

# WHAT ALL THE WORLD'S A-SEEKING

OR

THE VITAL LAW OF TRUE LIFE,  
TRUE GREATNESS, POWER,  
AND HAPPINESS

BY

RALPH WALDO TRINE

**Ralph Waldo Trine: What All The World`s A-Seeking**

Ralph Waldo Trine, 1896, 1899

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## Contents

<i>Preface</i>	4
<i>Preface to revised edition</i>	4
PART I: THE PRINCIPLE	5
PART II: THE APPLICATION	14
PART III: THE UNFOLDMENT	23
PART IV: THE AWAKING	36
PART V: THE INCOMING	44
PART VI: CHARACTER-BUILDING THOUGHT POWER	62
About the author	71

## *Preface*

There are two reasons the author has for putting forth this little volume: he feels that the time is, as it always has been, ripe for it; and second, his soul has ever longed to express itself upon this endless theme. It therefore comes from the heart - the basis of his belief that it will reach the heart.

R. W. T.  
*Boston, Massachusetts*

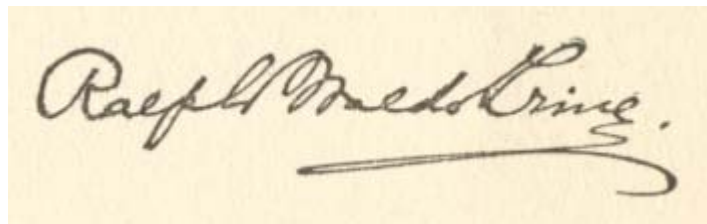
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## *Preface to revised edition*

It is impossible for one in a single volume, or perhaps in a number of volumes, to reach the exact needs of every reader.

It is always a source of gratitude, as well as of inspiration for better and more earnest work in the future, for one to know that the truths that have been and that are so valuable and so vital to him he has succeeded in presenting in a manner such that they prove likewise of value to others. The author is most grateful for the good, kind words that have come so generously from so many hundreds of readers of this simple little volume from all parts of the world. He is also grateful to that large company of people who have been so good as to put the book into the hands of so many others.

And as the days have passed, he has not been unmindful of the fact that he might make it, when the time came, of still greater value to many. In addition to a general revision of the book, some four or five questions that seemed to be most frequently asked he has endeavored to point answer to in an added part of some thirty pages, under the general title, "Character-building Thought Power." The volume enters therefore upon its fifteenth thousand better able, possibly, to come a little more directly in touch with the every-day needs of those who will be sufficiently interested to read it.



Ralph Waldo Trine.

**PART I**  
**THE PRINCIPLE**  
**WHAT ALL THE WORLD'S**  
**A-SEEKING**

## THE PRINCIPLE

*Would you find that wonderful life supernal,  
That life so abounding, so rich, and so free?  
Seek then the laws of the Spirit Eternal,  
With them bring your life into harmony.*

How can I make life yield its fullest and best? How can I know the true secret of power? How can I attain to a true and lasting greatness? How can I fill the whole of life with a happiness, a peace, a joy, a satisfaction that is ever rich and abiding, that ever increases, never diminishes, that imparts to it a sparkle that never loses its lustre, that ever fascinates, never wearies?

No questions, perhaps, in this form or in that have been asked oftener than these. Millions in the past have asked them. Millions are asking them today. They will be asked by millions yet unborn. Is there an answer, a true and safe one for the millions who are eagerly and longingly seeking for it in all parts of the world to-day, and for the millions yet unborn who will as eagerly strive to find it as the years come and go? Are you interested, my dear reader, in the answer? The fact that you have read even thus far in this little volume whose title has led you to take it up, indicates that you are, — that you are but one of the innumerable company already mentioned.

It is but another way of asking that great question that has come through all the ages — what is the *summum bonum* in life? — and there have been countless numbers who gladly would have given all they possessed to have had the true and satisfactory answer. Can we then find this answer, true and satisfactory to ourselves, surely the brief time spent together must be counted as the most precious and valuable of life itself. There is an answer: follow closely, and that our findings may be the more conclusive, take issue with me at every step if you choose, but tell me finally if it is not true and satisfactory.

There is one great, one simple principle, which, if firmly laid hold of, and if made the great central principle in one's life, around which all others properly arrange and subordinate themselves, will make that life a grand success, truly great and genuinely happy, loved and blessed by all in just the degree in which it is laid hold upon, — a principle which, if universally made thus, would wonderfully change this old world in which we live, — ay, that would transform it almost in a night, and it is for its coming that the world has long been waiting; that in place of the gloom and despair in almost countless numbers of lives would bring light and hope and contentment, and no longer would it be said as so truly to-day, that "man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn"; that would bring to the life of the fashionable society woman, now spending her days and her nights in seeking for nothing but her own pleasure, such a flood of true and genuine pleasure and happiness and satisfaction as would make the poor, weak something she calls by this name so pale before it, that she would quickly see that she hasn't known who's true pleasure is, and that what she has been mistaking for the real, the genuine, is but as a baser metal compared to the purest of gold, as a bit of cut glass compared to the rarest of diamonds, and that would make this same woman who scarcely deigns to notice the poor woman who washes her front steps, but who, were the facts known, may be living a much grander life, and consequently of much more value to the world than she herself, see that this poor woman is after all her sister, because child of the same Father; and that would make the humble life of this same poor woman beautiful and happy and sweet in its humility; that would give us a nation of statesmen in place of, with now and then an exception, a nation of politicians, each one bent upon his own personal aggrandizement at the expense of the general good; that would go far, ay, very far toward solving our great and hard-pressing social problems with which we are

in the strength and influence of his character, he becomes an example and an inspiration to all with whom he comes in contact; so that through him the weak and faltering are encouraged and strengthened; so that those of low ideals and of a low type of life instinctively and inevitably have their ideals raised, and the ideals of no one can be raised without its showing forth in his outer life. As he advances in his grasp upon and understanding of the power and potency of the thought-forces, he finds that many times through the process of mental suggestion he can be of tremendous aid to one who is weak and struggling, by sending to him now and then, and by continually holding him in the highest thought, in the thought of the highest strength, wisdom, and love.

The one who takes sufficient time in the quiet mentally to form his ideals, sufficient time to make and to keep continually his conscious connection with the Infinite, with the Divine life and forces, is the one who is best adapted to the strenuous life. He it is who can go out and deal with sagacity and power with whatever issues may arise in the affairs of everyday life. He it is who is building not for the years, but for the centuries; not for time, but for the eternities. And he can go out knowing not whither he goes, knowing that the Divine life within him will never fail him, but will lead him on until he beholds the Father face to face.

He is building for the centuries because only that which is the highest, the truest, the noblest, and best will abide the test of the centuries. He is building for eternity because when the transition we call death takes place, life, character, self-mastery, divine self-realization, — the only things that the soul when stripped of everything else takes with it, — he has in abundance. In life, or when the time of the transition to another form of life comes, he is never afraid, never fearful, because he knows and realizes that behind him, within him, beyond him, is the Infinite wisdom and love; and in this he is eternally centred, and from it he can never be separated. With Whittier he sings:

*"I know not where His islands lift  
Their fronded palms in air;  
I only know I cannot drift  
Beyond His love and care."*

## About the author

Ralph Waldo Trine was a philosopher, mystic, teacher and author of many books, and was one of the early mentors of the New Thought Movement. His writings had a great influence on many of his contemporaries including Ernest Holmes, founder of Religious Science. He was a true pioneer in the area of life-transforming thought. No other New Thought author has sold more books than he, his writings reaching far beyond New Thought circles out to the general public, which has bought and read Trine's books without ever knowing that they were New Thought.

Trine was born on 6th September, 1866, in Mount Morris, northern Illinois. He was educated at Carthage College Academy, Knox College, A.B. 1891; and studied at the University of Wisconsin and later at John Hopkins University in the fields of history and political science. He was much interested in social and economic problems, having won a \$100 prize for an essay on "The Effects of Human Education on the Prevention of Crime." After spending some time as a graduate student at the latter University, Ralph was a special correspondent for *The Boston Daily Evening Transcript*. Whilst working in this capacity, he built himself a little cabin on the edge of a pine grove - testament to the peace and simplicity of the man. He married a graduate of the School of Expression (which became Curry College) who became Grace Hyde Trine, an author and poetess in her own right, and together they had a son, Robert. Trine lived for years at Mt. Airy, New York, and was deeply involved in the metaphysical seminars at Oscawana.

He began his writing career in his early 30s. He was much influenced by the writings of Fichte, Emerson and the Scottish scientist/evangelist, Henry Drummond, his "What All the World's A-Seeking" expanding on a number of the themes covered in Drummond's inspirational classic, "The Greatest Thing in the World." His remarkable seminal book, "In Tune with the Infinite" was launched in 1897 and went on to sell over 2 million copies, and has stood the test of time for over a century. It was read by such luminaries as Queen Victoria, Janet Gaynor and Henry Ford. It is interesting that Henry Ford, pioneer of mass produced automobiles, attributed his success directly to having read "In Tune with the Infinite." After reading the book, Ford ordered it on mass, and distributed copies freely to high profile industrialists. It's a true mark of how powerful the book was and still is!

In its pages we find perennial truths that have been restated in many other forms in recent years, though perhaps never so clearly. By recognizing the power of our thoughts and by harmonizing our own with the Divine will, we will attract perfect peace, health, love, prosperity and success. A number of chapters from "In Tune with the Infinite" can be read on-line in the book "This Mystical Life of Ours" listed below.

*»The moment we fully and vitally realise who and what we are,  
we then begin to build our own World even as God builds his."  
"Within yourself lies the cause of whatever enters into your life.  
To come into the full realization of your own awakened interior  
powers is to be able to condition your life in exact accord with  
what you would have it"*

(from: "In Tune with the Infinite")

Trine wrote over a dozen books and was still writing into his 70s. He died peacefully at a fine age of 91 on 22nd February, 1958, in an elderly living facility for religious professionals, Plymouth Place, Claremont, California. He moved there years earlier from a home in the Hudson River valley. In California, Trine spent his time in quiet leisure, planting and tending fruit trees! He retired there with his wife only a few years before his death.

Although he never sought fame or fortune for himself, and although his name remains largely unknown to the masses, he left as his legacy an indelible mark on the world in the form of his elevated thinking and inspired writings, and so has influenced countless people for the good of mankind.

Source: <http://ralphwaldotrine.wwwhubs.com/>