

**LECTURES ON THE SCIENCE OF
RELIGION, WITH A PAPER ON BUDDHIST
NIHILISM, AND A TRANSLATION OF THE
DHAMMAPADA OR "PATH OF VIRTUE".
[LONDON-1872]**

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Lectures on the Science of Religion, with a Paper on Buddhist Nihilism, and a Translation of the Dhammapada Or "Path of Virtue". [London-1872] by Max Müller

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MAX MÜLLER

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LECTURES

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Benj. B. Warfield
Apr. 1874.

SCIENCE OF RELIGION;

WITH A PAPER ON

BUDDHIST NIHILISM,

AND A TRANSLATION OF THE

DHAMMAPADA OR "PATH OF VIRTUE."

BY

MAX MÜLLER, M. A.

FELLOW OF ALL-SAINTS' COLLEGE, OXFORD, CORRESPONDANT DE
L'INSTITUT DE FRANCE, AUTHOR OF "LECTURES ON THE
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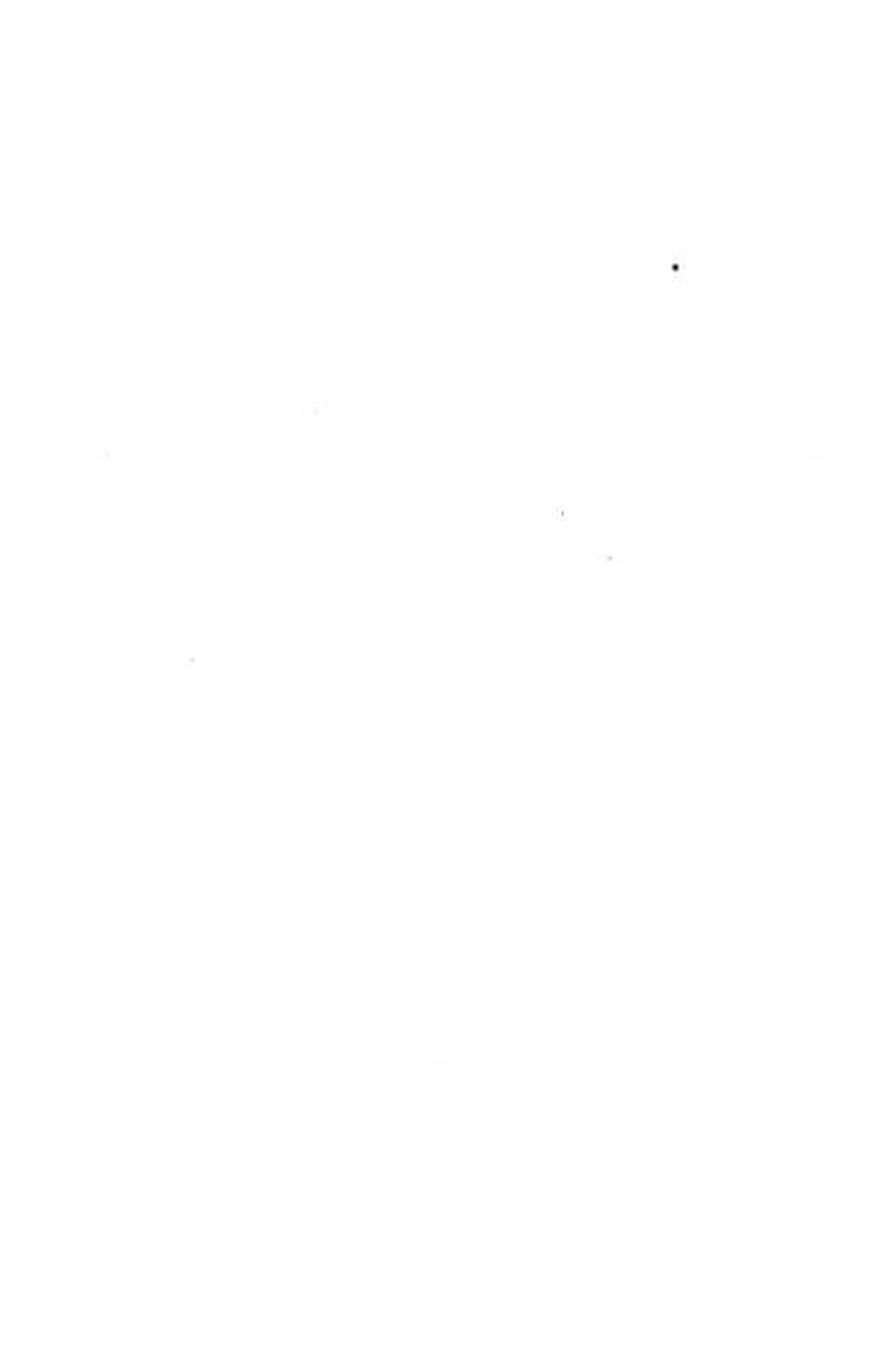
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LECTURES ON
THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION.

By MAX MÜLLER,
PROFESSOR OF COMPARATIVE PHILOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD, ETC.



FIRST LECTURE

DELIVERED AT THE ROYAL INSTITUTION, FEB. 19, 1870.

WHEN I undertook for the first time to deliver a course of lectures in this Institution, I chose for my subject the *Science of Language*. What I then had at heart was to show to you, and to the world at large, that the comparative study of the principal languages of mankind was based on principles sound and scientific, and that it had brought to light results which deserved a larger share of public interest than they had as yet received. I tried to convince, not only scholars by profession, but historians, theologians, and philosophers, nay everybody who had once felt the charm of gazing inwardly upon the secret workings of his own mind, veiled and revealed as they are in the flowing forms of language, that the discoveries made by comparative philologists could no longer be ignored with impunity; and I submitted that after the progress achieved in a scientific study of the principal branches of the vast realm of human speech, our new science, the Science of Language, might claim by right its seat at the round-table of the intellectual chivalry of our age.

Such was the goodness of the cause I had then to defend, that, however imperfect my own pleading, the verdict of the public has been immediate and almost

unanimous. During the years that have elapsed since the delivery of my first course of lectures, the Science of Language has had its full share of public recognition. Whether we look at the number of books that have been published for the advancement and elucidation of our science, or at the excellent articles in the daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly, or quarterly reviews, or at the frequent notices of its results scattered about in works on philosophy, theology, and ancient history, we may well rest satisfied. The example set by France and Germany, in founding chairs of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology, has been followed of late in nearly all the universities of England, Ireland, and Scotland. We need not fear for the future of the Science of Language. A career so auspiciously begun, in spite of strong prejudices that had to be encountered, will lead on from year to year to greater triumphs. Our best public schools, if they have not done so already, will soon have to follow the example set by the universities. It is but fair that school-boys who are made to devote so many hours every day to the laborious acquisition of languages, should now and then be taken by a safe guide to enjoy from a higher point of view that living panorama of human speech which has been surveyed and carefully mapped out by patient explorers and bold discoverers: nor is there any longer an excuse why, even in the most elementary lessons, nay I should say, why more particularly in these elementary lessons, the dark and dreary passages of Greek and Latin, of French and German grammar, should not be lighted up by the electric light of Comparative Philology. When last year I travelled in Germany I found that lectures on Comparative Philology are now attended in the universities by all who study Greek