

MORAL CULTURE AS A SCIENCE

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Moral culture as a science by Theoda Wilkins & Bertha S. Wilkins

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THEODA WILKINS & BERTHA S. WILKINS

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AS A SCIENCE**

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BY

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AND

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MOFFIT!

PREFACE.

THE great necessity for a definite plan of presenting the subject of Ethics to children in the public schools has led to the preparation of this treatise. The fact that a work was needed which should be practical, and yet wide in its range, has been constantly kept in mind.

For the convenience of readers, the book has been divided into three parts, with the addition of an appendix.

In the first part, those fundamental psychological facts which have a bearing especially upon ethical development have been set forth, as it seemed necessary that they be kept in mind by the reader. In the second part, the nature of the various virtues, and practical suggestions for teaching them, are considered, while the ethical aspect of school discipline and of our common-school branches of study are discussed in the third part.

The MS. of this work has been carefully reviewed by educational experts, and the conclusions reached have been pronounced correct, without exception. As to the manner of presenting them there has been a difference of opinion.

The popular method of illustrating ethical truths by stories, for children as well as for adults, is considered by far the most successful one, and doubt was expressed as to the possibility of teaching ethics in any other way.

So much is being done in this field by wholesome publications like the *Youth's Companion* and many series of books, that work of this kind seemed superfluous, although a few illustrative stories for children are appended to this work.

Ethical culture obtained in this way is necessarily disconnected and fragmentary. Educators, be they parents, teachers, or settlement workers, need a clear, connected, and scientific grasp of the subject as a whole; this we have tried to give, employing the analytical treatment of parts while preserving the unity of the whole.

We hope that the approval of our readers may justify our method of presentation.

B. S. W.

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INTRODUCTION.

MORALITY has, up to the present time, been taught in public schools only incidentally as misdemeanors were committed and occasion arose for their correction. It has never been made a subject of regular systematic instruction. For that reason it has made comparatively little impression upon the minds of children. Those who were dependent for their instruction in this direction upon the public schools have therefore received but vague and uncertain ideas regarding their moral nature and duties.

A systematic education includes, besides mental and physical training, also moral culture. Such an education the state is in duty bound to give to its future citizens.

To invest this subject of morality with its rightful dignity and importance in the eyes of school children, certain regular hours should be set aside for the study of its guiding principles. Here, as elsewhere, concentration of thought is indispensable for the thorough understanding and mastery of the subject. Only one thing at a time can be studied. Incidentally, of course, both oral and written language is taught most effectively, as moral instruction awakens many thoughts of vital interest in the child's mind to which he will give spontaneous utterance. But to the child, it is studying only the great subject of how to do right, how to live. These moral principles