

**THE INNER  
CONSCIOUSNESS: A  
COURSE OF LESSONS**

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The Inner Consciousness: A Course of Lessons by William Walker Atkinson

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**WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON**

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THE  
INNER CONSCIOUSNESS

A COURSE OF LESSONS ON  
THE INNER PLANES OF THE  
MIND, INTUITION, INSTINCT,  
AUTOMATIC MENTATION and  
OTHER WONDERFUL PHASES  
OF MENTAL PHENOMENA

BY  
WILLIAM WALKER ATKINSON

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WASSEL BNAI

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## LESSON I.

## INNER CONSCIOUSNESS.

**I**T was formerly taught in the schools that all of the Mind of an individual was comprised within the limits of ordinary Consciousness, but for many years this old idea has been gradually superseded by more advanced conceptions. Leibnitz was one of the first to advance the newer idea, and to promulgate the doctrine that there were mental energies and activities manifesting on a plane of mind outside of the field of ordinary consciousness. From his time psychologists have taught, more and more forcibly, that much of our mental work is performed outside of the ordinary field of consciousness. And, at the present time, the idea of an "Inner Consciousness" is generally accepted among psychologists.

Lewes says: "The teaching of most modern psychologists is that consciousness forms but a small item in the total of physical processes. Unconscious sensations, ideas and judgments are made to play a great part in their explanations. It is very certain that in every conscious volition—every act that is so characterized—the larger part of it is quite unconscious. It is equally certain that in every perception there are unconscious processes of reproduction and

inference—there is a middle distance of subconsciousness, and a background of unconsciousness.” And Sir William Hamilton states: “I do not hesitate to affirm that what we are conscious of is constructed out of what we are not conscious of—that our whole knowledge in fact is made up of the unknown and incognizable. The sphere of our consciousness is only a small circle in the centre of a far wider sphere of action and passion, of which we are only conscious through its effects.” And Taine has said in connection with the same thought: “Mental events imperceptible to consciousness are far more numerous than the others, and of the world which makes up our being we only perceive the highest points—the lighted-up peaks of a continent whose lower levels remain in the shade. Beneath ordinary sensations are their components, that is to say, the elementary sensations, which must be combined into groups to reach our consciousness. Outside a little luminous circle lies a great large ring of twilight, and beyond this an indefinite night; but the events of this twilight and this night are as real as those within the luminous circle.” To this, Maudsley adds his testimony, as follows: “Examine closely and without bias the ordinary mental operations of life, and you will surely discover that consciousness has not one-tenth part of the function therein which it is commonly assumed to have. In

every conscious state there are at work conscious, sub-conscious and infra-conscious energies, the last as indispensable as the first."

It is now known that "Inner-Conscious" ideas, impressions and thoughts play a most important part in the thought-world of every individual. Beyond every outer-conscious action there may be found a vast inner-conscious background. It is held that of our entire mental processes, less than ten per cent are performed in the field of outer-consciousness. As a well known writer has so well expressed it: "Our self is greater than we know; it has peaks above and lowlands below the plateau of our conscious experience." Prof. Elmer Gates has forcibly put it: "At least ninety per cent of our mental life is sub-conscious. If you will analyze your mental operations you will find that conscious thinking is never a continuous line of consciousness, but a series of conscious data with great intervals of sub-consciousness. We sit and try to solve a problem and fail. We walk around, try again and fail. Suddenly an idea dawns that leads to a solution of the problem. The sub-conscious processes were at work. We do not volitionally create our own thinking. It takes place in us. We are more or less passive recipients. We cannot change the nature of a thought, or of a truth, but we can, as it were, guide the ship by a moving of the helm."