

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

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649252916

First principles of ethics: designed as a basis for instruction in ethical science in schools and colleges by J. T. Champlin

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**J. T. CHAMPLIN**

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



*Sauls & Nettles*

FIRST PRINCIPLES

OF

ETHICS.

DESIGNED AS A BASIS FOR INSTRUCTION  
IN ETHICAL SCIENCE

IN

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.

BY

J. T. CHAMPLIN,  
PRESIDENT OF WATKINSVILLE COLLEGE.

NEW EDITION, REVISED.

BOSTON:

WOOLWORTH, AINSWORTH & CO.

NEW YORK: A. S. BARNES & CO.

BJ  
C358f

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.



# CONTENTS.

---

CHAPTER I.		PAGE
ACTION AS THE SUBJECT OF ETHICAL SCIENCE. . . . .		7
CHAPTER II.		
ACTION PRESUPPOSES ACTIVE PRINCIPLES. . . . .		19
CHAPTER III.		
VIRTUOUS ACTION PRESUPPOSES THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL. . . . .		30
CHAPTER IV.		
RIGHT ACTS MUST BE DICTATED BY INTELLIGENCE. . . . .		38
CHAPTER V.		
RIGHT ACTS MUST BE GROUNDED IN THE NATURE OF THINGS. . . . .		53
CHAPTER VI.		
JUST ACTS ARE ALWAYS RIGHT. . . . .		75
CHAPTER VII.		
VERACITY IS ALWAYS RIGHT. . . . .		102

## CHAPTER VIII

BENEVOLENT ACTS ARE RIGHT, IF JUST AND TRUE. . . 115

## CHAPTER IX.

PRUDENT ACTS ARE RIGHT, IF JUST, TRUE, AND KIND. 129

## CHAPTER X.

ACTS OF PIETY ARE RIGHT, IF DIRECTED TO THE  
TRUE GOD. . . . . 140

## CHAPTER XI.

ENVOIOUS AND MALICIOUS ACTS ARE ALWAYS WRONG. 152

## CHAPTER XII.

OBLIGATION TO DO RIGHT. . . . . 163

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE RIGHT, THE TRUE, AND THE GOOD. . . . . 173

## CHAPTER XIV.

THE NATURE OF VIRTUE. . . . . 179

---

 SUPPLEMENT.

HISTORICAL ABSTRACT OF OPINIONS ON THE GROUND  
OF RIGHT AND WRONG. . . . . 185

# 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-