

THE STUDENT.*

Alas for those by drooping sickness worn,
Who now come forth to meet the gladsome ray,
And feel the fragrance and the tepid inorn
Round their torn breast and throbbing temples play;
Yet oft, as sadly thronging dreams arise,
Awhile forgetful of their pain and gaze,
A transient lustre lights their faded eyes,
And o'er their cheek the tender hectic strays.

There are few scenes more painfully distressing, than that of those towns in the south west of England, whither the afflicted with pulmonary disease have been recommended to remove, in the (alaw, too often fallacious) hope that change of air and a milder climate may arrest the progress of that disease so fearfully prevalent in our beloved island, and the eradication of which has often baffled the skill of the most eminent medical men. There is a solemnity reigning in such places which cannot fail to impress the heart. The gradual disappearance of faces once familiar, when little doubt remains that the emaciated frame has at length given away; the frequent tolling of the passing or funeral bell; the churchyard, crowded with the remains of those who have found a grave far from the homes of their childhood; more especially the invalids to be met with at almost every step, and on whose wasting cheek the fearful hectic flush is so prominently marked;—these are all calculated to engender painful feelings; and much to be pitied is that man, who can sojourn amidst such mementos of the evanescence of earthly joys, without being awakened to serious reflection.

Walking in the streets of one of the towns referred to, and struck with the solemn scene which now for the first time presented itself, I met an old college acquaintance, on whose arm was leaning a young man of peculiarly elegant and prepossessing appearance, but on whose frame it was obvious that disease was working its ravages. How touchingly descriptive the language of one of our most elegant Christian poets—

"Where time has rent the lordly tow'r
And moss entwines and arches grey,
Among many a light and lovely flow'r
That leads a lustre to decay.
Thus while existence wanes away,
Consumption's fever'd cheek will bloom:
And beauty's brightest beams will play
In mournful glory o'er the tomb."

DALE'S *Widow of Nain.*

He appeared exceedingly languid, yet very cheerful. He was introduced by my acquaintance as a cousin; and, by a look which I could not understand signifying that I should not notice his sickly state, I was invited to spend the evening at their lodgings, which I accepted with mingled feelings of pain and pleasure, for our walk had exceedingly interested me in the young man's state. He was a member of the University of Oxford; of an old family in the northern country; and had been reading for honours, with good prospect of success, when disease first manifested itself in an alarming form. His family was decidedly consumptive; two sisters had fallen victims; an only brother in the army died in Madeira, whither he had gone in hopes of recovery; his mother by the same disease, had found an early grave, and a paralytic father who resided at the family mansion, too enfeebled to accompany this frail prop of his declining years, was, save himself, the only one who remained of a once joyful circle. He had been strongly urged to try a change of climate for the winter; and, accompanied by his cousin, a barrister, and an old faithful domestic, he had taken up his residence at —. The cousin did every thing in his power to add to the comfort of the invalid;—paid him the most unremitting attention, and would, I am sure, have made any personal sacrifice to obtain alleviation of his complaint: but he could not be regarded as living under the influence of vital religious principle. Though a pleasant, he was not a fit companion for an invalid. It is, indeed, of the utmost importance that such a companion should be a per-

* By the author of "The Smuggler."—From the Church of England Magazine.

son of decidedly serious views; should delight to converse on those grand truths which he himself has received, and of that land.

"Where graves are not, nor blights of changeful time."

The evening was spent pleasantly, though not with much edification: stories of by-gone years were vividly recalled. The invalid joined at times in the conversation, to which I was most anxious, if possible, to give a religious turn; but every attempt to do so proved fruitless; any remark of such a tendency was received with the most marked repulse. He talked of his future plans and prospects—of his expected examination; of his probability of obtaining honours. Little did he seem aware that death could not be far distant; and that long before the period when he would be required to return to college, his remains would be mouldering in the sepulchre!

The invalid retired—not to rest, for incessant cough which no anodynes could remove, prevented the possibility—but for one of those long and weary nights suffering, though frequently unattended with actual suffering, generally attended consumptive cases. On his departure I asked his cousin if he was at all aware of his danger.—The reply was, "I do not think he is, I am anxious, if possible, to conceal it from him. The medical men in the country begged that he might, as much as possibly, be kept in darkness to his real state; that his mind should be cheered, and that he should not be suffered to dwell on the subject of death." "But he must be aware," I added, "that his mother, Brother, and sisters, died of decline; and he cannot be ignorant that it is wasting his frame." "It might be thought so," was the reply, "but somehow or other, the fact does not appear to impress him: he frequently speaks of what he will do when he leaves college; and I make it a point never to check him." I could not but express my regret that he should thus be allowed to remain in ignorance, and should not be counselled as to his danger: but my acquaintance seemed anxious to change the subject; and I found it vain to urge any further remarks. I had no opportunity of seeing the patient alone. I was obliged to leave at a very early hour the following morning: I intended to visit it, however, in the course of a few weeks, and I trusted to make such arrangements as might enable me to have some serious conversation with the interesting invalid.

There is something peculiarly affecting in the hoping against hope, which is usually discoverable in consumptive cases. How powerfully does it remind us of the ignorance too often testified by the sinner, in the certain ruin of his soul's eternal welfare, from his indulgence in some of the lusts of the natural man! He fancies danger is far distant, whilst it may be at the very door.

On my return, on calling at the lodgings, I found that, three days before, the invalid had been removed from his earthly trials. His decline had been exceedingly rapid at last; much more so than his medical attendants had expected. He had died, I was told, apparently without any severe struggle: nature was too much exhausted to contend against the last enemy; and he gently fell asleep.

At the request of the cousin, I attended the funeral. The corpse was followed by a small band of mourners—the cousin, the old domestic and myself. I have seldom felt more than on that solemn occasion: for I had felt then little evidence that the young man had been brought to build his hopes of acceptance on the only true foundation. Amiable and estimable, he yet appeared, as far as I could judge, to lack a principle of vital godliness. As remarkable for the natural sweetness of his disposition, as for his intellectual acquirements, he yet seemed a stranger to the "wisdom which is from above;" and deeply did I regret that I had not been permitted to have some conversation with him, in the hope that God might have blessed it. There are few objects more painfully interesting than that of a young person testifying, in an eminent degree, the various amabilities of the natural character, which may excite the esteem and admiration not brought under the impression of vital religion. How much is that interest increased, when disease has marked the victim as its own. I would not undervalue the honours which this young man aspired to attain; I would not

check that lawful ambition which stimulates to the acquirement of mental and intellectual rank. It is delightful to witness energy and activity in youth; but then only will it produce unalloyed satisfaction on the mind of the true Christian, when it is accompanied by deep religious feeling, and when every intellectual acquirement is regarded as wholly valueless when brought into competition with the soul's growth in grace; and aimed at as a means whereby the glory of God and the good of fellow-creatures may be advanced:

I was truly grateful to be afterwards informed that the young person in question had, before his removal, been led to clearer views as to the plan of salvation, and to an unreserved acquiescence in the Divine will. Life's brief day speedily drew to a close; but at eventime there was light—light, not emanating from the earthly lore, in which he was no mean scholar, but from the eternal Spirit, the source of heavenly wisdom. The old domestic was a man of deep religious feeling, and had been made acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus. Many had been his efforts to arouse his young master to a sense of his salvation; he had been with him from his birth; had ministered to the amusements of his boyhood; had watched with anxiety the sure progress of his disease. Others had hoped he might recover, but hope had never entered his bosom; he foresaw what would be the result, and often had ventured to throw in a word of counsel, when it was met with apathy, and even with unkind rebuke. He found, however, that by degrees his words were not without effect. Many were the weary hours he watched by the invalid's bed, with God's word in his hand, eager to catch the favourable opportunity to read some little portion for the young master's comfort. Often, amidst the restlessness of a weary night, would he bring forward some passage leading to patience and acquiescence in the Divine will. Many were the prayers he offered; and they were not offered in vain. It was his satisfaction to believe that a good work was begun in the young man's soul; that as the outward man perished, day by day: and that the last convulsive sob of that dear young master, as the drooping head leaned upon his aged bosom, was the signal of the release of the ransomed spirit from its worn-out tabernacle, that it might flee away and be at rest in the bosom of its Saviour and its God.

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN FOREIGN PARTS.*

AUSTRALIA:

Extract from a letter from the Bishop of Australia.

My impression is unfeignedly that as the support of Government is afforded to different forms of religion according to the election of the people, encouragement is thereby given to the lax and dangerous opinion that there is in religion nothing that is either certain or true. The Government virtually admits that there is no divinely instituted form of Church membership, or of doctrine; otherwise, that one would in preference receive its support. The consequence is that the most awful truths of Christianity, which have been acknowledged and preserved in the Church from the beginning, are now frequently spoken of as mere sectarian opinions to which no peculiar respect is due; and, indeed, I have been truly shocked sometimes to find those truths placed on a level, as to credibility, with the most destructive of the heretical opinions with which the Church has had to maintain a contest. In referring to this subject I speak of what is of too common occurrence in both these colonies; and I am strongly impressed with the conviction that this unhappy mode of thinking is fostered and encouraged by the influence of those principles upon which our present system of public support to religion is founded. My reason for bringing the subject under consideration of the Society is that they may be aware of the peculiar difficulties and dangers of our situation; and in selecting clergymen for the service of this Church may endeavour as far

* From the Report for 1839.