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**PERSONAL POWER**

**William Walker Atkinson**

# **Personal Power**

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# Table of Contents

[Volume I PERSONAL POWER](#)

[Volume II CREATIVE POWER](#)

[Volume III DESIRE POWER](#)

[Volume IV FAITH POWER](#)

[Volume V WILL POWER](#)

[Volume VI SUBCONSCIOUS POWER](#)

[Volume VII SPIRITUAL POWER](#)

[Volume VIII THOUGHT POWER](#)

[Volume IX PERCEPTIVE POWER](#)

[Volume X REASONING POWER](#)

[Volume XI CHARACTER POWER](#)

[Volume XII REGENERATIVE POWER](#)

# **Volume I**

# **PERSONAL POWER**

[Table of Content](#)

## **Your Master Self**

[I FOREWORD](#)

[II YOUR MASTER SELF](#)

[III YOUR 'I AM I'](#)

[IV CONSCIOUS EGOHOOD](#)

[V COSMIC POWER](#)

[VI THE TWIN-MANIFESTATION](#)

[VII THE THREE FORMULAS](#)

[VIII REALIZING YOUR IDEAS](#)

[IX "THE MASTER FORMULA"](#)

"look for the warrior and let him fight in thee. Take his orders for battle and obey them. \*\*\* he is thyself, yet infinitely wiser and stronger than thyself. Look for him, else in the fever and hurry of the fight thou mayest pass him; and he will not know thee unless thou knowest him. \*\*\* When once he has entered thee and become thy warrior, he will never utterly desert thee,..."

—Light on the Path.

# I

## **FOREWORD**

### [Table of Content](#)

THIS BOOK is devoted to the subject of the development, cultivation and manifestation of Personal Power—Personal Power in all its phases, aspects and modes of manifestation and expression. “Personal Power,” as understood and taught in this book, may be defined as: “The ability or strength possessed by the human individual, by which he does, or may, accomplish desired results in an efficient manner, along the lines of physical, mental, and spiritual effort and endeavor.”

This book is not written with the purpose of reforming the world, nor of conducting a propaganda for the advancement of some particular creed, belief, body of teaching or doctrine; nor is it written on behalf of any particular organization, cult, society, or school interested in enlarging its membership, or in spreading its doctrines. Instead, it is written for YOU—YOU are the individual in whom we are interested, and for whom this instruction is intended.

You have been attracted to this book, and it to you, by reason of certain everoperative though littleknown laws of life and being. You have long awaited the coming of this book; you are now ready to absorb its teachings; “your own has come to you” after your period of watching and waiting; and you will recognize it as your own, by reason of a certain intuitive perception which comes to those who are ready to receive that which it contains. You have demanded this book: here it is.

This book is different in many respects from anything that you ever have read. A careful and earnest study of the truths presented in it will work a marked change in you,

though you may not fully realize it at this time. You will never be exactly the same after its reading: it will have left its indelible impress upon you.

You may come to think that you have put it aside, and that you have no further interest in its teachings. But you will find that certain memories of the statements contained in it will abide with you, and that echoes of its teachings will ring in the ears of your mind. In the words of Whitman, its “words will itch in your ears till you understand them.” Its basic truths, and the suggestions as to their application, will stick in your mind as the burr sticks in the fleece of the sheep which has acquired it in its wanderings.

You can no more escape from the influence of the truths presented in its pages than you can run away from your own shadow. At every turn and crossroads of the path of experience hereafter, you will find yourself almost unconsciously applying the principles of this instruction, and employing some of the methods taught in it. You are hereby warned that such will be the case: if you are not willing to experience such results, now is your time to put away the book.

If, however, you decide to proceed with the reading and study of this book, we have several suggestions to make to you. You need not expect to master this instruction at the first reading. There is much solid food contained in it—many things requiring careful mental mastication, digestion, and assimilation. You will need to read the book several times, from start to finish, with intervals between each reading. Yet the instruction is quite simple, and at each reading you will acquire many important facts, principles, and methods.

The proper way in which to read this book for the purpose of study—in which to extract from its pages that which is condensed in them—is to start by reading it carefully, from beginning to end, but without trying to memorize any particular portion, or to impress any particular detail upon your mind. Then lay it aside for a

short time, while you think over its teachings in a general way. In this mental rumination try to classify the several most important topics and divisions of the general subject, but without direct reference to the book itself. Having done this, take up the book again, and this time carefully absorb each and every phase and feature of its instruction. Take your time in thus rereading and restudying it. You will find something new in this book each and every time you take it up—no matter how many times you have previously “gone over it.”

Finally, you are not asked to accept as true the instruction contained in this book merely because we have asserted it to be true. You have at your disposal the means of testing and proving the truth of our assertions—the test of actual application, experiment, and experience. If you will earnestly and persistently put into practice the principles and methods set forth in it, you will find yourself actually manifesting and demonstrating the results logically flowing from them.

All that you are asked to do is to accept at least tentatively— as a “working hypothesis”—the general principles announced in this book, and to adopt as a “working plan” the methods it presents to you. Reserve for yourself the right to accept or to reject either principles or methods, or both, after you have subjected them to an earnest, faithful, diligent, and persistent trial in actual life and work. If you will do this, you will, in all probability, need no further argument to convince you of the truth of the underlying principles of this instruction, and of the efficacy of the methods suggested in it.

Here is the prophecy: If you will recognize, by means of your intellect, the Fundamental Principles of Personal Power; and will realize them in your feeling; then will you be able to manifest and demonstrate them in your everyday life and work, by means of the methods herein indicated, or by similar methods devised by yourself but based upon the



same general principles. The principles are basic and fundamental; the methods are designed merely to enable you to apply effectively the principles—you are at liberty to adapt or to modify the latter to suit your own individual requirements.

If you attain the first two of the above stages, then assuredly you will attain the third stage—the stage of manifestation. These first two stages may be attained by any person of average intelligence, provided that he will faithfully and earnestly apply himself or herself to the task. You are hereby challenged to test the truth of this prophecy by such a trial and experiment: but that trial and experiment must be made in good faith, in an earnest, serious spirit, and must be pursued with diligence, persistence, and insistence.

## II

# YOUR MASTER SELF

### [Table of Content](#)

The active agent of all of your conscious experience is, of course, YOURSELF. The centre of your conscious experience is that “YOU” element of your being—that self-conscious Something or Somewhat, the actual existence and presence of which you assert when you say “I AM I.” This “I AM I” element of yourself is the one fact of your existence of which you are always absolutely certain, and concerning which you can never compel yourself to entertain any doubt.

Every time you say, or think, “I,” you assert the existence of your Self, and its presence in consciousness. No power of argument, no weight of evidence, no sophistry, no casuistry, no fallacy, can ever really convince you that your “I” does not exist; nor that it is not present in being at that moment of consciousness. You cannot truthfully assert, “I am not in existence, here and now”— for, even when you attempt to make such a denial and negation, you are conscious that it is the “I,” itself, making the attempt, and uttering the statement. Thus, even your very attempt at denial and negation is transmuted into an affirmation and assertion of your selfexistence, and of the presence of Yourself at that particular time and place.

This conscious certainty of the existence and presence of the “I” is the axiomatic basis of all philosophy. It is the one indisputable, incontrovertible, irrefragable fact of your thought and consciousness—the one fact that cannot be gainsaid, denied, refuted or overthrown. It is the one point concerning which you can feel absolutely sure and certain. Even the most acute metaphysical or philosophical

argument will fail to shake your belief in your own existence, and your presence in being.

You are always able to declare in the face of all arguments, “I AM I!” You may doubt the evidence of your senses—but you can never doubt this consciousness of your own existence as a conscious being. Here, at least, you feel that you are standing on the solid rock of certainty. Your uncertainties begin only when you start to ask yourself “What and why am I?” and

“What else really IS?” But both of these questions imply your assurance that you, Yourself, are present in existence at that time and place. When you say “now,” you mean the particular period of time or duration which YOU are then experiencing. When you say “here,” you mean the particular position in space or extension which You are then experiencing. You must always say and think “I AM I, Here and Now!” but the Here and Now are relative to Yourself, and have no other meaning to you.

If you think that we are here “making much ado about nothing,” and that we are telling you something which everyone knows without being told, we will answer you by saying that upon this very point philosophers and metaphysicians have earnestly disputed from the beginning of human thought— this, because they realized that this one point, if absolutely established, furnished man with his one solid rock of reasoning; his one certain point from which he might chart and diagram his world of experience. That they have reported—as they have been compelled to report—its certainty and essential reality, is an indication of its ultimate truth. For they have made every attempt to undermine or to surmount it: they saw the folly of merely “taking it for granted.” They knew that too many things which men “took for granted” are illusions or delusions—the flatness of the earth, or the stationery position of the earth, for instance.

Moreover, those great minds which for thousands of years have been investigating the subject of Personal

Power, long since discovered the fact that before one can hope to exercise any phase of Personal Power he must first arrive at a clear, distinct, and fundamental consciousness of HIMSELF—his “I AM I”—as a reality transcending all of his mental and physical instruments; and that upon the degree of his actual consciousness of the independent existence of this “I AM I” centre of his being depends the degree of his ability to manifest Personal Power.

So, you see, we are not wasting your and our time in telling you something not needing telling. Instead, we are endeavoring to awaken in you the actual and vivid conscious perception of a fundamental truth, without which you cannot hope to manifest or demonstrate Personal Power. Omitting this basic and fundamental instruction, there would be no reason for presenting the rest of the subject to you.

This Ego, Self, “I,” or “I AM I,” which stands at the centre of your conscious experience, and which is the real Seer, Doer, Feeler, Thinker, Willer, and Actor in your life journey, is the Master Self—the King on the Throne of your Personal Being. To omit reference to it here would be like omitting the character of Hamlet from the play of that name. Before you can hope to manifest and demonstrate Personal Power, you must become consciously aware of that Something or Somewhat which employs and manifests that power.

Personal Power might be present in abundance, but unless there were also something present able to employ and use it, there would be no manifestation or demonstration possible. YOU are that Something. You must become consciously aware of your essential and fundamental Self, before you will be able to employ the instruments at your hand. You must recognize your sovereignty, before you may mount your throne and rule your kingdom.

We wish, however, to state emphatically at this point that in our consideration of the Master Self—the Ego or “I” which

asserts “I AM I”—we shall confine ourselves entirely to the reports of consciousness concerning its presence and existence, its nature and character. We shall point out to you just how you may discover its presence at the centre of your being, and how you may awaken its latent powers and possibilities so that they may be applied effectively as Personal Power.

We shall avoid entirely the advocacy of any particular one of the many various metaphysical, philosophical, or theological speculations or dogmas concerning its nature, character, source or origin, or its destiny. We prefer to leave these subjects in the hands of those who specialize upon them; we have no desire to invade their special fields of thought, conjecture or speculation. We prefer to base our thought upon the fundamental report of selfconsciousness—that inevitable, invariable, and infallible report made by self-consciousness whenever it is awakened.

For the purpose of our consideration of the Master Self in this book, and that of the instruction to be based upon this, it is sufficient to assert merely: (1) that there exists in you a Master Self, Ego, “I,” or “I AM I” entity, to which all your personal faculties, powers and activities are subordinate; (2) that this Master Self (whatever else it may be or may not be) must be regarded as a focalized centre of Presence and Power manifested and expressed by the Ultimate Presence-Power in its manifestation and expression in the Cosmos.

These two general postulates are supported by all human thought on the subject, and in one form or the other are accepted by all phases of philosophical, metaphysical, or theological thought, though variously interpreted and explained. Moreover, actual human experience is in agreement with them. We shall present the general argument to you as we proceed, showing you how firmly based and grounded they are in human thought and experience. But, even so, you are not asked to accept them

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We earnestly ask you to proceed carefully with this process of selfanalysis, for it will bring to you results of the most practical and vital character. Do not pass over this part of the instruction as being merely theoretical, or speculative—for it is far from being so. And, above all, do not take the position that “I am willing to take this for granted without actual proof, without bothering about the investigation”; for by so doing you will miss the very kernel of the instruction. For, know you, that the process of selfanalysis will not only “prove the thing” to your satisfaction: it also will awaken within you the Power of the “I AM I,” or Master Self, in a way impossible by any other means. You must not only recognize this “I AM I” intellectually, but must also realize it in feeling, before you can manifest and demonstrate it in action.

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# III

## YOUR "I AM I"

### [Table of Content](#)

The active agent of all of your conscious experience is, of course, YOURSELF. The centre of your conscious experience is that "YOU" element of your being—that self-conscious Something or Somewhat, the actual existence and presence of which you assert when you say "I AM I." This "I AM I" element of yourself is the one fact of your existence of which you are always absolutely certain, and concerning which you can never compel yourself to entertain any doubt.

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## **IV CONSCIOUS EGOHOOD**

### [Table of Content](#)

THERE ARE seven stages of consciousness, as taught by the great masters of the Science of Being. Five of these stages we have just considered viz., the respective stages of (1) consciousness of separate existence—of existence as a separate and distinct individuality; (2) consciousness of the ownership and control of the instrument and machinery of the Physical Body; (3) consciousness of the ownership and control of the instrument and machinery of Emotion; (4) consciousness of the ownership and control of the instrument and machinery of Thought; (5) consciousness of the ownership and control of the instrument and machinery of Will. There are two other and higher stages of consciousness remaining to be considered.

In your consideration of the physical body, of the emotional states, of the thought states, of the will states, respectively, you have found it possible to abstract your consciousness of each of these instruments from your consciousness of your “I AM I” or Master Self. Each and every one of these processes of selfanalysis has found and left you conscious of the existence, “here and now,” of that “I AM I” or Master Self, independent of the several instruments and elements of machinery which it owns and uses. At the centre of each—even of Will—you found your “I AM I” existing in firm, constant and identical presence and power throughout all the changes in the activities and processes of its instruments and its machinery of expression and manifestation.

But, in the sixth stage of selfanalysis, you will discover that you are unable to abstract a certain kind of

consciousness from the “I AM I” or Master Self—you will be unable to set aside, examine, analyze, experiment with, and detach this form of consciousness from your Real Self, or “I AM I,” try as you may. Hence, you see, you will there have reached the stage of reality—of ultimate fact and being within yourself. This is a most important stage of your self-analysis—of your search for the “I AM I” or Master Self; therefore, you should approach it carefully, and conduct your inquiry with earnestness and diligence.

The sixth stage of your selfanalysis is that known as Ultimate SelfConsciousness. First, you should clearly understand just what is meant, and just what is not meant, by us in this employment of the term “selfconsciousness.” In the popular usage, the term means “an unpleasant and abnormal state of consciousness or awareness of one’s self as an object of observation by others.” The psychological usage, however, is quite different: it indicates that state of consciousness in which the “I AM I” is fully, keenly, and positively aware of its own existence as an actual entity, in being “here and now.” It is from this state of consciousness that the individual asserts positively, and with conviction, “I AM I, Here and Now!”

Comparatively very few individuals experience the full degree of this stage of consciousness. Many, of course, say “I AM I,” thereby distinguishing themselves from others—this, however, is merely the first stage of consciousness, not the sixth. Few proceed further in their realization of self-consciousness. Many are unable to differentiate in consciousness between the “I AM I” and the physical body. Still fewer are those who are able to make the distinction between the “I AM I” and the “feeling states”; and still fewer are those who can realize the “I AM I” as transcending the “thinking states.” Very rare and far between, indeed, are those who are able to distinguish between the consciousness of the willstates, and the consciousness of the “I AM I.” The great masses of the race think of the “self”

as an aggregate or composite of mind and body, feelings, emotions, thoughts, will activities, etc., and seldom, if ever, catch even a glimpse of the essential and ultimate Selfhood of the “I AM I” or Master Self—the Real Self.

But the great individuals of the race—those who “stand out” from the masses—will usually be found to have evolved into quite a full state of SelfConsciousness; and, accordingly, they will have experienced that sense of Personal Power that comes with this recognition of the “I AM I,” Master Self, Real Self. This illuminating experience, once it comes to the individual, leaves him changed and different: he is never again the same man. A new world is opened to him. A new and positive sense of the reality of his essential being has impressed itself upon him. It comes to many as an awakening from a troubled sleep, or dream state—the dawning realization that “I AM I,” in spite of the dream illusion. In this dawn of the realization of Ultimate Self-Consciousness, the individual “finds himself” at last.

An old English writer once said: “Whether we try to avoid it or not, we must face this reality some time—this reality of our own Egohood—that which makes us say ‘I,’ and in saying ‘I’ leads to the discovery of a new world.” A leading American psychologist has said: “SelfConsciousness is a growth. Many persons never have more than a misty idea of such a mental attitude. They always take themselves for granted, and never turn the gaze inward.”

The dawn of SelfConsciousness—the awakening from the dream of Simple Consciousness—in the individual, is accompanied by a new awareness and consciousness of reality and actual existence; in fact, so strong often becomes this new consciousness of the certainty of real and actual existence, that compared with it all other forms of conscious existence fade into comparative insignificance. This consciousness, once firmly established, serves as a Tower of Strength for the individual, in which he may take

refuge, and then defy the adverse conditions of the external world of thoughts and things.

The process of selfanalysis, according to which you have proceeded to abstract, in turn, the consciousness of the physical body, the emotional states, the thought states, and the will states, respectively, has now brought you to the point where you have nothing else left for you to analyze, for the purpose of possible abstraction, except the self-consciousness of the existence of the “I AM I” or Master Self—the Real Self. But when you undertake to subject that ultimate element of Selfhood to such process, you discover that further analysis, abstraction, simplification and reduction is impossible—you have reached something Ultimate which defies further analysis or simplification, or separation into parts, elements, or factors. It is the Irreducible Element—the Insoluble Residuum—of Selfhood: it is Egohood itself, in its final essence and principle.

You have discovered that this “I AM I” or Master Self, is not subject to changes, alteration or modification. It is not subject to Becoming, for it is Pure Being, always identical with itself, always constant, ever the same. It does not flow, nor is it in a state of flux. It is never transformed, nor is it transmuted. It does not change form, for it has no form. It does not manifest degrees, for it is absolute in its nature and being. It does not take on aspects, modes, or conditions of appearance. It is always itself, its whole self, and nothing but itself. In this respect it is seen to be entirely different from any of its instruments or machinery, mental or physical. It is not an instrument, nor a part of the machinery—it is That which owns and uses the instruments and the machinery of mental and physical expression and manifestation.

Moreover, your experiments will show you conclusively that you cannot set aside or abstract this “I AM I” or Master Self for the purpose of observation or experiment, as you have been able to do with the physical and mental

instruments or machinery which belong to it. You can never make of it an object to be examined or observed by your subjective observer. Try the experiment! You will then find that if you place the “I AM I” at the objective end of your microscope of attention, there will be no subjective “I AM I” left to conduct the examination from the other end of the instrument. Likewise, if you place the “I AM I” at the subjective or observing—end of the instrument, then there will be no objective “I AM I” at the other end, ready to be observed.

Just as the eye sees all outside of itself, but can never see itself, so the “I AM I” may observe and examine everything outside of its essential self, but can never observe and examine its essential self. Here, you find a Something or Somewhat in which subject and object are inseparably joined and combined. Here, indeed, you find the hypothetical “stick with only one end” of the old metaphysicians. Here you find something which is always “subjective,” and never “objective”—something which is all “inside,” without any “outside” aspect or part.

Again, if you attempt to set it aside, as you did its instruments and machinery, mental and physical, you will find that you have nothing at all left of Selfhood—nothing to still assert “I AM I.” You cannot even think it out of existence, nor imagine it out of being, try as you will. If you try to think of a world without this “I AM I” existent in it, and then proceed to examine this “I” less world, you will find that it is the “I AM I” itself conducting the examination. If you seek to get rid of it by some metaphysical casuistry or subtle sophistry, you will eventually discover that the “I AM I” is still there, “hidden behind some kindly metaphysical cloud, peering out cautiously, curious to observe how the world is getting along without it.” Throw the “I AM I” out of the door of your consciousness, and it will come in through the window; lock the windows and doors against it, and it



will descend through the chimney—it will gain access, somehow, someway.

Even though in imagination you may picture yourself as occupying many different bodies, successively, each with its own emotional, thought, and will character, yet you will always find that it is the same identical “I AM I” playing the part of occupant. Or, though you may imagine yourself in the role of the King of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the President of the United States, yet you always find YOURSELF playing these several parts—at the last, you will realize that YOU, the “same old I,” are the real actor playing the several parts, under the various masks and wearing different costumes. You may change characters, garbs, and roles—but you never can change “I’s”. You are YOU, and never can be not-YOU.

The unfoldment of Ultimate Self-Consciousness—Conscious Egohood—will bring to you the realization that you are a focal centre of Power in the cosmos—a focal centre of Real Power and Real Being. You will gradually realize that YOU are a Centre in the Cosmos, just as the sun is a centre with multitudes of objects whirling around it, or flowing past it.

The occult teachers of ancient days were wont to remind each of their students that he, himself, was “a Centre in the Cosmos; for, in the Cosmos, the circumference is nowhere (because the Cosmos is infinite), and, consequently, the centre is everywhere.” Therefore, the student was introduced to himself, and to think of himself, as a Focal Centre of Power and Being—as a central pivot of the Cosmos—which all else revolved. Rightly understood and interpreted, this statement is Truth: for each individual “I AM I” is, in fact, the pivotal centre of his own universe, with all the rest revolving about him, or passing in review before him.

Do not for a moment imagine that this realization of Conscious Egohood—this “I AM I” consciousness—will unfit

you for the duties, tasks and work of practical everyday life. On the contrary, it will render you many times more efficient in any particular phase of practical life. Realizing the nature of your real being, and your relations toward your mental and physical instruments and machinery, you will no longer be caught up in their movements as a man might be caught in the machinery which he is operating; instead, you will be able to detach yourself so that you may operate the machinery with increased skill, efficiency, and power.

Conscious Egohood will cause the muddy waters of your mentality to become as clear as crystal, so as better to reflect the light of that brilliant star of the "I AM I" which is shining above with a fierceness, clearness, and steadfastness inexpressible in ordinary words. The most practical of all men is the man who realizes the realities of his own nature and being, and the character of his relations to his mental and physical instruments of expression and manifestation. When you recognize the nature of your Power; when you realize the conscious feeling of that Power; then will you be able to express and manifest that Power to a wonderful degree, and with an excellence, otherwise impossible to you. Such recognition will make you a better business man, a better engineer, a better lawyer, a better doctor, a better nurse; it will enable you to reach a higher point in your lifework, and to acquire a higher recompense for your services, than would be possible without it.

Cultivate the perception and realization of Conscious Egohood. Seek to develop it by means of thought, of feeling, of imagination—use all of your mental powers to this end—employ every instrument at your disposal to discover YOURSELF, your Real Self. Assert and affirm your real being by saying, thinking, and acting "I AM I." There is a magic in these words. Their vibrations will set into motion every atom of your being, and they will reecho the statement to your ears. You will find the affirmation a tower of strength in hours of need. In moments of weakness it will revive your

failing courage and dwindling determination. It will serve as a powerhouse from which you may send forth currents of power and energy; it will serve as a great magnet which will draw to you the things, persons, and circumstances which you will need in your tasks of life. Use the White Magic of the “I AM I” affirmation.

As we proceed with our instruction, you will see that this “I AM I” is even greater and grander than we are now stating it to be. It is a focalized centre of Something or Somewhat infinitely greater—the point of contact between the Universal and the Particular, the Unmanifest and the Manifest, the Uncreate and the Create, the Infinite and the Finite. YOU are far greater than you know. When you say “I AM I,” you are uttering a tremendous statement of Truth, the full meaning of which you as yet only faintly glimpse. The individual who can say “I AM I,” with full recognition in thought, and with full realization in feeling, has lighted for himself a lamp which can never be extinguished by the winds of adversity nor the rains of circumstances. Such a one is well on the path to Mastery!

The seventh stage of your selfanalysis—the stage to which you proceed after you have discovered the ultimate nature of the “I AM I” or Master Self—is that which is known as the stage of “POWERConsciousness.” In this stage of consciousness, while holding firmly and with doubtdefying conviction to the recognition and realization of the “I AM I” as the ultimate and essential base and ground of your individual being, you nevertheless intuitively are aware of the existence of an Underlying Reality, with which in some intimate and essential way your “I AM I” is united, connected, and co-ordinated.

When this consciousness is awakened by the proper methods, you will become as actually conscious of this intimate relationship, as you are now conscious of the existence of your “I AM I” or Master Self. In fact, the two phases of consciousness will seem gradually to coalesce

and combine in your higher perception of Reality. Even when the intellect has not as yet been able to “work out the puzzle,” or to “ree the riddle,” the intuitive faculties will report that “it is true nevertheless.”

In the following sections of this book, we shall point out the road whereby the intellect may logically approach the facts concerning this highest Truth; for the present, we wish merely to indicate the general nature of the subject, and possibly to cause your intuition to begin to unfold so as to receive the full strength of the rays of the sun of Truth which is beating upon it.

In the stage of POWER-Consciousness, you will know that not only is your “I AM I,” your Master Self, your Real Self a real Centre of Power in the Cosmos: you will also know that back of, under, and around that “I AM I” or Real Self, is the great Ultimate Principle of POWER itself; that the “I AM I” is in actual contact with that POWER—and that the rhythmic vibrations of POWER are at least faintly discernible as they throb and thrill through your being.

Feeling this, all fear will drop away from you, and a new and strange courage will take possession of you: you will thereafter proceed to the Great Adventure of Life, fearlessly and confidently. You will enter into the conscious realization that POWER—AllthePowerThereIS—is back of and supporting you. You will enter into the conscious recognition that in the great substance and strength of POWER, you live, and move, and have your being. With the dawn of this consciousness, you will, in all truth, be “born again.”

While it is true that but comparatively few individuals actually experience this consciousness in full degree, yet it is true that many experience it in at least some degree; all may gradually unfold into it if they will but turn their attention to that direction. The men and women who have “done things” in the world of everyday life, if they would speak frankly and freely for publication, could give to the world the testimony that at some time in their lives had

come to them a certain strange and wonderful, mysterious sense of actual contact with, and relation to, a great Something, the essence of which was felt to be Strength or Power. Varying as are the reports of the different individuals who have testified to this phenomenon there is found a common and general agreement upon the fact that there has been an “actual contact with, and intimate relation to, a Something or Somewhat Infinitely Powerful and Strong.” There is always the consciousness of Immanent Presence, and of Power and Strength.

These individuals have interpreted to themselves these experiences in many ways, each coloring it according to his previous trend of belief or general philosophy of life. To some it has appeared to partake of a religious nature and color—as if the Supreme Being, or at least one of His arch-angels has hovered near, brooded over them, and reflected a portion of the Infinite Power upon them. Many a successful man has experienced this strange phenomenon, and has been comforted by the conviction that he has God “on his side,” or that God is “working in and through me.” One of the richest men of our times has repeatedly made statements at least implicitly expressing this idea; and many of the lesser lights of the world of success have had similar experiences and resulting convictions.

Others have attributed the experience to the presence and aid of some friendly beneficent entity or supernatural personality—a friendly “spirit” from “the other shore.” Others have felt it to be a hint of the presence and power of a kindly Destiny or Fate, or the influence of a beneficent “star.” Napoleon’s belief in his “star,” and the influence it exerted over him for many years of his rapid rise, is said to have arisen from an experience of this kind occurring at the Bridge of Lodi. He was reticent concerning the actual experience; but he often spoke freely of his Star of Destiny, at times going so far as to indicate the particular star which he believed was favoring him.

Others do not attempt to explain the experience, even to themselves; they are content to think of it as “That Something,” the presence and strength of which they have felt—the resulting sense of power after the visitation of which, they have experienced. Many others could testify to these strange experiences of contact with POWER, and to the resulting remarkable increase of Strength and Power therefrom, which afterward flowed into them and through them; the experience, however, is of such an intimate nature, and so likely to be regarded as “queer” by others, that most of these individuals have but little or nothing to say concerning it. The following may be stated as the rule: The more successful the individual has been—the higher he has risen in his particular field of endeavor—the greater is the degree of probability that he has undergone some experience similar to that which we have just stated.

There may be some who will criticize the above as “impractical,” and “fantastic”; but such criticism is not likely to come from those who have been exceptionally successful—who have “done things,” and accomplished great achievements—and who also have good memories of their early experiences. Repeat this statement to some man or woman of this kind—then see that individual smile in a peculiar way, and note the strange expression which will pass over his or her face, though a direct answer may be avoided.

This phenomenal experience is not “supernatural,” nor is it “mystic”; on the contrary, it is quite natural, and intensely practical in its effect. It means simply that the individual in the course of his mental or spiritual evolution has arrived at a stage where in the natural course of things he “contacts” POWER itself—the Principle of POWER which animates, energizes, and vitalizes the Cosmos. He becomes actually aware of the contact, and of the influx of Power which results from it. Moreover, in many cases—in most cases of the kind, in fact—when this contact is once experienced and