

**THE TESTS OF THE VARIOUS KINDS  
OF TRUTH: BEING A TREATISE OF  
APPLIED LOGIC. LICTURES,  
DELIVERED BEFORE THE OHIO  
WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY**

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The Tests of the Various Kinds of Truth: Being a Treatise of Applied Logic. Lectures, Delivered before the Ohio Wesleyan University by James McCosh

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**JAMES MCCOSH**

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BEING  
A TREATISE OF APPLIED LOGIC

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LECTURES  
DELIVERED BEFORE THE OHIO WESLEYAN  
UNIVERSITY  
ON THE MERRICK FOUNDATION

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BY  
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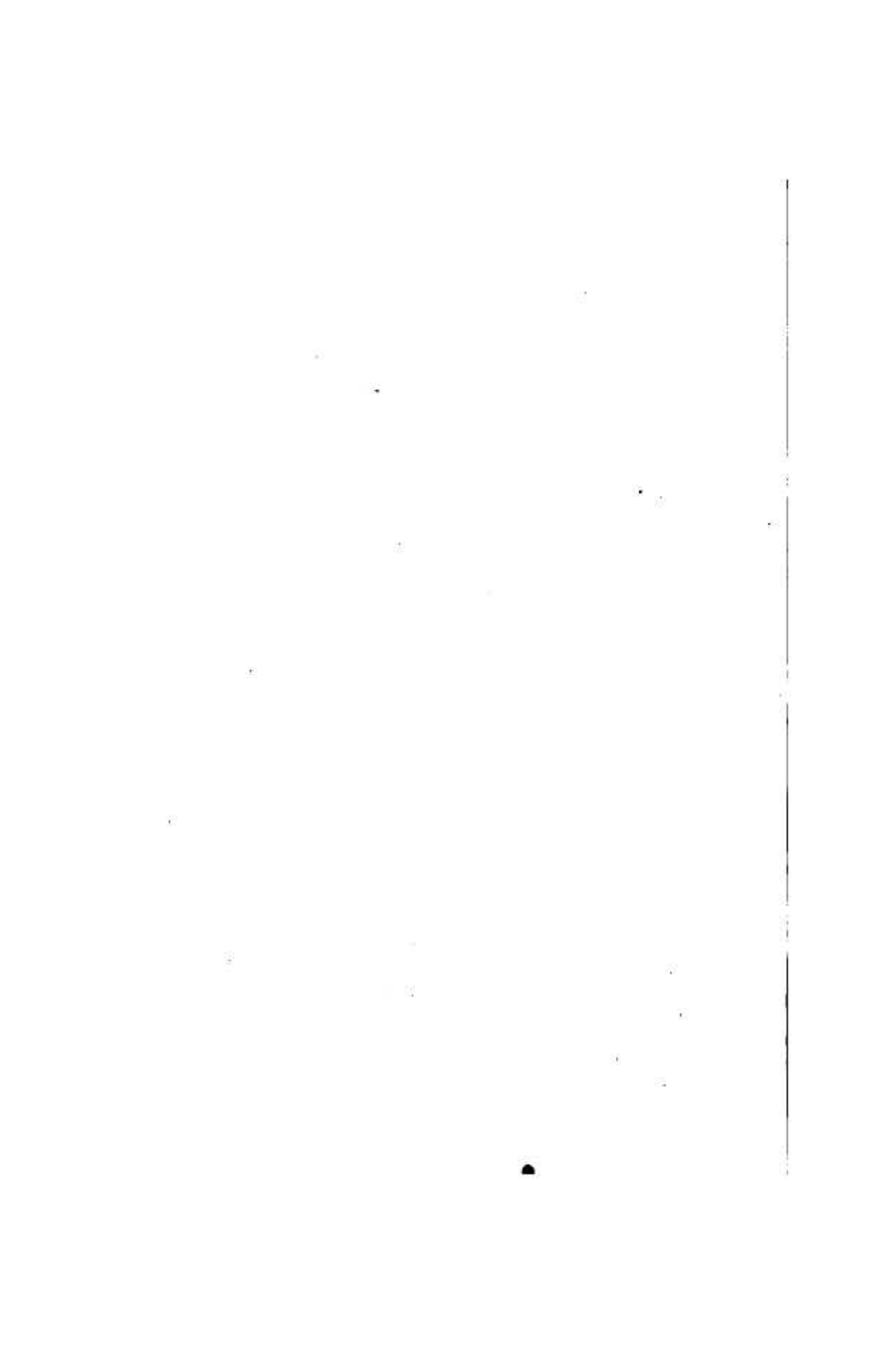
1889

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

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THE distinguished author of the following lectures needs no introduction to American readers. His eminent services as an educator, and his still more eminent philosophical writings, have given him a world-wide reputation. These lectures were especially prepared for delivery before the faculty and students of the Ohio Wesleyan University on the foundation indicated on the title-page. This foundation contemplates an annual course of at least five lectures on Experimental and Practical Religion. A previous course, by the late Rev. Daniel Curry, treats especially of the importance of religion in the higher institutions of learning. The present course is deemed eminently appropriate as tending to establish the foundations of the belief on which the entire religious life must rest. That the lectures are able and happily adapted to meet some of the subtle forms of prevailing unbelief will be readily admitted by all intelligent readers. They are given to the public in the belief that they will be eagerly sought, and that their wide circulation cannot fail to accomplish great good. They are accompanied with the prayer that such may be the result. The next course will be delivered by an eminent divine upon some of the fundamental principles of Experimental Religion.

OHIO WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY,  
*March 25, 1883.*



## PREFACE.

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THE age may be characterized as one of *unsettled* opinion. Our ambitious youth are not satisfied with the past, its opinions, and practices. Authority is not worshiped by them; they have no partiality for creeds and confessions. They do not accept, without first doubting, the truths supposed to be long established. In searching into the foundation of the old temples they have raised a cloud of dust and left lying a heap of rubbish. It is an age out of which good and evil, either or both, may come, according as it is guided. We may entertain fears, for it is dancing on the edge of a precipice down which it may fall. We may cherish hope, for it is an inquiring age.

Every form and phase of opinion seeks to have a philosophy, in which it may embody and express itself and by which it may be defended. Agnostics is the shape or figure which the doubting and hesitating spirit takes. It is not a new heresy. It has been held by a few in every age; it is now espoused by many, provisionally, till something more solid or



showy is propounded. It used to be called nes-  
cience, which maintains that nothing can be known,  
and nihilism, which holds that there is nothing to  
be known. It is of little use trying to argue with  
it, for it allows us no premises as a ground on which  
to start, and has no body or substance that we can  
attack. It is easy to show that it is suicidal. It is  
an evident contradiction to affirm that we know  
that we can know nothing. But when we have  
demonstrated this we have not destroyed it any  
more than we have killed a specter by thrusting a  
spear into it; for its defense is that all truth is con-  
tradictory. The best way of dealing with it is to  
allow it to dance as it may, like the shadows of the  
clouds, and, meanwhile, to found and build up truth  
and set it up before the mind, that it may be seen  
in its own light. It is well known that when we see  
a solid object through and beyond a specter the  
specter melts away and disappears. So it will be  
with agnosticism—it will vanish when we fix our  
eyes upon the truth.

But meanwhile an immense number and variety  
of crude views and opinions on the most moment-  
ous subjects, such as morality and religion, are set  
before the young and pressed upon their accept-  
ance. In consequence they often feel a difficulty in  
knowing what to believe, and they may be led to

believe too little or too much. In these circumstances it is of vast importance to provide them with tests which may enable them to distinguish between truth and fiction and settle them in the truth.

This is what is attempted in this work, which is meant for those who wish for their own satisfaction to know on what foundations the truths on which they are required to believe rest.

It is hoped, being a treatise on what Kant calls applied logic, which may be quite as useful as primary or formal logic, it may be used as a text-book.

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