

## LECTURE FOURTH.

## THE MOSAIC VISION OF CREATION.

THE history of creation is introduced into the "Paradise Lost" as a piece of narrative, and forms one of the two great episodes of the poem. Milton represents the common father of the race as "led on" by a desire to know

"What within Eden or without was done  
Before his memory ;"

and straightway Raphael, "the affable archangel," in compliance with the wish, enters into a description of the six days' work of the Divine Creator,—a description in which, as Addison well remarks, "the whole energy of our tongue is employed, and the several great scenes of creation rise up to view, one after another, in such a manner, that the reader seems present at this wonderful work, and to assist among the choirs of angels who are spectators of it." In the other great episode of the poem,—that in which the more prominent changes which were to happen, in after time upon the earth are made to pass before Adam,—he is represented as carried by Michael to the top of a great mountain, lofty as that on which in a long posterior age the Tempter placed our Saviour, and where the coming events are described as rising up in vision before him. In the earlier episode, as in those of the *Odyssey* and *Æneid*, in which heroes relate in the courts