

**THE PRINCIPLES OF
MORALS
(INTRODUCTORY
CHAPTER)**

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The Principles of Morals (Introductory Chapter) by John Matthias Wilson & Thomas Fowler

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JOHN MATTHIAS WILSON & THOMAS FOWLER

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WILSON AND FOWLER

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THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS

(INTRODUCTORY CHAPTERS)

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P R E F A C E.

THE three following chapters are part of a work on 'The Principles of Morals' planned, many years ago, by the late Professor J. M. Wilson and myself. The sheets now published were struck off in 1875, but the printing of the rest of the work was suddenly suspended in consequence of the declining health of my colleague. The remaining chapters or the materials for them exist in MS., in a more or less imperfect form; but a natural reluctance to recur to the work immediately after my colleague's death together with subsequent engagements has hitherto prevented me from devoting to them the attention necessary to their completion. Pending the question of undertaking this task, I think the publication of the following chapters may be of some service to students as affording an introduction to Moral Philosophy and containing a brief sketch of the leading English Moralists. There is the additional reason for publishing these chapters in a separate form, that they alone received Professor Wilson's final *imprimatur*. Should the remaining chapters ever appear, though they will contain many of Mr. Wilson's ideas, expressed, at times, in his

own language, the responsibility for the opinions adopted in them will rest mainly with me.

Many of Professor Wilson's old pupils will probably be glad to be reminded of the teaching from which, in former years, they derived so much stimulus and which they followed with so keen an interest. No University Professor during my own Undergraduate career (1850-1854), unless it was the late Professor H. H. Vaughan, exercised so powerful an influence in Oxford, and certainly none devoted himself with such untiring energy to the work of his chair. The present volume is, of course, only a fragment, but, if I mistake not, many passages in the chapter on the Method of Morals, in the account of Bentham, and in that portion of the first chapter which deals with the relation of Morals to the other sciences, will irresistibly recall the emphatic manner and lucid exposition which, at a time when several Professorships were only titular, attracted such numbers of eager and attentive auditors to the Corpus Hall.

There are a few corrections which I must ask the reader to make in the following pages :

On p. 11, l. 3, 4. *For* 'the several elements which compose the mind' *substitute* 'these several powers of the mind.' The former expression might suggest a false conception of the nature of mind.

In reading the note on p. 72, it must be borne in mind that the larger edition of Mr. Abbott's Selections from Kant had not yet appeared.

On p. 88, l. 9. *For* 'that' *read* 'to that.'

On p. 90, l. 19. *For* 'and theopathy' *read* 'or theopathy.'

On p. 112, had we been writing at the present time, we certainly should not have spoken of the speculations of Mr. Mill or Mr. Herbert Spencer as 'not having yet acquired historical importance.'

I may here state that, pending the possible publication of our joint and more elaborate work, I have recently set forth my own conclusions on some of the leading questions of Ethics in a small volume, entitled 'Progressive Morality,' which was published by Messrs. Macmillan and Co. in the autumn of 1884.

T. FOWLER.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE,
March 10, 1886.