

**NATURAL THEOLOGY. THE  
GIFFORD LECTURES, DELIVERED  
BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF  
EDINBURGH IN 1891**

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Natural theology. The Gifford lectures, delivered before the University of Edinburgh in 1891 by Sir George Gabriel Stokes

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**SIR GEORGE GABRIEL STOKES**

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GIFFORD LECTURES, DELIVERED  
BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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# NATURAL THEOLOGY

## The Gifford Lectures

DELIVERED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF  
EDINBURGH IN 1891

BY

PROF. SIR G. G. STOKES, BART., M.P.

LONDON AND EDINBURGH  
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1891



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# GIFFORD LECTURES

## LECTURE I

*Gifford Lectureship—Modes of progress in Natural Theology—Progress in Natural Science from laws to theories—Idea of causation, and limitation of its scientific investigation—Conception of a Designing Mind behind the order of nature—Qualification of the idea of personality as applicable to the First Cause—Evasion of the idea of design—Man's free will implies the possession of will as belonging to the First Cause—Impossibilities in the nature of things—Difficulties as to the existence of moral and physical evil.*

FROM the words of the bequest by which this Lectureship was established, it would seem that the idea of the Founder was that it was possible to establish the existence of a God, and to frame a perfect system of rules of duty, simply by the exercise of man's intellectual powers, exerted in a manner perfectly analogous to that by which the physical sciences have attained their present development. Difficult as the task might be, it was hoped that with due and liberal encouragement it might yet be accomplished.

Whether it is possible that the noble object of the