

LITERARY DEPARTMENT.

STORY OF A STUDENT.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

Creative Art,

Whether the instrument of words the use,
 Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues,
 Demands the service of a mind and heart,
 Though sensitive, yet in their weakest part
 Heroically fashioned—to infuse
 Faith in the whispers of the lonely muse,
 While the whole world seems adverse to desert;
 And O! when Nature sinks, as oft she may;
 Through long-lived pressure of obscure distress
 Still to be strenuous for the bright reward,
 And in the soul admit of no decay,
 Brook no continuance of weak-mindedness,
 Great is the glory—for the strife is hard.

WORDSWORTH.

CHAP. I.

I am about to record the stragglings of a life spent in that strife, but unrewarded by that glory.—True, my years have been few, too few for the attainment of a serene and lofty fame; yet few as they have been, their number is completed, for another will not elapse before this wasting frame shall have become “dust for oblivion.” The tide of life is ebbing fast through my young pulses—earthly hope and enterprize are extinct within me, and thought itself is changed to saddening retrospection; yet should I be uncandid did I say that self reproach makes part of my despondency—yet should I be ungrateful did I leave earth complaining of its woes, and thankless for its pleasures. But there is one mood of mind in which I am made to feel shame, remorse, and self-contempt: it is that in which I am haunted by the fear that I do not in truth possess that genius which should alone have caused or justified the enthusiasm with which I devoted myself to the pursuit of fame. The martyr, who, in the midst of death flames, should begin to doubt the divineness of the cause for which he suffered, could only estimate the misery with which I yield to the suspicion that the shrine on which I have sacrificed health, home, and all the world's untasted joys, contains no heaven descended spirit, but an idol formed by my own vanity. But this distrust of my own powers, though terrible, is only occasional, and there are moments, not a few, in which I entertain the proud conviction that, had time, and strength been given me, I would have won a crown and throne among the liv-

vht and son .

I was born in an Irish provincial town, which afforded excellent opportunities for education. My parents were poor and humble shop keepers. I was their only child; my mother's pride, my mother's sorrow. Of those early days when life is almost wholly animal, I recollect little more than my boisterous delight in boyish sports, my awe of my stern, cold father, and my fondness for my indulgent mother; but since I indeed became a living soul, since thought and self sentience dawned, memory has been a faithful chronicler. My father sent me to school betimes, intending that I should only receive instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic: and that when this meagre education should be completed, I should be apprenticed to some trade or business. It was long before I was reconciled to the inroads which school hours and school books made upon my childish amusements; but so soon as I had experienced the nobler excitement of mental conflict, I became the most ardent student in the academy. My father never praised or fondled me, but his parental pride was flattered by my reputation for talent, and in order, to give it a wider scope, he permitted me to learn Greek and Latin, and subsequently modern languages and science. But he had not relinquished his original design of putting me into business; he only postponed the execution of it until I should have acquired the last and highest of our collegiate honours. Meantime, study had with me become a passion: and the desire of fame grew up in my heart strong, silent, and unbending as a tree. I had felt the “spur of the old bards to mighty deeds;” I had vowed my soul to the service and search of truth; and my body I had devoted to be the slave and instrument of its divine guest, the soul. But my desire of fame was not a selfish and sole-thoughted passion for personal aggrandizement; it was composed of the best affections of our nature: love of parents, of country, of mankind. My heart throbbed warmly at the thought that I might be the destined discoverer of truths that should be benefactions to future ages, but dearer still was the hope of winning a fame that might be worthy to make part of my country's glory: that when she should be taunted with the ferocity of her philosophers and bards, mine might be among the honoured names with which she would reply to the reproach. I could not indeed expect to witness more than the com-