

LETTERS FROM HELL.

LETTER I.

I FELT the approach of death. There had been a time of unconsciousness following upon the shiverings and wild fancies of fever. Once more I seemed to be waking ; but what a waking ! The power of life was gone : I lay weak and helpless, unable to move hand or foot ; the eyelids which I had raised, closed again paralyzed ; the tongue had grown too large for the parched mouth ; the voice—my own—voice sounded strange in my ears. I heard those say that watched me—they thought I understood not—‘ He is past suffering. Was I ? Ah me ! I suffered more than human soul can imagine. I had a terrible conviction that I lay dying, death creeping nearer. I had always shrunk from the bare thought of it, but I never knew what it meant to be dying, never before that hour. Hour ?—nay, the hours drifted into days and the days seemed one awful hour of horror and agony, at the boundary line of life.

Where was faith ? I had believed once, but that was long ago. Vainly I tried to call back some shred of belief ; the poorest remnant of faith would have seemed