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In a Course of Lectures
Friedrich Von Schlegel
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Critic, poet and philosopher Friedrich von Schlegel (1772–1829) was a leading figure of German Romanticism. In the two years before his untimely death, he wrote three cycles of lectures intended as part of a larger project to lay the foundations of a new general philosophy. Two of these cycles, 'Philosophie des Lebens' (given in 1827, published 1828) and 'Philosophie des Sprache und des Wortes' (given in December 1828 and published posthumously), are reissued here in an 1847 English translation. The first presents Schlegel's understanding of philosophy as independent of theology or politics, concerned with the 'inner spiritual life' of humankind. The second explores the nature of communication through language and art. Schlegel argues that full human consciousness cannot be restored by Enlightenment science, but only by divine revelation and redemption. He offers no ready-made solutions, but encourages his listeners to develop their own responses to these questions.

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FRIEDRICH VON SCHLEGEL
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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN
BY
THE REV. A. J. W. MORRISON, M.A.

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P R E F A C E.

THESE fifteen Lectures on the Philosophy of Life are intended to give, as far as is possible, a clear and succinct exposition of the following subjects. The first five treat of the soul, 1, as the centre of consciousness: 2, as the centre of moral life: 3, as co-operating with mind in the acquisition of knowledge: 4, in its relation to nature: 5, in its relation to God. The next three investigate the laws of Divine Wisdom and Providence, as manifested in the system of Nature, the World of Thought, and the evidences of History. The subject-matter of the remaining seven is the unfolding of the spirit [or spiritual nature] of man, in consciousness and in science; in external life and its great social relations; in its struggle with the age; and in its course of restoration through the several grades of human development, until it arrives at the end and aim of perfection.