

DR. ARNOT ON SMOKING.

THE following letter was written by the lamented Dr. Arnot, five weeks before his death :—

"I don't smoke ; I never smoked ; God helping me, I never will. I have lots of reasons—more than I could crowd into one paper ; but here are some, taken as they rise to memory. I have sons, some of them grown-up and some growing. Whatever difference of opinion there may be as to the effect of tobacco on the health of men, I believe all are agreed that it damages at the root the constitution of youth, if they use it before they reach manhood. Now, common sense and all experience teach that a man weakens his influence immeasurably if he himself smokes and tells his boys to abstain. If you can encourage them to do as you do, you stand on a firm footing, and have a mighty purchase on your child. This is a method that God will bless.

"But there is one reason against smoking which is so big that it seems to me to comprehend nearly all others within it. It is that the use of tobacco makes it more difficult to be a Christian—hinders a Christian mightily in being a true witness to his Lord. I am accustomed now to pity greatly Christians who are also smokers. The practice not only drains the life-sap out of the smoker's cheeks ; it also drains charity out of the smoker's soul. Many smokers succeed in living a Christian life till their Lord calls them hence, in spite of this great obstruction, just as many youths contrive to wriggle forward into manhood, with somewhat sallow cheeks and somewhat sunken eyes, in spite of the tobacco poison. Yet it remains true that smoking to a greater or less extent diminishes the strength and

beneficial effects of a Christian's graces. The tender regard for others ; the willingness to suffer rather than inflict an injury ; the watchful, glad grasping at opportunities of doing to others as you would like them to do to you—all this is sapped and weakened at the foundation by the smoker's appetites and habits. My neighbours all round do me day by day deliberate injury, who, I believe, would give me fair treatment if they were not enslaved to tobacco. On the top of a car, where we are packed together in a row, with faces within eighteen inches of each other, a man sitting next to me on the wind side takes out his apparatus and prepares his dose. Then he scrapes a match, and the brimstone smoke nearly chokes me. The wind has blown out his match, and it is not until I have endured the brimstone three times that I am admitted into the pungent element of tobacco. It never occurs to him that he is doing me an injury ; and if I utter a complaint, five to one he meets it with insolence. The white ashes of the pipe are afterwards shaken out, and scattered like snow over the dress, and it may be into the eyes of the neighbours. The floor, meantime, where our feet are resting, is in such a condition that it can neither be described in polite society nor endured by any but the most robust.

"Everywhere the same thing. In crowds at railway stations, or at an illumination, where there is no means of escape, the person next you in the garb and with the mien of a gentleman and, I believe, in his heart a gentleman as far as his supreme and selfish devotion to his own gratification in the form of tobacco will permit—