

P R E F A C E.

THE following Lectures, with *The Cruise of the Betsey*, and *Rambles of a Geologist*, are all that remain of what Hugh Miller once designed to be his *Maximum Opus*,—THE GEOLOGY OF SCOTLAND. It is well, however, that his materials have been so left that they can be presented to the public in a shape perfectly readable ; furnishing two volumes, each of which, it is hoped, will be found to possess in itself a uniform and intrinsic interest,—differing in matter and manner as much as they do in the form in which they have found an embodiment. That form is simply the one naturally arising out of the circumstances of the Author's life as they occurred, instead of the more artificial plan designed by himself, in which these circumstances would probably more or less, if not altogether, have disappeared. Yet it may well be doubted whether the natural method does not possess a charm which any more formal arrangement would have wanted. Every one must be struck with the freshness, buoyancy, and vigour displayed in the *Summer Rambles* ; qualities more apparent in these than even in his more laboured Autobiography, of which they are, indeed, but a sort of unintentional continuation. They were the spontaneous utterances of a mind set free from an occu-