

## YOUTH'S DEPARTMENT.

For the Colonial Churchman.

It was in the delightful and cheering month of June 183—, while travelling through the lonely and solitary wilderness in the County of —, I was about passing a humble dwelling, when an old greyheaded man standing at the door waved his withered hand for me to approach him;—which of course I did. On reaching his door he extended to me his trembling hand, while with the other he supported his tottering limbs, and ushered me into his room, which was to him both parlour and kitchen. The house consisted of only two rooms. Being seated, I asked the old man how he could content himself in so solitary a place. His countenance brightening up, we entered into an interesting conversation as follows.

*Old Man.*—I would not exchange this my humble dwelling, for the most elegant mansion on earth. I have lived fourscore years and ten in this world, two thirds of which time, I have passed in what I call my little world, for there are but two dwellings within five miles of this, and they are occupied by my two only sons. My wife has long since been a tenant of the grave.

*Stranger.*—You must indeed, Sir, find it very dreary and lonesome without society in this retired spot!

*Old Man.*—Not so: for I have the frequent company of my two children which a merciful God has still spared me: and they take every care of me; and with God's assistance, they see that all my earthly wants are supplied from day to day.

*Stranger.*—You are indeed fortunate in having such kind and affectionate children to protect you now that you are so wholly helpless. But Sir, *the sabbath?*—you must indeed find that day very long and tedious?

*Old Man.*—Indeed it is far otherwise—that day is to me the very happiest day of the week. It gladdens my poor old heart to look back to my days of childhood and youth. When I was in the constant habit for several years of attending on that holy day a Sunday School in the parish of — conducted by a good and worthy minister (who has long since gone to give an account of his ministry to his Heavenly Master)—to that school, Sir, and that good man am I principally indebted for the happiness I now enjoy,—then and there, Sir, were implanted in my mind the seeds of religion that have grown up with me, and will continue with me, to all eternity in that heavenly mansion that I am soon to exchange for this very humble dwelling.

*Stranger.*—You have indeed been highly favored. But what opportunities have your faithful children had of learning the way to God; they must indeed be sadly at a loss for instruction, and I am afraid they cannot be well acquainted with the word of life.

*Old Man.*—My children certainly have had but few advantages in the way of learning. I am very poor, and it is well known that the poor man particularly in so retired a spot as this is, has not the means of employing a teacher. And there never has been a Sunday school for them to go to. They have but seldom heard the tone of the church bell calling them to the house of God (for we are several miles from any church.) But, Sir, they have had a humble teacher in myself. I have endeavored to instil into their minds all the good instruction that I have ever received at my Sunday school and elsewhere. They have with God's blessing on my exertions, become well acquainted with the word of God. They have committed to memory very many pretty hymns, and as to prayer (the food of the christian's soul) I have every reason to hope that their hearts and voices are often, very often raised up to the throne of mercy. And as to day is Saturday, and you cannot travel to-morrow, being the Sabbath, I shall be heartily glad and made happy if you will submit to be sheltered until Monday in my dwelling, humble though it is, and you will then have an opportunity of judging for yourself as to the way in which the Sunday is spent amongst us.

*Stranger.*—I shall indeed be most happy to remain with you: but, Sir, what you have already said makes me feel very sad. I never attended a Sunday school, although for years I lived within a few yards of one well conducted. My parents never sent me

there, but allowed me to go about the streets after the services of the church were over. Oh! Sir, I now see what advantages I have lost, and I have learned more in this solitary spot during this my short visit than I have learned for years in the city.

*Old Man.*—Your parents have indeed been much to blame for such their neglect; and so are all parents who neglect sending their children to Sunday schools when they have it in their power to do so.

*Stranger.*—I accepted the invitation and remained until the following Monday morning: and a more delightful sabbath I never spent. I attended morning and evening prayers most devoutly offered up by the old man. Much of the day was occupied in reading the word of Life. At a table placed in the centre of the room sat this humble christian, his two sons, and myself. The old man first read a chapter, and feeble and weak though he was, he explained it to us in such a way that I felt quite convinced that he was well acquainted with the way to heaven.—His sons also, each in his turn, read a chapter and fully explained it. I was then requested to read a chapter also. I did; and when finished, they each fixed their eyes on me, expecting my explanation. I kept my eyes fixed on the Bible, ashamed to look up.

*Old Man.*—We shall be glad, Sir, to hear from you some comments on that beautiful chapter (55 Isaiah) that you have just read.

*Stranger.*—You must excuse me. I am not able to explain it. I know but little of the Bible. My parents neglected me. But I must not reflect upon them, for they are laid low in the dust.

*Old Man.*—My dear Sir, I willingly excuse you; but bear in mind that at the day of Judgment you will be judged by that precious book: and the Divine Author of it will admit of no excuses.

*Stranger.*—On Monday morning I took leave of this good old man and his sons, with the promise that I would never pass the house without calling to see them. On my journey after leaving him I seriously reflected upon what I had seen and heard during my short visit, and my heart sickened within me when I found that I had so little acquaintance with the way to God. That visit laid the foundation to my leading a new and better life, and I am now trying to serve God here, that I may live with Him for ever hereafter. About 10 years after that visit I was passing again and called, but the dwelling was deserted, and going to decay. I inquired for the good old man, and found that the hand of death had been laid upon him, and that he had been summoned to meet his God. With a sad and heavy heart I inquired for his grave. It was pointed out to me, but it was without a stone to mark the spot. I knelt over it, and it was then the beauty of that part of the burial service of our church came forcibly to my mind—"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord," and while I knelt I prayed that my last end might be like that of the tenant of that grave; for I felt fully assured that he died in the Lord.

Reader! Are you a parent, and your children still spared to you? Then see that they regularly attend the Sunday school; for it may be the means of placing their souls in the way to heaven, as was the case with the good old man just alluded to.

August 4th, 1838.

D.

From the Southern Churchman.

## HUME'S DEATH.

I enclose a passage relative to the death-bed of Hume, the historian, which appeared many years ago in an Edinburgh newspaper, and which I am not aware was ever contradicted. Adam Smith's well known narrative of Hume's last hours has been often cited, to prove how calmly a philosophical infidel can die; but, if the inclosed account be correct, very different was the picture. I copy it as I find it, thinking it possible that some of your numerous readers may be able to cast some light upon the subject. If the facts alleged in the following statements are not authentic, they ought to be disproved before tradition is too remote; if authentic, they are of considerable importance on account of the irreligious use which has been made of the popular narrative, just as was the case in regard to the deathbed of Voltaire, which to this hour, in spite of well proved

facts, infidel writers maintain was calm and philosophical. The following is the story:

About the end of 1776, a few months after the historian's death, a respectable looking woman dressed in black came into the Haddington stage coach while passing through Edinburgh.

The conversation among the passengers which had been interrupted for a few minutes, was speedily resumed, which the lady soon found to be regarding the state of mind persons were in at the prospect of death. One gentleman argued that a real Christian was more likely to view the approach of death with composure, than he who had looked upon religion as unworth his notice. Another (an English gentleman) insisted that an infidel could look forward to his end with as much complacency and peace of mind as the best Christian in the land. This being denied by his opponent, he bade him consider the death of his countryman David Hume, who was an acknowledged infidel, and yet died not only happy and tranquil, but even spoke of his dissolution with a degree of gaiety and humor. The lady who had lately joined them, turned round to the last speaker and said, 'Sir, this is all that you know about it; I could tell you another tale.' 'Madam,' replied the gentleman, 'I presume I have as good information as you can give on this subject, and I believe that what I have asserted regarding Mr. Hume has never before been called into question.' The lady continued; 'Sir, I was Mr. Hume's housekeeper for many years, and was with him in his last moments; and the mourning I now wear was a present from his relatives for my attention to him on his deathbed; and happy would I have been if I could have borne my testimony to the mistaken opinion that has gone abroad of his peaceful and composed end. I have, sir, never till this hour opened my mouth on this subject; but I think it a pity the world should be kept in the dark on so interesting a topic. It is true, sir, that when Mr. Hume's friends were with him, he was cheerful, and seemed quite unconcerned about his approaching fate; nay, frequently spoke of it to them in a jocular and playful way; but when he was alone the scene was very different; he was any thing but composed; his mental agitation was so great at times as to occasion his bed to shake. He would not allow the candles to be put out during the night, nor would he be left alone for a minute. I had always to ring the bell for one of the servants to be in the room, before he would allow me to leave it. He struggled hard to appear composed, even before me, but to one who attended his bedside for so many days and nights, and witnessed his disturbed sleeps and still more disturbed wakings; who frequently heard his involuntary breathings of remorse and frightful startings; it was no difficult matter to determine that all was not right within. This continued and increased until he became insensible. I hope in God I shall never witness a similar scene.'

## LOSS OCCASIONED BY DELAY.

It is said that a large number of life preservers had been ordered for the Pulaski, but owing to some delay somewhere, they did not arrive till the day after she sailed. Will not our readers learn a profitable lesson from this fact? The delay of only a few moments to secure an interest in the blood of Christ by faith may prove the eternal ruin of your souls. Please at once to your great Spiritual Preserver.—*Southern Churchman.*

Mr. Barrow, agent for the London Bible Society in Madrid, has been arrested and committed to prison. The publication of a translation of the gospel of St. Luke in the Gipsy language, appears to be the enormous crime against which the political and ecclesiastical government of Madrid has taken offence.—*Christian Register.*

It is one of the most awful points of view in which we can consider God, that, as a righteous governor of the world, concerned to vindicate his own glory, he has laid himself under a kind of holy necessity to purify the unclean, or to sink him into perdition.—*Cecil's Remains.*