

well furnished; for the parents were respectable trades-people. We found him strangely altered in one single week, and his little body was swollen to twice its natural size; dropsy had laid hold on him, and the doctor despaired of his recovery. We inquired about him, and found that all had been done that a mother's love could prompt. But, there was one request, oft repeated and as often denied (oh! how he had begged for that, and begged in vain);—"Pray, mother, *do pray*." This was the continued request of the child; but the mother, poor soul! knew not how to pray. We learned, also, how anxious he had been to see his teacher,—a common thing among the little ones; but here was more unmistakable anxiety about another world, to which he was fast hastening,—no childish fancy, but, as the sequel proved, intense earnestness about heaven. We spoke to him of "gentle Jesus," gave him a few books, and, promising to come again, departed.

The evening found us once more at the house of Willie's father, a simple-minded man, who did not appear to be a native of this country, and was, alas! "without God and without hope in the world." He did not ask us to enter, but told us that Willie was dying, and that he had been for some hours insensible. He spoke, too, of his child's anxiety,—to him altogether inexplicable. "I did not think the child had so much in him," said he; "he talk of things of which I and his mother know nothing,—*about Jesus and heaven*; and he say, '*Pray mother*;'—we dont know how to pray. I hope he been good boy at school, I hope he go to heaven." Never shall I forget that father who thus spoke, while the tears fast coursed down his face, of things new and strange to him, and brought to him by one of "those little ones;" and earnestly did we pray that the trial might be sanctified to them all.

All this only increased our interest in the child, and the father at length said, "Perhaps you would like to see him once more." "Indeed we should," we replied; but ere we had well crossed the threshold Willie's sister came down to say, that Willie had asked for his teacher, and was now sensible. How strange that the teacher's influence should be so great!—insensible for hours, and yet to talk of "teacher" calls back the wandering faculties once more.

A few moments, and we were by the death-bed of Willie. Eight brothers and sisters, and several friends, had gathered there; the mother, worn out with grief and watching,