Logical Principle

1867 | On the Natural Classification of Arguments | W 2:24-25

...every argument has, as portion of its leading principle, a certain principle which cannot be eliminated from its leading principle. Such a principle may be termed a *logical principle*.

An argument whose leading principle contains nothing which can be eliminated is termed a *complete*, in opposition to an *incomplete*, *rhetorical*, or *enthymematic* argument.

Since it can never be requisite that a fact stated should also be implied in order to justify a conclusion, every logical principle considered as a proposition will be found to be quite empty. Considered as regulating the procedure of inference, it is determinate; but considered as expressing truth, it is nothing.

In 1893, Peirce modified the last part of this quote as follows: "Since it can never be requisite that a fact stated should also be implied in order to justify a conclusion, every *logical principle* considered as an assertion will be found to be quite empty. The only thing it really enunciates is a rule of inference; considered as expressing truth, it is nothing." (CP 2.467)

1867-03-23 | The Logic Notebook | W 2:1

A purely contentless principle. As a logical principle should be.

1880 | On the Algebra of Logic | W 4:167-168; CP 3.166, 168

...a leading principle, which contains no fact not implied or observable in the premises, is termed a *logical principle*, and the argument it governs is termed a *complete*, in contradistinction to an *incomplete*, argument, or *enthymeme*.

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A logical principle is said to be an *empty* or merely formal proposition, because it can add nothing to the premises of the argument it governs, although it is relevant; so that it implies no fact except such as is presupposed in all discourse...

1898 | Cambridge Lectures on Reasoning and the Logic of Things: Types of Reasoning | RLT 132

...a leading principle of maximum abstractness may be termed a *logical principle*.