

THE DEATH-RATTLE.

“IF I can't believe, I can't.” Such were the last words which the writer ever had the opportunity of hearing from the lips of a man who was an avowed infidel, and with whom he had frequently discussed the question of the divine authenticity of the scriptures, which however is *no question* at all but a *fact*. At the moment of uttering these words he was lying on his sofa, suffering, though not very severely, from bronchitis, which at that time (some twenty years ago) was epidemic in some parts and had been remarkably fatal in several instances. They had been speaking together on the old subject, and the infidel finding all his arguments worthless, and having had all his objections met, fell back upon what afterwards proved to be a direct falsehood—“If I *can't* believe, I can't.” Meaning that he could not believe the bible to be God's word, although he could bring forward no reason or ground for his opinions than what had been already proved fallacious. After some further attempts to convince him of his folly, his visitor left, but warned him of the dangerous nature of his disease, which had carried off several, both young and old in that neighborhood.

About a week or ten days afterwards, the writer learned one morning that a woman had called between eleven and twelve o'clock the night before at a house where he was known, to enquire for him, saying that her husband was dying, and earnestly wished to