

and the sun hastening to its setting ; in little more than half an hour, both father and son would have been set free from their labours for the evening, when the boy, in what promised to be one of his concluding journeys roofwards for the day, missed footing just as he was stepping on the eaves, and was precipitated on a stone pavement thirty-five feet below. Light and slim, he fared better than an adult would have done in the circumstances ; but he was deprived of all sense and recollection by the fearful shock ; and, save that he saw for a moment the gathering crowd, and found himself carried homewards in the arms of his father, a fortnight elapsed ere he awoke to consciousness. When he came to himself in his father's house, it was his first impression that he had out-slept his proper time for rising. It was broad daylight ; and there were familiar forms round his bed. He next, however, found himself grown so weak, that he could scarce move his head on the pillow ; and was then struck by the profound silence that prevailed around him,—a silence which seemed all the more extraordinary from the circumstance that he could see the lips of his friends in motion, and ascertain from their gestures that they were addressing him. But the riddle was soon read. The boy, in his terrible fall, had broken no bone, nor had any of the vital organs received serious injury ; but his sense of hearing was gone for ever ; and for the remainder of the half-century which was to be his allotted term on earth he was never to hear more. Knowledge at one entrance was shut out for ever. As is common, too, in such circumstances, the organs of speech became affected. His voice assumed a hollow, sepulchral tone, and his enunciation became less and less distinct, until at length he could scarce be understood by even his most familiar friends. For almost all practical purposes he became dumb as well as deaf.

Unable, too, any longer to assist in the labours of his dissipated father, he had a sore struggle for existence, which