

LECTURES ON BACTERIA

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Lectures on Bacteria by A. de Bary & Henry E. F. Garnsey & Isaac Bayley Balfour

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A. DE BARY & HENRY E. F. GARNSEY & ISAAC BAYLEY BALFOUR

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DE BARY

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PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH
EDITION.

THIS translation of Professor De Bary's 'Vorlesungen über
Bacterien' has been prepared because there is at present
no book in English which gives in like manner 'a general
view of the subject' of Bacteria, and 'sets forth the known
facts in the life of Bacteria in their connection with those
with which we are acquainted in other branches of natural
history.'

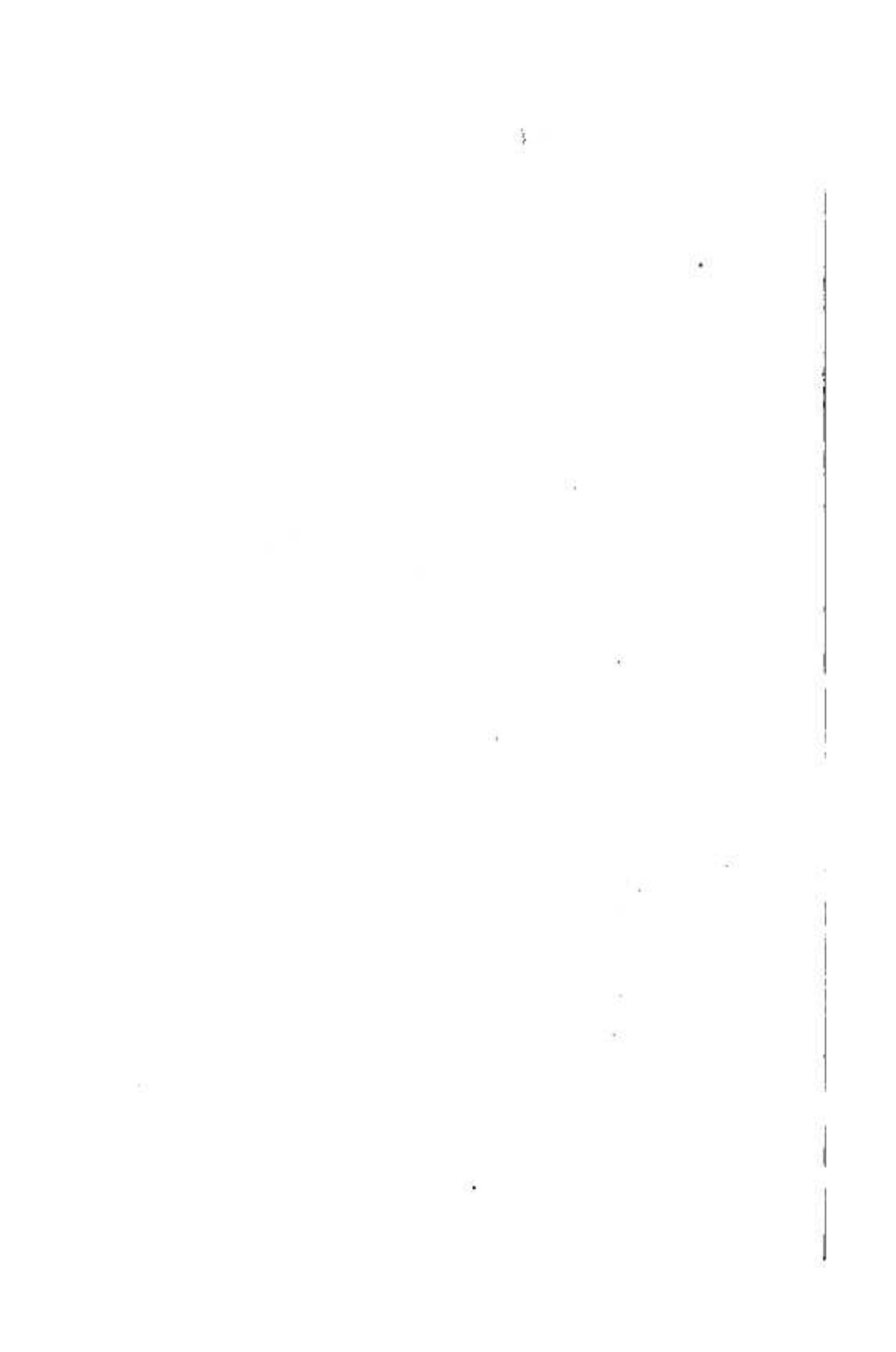
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OXFORD, 1887.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE present work is in the main a short abridgement of a number of lectures, some of which were delivered in a connected series as a University course, others as occasional and separate addresses. The form of the lectures has been occasionally altered to meet the difference between a written treatise and free oral delivery accompanied by demonstrations. Some things have been omitted and others added, especially some matters of general importance which were not published or did not become known to me till after the delivery of the actual course.

The lectures were an attempt to introduce an audience composed of persons of very different professional pursuits, medical and non-medical, to an acquaintance with the present state of knowledge and opinion concerning the much discussed questions connected with Bacteria. They had, therefore, to give such a survey of the subject as would be intelligible to all who were not strangers to the elements of a scientific training, and especially to set forth the known facts in the life of the Bacteria in their connection with those with which we are acquainted in other branches of natural history.

A survey of the present extensive literature of the subject, and of the almost daily additions to it, shows the existence of many serviceable and some excellent publications, but at the same time also of much that is mistaken and obscure. The scientific and semi-scientific converse of the day, if I may use

the expression, is greatly influenced by works of the latter kind, and the chief reason for this, if I am not mistaken, lies in the absence of a general view of the subject itself and of its relations to other portions of natural history; we cannot see the wood for the trees. An attempt to give such a view would be no mere superfluous addition to existing works, and this consideration was a decisive reason in the judgment of myself and of those who gave me their encouragement for afterwards transcribing and publishing my lectures.

The present treatise, therefore, must not be expected to be a Bacteriology, or even to report and enumerate all the details which may be of interest and importance; it should rather serve only as a guide for the direction of the student through these details.

Many readers, devoted to the study of the Bacteria, will be familiar with the literature or with the guides to it before they take up this book. For the sake of those who seek to gain some knowledge of the subject from its perusal, and also for the purpose of naming the most important sources of information which I have made use of along with my own investigations, I have added a few notices of publications at the end of the volume, and have indicated by numerals in brackets the places in the text to which the citation marked with the same number refers.

So much by way of introduction to this little work. I trust that it may do something to clear up existing views on the subject of the Bacteria, and to lead the investigation of these organisms from its present stage of storm and pressure into the ways of quiet fruitful labour and increase of knowledge.

The above with the omission of one sentence is the wording of the preface written in July, 1885, for the first edition of this book. The kindly reception which it met with can only