We can never be lost, never destroyed in essence, nature, substance, and principle.

Though change alters our forms, states, or conditions, we are still in Spirit. The knowledge of our essence, nature, substance, and principle destroys fear, kills our apprehension, removes doubt, and sends us forward to the Divine Adventure with a smile on our lips and joy in our heart. And

as to the end, if end there be to the personal being, we know that whatever is *real* in us is above personality and cannot perish. Those to whom illumination has come invariably echo the words of Gautama, the Buddha, who said of such an ending of personality:—

*“If any teach Nirvana is to cease,
Say unto such they lie;
If any teach Nirvana¹⁶ is to live,
Say unto such they err, not knowing this,
Nor what light shines beyond their broken lamps,
Nor lifeless, timeless bliss.”*

*“The Dew is on the Lotus. Rise, Great Sun,
And lift my leaf and mix me with the wave.
Om mani padme hum! The Sunrise comes!
The Dewdrop slips into the Shining Sea!”*

¹⁶ Nirvana (Sanskrit: 'blowing out') is the ultimate goal in Buddhism: the cessation of suffering and rebirth. The author quotes a description of it as 'the peace of limitless consciousness unified with limitless will.'

XV. THE PHENOMENAL UNIVERSE.

The wise have ever asserted the phenomenal universe to be but an appearance *in* Spirit; and yet Spirit is seen to be Indivisible and Changeless. The phenomenal universe is perceived to have been *created in the essence, nature, substance, and very being of Spirit; but Spirit itself is and remains ever Inseparable and Immutable.*

This is a very important point of teaching and should be considered carefully in order that its full meaning may be grasped and assimilated. The term “created” means “brought into being; caused; produced.” It is sometimes defined as “to form out of nothing,” but such definition is meaningless, for the laws of thought show that the mind is incapable of thinking of something having proceeded from Nothing. In speaking of the phenomenal universe as “created” in the essence, nature, substance, and principle of Spirit, the preposition “in” signifies “situation or place with respect to surrounding, environment, encompassment.” It is generally associated with position or place in space because of its ordinary employment in connection with material objects. But it is also used in connection with mental states and ideas, as, for instance, “*in* the mind,” “*in* thought,” “*in* imagination,” thus showing that it is not necessarily related to space, for mind does not occupy space. Care must be taken not to identify the word “in” (as used above) with “of,” “from,” “out of,” in the sense of separation, removal, or division, for we have seen that Ultimate Reality is Indivisible and Inseparable; its Unity and Oneness cannot be impaired or destroyed. We are asked to consider a creation “in” Spirit and yet not “of” or “from” it. The creation must be accomplished without separation, division, or partition, and also without actual change in the essence, nature, substance, and being of that *in* which it is created. The necessities of the case require clear and subtle thought.

Let us first consider the various forms of “creation” familiar to us in the phenomenal world, that we may understand the nature of the creation of the phenomenal universe *in* Spirit and yet not *of* or *from* it.

Creation from Materials.

The most familiar form of creation is that in which something is created from materials. Man creates boats, shoes, knives, houses, textiles in this way. But a moment’s thought will show us that Spirit cannot create the phenomenal universe in this manner. In the first place there are no materials *outside* of itself from which it could so create; there is no “outside” and there

is nothing other than itself. In the second place it could not create from the material or substance *of* itself, for that would necessitate a separation, division, and partition of itself for the purpose of the creation, and the creation when completed would then be apart from its creator, divided and subtracted from it. Division and partition of, or subtraction from, Spirit is unthinkable, as we have seen in our inquiry. In the third place the creation cannot be made from Nothing, for something can never come from Nothing.

Procreation.

Another familiar form of creation is that known as begetting or procreation, which is familiar to us in the natural processes of animal birth. Spirit cannot create the phenomenal universe in this way, for begetting or procreation is but a form of division or subtraction. The procreated thing is always divided or subtracted from the parent thing. This is true in all birth, from that of the single cell to the higher forms of life, and even in the inorganic world in cases where the new forms are created from the material or substance of the old. Moreover, even were this possible, the procreated thing would be the “young” of its parent; the “young” of Spirit is unthinkable. Each young Absolute would be a replica of the parent Absolute—an absurd idea. Were there “young Spirits” there would no longer be Spirit, the Ultimate Reality, but, instead, *many* Spirits, *many*

Ultimate Realities, none of which would be ultimate, none absolute, none infinite, none total, none independent. The conception of anything being procreated from Ultimate Reality belongs to the child mind of the race, and flatly contradicts the report of the reason. The test of the Axioms of Being, which arise from the report of the highest reason, effectively disposes of this fallacious conception.

Creation by Change of Form.

A third form of creation is that in which the creation arises by reason of a change in the form, shape, activity, or appearance of the substance of the creator. A familiar instance of this form of creation is that in which a whirlpool appears in the running stream or a wave upon the surface of the river; or, in a more permanent condition, the appearance of lumps of ice in a body of water, crystals in the mother fluid, or lumps of butter in the cream; or, again, that in which motion is transformed into heat or light. The transformation of energy into various forms, as we have seen, affords us excellent and convincing examples of this form of creation. Certain

scientists have assumed that matter may have arisen from “knots” or “rings” formed in the Universal Ether. In this way Materialism has sought to account for the variety apparent in the phenomenal universe.

A little analytical consideration, however, reveals the fact that the above-cited instances and their kind are in reality not *creations* in the true sense of the word, but rather are *transformations*. The whirlpool or wave in the stream is but the temporary change of form resulting from the effect of motion. The wave results from imparted motion; the whirlpool from arrested motion; in each case the effect being produced in matter. Again, the lumps of ice and the crystals are merely changes of molecular arrangement, molecules being incidents and “parts” of Matter, the creation being *merely a change in the particles of the particular kind of Matter*. The lumps of butter arise from the *separation* of one constituent or part of the cream from the other.

Heat, light, and other forms of energy arise from matter whose vibrations have been raised by motion. Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as heat or light in themselves; there is only *heated* matter or *lighted* matter. The waves of heat and light traveling in the ether from the sun are neither heat nor light, but are merely waves in the ether. The space through which they travel is neither heated nor lighted. Space is absolutely cold and absolutely dark. It is only when the waves come in contact with air or other matter that “light” and “heat” result. Light and heat, therefore, as we know them, are *merely rates of vibration of matter*, and can scarcely be considered as *created* things; they are, rather, *conditions of things*.

Likewise, the transformation of energy and force is simply the effect of motion upon matter. None of the so-called manifestations of energy and force are really such; they are merely material objects energized by force. They have simply experienced *change of condition*. In all the so-called changes of energy there is found but a changed condition of matter. The energy has not changed at all. Take away the matter and we would perceive no changes or transformations of energy. The theory of matter being created by “knots” or “rings” in the Universal Ether does not meet the requirements of science. The Universal Ether is not something that can be twisted or knotted, even if there were anything in existence to so twist or knot it.

Our examination shows that this class of “creations” are not creations at all. Moreover, Spirit cannot create in this way, *i.e.*, by changes in its particles, for it has no particles; nor by separation of its constituent parts,

for it has no constituent parts; nor by change of its form, for it has no form; nor by arrangement of its molecules, for it has no molecules; nor by playing its energy upon matter, for there is no matter originally for it to play upon; nor by raising its rate of vibrations, for it has nothing to vibrate, no particles to be subject to motion, no material to be vibrated; neither has it anything to be knotted or ringed, it not being material. And, above all, we have seen that it is Unchangeable, Invariable, Constant, and Immutable. It cannot be thought of as subject to any of the above changes in itself, which are but characteristics of matter, from which immaterial reality must be free. Spirit, which is Ultimate Reality, cannot be thought of or considered in terms of matter. Of every quality of matter Spirit must be freed in thought. Naming each quality, property, attribute, and characteristic of matter, we must ever say “*neti, neti*”—“not this, not that”—in our consideration of Spirit.

“The Changing Absolute.”

But this fallacy of “the changing Absolute” is not confined to the school of Materialism. Some forms of Pantheism, and what may be called “conditional Monism,” hold that The One Ultimate Reality—the Absolute—“manifests as” and “assumes” many shapes and forms in phenomenal appearance by “becoming” the relative things of phenomenal life. They hold that The One *becomes* the Many in this way. An analysis, however, shows that this “becoming” would really mean either

(1) a division, partition, or separation of the One Absolute into parts, personalities, and separated activities; or else (2) a series of distinct *changes* in the Absolute. Either or both of these suppositions are unthinkable regarding the Absolute. The Axioms of “Reality” serve to utterly confute these fallacies. Ultimate Reality—the Absolute—can never be divided, separated, or partitioned into parts or personalities. Neither can it change in shape, form, activity, or in any other way in any degree whatsoever and still remain the Absolute. Absolute Being must always remain Absolute. “Becoming” is an incident of phenomenal appearance and has not existence in fact or truth in Absolute Being.

“Emanation” and “Reflection.”

Another apparently plausible theory is advanced regarding creation, in which the phenomenal universe, with its varied forms, shapes, and personalities, is explained as being an “emanation” or a “reflection” of the One Ultimate Reality, being “of” it and yet not *in* it nor yet itself. This idea of “emanation” is likened to the fragrance of a rose, which, while not the

rose itself, nor *in* it, is nevertheless “of” the rose. This figure is as faulty as the concept which it seeks to illustrate. The fragrance of the rose is not a subtle, immaterial something flowing from it without partaking of its substance. It is really composed of minute particles of the substance of the rose from which it is cast off. An “emanation” from Spirit would have to be composed of particles of the substance of Spirit. But Spirit can have no particles to cast off, neither can it be divided or separated in any way whatsoever. This idea of emanation is but a cleverly disguised and subtle form of the idea of creation by division and separation.

The idea of “reflection” is likened to the One Sun reflecting its image in millions of falling raindrops or in millions of jars of water. The idea sought to be illustrated in this figure is that, although there be but the One Sun, the reflections result in the appearance of the Many. This figure, like the theory, also is faulty. One naturally asks for information regarding the nature and cause of the raindrops and the jars. Spirit has no raindrops of its own substance nor jars of its own being to catch the “reflection” of itself. Neither is there room or material outside of

Spirit for the creation of them. There can be no “reflections” of Spirit unless there is something to catch the rays. If we assert that Spirit *creates* the cosmic-reflecting material, then we are back again to the question of the how of creation. Instead of answering the question we have simply removed it one more step. This conception, also, is but another cleverly-disguised version of the theory of separation and division and must be discarded.

XVI. THE NATURE OF CREATION.

Statement: Spirit creates the Universe, and the parts thereof, by its own Ideation and Volition, with its own Life and under its own Law.

Mental Creation.

In addition to the forms of creation mentioned in the preceding lesson, there is a third form or method of creation known to man in the phenomenal world which serves as a finite illustration of a universal fact. *Man creates mentally.* In his mind he creates mental images, ideas, mental forms, conceptions, combinations, associations, pictures, figures, shapes, and forms, many of which are afterward reproduced in material form by the work of his hands. The forms in his mind are as real as are their reproductions in the most solid matter. And, wonderful fact, these mental creations are *in* his mind and yet not *of* it in the sense of division, separation, or partition. Neither do they necessitate *change* in the essence, nature, substance, or very being of his mind. These ideas and mental images are merely “appearances” in the mind, requiring no change, division, or partition of the substance of the mind, and allowing it ever to retain its original unity of being; This is true even of the finite mind of man. Substitute for this the Absolute and Infinite Mind of Spirit and we may begin to get a glimpse of the nature and process of the creation of the phenomenal universe.

Everything Built Around an Idea.

To those who would object that mental creation would lack reality we would say that *the body of every living creature has been built by mind around a mind picture.* In the mind of the original cell there is a mental picture which is built around with material form. *All creation is around a mental form.* The mental form exists first, and then the material form is created around it. Every bridge, every house, every work of the hand of man has been preceded by the form in his mind. Nature always builds living forms around the mental form—even the crystals are built around an invariable form existing in the immaterial mental part of the mother liquor. Moreover, science shows us that mental states powerfully influence physical forms. Our faces, our walk, our carriage are the reflex of our mental states. Health and disease reflect mental states. Even in the phenomenal universe the physical form is seen to be but the veil for the mental image. With this power and reality *raised to infinity*, who may dare to say that a mental image or idea is “unreal”?

Idealism.

Many of the wisest of the race have held that the phenomenal universe is but an idea or ideas—a mental image or images—in the mental substance of Supreme Being, God, Spirit, or by whatever name Ultimate Reality is called. Absolute Idealism is the highest form of philosophical teaching. It holds that the phenomenal universe has no existence other than in the Universal Mind. But this existence, although pure appearance, is not regarded as *fictitious*, but on the contrary is held to be second in reality only to Ultimate Reality itself. *Thought is second only to the mind creating it.* If a mental image is regarded as unreal, then the mind creating it must be only a degree less unreal. When it is remembered that all the substance there is is spiritual substance,—the substance of Spirit,—then it may be seen that creations *in* that substance are as relatively real as anything could be.

Everything of Immaterial Origin.

The person who may object to this statement, and who may hold for the “substantial reality of material things,” should remember that the origin of his so-called world of matter is as immaterial as is mind. Science holds that Ultimate Substance is to be found only in the Universal Ether. This Universal Ether, we have seen, is a Something which is practically a No-thing. It is an *absolutely immaterial* substance. It possesses no more solid materiality than does mind. Even under the most materialistic theory it is held that the Universe is a phenomenal manifestation of a most immaterial reality. Those who find it easier to think of the Universe as a phenomenal manifestation in the Universal Ether, than as a phenomenal appearance in Universal Mind, should not forget that there is really very little difference between *a Universal Ether in which Life and Mind are held to abide*, and our conception of Spirit, which is Pure Substance, Pure Energy, Pure Life, Pure Mind—which is the essence, nature, substance, and principle of All-that-is. At the last, the conception of the Universal Ether is seen to be but little more than an emphasis of the *substance and energy* of Ultimate Reality; while the conception of Spirit is an emphasis of the *life and mind* of Ultimate Reality. There is surely room here for a sane reconciliation between Materialism and Idealism.

The Universe as an Idea.

The Phenomenal Universe, as a whole, and in its every part, is perceived to exist only as an ideal appearance in Spirit considered as Universal Mind.

The term “ideal,” as here used, means “of the nature of the image of an object apprehended, thought of, or conceived in the mind.” The term “appearance,” as here used, means “that which is perceived by and is visible to the apprehension of the mind.” The combined term “ideal appearance,” then, is seen to mean “that which is conceived in, and perceived by, the mind.” It is not only perceived as visible to Universal Mind, but has also been actually created and conceived in and by Universal Mind.

The above statement embodies and expresses the fundamental principle of the great philosophical school of Idealism, which contends that matter cannot be conceived to actually exist, as the only real substance is Universal Mind, and that the material and phenomenal universe is nothing but a series of mental appearances and impressions which appear and disappear in accordance with mental laws which are called “The Laws of Nature”; that the only reality of the phenomenal world consists in its being consciously “perceived” by God, Spirit, the Absolute, or whatever Ultimate Reality may be termed.

Monistic Idealism.

Monistic Idealism, or Idealistic Monism, is the flower of philosophic thought and is found wherever philosophy has dared to carry its speculations to their ultimate conclusion. It forms the highest peak of Western Philosophy, and in the

Philosophy of the East it occupies an equally high position. In the Western world some of the greatest philosophers have advanced its principles, and it is claimed that they never have been successfully controverted. In the Eastern world, represented by Hindu thought, the Vedanta (in its school of unqualified Monism) has always successfully challenged attack. Of the latter school it has been said that “it is the highest pinnacle of philosophic thought which the human mind can possibly attain.” Schlegel says of it: “Even the loftiest philosophy of the Europeans, the idealism of reason, as it is set forth by the Greek philosophers, appears in comparison with the abundant light and vigor of Oriental Idealism like a Promethean spark in the full flood of heavenly glory of the noonday sun, faltering and feeble and ever ready to be extinguished.” Max Müller says of it : “No philosopher, not excepting Heraclitus, Plato¹⁷, Kant, or Hegel, has

¹⁷ Plato (c. 428–348 BCE) distinguished between the changing world of appearances and the eternal realm of Forms or Ideas. The author references his view that the

ventured to erect such a spire, never frightened by storms or lightnings, Stone follows upon stone, in regular succession, after once the first step has been made, after once it has been clearly seen that in the beginning there can have been but One, as there will be but One in the end.”

The Harmony of Idealism.

Testing the principle of Idealism by the preceding Axioms derived from the report of the reason, we find that it harmonizes with each and contradicts none. The Idealistic conception of creation is compatible with the following facts of Spirit (which is Ultimate Reality) as stated in the Basic Postulate and Axioms: (1) The fact that Spirit is the essence, nature, substance, and principle of All-that-is; (2) the fact that Spirit is One, in the sense of Absolute Unity; (3) the fact that Spirit is Absolute, Infinite, Ultimate, Original, Causeless, Unchangeable, Indivisible,

Total, Formless, Independent; (4) the fact that Spirit is Infinite Substance, Infinite Energy, Infinite Mind, Infinite Life, Infinite Law.

It will be noticed especially that under the principle of Idealism creation by Spirit is possible without affecting the unity, oneness, totality, independence, absoluteness, infinity, and particularly without violating the indivisibility and unchangeableness of Spirit. *No other theory or explanation of creation of the Many by the One escapes the violation of these essential facts of Ultimate Reality. It is seen to be the only possible logical explanation of creation.*

In every other explanation of creation it is seen to be necessary for the One to *undergo change*, or to undergo separation, division, subtraction, or addition in order to manifest the Many. Either the One had to divide into parts, or to change itself into something else by “becoming.” In such cases not only does the One have to divide and separate itself into parts, but it also continually changes itself in these parts to the infinite variety of forms, shapes, and activities of the phenomenal universe. It brings itself under the Law of Change. Under the Idealistic conception, on the contrary, the One does not change, nor does it divide itself into parts. In its Mind-Principle the universe of appearances comes and goes. The infinite changes affect not the One. The infinite number of forms and shapes affects not the integrity of the One.

Such is the report of reason regarding the nature of Creation and the creation of Nature.

¹‘unconditioned ground’ is the true subject of philosophy.

XVII. PRACTICAL IDEALISM.

The wise, while realizing the idealistic nature of the phenomenal Universe, and the fact that it has no existence except as ideal appearance in Spirit considered as Infinite Mind, nevertheless have held that, for the *practical purposes* of life and living in the world of appearances, the Universe and Nature must be considered as existent. Those who fail to realize that “a little learning is a dangerous thing” run the risk of falling into the sad error of believing that the idealistic nature of the universe renders it “unreal” for practical purposes, and that its laws may be denied and defied. The wise hold that the laws of each plane of existence govern those abiding on that plane—that those living in Nature are bound by Nature’s laws. The laws of the physical plane may be transcended only by those who have transcended that plane in life and being—and such are no longer men. This does not mean that Nature’s physical laws are the only laws, for there are finer forces and higher laws which are realized by Life as it ascends in the scale of being. Laws spring from Law, and Law is identical with Ultimate Reality, or Spirit.

For the practical purposes of phenomenal life and living, the phenomenal Universe may be accepted as *existent*, and not as mere illusion or nothingness. Mastery of its activities and release from its bondage is possible only to those who recognize the fact of its idealistic nature, and its actual and real basis and support in Spirit. The outer form has its phenomenal and practical existence; while Spirit is the actual, fundamental, and ultimate Reality. Wisdom arises from an understanding and reconciliation of this paradox.

The conception of the ideal appearance of the Universe does not in any way deny the relative qualities and finite relations of the phenomena of the world of appearances. Natural physical laws proceed in the same way, whether we conceive Matter, Energy, Mind, or Spirit to be Ultimate Reality. Electrons and planets revolve, gravitation persists, the laws of mathematics continue to be valid, whether we conceive the Universe to be composed of particles of matter grouped together in manifold forms and shapes manifesting manifold forms of activity, or else centers of activity in Universal Energy; or whether we conceive the Universe, and its particular parts, to be shapes, forms, and activities—*Ideal Appearances*—in the Infinite Mind-Principle and the Ultimate Substance-Principle of Spirit. If all Substance is the Substance of Spirit, then all things must be in and of that

Substance, and therefore must be substantial and real to the highest possible degree. The Universal Ether can give no more substantiality and reality to the universe than does Spirit considered as Infinite Substance.

Even the Vedantists, whose thinkers fear not to follow their thought to its logical and extreme conclusion, and who say, “Brahman is true; the world is false,” and who claim that the phenomenal universe arises by reason of the existence of “Maya, the inexplicable illusion, self-imagined, that is illusorily overspread upon Brahman,”—even these daring thinkers do not assert that the world is Fictitious *so far as practical purposes are concerned*. They say: “Dreams are true *while they last*.” As Max Müller has truly said: “For all *practical* purposes the Vedantist would hold that the whole phenomenal world, both in its subjective and objective character, *should be accepted as real*. It is as real as anything can be to the ordinary mind; it is not mere emptiness, as the Buddhists maintain. And thus the Vedanta philosophy leaves to every man a wide sphere of real usefulness, and places him under a law as strict and binding as anything can be in this transitory life.”

The ideal appearances in Infinite Mind—Spirit—are second in reality only to Spirit itself. There can be nothing more real than the Universe, except Spirit Itself. The Laws of Time, Space, Causation, and Nature are included in Spirit’s Cosmic idea of the Universe; they are thus made perfectly valid and effective to all phenomenal things. There is every difference between the relative ideas and mental images in the finite minds of men, and the Cosmic ideas and images in the Infinite Mind of Spirit.

The world must not be regarded as a mere dream, unless one also regard his personal self as a figure in that dream. (We say his *personal* self to distinguish it from his *real* self.) It is true that we may assert the mere “appearance” of the natural world and refuse to eat, drink, and clothe ourselves, but in so doing we will injure our physical body, which is also an “appearance,” and may even destroy our *personal being*, which is also an “appearance,” at the last. So long as we live and move and have our personal and finite being in the physical world we must recognize and obey the physical laws of that world. Things dwelling on any particular plane of existence either must come under the laws of that plane or else *transcend* that plane in their being.

We have no desire to imply that the phenomenal world is pure illusion. On the contrary we wish you to remember that it is second in possible

reality only to Spirit itself. It may help you to think of the phenomenal world as Real and of Spirit as Super-Real. Do not make the mistake of considering the world as an illusory Nothing. It and all in it are Real Things in the world of Things; it is only when we rise *above* Thingness that we find the Reality of Super-Thingness. Remember that the world considered as an idea of Spirit is just as real and as practical as when considered as the expression and manifestation of the Energy of the Universal Ether of Science. Carry always in mind the idea well expressed by an authority, who said, “*Phenomena do not change with our varying views as to what things really are.*” The phenomenal world is under Law and laws; heed ye them!

Finally, it must be remembered that while the Universe and its particular parts are but ideal appearances in Spirit, it is likewise true that Spirit is *immanent and abiding* in the Universe and in each and every of its manifestations down to the most insignificant. Just as All is in Spirit, so is Spirit in All. Spirit is ever the Universal Creative Spirit of Nature, every shape, form, and activity in Nature. The presence and energy of Spirit is ever perceived manifesting in shape, form, and activity. The veil of Matter serves not only to conceal Spirit but also to *reveal* it. Just as the fluttering flag and the moving field of grain serve to reveal the presence and power of the breeze which is animating them, and which in itself cannot be seen, so do the moving shapes and forms and activities of the universe serve to indicate the presence and power of Spirit ever behind them.

This fact, remembered, should serve to forever remove all ideas of the practical unreality and illusion of the universe. While the shape, form, and physical activity is and must be but mere appearance, the animating power acting and moving in that shape and form and activity is Ultimate Reality itself—Spirit.

The garment is seen to be but appearance, but the Reality wearing it is the only real thing there is.

You, the individual “I” which is now receiving this instruction, are far greater, grander, and infinitely more Real than you have been led to believe under the fallacious conceptions regarding the nature of the Universe. Whatever the Universe may or may not be, You may bring yourself to a recognition, realization, and manifestation of your Real Self which will transcend any idea born of the finiteness of your being. When the soul receives its Illumination, universes may come and go and matter not, for the soul perceives in its “I am” the one supreme fact of Reality.

XVIII. THE CREATION OF NATURE.

Statement: Spirit creates the Cosmos by Evolution, preserves it by Balance, re-creates it by Devolution, and yet these three, in Truth, are but One—three forms of the Creation of Nature.

The Cosmos.

By "*the Cosmos*" is meant "*the Universe, or universality of created things; so called from the order, arrangement, and harmony displayed in it, as opposed to Chaos.*" Many philosophers have preferred the Greek term "*Cosmos*" to the Latin one, "*Universum*," in expressing the idea of the Created World. The Latin term, from which our term "Universe" arose, meant simply "Oneness of Creation"; while the Greek term

"Cosmos" implies the existence of absolute law, order, harmony, system, and logical arrangement in addition to the idea of the Oneness of Nature. The term in question is derived from a Greek word meaning "Order." The term "the Cosmos," as applied to the orderly Universe, was first used by Pythagoras. His followers, Philolaos, Callicratidas, and others, adopted the term, as did the philosophic poets, Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Empedocles. It was finally adopted as a philosophic term in general use. The Stoics also employed it as expressing the *anima mundi*, or World Spirit. In essence, the term "the Cosmos" is directly opposed to the term "Chaos," which means "yawning, empty space, or the disorderly universe or mass of universal matter in confusion; the world 'without form and void.'"

Nature.

The term "Nature" is used to express "*the Universe as distinguished from the Creator; Creation; the world of created things; the powers which carry on creation; the powers concerned to produce existing phenomena, whether in sum or in detail.*" The term "Nature" expresses more fully the activities of the Universe or Cosmos. It is the Universe or Cosmos expressing itself in activities of Life. "Nature," then, may be considered as the expressed and expressing Life of the Universe or Cosmos.

The Beginning.

The philosophers who have recognized and realized the spiritual nature of the Universe, and the immanence of Life and Mind in Nature, have speculated deeply regarding the manner or process whereby Spirit creates the Cosmos and endows Nature with her evolutionary tendency. In order

to understand the “how” of the Cosmic processes, the student must imagine a “beginning,” although the highest teaching is positive that there is no beginning. The student must assume a beginning in order to picture the creative processes.

The “Mother Nature.”

By placing ourselves in the position of an observer of a system of Universes, just before the dawn for them, we would see in the Universal Mind of Spirit the vague manifestations of subconscious activity forcing their way up toward the field of consciousness. Toward dawn there would be manifested an almost infinitely subtle and tenuous materializing or “congealing” of the Universal Substance, caused by the formation of a nebulous *idea* of a nascent Universe. (By “nascent” is meant “coming into being; being developed.”) As the idea develops in Universal Mind it takes on a greater and still greater degree of materiality, just as does an idea of the human mind when one is “thinking out” an invention, a poem, a picture, or any other product of constructive imagination. After a time there appears a peculiar tenuous quasi-material substance, which is the “Mother Nature” of matter and physical energy and in which abides also the possibilities of life and mind. This “Mother Nature” is akin to the Universal Ether of Science.

The Hindus distinguish between the three aspects of this “Mother Substance,” calling the Matter-Principle *Akasha*, the Energy-Principle *Prana*, the Mental-Principle *Manas*. Western Science combines the three in its conception of the Universal Ether.

Creation Of The Atoms.

The “Mother Nature” then begins to manifest activities, urged on by the development of the *idea* in the Infinite Mind of Spirit. Changes, modifications, and combinations of the evolving energy produce infinitesimally tiny particles of Something which is neither energy nor matter and yet which has characteristics of both. These particles are in constant vibration, as, in fact, are all created forms of energy or matter. In each is the possibility of life and mind, pressing forward for expression. These particles circle around each other and form a miniature universe of whirling mites, which have a unity of activity, thus forming a larger particle. These larger particles, in turn circling around each other, form a still larger, and so on, until finally is evolved the particle known to Science to-day as

the “ion,” “corpuscle,” “electron,” etc., which are now perceived to group together, and form the “atom” of matter.

This entire process, remember, is *purely mental* in character—merely the growth and development of the *idea* of the Nature forming in Universal Mind.

The Appearance Of Matter.

With the birth of the atom, matter appears. Matter, which the uninformed mind regards as the most *real* substance in Nature, really is merely the *product of the ideative thought* of the Universal Mind of Spirit. All matter is produced in this way; there is no other way in which it can be produced. Just as man may distinguish the difference between his *thoughts* and his *mind*, so is there this difference between matter and the Infinite Mind that thinks it into being as an idea. The “idea” of matter entertained by the Infinite Mind of Spirit gives to matter its peculiar and special characteristics. Matter is just what it is, merely because the “idea” of it held in the Infinite Mind of Spirit makes it just what it is. Matter does not make itself what it is. Nor does its “just-what-it-is” character arise from or by chance, for there is no such thing as chance. The idea of matter includes the ideas of weight, extension, and all the other qualities of matter. The characteristics of matter are *thought into it* by means of the idea of matter in Universal Mind. And the laws governing and determining the activities of matter are also thought into being in the same idea. It is just as if a man were to form the idea of a new thing called matter in the course of writing a strange story of a strange new world, with this difference, that when Universal Mind forms an idea that idea is imposed upon all other creations of Universal Mind. Everything that follows in the course of the evolving idea is bound by the laws and terms of the idea imposed upon it in its creation.

The Story of Evolution.

The rest of the story from this point on is but the familiar and oft-repeated tale of Evolution as taught by modern Science. Atoms of various kinds and degrees of vibration and arrangements of particles developed different characteristics. Likes and dislikes began to manifest between them. Affinities caused certain of them to form unions and groups, and new and strange forms of Matter appeared by reason of the different combinations. It will be seen, of course, that this evolution of form and variety arose solely by reason of *the evolution of the idea of Creation*. The inner

idea always was the direct cause of the material form and characteristics. The inner always preceded the outer.

Atoms combined and formed molecules of a new form of matter. The molecules grouped themselves together and formed masses of material form. The vibrations of Energy playing in and through matter changed its vibrations from time to time by the activities of heat, the latter being entirely a matter of vibration. The higher the vibration, the farther apart from each other do the molecules separate; the lower the vibrations, the closer together do they approach each other. These degrees of nearness, or farness, caused the differences between solids, fluids, gases, and the ultra-gaseous forms of Matter. Nebulae appeared; suns were formed; planets were thrown off from suns; worlds were created.

Appearance of the Life Forms.

The cooling worlds manifested new forms. As the possibility of the appearance of life and mind forms developed, the life and mind immanent in matter began to assert itself and moulded forms of matter to accommodate them. This, too, of course, was part of the evolving “idea” in Infinite Mind.

The crystals of the mineral first began to manifest intelligent growth and reproduction of form from the mother liquor. Then began the evolution toward organic life forms. Using the terms of modern Science, let us say that first begins to appear the radiobes, then comes the chromacea, then the gymnosporos and the angiosporos. The chromacea is a peculiar form of matter, comprising the characteristics of both mineral and plant life. It is found in the deposits upon damp rocks, bark of trees, etc. From it develop the angiosporos, which are the simplest forms of plant life, and the gymnosporos, which are the simplest forms of animal life.

From the above lowly forms to the moneron of Haeckel is but a step, although that step took millions of years of time to make the transformation. The moneron is the tiny glue-drop-like cell found at the bottom of the ocean bed, without organs, without even a nucleus, and yet manifesting life and mind. Then came the amœba, the protozoa, and the variety of elementary life forms; then the starfishes, the sea urchins, the molluscs; then evolved the fishes, the reptiles, the birds, the marsupials, the lower forms of mammals; then the higher forms; then, at last, primitive man. To go into detail here is but to repeat the pages of the familiar text-books. And throughout all this process— during all these ages of

time—there was working *the evolving idea* in the Infinite Mind of Spirit. The evolution toward Life and of Life is ever working out and unfolding in the idea. Living forms are ever being thought into being.

XIX. LAW AND CHANGE.

And through this wondrous evolution there is manifest ever invariable and unchanging Law. This law is mental law—logical laws. Everything proceeds from step to step, from unfoldment to unfoldment, in orderly sequence and regularity, as if an absolutely logical process were under way, as indeed it is. By this is not meant that each step is planned out beforehand; on the contrary each step proceeds logically from the one immediately preceding it and in turn develops the one next succeeding it. Failures are made, blind alleys are entered, but even these and their consequences are perfectly logical and the inevitable result of all that has gone before. An experimental step here works certain results of success or failure a little farther on. *Foresight* is not claimed for the creative processes of Universal Mind any more than it is for any ideative, progressive process. It is simply a progress step by step, in this direction and in that, striving here and trying there, the unfolding idea being ever behind the evolution of form, shape, variety, and activity. But each step is *the only possible logical step*. Reason recognizes that the Universe is governed by Law. Each event in Nature is the inevitable and necessarily determined event logically proceeding from all that has gone before. There is no Chance in Nature. Law reigns everywhere throughout Nature's domains. There are no exceptions, no illogical sequences, no variation from lawful and orderly procedure.

Law, not Fate.

This does not mean that Fate rules, or that Spirit predestines results. On the contrary there is nothing consciously predestined in Nature, and Fate is but a word conveying a half truth. Spirit is not consciously aware a second before an event occurs of what that event will be; and yet that event will be the only event that is logically possible and which could occur, considering all of the existent conditions past and present. There is no arbitrary Fate decreeing this or that result; but yet there exists Law that causes everything to happen in exact and invariable consequence of all the conditions of the case. Fate cannot compel an unlawful, disorderly, or illogical happening or event. Fate is but a shadow of Law, which men have

mistaken for the real thing. Universal Mind is compelled to manifest logical law in its activities by the very fact of its being Universal Mind. From these things arise what is called Natural Law, which thoughtful men have ever recognized and which modern science as well as ancient and modern philosophy positively asserts to exist. Everything in the Universe is under Law. Nothing great or small can escape Law.

The fact of Universal Law is a positive proof of the mental origin of Nature.

Omnipresent Change. Moreover, the fact of the mental origin of Nature is shown by the ever-present and ever-active manifestation of Change in all natural things. We have seen elsewhere that consciousness is possible only where there is a constant change of the object of consciousness. This is true of Universal Mind as well as of Sense-Mind. Consequently we need not feel surprised when we see that all Nature, and all the Universe, is in a constant state of flux, everything changing its shape, form, or activities from the very moment of its birth or creation. Everything is in constant motion, from atoms to suns, from Universes to the particles of which atoms are composed. Shape, forms, position, activities, conditions, and all else, physical and mental, are ever changing. Nothing remains the same for two consecutive moments, and no two things are ever the same at the same moment. Infinite variety and infinite change, this is the order of Nature. Everything is born, rises, declines, and perishes—everything, from atoms to universes. There is nothing changeless save Spirit. And this change is seen by the wise to arise from the manifestation of consciousness on the part of the Infinite Mind of Spirit. And this consciousness is the “liveness of life” of the Spirit of Life, which is Spirit.

And so proceeds the course of Nature; so manifests the Universe; so evolves the Cosmos. Under the veil of the form and shape of Matter may ever be seen the Spirit of Life striving, moving, changing, pulsating, evolving, building up, tearing down, rebuilding, creating, destroying, resolving, and dissolving its outward forms and shapes, and yet ever remaining constant itself.

Everything “Becoming.” Men have sought to personify these activities of Nature and to explain them by human desires. Heraclitus said that Nature evidently finds pleasure in creating and pain in holding created forms rigid, for she is ever creating and yet ever destroying or changing her creations. Others picture the constructive and destructive forces of Nature

as engaged in a titanic warfare and struggle,—one striving to build up, and the other to tear down,—the result being that nothing is stable but everything is ever changing. The Hindu mythology pictures a Trinity of Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Shiva the Destroyer. Cycles follow cycles. Worlds, nations, families, and individuals have their birth, their growth, their decline, their death. Like the tides, everything created, large and small, has its rise and fall, its ebb and flow. The Law of Change is ever in operation. The Law of Activity is always evident. Nothing stands still. Everything moves. Everything changes. Everything flows. Everything passes. Everything rises. Everything falls. Everything has its reappearance in new form. Nature experiences a million millions of births each second of time. In the same time she experiences a million millions of deaths, and yet Nature exists ever, birthless and deathless.

Spirit in Nature. Nature is the outward manifestation of the nature of Spirit. Her activities are the expression of the consciousness of the Universal Mind of Spirit. Her energies are the expressions of the power of Spirit. Her Law and Orderly Sequence are the manifestations of the Law of Spirit. And yet, outside of the Universal Mind of Spirit, Nature has no existence whatsoever. In herself she is as Nothing, and yet in her manifestation she is as Everything. An American playwright makes her speak through the lips of one of his characters, saying: “I am to-day this; yesterday, a pine upon a mountain crag; to-morrow, a butterfly, a blade of grass, a rainbow over a waterfall, a lizard warming on a rock, the rock itself, a beam of the moon. I am nothing because I am everything; everything because I am nothing.”

And from this consciousness of Nature’s universal everythingness comes to some souls that sense of the joy of life, the spirit of Nature, which identifies one’s self with The All, and The All with one’s self. The ancient Greeks deified Nature because they saw in her activities the expression of the life of the World-Spirit. Blessed indeed is he who can feel this great joy of Nature’s Life flowing through his veins, thrilling his pulses and throbbing his heart. To such a one has come a great joy; for, at the last, the wise know that,—

“The All is One, and all are part,
And not *apart* as they seem to be;
And the blood of life has a single heart,
Beating through God, and cloud, and Me.”

XX. IMMANENT SPIRIT.

Statement: Spirit is Immanent In all of its Creation, and In every part thereof; and In essence, nature, substance, and principle is identical therewith.

Students of Truth are often so carried away with the almost absolute distinction between Spirit and its finite Creation that they lose sight of the essential fact of the Oneness and the Only-ness of Spirit, and of the fact that Creation is an *expression* of Spirit—Spirit in outward activity. Creation is not pure illusion, though many have so taught in absence of the view of the other side of Truth. It is the most real thing that can be, with the exception of Spirit-in-Itself. Creation is really Spirit-in-Manifestation, not a separate thing. Just as all Creation is in Spirit, so is Spirit immanent in all Creation. (By “immanent” is meant “remaining within; inherent; internal.”)

Therefore, Creation cannot be mere illusion or delusion. Though its forms are but phantasmal appearances, fading away even as they appear, its essence, nature, substance, and very being is Spirit itself.

The primary laws of thought hold that the essence, nature, substance, and very being of a thing remain the same, notwithstanding the difference of the forms, shapes, states, or conditions under which the thing occurs, presents itself, or appears. Also, that what is is always Itself and never not Itself. We have seen, also, that All that is in Every Being is in Spirit.

Spirit in Creation.

From the above we see that all that is real in Creation must be *in* Spirit; there is nowhere else it could be. As it is in Spirit, it follows that Spirit must be *in it*; for Spirit *is* everywhere and in everything that is, by reason of the primary facts of its nature. More than this, the *real* essence, nature, substance, and very being of Creation, and all the parts thereof, must be actually and in fact naught but Spirit itself. There is nothing else but Spirit to be the real essence, nature, substance, and very being of Creation and all the parts thereof; and nothing else for Spirit to be, so long as there is Creation in existence.

Spirit Is Always Spirit.

Moreover, as Spirit is always Spirit and can never be anything else but Spirit,—as Spirit is always Spirit in essence, nature, substance, and very being, notwithstanding the infinite variety of difference in the forms, shapes, states, or conditions under which it occurs, presents itself, or

appears in its Creation and all the parts thereof,—then it follows that Spirit is the Inner Thing of the Cosmos, and that that which we call the Cosmos is merely the Outer Thing of Spirit. In this sense we see that not only is Spirit *immanent* in the Cosmos, but also that Spirit and the Cosmos, and all the parts thereof, are identical in essence, nature, substance, and very being.

The Totality of Spirit.

We have seen that Spirit is Immutable and Indivisible, Changeless and Inseparable. Therefore, Spirit cannot *change itself* into the Universe; neither can it *divide itself* into the Universe. This being so, it follows that the Universe, and every part thereof, has as its essence, nature, substance, and principle, not only Spirit, but actually, verily, truthfully, and in fact the Totality of Spirit—All-Spirit. This is a stupendous idea, a magnificent conception, a startling and almost terrifying conclusion. But it is the inevitable report of trained and developed reason directed to the subject. It is the ultimate report of Reason regarding the nature of the Cosmos, which is the Creation of Spirit. The reason cannot escape from it. Being true to itself, it must so report.

The Totality of Spirit is immanent in and identical with every thing, fact, detail, event, or activity of Creation.

It is most difficult for the average mind to assimilate this terrific report of reason. Such a mind must approach the fact very carefully, cautiously, and gradually. The reason may positively report a great truth, but it is often a long and tedious process to assimilate the truth thus reported by the reason.

The mind must not attempt to “bolt” such a large portion of Truth as this, but must mentally masticate it, slowly swallow it, and then digest it gradually. It is necessary to “Fletcherize”¹⁸ the Truth; to allow it to “swallow itself” as it dissolves in the saliva of apperception; and, finally, to allow it time, quiet, and ease in its digestion. Otherwise the outraged mind may indignantly regurgitate it; or else, retaining it, may give its owner a severe attack of mental and spiritual dyspepsia.

The Truth may be masticated by illustrations from previous experience. Apperception consists in assimilation of new perceptions with old ones. If

¹⁸ Horace Fletcher, early 20th-century American nutritionist, believed extreme mastication improved digestion and overall health. To fletcherize means to chew food slowly and thoroughly until it is completely liquefied before swallowing.

the mind is given an illustration of some familiar experience, it will associate the new fact with it, and all will then be well. Therefore, let us consider a few familiar experiences as an illustration of this Truth.

Illustration.

Everyone has a mind. Everyone creates ideas, images, and thoughts in that mind; Mental images, thought-forms, mental creations are always appearing in the mind. The mind is never inactive, on all of its planes, at any time, even in sleep. It is always creating, working, manufacturing, and everything in it is constantly changing, while the mind itself persists. And everything that is created in the mind is always associated with other creations that precede or follow it. The Law of Continuity and Association is ever evident and active in mental processes.

The Law of Change is equally evident there. In fact, every law that we have seen to be manifest in the Cosmos may be seen in operation in the processes of the Mind.

We have seen that Mind creates thought-forms, images, etc. How? Does it take some of its own material, make up thought, and then set it adrift for itself? Apparently not. It is unthinkable that Mind can take material from itself, use it up, and set it adrift in this way. How, then, can it create thought? Simply in the way of mental appearance or presentation to itself. In some way different from anything else we see in Nature it is able to form in itself (not out of itself) thought-forms, mental images, etc., to hold them up to its own inspection and consideration, and then dismiss them. And all the time Mind itself remains unchanged in essence, nature, substance, and principle. So far the illustration seems to “go on all fours” (as the lawyers say) with Spirit in Creation, does it not? Let us pursue it further and see whether or not it will continue to “work out.”

Immanence in Thought.

A leading authority says: “We are never conscious of any experience *separated or detached* from the mind.... *You yourself enter as a constituent into every mental fact of which you are conscious.* In other words, in being conscious of mental facts we are conscious of ourselves....As you never know the act or state of experience apart from yourself, so you never know yourself apart from the act or state of experience....The self of consciousness exists, not apart from, but as an element of the various experiences of which we are conscious.” Is not this a good illustration of the immanence of the thinker in his thought-creations? Raise this idea to the Universal and have we not a

fair working illustration of the presence of Creation in Spirit and the immanence of Spirit in Creation?

“Characters.”

But, you may object, this illustration may do very well so far as inanimate objects go; but how about living beings, persons with distinct “characters”? The mind does not *think* characters into being. Doesn’t it? Consider a moment. Do not novelists, poets, and dramatists create “characters” in their mind? Do they not live themselves out in their characters? So real are these created characters that we feel as if they were real characters we have known; we weep over them and rejoice with them. But the characters would be nothing whatever unless the mind and life of their creators were in them. Othello would be nothing were it not for Shakespeare. Uriah Heep would be nothing were it not for Dickens. These Creators enter into their characters and impart life to them; they live through them, feel through them, act through them, speak through them. Note this: Just as these characters exist in the mind creating them, so does the mind creating them exist in and through the characters. The character is in the Creator; the Creator is in the character.

Is Othello *himself* or his Creator? the Moor or Shakespeare? Is Uriah Heep merely the character who is “so humble, so very humble,” or is he Dickens looking through Uriah’s eyes and speaking through his lips? Where does the Creator leave off and character begin?

The Artist in His Creations.

Moreover, the writer, poet, or dramatist frequently arrives at a knowledge of himself by the very creation of his characters. He knows himself by reason of them just as others know *him* by reason of *them*. The creative artist unfolds his own nature by reason of the unfoldment of his characters. What has been said here regarding the creation of characters in fiction, poetry, or the drama is also true—perhaps still more true—in the case of the painter or sculptor who *materializes* his mental creations. He not only lives through them, but he also gives to them objective form. When we view the Venus of Milo, we see the *soul* of the sculptor long since passed from mortal view; it lives in and through its creation. When we gaze at the inscrutable smile on the lips of the Mona Lisa, we are in touch with the soul of Leonardo da Vinci, the artist who lived several hundred years ago. These men not only created these characters, and lived through them, but gave to

them objective shape and form and continue to live through their own material bodies.

Yes, “characters” may be mentally created as well as mere forms, images, and abstract ideas.

But, you say, these are but figurative examples; these creations are not *real*; they do not actually live and move and have their being in material form. True; but give to the artist Infinity of Being, Absolute Power, and Infinite Substance of Mind, what would result? And remember that even finite man may work out his mental creations in matter by the use of his hands. Cannot Infinite Spirit so work it out *without the necessity of hands*, particularly if we stop to consider that the Substance of Universal Mind is the Ultimate Substance, the Substance of Substance? Could not such a Mind crystallize or congeal its thoughts into objective form if it so desired?

Identity and Totality.

There is, however, one more point not as yet brought out in the illustration—the fact that the Totality of Spirit is in the smallest detail of the Manifestation. Going back to the illustration for a moment more, we may see that Mind cannot be *divided*; it is a Whole. Therefore the Whole Mind is back of and immanent in the smallest thought. Not all of its *power*, perhaps, but all of its *being*. It was not *a part of* Shakespeare’s mind that created Othello and was immanent in it; not *a part of* the mind of Dickens that created and lived through Uriah Heep; not *a part of* the mind of the unknown artist that created and lived in and through the Venus de Milo; not *a part of the* mind of Leonardo da Vinci that created and smiles through the countenance of the Mona Lisa. Mind, being immaterial, does not occupy space. It cannot be divided into parts. It is a Unity—Indivisible. Wherever Unity *is at* all, there must *all* of it be. It must always be regarded as a Whole. Here, too, we find the illustration sustains us.

But apart from the aptness and fitness of any finite illustration, the reason reports that all Creation must be in Spirit; that Spirit must be in all Creation; that the Totality of Spirit is back of, behind, and in every detail of Creation. For All-that-is is in Spirit. Spirit cannot be other than Itself and is always Itself. Spirit remains the same in its essence, nature, substance, and very being, notwithstanding the differences apparent in the forms, shapes, states, and conditions of its Creation—the phenomenal aspects in which it occurs, appears, and presents itself. And, finally, Spirit being Immutable and Indivisible cannot change itself into anything; not divide itself into

anything. It thus follows that whatever is dwells and abides in the 'Totality of Spirit, and the Totality of Spirit *is immanent in it* and, at the last, *is identical with it*.

Here, then, have we arrived at the end of this stage of the Journey. Here we have attained the end of our Inquiry. We have found Ultimate Reality for which we sought. We have found it at the very center of our own Being. Later we may learn how to Manifest it in our own lives; but first we must pause to fully assimilate the knowledge we have gained.

XXI. CREATIVE POWER OF THOUGHT.

We have seen that man is the expression of Spirit. Spirit is immanent in him in its totality. Man may express as much of the Creative Power of Spirit as he is capable of focusing and manifesting in conscious realization. The power of Thought is recognized by all students of psychology, mysticism, and occultism; but very few of the many theories advanced to account for the same are true. The majority endeavor to account for Thought-Power by means of physical analogies, such as thought-waves, thought-vibrations, etc. But the whole secret lies in the fact that man is a miniature edition of Spirit. He is the microcosm to the macrocosm of Spirit. The Law of Spirit is also the law of man's mentality. What Spirit does on the Infinite scale man may do on the finite scale.

The activities of Spirit are purely Creative. Spirit is forever and forever creating. Even the destructive activities of Spirit are really creative, for they are but a rearrangement of old materials in new forms. The old perishes to give birth to the new. The Law of Change is but an expression of the Creative Law which lies at the heart of the Will and Ideation of Spirit. Spirit is ever willing and desirous of expressing itself in creative activity. It loses no opportunity for so doing, and apparently welcomes any creative invitation on the part of man.

How Man May Create.

Man, when he understands his Spiritual nature and possibilities, may direct the inner activities of Spirit along his own lines. He may do this through and by reason of the Ideative Powers of his Mind. Building up ideals and mental forms in his mind, and allowing the Will to flow in and through these, man is able to materialize his ideals and mental pictures in objective and material form. He thus becomes a miniature world builder,

for every man's world is his individual universe. When man understands this, he is no longer the slave of circumstances, but becomes a Creative Master of Circumstance. From being the passive chessman on the board of life, he takes a hand in the game and makes moves on his own account.

We have given but a hint here of the “why” and “how” of the employment of the Creative Power of Thought by man. But in this hint is contained the secret of the entire field of the activities of Creative Thought which has attracted so much attention of recent years from the followers of the “New Thought” and allied movements. The hundreds of books written on the subject, with their often startling and bizarre theories, really seek to teach this one fact. One may study for years without finding the Master Key to the science of Creative Thought. But here it is given in a few lines: Manifest by Ideation and Volition—by Mental Images and Will—the Creative Spiritual Power which is immanent in you by reason of your Identity with Spirit.

Recognition and Manifestation.

But man can manifest only in the degree that he really recognizes and realizes the Truth. More than a mere intellectual acceptance is required. Man must feel *in his very heart and soul* that Spirit is in him and he in Spirit; that, at the last, Spirit and Creative Power of Thought are identical in the totality of essence, nature, substance, and principle. This realization is often a matter of slow and gradual development. Man has been so hypnotized with the belief in his own separateness and inferiority that he fails to realize inwardly the Truth, even when he recognizes it intellectually. It is only when the Spirit in him wakes up to the fact that it is

Itself in verity, truth, and fact in man; it is only then that man is able to exercise his Creative Power. But every step in that direction brings its reward and success. Every step on the Path of Attainment gives a better, higher, and clearer view of the surrounding mental country and man strengthens his spiritual limbs by the exercise on The Path.

Man is like a young spiritual giant,—he has not as yet learned his own strength. As he awakens to the facts of his being, then he discovers his latent powers, possibilities, and capabilities. Often this recognition comes to him only when he hears the call of another who has discovered his Inner Strength.

The Awakened Lion.

The Orientals have a fable which illustrates this: A lion cub strayed away from its mother and the rest of the brood, and, becoming lost, was adopted by a sheep which had lost her own lamb. The lion grew up with the sheep of the flock and never dreamed that he was other than a sheep. But finally one day on the crest of a neighboring hill appeared another lion, grown up, magnificent of build, and with great tawny mane. With sonorous voice, roaring proud defiance to the world, the visiting lion stood, vibrating the air with the strength of his call.

The lion who had thought himself a sheep listened like one in a trance. Something within him was touched; something stirred within his inner being. A moment he paused, and then, sending forth an answering roar, which shook the very hills around him, leaped off to join his brother on the hills. *He had discovered that he was a lion!* Something like this happens at times to men and women, when they hear the note of someone who has discovered the Mastery of Being within himself, and who sends forward the Message of Spirit to his brothers and sisters on the plains among the sheep.

The awakened Spirit is roused to the recognition and realization of itself in man, and, as a great teacher expresses it, “it hews open the path, as the lightning flash splits the darkness,... dissolves doubts, cuts knots of chronic impossibility, melts circumstances, pierces shadows like a flash of glory, dashes through the jungle of appearances like the horn of the unicorn. It is the sword of the spirit of truth, ‘the flash of the will that can.’”

In this perception, and this alone, is to be found the secret of Creative Thought of the mind of man. Make it your own, your very own. Let the warrior within you fight the battles of life for and through you, for he is your Real Self, the Abiding Spirit which is perceived as Yourself at the last.

Mastery.

Man is Master of his Being in the degree of his recognition, realization, and manifestation of his Identity with Spirit. In the degree that he allows Spirit to unfold and manifest itself through him in the directions of Conscious Recognition of the Real Self,—which is Spirit,—so will be the degree of his Mastery. As Spirit awakens to self-consciousness within him, it will raise him up to as yet undreamed-of heights of attainment and mastery.

In the above few words is to be found the key to the demonstration of those who have awakened to the Something Within,—the experience of

Inner Being, which has always been known to the wise of the race. Many have stumbled unawares upon this great truth of Being, and have manifested its power without being aware of the nature of the Something Within which has manifested its power and glory in their soul.

It is as if Spirit had been indulging in a dream, imagining itself to be John Jones or Mary Smith, and then gradually awakens to Creative Power of Thought

the realization that these are simply forms of disguise or masks used in the Dramatization of the Universe. The awakening Spirit gradually asserts itself and manifests its power as its true consciousness increases and grows clear. This, in effect, is what the evolving soul of man is doing. From simple consciousness it has passed on through many stages into self-consciousness, and is now proceeding to Cosmic Consciousness of its Identity with All.

XXII. IDENTITY WITH SPIRIT.

Statement: Spirit identifies Itself with those of Its characterizations which demonstrate their ability to consciously identify themselves with It. The conscious recognition of such Identity by the Intellect constitutes the Perception of Truth; the conscious realization of it by the Intuition constitutes Illumination; the conscious manifestation and demonstration of it by Volition and Ideation constitutes the Mastery of Being.

The Message of Truth.

In the above statement is announced the Message of the Perception of Truth, of Illumination, of the Mastery of Being. It is the highest Message possible of delivery to man. *In it is contained the gist and essence of all esoteric and occult teaching.* Book after book may be written to elaborate and illustrate this Truth; but the essence ever remains the same, for it is the very Truth of Truths.

The Perception of Truth.

In the preceding chapters we have sought to bring to the student the first stage of the conscious recognition of Infinite Identification—the conscious *recognition* by the Intellect, which constitutes the Perception of Truth. To this end the axioms embodying the highest report of the reason have been presented to you, and you have been invited to make them your

own. The practice and habitual employment of the Axioms of Reality will exercise and develop the Intellect to the point where *the absolute conscious recognition* of Spirit becomes a fact of your mental being.

But the above statement mentions the existence of two succeeding stages—that of conscious *realization* by the Intuition, and conscious *manifestation and demonstration* by Volition and Ideation. These are the stages of Illumination and Mastery, respectively. Let us now consider them.

Intuition.

The statement announces that the conscious *realization* of the identity with Spirit by the Intuition constitutes Illumination. Let us pause a moment to consider what Intuition is and how one may realize Truth by means of it.

“Intuition” is defined as “direct apprehension or cognition; immediate knowledge, as in perception or consciousness involving no reasoning process; perception by the mind immediately and without the intervention of argument or testimony.” The term was first used in the Scholastic Philosophy of many centuries ago, where it signified the means whereby man obtained a knowledge of God without the need of the reasoning faculties. It afterward passed into general philosophy, where it was used to indicate a supposed elemental knowledge of certain general facts and truths of the universe. In a closer usage it was employed to designate a supposed faculty of the mind, possessed by a favored few, which was superior to reason and which enabled its possessors to philosophize in a manner impossible to the common man who depended solely upon reason.

Reason vs. Intuition.

Modern philosophy, however, and modern psychology in particular, have been inclined to deny the validity of the so-called Intuitive Faculties of man. It is now generally held that the so-called intuitions are the products of evolution and heredity and are akin to race-memory; in short, Intuition is held to be identical with instinct. Innate ideas are denied upon the same grounds. The general philosophic thought of to-day holds that reason is the only source of knowledge possible to man, and echoes the words of Jami, the Sufi poet:—

“And first with Reason, which is also best;
Reason that rights the wanderer, that completes
The imperfect; Reason that resolves the knot

Of either world, and sees beyond the veil.
“For Reason is the fountain spring of old
From which the prophets drew, and none beside.
Who boasts of other inspiration, lies;
There are no other prophets than the wise.”

Esoteric Teaching.

But in the occult and esoteric teaching of all ages there is ever found the insistent claim that man possesses certain faculties or powers of intuitive perception, not adapted to receiving reports of the objective world, but which may and do receive reports from one's own inner nature and being which are impossible to the sense organs or the perception arising therefrom. Such teachings hold that man is able to turn his mental gaze inward, as well as outward, and thus to obtain reliable and valid reports of his own inner nature and being, which may afterward be considered by the reason and deductions made therefrom. As we have said, philosophy and science have frowned upon this idea and have declared it to be but vain imagining. But there has recently arisen in the philosophical firmament a new philosopher of the first magnitude, who positively asserts the existence of Intuition in man and declares that there is a certain knowledge possible to man only through the exercise of Intuition, the reason being unable to explore the field of such knowledge. This philosopher of the revolutionary idea is Henri Bergson, whose work is now attracting the attention of the world of philosophy.

The New Philosophy.

Bergson claims that Truth is known to man only through the interaction of Intellect and Intuition. He claims that Intellect informs us only regarding material things; Intuition informs us only regarding the inner nature and facts of life and being. He claims that the Intellect is a nucleus formed by a contraction or narrowing of the power of consciousness, and that around it is a fringe of more comprehensive consciousness; in the latter the power of Intuition lies. The Intellect, he says, has been constructed by the evolutionary life forces to serve the practical purposes of the creatures possessing it, and that its very limitations add to its usefulness in its own particular field. Bergson insists that the Intellect is neither supreme nor absolute, not even the *only* source of knowledge. Intuition is held not to be compared with the Intellect so far as the practical knowledge of the

objective world is concerned, our practical knowledge being almost entirely intellectual. But in its own field Intuition far surpasses the Intellect and gives us knowledge utterly unknown to the latter. Bergson, however, claims that, while the knowledge reported by Intuition is perfect in its nature, it is limited in its scope. For, as he says, “There are things that the Intellect alone is able to seek but that *by itself* it will never find. Those things Intuition alone can find; but it will never seek them of itself.”

The Something Within.

Schopenhauer, in advancing his conception of the World-Will, held that the Intellect can never understand or know the Will, the latter being more elemental than reason. He held, however, that the existence of the Will as Ultimate Principle can be perceived in a unique way by turning the mental gaze inward; at the very center of being will be found the Will, and its nature may be understood only by a study of its activities within ourselves. The Hindu philosophers have always held that the Essence of

Being—Spirit—may be perceived intuitively by turning inward the perceptive activities by the concentrated exercise of the Will. The pages of the writings of the mystics are filled with instances of the conscious intuitive perception of Union with God, or similar transcendental mental states. So common in the experience of the race is this mental phenomenon that it is everywhere recognized under the name of “Illumination.”

Mystic Illumination.

By “Illumination” is meant the illumining or lighting up of the mind by an influx of new knowledge and perception. Those who have attained this stage of Intuition have been known as “The Illuminati,” this title having been used by the Rosicrucians¹⁹ and other organizations of mystics. Illumination is generally held to be a strange, mystic experience or inrush of new knowledge. Such is the conception of the mystics, and such is the conception of the idea of “Cosmic Consciousness²⁰” of which so much has

¹⁹ A legendary or secret society originating in early modern Europe, combining Christian mysticism, alchemy, and occult philosophy. The term Illuminati has been used by various esoteric groups claiming special spiritual illumination, notably the Bavarian Illuminati (1776) and earlier the Rosicrucians. Here it refers broadly to those who attain mystical insight, and to denote a tradition of esoteric illumination.

²⁰ A term popularized by Richard Maurice Bucke (1837–1902), Canadian psychiatrist and author of *Cosmic Consciousness* (1901), for a mystical state in which the individual feels a sense of unity with the entire universe, transcending the ordinary self. It is a higher

been heard during the past decade. This form of Illumination has been common in all phases of religious thought and practice, and even outside of religious bodies. Many of the Saints of all religions have recited instances of it; while, on the other hand, men like Tennyson²¹ and Whitman have testified to similar experiences. The underlying experience common to all those relating the strange happening is that of a sudden sense of “Oneness with God or Being.” This sense of Oneness has been variously interpreted by the members of the several religious beliefs favored by those experiencing it, but its universality takes it out from creed interpretation or sect possession and raises it to a much more exalted plane. Maurice Bucke, in his work on “Cosmic Consciousness,” claims that it is an inevitable result of the evolution of consciousness in the race, and that all the race eventually will experience it, although at present only a few advanced individuals know it in consciousness. He claims that just as mere sensation was succeeded by simple consciousness, and this later by self-consciousness, so will the latter be succeeded by this universal consciousness in which the individual is consciously identified with the All.

Intellectual Illumination.

Apart from these instances of mystic experiences, many careful, conservative, thoughtful men of philosophic tendency and temperament have experienced a gradual unfoldment of some inner faculty of the mind which brought to them a *consciousness* of an identity with an Underlying Something which they found at the very center of their being, and which was recognized as being something far more elemental, fundamental, and real than the Intellectual Self or Ego. This experience would seem to be analogous to that asserted by Schopenhauer, who asserted that the consciousness of the

Ego or “I” of each individual is in reality the “consciousing” of the point of connection or identity with the World-Will, or Spirit. This experience is not the mystic, ecstatic “Union” of religious devotees or poets, but rather the calm “awareness” of the philosophic temperament. And instead of being regarded by those experiencing it as a supernatural or

state of awareness beyond self-consciousness. This book is part of our Timeless Wisdom Collection both in English and Spanish.

²¹ Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809–1892), Victorian poet. He described mystical experiences of oneness with the divine, notably in his poem 'The Higher Pantheism' and in personal accounts.

transcendental happening, it is treated as a valid and natural report of some form of inner perception, and is then passed on to the reason for classification and deduction.

“Seeing” and “Feeling.”

The statement makes the distinction between the recognition by the Intellect and the *realization* by the Intuition, the first resulting in the Perception of Truth and the latter in Illumination. The distinction may well be considered in the terms of certain esoteric teachings in which the recognition by the Intellect is considered as the “*seeing*” phase of perception, and the realization by the Intuition as the “*feeling*” phase of the perception. The real, full, perfect, and complete Knowledge of Truth comes only from the combined report of Intellect and

Intuition—the *recognition* joined to the *realization*. It is only when one both “*sees*” and “*feels*” the Truth that he *knows* the Truth. “Seeing” without the accompanying “feeling” is cold and unsatisfying, the intellect never satisfying the inner longing for Truth; while “feeling” without the “seeing” is likewise unsatisfying, except perhaps to the poet or religious enthusiast, for the outraged Intellect voices its disapproval and gives its owner no peace. It is only when the Intuition and Intellect join hands, when they stand side by side and see the same Truth, that the entire mental being is satisfied and finds peace.

The Coming of Peace.

Some of the wisest of the race, in the older schools of esoteric teaching, have insisted that the only *satisfying* Illumination is that of “The Illumination of the Intellect by the Intuition,” when the power of Intuition is admitted to the Intellect and runs freely over its wires and brings the glow to the lamps of reason. Then and then alone comes that satisfying peace, that calm of “seeing” and rest of “feeling,” that “peace which passeth all understanding.”

Illumination is the clearing away of the smoke of illusion from the tear-stained eyes of the individual, that he may see what he is in his Real Self. He then perceives not only that he lives and moves and has his being in Spirit, but also that Spirit, in its Totality of Being, lives and moves and has its being in Him. Illumination comes gradually to some, instantaneously to others. It comes to no two alike. It calls men and women in the field, the workshop, the kitchen, as well as in the palace or in the parlor. It respects

not position nor condition. It ever calls its own to it. "When the pupil is ready, the Master appears."

"Wheresoever I go mine own await me." "Wheresoever I pass mine own know my footsteps and follow me." As a great teacher has said: "And the prophecy is this: That those who shall devotedly and sincerely adopt the message of truth, rationally interpreted, must inevitably perceive the truth, realize the truth whereby immortality, satisfaction, and freedom are secured."

Nirvana.

An authority, speaking for the Buddhist conception of Spirit, says: "There is a Japanese proverb which says: 'There are many roads up to the mountain, but it is always the same moon that is seen from the top.' The Japanese themselves, with a liberality worthy of imitation, apply this saying to different forms of religious belief. The mountain may well typify matter, and the summit the highest point on which a climber can stand and maintain his separate individual existence in terms of consciousness drawn from the material world. This peak may be accessible by any religion or without any religion; but Buddhism and its genetically associated systems look beyond.

The mountain top is the apotheosis of personal existence, the highest form of consciousness that can be expressed in terms of separate individuality—a sublime elevation where many a pilgrim is content to pause. Below him are the kingdoms; above him are the stars; the kingdoms and stars alike are his. But it is not the end. Deeper than the kingdoms and higher than the stars is the sky that holds them all. And there alone is peace, that peace which the material world cannot give, the peace which passeth understanding trained on material things, infinite and eternal peace, the peace of limitless consciousness unified with limitless will. That peace is Nirvana!"

Rest for Reason.

Another authority says: "As knowledge and wisdom increase, as our eyes are opened more fully to the eternal verities, as we more fully realize the marvelous wonders of the Universe, and as we shall be in better accord, we may finally come to recognize that 'our consciousness of God is only a part of God's consciousness of himself; all bodies modes of infinite extension, all souls modes of infinite thought.' And as we see more clearly and feel more vividly that 'we are inherent parts of its glorious Unity, we

may hope to reach that ultimate real principle of knowledge and being without which there can be no rest for reason, or Unity in the Universe.”

A poet of our Western land has voiced this truth forcibly in the following lines:

Illusion.

By Ella Wheeler Wilcox²².

God and I in space alone, And nobody else in view.

And “Where are the people, O Lord,” I said,

“The earth below and the sky o’erhead,

And the dead whom once I knew?”

“That was a dream,” God smiled and said,

“A dream that seemed to be true;

There were no people living or dead;

There was no earth and no sky o’erhead; There was only Myself and you.”

“Why do I feel no fear,” I asked, “Meeting you here in this way?

For I have sinned, I know full well;

And is there heaven, and is there hell,

And is this the judgment day?”

“Nay! those were dreams,” the great God said,

“Dreams that have ceased to be;

There is no such thing as fear or sin;

There is no you—you never have been; There is nothing at all but Me!”

Avatars of the Almighty.

Harold Bolce²³, in his series of articles in the *Cosmopolitan* a year or so ago, said: “And now that man has discovered that there resides in his nature a spirit or energy that is divine, the colleges say, and that he can summon it to work his will, the potency and future operations of this force no man can compute. Science has found a way through psychology to God; the

²² Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850–1919), American poet and religious writer. Her poem ‘Illusion’ presents a dialogue with God revealing the ultimate unity of all existence.

²³ Harold Bolce was an American journalist who wrote a series of articles in *Cosmopolitan* magazine (c. 1905–1906) on the new scientific and philosophical understanding of man's divine nature. The author quotes his phrase ‘avatars of the Almighty.’

opportunities for the race, through invoking in the human consciousness the brooding Spirit that fills all space, are absolutely infinite. Science, therefore, is demonstrating along new lines, or at least is claiming to demonstrate, that *man is God made manifest*. And modern philosophy, as set forth in

American universities, holds this incarnation not as a fanciful and merely beautiful ideal, but as a working and understandable principle in the soul of humanity. The professors therefore stand as the exponents of the teaching that *man is the embodiment and conscious expression of the force that guides all life and holds all matter in its course*. Not merely in religious rhetoric, but in reality, the schoolmen say, is *man the avatar of God*. Man has begun the cycle of that triumphal daring prophesied by ancient seers, and which appealed so potently to the imagination of Poe, who said: "Think that the sense of individual identity will be gradually merged in the general consciousness; that man, for example, will at length attain that awfully triumphant epoch *when he shall recognize his existence as that of Jehovah!...*" This is not an atheistic banishment of God and His holy angels, but is, on the contrary, the enthronement of a new Jehovah—a *God that has become conscious and potent in the human mind.*"

The Promise.

Passing on from this consideration, we call your attention to the promise contained in the first lines of the statement given at the beginning of this chapter: "Spirit identifies itself with those of its characterizations which demonstrate their ability to consciously identify themselves with It."

The importance of this Message is at first overlooked by many who read the words. It is really a Promise and a Message that Spirit will identify itself with those who recognize their identity with it. In the degree of the recognition and realization of the Identity by the individual, so will Spirit identify and manifest itself with and through the individual. As man begins to realize what he really is, he begins to be able to manifest that reality and being through his individual channels of expression.

And, accordingly, there begins that "conscious manifestation by Volition and Ideation which constitutes the Mastery of Being."

The Mastery of Being.

When man discovers his Identity with Spirit he begins to manifest Creation on his own account. No longer a passive instrument, tool, or chessman in the Cosmic Life, he becomes a Center of Creative Power in

himself. It is true that he sees the phenomenal world for what it really is; he sees that prizes and rewards of life are mere baubles and trinkets; and he strives no longer for them *for themselves*. But, in place of the old illusion, he sees a Creative Purpose in the Cosmic Activities, a Meaning in the Universal “Becoming,” and he smiles and takes his place again on the Stage of Life, playing his part willingly, cheerfully, confidently, and understandingly. His peep behind the scenes does not interfere with his characterization and the portrayal of his appointed part; on the contrary, he plays his part all the better by reason of his knowing. He loses all fear of death; he fears neither Life nor Death; neither does he seek Death nor avoid it. He seeks neither participation in nor renunciation of Life; he simply *lives*, for *to live is the object of Life*.

As the sense of his real nature and being dawns upon him, the sense of his powers begins to manifest in his consciousness. He soon learns that his Ideation and Volition are real—the same powers with which the universe is created and manifested. He finds that his Ideation, when vitalized with his Volition, materializes and takes on objective reality. He finds that his Ideals tend to become Real. He discovers that circumstances, environment, conditions, and states may be created for himself—first the sense of Identity and the belief in its power; then the Ideative Picture in the mind; then the Volitional Activities of the Will; then the Objective Manifestation. Thus does man become a Creator and build for himself a miniature universe with himself as a center.

But (and this must always be remembered) man must never allow himself to become entangled in his Creations; he must see them always as Creations and must never permit himself to become hypnotized by the delusion of their ultimate reality.

There is always the danger of taking one’s own creations too seriously, just as the world is hypnotized into accepting its own mental creations as realities. The Master of Being must needs learn to detach himself from his creation, and, figuratively, to stand aside and see himself act and play his part among his creations. Mastery requires the eyes to be kept clear of the stinging smoke of illusion. The Master of the Show must never allow himself to become carried away by the action of the play, lest he become the victim rather than the victor. These may be strange words to the ears of many, but those whose ears have awakened by the Song of Life will readily understand them.

Parting Words.

And now, students, friends, and fellow-travelers on The Path, we come to the time of temporary parting. *You will never be the same as you were before you studied this book.* You have “built thee more stately mansions” of thought and will continue to build,—

“Till thou at length art free,

Leaving thine outgrown shell by Life’s unresting sea.”

You may not have accepted the Message, nor have perceived the Truth sought to be expressed in these lessons. But the spirit of them will remain with you. For no one who embarks on the Quest for Truth ever is able to permanently relinquish it nor to forsake The Path. He may turn away from it, or seek to retrace his steps, and for a time will seem to have left it behind forever; but sooner or later again will the hunger for Knowledge, and the thirst for Truth, be felt. Again will the Sound of the Message penetrate to the ear, and again the Pilgrim will resume The Path. As Whitman²⁴ says: “My words will itch in your ears till you understand them.” Once a Truth-Seeker, always one!

“Om, Mani Padme, Hum²⁵!”

Finis

²⁴ Walt Whitman (1819–1892), American poet. His work celebrates the self and its unity with the universe, as in 'Song of Myself.' The author quotes his declaration about words itching in the ears. Bucke, in “Cosmic Consciousness”, declares Whitman as one of those few “illuminated”.

²⁵ The most famous mantra in Tibetan Buddhism, associated with Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva of compassion. It is often translated as “The jewel is in the lotus.”

STUDY GUIDE

The Mastery of Being

**A Study Guide for Deepening Your Understanding of Reality,
Reason, and Intuition with William Walker Atkinson**

By M.C. Mesen

Introduction

This guide accompanies one of Atkinson's most contemplative works, centered on the timeless philosophical question: What is Reality? Far from mere theoretical speculation, 'The Mastery of Being' invites a practical exploration of the essential nature of Self, the limits of reason, and the role of intuition.

The approach is to turn each chapter into an opportunity to examine your beliefs, your direct experience, and how you use reason and intuition in daily life. Read with a willingness to set aside superficial certainties, to contemplate what is permanent beneath constant change, and to observe how this study can refine your self-knowledge and decision-making.

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. THE QUEST FOR REALITY

Core teaching: Atkinson recounts humanity's journey toward knowledge that goes beyond appearances: the search for the ultimate Reality underlying all. The essential question is what is truly permanent and essential, beyond the temporary or superficial.

Working question: What beliefs, ideas, or habits do you accept automatically as real in your life? Can you imagine that something deeper might exist beneath the obvious?

Practice: Choose an ordinary situation and observe it as if it were merely an appearance, asking: What here could be more fundamental or permanent than what first meets the eye?

2. REASON AND INTUITION: TWO PATHS TO KNOWLEDGE

Core teaching: The text distinguishes between rational knowledge and deep intuition. Reason analyzes and discriminates; intuition perceives inner truths directly. Used together, these faculties can lead to a higher understanding of being.

Working question: Do you trust your reason more than your intuition, or vice versa? Can you recall an important decision in which both played a part?

Practice: Recall a recent choice and analyze: Which part of your process was logical, and which was based on a hunch? Note how you might integrate both approaches into small daily decisions.

3. THE SELF AS CENTER OF EXPERIENCE

Core teaching: For Atkinson, the Self is not merely a product of external circumstances, but the core that experiences, interprets, and seeks meaning in all events. Mastery of Being involves recognizing and affirming this inner center.

Working question: Do you tend to define yourself by what you have, do, or by your self-concept? Can you identify a deeper sense of Self—constant amid changing circumstances?

Practice: Spend five minutes with eyes closed, gently repeating: 'I am.' Notice any thoughts or sensations that arise, but keep returning to the sense of presence beneath all.

4. PRACTICAL APPLICATION: LIVING FROM REALITY

Core teaching: Atkinson maintains that philosophical study matters only if it transforms daily life. Observing and questioning what is real refines your actions, composure, and ethical, centered decision-making.

Working question: In what areas of your life do you operate on 'autopilot,' without questioning the real meaning of your actions?

Practice: For one day, whenever you perform a routine task (eating, working, conversing), mentally ask: 'Am I acting from my conscious center or from habit?' Note any changes in clarity or attitude.

Closing

The Mastery of Being suggests that every true search for reality begins and ends with conscious practice. Review your notes, pick one observation to deepen over the coming week, and let your reading become lived self-knowledge.

More guides and information at MauricioChavesMesen.com