

**CHAPTERS ON THE  
SCIENCE  
OF LANGUAGE**

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Chapters on the Science of Language by Léon Delbos

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**LÉON DELBOS**

**CHAPTERS ON THE  
SCIENCE  
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CHAPTERS  
ON THE  
SCIENCE OF LANGUAGE.

BY  
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OF KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON.

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SECOND EDITION.

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## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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THE principal alterations, in this second edition, consist in corrections and additions. In the first chapter, availing myself of the very able remarks of some of my critics, I have effected very material changes. The "Etymological Vocabulary" has been completely rewritten, whilst all the Greek words have been properly accented. The greatest care has been bestowed on that portion of the book in order that it may be a trustworthy guide. The additions consist in a chapter on "Comparative Grammar," in which the leading facts of Comparative Philology have been given. It was of course impossible to enter into minute details, but it is hoped that this additional chapter will be found useful, and that it will form a suitable introduction to the study of larger works.

LEON DELBOS.

KING'S COLLEGE, 1884.



CHAPTERS  
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CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN AND FORMATION OF LANGUAGE.

It will not be out of place to take a survey of the several theories, which from time to time have been propounded by different writers, without, however, dwelling upon those which are mere fancies, and from which nothing, either important or useful, can be derived, such as the hypotheses of Lucretius, which can only be considered as the wild ideas of a poet totally under the influence of a fanciful imagination, and not as those of a philosopher who has acquainted himself thoroughly with his subject; or, again, those of the Brahmins, who imagined they had solved the problem of the origin of language, by attributing the invention of it to the goddess Sarasvati, wife of Brahma, to whom also they ascribed the invention of Sanskrit, that of music and of the letters called Devanagari; and, therefore, leaving these and the like unnoticed, we shall at once proceed to examine more rational conceptions.

The Grecian philosophers seem to have been the first who began the study of the subject in a scientific manner,