

**FIRST PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS.
DESIGNED AS A BASIS FOR
INSTRUCTION IN ETHICAL
SCIENCE IN SCHOOLS AND
COLLEGES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649583904

First Principles of Ethics. Designed as a Basis for Instruction in Ethical Science in Schools and Colleges by J. T. Champlin

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J. T. CHAMPLIN

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IN ETHICAL SCIENCE

IN

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.

BY

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PRESIDENT OF WATERTOWN COLLEGE.

NEW EDITION, REVISED.

BOSTON:

WOOLWORTH, AINSWORTH & CO.

NEW YORK: A. S. BARNES & CO.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1861, by
J. T. CHAMPLIN,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Maine.

STEREOTYPED AT THE
BOSTON STEREOTYPE FOUNDRY.

P R E F A C E .

THE favor with which my text-book on Intellectual Philosophy has been received, and the need which I have felt in my own classes of a similar book on Ethics, have induced me to add this to the many excellent treatises on that subject already in existence. The great enlargement of the list of studies in our schools and colleges, of late years, renders it more desirable than ever that text-books should be brief, presenting only essential principles, to the neglect of details, which may be supplied by the teacher, or by general reading. These considerations have determined the form of the present treatise.

At the same time, I have hoped to present a more orderly outline of the principles of the science, and supply a more rational foundation for them, than has usually been done in treatises on Ethics. The doctrine that right is conformity in conduct to the nature and reason of things, is not, indeed, a new doctrine, but it has been a good deal overlooked of late, and has never, perhaps, been fully and consistently carried out. Whether it has been in the present instance or not others must judge.

Aiming at an orderly and consecutive development of the principles of the science, I have introduced the opinions of others but sparingly into the text. These have generally been reserved to the end, where they have been presented together, in the form of an Historical Abstract, which, it is hoped, will be found both interesting and profitable.

WATERVILLE COLLEGE, July 1, 1861.

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FIRST PRINCIPLES OF ETHICS.

CHAPTER I.

ACTION AS THE SUBJECT OF ETHICAL SCIENCE.

1. *Ethics a practical science.*—Ethics, or moral philosophy,—the one designation being of Greek and the other of Latin origin, and, as now used, meaning precisely the same thing,—is a *practical* science. Not that ethics is any less theoretical than other sciences,—for every science is necessarily a theory,—but it is a theory pertaining to practice, and for the sake of practice. The term *practical*, therefore, refers wholly to the object-matter and end of the science. Ethics, then, even in theory, is entirely practical in its scope, since it sup-