

animals, and the descent was consequently very fatiguing, and even painful. All this too beneath a blazing sun, with the thermometer at 78°, and not a vestige of shade. At last Tom and I reached the bottom, where, after partaking of luncheon and draughts of quinine, we lay down under the shadow of a great rock to recruit our weary frames.

Refreshed by our meal, we started at six o'clock on our return journey, and went down a good deal faster than we came up. Before the end of the pumice-stone or Retama plains had been reached, it was nearly dark. After an interval of uncertainty, the other guides confessed that they did not know the way back in the dark. Horns were blown, and other means of attracting attention were tried; first one and then another of the party meanwhile coming more or less to grief. My good little horse fell down three times, though we did not part company. Finally, half an hour after midnight, we arrived at the house of the Vice-Consul, who had provided refreshments for us, and whose nephew was still very kindly sitting up awaiting our return. But we were too tired to do anything but go straight on board the yacht, where, after some supper, we were indeed glad to retire to our berths.

### The Road to Heaven.

BY DAGONET.

How is the boy this morning? Why do you shake your head?

Ah! I can see what's happened—there's a screen drawn round the bed.

So poor little Mike is sleeping the last long sleep of all;

I'm sorry—but who could wonder, after that dreadful fall?

Let me look at him, doctor—poor little London waif!

His frail barque's out of the tempest, and lies in God's harbour safe;

It's better he died in the ward here, better a thousand times,

Than have wandered back to the alley, with its squalor and nameless crimes.

Too young for the slum to sully, he's gone to the wonderland

To look on the thousand marvels that he scarce could understand,

Poor little baby outcast, poor little waif of sin!

He has gone, and the pitying angels have carried the cripple in.

Didn't you know his story?—Ah, you weren't here, I believe,

When they brought the poor little fellow to the hospital, Christmas Eve.

It was I who came here with him, it was I who saw him go

Over the bridge that evening into the Thames below.

'Twas a raw cold air that evening—a biting Christmassy frost—

I was looking about for a collie—a favourite dog I'd lost.

Some ragged boys, so they told me, had been seen with one that night

In one of the bridge recesses, so I hunted left and right.

You know the stone recesses—with the long, broad bench of stone,

To many a weary outcast as welcome as monarch's throne;

On the fiercest night you may see them, as crouched in the dark they lie,  
Like the hunted vermin, striving to hide from the hounds in cry.

The seats that night were empty, for the morrow was Christmas Day,  
And even the outcast loafers seemed to have slunk away;  
They had found a warmer shelter—some casual ward maybe—  
They'd manage a morning's labour for the sake of the meat and tea.

I fancied the seats were empty, but, as I passed along,  
Out of the darkness floated the words of a Christmas song,  
Sung in a childish treble—'twas a boy's voice hoarse with cold,  
Quavering out the anthem of angels and harps of gold.

I stood where the shadows hid me, and peered about until  
I could see two ragged urchins, blue with the icy chill,  
Cuddling close together, crouched on a big stone seat—  
Two little homeless arabs, waifs of the London street.

One was singing the carol, when the other, with big round eyes—  
It was Mike—looked up in wonder, and said "Jack, when we dies  
Is that the place as we goes to—that place where ye're dressed in white?  
And 'as golden 'arps to play on, and it's warm, and jolly and bright?"

"Is that what they mean by eaven, as the mission coves talk about,  
Where the children's always happy, and nobody kicks 'em out?"  
Jack nodded his head assenting, and then I listened and heard  
The talk of the little arabs—listened to every word.

Jack was a Sunday scholar, so I gathered from what he said,  
But he sang in the road for a living—his father and mother were dead;  
And he had a drunken granny, who turned him into the street—  
She drank what he earned, and often he hadn't a crust to eat.

He told little Mike of heaven, in his rough, untutored way,  
He made it a land of glory, where the children sing all day;  
And Mike, he shivered and listened, and told his tale to his friend,  
How he was starved and beaten—'twas a tale one's heart to rend.

He'd a drunken father and mother, who sent him out to beg,  
Though he'd got over a fever, and was lame with a withered leg;  
He told how he daren't crawl homeward, because he had begged in vain,  
And his parents' brutal fury haunted his baby brain.

"I wish I could go to 'eaven," he cried, as he shook with fright;  
"If I thought as they'd only take me, why I'd go this very night.  
Which is the way to 'eaven? How d'ye get there, Jack?"  
Jack climbed on the bridge's coping, and looked at the water black.

"That there's one road to 'eaven," he said, as he pointed down  
To where the cold Thames water surged muddy and thick and brown.  
"If we was to fall in there, Mike, we'd be dead; and right through there  
Is the place where it's always sunshine, and the angels has crowns to wear."

Mike rose and looked at the water, he peered in the big broad stream,

Perhaps with a childish notion he might catch the golden gleam  
Of the far-off land of glory. He leaned right over and cried,  
"If them are the gates of 'eaven, how I'd like to be inside!"

He stood but a moment looking—how it happened I cannot tell—  
When he seemed to lose his balance, gave a short, shrill cry, and fell—  
Fall over the narrow coping, and I heard his poor head strike  
With a thud on the parapet under, then splash in the Thames went Mike.

We brought him here that evening. For help I had managed to shout—  
A boat put off from the landing, and they dragged his body out;  
His forehead was cut and bleeding, but a vestige of life we found;  
When they brought him here he was senseless, but slowly the child came round.

I came here on Christmas morning—the ward was all bright and gay  
With mistletoe, green, and holly, in honour of Christmas Day;  
And the patients had clean white garments, and a few in the room out there  
Had joined in a Christmas service—they were singing a Christmas air.

They were singing a Christmas carol when Mike from his stupor woke,  
And dim on his wandering senses the strange surroundings broke.  
Half dreamily he remembered the tale he had heard from Jack—  
The song, and the white-robed angels, the warm bright heaven came back.

"I'm in heaven," he whispered faintly. "Yes, Jack must have told me true!"  
And as he looked about him, came the kind old surgeon through.  
Mike gazed at his face a moment, put his hand to his fevered head,  
Then to the kind old doctor, "Please, are you God?" he said.

Poor little Mike! 'twas heaven, this hospital ward to him—  
A heaven of warmth and comfort, till the flickering lamp grew dim;  
And he lay like a tired baby in a dreamless, gentle rest,  
And now he is safe for ever where such as he are best.

This is the day of scoffers, but who shall say that night,  
When Mike asked the road to heaven, that Jack didn't tell him right?  
'Twas the children's Jesus pointed the way to the kingdom come  
For the poor little tired arab, the waif of a London slum.

### Speak a Word.

It is not easy wisely to speak words of divine wisdom. It is an awkward thing to obtrude religious conversation "out of place" and "out of time."

The embarrassments thus recognized too often lead to an utter neglect of religious suggestion. Lamps are put under bushels, and possible good buried in a napkin.

There is a divine art—a masterly tact—in religious suggestions which it is the duty of every one to learn.

On a train one day, in a group of men, one rude fellow was swearing boisterously, when a minister at his side simply touched his knee, and with a smile whispered: "Those are very strong words, my friend." Immediately a blush mantled the brow of the

swearer. He bowed assent, promptly apologized, confessed that it was "a very bad habit;" resumed his conversation; but not once again during that ride was guilty of an oath. The reproof was given so gently and delicately that it stirred within the man every noble impulse he had, and the very blush with which he received the reproof was a token of good.

In a railway station a young fellow was swearing in every sentence. The facts he narrated, the comments he made, abounded in oaths. A minister, apparently giving him no attention, walked up and down the room in a quiet, musing way, singing very softly, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me." In a few minutes the profane youth touched the minister on the arm, stopping him as he passed, and saying, with tears in his eyes: "See here, sir, my sister sung that when she was a-dying, and it makes me feel awful bad to hear it." A religious conversation followed; the two went out of the railway station into the darkness. After a short and earnest prayer by the minister, the young man pledged himself to give his heart to God.

Riding in an elevator, a gentleman said to the boy who ran the machine: "You have a life of ups and downs, don't you?" "Ay, ay," answered the boy. "Well," said his friend, "I hope that your last move will be up." A smile and cordial indorsement and serious look told the speaker that his words would not soon be forgotten.

In manifold ways we may, with no violation of propriety, but in most perfect taste, guide others to a knowledge of the truth which Christ has given us; truth which we hold as a treasure from him; truth which, though we hold it, is still his, and for which we as his almoners are to make faithful account when he makes requisition.—S. S. Journal.

### A Word to Teachers.

ONE word to you, teachers! You who are so often absent from Sabbath-school. Have you a good excuse? Do you realize how much harm you are doing by staying away? Your class expect you there, and when you are not present, they are disappointed. It is no encouragement for them to study the lesson, when the teacher, whose place it is to instruct them, is so often missing.

The superintendent has to supply the class as best he can, and it too often happens that the one whom he selects to fill your place, not expecting to act as teacher, has hardly looked at the lesson. The class are dissatisfied, and it is no wonder that they soon begin to stay away, too; and thus the school grows smaller, the interest wanes, opportunities for doing good are lost, and whose fault is it?

Teacher! think of these things, and resolve to be punctual, and do your whole duty to the class intrusted to your care.