

LECTURE THIRD.

THE TWO RECORDS, MOSAIC AND GEOLOGICAL.

It is now exactly fifty years since a clergyman of the Scottish Church, engaged in lecturing at St Andrews, took occasion, in enumerating the various earths of the chemist, to allude to the science, then in its infancy, that specially deals with the rocks and soils which these earths compose. "There is a prejudice," he remarked, "against the speculations of the geologist, which I am anxious to remove. It has been said that they nurture infidel propensities. It has been alleged that geology, by referring the origin of the globe to a higher antiquity than is assigned to it by the writings of Moses, undermines our faith in the inspiration of the Bible, and in all the animating prospects of the immortality which it unfolds. This is a false alarm. *The writings of Moses do not fix the antiquity of the globe.*"

The bold lecturer on this occasion,—for it needed no small courage in a divine of any Established Church to take up, at the beginning of the present century, a position so determined on the geologic side,—was at the time an obscure young man, characterized, in the small circle in which he moved, by the ardour of his temperament, and the breadth and originality of his views, but not yet distinguished in the