

**FOUR LECTURES ON THE  
EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY;  
DELIVERED IN SOUTHWARK,  
1834, TO THE JUNIOR MEMBERS  
OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649536542

Four Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity; Delivered in Southwark, 1834, to the Junior Members of the Society of Friends by Joseph John Gurney

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY**

**FOUR LECTURES ON THE  
EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY;  
DELIVERED IN SOUTHWARK,  
1834, TO THE JUNIOR MEMBERS  
OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS**



## INTRODUCTION.

---

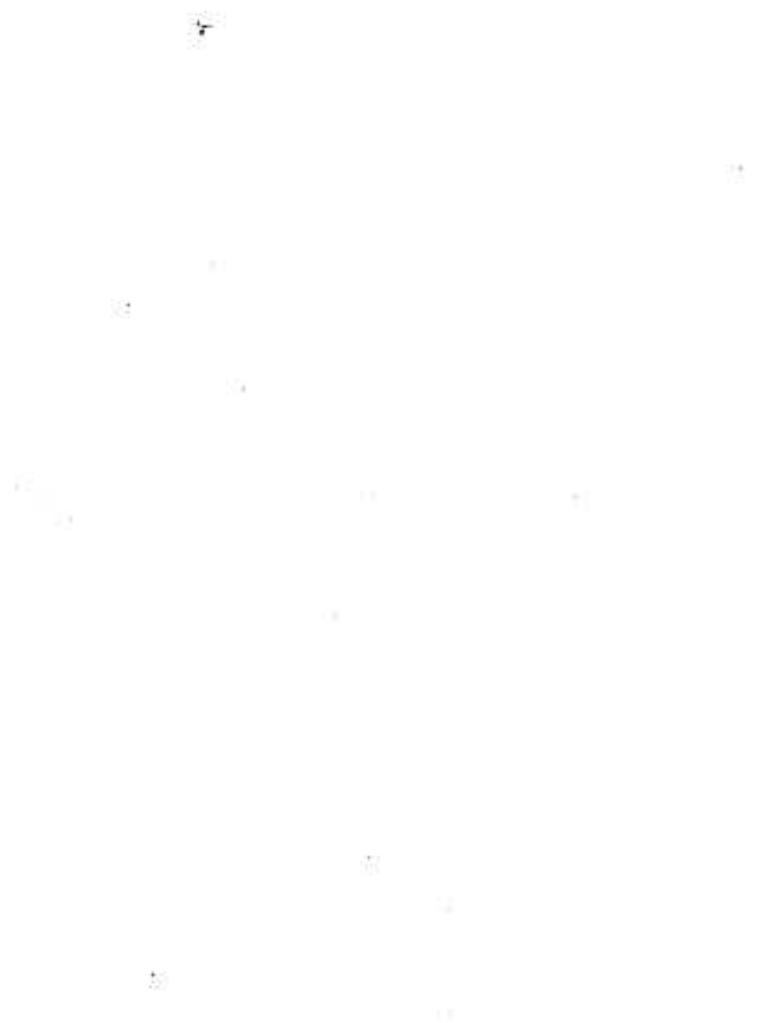
IN presenting to the public the following Lectures, the editor deems it incumbent upon him, in justice to the gentleman who delivered them, to make a few explanatory observations respecting their publication; and, to account for any errors which may be detected by the literary reader, it may, perhaps, only be necessary to mention that they are printed from the notes of the short-hand writer who took them down at the time of their delivery.

Much indeed it is to be regretted, and by no one more than the editor, that they have not made their appearance with the sanction and revision of the learned author; at the same time, it cannot fail to strike the intelligent reader that, considering their extemporaneous character, these lectures, upon subjects which embrace so wide and multifarious a range of observation, both literary and

scientific, amply vindicate Mr. Gurney's reputation as an eminent Biblical critic; and, though his correction while passing through the press would have prevented many little defects that now exist in the work, it is not improbable that, from his appreciation of the importance of the subject, they would have been deprived of much of their present features as oral discourses.

Should it be urged by any that their publication is needless, as so many learned and valuable works connected with Biblical literature have been prepared for the press, the editor would reply, and believes that the experience of most of his readers will concur with him, that the mind which may feel incapable or indisposed to grapple with the arguments of a studied treatise will pleasantly listen to the easy, unlaboured eloquence of a *viva voce* lecture. And the unmingled satisfaction expressed by those who heard these lectures, the editor hopes, will prove a sufficient apology for this endeavour to extend their benefit to that very large portion of the Society and the public in general who had not that advantage. Their simple and single aim seems to be to point out and to prove how irresistible is the authority, how matchless

the beauty, and how adapted to the condition of man is the revelation, of the Holy Scriptures. And if they conduce, in however trifling a degree, to this great end, the editor cannot but believe that their esteemed author, however he may have disliked their unauthorized circulation, will be among the first to rejoice at the results.





# FIRST LECTURE.

---

ON THE  
GENUINENESS AND AUTHENTICITY  
OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT.

---

I SHOULD like my young friends to figure to themselves the case of a person who is entirely unacquainted with the Christian religion, but who, nevertheless, is competent to inquire into those circumstances and those historical facts which prove its truth. I should like them to suppose that such a person is provided with a copy of the New Testament, and that he should take the opportunity of giving it a careful perusal. It is quite impossible that a person so circumstanced should fail to be extremely struck with the contents of the volume. He would find throughout the volume that air of simplicity, that naturalness, and that remarkable moral and spiritual weight, which would at once suggest the truth to him that it is a

book of no common order; nor could he fail to be peculiarly struck by the account contained in that volume of the wondrous person whose life and death and resurrection and doctrine it so clearly describes,—a person claiming the divine character, and, at the same time, showing forth all human perfections; and, supposing him to be a candid inquirer after truth, there are two questions which would immediately arise with him respecting this extraordinary book,—a book to which the whole compass of his literary researches would afford him no parallel,—nothing at all comparable to it in point of weight, beauty, power, and moral cogency:—he would ask himself, in the first place, Is this book genuine? and, in the next place, Is this book authentic?

I wish my young friends to remark the distinction between *genuineness* and *authenticity*; it is of importance, in all inquiries of the present kind. When we say that a book is genuine, we mean that it is no forgery; that it was truly written by the persons whose names it bears, and in the age in which it professes to have been produced. When we say that a book is authentic, we mean that the contents of it are true; that the history which it contains, and the circumstances which it relates, are truly described, and have really happened.

Before we inquire into the authenticity of a book, and into the truth of the history which it relates, the question of its genuineness arises

in the first instance, and must be disposed of before we go further. It so happens, that the genuineness of the books of which the New Testament is composed has been the subject of more critical and more literary inquiry, and of a clearer and more elaborate investigation, than any books which have ever been written; and the result of that investigation is, indeed, most satisfactory. He would be esteemed a fool, or at least entirely ignorant, in the critical world and among those who are accustomed to scholastic literature, who would dare, for a moment, to dispute the genuineness of the New Testament. The plain fact is, that we are in possession of evidence of its genuineness unspeakably superior to that of any other ancient book whatever, unless, indeed, it be the Old Testament, of which I shall soon afterwards speak.

I do not know whether my young friends are acquainted with the method which is usually adopted by critics in order to prove the genuineness of any ancient book. There are various criterions by which it is effected: there are external and there are internal evidences. In the first place comes the question, Has this book been quoted by writers who have lived in subsequent ages? is it recognised by persons who wrote on the same subject, as the ground of what we may now call their science? Now, we find, and we all know, that there is no book so largely quoted in the present day, by speakers and by writers, on any subject connected with