KNIGHT'S

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KNIGHT'S

WEEKLY VOLUME

FOR ALL READERS.

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every other series, of forming cheap and elegant libraries."
—*Glasgow Examiner*, July 27.

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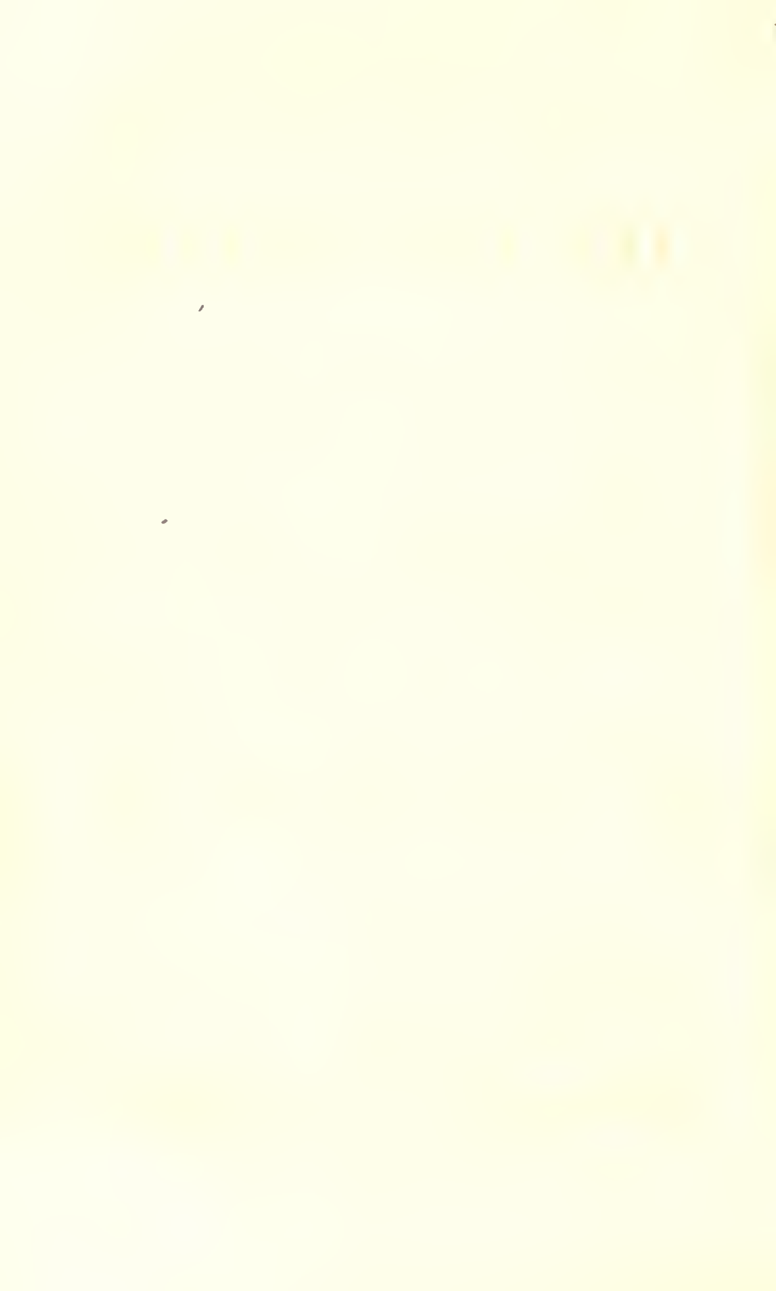
equal to all, and surpassing some, of our more expensive books; and there are, in most of the volumes, a variety of highly-finished illustrative woodcuts, which lend a continued charm and throw an additional light upon the prose descriptions. Such a series of works is calculated to exert an important influence upon the reading public; and, for issuing it, the publishers add another to their past powerful claims upon the public for countenance and support."—*Sunderland Times.*

"The establishment of the 'Weekly Volume' suggests a reference to the progress of cheap literature. Nineteen years ago, Mr. Constable, of Edinburgh, projected his 'Miscellany,' which was then, and at its first appearance in 1827, thought a perfect marvel. It was a work of similar size to Mr. Knight's, but not so well got up, and was *three times as dear.* The weekly number—not volume—contained, on an average, only about a third as much as the publication before us. The 'Library of Entertaining Knowledge,' which was commenced in 1829, by Mr. Knight, was a step in advance, but only a very slight step; the late Mr. Murray projected his 'Family Library' in the same year, but it was a retrograde movement—a five-shilling volume. Since that time several efforts have been made; the appetite for reading has been whetted by the establishment of the Penny and Saturday Magazines, Chambers's Journal, and other weekly publications; which were suggested probably by the success of the twopenny 'Mirror;' finally we have a 'Weekly Volume for all Readers'—a savings' bank of knowledge for the struggling and the inquiring—an invaluable aid towards the establishment of cheap book-clubs, or lending libraries. What a striking sign of the time—of the increasing desire for instruction amongst the masses of the people! The diffusion of such books as those under notice must produce an effect on the rising generation, which all thoughtful men begin to earnestly ponder over. Literature, like locomotion, has a new phase; fortunately, it has plenty of ballast. There may be differences of opinion relative to the education of the many, but very few opponents to it are left in the field. The great point is to secure a supply of wholesome food."—*Gloucester Chronicle.*

THE LOST SENSES.

Series I.—DEAFNESS.



THE LOST SENSES.

BY

JOHN KITTO, D.D., F.S.A.

EDITOR OF THE 'PICTORIAL BIBLE,' &c., &c.

SERIES I.—DEAFNESS.

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

1. INTRODUCTION 5
2. SPEECH 18
3. PERCUSSIONS 32
4. SIGHT 48
5. DISQUALIFICATIONS 72
6. COMMUNICATIONS 97
7. SOCIETY 138
8. MISCELLANEOUS 155
9. MASSIEU AND OTHERS 183

THE LOST SENSES:

Series I.—DEAFNESS.

INTRODUCTION.

Any one who has spent a considerable portion of time under peculiar, or at least undescribed, circumstances, must have been very unobservant if he has nothing to relate in which the public would be interested. It may be, indeed, that such a person lies under the same obligation to the public of describing his own condition, as a traveller is under to render his report respecting the unexplored countries which he has traversed in his pilgrimage. It is under this impression that I now write. I am unwilling to quit this world, without leaving behind me some record of a condition of which no sufferer has yet rendered an account.

The condition itself is not entirely new; and that it has not been hitherto described, may be owing to the fact that a morning of life subject to such crushing calamity, has seldom, if ever, been followed by a day of such self-culture—which is the only culture possible,—and of such active exertion, as seems indispensably necessary to prevent the faculties from rusting under the absence of the diverse influences by which they are, in ordinary circumstances, brought into working condition for

the useful labours at which all men should aim, and for the struggles necessary to self-advancement in a country and in a time like this.

My case is this. It has pleased Providence that three-fourths of a life now at its meridian, should be passed in the most intense DEAFNESS to which any living creature can be subjected; and which could not be more entire had the organs conducive to the sense of hearing been altogether wanting. It is the consequences resulting from this position, that form the theme which I have now placed before me. For one who is deaf, my life has been studious; and for one who has been both deaf and studious—or indeed for any one—my life has not been uneventful. I know not, however, that I have any right to obtrude the events or studies of my life upon the public notice; and it is not my intention to refer to them further than may be necessary to bring out the points and peculiarities of the deaf condition. From the multifarious matters arising from the activities of a life which once seemed doomed to inertion, I shall select those only which arise from, which illustrate, or which are in any remarkable way connected with my deafness. It is needful to explain this, lest in sketching the natural history of my deafness, I should be supposed to offer a biography of myself.

I became deaf on my father's birthday, early in the year 1817, when I had lately completed the twelfth year of my age. The commencement of this condition is too clearly connected with my circumstances in life to allow me to abstain from troubling the reader with some particulars which I should have been otherwise willing to withhold.

My father, at the expiration of his apprentice-

ship, was enabled by the support of his elder brother, an engineer well known in the West of England,* to commence life as a master builder, with advantageous connections and the most favourable prospects. But both the brothers seem to have belonged to that class of men whom prosperity ruins: for after some years they became neglectful of their business, and were eventually reduced to great distress. At the time I have specified, my father had become a jobbing mason, of precarious employment, and in such circumstances that it had for some time been necessary that I should lend my small assistance to his labours. This early demand upon my services, joined to much previous inability or reluctance to stand the cost of my schooling, and to frequent head-ache, which kept me much from school even when in nominal attendance, made my education very backward. I could read well, but was an indifferent writer, and worse cypherer, when the day arrived which was to alter so materially my condition and hopes in life.

The circumstances of that day—the last of twelve years of hearing, and the first of twenty-eight years of deafness, have left a more distinct impression upon my mind than those of any previous, or almost any subsequent, day of my life. It was a day to be remembered. The last day on which any customary labour ceases,—the last day on which any customary privilege is enjoyed,—the last day on

* This brother held the contract for constructing the Upper Road across the Laira marshes, from Plymouth towards Exeter, and for embanking a great portion of this road from the tide. This embankment, which was locally regarded as an important public work, gained him much credit, being (as I have understood) on a new construction, with slate set on edge

which we do the things we have done daily, are always marked days in the calendar of life; how much, therefore, must the mind not linger in the memories of a day which was the last of many blessed things, and in which one stroke of action and suffering,—one moment of time, wrought a greater change of condition, than any sudden loss of wealth or honours ever made in the state of man. Wealth may be recovered, and new honours won, or happiness may be secured without them; but there is no recovery, no adequate compensation, for such a loss as was on that day sustained. The wealth of sweet and pleasurable sounds with which the Almighty has filled the world,—of sounds modulated by affection, sympathy, and earnestness,—can be appreciated only by one who has so long been thus poor indeed in the want of them, and who for so many weary years has sat in utter silence amid the busy hum of populous cities, the music of the woods and mountains, and, more than all, of the voices sweeter than music, which are in the winter season heard around the domestic hearth.

On the day in question my father and another man, attended by myself, were engaged in new slating the roof of a house, the ladder ascending to which was fixed in a small court paved with flag stones. The access to this court from the street was by a paved passage, through which ran a gutter, whereby waste water was conducted from the yard into the street.

Three things occupied my mind that day. One was that the town-crier, who occupied part of the house in which we lived, had been the previous evening prevailed upon to entrust me with a book, for which I had long been worrying him, and with

the contents of which I was most eager to become acquainted. I think it was 'Kirby's Wonderful Magazine;' and I now dwell the rather upon this circumstance, as, with other facts of the same kind, it helps to satisfy me that I was already a most voracious reader, and that the calamity which befel me did not create in me the literary appetite, but only threw me more entirely upon the resources which it offered.

The other circumstance was that my grandmother had finished, all but the buttons, a new smock-frock, which I had hoped to have assumed that very day, but which was faithfully promised for the morrow. As this was the first time that I should have worn that article of attire, the event was contemplated with something of that interest and solicitude with which the assumption of the toga virilis may be supposed to have been contemplated by the Roman youth.

The last circumstance, and the one perhaps which had some effect upon what ensued, was this. In one of the apartments of the house in which we were at work, a young sailor, of whom I had some knowledge, had died after a lingering illness, which had been attended with circumstances which the doctors could not well understand. It was, therefore, concluded that the body should be opened to ascertain the cause of death. I knew this was to be done, but not the time appointed for the operation. But on passing from the street into the yard, with a load of slates which I was to take to the house-top, my attention was drawn to a stream of blood, or rather, I suppose, bloody water, flowing through the gutter by which the passage was traversed. The idea that this was the blood of the

dead youth, whom I had so lately seen alive, and that the doctors were then at work cutting him up and groping at his inside, made me shudder, and gave what I should now call a shock to my nerves, although I was very innocent of all knowledge about nerves at that time. I cannot but think it was owing to this that I lost much of the presence of mind and collectedness so important to me at that moment; for when I had ascended to the top of the ladder, and was in the critical act of stepping from it on to the roof, I lost my footing, and fell backward, from a height of about thirty-five feet, into the paved court below.

Of what followed I know nothing: and as this is the record of my own sensations, I can here report nothing but that which I myself know. For one moment, indeed, I awoke from that death-like state, and then found that my father, attended by a crowd of people, was bearing me homeward in his arms: but I had then no recollection of what had happened, and at once relapsed into a state of unconsciousness.

In this state I remained for a fortnight, as I afterwards learned. These days were a blank in my life, I could never bring any recollections to bear upon them; and when I awoke one morning to consciousness, it was as from a night of sleep. I saw that it was at least two hours later than my usual time of rising, and marvelled that I had been suffered to sleep so late. I attempted to spring up in bed, and was astonished to find that I could not even move. The utter prostration of my strength subdued all curiosity within me. I experienced no pain, but I felt that I was weak; I saw that I was treated as an invalid, and acquiesced in my condi-

tion, though some time passed—more time than the reader would imagine, before I could piece together my broken recollections so as to comprehend it.

I was very slow in learning that my hearing was entirely gone. The unusual stillness of all things was grateful to me in my utter exhaustion; and if in this half-awakened state, a thought of the matter entered my mind, I ascribed it to the unusual care and success of my friends in preserving silence around me. I saw them talking indeed to one another, and thought that, out of regard to my feeble condition, they spoke in whispers, because I heard them not. The truth was revealed to me in consequence of my solicitude about the book which had so much interested me in the day of my fall. It had, it seems, been reclaimed by the good old man who had sent it to me, and who doubtless concluded, that I should have no more need of books in this life. He was wrong; for there has been nothing in this life which I have needed more. I asked for this book with much earnestness, and was answered by signs which I could not comprehend.

"Why do you not speak?" I cried; "Pray let me have the book."

This seemed to create some confusion; and at length some one, more clever than the rest, hit upon the happy expedient of writing upon a slate, that the book had been reclaimed by the owner, and that I could not in my weak state be allowed to read.

"But," I said in great astonishment, "Why do you write to me, why not speak? Speak, speak."

Those who stood around the bed exchanged significant looks of concern, and the writer soon

displayed upon his slate the awful words—"You are Deaf."

Did not this utterly crush me? By no means. In my then weakened condition nothing like this could affect me. Besides, I was a child; and to a child the full extent of such a calamity could not be at once apparent. However, I knew not the future—it was well I did not; and there was nothing to show me that I suffered under more than a temporary deafness, which in a few days might pass away. It was left for time to show me the sad realities of the condition to which I was reduced.

Time passed on, and I slowly recovered strength, but my deafness continued. The doctors were perplexed by it. They probed and tested my ears in various fashions. The tympanum was uninjured, and the organ seemed in every respect perfect, excepting that it would not act. Some thought that a disorganization of the internal mechanism had been produced by the concussion; others that the auditory nerve had been paralyzed.

They poured into my tortured ears various infusions, hot and cold; they bled me, they blistered me, leeched me, physicked me; and, at last, they put a watch between my teeth, and on finding that I was unable to distinguish the ticking, they gave it up as a bad case, and left me to my fate. I cannot know whether my case was properly dealt with or not. I have no reason to complain of inattention, of my own knowledge; but, some six months after, a wise doctor from London affirmed that, by a different course at the commencement, my hearing might have been restored. He caused a seton to be inserted in my neck; but this had no

effect upon my deafness, although it seems to have acted beneficially upon the general health. Some years after, Mr. Snow Harris, with a spontaneous kindness, for which I am happy to be able at this distant day to express my obligations, put my ears through a course of electrical operations. He persevered for more than a month; but no good came of it: and since then nothing further has been done or attempted. Indeed, I have not sought any relief; and have discouraged the suggestions of friends who would have had me apply to Dr. This and Dr. That. The condition in which two-thirds of my life has been passed, has become a habit to me—a part of my physical nature: I have learned to acquiesce in it, and to mould my habits of life according to the conditions which it imposes; and have hence been unwilling to give footing for hopes and expectations, which I feel in my heart can never be realized.

It was some time before I could leave my bed, and much longer before I could quit my chamber. During this time I had no resource but reading; and the long and uninterrupted spell at it, which I had now, went far to fix the habit of my future life. The book to which I have repeatedly referred was re-borrowed for me, and was read without restraint. I wish this book had been the 'Paradise Lost,' or some other great work: the reader would be better pleased, and the dignity of this record would have been much enhanced. But I still think it was 'Kirby's Wonderful Magazine;' and, on second thoughts, I do not know but that this was a very proper book for the time and the circumstances. The strange facts which it recorded were well calculated to draw my attention

to books as a source of interest and a means of information; and this was precisely the sort of feeling proper for drawing me into the habits which have enabled me, under all my privations, to be of some use in my day and generation.

I had been so much in the habit, like others in my class of life, of regarding the Bible as a book specially appointed for reading upon Sundays, that I had never ventured to look into it on any other day. It seemed a sort of profanation to handle the sacred book with work-day fingers; but the exhaustion of all other materials at length drove me to it, and then I read it quite through, Apocrypha and all. It is not in this place my business to trace the religious impressions which resulted from the direction which my reading had thus taken; but as much of my attention has been in the course of my life devoted to sacred literature, with results which have long been before the public, it may be desirable to state the means by which this bent of study seems to have been created.

At the period to which my present recollections refer, the art of reading was by no means diffused among the class in which I then moved, in the same degree as at present. Many could read: but the acquirement was not in the same degree as now applied to practical purposes. It was regarded more in the light of an occult art,—a particular and by no means necessary attainment, specially destined for and appropriate to religious uses and Sunday occupations. Besides, books were then extravagantly dear, and those which were sold in numbers, to enable the poor to purchase them by instalments, were dearest of all. Hence men could not afford to procure any merely current or tem-

porary literature, but desired to have something of substantial and of permanent worth for their money, something which might form a body of edifying Sunday reading to themselves and to their children. The range of books embraced by these considerations was very narrow: a folio Family Bible; Fox's Book of Martyrs; Life of Christ; Josephus's Antiquities of the Jews; Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress; Hervey's Meditations; Drelincourt on Death (with Defoe's Preface, containing the Ghost Story of Mrs. Veal); Baxter's Saint's Rest; Watts's World to Come; Gesner's Death of Abel; Sturm's Reflections, &c. Those who launched forth beyond this range into profane literature, were for the most part content with Robinson Crusoe; Pamela; The Arabian Nights' Entertainments; and Henry Earl of Moreland. This was a selection of books not to be despised. They were all good, and some of them immortal works. But the thing was, that you could see no other books than these. The selection from these books varied, and it was rare to see the whole or a great part of them together; but whenever a book was to be seen, it was sure to be some one of these. Periodical literature had not reached even the class of tradesmen in any other shape than that of religion. The only periodicals within their reach were of a religious kind, being the Magazines of their respective denominations, which were sold at sixpence each. Tradesmen doubtless read the newspapers, but the use of them (except in public houses) had not descended below their class; and I can declare that I never saw a newspaper, to read, till I was nearly twenty years of age, and after I had been, in fact, removed out of the position to which these first experiences apply.

From this account it will appear that any studies founded upon the books to be found under these circumstances, could not but be of an essentially religious tone. At a later period I fell in with books of a different description in the same class, and was enabled to satiate myself with controversies on the five points, and to treasure up the out-of-the-way knowledge to be found in such books as Dupin's Ecclesiastical History. The day came when I plunged into the sea of general literature, and being able to get nothing more to my mind, read poems, novels, histories, and magazines without end. A day came, in which any remarkable fact which I met with, was treasured up in my tenacious mind, as a miser treasures gold; and when the great thoughts which I sometimes found, filled my soul with raptures too mighty for utterance. Another day came, in which I was enabled to gratify a strange predilection for metaphysical books; and with all the novelists, poets, and historians within the reach of my arm, gave my days to Locke, Hartley, Tucker, Reid, Stewart, and Brown. I think little of these things now, and my taste for them has gone by: but although I now think that my time might have been more advantageously employed, my mind was doubtless thus carried through a very useful discipline, of which I have since reaped the benefit. But amid all this, the theological bias, given by my earlier reading and associations, remained; and the time eventually came, when I was enabled to return to it, and indulge it with redoubled ardour: and after that another time arrived, when I could turn to rich account whatever useful thing I had learned, and whatever talent I had cultivated, however remote such acquirement or cultivation might

have at first seemed removed from any definite pursuits. This point is one of some importance; and as I am anxious to inculcate upon my younger readers the instruction it involves, it may be mentioned, as an instance, that an acquaintance with the Hebrew language, which has eventually proved one of the most useful acquirements I ever made, was originally formed with no higher view than that of qualifying myself to teach that language to the sons of a friend, whose tuition I had undertaken.

These facts, although they may seem at first to bear more upon my literary biography than upon my deafness, which is my proper theme, are necessarily introduced here, to render intelligible some allusions which will be found in the ensuing pages. And having now fully informed the reader concerning the origin of the calamity to which these pages refer, I shall digest the remainder of my information under such heads as appear to me calculated to develope the more striking facts and circumstances in the physical, social, and intellectual condition of one who has the chief entrance to his inner being closed.

SPEECH.

It has often occurred to me that there is really more connection between the organs of hearing and of speech than is usually supposed. It is now the received belief that the deaf and dumb are naturally only deaf, and that they are dumb also because they have never had opportunity of learning to speak. It is undoubtedly true that for this reason they *do* not speak; but I am persuaded there is also—apart from this, and physically connected with deafness—a sort of *inability* to utter articulate sounds. I have no physiological acquaintance with the subject; but the impression growing out of my own experience and observation is, that the same functional causes act upon both organs. The hearing, being the more delicate organ, is utterly extinguished by that which only suffices to impede or deaden, without utterly destroying, the vocal organs; leaving in them so much vitality as may, under a certain artificial training and stimulus, be awakened into imperfect action. The deaf can thus be taught to speak, as a bear can be taught to dance, or a man without hands to fabricate baskets; but a natural indisposition to use this acquired art, with more or less difficulty or pain in the use of it, remains; and this I am disposed to attribute not to the education being left imperfect through deafness, but to a physical difficulty in the formation of articulate sounds.

It will be seen how far my own experience bears upon or illustrates this hypothesis.

Before my fall, my enunciation was remarkably clear and distinct; but after that event it was found that I had not only become deaf, but spoke with pain and difficulty, and in a voice so greatly altered as to be not easily understood. I have no present recollection of having ever experienced positive pain in the act of speaking; but I am informed by one who was present, and deeply interested in all which took place at that time, that I complained of pain in speaking; and I am further told, that my voice had become *very similar to that of one born deaf and dumb, but who has been taught to speak.* This appears, under all the circumstances, to be a very strong corroboration, if not an absolute proof of the position I have ventured to suggest. And it is a fact, that under all the modifications and improvements which my vocal organs have since sustained, this resemblance to the voice of the born deaf and dumb has been preserved. It is evident that this cannot be accounted for by any of the reasons which have been supposed to explain the imperfect development of the vocal organs in those born deaf and dumb; seeing that my vocal powers were once in a perfect condition, and speech acquired before I became deaf. I see not how this fact is to be accounted for in any other way than that which has been suggested.

Although I have no recollection of physical pain in the act of speaking, I felt the strongest possible indisposition to use my vocal organs. I seemed to labour under a moral disability which cannot be described by comparison with any disinclination which the reader can be supposed to

have experienced. The disinclination which one feels to leave his warm bed on a frosty morning, is nothing to that which I experienced against any exercise of the organs of speech. The force of this tendency to dumbness was so great, that for many years I habitually expressed myself to others in writing, even when not more than a few words were necessary; and where this mode of intercourse could not be used, I avoided occasion of speech, or heaved up a few monosyllables, or expressed my wish by a slight motion or gesture;—*signs*, as a means of intercourse, I always abominated; and no one could annoy me more than by adopting this mode of communication. In fact, I came to be generally considered as both deaf and dumb, excepting by the few who were acquainted with my real condition; and hence many tolerated my mode of expression by writing, who would have urged upon me the exercise of my vocal organs. I rejoiced in the protection which that impression afforded; for nothing distressed me more than to be asked to speak: and from disuse having been superadded to the pre-existing causes, there seemed a strong probability of my eventually justifying the impression concerning my dumbness which was generally entertained. I now speak with considerable ease and freedom, and, in personal intercourse, never resort to any other than the oral mode of communication. This was brought about in a rather remarkable manner.

When I first went to the Mediterranean, the companions of my outward voyage were Dr. Korek, a German physician, who had lately taken orders in the Anglican Church, and Mr. Jadownicky, a converted Polish Jew, lately arrived from America,

where he had been completing his Christian education. These well-informed and kind-hearted men, being always with me, soon perceived how the matter really stood; and after much reasoning with me on the matter, they entered into a conspiracy, in which the captain of the ship joined, not to understand a word I said, otherwise than orally, throughout the voyage. In this they persevered to a marvel; and as I had much to ask, since I had not before been at sea, I made very great progress with my tongue during the six weeks' voyage, and by the time we reached our destination, had almost overcome the habit of clutching a pen or pencil to answer every question that was asked me. From this time I usually expressed myself orally to those whom I knew, in the ordinary intercourse of life; but when my communication required many words, it was usually conveyed in writing. This also I at length dropped, and strangers only were addressed in writing. Finally, I ventured to accost even strangers with the tongue; and it was only when not understood, that I resorted to the pen. At first strangers could rarely understand me without much difficulty; but under the improvement which practice gave, my voice was so much bettered, that the instances in which it was not readily understood gradually diminished; and at the present day I rarely find even a foreigner to whom my language is not clear.

This work has been very gradual. I have been made to feel this, by the marked surprise and many compliments of friends, whom I have met at distant intervals of time, at the great improvement which has taken place in my speech since they heard me last. One, in particular, whom it has been my

somewhat singular lot to meet with at regular intervals of time, in places thousands of miles apart, has invariably made the vast improvement of my speech the subject of his first remark. I regret exceedingly, that, as I have no present means of access to this gentleman, I am unable to produce his views on this matter. But another friend, with whom I had much personal intercourse twelve years since, but who has not since heard my voice, favours me with the following remarks, which, however, must be understood with reference to the period indicated, for before then my voice was not so good as at that time, and since then it has much improved.

REMARKS ON DR. KITTO'S VOICE.

"It is pitched in a far deeper bass tone than is natural to men who have their hearing. There is in it a certain contraction of the throat, analogous to wheezing; and altogether, it is eminently *guttural*. It may be suspected, that this is attributable to the fact that his deafness came on in boyhood, before the voice had assumed its masculine depth. The transition having taken place without the guidance of the ear, was made at random, and without any pains bestowed upon it by those who could hear and correct it. His pronunciation is generally accurate enough, as regards all such words as young boys are likely to be familiar with, and as to others which closely follow their analogy: but is naturally defective in respect to words of later acquirement. In spite of the too great guttural action, his articulation of every English consonant and vowel, considered in isolation, is perfect."

It is a remarkable fact, that when I thus again obtained the use of speech, my language was formed

not so much upon the recovery of my former habits as upon the language of books ; and the vocabulary on which I proceeded was very different, more copious, and contained more choice words than those which I had been in the habit of using before my affliction. I have often calculated that above two-thirds of my vocabulary consist of words which I never heard pronounced. From this result some peculiarities not unworthy of notice. Many of the words of my old vocabulary continue to be pronounced in the provincial dialect in which they were learned, such as *tay* for *tea*, even though I know the right pronunciation, and generally recollect the error after it has been committed. I know not that I should regret this, as it seems to give to my language a *living* character, which it would necessarily want, if all framed upon unheard models. Many such words do not, however, occur, as I have exchanged many provincialisms for book words, which I am not *in the same way* liable to mispronounce. But even my book words, though said to be generally pronounced with much precision, are liable to erroneous utterance through my disposition to give all such words as they are written ; and it is well known that the letters of which many of our words are composed, do not adequately represent the sounds with which they are pronounced. This error of pronouncing words as they are written, is the converse of that so common among uneducated people, of writing words down according to their sounds. Many of such faults have, however, been corrected in the course of years, and it may not now be easy to detect me in many errors of this kind : but this arises not more from such corrections, than from the curious

instinct which has, in the course of time, been developed, of avoiding the use of those words about the pronunciation of which I feel in any degree uncertain, or which I know myself liable to mispronounce. This is particularly the case with proper names and foreign words; although, even in such, I am more in dread of erroneous quantity than of wrong vocalization. I need not point out the serious obstacle which this condition of affairs offers to any attempt to acquire the *vocal* use of a foreign language. This use of German, in which the words are written as pronounced, and in which the syllables are distinctly brought out, might perhaps be acquired with less difficulty than many other languages. Indeed, of foreigners acquainted with English, with whom I have at any time conversed, none have understood me with so little difficulty as Germans. So remarkably distinct does my speech appear to them, that if I am talking in the presence of Germans and Englishmen equally strangers to me, the chances are more than equal that the Germans will understand me far better than the Englishmen.

In this, however, there is another reason than has yet appeared. In the new, or rather mixed language with which I recommenced my vocal operations, there was a marked absence of all colloquial idioms and contractions. I knew them and had used them, but I became as morally unable to pronounce them as I had been to speak at all. I no longer said, *can't you*, *won't you*, *don't you*, &c., but *can you not*, *will you not*, *do you not*. I was even shy of *cannot*, and always, when I used it at all, made two very distinct words of it, *can not*. This extended to all words or phrases capable

of the same colloquial abbreviation; and it must have been of great aid to a foreigner to have every word and syllable thus distinctly pronounced. This necessarily gave a kind of stiffness and preciseness to my language.

Indeed, I seem to have had a singular reluctance to use any but the substantial words of the language, and my practical vocabulary was and is singularly void of all expletives and adjuncts, of all complimentary phrases, and even of terms of endearment. I was touchingly reminded of the last characteristic a short time since, when one of my little boys suddenly quitted my study, and hastened to tell his mother that I had for the first time in his life called him "Dear." This disposition to confine myself to the words essentially necessary to convey my meaning—the dry hard words without the flowers and derivative adjuncts which custom had made to represent the amenities of social intercourse, must perhaps give an air of rigidity and harshness to my spoken language, which prevents it from being, I trust, a faithful representative of my feelings or character. The conventional talk, which stands in the place of intercourse with those to whom one has nothing real to say, I never could manage, and have preferred to be altogether silent than to resort to it. I could never, by the utmost stretch of violence upon my acquired disposition, bring myself to express much solicitude about the health of those whom I saw to be perfectly well; or to exchange or make remarks upon the weather, and say—"It is very warm"—"It is a foggy morning"—"It is very cold"—"It threatens to rain"—to those who must be as fully aware of the facts as myself. In like manner I

have abstained from the common salutations of casual intercourse. "Good bye," "Good morning," etc., I could never get out. A silent shake of the head, a nod, a bow, or a movement of the lips, intended to represent all these things, is all I have been able to manage. Such phrases of civility as "Thank you," "If you please," &c., have also been absent from my vocabulary; not from any disinclination, but because I supposed that having said all that was really essential, all these expressions of civility would be *understood*; and that, from my manner, it would be taken for granted that I felt all they were designed to express. That I am not in the way of *hearing* the interchange of such expressions, may in a great degree account for my neglect of them: for in matters of this kind it is not enough to know that they exist, but one must find them illustrated in daily and familiar use, to be kept in remembrance of them, and to become aware of their importance, as the small change of society, which one should always have at hand for current use.

Under all these conditions and progressive alterations, the more marked peculiarities of my voice have remained. It is of course impossible for me to define them accurately. This has been done in the paper which has been already introduced; and it only remains for me to notice such of the developments and effects as have come under my own cognizance.

To my own sensations I seem always to speak in *a loud whisper*, if the expression may be allowed; and from the facts I learn from others, this impression does not seem to be altogether incorrect. One whose definition agrees well with my own

sensations, describes it to me as if formed in the chest, and as issuing therefrom through a tube without being much modulated in its passage through the mouth. The conditions of this voice vary much at different times, and I am myself perfectly aware, not only whether I am in good voice or not, but of the very words which I have failed to bring out with distinctness.

The voice itself is loud, and may be heard to an unusual distance, although the articulations can only be made out under cover, or by a person quite near in a quiet street. This would seem to be the cause of the strangeness; for when people hear a loud voice they expect to distinguish its articulations; but to hear a voice in speaking action, without being able to distinguish the words, has a startling and somewhat unearthly effect. From this cause my voice is often inaudible where most others might be heard by the persons addressed, as in the streets of the metropolis, or in a carriage. The sound, under such cases, combines with and is lost in the noises of the streets or the rattle of the chariot wheels. In more quiet thoroughfares, I cannot speak without drawing all neighbouring eyes towards me. If I happen to forget myself, and speak to a companion while others are walking just before us, it is equally annoying and amusing to see the sudden start and abrupt turn of the persons behind whom we walk, at a sound seemingly not of this earth, and so much beyond the range of all ordinary experience.

This phenomena is developed with exaggerated effect in a long and confined avenue, such as the Burlington Arcade, which, when in town, has always been a favourite walk of mine. When walking in such places, how often have I been lost

in astonishment to see all the people before me, even from one end to the other, turning round as by one impulse, while at the same time my arm has been gently pressed, it might be supposed to draw my attention to some passing object, but in fact as a hint to suppress my voice, and so prevent the continuance of that rude gaze which I take to be a characteristic of the English people, as I never noticed the like of it in any country through which I have travelled. Yet in this case, if in any, it might be pardoned ; as I am told that in the arcade the preternatural rumble of this voice is heard afar, and that the wonder really is, that all the busy inmates of that industrious hive, flock not forth from their cells, to ascertain what calamity threatens their flimsy habitations.

Perhaps this chapter should contain some record of the fact, that I have of late years become disposed to read aloud, of an evening, anything which I have met with in the course of the day that seems likely to interest my sole auditor. Yet I cannot venture upon too large a dose of this at one time, as the practice has brought to light new and previously unknown talents in me as a setter to sleep : and I am much flattered by the suggestion, that were I again in Persia, it would be in my power to realize a handsome income by the exercise of a gift which is there only well appreciated. It throws into the shade all the boasted wonders of the mesmeric trance, to behold the gradual subsidence of my victim under the sleep-compelling influences of my voice, in spite of all her superhuman struggles to avert the inevitable doom.

It will surprise many readers to know that few persons speak in my presence concerning whose

voice I do not receive a very distinct impression. That is, I form an idea of the sound of that person's voice, by which it becomes to my mind as distinct from the voices of others, as, I suppose, one voice is distinct from another to those who can hear. The impression thus conveyed is produced from a cursory, but probably very accurate, observation of the person's general physical constitution, compared with the action of his mouth and the play of his muscles in the act of speaking. I form a similar idea concerning the laugh of one person as distinguished from that of another; and when I have seen a person laugh, the idea concerning his voice becomes in my mind a completed and unalterable fact. The impression thus realized would seem to be generally correct. I have sometimes tested it, by describing to another the voices of persons with whom we were both acquainted, and I have not known an instance in which the impression described by me has not been declared to be remarkably accurate. This faculty must be based upon experiences acquired during the days of my hearing, and cannot be realized by the born deaf, seeing that it is impossible for them to have any idea of *sounds* produced by the action of the vocal organs, and still less of the peculiarities by which one voice is distinguished from another.

I am reminded by this of the power which some deaf persons and deaf mutes are said to have possessed of *reading off*, so to express it, the words of a person from the motions of his lips. We have all heard the story of the old lady who became deaf, and who yet continued her attendance at church, and was able very completely to follow the preacher, by observing the action of his mouth. I have been told something similar of a lad now living; and a

case has been mentioned to me, by an intelligent stationer, of a lady who came to his shop and asked for certain articles in what seemed to him a foreign accent; and who so readily understood and replied to what he said, that he had not the slightest suspicion of her being deaf and dumb, which he afterwards learned to be the fact. This was, however, a lady of fortune, who had from childhood been the sole object of attention to an experienced governess, which may go far to account for her extraordinary progress.

I have been repeatedly asked why I did not cultivate this faculty; which might, seemingly, be of such great benefit. My answer has been, that I doubted if the power could be acquired in such perfection as is commonly supposed; that even a limited degree of facility in mouth-reading could only be acquired by sedulous and long-continued attention; and that, although this might not be of much importance to those who had little else to engage their attention or fill up their time, it offered no adequate recompense to one who felt his time to be very precious, and who knew how to apply his attention to objects in the highest degree useful and interesting.

As to the degree of perfection which may be acquired in this art, I am persuaded that it may suffice for the perception of ordinary questions and answers in the daily occurrences of life, the subject of which can in most cases be partially anticipated, or which has seldom more than two or three alternatives. I can myself make out some single words and short sentences in this way, when I know that what is said must be one of three or four things. But I am thoroughly persuaded that this mouth-reading must be wholly inadequate to the purposes

of *real* conversation, involving intercourse of the intellect or the imagination. I may, perhaps, be reminded of the old lady and the sermon. But to this I must answer that I do not believe any one who was deaf can by this means follow a speech or sermon, although that should be far easier than to follow a *real* conversation in its various changes, windings, and combinations. I am always sorry to spoil a pretty story by dissecting it too sternly: and many of my readers will have been heretofore interested in picturing to themselves that ancient woman in her red cloak and black bonnet, posted conveniently in the aisle, with her eyes fixed on the mouth of the speaker, and picking up the precious words that fell from him: and I am reluctant to blur this picture by suggesting that the most which can be done in such a case is—not to go with the preacher through all his three heads to his conclusion, but to catch a few scattered sentences sufficient with the text to suggest the general drift of the discourse. A deaf person who does this, will perhaps be able to repeat as much of the sermon as one who has heard it. But the latter will repeat only the salient points and general drift, although he has heard the whole: the deaf person will do nearly the same thing—and by doing this will suggest that, like the other, he is repeating the leading points of the whole discourse, whereas, in fact, these few sentences which have been supposed to evince that large extent of apprehension, form *all* that the deaf person has been able to collect. It is from this habit of inferring the unknown from the known, and of ascribing the same causes to the same or similar effects, that such misconceptions, and others of more grave importance, originate.

PERCUSSIONS.

In the state of entire deafness, a peculiar susceptibility of the whole frame to tangible percussions supplies the only intimations which have the slightest approximation to those which hearing affords. I was about to call this a peculiar susceptibility of the sense of touch; but this would unduly limit a kind of vibration which, in certain of its developments, seem to pervade the whole frame, to the very bones and marrow. I do not at all imagine that there is in this anything essentially different from that which is experienced by those who are in possession of their hearing: but it would seem that the absence of the sense, concentrates the attention more exclusively upon the sensation which is through this medium obtained; and the intimations of which, being no longer checked and verified by the information of the higher organs, assume an importance which does not naturally belong to them. This is a physiological phenomenon which has not hitherto received due attention; and I have therefore the more satisfaction in recording a few facts which may tend to illustrate its conditions.

The loudest thunder is perfectly inaudible to me, neither does it make any impression whatever upon my sensorium; for being in the upper air the percussion does not produce that very distinct vibrating connection with my standing place as is

most essential to the sensation which is described. But I remember that, some years ago, during the most awful thunder-storm in the memory of man, a dreadful clap, which shook the house, made such an impression as led me to suppose that a servant was moving a table in the adjoining room.

For the same reason, bells of all kinds are beyond the grasp of this sensation. After I became deaf, I ascertained, by experiment, that, even close under the church tower, I was altogether insensible to the full peal of a magnificent set of bells, which I had in former times been wont to hear afar off. When I placed myself in direct contact with the tower, I became conscious of a dull percussion over head, like that of blows struck upon the wall above me. The tower was a lofty and very solid old structure of granite and limestone: if the mass had been less solid or less lofty, the impression would perhaps have been more distinct. If I had gone into the belfry, I should doubtless, on its wooden floor, have been more sensible of the percussion; but I never tried the experiment. The sonorous curfew of this same old tower, which I had heard every evening during the first twelve years of my life, and which had often ministered a strange delight to my young soul, when I heard it about the time of the setting sun, while the waves broke into spray upon the rocks beneath my feet—this curfew "tolled the knell of parting day" no more for me. The vigorous efforts by which I strove to make myself "all ear," to catch the faintest intimation of that dear old sound, were utterly in vain. At no time—in none of the many places I tried, under no circumstances, could I ever recover the slightest trace of that familiar

voice which had been so long the music I loved best.

I remember that, once, when I was showing a young friend from the country over St. Paul's, we happened to be up examining the great clock, at the very time it began to strike. The sensation which this occasioned was that of very heavy blows upon the fabric in which I stood, communicated to my feet by contact with the floor, and from the feet diffused over the whole body. I was watchful of my own sensations, and I thought I could faintly distinguish a dull metallic sound amid the blows: but I should not like to affirm this as a fact; for as the sound to be expected under such circumstances was not unknown to me, it is very possible that this shadow of a metallic sound existed only in the unavoidable association of ideas.

Before quitting St. Paul's I may mention that the whispering gallery might as well have been altogether dumb for me.

Great things became small, and small things great, under the operation of this sensation. Guns—even powerful cannon, make no impression upon it, unless I happen to be very near when they are fired. In that case, I can compare the effect to nothing better than to the sensation produced by a heavy blow upon the head from a fist covered with a boxing glove. This effect could only be produced by the *tangible* percussion of the air, and by the percussion upon the ground transmitted by the feet. Under this view, it will be easily understood, that the discharge of a very small piece of ordnance on board of ship, will make a much stronger impression upon this sense than the report of all the artillery in St. James's Park.

I have been in a besieged city, at which and from which many cannon were fired, and into which many shells were thrown, some of which exploded quite near to the house in which I dwelt. But, from the first to the last, I was utterly unable to distinguish any of the reports which such discharges occasioned. And this, certainly, was then no loss to me.

When a percussion of any kind takes place upon the very framework with which my standing point is connected, the sensation is powerful, and the intensity is in the ratio of the closeness of the connection.

The drawing of furniture, as tables or sofas, over the floor above or below me, the shutting of doors, and the feet of children at play, distress me far more than the same causes would do if I were in actual possession of my hearing. By being to me unattended by any circumstances or preliminaries, they startle dreadfully ; and by the vibration being diffused from the feet over the whole body, they shake the whole nervous system, in a way which even long use has not enabled me to bear. The moving of a table, is to me more than to the reader would be the combined noise and vibration of a mail coach drawn over a wooden floor ; the feet of children, like the tramp of horses upon the same floor ; and the shutting of a door like a thunder-clap, shaking the very house. It is by having once heard that I am enabled to make such comparisons as these, for the illustration of a sensation which one who has never heard, and one who is not deaf, would be alike unable to describe.

It deserves special notice, that when such percussions take place I am unable to determine, from

the information of the sensation itself, whether it has occurred upon the floor above or in that below me, or in the passage or room adjoining that in which I may be at the time. I am not aware that the impression is more distinct from the floor above than from that below, but it certainly is more distinct in another room of the same floor than from either the one above or below; whence I am much in the habit of referring to the next room the percussions which make the strongest impression upon me. In this I am not seldom mistaken. Often have I looked into the next room under the impression that it was undergoing the noisy operation of cleaning at an unusual time, or that the children were there at play; but have found all quiet there, and that the cause of my distress was on the floor above or below. The information is equally defective even in the very room I may happen to occupy. If a book or other object falls in any part of the room, the sensation is painfully distinct, the percussion being upon the very boards on which I stand; but even in this case, I am at a loss for the quarter in which the circumstance has occurred, and generally look for it in the wrong direction, and have to scan the whole room with the eye before I can make it out. I once had my study in the back parlour of the house I occupied; but the frequent shuttings of the street-door, every one of which gave a nervous shock to the whole body, and the stumping of many heavy feet through the passage, gave me so much pain, and caused so much distraction of mind, that I was driven for refuge to the first floor. Many of the readers will doubtless declare their sympathy in this annoyance; but they must not lose sight of the main point of the state-

ment, which lies in the fact, that one who is entirely deaf, is subject to even aggravated annoyance from a different effect, or rather a secondary effect, of the same cause which has doubtless often distressed themselves. It has occurred to me since, that if the passage had been laid with carpet instead of oil-cloth, the effect would have been subdued in about the same degree as that in which a similar provision would relieve the impression upon the auditory sense; but I did not try the experiment, and have not now occasion to do so.

With respect to doors, it is to be observed that I am not, even when upon the same floor, conscious of any knocking at the street door, however violent, while the shuttings of the same door are painfully distinct, and, if very violent, are distinguishable to me even when upon an upper floor of the house. The reason of this is obvious; the valve of the door on which the percussion is made by knocking, is a detached frame of wood hung upon hinges, and the vibration is therefore comparatively isolated, and not propagated throughout the frame of the house, as is the case when, in shutting the door, the valve itself strikes upon the door-post, which is identified with the framework of the building. It seems, however, that I am not altogether insensible to the vibration caused by beating upon the door of the room in which I happen to be. This is quite a new discovery, which thus occurred. Having business in London, I went in upon the previous afternoon, that I might have the whole of the following day before me in which to go through it, and took up my quarters for the night at an inn. I locked the door before going to bed; but the bed being strange, some time passed before I could get to

sleep. My meditations were not of a very pleasing character. I reflected that I was now apart from those who would know perfectly well how to act towards me in any emergency that arose, and whose first care would be to arouse me in case of fire or any like accident. But here I was among strangers who probably only regarded me as "hard of hearing," and who, under that impression, would make no other effort to attract my attention than by uselessly thumping at the door, which I had unadvisedly locked. The fatal fire at an inn in Oxford Street, not far from the spot where I then lay, had been sufficiently recent to give an agreeable pungency to these considerations. It was clear that I ought not to have fastened my door. Then why not get out and unlock it? It was very cold; and by this time I was warm in bed: and as I had from my youth up abominated cold beyond all other evils of life, it was a serious and nicely balanced question—whether it were better to risk the *possibility* of being roasted alive, or to incur the dead *certainty* of a chill by turning out to unfasten the door. Before I could make up my mind, I fell asleep; and in the morning I awoke safe and sound. Apprehending, however, that I should not be able to distinguish the knock of the attendant when he should bring my warm water at the hour I had directed, I now unfastened the door and returned to the bed,—concluding that after having knocked, and finding that I did not answer, he would come in without more ceremony. I lay awake and watchful, when presently I became conscious of a tremendous thundering at the door, which I think would have sufficed to awaken me had I been asleep. I cried, "Come in!" and in

came the warm water, the bearer of it looking quite naturally, as if nothing particular had happened. This discovery gave me greater satisfaction than anything connected with my physical condition which had occurred for many years, as it showed that in one important class of matters I was not so entirely helpless as I had previously imagined.

. . . . . .

Alas! alas! This pretty discovery has, after all, come to nothing: and yet I suffer the page which records it to remain; as the explanation which I have now obtained, with reference to the fact on which this satisfaction was founded, serves better than almost anything I could state, to illustrate the uncertainty of the impressions derived from the source under consideration; and this is one of the points which it is the object of this chapter to demonstrate.

Having some misgiving that, after all, there might be some mistake in the conclusions to which I had arrived, I read the above paragraph to my wife, to whom I had not previously described the circumstances with the same degree of minuteness and coherence. She shook her head, and doubted much, affirming that she had often knocked at room doors in vain, to attract my attention. "If the head of the bed had been on the same side with the door, and some part of it had touched against the wall, I could understand it better: but as you state that the head of the bed was against the side of the room opposite the door, it is at variance with all my own observations, and requires further proof." Then why not prove it at once?

Accordingly, a loud knocking at the door of the

room in which I write this, was speedily produced, but I could distinguish nothing. "The room is too large, let us try another." This was done, in a very small room, still without effect. "It is clear to me," quoth my wife, "that what you took for a 'knocking' at the door, was a stamping upon the floor. In all probability the attendant had been knocking in vain, and then as a last resort, to avoid coming in upon you unannounced, bethought himself of stamping upon the floor." To prove this she went out; and presently I distinguished the very percussion, which at the inn I had mistaken for a knocking at the door. She had merely stamped on the floor outside; and the identity of the sensation produced, with that which I had previously experienced, at once settled the whole question.

My informant states that this explanation of the matter was suggested to her by the observation, that the lightest footfall *upon the same floor* is quite sufficient to attract my attention, and even to rouse me from sleep. Of this I am myself fully aware, as I constantly suffer much inconvenience and distraction from the morbid acuteness of this perception, through which the state of the deaf is far from being one of that perfect quiet and undisturbed repose which the uninitiated fondly imagine. Some examples will demonstrate this.

If any small article, such as a thimble, a pencil, a penknife, or even a more minute object, falls from the table to the floor, I am often aware of it, even when other persons sitting at the same table have not been apprised of it by the ear.

The greater the number of my points of contact with the floor, the stronger are the impressions I receive. Hence they are more vivid and distinct

when I sit than when I stand; because, in the former case, not only my own two legs but the four legs of the chair are concerned in conveying the percussion to my sensorium. And when the chair itself on which I am seated has been subject to the percussion, the sensation is such as baffles description. For instance; a few days since, when I was seated with the back of my chair facing a chiffonnier, the door of this receptacle was opened by some one, and swung back so as to touch my chair. The touch could not but have been slight, but to me the concussion was dreadful, and almost made me scream with the surprise and pain—the sensation being very similar to that which a heavy person feels on touching the ground, when he has jumped from a higher place than he ought. Even this concussion, to me so violent and distressing, had not been noticed by any one in the room but myself.

Again, I am subject to a painful infliction from the same causes, during the hour in which my little ones are admitted to the run of my study. It often happens that the smallest of them, in making their way behind my chair, strike their heads against it; and the concussion is, to my sensation, so severe, that I invariably wheel hastily round in great trepidation, expecting to see the little creature seriously injured by the blow; and am as often relieved and delighted to see it moving merrily on, as if nothing in the world had happened.

If these perceptions are so acute in carpeted rooms, it will be easily understood how much more intense they become upon a naked wooden floor. The sensation then amounts to torture—as every movement or concussion, in any part of the room, then comes with an intensity of effect, far more

than proportioned to the difference in the impression which would, under the same circumstances, be produced upon the auditory sense.

In those parts of the East where, from scarcity of wood, the floors are made of a kind of compost of mud and chopped straw, I have enjoyed entire immunity from all this annoyance; and in the mud-floored cottages which have often furnished a resting-place in my travels, nothing of the kind was ever experienced. On a floor paved with stone or with tiles, nearly an equal degree of exemption is enjoyed.

The reader will be easily able to apply these developments to the conditions which the streets afford to one in my predicament. Of the foot passengers I have nothing to say: on any kind of footway—gravel, mould, stone, asphaltum—the percussions of an army of feet would be *nil* to my sensations. The question is, however, different with regard to carriages and carts, the powerful vibration and awful din occasioned by which in the leading streets of the metropolis, must be known by experience or report to every reader. Of all the streets in the world Fleet Street is the one best suited to experiments of this kind; and it so happens, that I lodged in this very street for a short time, soon after my return from abroad. This street was then, like all the other principal streets of London, paved with granite blocks. When in the street itself, the vibration caused by strong friction with the pavement, or, as I may call it, the *felt sound*, was perceptible only from such vehicles as passed on my side of the way, and when they came directly opposite to the spot on which I stood. The rapid succession of the carriages in such a street would

keep up an almost continuous vibration; but I know, from the comparison of observations made in less frequented streets, that the vibration of only the carriage passing immediately in front of the flag-stone on which I stood, could be distinguished at one time. Hence the sea of sound, produced in that great street, from the grinding of a thousand wheels against the hard granite, made far less impression upon my organs than the rap of a finger-nail upon the back of my chair would produce. In the house itself I was not *in any way affected* by the din of the street; excepting, that in the early morning I was sensible of the passage of the heavily laden market carts, for they shook the very bed on which I lay.

The passage of carriages over macadamised roads, and over pavements of wood and asphaltum, makes not even this limited impression upon me. If the reader is surprised at the inclusion of wood pavements in this category, after what I have stated of wooden floors, he has only to remember that such pavements are composed, not of boards, but by the junction of separate blocks of wood. The same causes, therefore, which prevent me from distinguishing the knock at a door, equally preclude me from being sensible of the vibrations upon a pavement thus composed. But I remember that in travelling through those parts of Russia where the roads are (or were) paved with the entire trunks of trees, the passage of even a light carriage was always felt very sensibly, and even painfully, by me.

After what has been stated, the reader will not expect that I should be capable of deriving any satisfaction from music. There are, however, some experiences even on that subject to relate. The

organ in the church of the parish to which I belonged, is one of the most powerful in the West of England, but in the body of the church I was quite insensible to its tones. When in the gallery, however, I became sensible of a strong vibration, but without any metallic sound, and more like to the sound of the distant singing of a congregation—so distant that one can only catch the higher notes—than to anything else with which it can be compared.

I am not sensible to any impression from the notes of a piano when played in a room in which I sit. One day, however, some twenty years since, when I sat near a piano, I happened to place my hand upon it when it was in the act of being played, and instantly became conscious of a more agreeable sensation from the higher notes, than any which had since my deafness been imparted to me. Besides the sense of mere percussion upon a highly vibratory body, there was something of the metallic twang, which to me formed the enjoyment, for the sensation of simple percussion is anything but pleasant. On further experiment I found that the notes were the most distinct to me when the points of my finger-nails rested upon the cover, and still more when the cover over the wires was raised, and my fingers rested on the wood over which the wires are stretched, and to which they are attached. I could then make out with tolerable distinctness all the high notes, and if I knew the tune, so as to be able to supply the low notes by imagination, a certain degree of enjoyment in the music was obtained. Of course, the more the piece abounded in loud notes the more it suited my taste, as there was the less for the imagination to supply. In the College at Isling-

ton there was a noble piano, and a player quite worthy of the instrument was there in the person of a young German with whom I became intimate. It occurred to him to treat me to "The Battle of Prague," and he was not mistaken in his selection. The high notes in which that piece abounds, and the imitations of the various noises of battle, made it very much to my taste, and I could follow it far better than any other piece with which I have in this way become acquainted. My kind friend entered with interest into this matter, and took a benevolent pleasure in imparting to me the only enjoyment which I seemed capable of deriving from music; and whenever we met in the room where the piano stood, he usually, of his own accord, proposed to treat me with "The Battle of Prague." The piece was, however, not so much to the taste of others as of mine: and a hint from the Principal about the uproar which it occasioned, soon put a stop to our proceedings. Afterwards my lot was cast for some years in lands where pianos are unknown; and since my return to England I have cared little for any enjoyment derivable from this source—perhaps because I have not considered the imperfect gratification equal to that which might be derived from a book in the same interval of time. I have, however, often thought that if I had cultivated this perception with real earnestness and solicitude, in connection with a good piano, some finer results might have been obtained than it is now in my power to record.

I had lately occasion to note with attention my own perceptions in presence of a full military band, playing upon the lawn in front of Hampton Court Palace. This is, I believe, what is called a brass

band, all the instruments, as usual in military music, being wind instruments and instruments of percussion. All was mute to me; with the exception of the highest notes, of which I caught a faint indication, and of some of the louder thumps upon the drum, which were much better suited than the sound from wind instruments to my range of perceptions. If there had been stringed instruments in the band, the effect would not have been different, as such instruments only afford a sensation when I am in actual contact with them. For this reason—seeing that wind instruments are undistinguishable, as are also stringed instruments unless touched, I doubt that the impression would be more distinct under cover and upon a wooden floor, than it was under the open sky and upon the green sward of Hampton Court; and this doubt is confirmed by all the necessarily limited opportunities which I have had of testing the facts by experiment.

When I myself blow any wind instrument, no impression whatever is made upon my organs, and I have to ask others whether any sound has been produced.

I was much interested the other day in reading the account of a lad both blind and deaf, whose principal enjoyment appeared to be derived from striking a small key upon his teeth. It is evident that in the search of a sensation, he had hit upon this trick as affording a more distinct impression of a felt sound than any other which he had been able to attain. Until this case fell under my notice, it had escaped my attention that I have myself unconsciously contracted a habit of continually striking the back of my thumb-nail, or the point of a penknife, upon the edge of my teeth; and that I

also felt pleasure, for which I had not previously seen any particular reason, in vibrating a knife or spoon upon the edge of a dish or plate, or against an empty tumbler or wine-glass. It is obvious that the slight but pleasurable feeling by this means obtained, is of some value to those whose range of sensations has become so limited.

SIGHT.

It is often stated, that the loss of one sense is compensated by the extraordinary development, the acuteness, or the strength of another. I doubt this, unless something be meant like that which I have described in the chapter 'Percussions.' If it were true in any other sense, its truth should be the most apparent with respect to the sight, which is the organ through which chiefly compensation for deafness would be expected. But my visual powers, naturally good, have been subject to all the accidents of advancing time. I am not aware that a distant object can be perceived by me more distinctly than by persons of ordinary visual power. I have, indeed, noticed that a flock of birds, as rooks, has repeatedly continued visible to me in the distance, after it has ceased to be perceptible to others. But this I attribute to mere habit, and especially to the habit, contracted in my travels, of concentrating the attention upon any distant object that has once attracted notice. I know not of any particular readiness of *discovering* an object in the distance; and if I knew of its existence, should be inclined to attribute it to the habit acquired at sea, of making out the faint indications of vessels in the distant horizon. But in this respect I abstain from advancing any claims; for I happen to remember, in good time, that on arriving in

Stangate Creek, I made inquiry respecting certain "tomb-stones" which I observed scattered over a field at the further extremity of the creek, and which the greatly-amused captain assured me were sheep. For all that, the scene was more like to that of tomb-stones in an Eastern cemetery, than to any other object with which my eyes had been of late familiar.

For the rest, I observe nothing particular. In reading, I no longer glory in pearl and diamond types, which I once preferred to any others, and my "miniature editions" remain unread in their repositories. Small types, the names in maps, and Bagster's Polygots, painfully convince me that the eyes even of the deaf are subject to decay. I require candlelight for things I could once do by the light of the moon or of the fire; and I need strong daylight for that which once the light of even a rushlight could make distinct to me. For five years I have acknowledged these painful facts to myself, and for three I have been talking of spectacles—from the time when the subject was first laughingly started in jest, till even now, when it has ceased to be a laughing matter, and I tremble on the verge of spectacled days.

Nothing that concerns the eyes, is or can be a light matter to one who is deaf; and to whom light has therefore become the only avenue to the soul. To one who lives so much as I do in the world of books, and who is scarcely ever without a book or pen in hand, the privation of this other sense would be the greatest calamity that life could offer. One would then be shut out altogether, not only from the external world, but from every means of

intercourse with other minds, and from the intellectual nourishment which such intercourse can furnish. If one becomes blind, the cheerful talk of his fireside may enliven his spirits, and lectures, sermons, and the readings of others to him, may inform his understanding, and give him much food for thought. If one becomes deaf, he has none of these advantages; but he can read for himself, and this benefit is enhanced by its being the *only* means of intellectual culture and recreation open to him. But conceive the case of him who has lost *both* these prime senses, and by that deprivation is cut off from all the enjoyment and instruction which the ear can minister to the blind and the eye to the deaf. The case is almost too horrible to conceive. There have been cases of the absence of both these senses, and some of them will hereafter be noticed: but in such cases the persons were either born without the senses, or lost them too early in life to know the extent of the privation. The horror is, for him who has been in the full enjoyment of these senses, to lose them both, and more especially to lose the one which has become the instrument of compensation for a previous loss of the other. And this being the case, conceive the exceeding preciousness of the remaining sense—of the hearing to the blind, and of the seeing to the deaf; and then realize the strong anxiety with which one who is deaf, cares for and watches over the delicate faculty which alone lies between him and moral death, and which is yet

> "To such a tender ball as the eye confined,
> So obvious and so easy to be quenched."

Could there be left anything to such a one but snuff and smoke? Indeed, could he even smoke? I do not recollect to have ever seen a blind man smoking; and I think it is true, that one derives no sensation from smoke, nor even knows that he is smoking, unless he is assured of the fact by seeing either the smoke or the fire, or both.

But, although I am unprepared to say that I perceive any physical developments of the visual organ, which can be supposed to be referable to the loss of the other perceptive sense, I do conceive that there have been some marked effects, manifested through the eye, of those circumstances which have made that organ almost the only sense of pleasurable perceptions.

It has, I believe, in the first place, developed a sense of the beautiful in nature and art, and a love for it—a passionate love—which has been to me a source of my most deep and pleasurable emotions. This I attribute to my deafness. It seems to me that, under ordinary circumstances, this feeling is, in a great degree, the result of cultivation received, at least in the rudiments, through the ear. For this cultivation, formal instruction is not needed, but it is, as I apprehend, imbibed insensibly, in the course of years, from the admiring observations of friends in the presence of beautiful objects. If such observations only *suggest* in the slightest way *what* objects are beautiful, and *why* they are so, this is instruction; for they set the mind to work in the right direction, and indicate the principles which are applicable to all the objects of this sentiment. Now anything like this instruction I have never had, even to this day. It is not to be acquired from books, and must be conveyed, so far

as it is instruction, in the oral intercourse with friends. Such friends need not, I apprehend, be much more cultivated, or much wiser than ourselves. The spark is kindled by the action of two minds. It exists neither in the flint nor in the steel, but is produced by the action of the one upon the other; or if it be latent in both, is only by that action manifested. Peter thinks in his soul that such an object is very beautiful, and *this* is as an instinct; but while he is thinking thus within himself, John remarks that it is beautiful—*that* is the spark. There is not much of instruction, commonly so called, in the remark; but there is in it much of that instruction which schools do not know and cannot teach. Peter and John have both the assurance of *two* minds that the object is really beautiful; whereas, without that assurance, it could not have been to either more than an impression which might be erroneous. But it is now an established fact, and one which by analysis and comparison may become the guide to a hundred other facts. It is a thing to be reasoned upon. We ask ourselves, *why* this object is beautiful? and we infer that if A be beautiful, then B, C, and D, which have certain qualities common to A, must be beautiful also.

Now, this kind of instruction I have altogether wanted. Before or after my deafness, I never had any one to say to me, "This is beautiful." My tastes, therefore, must be much of the nature of instincts. They began to manifest themselves soon after my downfall, in a rapidly increasing admiration and love of whatever gratified the eye, and a more intense abomination of whatever displeased it. I think that at first, this taste was nearly as general as

the terms in which I have described it: but it soon became more discriminating in the objects of admiration, although not in those of disgust, which were evaded as far as possible, *en masse*, as things not to be studied or discriminated, but to be cast out of mind and out of view. It is well, however, that the range of pleasurable was far more extensive than that of unpleasurable perceptions. The former were infinitely varied; but the latter were, I think, confined to dead animals, especially as exhibited in shambles, and to persons deformed, or exhibiting in their countenances traits or expressions which I did not approve. This feeling became at length almost morbid; and I felt thoroughly miserable when in the same room with an ugly old woman, or with a man exhibiting distorted or imperfect features, labouring under any obvious disease, or displaying any sinister or malignant expression in his countenance. I used to feel a strong inclination to fly at them, and drive them from me; but found it more safe and prudent to quit their presence. I do not know that I have altogether got rid of this sort of feeling; but occasion to strive against it and to subdue it, was too soon found for me. Authority over me was for some time possessed by a person whose nose had been destroyed, and his upper lip much disfigured by a cancer. This was a terrible infliction upon me. It happened that this man's temper and conduct justified the aversion and horror which his appearance inspired; and by this combination of qualities, he acquired a strange influence over me, such as no man ever before, or even since, possessed. He seemed as my evil genius. I dreaded, hated, loathed him; and became in all things the slave of his will, obeying

the slightest motion of his finger, and the faintest twinkle of his small eyes. He has many years been dead, but I see him now, and dream of him sometimes.

This experience certainly did not tend to diminish the feeling I have described, but it taught me to subdue its manifestations; and, eventually, travel and varied intercourse, went far to obtund the acuteness of such perceptions.

I am almost afraid to say anything about the moon. Yet in pursuing this subject, necessity is laid upon me to confess, that I have been moonstruck in my time. I must not refuse to acknowledge that when I have beheld the moon, "walking in brightness," my heart has been "secretly enticed" into feelings having perhaps a nearer approach to the old idolatries than I should like to ascertain. It is proper to mention this here, because I am strongly persuaded that my intense and almost agonizing enjoyment of this crowning glory of the material universe, is owing in a great degree to the great force with which, by the privation of hearing, my soul was thrown exclusively upon its visual perceptions. And I mention this first, because, at this distant day, I have no recollection of earlier emotions connected with the beautiful, than those of which the moon was the object. How often, some two or three years after my affliction, did I not wander forth upon the hills, for no other purpose in the world than to enjoy and feed upon the emotions connected with the sense of the beautiful in nature. It gladdened me, it filled my heart, I knew not why or how, to view the "great and wide sea." the wooded mountain, and even the silent town. under that pale radiance; and not less to follow the

course of the luminary over the clear sky, or to trace its shaded pathway among and behind the clouds. This is one of the enjoyments of youth which have not yet passed away. Indeed I know not but that this feeling towards the ruler of the night, has become more gravely intense. For to the simple impression of the beautiful, are now added all the feelings which necessarily connect themselves with the experience of the same emotions, from the same cause, during long nights of travel or of open-air rest, in many different climates and realms—even from the utmost north to those plains in which the Chaldæan shepherds, watching their flocks by night, pored over the great glory of the spotless skies above them, and drew from what they witnessed the first insight into the mysteries of the upper world. All these past experiences and feelings centered in the same object — itself unchanged, and looking down upon the world with the same pale and passionless face as on the night it was first beheld—make the moon seem as an old and dear acquaintance, who, in many lands, has been the object of my admiration, and the witness of my few joys and many griefs. And this feeling becomes the more solemn as time advances, and conducts to the period of life in which the perception of change—great change, in men and things, comes upon me from every side.

After this, I do not know that any single class of objects in nature has acted so strongly upon my sense of the beautiful—or perhaps I should say of the sublime,—as mountains. For to me

> "High mountains were a feeling,"

from the time that I first gazed upon the glory of

the Grenada mountains, as the sun cast his setting beams upon their tops, to that in which I caught the Titanic shadow of Etna in the horizon, or spent my days among the glories of the Caucasus, or wondered at the cloudy ring of Demavend, or mused day by day upon the dread magnificence of Ararat.

An exquisitely keen perception of the beautiful in trees, was of somewhat later development, as my native place, which I did not quit till I was about twenty years of age, being by the sea side, was not favourable to the growth of oaks, and had nothing to boast of beyond a few rows of good elms. But, afterwards, the magnificent oaks and other trees of the interior, called into full activity that perception of beauty in trees which afterwards ministered greatly to my enjoyment as I travelled among the endless fir woods of northern Europe, and the magnificent plane trees of Media, and dwelt amidst the splendid palm groves of the Tigris. Since then I have seldom enjoyed serenity of mind in any house from which a view of some tree or trees could not be commanded. Even in the environs of London—which are really beautifully wooded, whatever country folks may think to the contrary—I have managed to secure this object: and in my present country retreat, in a well-wooded district, and within reach of many fine old trees, my heart is fully satisfied. In all cases, my study has been chosen more with reference to this taste than to any other circumstance. In any house which it has been my lot to occupy, I have not sought or cared for the room that might be in itself the most convenient, but the one from the window of which my view might with the least effort rest upon trees, when-

ever the eyes were raised from the book I read or from the paper on which I wrote. In all cases even the stillness of a tree has been pleasing to me; and the life of a tree—the waving of its body in the wind, or the vibration of its leaves and branchlets in the breeze—has been a positive enjoyment, a gentle excitement, under which I could have rested for hours. This strong feeling has enabled me to understand, better than I otherwise might, the curious and often beautiful superstitions and idolatries which were associated with trees in the ancient times; and I have understood better than Ælian, the class of associations which may have induced the Persian king to present the glorious plane near Sardis with costly gifts, and to deck it with the ornaments of a bride. It is by this keen perception of the seducements of grove-worship, that one is able to understand and illustrate the many cautions against it which the Holy Scriptures contain. Under the influence of such impressions, I find it very difficult by any effort of reason to control the regret and indignation with which I regard the destruction of a tree, especially if it be one of which I had any previous knowledge. To destroy that which has seen many generations of men pass by, and is still beautiful and strong, and which might still outlive many more generations, is an awful act. The tree seems to have stood among, and to have witnessed, the ever-changing panorama of human life; and we know that it has in itself been an object of notice, and has ministered some pleasure in past ages, to eyes long quenched in dust. I confess, that under these views the slaughtering of a tree affects me more sensibly than that of an animal, whose years can be but few at the best.

Many readers will consider it strange that with all this appreciation of the sublime and beautiful in nature on the one hand, and with a strong love for pictures on the other, I have but little regard for landscape paintings. Painted action, and the expression of human passion and circumstance, are delightful to me; but landscapes are insipid. The reason of this probably is, that I care too much for the reality, to have much regard for the imperfect imitation; and that, by dint of travel, my mind has become so much crowded and pre-occupied with images of natural scenery, in every variety of grandeur and beauty, as to render me rich enough in this kind of wealth, without recourse to the secondary impressions derivable from artificial sources.

Even those who may be disposed to doubt that I owe to my deafness that exquisite enjoyment of the beautiful in nature which I have indicated, will be ready to admit that my enjoyment from pictures may be referred to this source. *I* have no doubt on the point: for even admitting that a mind naturally active, must have taken some decided turn or other, even had deafness not been superinduced, it was, in this respect of taste, quite as likely that I should have sought my enjoyment in pictures as in books. The food which was first found for the growing pictorial appetite imposed upon me, by the circumstances which made it one of the necessities of my condition to seek gratification for the eye, was of a very humble description. Excepting an occasional painting in the window of the sole picture frame maker, and a few smirking portraits in the windows of the portrait and miniature painters, my only resource was in the prints,

plain and coloured, and in the book-plates, displayed in the windows of the stationers and booksellers. These were seldom changed, and often not until, by frequent inspection, I had learned every print in every window by heart: so that it was quite a relief to see one of the windows cleared out for a scouring or a fresh coat of paint. Daily did I go to watch the progress of the operation, awaiting with anxious expectation, the luxury of that fortunate day in which the window should display all its glory of new prints and frontispieces. In my own town, the windows of the shops lay within such narrow limits, that it was easy to devour them all at one operation. A neighbouring town, two miles off, had its book and print shops more dispersed; and this I divided into districts, which were visited periodically, for the purpose of exploring the windows in each, carefully and with leisurely enjoyment, at each visit. Here, I had often the inexpressible satisfaction of finding, that a window had been completely changed since I saw it last, which could not happen in my own town, where a leaf could not flutter in any window without my cognizance.

Coloured prints were much in vogue in those days; more so I apprehend than at present, when we seldom think of giving colour to any superior kinds of engraving. Even caricatures, which then blazed forth with red, blue, and yellow, now produce their effects in simple black and white. The earlier practice was more satisfactory to one who merely sought pleasure for the eye, and to whom the degree of instruction which eventually results from such constant inspection and comparison of engravings, was entirely an accident. Colour is certainly a source of great pleasure to the eye, and

although I have in later years risen above dependence upon it, and can obtain much enjoyment from uncoloured prints, I retain a general partiality for colour, and would like to see it employed in many ways wherein our purists would reject its assistance. For instance, after having been accustomed to the cheerful colours of Oriental attire, I have little patience—albeit I wear black myself,—with the sombre hues of modern European male costume, which seems to me one of the austere barbarities of over refinement. I may live to see the revival of a better taste; and meanwhile it is not one of the least of the obligations we owe to womankind, that they, in their own persons, have afforded no countenance to this innovation, but have consented still to enliven, by pleasant colours in their raiment, the heavy atmosphere in which we dwell.

To return to pictures. With the predilections which have been described, it may easily be conceived what enjoyment I was enabled to find in London, with its endless variety of print shops and exhibitions of pictures. By the time of my return from abroad the National Gallery was open, and the many happy hours which have been spent there, feasting the eye and the imagination, have no doubt tended to form and purify my taste, and to invigorate my perceptions. Still, I know little or nothing of the routine rules of art, and the styles of masters. I look upon a picture as an object of sensation, and form my judgment of it according to the degree of enjoyment which a close inspection of it conveys to me. This is not much more than an instinctive perception, but it generally runs right, as it seems that I usually single out for my admiration the paintings which I afterwards learn

to be first-rate works of art, and seldom waste much notice on those which turn out to be of little worth. I should add, however, that any gross impropriety, so common in the old masters, of costume or historical treatment, is quite sufficient to neutralize whatever pleasure I might derive from a picture as a work of art. The Prodigal Son in trunk breeches, and King Joash as a half-naked mulatto, are things too hard for me. Pictures thus treated cease to be truths; and I have through life sought the true not less earnestly than the beautiful.

Another strongly developed use of the visual organ, is manifested in the habit of seeking the character and passing sentiments of persons in their countenance. It is probable, that one who is in possession of his hearing, derives from the tone of the voice and manner of speech of the person to whom he attends, certain impressions concerning his character and existing feeling equivalent to those which the deaf, for the want of this source of information, has no alternative but to seek in the countenance of the person who comes before him. Thus it is true that, in a certain sense, every one who is deaf must become a physiognomist: not by any rules of art, but as a matter of impression merely. He may not know the distinct meaning which a Lavater might assign to every particular feature, nor may be able to detect the significance which a Spurzheim would discover in the proportionate development of the "basilar" and "sincipital" regions of the head; but a rapid glance enables him to gather an intuitive and unscientific aggregate of all the conclusions to which scientific investigations might lead, and to realize an impression concerning the person with

whom he has to deal, which he might find it difficult to define in words, but which is generally so true, that subsequent acquaintance seldom gives occasion to correct the notice which the first hasty glance conveyed. There is nothing annoying or obtrusive in this scrutiny; for although the deaf may continue to watch the countenance with interest and solicitude, this is only for the purpose of catching the passing feeling, to assist him in understanding what is said, by enabling him to connect a living spirit drawn from the countenance of the speaker, with the dry forms in which words are of necessity presented to him. The measure of the man himself, is taken at the first glance; and as this has no other object than to put the observer in a right position in the expected intercourse, no further survey *for that purpose* is usually made, although, certainly, a note is mentally taken of any marked gesture or expression of countenance which is observed in the progress of the intercourse, and it goes to complete or correct the impression derived from the first survey.

This survey of faces for the purpose of forming an estimate of character, becomes in time so much a habit, that it appears to be quite intuitively practised even where no intercourse is expected to follow. In large assemblies I take much interest in travelling over all the countenances distinctly within my view, even as an amateur would inspect a bed of tulips; and very often have I walked from St. Paul's to Charing Cross, and have scanned, and realized a distinct impression of, every face which has met my view in that populous walk. They are living pictures, and as such they strike my attention, and I study them. Any one who has

done this cannot fail to have formed a strong opinion concerning the vast masses of ill-compacted matter which has been cut up to form the aggregate of the insipid and characterless faces which crowd our streets. Faces really beautiful or ugly, really engaging or repulsive, really striking or eccentric, are rare; but to find one such is sufficient recompense for much dreary travel over the wilderness of a thousand unmeaning countenances.

It must be obvious from what has been stated, that being in darkness must be peculiarly irksome to the deaf, as this nearly throws out of exercise all the perceptive faculties, and, for the time, reduces the patient as nearly as possible to the deplorable state of one who is *both* deaf and blind.

Most people like to sit in the twilight, and are seldom in a hurry to ring for candles. But this is far from being the case with the deaf, if I may form a judgment from my own experience. I dislike not twilight, or even darkness, so that it be not "pitch dark," when in the open air; but indoors, there cannot be a sorer grievance to me. So soon as it becomes too dark to read, I am impatient and restless until the lights are introduced. The reason is plain: the eye ceases to be a means of any enjoyment or information. No book can be read, no communication can be carried on. As the darkness deepens, any conversation in which I may have been engaged comes to a dead pause; and, on my side, not a word is uttered until light is obtained. This is because that unless the face of the person addressed is visible to me, I cannot know that anything said to him has been heard or understood, nor perceive any gesture of assent or dissent; and on the other hand, no communication can be made to me when

I become unable to distinguish the play of the fingers in the use of the finger alphabet. This is a deplorable situation; in which the eagerness to continue the remarks, or to see what the interlocutor has to say, gives a more painful consciousness of the privation under which one labours, than can any other circumstance of ordinary occurrence in the life he leads. If several persons are in company, the idea that they are all sitting in silence, waiting for the lights, is distressingly present to the mind; for as the movements of the lips are not perceived, it requires an effort of recollection to be aware, that others can speak to one another freely in the darkness by which you are silenced.

The deaf are subject to other inconveniences from darkness, which may not have occurred to the notice of any but those who have had opportunities of attending closely to the subject. It is however, evident, that there are many common acts of life, in which the intimations of the eye or ear are necessary to all assurance of safety and precision of action. I will specify two occasions in which I have been strongly convinced of this, and which will serve as examples of many other incidents of the same class.

I once went up St. Paul's, so high as the gallery at the top of the dome. As I was then accompanied by a friend, the adventure was accomplished without much inconvenience, and I was so much interested in the view over the great city from the high point which had been reached, that I ventured to promise myself many more such excursions from which air, exercise, and eye pleasure might at once be realized. One attempt of the kind by myself was quite sufficient for me. Those who have ascended

to that mysterious height, know that it is accomplished in utter darkness up sundry flights of wooden steps or stairs, with numerous turnings, and protected at the sides only by a hand-rail. Over what depths these stairs are laid I know not; but the impression to one who could not hear, and where the darkness prevented from seeing, was, that they hung in air over some fathomless vacuum, so that if one took a false step, or slipped over the stairs, down he would go—down, down, down to the very crypts of the cathedral. The only correction of this impression which could be gained was near the top and bottom of the ascent, where a faint glimmering of light disclosed certain mighty beams crossing the abyss in various directions, suggesting the pleasant alternative that one's brains might be knocked out a good while before reaching the bottom. As I went up and descended this apt symbol of "ambition's ladder," many persons passed me from above, and from below, of whose approach I had no intimation by voice or footstep. These were my real or imagined dangers; for while on the one hand, it was only by feeling along the hand-rail that I could direct my own course, during the devious turnings of the stairs; on the other, I was in the utmost trepidation lest in my ascent I should be trodden down, and hurled over by parties hurrying down from above, and of whose approach I could not know till they were close upon me; or lest that in my own descent I should myself deal out the same doom upon those who were toiling their upward course. The latter danger was perhaps greater than the former; for those who were coming down might know by the sound of my footsteps, that some one was before them; but of

the proximity of those who were meeting me in my own descent, I could have no intimation. In fact, I actually came breast to breast with several persons, who would certainly have been toppled over by the concussion, if I had descended with any of the impetus with which many others came down. Now all this anxiety and alarm arose from the want of *both* sight or hearing, either of which would have perhaps assured me that the dark gulf over which the steps hung was not so formidable as I apprehended; or would certainly have acquainted me with the nature of the ascent, and would have relieved me from that ignorance respecting the approach of others, which involved me in danger and made me dangerous. This to me seemed a greater danger—at least it affected me more strongly, than any, and they are not few—that I ever incurred in all my adventures by flood or field: and when I landed safely at the bottom, I vowed never again to tempt so great a danger for so inadequate a recompense. My old experience in falling, may have had some effect in producing this trepidation: for that experience was certainly not calculated to recommend this kind of operation to me; although if there seemed any chance that my hearing might be knocked in again, by such another concussion as that which knocked it out, it might appear worth my while to try it once more.

It is not long since that I had occasion to ascertain the impossibility, for one who is deaf, of walking in country lanes after nightfall. My present abode is something above a mile from a railway station, the road from the one to the other lying through pleasant lanes, which are without lamps or separate

foot-paths, although much frequented by vehicles to and from the railway. When I have been any where by the railway, it has been my usual practice to return by day-light, and walk from the station to my own home. But one evening I missed a train, and it had become dark by the time the station was reached. Nevertheless I still walked on, as I had not previously avoided being late from any considerations connected with my deafness. I had not proceeded far, however, before I became uneasy; and found myself looking back every moment, to see if some carriage from the railway might not be close upon me. The case was plain. As the night was very dark, a carriage from behind might be driven over me before the driver could be aware. My deafness would preclude me from hearing its approach, and the darkness would prevent the driver from seeing me in front, so as to keep clear of me. I never before was so strongly sensible of the advantage of the lamps and causeways to one in my condition; and so painful was this dark walk to me, that I have never since ventured to repeat it.

Although, as stated at the outset of this chapter, I am unable to claim any marked strength in visual perception, I cannot but consider that the remarkable distinctness and permanence with which images received through the eye remain impressed upon my very mind, must be ascribed to the unconscious intensity of even casual observation, when the eye becomes the *sole* medium through which the images of objects have access to the brain. It thus happens that my mind retains a most distinct and minute impression of every circumstance in which at the time of occurrence I felt the slightest degree of interest; of every person whom I have at any time during

the last twenty-eight years regarded with more than casual observation; and of every scene upon which, during frequent and long-continued change of place, I bestowed more than the most cursory notice. It is something to say this, under the immense variety of new objects which, during a long period of time, were constantly passing before my eyes, like the moving panoramas of some London exhibitions. And it should be understood that what I mean by "cursory observation" is the *seeing* of a thing without *looking* at it; and therefore that I retain a clear impression or image of every thing at which I ever looked, although the colouring of that impression is necessarily vivid in proportion to the degree of interest with which the object was regarded. I find this faculty of much use and solace to me. By its aid I can live again, at will, in the midst of any scene or circumstances by which I have been once surrounded. By a voluntary act of mind, I can in a moment conjure up the whole of any one out of the innumerable scenes in which the slightest interest has at any time been felt by me. I am not exactly aware of the extent in which this faculty may be common or not to others: but from the few opportunities I have had of comparing my own impressions with those of others, I think that where ordinary observation is limited to one or two prominent points in a set of circumstances, mine embraces the *whole* of the circumstances in which these prominent points were involved. If I wish to recollect a person, along with him comes all the scenery amidst which I beheld him, and all the persons who were at the same time associated with him; and so, in like manner, if I wish to realize a scene, to conjure up the view of a place, it comes

before me peopled with the very persons I saw in it. This last point I indicate with emphasis; because I notice that most persons in peopling the scenes which at a distance of time they strive to realize in their imaginations, are apt to put in many figures borrowed from other places which they saw shortly before or not long after, and which, in this and some other important points, they do not sharply distinguish from the one which should form the sole object of their recognitions. Indeed, I have known some persons whose perceptions are so dull in this matter, that they will populate a place which they recollect, with inhabitants from a tribe of a nation different from [that to which it really belonged. It may also be observed that the figures are not simply lay figures arrayed in a certain garb, but real existences in all the identifying circumstances of form and feature, of which as many are *individually* remembered as usually occupy the foreground of any picture, and which did occupy the foreground of the actual scene from the point of view in which it engaged my notice.

In actual travel, I was loath to trust to a faculty which had not been sufficiently tried, and which might lead me astray. I therefore diligently wrote up my travelling journals day by day. But, although I had much occasion for the literary use of the facts and observations thus obtained and preserved, I have had scarcely any need to refer to these journals, seeing that whatever I wished to recollect became at once present to my mind in all its accessories and circumstances. It may, indeed, be alleged that the act of keeping a journal must have tended to produce that distinctness of impression which has been described. I should have

supposed so too: but the fact is, that the recollections are equally clear and distinct with reference to one part, extending over five hundred miles, of one journey, during which I was prevented from keeping any journal, and is also equally vivid with reference to *home* scenes, of which no written record is attempted.

Experience has taught me strong reliance upon this faculty. I have so often been able to prove myself right, whenever the impression of another in any matter of ocular evidence has been different from my own, that I feel it safe to adhere to my own view of the point with all reasonable obstinacy.

One out of many instances, will illustrate this point better than much abstract statement. In the place where I now write, some of the houses have fronts of red brick, and others have the fronts covered with plaster. I first went to see the house I now occupy in company with another person, who afterwards went again alone. The day before removing to it, a question arose whether the front were brick or plaster. My impression was that it was plaster; but my companion scouted the idea, and was quite sure of its being good red brick. As I was sensible that I had only given the matter cursory and not pointed attention, that is, that I had merely *seen* and not *looked* at the front, I was afraid to be too positive; in opposition to one who had been twice on the spot, and who must have had reason for being so resolute in behalf of so marked a thing as red brick: yet, on the other hand, I had been too much in the habit of relying upon my own ocular impressions to abandon the ground I had taken, even though the weight of

evidence and authority was as two to one against me. I was therefore content to leave the matter in abeyance; retaining my own impression, but admitting my reluctance to be too positive in affirming a point contradicted by one who had better means of judging. It was left for the proof of the ensuing day:—and that proof was in my favour; not a morsel of red brick was to be seen in any part of the house, which was covered, from ground to roof, with plaster. I confess that I allowed myself to exult at this, as it was a very strong proof of the *distinctness* of the faculty of minute observation, and was all the more important to me as my own impression was in this case founded on a cursory observation, and was distinctly opposed to what would have been far better legal testimony.

DISQUALIFICATIONS.

It will require no great weight of argument or force of illustration to demonstrate that one who is deaf labours under a highly disqualified condition. In much of that in which lieth the great strength of man, he is impotent; for the great race of life he is maimed; and his daily walk is beset with petty humiliations, which bear down his spirit by the consciousness, which he is never allowed to forget, that he is, in one most essential respect,

"Inferior to the vilest now become."

If a man without the advantages of any but self-acquired education, without the smiles of fortune, and without those well-doing connections from whom alone can be expected services which strangers will not render in helping him over the rough places of his career: if, in the face of want, trouble, and moral isolation, such a man struggles forth into the light from the outer darkness by which he was surrounded, and takes a position of honour and usefulness, we count that he has done a great thing; and we deny not that he who has among a thousand competitors distanced many possessed of all the advantages which he has lacked, must have done so by the exercise of great energies, unbounded hope, and unusual force of character.

If this be the case with one who, whatever be

his outward circumstances, has at least been in full possession of all the faculties which minister to success in life—what hope is there for one who sits in utter DEAFNESS; which *by itself*, will be readily admitted to be by far a greater privation and disqualification than any which mere circumstances can bring? What hope is there for *him*, even though he be surrounded by the external helps which the other wants? And what if these two classes of disqualification, the first tremendously difficult, and the other all but insuperable—what if BOTH are the lot of the same man? Is there any hope for him? "No hope for this world:" would be the answer of a thousand voices: yet, thank God, this answer would be wrong. I, perhaps, have as much right as any man that lives, to bear witness that there is no one so low but that he may rise; no condition so cast down as to be really hopeless; and no privation which need of itself shut out any man from the paths of honourable exertion, or from the hope of usefulness in life. I have sometimes thought that it was possibly my mission to affirm and establish these great truths: and if my experience tends in any way to this result, I shall not have lived in vain. It is under this impression that I constrain myself to say much from which I should otherwise shrink; for it is not pleasant to any man of sound judgment to speak much of himself and his own exertions. Yet I think it right to incur this inconvenience, and perhaps to expose myself to some misapprehension, rather than an undescribed condition of existence should remain unrecorded.

Adequately to illustrate these themes by tracing my own course of life, and the circumstances by which, with one great object always in view, I have

been led on from one step to another, through various scenes, which have all in the long run been made subservient to the objects which I at first proposed to myself—would require more space than is here allowed me, and would demand an effort which I do not at present wish to make. It only remains to illustrate the matter before me by some points suggested by my own experience. In doing this, however, I must be permitted to view the position in which I stood at the outset of my career, by the lights which subsequent experience and observation have thrown back upon it; for there was much in that which lay before me, which could not be prospectively estimated; and which even at the time of endurance or action, could not be thoroughly understood.

When my health was restored, I was no longer required to resume my former labours, and it is now clear to me, that I was considered to have been rendered useless by my affliction. I had thus much leisure thrown upon my hands; and from the mere promptings of my inclinations, without any distinct views or purposes, I made the best use of this leisure which my means and opportunities allowed, by storing my mind with every kind of book knowledge to which I could get access. I was thus, in the merciful providence of God, led into the only course by which, it seems, I could come out of that condition of *uselessness* to which I had been, even in the opinion of those that loved me, consigned. Very cheerless was the lot that seemed then to lie before me. Had I not already become an incumbrance which only love could bear, and which even love would not be able to bear always? Did it not appear as if at the feast of

life no place was left for me? And did it not seem even more than could be expected that, by some humble employment, I might be just able to relieve others from the burden of my support?

If the reader spares one moment to take a glance over the occupations by which men live and thrive, he will be surprised to find how few there are, for which the condition to which I was reduced would not operate as a serious disqualification. To all trades, consisting of buying and selling, hearing is most essential; to all professions it is still more necessary; and there are not many kinds of handicraft in which it could be easily dispensed with. Still, there are some kinds in which even one who is deaf might contrive to get on, through the occasional help and ever-ready sympathy which I am happy to believe that handicraft-workmen are apt to show—at any expense of time or labour—towards an afflicted brother. But even handicraft-labour seemed closed against one who was deaf. The branches are few to which deafness would not be an insurmountable bar, and in these few a premium would be necessary. And, even with a premium, who would readily encumber himself with a deaf apprentice, when he might have a choice of those in full possession of all their senses? Taking all these matters into account, it seems that the utmost usefulness to which one in this position could feasibly aspire, would be that of redeeming himself from entire uselessness by doing *something* towards his own maintenance; and that this alone would be so difficult as, under all the circumstances, to become a great and meritorious achievement. The more carefully this matter is considered, the more providential it will appear that my attention should

have been turned, so decidedly as it was, to the only means which seems really available for any large usefulness to myself and others. I have sometimes, indeed, thought that painting was another pursuit not closed against me; for, although the hearing is doubtless advantageous in that pursuit, it is not perhaps more necessary than in literature, in which also hearing would be a great advantage. There was, moreover, a good taste for painting in my native town, which has produced several eminent painters, but scarcely any men of letters; and the probabilities were that my decided manifestations of a taste for painting would not have wanted local encouragement. Considering all the circumstances, and seeing that I had acquired an interest in pictures as a source of gratification, I do somewhat wonder that my attention was not drawn in that direction, especially as I had some rude notions of drawing, and had early found much amusement in a cheap box of water-colours. However, it was not my destiny to be a painter; and I am well satisfied that it was not so, although I think that by any degree of success in that pursuit, my struggles in life would have been materially shortened.

For many years I had no views towards literature beyond the instruction and solace of my own mind; and under these views, and in the absence of other mental stimulants, the pursuit of it eventually became a passion which devoured all others. I take no merit for the industry and application with which I pursued this object—none for the ingenious contrivances by which I sought to shorten the hours of needful rest, that I might have the more time for making myself acquainted with the minds of other men. The reward was

great and immediate; and I was only preferring the gratification which seemed to me the highest. Nevertheless, now that I am in fact another being, having but slight connection, excepting in so far as "the child is father to the man," with my former self; now that much has become a business which was then simply a joy; and now that I am gotten old in experiences, if not in years—it does somewhat move me to look back upon that poor and deaf boy, in his utter loneliness, devoting himself to objects in which none around him could sympathize, and to pursuits which none could even understand. The eagerness with which he sought books, and the devoted attention with which he read them, was simply an unaccountable fancy in their view; and the hours which he strove to gain for writing that which was destined for no other eyes than his own, was no more than an innocent folly, good for keeping him quiet and out of harm's way, but of no possible use on earth. This want of the encouragement which sympathy and appreciation give, and which cultivated friends are so anxious to bestow on the studious application of their young people, I now count among the sorest trials of that day: and it serves me now as a measure for the intensity of my devotement to such objects, that I felt so much encouragement within, as not to need or care much for the sympathies and encouragements which are, in ordinary circumstances, held of so much importance. I undervalue them not; on the contrary, an undefinable craving was often felt for sympathy and appreciation in pursuits so dear to me; but to want this was one of the disqualifications of my condition—quite as much so as my deafness itself; and in the same degree in

which I submitted to my deafness, as a dispensation of Providence towards me, did I submit to this as its necessary consequence. It was, however, one of the peculiarities of my condition, that I was then, as I ever have been, too much *shut up*. With the same dispositions and habits, without being deaf, it would have been easy to have found companions who would have understood me, and sympathised with my love for books and study—my progress in which might also have been much advanced by such intercommunication. As it was, the shyness and reserve which the deaf usually exhibit, gave increased effect to the physical disqualification; and precluded me from seeking, and kept me from incidentally finding, beyond the narrow sphere in which I moved, the sympathies which were not found in it. As time passed, my mind became filled with ideas and sentiments, and with various knowledges of things new and old, all of which were as the things of another world to those among whom my lot was cast. The conviction of this completed my isolation; and eventually all my human interests were concentrated in these points,—to get books, and, as they were mostly borrowed, to preserve the most valuable points in their contents, either by extracts, or by a distinct intention to impress them on the memory. When I went forth, I counted the hours till I might return to the only pursuits in which I could take interest; and when free to return, how swiftly I flew to immure myself in that little sanctuary, which I had been permitted to appropriate, in one of those rare nooks only afforded by such old Elizabethan houses as that in which my relatives then abode.

There was a time—by far the most dreary in that portion of my career—when an employment was found for me, to which I proceeded about six o'clock in the morning, and from which I returned not till about ten at night. I murmured not at this; for I knew that life had grosser duties than those to which I would gladly have devoted all my hours; and I dreamed not that a life of literary occupations might be within the reach of my hopes. This was, however, a terrible time for me, as it left me so little leisure for what had become my sole enjoyment, if not my sole good. I submitted; I acquiesced; I tried hard to be happy:—but it would not do; my heart gave way, notwithstanding my manful struggles to keep it up, and I was very thoroughly miserable. Twelve hours I could have borne. I have tried it; and know that the leisure which twelve hours might have left would have satisfied me; but sixteen hours, and often eighteen, out of the twenty-four, was more than I could bear. To come home weary and sleepy, and then to have only for mental sustenance the moments which by self-imposed tortures could be torn from needful rest, was a sore trial: and now that I look back upon this time, the amount of study which I did, under these circumstances, contrive to get through, amazes and confounds me, notwithstanding that my habits of application remain to this day strong and vigorous.

Since then, I have had many difficulties interposed between me and what I believed to be proper objects of my existence; but not any that I think equal to this: and it did certainly evince a degree of enthusiasm and industry, which I am now fully able to appreciate, thus, without any encouragement

of praise or approbation, to macerate the toil-worn body by the denial of needful rest, and even by painful infliction, for the sole sake of that nourishment of mind, in which my chief good—the good most suited to my condition, had been found. The self-imposed toils of students at colleges, of which we read so much, I am not by any means disposed to underrate; but it is necessary to the developments for which these pages are written, that I should point out the entire absence, in the case before us, of the extrinsic stimulants which generally concur in producing this result among young students. They work for an immediate prize—for academical honours, for distinction among their peers, for the applause of listening senates, for the satisfaction and approbation of friends, and to secure a fair start in life. These are great and powerful influences; and if I call attention to the fact, that every one of them was in my case inoperative, and some of them reversed, and that such devotement was not what any one expected from me, not any part of my duty in life, but a voluntary and unregarded task, superinduced upon an exhaustive pre-occupation of all the hours—and more than all the hours, which are usually devoted to the toils of life and literature,—I do so, not for the sake of insinuating any claims of special merit, but to illustrate the imperative law to which my mind had become subject, of seeking for itself elsewhere, the nourishment and solace, which it was no longer capable of receiving in the ordinary commerce of life, from the outer world.

In the state to which I have thus referred, I suffered much wrong; and the fact that, young as I then was, my pen became the instrument of

redressing that wrong, and of ameliorating the more afflictive part of my condition, was among the first circumstances which revealed to me the secret of the strength which I had, unknown to myself, acquired. The flood of light which then broke in upon me not only gave distinctness of purpose to what had before been little more than dark and uncertain gropings; but also, from that time, the motive to my exertions became more mixed than it had been. My ardour and perseverance were not lessened; and the pure love of knowledge, for its own sake, would still have carried me on; but other influences,—the influences which supply the impulse to most human pursuits, *did* supervene, and gave the sanction of the judgment to the course which the instincts of mental necessity had previously dictated.

I had, in fact, learned the secret, that knowledge is power; and if, as is said, all power is sweet; then, surely, that power which knowledge gives, is of all others the sweetest. And not only was it power, but safety. It had already procured for me redress of wrongs which seemed likely to crush my spirit; and thus bestowed upon me the gratifying, I had almost said proud, consciousness, of having secured a means of defence against that state of utter helplessness and dependence upon others, which had seemed to be my lot in life;—

> "Within doors or without, still as a fool,
> In power of others, never of my own."

Trivial as this circumstance may seem, as I have related it, it does seem to have been the turning point of my career. At a critical time of life it gave the bounding consciousness of essential vitality

—of subsistence to the higher realities of life—to one who had seemed

"Dead, more than half;"

and small as was the key, it served to open the door to a large world of hopes, which had till then seemed closed for ever against me. I am far from wishing it to be understood, that I at once realized to my own mind all the cheering influences of the prospect which was then laid open before it: but it was open—that was the point. The door of exclusion was unlocked; and I knew that I was at least free to roam over the wide prospect which lay beyond, although I had not yet explored all the glories of the distant hills, or tasted all the sweetness of the flowery vales which it embraced.

It at first seemed so great an idea that I should cease to be utterly helpless, that it took some time before I could contemplate this prospect in any other relations than those which bore upon my own condition. As nearly as the matter can be now traced, the progress of my ideas appears to have been this:—Firstly, that I was not altogether so helpless as I had seemed. Secondly, that notwithstanding my afflicted state, I might realize much comfort in the condition of life in which I had been placed. Thirdly, that I might even raise myself out of that condition into one of less privation. Fourthly, that it was not impossible for me to place my own among honourable names, by proving that no privation formed an insuperable bar to useful labour and self-advancement. Lastly, I became dissatisfied with this conclusion; and took up the view that the objects which I had by this time proposed to myself would be unattained, unless the degree of usefulness which I might be enabled to realize,

were not merely *comparative* with reference to the circumstances by which I was surrounded, but *positive*, and without any such reference. To do what no one under the same combination of afflictive circumstances ever did, soon then ceased to be the limit of my ambition: and I doubted that I should have any just right to come before the world at all, unless I could hope to accomplish something, which might, on the sole ground of its own merits, be received with favour. How far this object has been realized, it is not for me to say: and I should be sorry to think that higher labours do not yet lie before me than any which I have yet achieved; but it is essential to my argument to say this,—that the degree of attention with which my labours have been favoured, has *not* arisen out of any sympathies for, or had reference to my peculiar condition: for my greatest and most successful labour was placed before the public without any name; and although the author's name has been attached to later works, it has not been accompanied by any information concerning the circumstances which have now been described. As therefore the public has had no materials on which to form a sympathizing, and therefore partial, estimate of my services, and has yet received them with signal favour, I may venture to regard the object which I had proposed to myself as in some sort achieved. And since it is at length permitted me to feel that I have passed the danger of being mixed up with the toe-writers and the learned pigs of literature, I have now the greater freedom in reporting my real condition.

The necessary connection of the preceding paragraphs has led me somewhat too fast; and we must turn back to the page which enumerates the objects successively presented to my mind. If the

reader examines these objects closely, he will see that they were not different but cumulative, the preceding objects being taken into the larger scope of those which followed, and all into the last.

Most of the ideas which I have described as being successively formed in my mind, are too obvious to require remark; but there are one or two which may not be dismissed without some explanation.

I have confessed that self-advancement eventually became one of the objects which I contemplated as the possible result of my exertions. Very few of my readers will complain of this: but considering the generally sacred character of my pursuits, which, I will venture to say, have been, however tremblingly, directed not less to the glory of God than to the use of man—some will be disposed to ask whether self-advancement is a legitimate object of exertion; and whether it was not rather my duty to have been content in the station to which it had pleased God to call me. Now, by "self-advancement," I mean melioration of the evils of my condition; and no one can object to that without affirming that it was my duty to lie still, to be content and happy, under the unmitigated calamities of the condition to which I had been reduced. I believe that *this* was not required of me. I am persuaded that the state of life to which the Almighty calls every man is that for which he is fitted, and to which he may be able to rise by the just and honourable use of any and every talent which has been confided to him. In *that* station let him be content, and not waste his heart in aiming at things beyond his reach. I have read the Bible ill if this be not its meaning. Saint Paul enjoins the Christian slaves to be content in their stations; and yet he tells them

that "if they may be made free—to *use it rather*." Was ever any slave in so hard a bondage—bondage so hopeless as that into which deafness brought me? and if I might, by exertions not degrading but elevating, be free, should I not "use it rather?" Let the answer be found in the contrast between the uselessness of my first condition, and the usefulness of that to which I have attained. I am *now* content; for I have found my place, and would not exchange it for any other under the sun: and my place is that in which every faculty left to me, and every good thing I ever learned, is called into vigorous and useful exercise.

The desire to be honourably known among men—the craving for approbation—the wish to do something which might preserve one's memory from the oblivion of the grave—and the reluctance to hurry on through this short life and disappear along with the infinite multitudes who

> "Grow up and perish as the summer fly,
> Herds without name—no more remembered:—"

these things savour, seemingly, of that "love of fame," of which so much has been said and sung. I cannot say that this, as a motive to exertion, and to perseverance in the course which I had taken, did not find a way to my mind. I should not think it necessary to say anything in excuse for this: but as it has been suggested to me, that objection may be taken on this point, I may just mention that I am dealing with my subject historically, describing things as they occurred or existed, as facts, and do not hold myself responsible for the rightness of every feeling described, or of every measure taken. Woe to the man of forty and odd, who holds him-

self bound to justify all the feelings and actions of his youth! I do not say this as admitting the wrong of the desire of fame: and, if I saw need, I would not scruple to vindicate and uphold it, as a stimulant by which more worthy exertions and more generous actions have been produced than by any other in the world, next after that Christian principle which itself is but a higher development of the same feeling, seeing that it looks forward to the highest approbation which man can ever be capable of receiving, and is content with nothing less than the praises of the world to come. I trust that I have not been insensible to the influence of the *highest* considerations; but it may sometimes happen that as I am forbidden to make this work the record of religious impressions, or of the intercourse between the higher world and my own soul, I may seem occasionally to give undue prominence to secondary influences. Regarded in this light, the love of fame is, as it appears to me, never found apart from other influences; and I apprehend that it takes its hue—derives its character of good or evil, from the nature of the influences with which it is combined, and of the objects at which it aims: but that, taken on the whole, it is more generally good than evil, seeing that the order of minds on which it most strongly operates must have attained a certain degree of culture, and must be, more than any others, open to high and generous impulses. In this, I distinguish it from the love of notoriety, which I take to be *toute une autre chose*. It has often occurred to me that the stimulant which the desire of fame offers, is specially adapted to one's youth, in which indeed it is most actively in operation; and that it has been providentially given to that period of life, to

supply the absence of the more sedate stimulants which advancing life introduces. Rightly understood, it is then an incentive to good and a curb to evil, which in the spring time of life are so much needed: for he who, in his sanguine youth, hopes that the world will hereafter take notice of his course, will not be unsolicitous to keep his garments clean.

Such considerations and feelings are most vivid in the freshness of our youth; but as years hurry on, they are apt to pass out of sight as distinct motives to exertion, though they may continue to *act* as such. One who devotes his days to labours destined for publicity, cannot even then be without the desire to leave a fair fame to "the next age:" but this acts insensibly among the incidental encouragements of a kind of labour, which has become too much a habit of life, to remain subject to the strong emotional action of the impulses by which the habit was formed.

It also occurs to me, that the possession of a family tends much to subdue the care for posthumous reputation, excepting among those who from the public nature of their labours must leave some reputation of good or evil behind them, and who will remain solicitous that it shall be good. Apart from this consideration, a person who sees that he has any hold upon posterity in the person of his descendants, who for two or three generations will keep him in mind and take interest in his career, will, in the security which this gives, be inclined to rest satisfied, and to think and feel less strongly respecting the hope of renown from his own exertions and services, than in those days when he had no other connection with posterity than that

which might be in this way established. From all this it would seem, that about the same amount of enthusiasm in reference to posthumous reputation may remain undiminished, even after it may appear to have ceased, because the form in which it is manifested has become the common vehicle of many other feelings, from which it cannot be distinguished.

This kind of feeling, so far as it operated upon my mind, originated in a craving for and hope of that *appreciation*, which, by reason of my deafness, had been so entirely withheld from me in all the early stages of my progress, but which I began to have an impression that I should eventually be able to realize. Again, when I read Chaucer and Spenser, Bacon and Brown, Hooker and Hall, I could not but consider that these men had been dead some centuries; and yet that they indeed lived to me, as much or more than they did to their contemporaries. Such life on earth beyond the tomb as this—to leave much of one's thought and labour behind, when the body had returned to the dust from which it was taken; seemed to me the highest and most engaging object of human ambition: and my heart glowed within me, if at any time it crossed my mind that possibly I might achieve something which might survive the ruins of the time, and in a future age, or even in the next generation, might supply information, or afford some points of congenial thought, to some such lone student as myself.

> "What shall I do to be for ever known;
> To make the age to come mine own?"

was *not* my cry. The more sonorous blare of Fame's trumpet had no charms for me, or was beyond my hope; and I had no extravagant ex-

pectations of becoming "an enlightener of nations." But I did wish, I did earnestly desire, to leave to the age beyond some record of my past existence, and thereby establish a point of communication between my own mind and the unborn generations; and this not through any extensive recognition, but through some few students who might know that, in the times gone by, such a one as I had lived and laboured, and had left on record thoughts with which *they* could sympathize, or investigations which they found profitable.

The tendency of all these considerations has been to show, that literature must be the means through which the objects on which I had set my heart could alone be realized. I acquired gradually a thorough persuasion that this, and this only, was *my* proper instrument for usefulness in the world. I found little encouragement from others in reaching this conclusion. By some strange contradiction of ideas, those who eventually favoured me with their notice, solely on account of the attainments I had been enabled to make, were slow to admit that literature was my proper vocation. Other means of occupation and usefulness were, with the kindest intentions, pointed out; which, in deference to the judgment by which they were recommended, and because I felt really interested in them, I strove to follow, and did follow for several years, but without neglecting that mental culture in which alone I could find substantial enjoyment. It thus happened, that even under an improved phase of external circumstances, my literary predilections never obtained encouragement, but were rather opposed as an unreasonable infatuation. But the conviction was strong within me, that

none of the things to which my attention had been turned, and in which I really took considerable interest, formed my proper good, or furnished means for the degree of usefulness which I believed open to me. Therefore, and under circumstances which made the act one of no common daring, I eventually cast all other cares aside, and determined, at whatever risk, to act upon my own soul-felt conclusions, and to stand by the truth or fall by the error of my ineradicable convictions. It is well for me that the result has justified that greatest and most responsible measure of my life; and has shown that I was right in these persuasions, which, to many who wished me well, had seemed vain and idle. If I had failed, I should of course have been wrong; and my name would have served only for a warning and a bye-word. But I failed not. The heavy responsibility to which I pledged my hopes, and almost my existence, called into wholesome and vigorous exercise all the resources which had been confided to me; and the kind providence of God—which I humbly believe had marked out my path of labour, and had prepared me for walking in it—directed me to one qualified beyond most men to form a correct estimate of another's fitness, and to appreciate whatever means of usefulness he possessed. To the generous confidence of this true friend, in entrusting to my untried hands a great and noble task, which others would have deemed to need the influence of some great name in our literature, I owe the opportunity of taking my stand upon that ground which I have since occupied, and of that enlarged usefulness which has since been open to me. If the friend to whom I owe this great obligation,

were not also the publisher of this work, it might be permitted me to dwell on this point of my history with less reserve.

More than once in these pages I have named USEFULNESS as having become to me a leading principle of action; and this may perhaps require more explanation, which I am not reluctant to give. In a very early stage of my history, a gentleman of my native place, a member of the Society of Friends, invited me to his house, and sent me away laden with books, and with counsels which I then thought, and now think, the most valuable and quickening which I ever received. His grand point was this:—"That it was the duty of every rational creature to devote whatever talents God had given him to useful purposes—to aim at the largest usefulness of which he might be capable: and that so far as I did this—and abstained from rendering the good gifts of God ministrant to the idle vanities of life, so far might I expect His blessing upon the studious pursuits to which I seemed inclined, and which had hitherto done me much honour."

With much good taste and forbearance, he refrained from urging upon my notice his particular views of usefulness; but left me to apply the general principle he had laid down. And I did apply it. When the reader reflects how arduous the task was to bring myself into a condition of self-usefulness, he will not wonder that the hope of usefulness to others had never before occurred to me. The idea seemed too mighty for me; and I could not at first grasp it. It oppressed me; by seeming to lay upon me the burden of duties and obligations which I had not previously contemplated: and yet it pleased me to trace the conviction, in the mind of the

speaker, that I was not inevitably doomed by my affliction to an unprofitable and useless life, but had become, or might become, subject to the high responsibilities which his words described. For many years these words haunted me like an internal voice, and became a sort of conscience to me; and I became happy or not, in proportion as I supposed the objects which engaged my solicitude were or were not involved in the large views which had been placed before me. I owe much to this. It opened my mind to a new range of ideas and influences; and my experience affords no more striking illustration of the wise man's saying, "A word spoken in season, how good it is!"

It has been the object of the preceding pages of this chapter to show, that the nature of my affliction unfitted me for any other sphere of usefulness than that of literature, and it has been shown that this conviction was the more strongly pressed upon me by every attempt which was made to cultivate other fields of useful occupation. I am, however, somewhat in fear lest it should seem that I consider deafness a *qualification* for literature. This is very far indeed from the impression I wish to convey, which is, that to me, deafness was *less a disqualification* for literature than for any other pursuit to which I could turn: but even in the pursuits of literature, deafness is a greater hindrance and disqualification than those unacquainted with such pursuits would easily imagine.

If literature were nothing but closet-work, it might be all well. But the pursuit is not confined to this. It involves, or should involve, intimacy with men of similar pursuits, and it involves business often of a delicate and perplexing nature. But

the moment the deaf student rises from his desk, and goes forth into the business of the world, in which so many other men find their element, his strength departs from him. The intense consciousness of this disqualification, makes him shy and reserved, indisposed to move personally beyond the walls of his library and the limits of his domestic circle. This, in many ways, affects unpleasantly his circumstances, and neutralizes many of the advantages which belong to the position he may have attained. He is too much disposed to maintain all intercourse, and to transact all business, by writing; and he is hence, in his best estate, bare of those personal friendships, in which other men find strength and solace, and by which their objects in life are much advanced. Nothing useful or encouraging occurs in the daily intercourse of life—no new ideas are started, and brightened by the collision of different minds—no hints are gathered, —no information obtained—and no openings for usefulness are heard of or indicated. When it is considered how much of what a man hears and says in his personal intercourse with others, especially in the intercourse of studious men, influences his own career and determines his course of action—the disadvantages of this utter self-dependence will be readily perceived, although their full extent can only be estimated by the sufferer. He stands too much alone: and although his literary intercourse may be copious and extensive, he lives in the feeling that there is no stay for him but in the care of Heaven, and in his own right hand. If he stumbles in his career, there is no one who has personal interest enough in him to take the trouble to help him up; and if difficulties at times beset his path,

he must work his own way through them, unhelped and unencouraged. I shall doubtless be told, that the self-dependence which this state of things engenders, is wholesome and salutary. And this is doubtless true: but there are limits to all things; and if it be possible for the *aide toi* principle to be carried to harsh extremes, I should say that the discipline to which I have been in this way subjected, has been abundantly severe.

If the disqualifying influences of entire deafness operate to this extent against the formation of personal connections, it may easily be apprehended that these influences are still more detrimental in those matters of business, which even literature involves. The business in which a man of letters is interested, lies chiefly with that large, various, and influential body of commercial men, through whom his intercourse with the public is carried on. To one or two members of this body I owe much; and so far as my knowledge extends I believe it to contain a larger proportion of considerate and liberal-minded men than could be easily found in any other class of the community. Still, they are men of business; and every point which goes to form *that* character, is so much a point of repulsion to the deaf; and every point which goes to make up the personal position of a deaf man, is so much a point of repulsion to them, that feelings of cordiality, the foundation of which lies chiefly in personal intercourse, can seldom exist between them. Men of business have also a feeling that affairs can be transacted much better by personal interviews than in writing; and I have no doubt that this is the fact. But even a personal interview with one who is deaf involves the necessity of

writing, or of some equally slow process of intercommunication; and this is apt to become wearisome, and to involve a loss of time, which men of business habits do not relish. In fact, there is no concealing it, that the deaf man is likely to be regarded as a bore. Sensitively alive to this danger, he will perhaps depart, leaving his business unfinished; or if he concludes it best to sit it out at all hazards, he cannot but feel that he has engrossed too much of time considered precious, and that his visit has been received as a penal infliction. He will, however, be more likely, under the painful consciousness of this difficulty, to manage as much as possible of his intercourse by letter. This will be to him a substitute for an interview, a written talk, and it will therefore be long. But he learns that men of business have a dread of long letters, and will not sufficiently consider that the ten minutes' reading which is offered to them, is in reality offered as a substitute for the much larger demand upon their time which a personal interview would require. It is likely, that under the influence of this consideration he will write briefly; and will then feel that the statement he has offered has almost the same relation to an interview between unafflicted men, as the summary of a chapter in a book has to the chapter itself. If his business reaches a satisfactory conclusion under these circumstances, well: but if not, he will be apt to consider the failure as owing to that affliction, which so greatly limits his personal influence, by excluding him from the advantages of those easy and incidental conversations in which so much of the real business of the world is transacted.

These form far more serious disqualifications,

even in literature, than might at the first view be imagined ; and they are of especial importanee to one who, on seeing the responsibilities of life gathering around him, is sometimes tempted to deplore his inevitable exelusion from these subsidiary occupations in whieh others find some proteetion against the aecidents of literature. Individually, however, I am but too happy that the pursuits which, under any cireumstanees, would have been ehosen for my pleasures, have beeome my avoeations and my duties. This is a condition of life which few can realize ; and I must allow it to be truly enviable.

COMMUNICATIONS.

There is perhaps no fact which more strongly illustrates the unprofitable nature and limited extent of my early intercourse with the external world than this—that I was six years deaf before I knew that there existed any mode of communication with the fingers. A gentleman then happening to accost me on the fingers, and finding that I was unacquainted with this mode of intercourse, taught it to me on the spot. This manual talk was much less known at that time than it has since become; and I did not for a good while find much use in it. Very few of the persons whom I for some years knew, employed it in expressing themselves to me; and I never used it myself, having always, as the reader has been informed, *written* whatever I had to say, till the use of the vocal organs was recovered: the case is much altered in this respect now. All my own household, and all those with whom I am in habits of personal intercourse, make use of their fingers. Indeed, even my little ones, in their successive infancies, have early taken to *imitating* this mode of communication. They begin while yet in arms, falling to finger-talking whenever they see me—from mere imitation: and at a somewhat later stage, when they have begun to talk, it is truly affecting to see that, after having tried to make me understand their wishes in the ordinary way, they will stand before me, plying their fingers and

looking up into my face with infinite seriousness, and resting in the full confidence that I have understood them, or ought to have done so. But if they find that I have not apprehended them, the operation is with equal gravity repeated, until I either guess what is the matter, or direct their attention to some other object. I should add, that if the little creatures are so placed as to be unable to engage my attention by touching me, they call to me, and on finding that also unavailing, blow to me, or, if that also fails, stamp upon the floor; and when they have by one or other of these methods attracted my eyes, begin their pretty talk upon the fingers. One of the least patient of them, used to stamp and cry herself into a vast rage, in the vain effort to engage my attention. It is very singular that these practices have been taken up by all of them in succession, like natural instincts, without having learned them from one another.

It may be somewhat out of place, but now that I touch upon this matter, there is a constraint upon me to indicate the fact that—I never heard the voices of any of my children. The reader of course knows this; but the fact, as stated in plain words, is almost shocking. Is there anything on earth so engaging to a parent, as to catch the first lispings of his infant's tongue? or so interesting, as to listen to its dear prattle, and trace its gradual mastery of speech? If there be any one thing, arising out of my condition, which more than another fills my heart with grief, it is THIS: it is to *see* their blessed lips in motion, and to *hear* them not: and to witness others moved to smiles and kisses by the sweet peculiarities of infantile speech which are

incommunicable to me, and which pass by me like the idle wind.

As I have said, the finger-talk has become much more common now; especially among ladies, who, as I have been told, find it useful at school, as an inaudible means of communication, and for that purpose teach it to one another. Man, proud man, not needing it for this purpose, seldom knows it at all in youth; and in after life seems to regard it as too small an attainment to be worthy of his attention. Or, perhaps, he over estimates the difficulty of an acquirement, which any one may make in a quarter of an hour, and prefers the use of the instruments with which he is familiar—the pen or pencil—to the adoption of a new one, in the use of which, he must at the first incur the humiliation of making a few blunders, and of being somewhat unready. Whatever be the cause, the result is, that of twenty educated men perhaps not more than one will be found possessed of this accomplishment, whereas, perhaps, not more than eight or ten in twenty educated ladies are without it.

For long communications, writing is doubtless best; but for incidental purposes, which are far more numerous, the finger-talk is better. The advantages are these:—that the fingers are, so to speak, always at hand, and can be used with almost as much spontaneity as the tongue; whereas for writing, various implements are required—the production and preparation of which distress the deaf man with a painful consciousness of the difficulty of communicating with him, and of the trouble he is giving. Another thing is, that the finger language can be used with as much freedom in walking or riding as under any other circum-

stances, which with writing is far from being the case. How vividly do I remember the pleasant and informing intercourse which has in this way, at different times, been carried on with friends, throughout the live-long day, as we rode, side by side, for months together, over the plains of Asia. How greatly did not our caravan companions—the natives of the country,—marvel at it, as at one of the mysteries which might have been hidden under the seal of Solomon. And how pleasant was it to behold the reverence and admiration of THE USEFUL irradiate their swart countenances, when the simple principle of the art was explained to them, and it was shown to be as available for their own languages—Arabian, Persian, Turkish,—as for any other.

It is another recommendation of the manual alphabet, that the use of it is a less conspicuous act than that of writing; in company it excludes, or seems to exclude, the deaf man less from the circle of conversation than writing would; and in the streets, it attracts less attention than stopping to write. It also, upon emergencies, supplies a mode of communication in the dark: for as the letters are formed by the play of the right-hand fingers upon the left, it is manifest that a person who wishes to communicate in darkness, has only to work with the fingers of his right hand upon the left hand of his friend to convey the information he requires. The process is indeed tedious and sometimes uncertain; but it suffices for such concise intimations as in the dark can be alone necessary. I must confess, that I have on all occasions eschewed darkness with too much earnestness, to have found much use in this property of finger-talk: but it

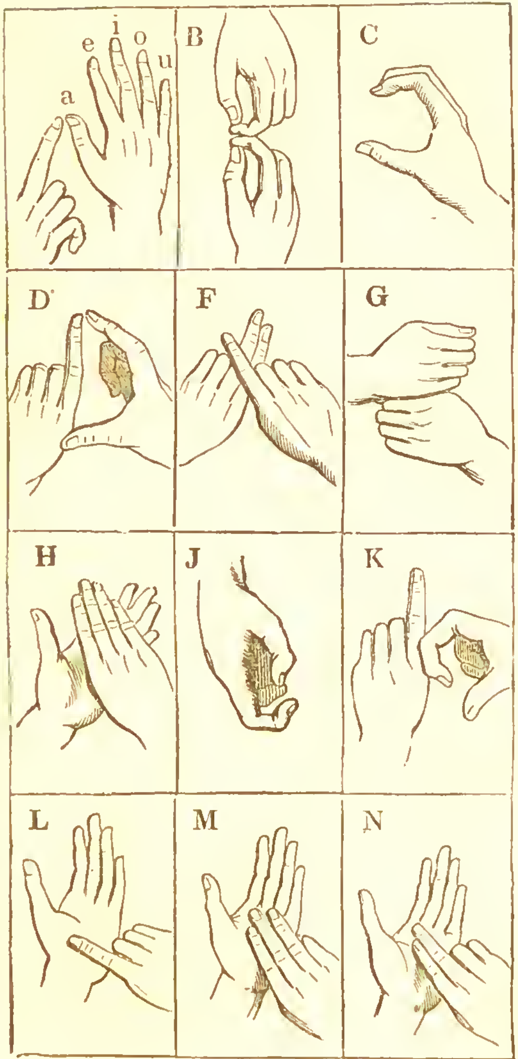
has nevertheless been sometimes useful, especially in travelling by night. The really practised finger-talkers, prefer that mode of communication with the deaf before writing; as they can form the words faster than the most rapid writer, with less effort, and certainly with less waste of materials.

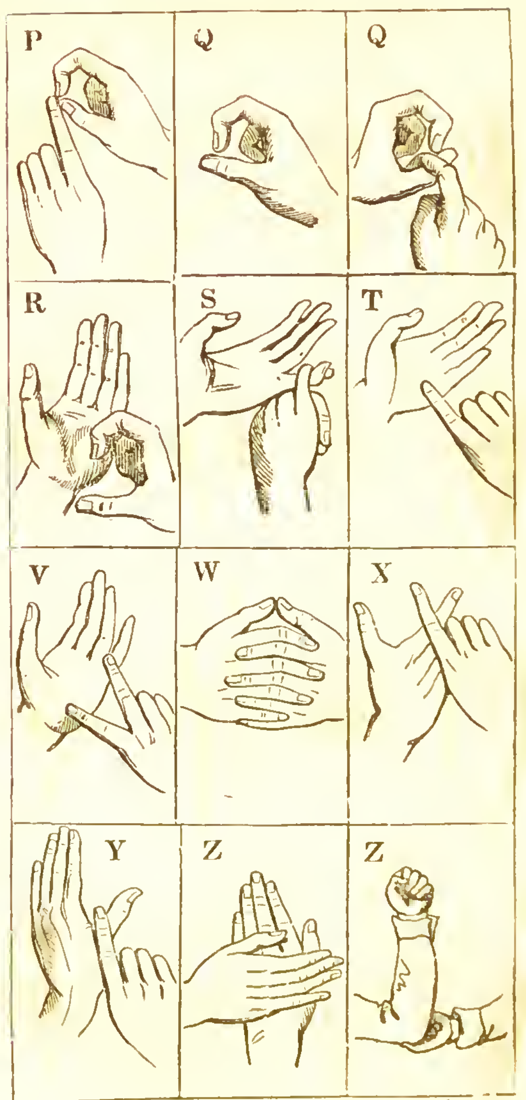
The inconveniences in the use of the fingers are more obvious to the talkee than to the talker. The perfection of a dactylogist is to form the characters with rapidity and distinctness. In beginners, the desire to be distinct often produces a tedious slowness; and in proficients, the rapidity of action which habit occasions often produces indistinctness. To acquire rapidity, and yet retain distinctness, is what few can manage; but these are the few to whom the deaf man delights to attend.

The main causes of this indistinctness, arise from the faults of the set of signs used to represent the letters of the alphabet. Some of them are too much like others to be distinguishable in rapid action. Then the vowels are represented by the five fingers of the left hand; and this is in every way a sore evil; for to hit the right digit on all occasions, is by far the most difficult point to learn in the use of the manual alphabet, and in rapid motions it is exceedingly difficult for the person addressed to be sure which of the two neighbouring fingers, representing different vowels, has been touched. It is often only from the connection of the word when completed, that he can tell which has really been used; and if on this point there is a possibility of mistake, a mistake is likely to be made. A few examples will illustrate this. They are not the most striking which have occurred, but, as the most

recent, are such as most readily occur. While the snow lay on the ground at the end of January in this year, 1845, I observed many great fellows prowling about the fields and gardens, with guns in their hands, shooting small birds. On mentioning this circumstance, I was informed that the village blacksmith had shot above a hundred birds the previous day in his garden. This kind of *battue* was new to me, and I inquired what birds they were, and was answered, "sparrows, robins, chaffinches, etc." I expressed my horror at finding that robins were included in this doom, and at the overthrow of my fond persuasion that the English, like other nations, had at least one poor bird whose life was considered sacred. I then learned, to my great grief, that there was a general prejudice against robins in this rustic place: "Even Rose says that she *hates* robins." This being very rapidly said, I took only the prominent letters, and asked, doubtingly, "Does Rose say she *eats* robins?" This mode of apprehending the communication, arose from a previous intimation that the blacksmith intended to make a pie of his hundred birds. Indeed the pre-occupation of the mind with an idea of this kind, is a very fertile source of such misapprehensions. Lately, in taking a walk on a fine day out upon the moors, my companion, pointing to a distant quarter, said, as I read it—"I hear the rain." I expressed some surprise at this, as not being aware that distant rain was audible, which produced the explanation that she had said "train" (railway train), not "rain." Now it is clear that if the strangeness of the understood fact had not occasioned a demur, I should have rested under the impression which I supposed it to convey.

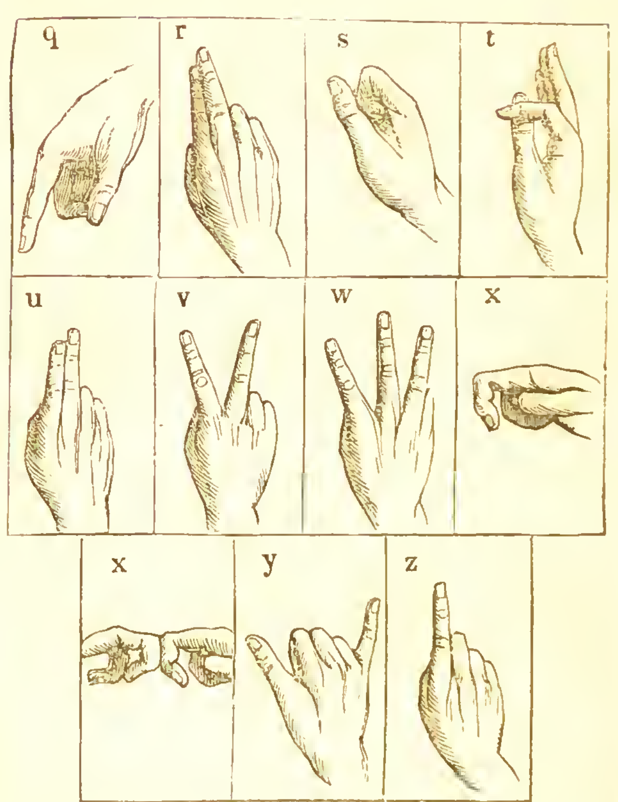
[THE DOUBLE ALPHABET.]




P
Q
Q
R
S
T
V
W
X
Y
Z
Z

[THE SINGLE ALPHABET.]

a	b	c	d
e	f	g	h
i	j	k	l
m	n	o	p


q
r
s
t
u
v
w
x
x
y
z

The more common mistakes arise from confounding the vowel *i*, represented by touching the middle finger, with *e* which adjoins it on one side, or with *o* which adjoins it on the other : for when the fingers are in rapid action, it is very difficult to distinguish whether it be the middle finger or one of its two neighbours that has been touched. There is, in fact, little other choice than to seize the letters that make sense, and whenever it happens that one vowel will make as good sense as another, which occurs more frequently than those inexperienced in finger-talk would imagine, it is quite as likely that the wrong sense, as that the right sense, should be taken. The vowel *a* being represented by so distinct a member as the thumb, is never mistaken for any other letter.

The consonants which under the common system, *and in rapid action*, are liable to be confounded with each other, are *d* with *p*; *l* with *t*; *f* with *x*; *r* with *t*, and with one form of *j*; and *n* with *v*. The same alphabet seems to be followed every where in this country. The varieties are in the letters *j*, *q*, *z*. The principle of this alphabet is to form the letters by the action of the right hand upon the left; and, for the sake of that principle, *j* and *q*, which might easily be formed with one hand, are often produced by both—*j* by laying the bent forefinger of the right hand upon the palm of the left, or by tracing its figure upon the palm of the left hand; and *q* by locking the tip of the forefinger of the right hand into a circle, formed by the junction, at the points, of the left hand thumb and forefinger. Others do not stand upon this ceremony, but " break their egg at the most convenient end," by employing one hand only; for *j*, crooking the fore-finger of the

right hand; and for *q*, bending in the forefinger upon the thumb of the same hand.

Upon the whole, the system is very defective, and is capable of great improvement. But it would be difficult to alter an established usage, in a matter like this; and the danger is, that any attempt which might have the effect of substituting arbitrary signs, easily formed and facile in use, for the present awkward imitations of the Roman characters, would deter many in general society from making an attainment, which the absence of any obvious resemblances to something they already know would make them suppose more difficult than the present plan, though in reality more easy—just as an ignorant person might suppose Greek easier to acquire than Hebrew, because the Greek characters have more resemblance to those with which he is familiar. It is certainly better to submit to this inconvenience, than to take any step, the effect of which might be, to diminish the number of those with whom the deaf can have unwritten intercourse.

The most obvious improvement, without disturbing existing arrangements, would be to establish a number of arbitrary signs for words of continual occurrence, and even for familiar phrases, by which the time and labour expended in the finger-talk might be greatly diminished. There was a sign for "and" in the alphabet as first taught to me, answering to the commercial "&," but it is not commonly employed. That and another for "the," would, even alone, be of some use.

Let us add to the uncertainty arising from these causes, those which spring from the inconsideration of the person using his fingers. It is obvious that, according to the modifications of his position, the

person addressed may be reading forwards or backwards, upwards or downwards, inside or outside; and although there can be only one right position, the dactylogist expects his deaf friend to understand him equally well under all possible circumstances. It is evident that the reader of the fingers, can only have a *right* point of view when he is either placed at the right side of the speaker, or when that person so turns his hands as to give a perfect view of the inside of his left hand and of the play upon it, to the person addressed. This duty is the more imperative, as it would not be very decorous for the deaf person to be constantly changing his place, to obtain a right view of the hands of those who address him. Yet scarcely any one thinks of this. It is quite usual for a person to work away with his fingers, with the *back* of his left hand towards the other party, so as to render it impossible for him to see the play of the fingers of the other hand upon the *palm*. The finger-talker has little notion of the difficulties which occur in following his operations. The distress which I have myself experienced frequently, in the consciousness of having missed a word or two, has often been very great. The connection of the sentence is broken, and its exact purport lost, and the question is whether to put your friend to the trouble of repeating his communication (a very different thing from asking the repetition of a verbal statement), or to allow it to be supposed that you have understood, when the communication does not seem to have been of importance, or such as requires a direct answer.

Writing in the air, is sometimes resorted to by persons who are ignorant of the finger-alphabet,

and have not access to more tangible materials. This has all the disadvantage, without any of the advantages, of actual writing. It is more liable to be mistaken than even the finger-talk; and, to be at all distinct, the characters must be traced much more slowly than either in actual writing or by the finger-alphabet. It can only be required in the open air, at a distance from writing materials; and in the open streets, it is a sort of action well calculated to attract the attention of passers-by; and this is a great disadvantage with a person nervously alive to whatever draws public attention to his peculiar affliction.

Of *signs*, as a medium of intercourse, I have but limited acquaintance, and of the artificial system, taught at the asylums, none. In my own intercourse signs have not been needed, save with the uninstructed deaf and dumb, and with persons unable either to write or to use the finger-language. With both these classes my intercourse has been small, because I could gain or impart nothing useful by it, and because I have the strongest aversion to modes of intercourse which attract the attention and curiosity of others. As soon, therefore, as a person has attempted to communicate with me by signs, I have ceased to have any other object than to make my escape. I have sometimes been accosted by persons after the system of the asylums: and, without being able to recognize many of the signs, I have been shocked at the too marked movements which they involved. This is stated simply with reference to my own impressions; for the very circumstances which rendered them unprofitable and annoying to me, might make them

the more fitting medium of intercourse for the born deaf and dumb, or those who have occasion to communicate with them.

As signs are the medium of intercourse for those who have no more artificial vehicle for the interchange of their thoughts, it is obvious that they have not been needed by me, save under particular circumstances; whereas, the born deaf and dumb, however well instructed to speak, to write, or to use the fingers, will, by preference, resort to signs in their intercourse with each other, and even with their friends, if permitted: for signs are their natural language; and all the other modes of intercourse, are to them eminently artificial, and are not used without some degree of painful effort and constraint. Before proceeding to exhibit the sum of my own experience on this head, I must permit myself to introduce an interesting passage on the subject, which I find in Dr. Watson's book on the 'Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb.' London, 1809.

After adverting to the condition of a child "naturally deaf, and consequently dumb," this benevolent writer says—"The first five or six months of his existence are not distinguished by any perceptible deficiency: he is not less attentive to the smiles and visible caresses of his parent or nurse than another would be; but when that period arrives at which words usually begin to make some impression, and a few responsive syllables of the most obvious formation begin to gratify a parent's ear, he remains mute, and insensible to the most moving accents. Still hope finds a thousand excuses; and though doubts and fears may arise, yet are they reluctantly entertained in

the paternal breast till time has slipped away with a year or two of infancy; and then it is gradually discovered that when a want is to be made known, or an approval or aversion expressed, it is done by a motion of the hand, head, or countenance. In place of the loquacious and engaging prattle usual at his age, with him there is silence or only inarticulate sound. At times he is pensive and cheerless, no doubt feeling the disappointments necessarily, frequently, resulting from incapacity to make himself fully understood by those about him, who, possessing a more perfect medium of mental intercourse, are too apt to be inattentive to the signs and gestures of the little MUTE. Discouraged by his frequent fruitless attempts to make himself understood, and to understand, ought we to wonder if the temper of a deaf and dumb person should be soured,—if he should be rendered little communicative of the few ideas furnished by his own observation, and still less inquisitive about the idea furnished by the observation of others?

"Having had no means of making known his wants and inclinations, or of knowing the things intended for his information by others, his attention will naturally be turned to the interpretation of *visible appearances*. The least alteration of the countenance, a slight motion of the hand or head, will be understood by him, if it does but indicate, in a natural manner, approbation, disapprobation, &c. Thus, when any person, thing, or matter is beheld with a bright or smiling countenance, he immediately interprets approval; the reverse, if he discovers the countenance darkened by a frown, while the eyes are directed to any object. Do you

require him to approach you, make the sign of the hand drawn towards you; to go from you, reverse the sign, and he instantly obeys. Do you require him to eat imperatively, put your hand to your mouth, making the jaws to move as in the act of mastication, keeping the countenance intense and steady; he will comprehend and obey, or refuse with a significant sign. Suppose you wish to put the question whether he be inclined to eat, you need only make the same signs of the hand and mouth, and instead of the stern steadiness of command on the countenance, let it bear an indication of inquiry. By the same signs, with an appearance of anxiety and kind concern on the countenance, you may entreat him to eat; and so on of other things, such as drinking, sleeping, walking, running, &c.; but the signs necessary on such occasions are so obvious that they need not be particularized.

"It is in this simple manner that two or more deaf and dumb persons are enabled to hold instant converse with each other, though brought together for the first time from the most distant parts. Thus far the signs may be termed *natural;* but the naturally deaf do not stop here with this language of pantómime. When they are fortunate enough to meet with an attentive companion or two, especially where two or more deaf persons happen to be brought up together, it is astonishing what approaches they will make towards the construction of an artificial language. I mean that by an arbitrary sign, fixed by common consent or accidentally hit upon, they will designate a person or thing by that sign; which, from henceforth, is used by them as a proper name. It is remarkable

that although in the first instance of inventing and applying these sign-names (if I may call them so), they are generally guided by some prominent, but, perhaps, by no means permanently distinguishing mark, such as (in the case of a person) a particular article of dress being worn, the first time of becoming acquainted; an accidental wound, though it leave no scar; or peculiarity of manner, &c. Yet, after having fixed, they never vary, notwithstanding the distinction which may have guided their choice should have long ceased to be observable about the person of the individual to be designated. Nor will they fix upon the same sign for another of their acquaintance, though at the time of first meeting him he might have the same mark of distinction about him which they had used to specify a former person. This fully proves that they regard the sign merely as a proper name; and they receive it as such from one to another without inquiry as to its origin.

"But an example will, perhaps, be requisite to make it clear to those unacquainted with the manner of these interesting but unfortunate fellow-beings. Suppose a person the first time he is particularly taken notice of by one who is deaf and dumb, had accidentally cut his face, and wore a patch, it is a hundred to one that that would thenceforward be his distinguishing mark, unless some one else of the deaf person's acquaintance had been already so distinguished. The wound might be cured, and the patch removed; but the deaf person would uniformly put the end of his finger to the part of the person's face where the patch had been worn when he wanted to point him out; and, lest those to whom he might be afterwards desirous

of communicating something concerning this person should not comprehend him, he will not fail to introduce him to them by repeatedly pointing to him, and then to the mark by which he meant to describe him. By similar contrivances, places and things are distinguished by the deaf in an astonishing manner. To attempt a description of these signs in words would be endless, because they are various as the circumstances and fancies of the inventor."

As I was myself never dependent on signs, my own observations can only to a limited extent bear directly upon the subject; although, as belonging to a set of matters more or less connected with my condition, it has not failed to engage my attention. It so happened, that, before my own deafness, I had a boyish acquaintance with a born deaf mute, running wild about the streets, and entirely uninstructed. The untameable violence of his character was, however, so opposed to the quietness of my own temper, that I rather shunned and dreaded him, than courted his friendship. For some years I lost sight of him; but eventually, after I had become deaf, we were again brought into closer contact than ever, and I had ample opportunities of studying his characteristics, and of comparing my own condition with his. I then found that he was understood to have become able to read and write; and as he was far from unintelligent, but, on the contrary, one of the sharpest lads I ever knew, I supposed that it would be in my power to communicate with him in writing; but I found that he could be induced to write nothing beyond his own name, and the words of any copy from which he had been taught to write; and when I

placed before him a written question or communication, it was lamentable to see how hopelessly he groped over it, without the most dim perception of the meaning, though he was acquainted with the letters of which the sentence was composed. But when another undertook to express the same thing to him by signs, it was wonderful to see how his blank and somewhat fallen countenance lighted up, and how readily he apprehended the purport of the communication thus made to him. The signs were of his own devising, and had mostly been learned from him by the lads with whom he associated. I observed, however, that if a lad had something to express for which no existing sign was sufficient, this lad would invent a new one for the occasion, or would persevere in trying several, till he hit upon one which the deaf-mute could understand. The sign thus invented, was usually adopted by the latter into his system; and if, when used by him, it was not easily understood, he could refer to the inventor, whose explanation would soon render it current. I was myself eventually obliged to adopt this mode of intercourse with him, and to acquaint myself with his system of signs. It was, in some respects, wonderfully ingenious, in others strikingly significant, and in some grossly simple, from the absence in his mind of any of that acquired delicacy, which teaches that there are facts which will not admit of the most direct and significant description. Upon the whole, it exhibited a vast amount of curious contrivances and resources, for getting over the difficulties which must necessarily occur in making manual signs the representatives of facts or ideas.

That part which stood for proper names seemed

to me very interesting, and engaged much of my attention. They proceeded exactly upon the system so well described by Dr. Watson. The lad's sign for my name was to put his fingers to his ears; and for his own, to put his forefingers to his ears and his thumbs towards his mouth, at the same time. There were many lame persons within the range of his knowledge; and the different kinds of lameness were discriminated with highly mimetic accuracy, to designate the different persons. There was one man who was both lame and in the habit of occasionally blowing, in a somewhat marked manner. The blowing furnished a mark for this person; but if this were not sufficient, the blowing and lameness were *both* indicated in such a manner that no one acquainted with the original could be longer under any doubt. The lameness alone would not have done as a sign, since another exhibited a similar lameness. Another person was designated by his manner of brushing up his hair; others, by habits of smoking or taking snuff, by the shape of the nose, by peculiarities of temper or manner, and even by trades, professions, and habits of place. I observed that to avoid a perplexing multiplicity of such signs, females and young people were, for the most part, designated by reference to their relationship to the head of the family, and translated into words would stand thus,—the wife of Longnose; the first, second, or third son, or daughter, of Longnose, etc.

With respect to names of *places*, I discovered nothing of the kind in his range of signs. He had a movement of the hand for indicating distances, and the more numerous and prolonged were these movements the more distant was the place he

wished to indicate; and as his local knowledge was limited to a few miles, his indications were generally understood.

The knowledge of signs which I picked up in this way, proved of some use to me when in foreign parts and especially when among people who, from the habit of seeing persons of neighbouring nations whose language they only partially or not at all understood, were much in the habit of using signs as a substitute for or as an assistant to oral language. Thus my occasional resort to signs, for incidental communication in streets, bazaars, villages, and caravanserais, caused me to seem to them rather as a foreigner ignorant of their language, than as deaf; and the resort to signs had no strangeness to them or attracted that notice from others which it never fails to do in this country. From this ready apprehension of signs, I found more facilities of communication than might have been expected—more than perhaps would be open to one possessed of hearing but only partially acquainted with the language: for such a person would be more disposed to blunder along with his attempts at speech, than to resort to the universal language of signs. These also are the only circumstances in which I ever used or attended to signs without reluctance.

The signs used by the Orientals to express universal acts and objects, I found not to be materially different from those which my former deaf-mute companion had employed; but those which were founded upon local or national customs and Moslem observances, I found much difficulty in comprehending, till these customs and observances had become familiar to me by residence in the East.

With all this help from signs, however, travel

is to a deaf man not without its dangers and difficulties. I cannot better show this than by exhibiting the incidents of one day, which all bear more or less upon this subject.

I was staying at the village of Orta Khoi on the Bosphorus, about six miles above Constantinople, of which it is one of the suburbs, and was in the frequent habit of going down to the city and returning by water. One morning on which I had determined to go, it threatened to rain; but I took my umbrella and departed. On arriving at the beach, it appeared that all the boats were gone, and there was no alternative but to abandon my intention, or to proceed on foot along a road which manifestly led in the right direction, at the back of the buildings and yards which line the Bosphorus. I had not proceeded far before it began to rain, and I put up my umbrella and trudged on, followed, at some distance behind, by an old Turk in the same predicament with myself: for it should be observed, that, at and about Constantinople, the people are so much in the habit of relying upon water conveyance, that there is less use of horses than in any Eastern town with which I am acquainted. Nothing occurred till I arrived at the back of the handsome country palace of Dolma Baktche, the front of which had often engaged my attention in passing up and down by water. Here the sentinel at the gate motioned to me in a very peculiar manner, which I could not comprehend. He had probably called previously, and in vain. Finding that I heeded him not, he was hastening towards me in a very violent manner, with his fixed bayonet pointed direct at my body, when the good-natured Turk behind me, who had

by this time come up, assailed me very unceremoniously from behind, by pulling down my umbrella. After some words to the sentinel, I was suffered to pass on under his protection, till we had passed the precincts of the imperial residence, where he put up his own umbrella, and motioned me to do the same. By this act, and by the signs which he had used in explanation of this strange affair, I clearly understood that it was all on account of the umbrella. This article, so useful and common in rainy climates, is an ensign of royalty in the East; and although the use of it for common purposes has crept in at Constantinople, the sovereign is supposed to be ignorant of the fact, and it may not on any account be displayed in his presence, or in passing any of the royal residences.

That day I was detained in Pera longer than I expected; and darkness had set in by the time the wherry in which I returned reached Orta Khoi. After I had paid the fare, and was walking up the beach, the boatmen followed and endeavoured to impress something upon me, with much emphasis of manner, but without disrespect. My impression was that they wanted to exact more than their fare; and as I knew that I had given the right sum, I, with John Bullish hatred at imposition, buckled up my mind against giving one para more. Presently the contest between us brought over some Nizam soldiers from the guard-house, who took the same side with the boatmen; for when I attempted to make my way on, they refused to allow me to proceed. Here I was in a regular dilemma, and was beginning to suspect that there was something more than the fare in question; when a Turk, of apparently high authority, came

up, and after a few words had been exchanged between him and the soldiers, I was suffered to proceed.

As I went on, up the principal street of the village, I was greatly startled to perceive a heavy earthen vessel, which had fallen with great force from above, dashed in pieces on the pavement at my feet. Presently, such vessels descended, thick as hail, as I passed along, and were broken to sherds on every side of me. It is a marvel how I escaped having my brains dashed out; but I got off with only a smart blow between the shoulders. A rain of cats and dogs, is a thing of which we have some knowledge; but a rain of potter's vessels was very much beyond the limits of European experience. On reaching the hospitable roof which was then my shelter, I learned that this was the night which the Armenians, by whom the place was chiefly inhabited, devoted to the expurgation of their houses from evil spirits, which act they accompanied or testified by throwing earthen vessels out of their windows, with certain cries which served as warnings to the passengers: but that the streets were notwithstanding still so dangerous that scarcely any one ventured out while the operation was in progress. From not hearing these cries, my danger was of course two-fold, and my escape seemed something more than remarkable: and I must confess that I was of the same opinion when the next morning disclosed the vast quantities of broken pottery with which the streets were strewed.

It seems probable that the adventure on the beach had originated in the kind wish of the boatmen and soldiers to prevent me from exposing

myself to this danger. But there was also a regulation preventing any one from being in the streets at night without a lantern: and the intention may possibly have been to enforce this observance, especially as a lantern would this night have been a safeguard to me, by apprising the pot-breakers of my presence in the street.

The adventures of this one day will serve for a specimen of numberless incidents, showing the sort of difficulties which a deaf man has to contend with in distant travel. The instances evince the insufficiency of mere signs as a means of communication, unless in some matter in which there is a prepared understanding, as in buying or selling. This mode of intercourse necessarily fails, when, as in the cases cited, it is made the exponent of customs unknown to one of the parties in that intercourse. Signs must in all cases be an imperfect vehicle for the communication of abstract ideas; and we see the proof of this in the distressing dearth of matter in the letters and other writings of the deaf-mutes, who have learned the use of written language through the medium of signs. In ideas they are not necessarily deficient, unless so far as a deficiency arises from the want of real education and substantial reading. But they want the power of expression; and hence are necessitated to confine themselves to a few simple matters which they know they can express, like a foreigner in speaking a language which he has but imperfectly acquired. This painful narrowness of range is much overlooked by cursory observers, in their surprise and admiration at finding the deaf and dumb in possession of *any* means of communication with others. There are no doubt exceptions, as in the cases of Fontenay,

Massieu, Clerc, and a few more, who attained a great command of written language. But these were the exceptions of men of genius, of whom it would be in vain to expect to see more than two or three in a hundred years. And by "genius," in this application, is understood that ardour for a given object—say knowledge—with that force of character in the pursuit of it, which enable men to rise over difficulties that seem insurmountable. Through such ardour and force of character, these men made themselves "extraordinary," by bringing their attainments nearly up to the mark of middle class education among those who have hearing and speech. The same degree of energy and force of character necessary to bring them to this point, would have made them not only "extraordinary" but "great"—would have procured for them immortal names, if they could have started from the level of average attainments among men. The cause of deaf and dumb education is made to rest too much upon the examples of such men. But their cases are exceptional, and as infrequent as cases of first-rate genius in the world at large: and to be convinced of this, we need only to note the woful difference between their compositions, and the letters of the most proficient pupils of the Asylums, as published in the Reports. These incoherent compositions, which seem to be chiefly made up of recollections of Scripture and reading books, give a most deplorable idea of the condition of which *this* is almost the ultimate attainment; and yet, the lower idea we form of that condition, the greater will be our satisfaction at even the exceeding limited resources which this sort of education opens to them. Much more than has been done for them might perhaps

be effected, if this education had been suited more to their real condition, than directed to the production of effects calculated to strike public attention.

Signs are undoubtedly the proper language of the deaf and dumb; and it is equally the mode of communication among those who, by ignorance of each other's language, are virtually dumb to each other. I have stated that in my own experience abroad, signs were best understood and most used in those places where the population was much mixed, or which were much the resort of strangers. This observation is corroborated by a curious fact recorded in 'Observations on the Language of Signs,' by Samuel Akerly, M.D., read before the New York Lyceum of Natural History, in 1823.

"The Indians, Tartars, or aboriginal inhabitants of the country west of the Mississippi, consist of different nations or tribes, speaking different languages, or dialects of the same language. Some of these tribes have stationary villages or settlements, while others wander about the country, resting in their skin tents or lodges, and following the herds of bisons or buffalos, upon which they principally depend for support. These tribes are not able to hold communication with each other by spoken language, but this difficulty is overcome by their having adopted a language of signs, which they all understand, and by means of which the different tribes hold converse without speaking.

"This circumstance may be considered as something novel in the history of man; for although temporary signs have been occasionally resorted to by travellers and voyagers, where spoken language was inadequate, yet we know of no nation, tribe, or class of human beings, possessed of the faculty

of speech, besides the Indians of this country, who have adopted anything like a system of signs, by which they could freely express their ideas.

"Philosophers have discussed the subject of a universal language, but have failed to invent one; while the savages of America have adopted the only one which can possibly become universal. The language of signs is so true to nature, that the deaf and dumb from different parts of the globe will immediately on meeting understand each other. Their language, however, in an uncultivated state, is limited to the expression of their immediate wants, and of the few ideas which they have acquired by their silent intercourse with their fellow-beings. As this manner of expressing their thoughts has arisen from necessity, it is surprising how the Indians have adopted a similar language when the intercourse between nations of different tongues is usually carried on by interpreters of spoken language.

"If we examine the signs employed by the Indians, it will be found that some are peculiar, and arise from their savage customs, and are not so universal as sign language in general; but others are natural and universally applicable, and are the same as those employed in the Schools for the Deaf and Dumb, after the method of the celebrated Abbé Sicard."

It was very probably some indistinct rumours concerning this people, which led the Abbé Sicard to conceive the possible existence of a nation of deaf-mutes. The following passage from one of his books is cited in Dr. Orpen's 'Anecdotes and Annals:'—"May there not exist in some corner of the world an entire people of deaf-mutes? Well, sup-

pose these individuals were so degraded, do you think that they would remain without communication and without intelligence? They would have, without any manner of doubt, a language of signs, and possibly more rich than our own; it would be, certainly unequivocal, always the faithful portrait of the affections of the soul; and then, what should hinder them from being civilized? Why should they not have laws, a government, a police, very probably less involved in obscurity than our own?"

This excellent man was very clearly of opinion, which he constantly avowed, that signs were the proper language of the deaf-mutes. And it would appear, that if their own happiness and comfort only were considered, much of the time and labour which is wasted in other and to them foreign objects, might be advantageously employed in completing and enriching the language of artificial signs. Their own estimation of signs is evinced by the hilarity and *abandon* with which they communicate with one another by them, as compared with the restraint and hesitation which they manifest in the use of written, or still more, in which they *imitate* vocal language. The result is, that they seem to *avoid occasions* of exercising the acquirements, which have been taught them with so much trouble to themselves and others; and after their education has been completed, confine themselves, as much as they can, to such intercourse as will bring no other demand than for the use of signs upon them. There are doubtless exceptions: but this appears to be the rule. The instructed deaf-mutes may be accepted as the exponents of their own feeling in this matter. In the Sixth

Report of the Amerieau Asylum at Hartford, Connecticut, the following occurs as the answer of a deaf-mute to the question—"Which do you consider preferable—the language of speech or of signs?" Answer—"I consider to prefer the language of signs best of it, because the language of signs is eapable of to give me elucidation and understanding well. I am fond of talking with the deaf and dumb persons by signs, quickly, about the subjects, without having the troubles of voice: therefore the language of signs is more still and calm than the language of speech, which is full of falsehood and troubles."

The more attentively this answer is considered, the more suggestive it will appear: and the last phrase, in particular, evinces that the difficulty and sense of labour in expressing an idea, which those who have hearing connect with the use of manual signs, are referred by the deaf-mutes to the use of oral language—so far as it is known to them in their own experience.

The same preference, as expressed by another deaf-mute, is still further suggestive. It is contained in a letter quoted by Dr. Orpen, from the Sixth Report of the American Asylum. It is not very intelligible, and exhibits the usual child-like failures of the deaf-mutes, in their attempts to grasp or to bring forth an idea: but enough may be understood for the present purpose. "The language of signs is the action of some members of the body with the arms, and the expression of the face is the eounterfeit of feelings. The arms are subservient to the language of signs. Had a person no arms, the use of the signs would be very difficult for him. The expressions of the soul, or

counterfeited feelings, are indispensable to the language of signs. If the expression of a real or false feeling were not used with the sign of the feeling, the sign would be unique. The signs generally resemble what is seen in the mind. The signs when used in conversation have but few arrangements, but words must be in arrangement. The gestures are very easy to use in conversation, and are quicker than writing. I believe that speaking is quicker than they. These actions should be clear, and should be used according to the proceeding of the circumstances. The language of signs belongs to the deaf and dumb, and some persons who can hear and speak converse by signs. The signs are the road of the ability of knowing a language of the tongue, to the deaf and dumb. They are necessary for the deaf and dumb to know. The deaf and dumb may acquire the ability of reading and writing the language of those who can hear and speak, through the signs. The deaf and dumb understand the words, through the signs which a person makes, to express the words. A person who can speak his own language, cannot speak another language of another. They can converse with each other by signs, and understand one another."

This clearly expresses the impression that signs are the proper language of the deaf and dumb, and there is a manifest disposition to prefer it to writing, with a vague impression of its being inferior only to speech as used by those who have hearing, and preferable to speech as used by the deaf and dumb.

The result of the testimony as furnished, by the educated deaf-mutes *themselves*, is—that oral

speech is of little if any use to them, and not worth the labour which the acquisition has cost; that reading and writing, although difficult, are useful and important as a means of acquiring knowledge; but that signs are the proper instrument of their *intercourse*, and the only one they can use with pleasure. It may also be collected that the chief attraction of writing is, that it may enable them to communicate with persons at a distance. They accordingly betake themselves to this employment of their acquisition with eagerness; but they appear soon to break down under the paucity of ideas and facts, which is the most afflictive circumstance of their condition; and if religiously educated, they fill their paper with matter taken from the Scriptures. To the friends of those unfortunates, it must be most interesting to peruse their simple effusions: but to the public, most of the letters which have been offered as signs of advancement in the first class scholars, are melancholy displays of deficiency and feebleness.

My own estimate is in accordance with that which has been stated, as the one which the deaf-mutes themselves form of signs and of writing, and oral language. Signs will be their means of intercourse among themselves; writing (including of course reading and the fingers) their instrument for acquiring knowledge, and for their intercourse with those beyond their own class; but speech, learned with so much difficulty, and used with so much effort and reluctance, can never be of much, if any, use to them. Its only value would be to qualify them for intercourse with those who can hear and speak; but it does nothing of the kind: for that deafness alone is a sufficient bar against

such intercourse, is shown by my own experience, as related in this work. It proves this at least: but, in other respects, it must be remembered that in my case speech was recovered merely, and not created. And if in that case there was so much reluctance to speak and difficulty in speaking, how much more in the case of the born deaf-mutes. And joining my own experienee to that of others, I am thoroughly convinced that writing and signs are abundantly sufficient for all the intercourse to whieh a deaf-mute is equal.

This was the opinion of Abbé Sieard. Few of his pupils were taught to speak, and most of those who were edueated in his institution had a strong feeling against learning articulation. His predecessor, the good old Abbé de L'Epée, whose views were much less expanded than Sicard's, though his heart was as large, used indeed to say that the only way of restoring the deaf-mutes entirely to society, is to teach them to understand the eyes and to express themselves *vivâ voce*. This may be trne; and till they can understand the eyes, it may be well for them to leave the other part alone. But it is an idle dream to hope to restore such persons entirely to society. Deafness—the same canse which has cut me off from soeiety, from the enjoyment of which I am by nothing else disqualified—would alone, even though they spoke with the tongue of angels, suffiee to exclude them from it. My own present facility of speech stands me in little stead, beyond the walls of my own house. I do not find real oecasion for it ten times in a year.

It is not very elear whether it is or not owing to the useless attention bestowed on oral language.

that the pupils of our asylums do not evince those signs of attainment which we witness in those of France and Italy. In Dr. Orpen's book there are letters written by French and Italian deaf-mutes *in English;* and they are for the most part more correct and more on a level with ordinary correspondence than those by English deaf-mutes. It is true that deaf-mutes of every country have no mother tongue; but still these French and Italians had learned English as an accomplishment additional to the acquisition of the language of their own countries, whereas the others were writing in the only language they knew.

Laurent Clerc, one of the famous pupils of Sicard, was eventually engaged to teach in the American Asylum at Hartford, whence he wrote a letter in English to Dr. Orpen, the founder of the Irish Asylum. It is given here, not only because it is the best-written English letter in the book, but for the corroboration which it offers to the views which have been advanced:—

"Connecticut Asylum, Hartford,
"September 30, 1818.

"We have received the report you forwarded us. I ought not simply to thank you for this complaisance, but for the opportunity you have thus afforded us of augmenting the number of our acquaintance with men of benevolence. The report is excellent, and the time we have employed in reading it has certainly been profitable to us. It has excited our wish to pursue the object of increasing our library. Send us then an account of all you may hereafter do; it will be a new obligation which we shall owe you.

"The eulogy which you have given to my

master's mode of instruction has sensibly affected me; and the answers of my friend Massieu, which you have mentioned in your address, are exactly the same as I saw him write; and I think them so correct and so precise, that they themselves prove the excellency of Monsieur Sicard's system. *I therefore wish very much that you would follow the same, and lay aside the useless task of teaching the Deaf and Dumb to articulate sounds, or I cannot expect to see your pupils forward enough to understand abstract ideas.* If I have not mistaken the contents of your Report, it appears that —— and —— of —— and —— have not been very kind to you; you ought, nevertheless, not to be sorry for it, for whoever declines to communicate his secrets gives a proof of their sterility.

"Adieu! The task which you have embraced is a very good one. May the Lord bless you, and keep you, make his love to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you, lift up his countenance upon you, and give you courage and light, and reward you above, for the good you are doing to my poor companions in misfortune.

"Your humble servant.

"LAURENT CLERC."

It is very evident from the passage marked in italics, that Clerc considered the attempt to teach oral language to the dumb a useless encumbrance, rather than an advantage to their education, especially as regarded the formation and comparison of "abstract ideas," which could be by them only made through the sedulous and exclusive cultivation of written language. We may therefore not be astonished at the difference which appears in such

letters as the above, and those furnished by English deaf-mutes; a few specimens of which will be inserted at the end of this chapter.

In former chapters I have recorded matters arising out of my own experience, which are such as have not been and could not be described by any born deaf-mutes, because they could not know in what their own experiences differed from those of persons possessed of hearing and speech; and because having never possessed hearing they cannot really know or feel the extent of their privation or the calamity of their condition. In the present chapter, the subject has afforded materials for comparing the experience of deaf-mutes with my own; and I have used these materials and reasoned upon them. The result to which I am led from these considerations, has already appeared as regards myself; and as it regards the deaf-mutes, it leads me to the conviction that seeing they are and ever must be cut off from *real* intercourse with society, that education is the best which creates the highest appetite for books; and which, by conferring a complete mastery of written language, not only gives them as much intercourse with the minds of others as they are capable of enjoying, but opens up to them the wide worlds of facts and ideas which books contain. If such mastery of written language had no other result, than to make them acquainted with the contents of that Sacred Book on which our hopes for the other world are built,—that alone would be an ample recompense for years of toil upon their education. Infinite is the difference between the uninstructed deaf-mute, to whom that sacred treasury is closed, and the instructed one, who can at all times recur to its elevating truths, and refresh

his soul from the well-springs of comfort which it offers.

There is not room for so many of those illustrative letters, written by the instructed deaf-mutes, as I should like to introduce. The two here added seem very characteristic; and are rather above than below the level of those which the Reports have printed as favourable specimens of progress.

The first is a letter to no less a personage than King George IV., by a pupil of the Claremont (near Dublin) Asylum. The writer seems to have been regarded as the best example of instruction produced by that institution. He was much excited by the visit of George IV. to Dublin, and wrote to him this letter, which actually found its way to the king, and produced a response in the shape of a draft for ten pounds, with which the lad was afterwards apprenticed to a printer.

"Wednesday, July 4, 1821.

"MY DEAR GEORGE,

"I hope I will see you when you come here to see the deaf and dumb pupils. I am very sorry that you never did come here to see them. I never saw you; you ought to see the deaf and dumb boys and girls. I will be very glad to see you, if you will come here often to see me. Did you ever see the deaf and dumb in London? In what country did you ever see the deaf and dumb? The boys and girls are very much improving, and very comfortable here. Are you interested in seeing the deaf and dumb? All the soldiers in the armies belong to you; the King of England gives a great

deal of money to them. You must write a letter to me soon. I am very much pleased with writing a letter to you. I want to get a letter from you. I am much polite and very fond of you. How many brothers and sisters have you? Would you like to see me at Claremont? I could not go to London, because there is too much money to pay to the captain of a ship for me. I am an orphan, and a very poor boy. God will bless you. I love God very much, because he is the Creator of all things, and sent his Son to save us from sin; He supports us and gives us every thing, and makes us alive in the world. Do you know Grammar, Geography, Bible, Arithmetic, Astronomy, and Dictionary? I know them very little. Claremont is a very beautiful place; it has a great deal of meadows, ponds, lakes, trees, flowers, gardens, a horse, and an ass. I am thinking of everything, and to be polite to every one. Some of the deaf and dumb boys are always working in our garden, with my brother. I have been at school for four years and a half. I am sixteen years of my age. I am very delighted that I am improving very much. Perhaps I will be an Assistant of the Deaf and Dumb School. There are forty-one pupils at Claremont. Where were you born? I was born in Dublin. I am quite deaf and dumb, and can speak very well. Would you like to correspond with me? I would be very fond of you. You ought to write a long letter to me soon. What profession are you of? I never saw you; I am very very anxious to see you indeed, and would like to see the King of England very much. We want a new school-room, and we want more deaf and dumb boys and girls at Claremont; but we have not money enough to buy clothes and food for

them. Will you send us some deaf and dumb children, and give us money to pay for educating them.

"I am your affectionate Friend,
"T. C."

The following is from another pupil of the same Institution, after he had completed his education, and was apprenticed in London. There are many characteristic touches in it, and the minute observations are illustrative of some remarks in the chapter on Sight.

"London, September 9, 1824.

"MY DEAR JOSEPH,

"I am bound to a shoemaker about three weeks; I can make new shoe a little. I get up at six o'clock every morning; I am not lazy, indeed; you said that I was lazy when at school with you; my master make me work very hard; I am attentive to work; shoemakers and tailors are Kerry men; they know Major Orpen of Kerry; his place is called Ardtully, in Kerry. There are a great many Irish men and women to live in London, because they get more money than they did not get in Ireland; but is dearer than Irish clothes and food. Tell ——, I got a letter from him last April; I can't read half letter, because it was bad writing; my father can't see well, and he can't read it all; he said that it was bad wrote; he wear a spectacles on his eyes; he can read and write well; my father's wife is a lady; she is a handsome woman; I have a half-brother and three sisters; I have twin sisters; they died in a few weeks ago all; they are very handsome, more than I am not; my father is more good than —— ; he is a very sober

man, and take care of me from the bad ; I am very sorry that —— is not good, because —— is fond of drinking —— ; my father is very fond of my step-mother, because she is good to him and his children. I know that you dearest Collins is displeased with me for not writing a letter to him ; I hope he is not, because I am in a hurry to learn to make shoe. Tell Collins, I have seen the Duke of Wellington, who is riding on his fine horse ; he has nose aquiline ; he is a thin man ; his hair is light ; his cheeks are half white ; he wear a blue surtout and white nankeen ; his horse has a long tail ; soldiers and officers follow him ; his lips are small ; he has two long teeth, like Brennan.

"I am yours,
"P. R."

SOCIETY.

THE reader has probably never had occasion to contemplate the peculiar position in mixed company of one who is deprived of his hearing. In now proceeding to this subject, it may be proper to define that by "society," is meant a company composed of almost any number of persons beyond one's own domestic circle.

If one who is deaf has any respect for himself, and for his own feelings, as well as for the real comfort of others, he will not be solicitous to bring himself into that unequal condition which his presence, say at a dinner party, imposes: nor is it clear that one whose condition is socially so unequal to that of others, has any right to introduce into such company the anomaly which his inability to take part in the flow and windings the conversation involves. Those around him will be uneasy if they neglect him; and will yet feel that in attending to him they are making a sacrifice of some part of their own enjoyment in "the flow of soul" around. Under such circumstances, it is surely a social duty in the deaf to avoid company, in the assurance that by going into it, or gathering it around him, he is only a stumbling-block to the pleasure of others, and is only laying up for himself a store of mortification and of regret for those terrible disqualifications which, in the solitude of

his chamber, or in the presence of his trained domestic circle, he may half forget.

Still there are occasions in which even one who is deaf cannot without apparent affectation or show of neglect, avoid "putting in his appearance" on such occasions: and the feeling of what would under ordinary circumstances be considered due to his social position, will be stronger than the perception of his unfitness for this portion of its obligations.

This, with the apprehension that others will not give enough thought to the matter to allow for any marked evasion, or to appreciate his reasons for it, will sometimes tempt him to the daring act of quitting the sober light of his shaded reading lamp for the full blaze of wax candles. If the party be his own, he will get on better, although his responsibilities are greater, than when it is another's; for, in the former case, all the persons composing it will be known to him, in the latter only a few. If the company which he joins is brought together by and at the house of a friend, the ease of the deaf guest will be proportioned to the number of personal acquaintances, or at least of known faces, which he is able to recognize. A glance at the company will satisfy him of his position in this respect, and assure him of the ground on which he stands. I have usually on such occasions endeavoured to seat myself near the person whom, of all my acquaintance present, I know to be the most expert dactylogist, and able in a quiet way to attend to me without appearing to neglect the company. When this choice of a victim for the evening has been managed with reasonable skill and judgment, one great part of the difficulty and embarrassment

of an anomalous position is over. The person thus selected has, by the fact of that selection, a somewhat onerous task imposed upon him: but he invariably submits quietly to his fate; and if at first he does wince a little, he soon regains his good humour, and discharges his task with feeling and spirit, and gets animated by a desire to impart to me some share of the enjoyment which is circulating through the room.

The right of enlistment for this special service is never disputed, nor is there any appeal from it. It is one of the few offices remaining in this country, which the person to whom it is offered is not at liberty to decline. The right of making it, is supported by a tacit understanding on all sides, that it is the best thing that can be done for the general benefit, and for my own in particular. My individual benefit is clear: and, for the company, it is convenient to be able to feel that there is some one to attend to me, when they are disposed to abandon themselves to the general current of conversation; and one through whom such of them as may not happen to know the finger alphabet, may be able to exchange some words with me. The unfortunate recruit himself is the only one who has any reason to complain. And he does not complain: for there must have been a singular failure of discrimination if the selection has fallen on one in whose good humour and willingness for the service reliance may not be placed.

The duty which practically devolves upon this obliging person is, to keep his client apprised of the general current of the conversation, and to exhibit in some detail, the salient points which from time to time produce such animation in the

company as to awaken his curiosity and interest. It also becomes his part, to repeat on the fingers any intimation or communication addressed orally to his deaf friend; and also to repeat aloud for the benefit of the company, any observation made by the latter, which he thinks may be advantageously produced. For it is to be observed, that in such cases all my observations, except those in answer to direct questions, are addressed to the interpreter: as it never occurs to me, in mixed company, to speak across a table or a room, or to any one who is not close to me. This is doubtless a result of the practically mute condition in which I remained some years after my accident, and from which I never recovered the power of pitching my voice to a distance, or the confidence of being able to make myself understood by a person not close at hand; although I am told that my vocal powers are not in this respect so deficient as my own impressions seem to intimate.

The task which has been imposed on this friend is seldom so protracted as to tire him quite out. When a movement has taken place, it is ten to one that some one of the company—a previous acquaintance or a stranger—has sufficient confidence in his power of finger, as to come forward and enter into conversation; and if the circle has become more compact, the example draws in others, till, towards the close of the evening, it will often happen that I am enabled to make the nearest approach of which my condition is capable, towards taking a real share in a general conversation.

This is the utmost advantage that can be realized, and it is by no means a sufficient equipoise

to the disadvantages. Some of these have already been indicated, and others may easily be imagined. One, which is most acutely felt on such occasions, is the distressing consciousness of incapacity and privation, in the feeling that you are in the presence of men well able to enliven by their wit, or illustrate by their knowledge, any subject of which they may be then actually speaking; and to observe by the play of the features and the motions of the company, the varied interest, or pleasure, or enthusiasm, with which they listen or speak; and to feel—to know from actual and present experience, that your body only is present at

> "The feast of reason and the flow of soul;"

and that in this

> "Intercourse of thought and wisdom;"

you can be no real partaker.

There is nothing which so much as this brings home to the heart the full sense of this terrible privation, or which so sharply unveils the real misery of this condition. The First Report of the Dublin Asylum affords an anecdote bearing on this point; and it is so forcibly significant, that I shall here introduce it.

"Thomas Collins (a pupil whose progress was afterwards considered remarkable), being present where some gentlemen were conversing on a subject that interested them deeply, he watched the varying expressions of their countenances, with the most minute and anxious attention, as if endeavouring to catch some knowledge of what seemed to afford them so much entertainment, and striving, as it were, to burst the bonds which withheld him

from the social circle. He repeatedly asked by signs to be informed of what was the source of their obvious gratification, but the subject of their conversation being beyond the range of his attainments at that time, he could receive no answer that was calculated to satisfy his curiosity. Finding all his efforts to participate in their pleasure fruitless, and productive only of disappointment, the poor child at length turned away his head, with a countenance expressive of the deepest regret and dejection, and almost bursting into tears, made use of the few words which he had at that time learned to use and to understand, to say, 'Deaf and Dumb is bad,—is bad,—is bad!'"

In a company not mixed, that is, composed of persons all of whom are my friends and acquaintances—such as even a deaf man will feel bound occasionally to assemble in his own house, the case is somewhat different from that which has been already described. The confidence which he gathers from the consciousness of being really at home, among friends familiar with his difficulties, and disposed to receive all his attempts with indulgent consideration; and with curious books and prints at hand, to fall back upon in case of emergency—all this strengthens his weak social position, and emboldens him to try, at least, to do something towards the discharge of the responsibilities which his place as host imposes upon him, of assisting to make the time pass pleasantly. It is nevertheless true, with some limitations, that a deaf man, from his inability really to follow the windings and turnings of the conversation, must take either a leading part or no part in it. I have myself usually taken the leading part at first; but it would be impossible to sustain this

effort long, and therefore, when the ball of conversation seems fairly up, and all parties appear sufficiently interested in talking or listening to one another, I gradually withdraw from the talk, and take the position of an attentive *listener*. Let not the reader smile at this: for he may be assured that one who is deaf, is the most attentive and wrapt of listeners. He sits watching by turns the mouth-play of the speaker, and the varied expression of his countenance, with a side glance at those of the hearers. There is no compliment to an animated talker so great as that fixed attention which the deaf alone can give; and if he notes it, he half forgets one's deafness, and proceeds under a vague impression, that in some way or other, his conversation with others imparts pleasure even to the deaf. And so it does for a time: but an attention productive of no real benefit to the mind or spirit, cannot be long sustained. But, by the time it begins to flag, he finds that the company are so deeply engaged in conversation as to be in a condition to bear and excuse his apparent neglect, if at all noticed; and he will contrive to give half his attention to a book or paper, which an easily acquired tact enables him to do without seeming neglectful of the company or uninterested in what is passing.

Another resource is to engage one or more of the party in the inspection of some rare or curious books, or of a collection of prints. This is an excellent diversion, and fully excuses any apparent inattention to the company; as every one feels that he is at liberty to partake of this enjoyment if he pleases, and is a sort of half-consciousness in his mind, that he is neglecting what you consider a source of interest, becomes an admirable set-off

against the real but unavoidable neglect on your side. Of course no one, when he comes to consider the matter, would blame a person who is deaf from any resource of this kind, to which he might be driven, in company, by the necessities of his position. But it always seems to me, that something more is necessary, than to have the verdict of an approving judgment, when the matter comes to be considerately weighed. That should be done which seems right and proper at the moment, and which the mind instinctively recognizes to be such, without having the trouble to consider. The appeal to the ultimate judgment, against any unpleasant feeling which you have been instrumental in creating in a party intended to be pleasurable, is one that cannot with propriety be lodged under any circumstances; and the eare should be to prevent, so far as possible, all occasion for it, by enabling your friends to depart perfectly satisfied with you and with themselves.

There is, however, one most perfect way of obtaining this result; enabling even a deaf man to become really one of the party, and to derive enjoyment from it, in a degree which could scarcely be imagined by the uninitiated. This, however, so far as I am concerned, depended on the kindly co-operation of one man, and although that man was, in the time of my greatest need, taken from me, it is well to have the opportunity of notiнg in one's tablets

——" That there is such a feeling."

This person was the one with whom—far beyond all others—I most enjoyed private intercourse, from a number of common sympathies in literature, from his excellent talents and strong powers of

observation, from his being able to impart much of the kind of information, floating about in society, to which I had no other means of access; from the striking points of view in which his lively fancy invested, and the singular phosphoric light which it left for a moment upon, every subject on which it rested. And then, which was his crowning gift—he had, beyond all the persons I ever knew, the talent of giving to his finger-talk much of the distinctness, the emphasis, the intonation, the colloquial ease of oral language: and all these peculiar endowments, so admirably suited to my wants that I might have wandered over the globe without finding another like him, were animated and *applied* by a distinct and vivid appreciation of my condition, and by a sort of friendly gratification in the knowledge of the enjoyment which he knew that he was capable of imparting to me. This prevented the exertions necessary to any prolonged intercourse with me, from being in any way burdensome to him; and indeed, I have reason to think that, notwithstanding the inequality of all intercourse between the hearing and the deaf, the enjoyment was, in some degree, reciprocal; although to him there was open intercourse necessarily much more pleasurable than any which a solitary deaf man could offer, while to me there was nothing on earth comparable to, or in rivalry with, the enjoyment which he was capable of affording.

I have specified this, that it may be the better understood what a relief and resource it was to me when this friend was present at such a party as I have just described. Every thing went right the moment he appeared. He at once threw an ægis over me, under which I not only found shelter from the

soeial difficnlties of my temporary position, but became able to receive mueh satisfaetion from the company, and perhaps to impart a little. He took, as by instinct, his place between me and the company, and gave new life to both. His voluble tongue became at the service of the party, and his equally voluble fingers at mine; and occasionally both could be going at once on different subjects. I am certainly persuaded that he heard separately with both ears; and I am in doubt that he did not see separately with both eyes. At all events, the facility with whieh he managed an nnder eurrent of talk with me, while taking his full share in that of the eompany, was truly wonderful. He also *indiced* to me the general current and windings of the conversation, and *detailed*, with rare taet, the partieular points which might suggest the whole, or which involved any strong or witty remark. This was a rare qualification for me. In general, when you see the eompany visibly amused or interested, and ask to know the eause, the ehances are that the person to whom you apply thinks it *not worth* repeating on his fingers; and so even at the end of a long sitting, which appears to have been animated, you apply to one of yonr own domestie eirele for a report of the subjects which have engaged attention, yon will probably find that nothing has made a sufficiently distinet impression to seem worth reeording. This is one great annoyance in the estate of the deaf. He is confined to the solid bones, the dry bread, the hard wood, the substantial fibre of life; and gets but little of the graee, the nnetion, the gilding and the flowers, which are to be found preeisely in those small things which are "not worth" reporting on the fingers.

The friend of whom I have spoken, understood this; and he was not backward to impart to me the casual intimation and light remark, while still warm and volant from the speaker's mouth, and animated by the gleam of his countenance. In his esteem, nothing that was large enough to please, was too small for the fingers; and this feeling, on his part, was not the least of the things which, taken together, constituted the charm of his society to me.

In the attempt to take part in the current conversation without engrossing it entirely, one who is deaf will encounter some curious difficulties. It has been my own custom to inquire from time to time what turn the conservation has taken, and then, perhaps, the general drift, or some pointed observation which may suggest it, is reported to me. I am then prompted to make an observation on that subject, which I may, perhaps, think striking or suggestive; but the difficulty is how to discharge it. The eyes are thrown round the circle again and again, to catch a moment when no one else is speaking. But nothing is harder to catch than this. After long watching for the happy moment in which a sentence may be thrust in, it may seem at last to be secured. Every tongue is at rest. Then I begin, when a start of divided attention, a look wandering from me to another, apprises me that the ball of conversation had again been struck up in another part of the circle in the brief interval of an eye-blink, and I find myself involved in the incivility and rudeness of having interrupted another, perhaps a lady, and have to drop, with confusion of face, the word I had taken up, or else to give it utterance

under circumstances of apology and pressure, which magnifies into mortifying importance, and therefore renders abortive, what was designed only as an airy remark or jocular illustration.

If, however, it so happens that I do succeed in launching my observation without such utter wreck at the outset, I have often the humiliation of finding that it has become stale by keeping, and that it applies to a subject which the rapid current of oral talk has left a mile behind. In both cases, although the remark may have been perfectly impromptu, that is, may have occurred at the very moment the intimation was made to you, the time which has passed till the opportunity for giving it utterance occurs, will necessarily give one the appearance of having been all this while concocting what turns out to be no great matter after all. Sometimes, however, the very reverse of this happens: and the observation may prove to be the very same which is being made, or has just been made, or is just about to be made, by another of the party. This singular coincidence is much more frequent than the uninitiated would imagine. It merely shows how two minds set upon the same track may reach the same point together. And even this is only in appearance; for while the other party utters what he has then first conceived, I necessarily utter what I had some time before conceived, and had waited an opportunity to deliver. The coincidence of utterance is still, however, singular, and is sometimes so much the same, even in form of words, as to call forth many merry exclamations of "You hear!" "You hear!" "You are found out!" etc. And, in truth, at the first glance such a fact will convey this impression, although the second will show that

no one possessed of his hearing would say the same thing that another was saying or had just said.

Under such circumstances as have been here described, a strange craving arises for that lesser talk which no person thinks it worth while to repeat to one who is deaf, and which indeed no such repetition can adequately convey. I sigh to hear the talk of children to each other; and have a strong desire to be in a condition to pick up the wisdom and the foolishness that cry in the streets. If I am walking with a friend, nothing surprises me more than his indifference to the street-talk which is passing in all directions. I speculate within myself upon the intimations of condition, and the insights of feelings and character, which might be gathered from the expressions which must smite the ear in the streets; and I deplore the want of that endless amusement which might, as I judge, be derived from the peculiarities of phraseology and language, the cockneyisms, the provincialisms, and the technicalisms, of the various sorts and conditions of men who accost each other by the wayside. I am, to the extent of my resources, a diligent student of human character. I have been permitted to witness its developments, under different climates, religions, and governments, as manifested in countenance, dress, action, ceremony, and habits of life; and in all cases I have eagerly seized hold of any circumstance, however minute in itself, which seemed indicative or suggestive, or which supplied materials for comparison and analysis. This, indeed, has been the chief source of the interest which I have taken in foreign travel. I have had but an indifferent taste for anything which travel offered (mountains and trees excepted), save man and

the circumstances by which he is surrounded; and even ruins have been interesting to me chiefly as circumstances belonging to men of a past age, and I have cared for them only as I could read man in them. Oh, how it has delighted me to take a man, distinguished from his brother man by a thousand outward circumstances, which makes him appear at the first view almost as another creature —and, after knocking off his strange hat, his kullah, or his turban—after helping him off with his broadcloths, his furs, or his muslins—after clipping his beard, his pigtail, or his long hair—after stripping away his white, black, brown, red, or yellow skin—to come at last to the very man, the very son of Adam, and to recognize by "one touch of nature," one tear, one laugh, one sigh, one upward or downward look—the same old universal heart—the same emotions, feelings, passions, which have animated every human bosom, from the equator to the poles, ever since that day in which the first of men was sent forth from Paradise.

Now, it will be easily perceived that the same habit of observation may have large scope in the streets—especially in the streets of London, and might not lack objects even in a village. But then, when the comparison ceases to be that of nation with nation, and human character is no longer beheld under the differences produced by the influence of large circumstances, there is no alternative but to exercise this faculty—which is one that cannot be idle—in taking cognizance of the smaller matters, which, in the same nation, distinguish class from class and man from man. In doing this, deafness is felt to be a great hindrance and discouragement; for a thousand distinguishing traits

of individual character, must needs be lost to one who is unable to catch up the forms and habits of expression, which are as identifying and as characteristic as the personal manner and the countenance. To illustrate this deficiency and the sense of privation which it conveys, I may ask the reader whether in the stories of Mr. Dickens, the numerous characters are not identified and fixed in the mind more by their manner of speech than, as characters, by the descriptions of their conduct and personal appearance? It cannot be denied that their talk goes far to make up the idea which we form of those characters. But the deaf student of living character, is in precisely the same case as would be the student of the characters in Boz, who should be acquainted with no other copy of the tales, than one in which all the talk is blotted out.

Having been thus led to mention my street studies of character, I may be permitted to remark that I never have been capable of deriving so much enjoyment from any recreation as from that which a walk in the principal streets of London has afforded to me. The numberless curiosities, new inventions, and interesting objects which fill the shop-windows on the one hand, and the little street incidents and endless varieties of human character and costume on the other, have at all times furnished to me a fund of amusement which no frequency of resort could exhaust or deaden. How often, at the end of a day's hard toil, have I thrown myself into an omnibus, and gone into town, for no other purpose in the world than to have a walk from Charing Cross to St. Paul's on the one hand, or to the top of Regent Street on the other; or from the top of Tottenham

Court Road to the Post Office. I know not whether I liked this best in summer or winter. I could seldom afford myself this indulgence but for one or two evenings a week, when I could manage to bring my day's studies to a close an hour or so earlier than usual. In summer there is daylight, and I could the better enjoy the picture shops and the street incidents, and might diverge so as to pass through Covent Garden, and luxuriate among the finest fruits and most beautiful flowers in the world. And in winter it might be doubted whether the glory of the shops, lighted up with gas, was not a sufficient counterbalance for the absence of daylight. Perhaps "both are best," as the children say; and yield the same kind of grateful change as the alternation of the seasons offers.

If I failed to secure this recreation, from press of editorial or other literary business, during the early portion of the week, I seldom missed it on Saturday night. This was because, as an observer of character, I took much interest in seeing the working people abroad with their wives, laying out the money which their week's labour had produced; and in witnessing the activity which this circumstance gave to many streets, and inspecting the commodities there exposed for sale in the open air. I felt that I could enter with interest into the feelings of the various parties pausing, hesitating, or purchasing at the various shops and stalls, materials for the hiss of universal fry, which on Saturday night ascends from fifty thousand hearths, or for the scarcely more enjoyed bake of the Sunday dinner. It was something to be able to enter into these matters, and to follow a hundred of these parties home, to assist in blowing the fire, to turn out be-

fore the eyes of the bigger children the treasures of the basket, to pacify the young ones, now all alive in bed, with an apple or other nicety, to watch the spit and sputter and hubbub of the frying-pan, and at length to share its steaming contents with all.

What a multitudinous host of beggars are then abroad, whom one sees not at any other time! Their faith in their own class—always willing, but then only able, to assist them; their assurance of the warm sympathies of those who have dominion over Saturday night, more than in the cold charities or colder uncharities of gentlefolks who have rule over the rest of the week; are the influences which that night may draw forth into the streets, from their wretched nooks, hundreds of miserable creatures, who but for the gleams of sympathy and kindness which in that one evening shine upon their hearts, would perhaps cast themselves down in helpless despair to curse God and die.

Then also the music is all abroad. Barrel-organs we have at all times; but on Saturday nights bands of fine instruments are about in all directions, as well as songsters and solitary fiddlers. This is not without enjoyment to me. I like to stand a few paces aloof from a party of Saturday-night people gathered round the musicians. I watch the impression it makes upon them, I sympathize in their attention, and by identifying myself with them, derive real enjoyment from the music through them, and drop my dole into the plate with as much cheerfulness as if the whole concourse of sweet sounds had rushed into my own ears.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THERE will be no difficulty in conceiving that one in my circumstances must needs sometimes experience an intense craving to hear again the human voice. Deaf-mutes cannot feel this in the same degree, if at all, seeing that they can have no clear idea, if any idea, of what hearing a vocal sound is. Many of the occasions under which this desire is experienced, have already been suggested, particularly in regard to the voices of the domestic circle, and the intercourse of friends: but to complete the developments connected with this subject, attention must now be given to a few other instances of this kind of feeling which could not be introduced under the heads which supplied the former examples.

I cannot pretend to any permanent regret in connection with the absence of vocal or other sounds. There are indeed times when I felicitate myself on the quiet which I am able to enjoy in my study, in the midst of all the noises which, as I am told, the voices of my children and knockings at the door produce. This is, however, but an incidental benefit; even as a man is secure from a surfeit who never dines: and is therefore of little weight in an estimate of the general condition. And now that I have touched on this point, I will not hesitate to denounce with indignation the cold

and miserable comfort of those, who seem to think it a kind of compensation for the loss or absence of a sense, that one is no longer exposed to some matters of annoyance, which the wide range of the organ must now and then embrace. What is this but to comfort a man with a wooden leg by the assurance that corns will no more afflict his toes; that his feet can be no more cold; and that he saves much in shoe leather? It is surely spare comfort to the deaf man, that the same calamity which shuts up to him the world of uttered thoughts, and from the sweet concords of the universe, also excludes an occasional noise or discordance; and to the blind, that the same lost sense which might enable them to look

> "Abroad through nature, to the range
> Of planets, suns, and adamantine spheres;"

might also light upon the annoyance of a dunghill or of a dead carcase.

It may also be added, that annoyances have much less difficult access to even the deaf, than such comforters imagine: and the exemption which has led to this remark, has a very equal counterpoise of disadvantage in the annoyances which grow out of the peculiarly keen perception of reverberations, which has been described in the chapter on Percussion.

It is my conviction, that the human mind is incapable of any permanent, unredeemed, feeling of affliction. Under this, the mind or body must soon give way, and yield the relief of madness or of the grave. If there were any physical calamities over which the mind might be supposed to brood with more abundant and abiding sorrow than any

others, they should be deafness and blindness: but the blind are proverbially cheerful, and the deaf, although less hilarious, do not rest in abiding depression. My own experience is this. It has been already stated, that at first, and in early boyhood, the enjoyments which hearing offered were necessarily too limited and too indistinctly appreciated, to occasion much, if any, regret at the loss I had sustained. But afterwards, when I became more truly aware of my real position, coupled as deafness was with other down-casting influences, my mind gradually became

> "Sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;"

and habitually rested in most sombre views of life, and of my own position and prospects in it. When, however, I was enabled to realize the pleasant consciousness that my solitary studies had not been altogether in vain, and that I might come as an invited guest, and not a beggar, to the feast of life, my views and feelings underwent a rapid change, and my average temper has become by far more cheerful than melancholy, and much more sanguine than despondent. It remains, however, that, from my course having lain so much alone and apart, I am less than most men able to endure the frets and annoyances from the outer world to which life is incident, and from which my own career has been by no means exempt. Under the nervous sensitiveness which is thus produced, many things oppress, grieve, and overpower me, which probably a man moving about among the activities of life, would heed but little.

The regrets arising *directly* from the sense of privation are by no means so common as might

be supposed, and are seldom experienced with any intensity, save in the presence of some strongly exciting cause. Some twenty years ago, just before I went abroad, I took a strange pleasure in attending the anniversary meetings then held in Freemasons' Hall. My sources of enjoyment in this were various. It gave me an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the persons and witnessing the manner of many who were at that time eminent for their eloquence in speech and writing; and of tracing the impression they made upon their auditors. Apart from other considerations, it was a satisfaction even to the deaf to realize the embodied presence of men whose names were then so familiar as those of Lords Teignmouth, Gambier, Bexley, and Harrowby; Sir R. H. Inglis, Charles and Robert Grant; Bishops Burgess, Ryder, and the Sumners; and such clergymen as Simeon, Daniel Wilson, Bickersteth, the Noels, Jerram, Cunningham, Rowland Hill, Irving, the Burders, the Claytons, the Parsons, etc. I found much interest in comparing the persons and manner of such men, with the idea which I had previously formed of them from their writings or character. Apart from this, the most animated speakers pleased me most; but I found that after I had seen enough of one speaker to be in possession of his manner, I soon tired of him, however animated, and longed for him to sit down, and another to rise. As my interest was divided between watching the speaker and observing the effect which he produced on the auditors, I had seldom much craving to be able to hear the whole of a speech. But when the audience broke into "loud cheers," or when the speaker came to his most vehement points of

action, I became keenly alive to my privation, and was most anxious to know the great words which had been so impressively delivered, or by which such effects had been produced. In this I was the more interested, as religious newspapers were then unknown, and the speeches at such meetings were therefore not reported, as they have more recently been. A friend was generally at hand to gratify my curiosity in this respect; and after having frequently marvelled at the very small causes of the great effects by which my curiosity had been excited, I would resume with the greater equanimity my silent observations upon the scene before me.

The sort of feeling which led me to attend these meetings eventually abated—probably because after a round of such attendances, the same persons constantly recurred, and the source of interest in them became exhausted when they ceased to convey new ideas. In those who *heard* their words, the interest in them might have been sustained for any length of time or under any number of impulses; but to me the interest was based on circumstances which soon ceased to afford any new developments.

The only public meeting of the same kind which I have of late years attended, was that which was held in Exeter Hall, under the presidence of Prince Albert, for the purpose of creating an interest in the Niger Expedition. The object was one in which I took much interest, and it gladdened my heart to find so many illustrious persons assembled to promote a design from which I then, in common with them, entertained hopes which were doomed to be frustrated. I was, indeed, aware that the presence of the Prince, whose first public appear-

ance this was, had more than anything else drawn together half of those illustrious persons, and more than half of that immense audience. But I was disposed to take my enjoyment as I found it, without inquiring too closely how its elements were composed. It was something to see together, on one platform, and assembled for one object, such men as the Bishops of Winchester, Exeter, and Chichester, Archdeacon Wilberforce, M. Guizot, Earl of Ripon, Lord Howick, Lord Ashley, Sir R. Peel, T. F. Buxton, Daniel O'Connell, S. Gurney, Jabez Bunting, J. Clayton, G. Dyer, Dr. Bowring, and others; and to see the chief of them rise one after another to sway by their words, one of the mightiest hosts that ever assembled within walls. The preponderance of political and the intermixture of historical men, imparted a new interest to this assembly, and I found some employment in comparing the oratorical manner of political men with that of clergymen, with which I had been more familiar, and I must say that the balance of impressive and becoming manner did not seem to me in favour of the latter, although the animated action of two of the clergymen present, gratified me much. Of course, I am no judge of these things: and I speak of them only for the purpose of showing how my condition directed the form, and determined the degree, of my enjoyment.

I was, of course, exceedingly desirous to hear the words of men of such great eminence in the world as many of those who then spoke, and to ascertain the precise causes of the great interest with which some of them were heard by the vast audience, and of the applauses which were showered lavishly upon them. This, therefore, was one of those occasions on which

a privation such as that under which I suffer, is the most strongly felt; yet the animation of the scene, and the zest with which the sources of enjoyment which remained open, were entered into, prevented that regret from becoming too acute. I was, besides, acquainted with the usual style and matter of most of the speakers, from the political and religious papers; and it was not difficult for my imagination to ascribe to them words correspondent to the feeling which their action manifested. Moreover, I knew that I should the next morning see in print all the speeches which had been uttered, and expected that I should be able to recognize in them the points by which enthusiasm was so strongly excited. On this I reckoned with too much confidence; for, in reading the speeches, I was far from being always able to find points of statement or eloquence, which appeared to me adequate to the applause which had been excited; and many of the addresses were by no means so rich or so eloquent as the extent of that applause had led me to expect. But this was, without doubt, the fault of the reporters. However, the comparison of my own coolness in *reading* the very speeches, which had been delivered with earnestness and *heard* with enthusiasm, supplied a measure for, and made me painfully aware of, the extent of my privation. It enabled me to realize an idea of the power possessed by the human voice, of rendering the communications of man to man more engaging and persuasive, and of investing the intercourse of life and intellect with a grace and energy, in comparison with which the dry, hard forms of words, as exhibited in print and writing, are poor indeed.

Since this I have been in the House of Commons,

and witnessed a somewhat animated debate. But this added nothing to the experiences I have now described. The interest taken in the speeches was almost the same as I have just mentioned, and my chief attention was engaged in observing how the great business of talk was managed in our legislature; and in studying the persons of the numerous public men who were then present, as they were successively pointed out to me by a well-informed friend. I must confess, to my shame, that I was much more amused than awe-struck by the scene before me. I was shocked by the want of solemnity in what I had been wont to regard as the most august assembly upon earth. The number of odd figures coming in and out, and crossing the floor, or talking freely to each other *while another was speaking*, distracted me beyond measure, as confused and irregular movement always does: and my far too active sense of the ridiculous almost overcame me when the very remarkable Sergeant-at-Arms shouldered his mace with the air of a musqueteer, and escorted up to the table two robed and wigged Masters in Chancery who brought down a bill from the Lords', and who, in retiring, walked backward the whole length of the floor, stopping at regulated intervals in their retrogressive course to bow very low to the chair. This absence of a becoming impression of our great legislative assembly, must no doubt be ascribed to my being able to apprehend it only through the eye; for if I could have heard also, I should surely have come away with all the grave impressions which I had expected to realize. Besides, as I viewed the house from the reporter's gallery, which is above and behind the chair, I lost the view of so essential a feature as the Speaker

in all his glory, the sight of which would certainly have given adequate solemnity to all my perceptions.

In a preceding chapter I have described the usage respecting proper names among deaf-mutes. My own experience with reference to such names could not there be introduced, as it had no direct relation to the subject of the chapter ; but it is too remarkable to be left unrecorded.

A person in the full enjoyment of his senses is in the habit of constantly hearing the names of persons with whom he is even in a slight degree associated, or whom he is in the habit of seeing frequently. The reverse of this is the case with the deaf. A person's face often becomes as familiar to him as that of one of his own family, before he is acquainted with his name ; and when a name is given to him, in the way of formal introduction or in answer to direct inquiry, it is in most cases imparted to him but once, and therefore does not make that distinct impression which frequent repetition produces. It is hence often forgotten beyond recovery ; and this is a circumstance which not seldom occasions much confusion and embarrassment, and sometimes may prove the source of unpleasant feeling to those who do not sufficiently consider the peculiar difficulties of the deaf condition. An example which made a vivid impression upon my own mind will illustrate this.

On my last return from the East, I was detained for some time at a port on the Black Sea, waiting for a vessel in which to proceed to Constantinople.

During this time I remained with the British Consul, in the receipt of those gentlemanly hospitalities to which many travellers before and since have been eager to acknowledge their obligations. Among the permanent inmates were two gentlemen whom I met at every meal, and from whom I received much local information and many kindnesses. Some years after I was privileged to meet the Consul in London; and in the course of conversation inquired after these gentlemen. One of them I had no difficulty in naming, as his name had intermediately come under my notice as the correspondent of a scientific journal; but the name of the other, with whom I had had far more communication, had utterly escaped me, although his person and manner were most vividly before me. Unaware of this, I proceeded to inquire concerning "Mr." —— and there I found myself at a dead halt, which distressed me beyond measure, as calculated to suggest that I had but a very faint recollection of one who had shown much kindness to me. The name itself seemed indeed at the tip of my tongue; but it would not quit my mouth; and after a pause of nervous anxiety, I was constrained to indicate the person as "the gentleman with the silver snuff-box;" resorting in fact to an oral *sign*, to express the name which I was unable to recover.

Now I had been in circumstances in which, if possessed of hearing, this gentleman's name would have been heard by me at least ten times a day during three or four weeks, so that it could not have failed to occur most readily to me on all future occasions; but the fact being, that it had only once or twice been brought before me in all

that time, and that I had never met with it in the intervening years, sufficiently accounts for the lapse of recollection. But it was not likely that this point would be considered by the person who witnessed my hesitation; and I have often since recurred to this incident with much annoyance, which would have been greatly increased had I supposed it likely that the gentleman whose name was in question, should ever become acquainted with the fact of my imperfect recollection.

Another fact, which has some bearing on the subject, may here be mentioned. In society I am not seldom accosted by persons who seem to assume that I know them, but of whose names I am wholly ignorant and whose persons I do not recognize. In this case, it will usually turn out that the person is one with whom I have been in literary correspondence without having ever before seen him; and as he readily and immediately hears who I am, he easily and naturally assumes that I am in possession of the same information concerning himself, and proceeds on that assumption; although it may in fact happen, that I am not until after the interview aware that I have been speaking with an old acquaintance.

Now it is true, that a little recollection and consideration on the part of those with whom—as in both the above cases—the deaf come into intercourse, might obviate any misconceptions; but people *do not* recollect or consider such matters; and under the views which have been stated in the last chapter, I freely admit that the task of doing so ought not to be imposed upon them. The deaf man who goes into society must take it as he finds it—suited to the conditions and habits of persons

who can hear each other; and he has no right to expect that the ordinary terms of social intercourse should be restrained or modified to meet his solitary and peculiar case.

The incident which has been related, in which "the gentleman with the silver snuff-box," was, in a fit of desperation, resorted to in the want of the proper name, reminds me to state that I much better remember such names as are significant than such as are not. From this perhaps, as well as because it is an amusing intellectual exercise, I find myself much in the habit of endeavouring to make out the etymology and signification of most of the proper names which come across me, and of building a set of inferences upon them: and it rarely happens that any name which has been the subject of this exercise, subsequently escapes my recollection. That no friend may be offended at my taking liberties with his name, I will illustrate this point from my own. Few readers will be able to attach any signification to it. It long baffled my own inquiries, and I was disposed to refer its etymology to the unknown tongues. In this classical country, a disposition exists to confound it with Cato; and, in the Mediterranean, Spaniards would have it to be Quito, while my Italian friends vowed that it was Chetto, and claimed me for a countryman on the strength of it, triumphantly adducing my complexion as an undeniable proof of their position. This I had good reason for disputing: but had nothing better to propose, till I found that the very word, letter for letter, Κιττώ, is that which Dioscorides uses in the name of a species of Cassia. This again is called in Hebrew קדה *kiddah*, which, as well as the Greek, pro-

bably represents the Phœnician name of this aromatic. Now the Phœnicians had much intercourse for tin with the remote part of Cornwall, from which my grandfather brought his family ; and the probability is that it was at least a Phœnician name, if it does not imply a Phœnician origin for those who bear it. In such conclusions I rest.

There is one point of difference between the deaf and the blind which does not appear to have received all the attention it deserves, although it seems better calculated than any other single circumstance which could be produced to illustrate the disparity of their intellectual condition. This is the prominence of poetical tendencies in the blind, and the utter absence of such tendencies in the deaf. The cause of this remarkable difference is not very recondite. The blind have a perfect mastery of words, and their sole reliance upon the ear, as the vehicle of pleasurable sensations, renders them exquisitely alive to harmonious sounds and numbers. Add to this, that in the absence of the resources in reading, etc., which hearing allows, it must be a most interesting occupation and solace to the blind, to be able to occupy themselves in poetical compositions, in marshalling their ideas, and in constructing and polishing their verse. During those hours in which they must necessarily be left to their own resources, the time thus employed must move more pleasantly away than in any other intellectual exercise which could be devised.

But the deaf man, having external resources from visual impressions, will not take the same

degree of interest in this as a mental exercise, even supposing him equal to it. But he cannot be equal to it; for he not only *wants* all the peculiar resources of the blind man for this kind of occupation, but his disqualifications for it are in direct antagonism to the qualifications of the other. In the first place he wants words; and then he has in a painfully literal sense, *no ear* for numbers. For want of oral guidance in hearing others speak, it is next to impossible that he should have that knowledge of quantity and rhyme which is essential to harmonious verse. He would also be unsafe in his rhymes: for rhyme lies in assonances which can often only be determined by the ear; and verse will require words which one who became deaf in early life will never have heard. It is, therefore, not wonderful that the deaf-mutes, and those who have become deaf in childhood, never do attempt to contend with these difficulties, which seem absolutely insuperable. I am utterly ignorant of any verse—for I will not venture to call my own such—written by any persons under such circumstances. With those who become deaf after adult age has been attained, the case may be different—although I am not aware of any poetry which even such persons have given to the world. My own experience in this matter is easily told.

I do not apprehend that I ever heard poetry read or recited by others previously to my accident, and up to that time I had so little idea of blank verse, that when a poem in such verse fell into my hands, I marvelled on what grounds prose should be printed with the unequal lines of poetry, and was disappointed at not finding the rhymes at the end of them. At first I read it as plain prose: then as

cadenced prose; and at length attempted to read it as poetry. In doing this I fell into the habit of making a sensible pause to mark the ending of a line, whether the sense required it or not. I suspect this may be wrong; but to this day I am unable to assure my mind whether it be so or not. The hearing of a single recitation or reading in blank verse, would at once and long ago have set me right in this and other points, which to me still appear obscure and doubtful. With these experiences before me, I of course never attempted to write blank verse: and it is very rarely that I endeavour to read more than a few lines of it aloud. Rhymed verse I can read out with less difficulty; but for my own unuttered reading I prefer blank verse upon the whole, and enjoy it most.

I arrived very early at the conclusions which have now been stated. Yet, from a strange fancy which I have always had of trying to master difficulties, and from an unwillingness to regard *any* apparent disqualification of my condition as insuperable, I was tempted for the very reasons which would have seemed likely to deter me, to try my hand at verse. Nor was this the only reason. There is a time of life when the emotional character is more strongly developed than at any other; and if one is then subjected to exciting and impressive circumstances, the chances are ten to one that the feelings thus produced will strive to vent themselves in verse; the ordinary vehicles of human thought seeming then too poor and level for the due expression of intense emotions. It was at such a time that my attempts were made. The right view of the matter may therefore be, that I did not suffer my deafness to deter me from resorting to the modes of expres-

sion, which, at one time of life, seem natural to a certain class of feelings.

So I wrote. But I think myself happy that my literary habits were by that time so much fixed in more stern occupations, that I was prevented from making poetry a pursuit, or from entertaining any desire to place my effusions before the public. I was too little satisfied with anything I did in this line, to have any idea of its intrinsic merit: but I thought that I could so far manage the *forms* of verse, that, supposing a deaf man to have the true poetical spirit, those forms need not be regarded as constituting a *necessarily* insuperable bar to his making verse the vehicle of his thoughts and emotions. Still, I had myself always a misgiving in this matter. Although my verses, *as I read them*, would scan, although they had, from my own mouth and to my own mind, both rhythm and rhyme, I could never be sure that in the mouth of another, reading with the knowledge of an instructed ear, the rhythm would not halt, or the rhyme be truly assonant. This uncertainty was a great drawback on the enjoyment of my own attempts; and has helped to guard me from suffering a line of my own compositions to appear in print, or indeed to be displayed in any manner. In this I have also been influenced by another consideration, which would in any case have induced me to check rather than to encourage any poetical predilections. Men uneducated or self-educated, have for the most part betaken themselves so generally, if not exclusively, to poetry, that this has come to be almost regarded as their proper line of pursuit, and an ill-defined feeling is entertained of their being unfit for any other. Apart from my deafness, I should have

desired on this ground alone to eschew the tuneful art, and to addict myself, as I have done, to less flowery but more substantial studies. It has thus, from one cause and another, happened that, since the fit has been over, I have not concerned myself with verse, unless when constrained to indite some lines in young ladies' albums.

Since writing the above I have been at the pains to hunt up some of those old verses. A glance over them confirms me in the view which I have stated. The defects which they exhibit are quite apparent to the more cultivated taste and judgment, which it would be a shame to me had I not after the lapse of many years attained. Yet the rhythm and the rhyme, as I read these verses, still appears to me correct; and as there is no other way of settling the question which has here been mooted, I will venture to introduce a few specimens. If the reader can discover the formal errors—the bad rhymes—the halting, hopping, stumping feet—which I am unable to detect, then my proposition is demonstrated; but if he can make no such discoveries, it must then be admitted with some qualification. But I must earnestly stipulate that the reader shall bear in mind the single experimental purpose for which these lines are introduced. I solemnly repudiate and protest against the idea that I am advancing any poetical pretensions for my former or for my present self; and I should feel much distressed, if I supposed it likely that any of these lines should be cited without any reference to the considerations which have led me to introduce

them. For the rest, I must also decline any present responsibility for the morbid state of feeling (for which there were causes) which some of these lines evince; as well as for sentiments which however suited to the time of life at which they were written, would somewhat misbecome that staider age to which I have now attained. The piece entitled "Mary," is perhaps on this ground liable to some objection; but it is introduced because it is the only piece in which I can discover allusions to my deafness, which render it suitable to the object of the present volume.

ALTERNATIVES.

Were all the beams that ever shone
   From all the stars of day and night,
Collected in one single cone,
         Unutterably bright;—
I 'd give them for one glance of heaven
Which might but hint of sin forgiven.

Could all the voices and glad sounds
   Which have *not* fallen on my sense,
Be rendered up in one hour's bounds—
         A gift immense;—
I 'd for one whisper to my heart
Give all the joy this might impart.

If the great deep now offered all
The treasures in her bosom stored,
And to my feet I could now call
That mighty hoard ;—
I'd spurn it utterly for some
Small treasure in the world to come.

If the sweet scents of every flower—
Each one of which cheers more than wine—
One plant could from its petals pour,
And that were mine ;—
I would give up that glorious prize
For one faint breath from Paradise.

Were all the pleasures I have known,
"So few, so very far between,"
Into one great sensation thrown—
Not *then* all mean ;—
I 'd give it freely for one smile
From Him who died for me erewhile.

THE TEAR.

Upon the beautiful blue sea
A tear fell down at thought of THEE,
From the deep source within, whence rise
Mournings for my lost Paradise.
That tear adds motion to the wave
Which shall some far-off region lave :

Unconscious harbinger of grief
To shores I speed to for relief,
From the tempestuous whirl within
Of rage and pity, grief and sin ;—
Where seek, but hope not now to find,
Some charm to paralyze the mind,
Or else amuse and while away
The weariness of life's long day.
In vain !—The beautiful and new
With a lack-lustre eye I view,
And see with an averted sigh
The most vain shows of life pass by :
Thus idly wandering while the heart
Is rusted in the active part ;
The one deep sorrow only known,
Which sits upon the mind's own throne.

A storm arose. The waves their hue
To fleecy white changed from deep blue ;
And their soft undulating smile,
Swell'd into fury and turmoil.
Death followed in our wake, and Dread
A trembling view sent forth a-head.
But my soul plunged into the gloom,
To hail the symbols of its doom ;
Yet sighed once more to feel that life
Had no gifts left but such stern strife—
Sighed o'er the late yet far-off hours,
When bright suns shone, and fairer flowers
Than Shiraz' rose adorned the shade
Where Hope her blessed home had made.

Hope!—vain thing of song and tale,
Full bitterly shall they bewail,
Who trust thy promises, and lean
Thy silver anchor on, whose sheen
Doth only gild a rotten reed,
Which failing in extremest need,
Leaves bleeding, and in dust defiled,
The heart thy treacheries beguiled.
He that has felt—he only knows
The rending and convulsive throes
Which the heart suffers, till it fain
Finds food in its own proper bane,
And, hardened in many fires, can bear
The worst without a hope or fear.

Happy the living dead, who stand
On some tall summit of the land,
And look down with a smile of scorn,
On men whose hopes are daily born;
Who daily with new vigour rise,
Still to pursue what daily flies.
This I still lack: such stand on ground
Higher than one who looks around,
And in the elements which form
The earthquake, volcano, and storm,
Strives thus—with craving heart—to find
Something like fellowship of mind.

Look on the billows!—Who can tell
That the hot tear which from me fell,
By the deep sympathies which bind
Dead matter to the living mind,

Might not these elements awake
From their calm slumber, to partake
In the fierce anguish of a soul
Whose billows far more troubled roll?

Then welcome, welcome—thou great sea,
Thine awful sympathies to me.
Weary of things that seem to feel
And do not, I to thee appeal,
And joy thus in thine ancient mind
Some fellowship indeed to find—
Joy that thus thine answering roar
Thunders to many a clime and shore.

MARY.

One sparkle from my Mary's eye
Would I exchange for gems of Hind,
Or spices of rich Araby?
No:—a clear glowing light hath shin'd
Into the caverns of my mind,
To kindle thoughts which lay there cold,
And quicken hopes which died of old.
My soul to other vision blind,
And casting all its griefs behind,
Does count the diamonds and the gold
Which Eastern kings have left untold
But as a beggar's price to buy
One sparkle of my Mary's eye.

As the Chaldean, from his plain,
Upon him saw ten thousand eyes
Look down from the unclouded skies;
And deemed them, while he looked again,
The arbiters of joy and pain,
And from their thrilling glances drew
Conclusions most sublime—if true,—
So I resume my younger lore,
And turn astrologer once more;
And happy horoscopes I raise,
Replete with cheerful destinies,
From the kindly beams that shine,
Dear Mary, in these orbs of thine.

In silence I have walked full long
Adown life's narrow thorny vale,
Deaf to the melody of song,
And all music to me mute,—
From the organ's rolling peal
To the gay burst or mournful wail
Of harp, and psaltery, and lute.

Heaven's dread answer I have heard
In thunder to old ocean's roar,
As while the elements conferr'd,
Their voices shook the rock-bound shore.
I've listened to the murmuring streams,
Which lulled my spirit into dreams,
Bright hopes, and fair imaginings,
But false as all that fancy flings
Upon a page where pain and strife
Make up the history of life.

And so beneath o'ershadowing trees,
I've heard leaves rustle in the breeze,
Which brought me the melodious tale
Of the all vocal nightingale,
Or else, the cushat's coo of pride
Over his own new mated bride ;—
Yes : I have heard thee—Nature, thee,
  In all thy thousand voices speak,
Which *now* are silent all to me :—
  Ah, when shall this long silence break,—
And all thy tides of gladness roll
In their full torrent on my soul ?

But as the snows which long have lain
  On the cold tops of Lebanon,
  Melt in the glances of the sun,
And, with wild rush, into the plain
Haste down, with blessings in their train :—
So Mary, gilded by thine eye
  Griefs melt away, and fall in streams
  Of hope into the land of dreams,
And life's inanities pass by
Unheeded, without tear or sigh.

True, that the human voice divine
Falls not on this cold sense of mine ;
And that brisk commercing of thought
Which brings home rich returns, all fraught
With ripe ideas—points of view
Varied, and beautiful, and new,

Is lost, is dead, in this lone state
Where feelings sicken, thoughts stagnate,
And good and evil knowledge grows
Unguided and unpruned, and throws—
Too often a dull sickening shade,
Like that by trees of Java made,
O'er hopes and o'er desires which might
Have lived in glory and delight,
Blessed and blessing others, till
The gaspings of this life were still.

But Mary, when I look on thee
All things beside neglected lie,
There is deep eloquence to me
In the bright sparkle of thine eye.
How sweetly can their beamings roll
Volumes of meaning to my soul,
How long—how vainly all—might words
Express what one quick glance affords.
So spirits talk perhaps when they
Their feelings and their thoughts convey,
Till heart to heart, and soul to soul
Is in one moment opened all.

Mary, one sparkle of thine eye
I 'd not exchange for all the gems
That shine in kingly diadems,
Or spices of rich Araby.
My heart would count th' refined gold
Which Eastern kings have left untold
But as a beggar's price to buy
One sparkle of my Mary's eye.

* * *

I *am* a beggar;—poor indeed!
That eye whose glance was ample meed
For all the blood-strife that I knew,
The toil, the sorrow I went through,
No love, no strength, no skill could save
From the obstructions of the grave.
Was not that glance of heaven? Oh, why
Should things so little earthly die?
Why for the bridal of the tomb
Clothe them in loveliness and bloom?

Who can these hard things answer? Thou
To whom perforce I turn me now.
Oh! I 'm not only deaf but blind—
Blind, blind of heart. Oh! seek me, find
Thy lost one—he so prone to stray
From that sequestered and cool way,
Where thine walk, guided by thine eye
And cheer'd;—and Thou dost never die.

THE FLYING FISH.

Brief visitant of suns and skies, poor thing!
Thou unto me a theme and moral art.
Like thee, from grosser elements I start,
And upward bound with a convulsive spring;
But soon, with relaxed energy of wing—
The law of evil bound up in my heart—
I sink, till some fresh impulse shall me bring
Again from the deep waters which o'erflow.

Then may I fly to Thee, O Christ, and cling
Unto thy robes for refuge; for I know
That thou can'st hold me up—can'st draw the sting
Of all these woundings, and assuage the woe
Which hath brought down my strength of soul so low.

THE GARDEN.

My hope's enclosed garden,—where there grew
The trees that I had planted, and sweet flow'rs
Enwreathed in shady arbours and fair bow'rs
Of every form and fragrance—every hue
That the untroubled spirit loves to view;—
Where I have spent all my serenest hours,
Mocking the scowl of pride, and the fierce low'rs,
Which the ungentle world upon me threw;—
Is now a cheerless desert—broken—wild—
Whereon no eye reposeth with delight—
Of all its garniture and sweetness spoiled
By the keen winds and the untimely blight,
Which have not left my lilies undefiled,
Or spared my roses, beautiful and bright.

PSALM lxii. 6.

Like rain on the mown grass, He shall come down—
Like showers sent to water the hot earth
Making most fruitful its autumnal birth,—
So mild—so gentle! Not before His frown
Need the heart wither, or the blood congeal;
Not in the lightnings which pale Horeb saw,
Not in the thunders of avenging law
He cometh—for He cometh but to heal.

O that men would receive Him! O that we
 Could open the lone chambers of the heart,
For His dear love to dwell in!—then would He
 To all our wants from all His wealth impart,—
Strength to our weakness; healing to our sore;
Oblivion to the fears we knew of yore.

HOME.

If earth be not my home why then should I
 The blessedness and joy of home seek there—
 There make my rest, and build me dwellings fair
Which I may not inhabit? Why, Oh! why
On most vain things and vainer hopes rely?
 Why still again the pleasing structures rear
 Which have so oft dissolved into thin air,
And left me shelterless to misery?
Oh, for home indeed!—a place to hide
 Till the fierce biting winds are all blown by;
And not alone to flee to—but abide,
Free from these cares, this agony, this toil,
 Or where hope still may check the rising sigh,
And comfort me in pain and wearisome turmoil.

MASSIEU AND OTHERS.

I HAVE already more than once adverted to this celebrated pupil of the Abbé Sicard; and as he, beyond all deaf-mutes, possessed the power of explaining his own condition, I shall, in this place, introduce the details which he has given; and, in proceeding, offer some remarks upon them.

The author of a little book, called 'La Corbeille de Fleurs,' relates that he was anxious to have from Massieu some particulars concerning his childhood, and induced him to furnish in writing the following history of his first years.

"I was born at Semens, in the canton of St. Macaire, department of La Gironde. My father died in the month of January, 1791; my mother lives still. In my country we were six deaf-mutes, of the same paternal family, three boys and three girls. Until the age of thirteen years and nine months, I remained in my country, where I never received any instruction.

"I expressed my ideas by manual signs, or by gestures. The signs which I at that time used to express my ideas to my parents, and to my brothers and sisters, were very different from those of the instructed deaf-mutes. Strangers never understood us, when we were expressing to them our ideas; but the neighbours understood us.

"I saw oxen, horses, pigs, dogs, cats, vegetables, houses, fields, vines; and when I had seen all these

objects I remembered them well."—This phrase appears to refer to the great distinctness of ocular impressions, which there has been occasion to illustrate in a preceding page.

"Before my education, while I was a child, I knew neither to read or write. I desired to write and read. I often saw young boys and girls who were going to school, and I desired to follow them."—Which, it would seem, arose not from the most distant conception of what reading and writing really were, but from a vague feeling that there was some unknown privilege and enjoyment in the matter, from which he ought not to be excluded. He says, indeed, himself "*Et j'en étais très jaloux.*"

"I begged of my father, with tears in my eyes, permission to go to school. I took a book and turned it upside down to mark my ignorance. I put it under my arm as if to go out; but my father refused me the permission I requested, making signs to me that I should never be able to learn anything, because I was deaf and dumb."—Here Massieu appears somewhat to introduce into the description of his former state matters derived from his later knowledge. The idea of turning a book upside down to mark ignorance, would not occur to a person unable to read, who, indeed, would not know whether a book was upside down or not.

"Then I cried very loud. I again took the books to read them; but I neither knew the letters nor the words, nor the phrases, nor the periods. Full of vexation, I put my fingers in my ears, and demanded with impatience of my father to have them cured.

"He answered me, that there was no remedy.

Then I was disconsolate. I quitted my father's house and went to school, without telling my father. I addressed myself to the master, and asked him by signs to teach me to read and write. He refused me roughly, and drove me from the school. This made me cry much; but my purpose I gave not up. I often thought of writing and reading. I was then twelve years old; I attempted alone to form with the pen the writing signs."—In this we see, that by a sort of unconscious instinct, the poor lad was directed to what was really the best and only resource for him, and that he held to it in the face of all discouragement and opposition. This was PERSEVERANCE; and perseverance is the secret of his eventual success, as, in another line of things, it has been of my own.

"In my childhood, my father made me make prayers in gestures, evening and morning. I threw myself on my knees, I joined my hands and *moved my lips* in imitation of those who speak when they are praying to God. At present I know there is a God, who is the creator of heaven and earth. In my childhood I adored the heavens, not God. I did not see God, I did see the heavens.

"I did not know whether I had been myself made, or whether I made myself.

"I grew tall. But if I had not known my instructor Sicard, my mind would not have grown as my body, for my mind was very poor; in growing up I should have thought the heavens were God.

"Then the children of my age did not play with me, they despised me. I was like a dog. I amused myself alone in playing at ball, or marbles, or running about on stilts.

"I knew the numbers before my instruction,—my fingers had taught me them; but I did not know the figures. I counted with my fingers, and when the number passed ten, I made notches on a stick.

"During my childhood, my parents sometimes made me watch a flock; and often those who met me, touched with my condition, gave me money.

"One day a gentleman who was passing took a liking to me. He made me go to his house, and gave me to eat and drink.

"Afterwards, when he went to Bordeaux, he spoke about me to M. Sicard, who consented to take charge of my education.

"This gentleman wrote to my father, who showed me his letter; but I could not read it. My relations and neighbours told me what it contained. They informed me that I should go to Bordeaux. They thought it was to learn to be a cooper; my father said to me that it was to learn to read and write.

"I set out with him for Bordeaux. When we arrived there, we went to visit M. l'Abbé Sicard, whom I found very thin."—Here he was obviously in search of a circumstance by which he might distinguish this person, in place of a proper name; and he fixed on his thinness.

"I commenced by forming letters with my fingers. In the space of many days, I knew how to write some words. In the space of three months I knew how to write many words. In the space of six months I knew how to write some phrases. In the space of a year I wrote well. In the space of a year and nine months I wrote better, and I answered well to questions that were proposed to me.

"It was three years and six months that I had been with M. l'Abbé Sieard, when I set out with him for Paris.

"In the spaee of four years, I became like the *entendans-parlans.*"

The narrator proeeeds to state, that he asked Massieu some questions whieh might tend to throw still further light on his eondition.

"Before your instruetion, what did you think that people were doing when they looked at eaeh other and moved their lips?"

"I thought they were expressing ideas."

"Why did you think so?"

"Beeause I reeolleeted that some one had spoken of me to my father, and he had threatened to have me punished."

"You thought, then, that the motion of the lips was one way of eommunieating ideas?"

"Yes."

"Why, then, did you not move your lips to eommunicate yours?"

"Because I had not suffieiently watehed the lips of the speakers when they spoke; and beeause people told me my noises were bad. As they told me my defect was in my ears, I took some brandy, poured it into my ears, and stopped them with cotton." This was manifestly done in imitation of persons whom he had seen so treat their ears in temporary deafness from cold.

"Did you know what it was to hear?"

"Yes."

"How had you learned that?"

"A hearing female relative, who lived at our house, told me that *she saw with her ears a person whom she could not see with her eyes*—a person who

was coming to my father. The hearing *see with their ears* during the night a person who is walking."

These answers are of greater importance than any thing which has been elicited on the subject from the deaf-mutes. Taken in connection with other particulars, they show, that the idea which the born deaf form of sound is analogous to that which the born blind form of sight. The latter believe that sight is a kind of ocular hearing; and the former that hearing is a kind of auricular sight. All the evidence which can be drawn from Massieu and others tends to show, that they conceive the motion of the lips to produce a certain emission *visible* to others but not to themselves. They see that breath which is visible in cold weather is not so when the weather is warm; and they conceive that there is some other like emission, visible to others but not to themselves, through which others are able to communicate ideas to one another. They know that their own incapacity in this matter arises from some defect in the ears; but it seems doubtful whether they think that the ear itself or the eye is the seat of this perception—that is, whether they suppose that their own ear is incapable of perceiving the oral emissions visible to the ears of others; or that defects of the ear disqualify them from the ocular perception of those emissions. This is a curious and interesting point, which future and more exact inquiries may determine. Meanwhile it is certain that no *proper* idea of a sound can be entertained by those who never heard it—whatever be the degree of their "education." The nearest approach to such an idea which they can possibly reach is through the class of hitherto

undescribed sensations which I have endeavoured to explain in the chapter on *Percussions.*

Other points in the conversation with Massieu involve some interesting disclosures.

"What were you thinking about while your father made you remain on your knees?"

"About the heavens."

"With what view did you address to it a prayer?"

"To make it descend at night to the earth, in order that the plants which I had planted might grow, and that the sick might be restored to health."

"Was it with ideas, words, or sentiments, that you composed your prayer?"

"It was the heart that made it. I did not yet know either words, or their meaning, or value."

"What did you feel in your heart?"

"Joy, when I found that the plants and fruits grew. Grief, when I saw their injury by the hail, and that my parents still remained sick."

At these last words of his answer, Massieu made many signs, which expressed anger and menaces. The fact, as I have been informed (says the narrator), was, that during his mother's illness, he used to go out every evening to pray to a particular star, that he had selected for its beauty, for her restoration; but finding that she got worse, he was enraged, and pelted stones at the star.

"Is it possible that you menaced the heavens?" said we, with astonishment.

"Yes."

"But from what motive?"

"Because I thought that I could not get at it to beat it and kill it, for causing all these disasters, and not curing my parents."

"Had you no fear of irritating it?"

"I was not then acquainted with my good master, Sicard, and I was ignorant what this heaven was. It was not until a year after my education was commenced that I had any fear of being punished by it."

"Did you give any figure or form to the heavens?"

"My father had made me look at a large statue, which was in the church of my country. It represented an old man with a long beard; he held a globe in his hand. I thought he lived above the sun."

From this it would seem that the constant references of people *upwards* in worship and in connection with religious sentiments, had led him into some vague notions of a ruling or influencing power in the body of the heavens; which eventually resolved itself into an anthropomorphous idea of God, derived from the statue, whether that were the statue of a saint, or one of those representations of the Divine Being, which are but too common in many Roman Catholic countries. The facts of his dim perceptions on these subjects, as stated, are curious from the manner in which they touch at some points in the old pagan idolataries.—The conversation proceeded:—

"Did you know who made the ox, the horse, etc.?"

"No: but I was curious to see them spring up. Often I went to hide myself in the dykes, to watch the heaven descending upon the earth, for the growth of beings. I wished much to see this."

"What were your thoughts when M. Sicard made you trace, for the first time, words with letters?"

"I thought that the words were the images of the objects I saw around me. I learned them by memory with the utmost ardour. When I first learned the word God, written with chalk on a board, I looked at it very often, for I believed that God caused death, and I feared him very much."

"What idea had you then of death?"

"That it was the cessation of motion, of sensation, of chewing, of the softness of the skin, and of the flesh."

"Why had you this idea?"

"Because I had seen a corpse."

"Did you think that you should always live?"

"I thought there was a heavenly land, and that the body was eternal."

If Massieu had really these last ideas, at the time of which he speaks, and did not carry them back from his present to his past experience, they must have been founded on the circumstance of persons having pointed from the dead, or from the place of the dead, upwards, to indicate that they still lived, or would live again. If he apprehended this, it would suggest to him that the *body* was immortal, for he could have no idea of the soul. The difficulty which I myself experienced in conveying an idea of the soul to the young deaf-mute, of whom I had formerly occasion to speak, and who was by no means unready of comprehension, assures me that it could not possibly occur to any person in his condition untaught. That the dead body should hereafter revive, and become subject to happiness or misery in a future state of existence, he could comprehend; but all attempts to convey to him the idea of a distinct spiritual existence failed. He could, like Massieu, comprehend or infer the immortality of

the body—but not of the soul. In both these cases, even this limited idea of a future state, seems to have been the result of partial instruction. In general, the deaf and dumb, before instruction, suppose death the end of existence; and therefore regard it with an intensity of horror, which it is difficult for those whose minds are familiar with the higher hopes of religion even to imagine. Mrs. Phelan ("Charlotte Elizabeth"), in her interesting memoir of a deaf and dumb lad, to whom she was instrumental in conveying a knowledge of the leading truths of revelation, refers to this point in the following words:—

"I have frequently been much moved by the animated and feeling descriptions that my dear boy gave of this state of unwilling ignorance. He told me that he used to watch the motion of the sun, moon, and stars, the growth of plants, and the various natural appearances which bespeak the hand of an overruling power, until his tears had flowed, because he could not comprehend the cause of all. But nothing appears to occasion such distressing perplexity to a deaf-mute, as the death and burial of his fellow-creatures. The change produced, on countenances which used to smile upon them—the icy coldness, and total insensibility of the frame; the act of screwing down a coffin lid over it, and of depositing that coffin deep beneath earth's surface, with the solemn act of worship accompanying it; all these are terribly and awfully exciting to him, more especially when he is made to comprehend by some associate, that his turn will also come; that he, too, must be enclosed in a long box, and deposited in a deep pit, far from the cheerful light, and from all that now helps to gladden his solitary existence.

"I never beheld anything so striking as the avidity with which my poor John caught at the first intimation of a resurrection from the dead. It evidently removed from his mind a most oppressive weight of anxious doubt. And I think I may safely assert, that during more than seven years following, scarcely as many days passed, on which he did not refer to it with delight."

The picture which Massieu has, in the sketch of his early life, and by the answers to questions, given of his first condition, conveys more information, and is more suggestive, than the entire amount of what has been collected from all other deaf-mutes taken together. If the deplorable condition of intellectual being which he describes, was the lot of one endowed with such rare gifts, and with a genius so penetrating and metaphysical as Massieu, how melancholy must be the state of those who stand on the common level of character and intellect ! It is probably safe to say, that the condition which he describes, is the highest of which a deaf-mute is at that age capable, without special instruction ; and yet the painful inferiority of that condition, even in a character naturally so brilliant as Massieu, to that of the most dull and heavy boy of the same age who is in possession of his hearing, is most apparent, and is truly affecting to contemplate.

In Massieu the instruction of the deaf and dumb doubtless reached the highest point of which it was capable ; and the teachers of this unfortunate class may count themselves happy if once in a hundred years they meet with such another pupil—with one so quick of apprehension, and so able by the mighty efforts of his strong will, to throw himself out of and above the hard bondage of his condition.

His abilities, when fully instructed, were chiefly evinced in the written answers to questions put to him by strangers. Most of them were good, and some wonderfully fine. The following are specimens of their quality :—

"What is hope?"

"Hope is the blossom of happiness."

"What is the difference between hope and desire?"

"Desire is a tree in leaf, hope is a tree in blossom, enjoyment is a tree in fruit."

"What is gratitude?"

"Gratitude is the memory of the heart."

"What is time?"

"A line that has two ends,—a path that begins in the cradle and ends in the tomb."

"What is eternity?"

"A day without yesterday or to-morrow ; a line that has no end."

"What is God?"

"The necessary Being, the sun of eternity, the mechanist of nature, the eye of justice, the watchmaker of the universe, the soul of the universe."

The acute and dangerous question, "Does God reason?" is said to have been put to him by Sir James Mackintosh. The answer was—

"Man reasons, because he doubts; he deliberates, he decides: God is omniscient; he never doubts; he therefore never reasons."

This seems to us the best answer Massieu ever gave. It will be observed, that most of the others, which are among the best specimens of his peculiar talent, are properly translations into words of picture language. They are illustrations, similitudes, not always very distinct. He seldom attempts an

abstract definition, and when he does so he usually fails; and although his answers are striking and suggestive, they will not often satisfy the mind, as good in themselves, though wonderful from a person in his circumstances. A close inspection of the answers, will reveal the secret of that readiness with which he was enabled to reply to questions, which were often such as would puzzle one possessed of all his senses: for there are not many, even among educated men, who will be ready to give a good definition of even common things, which they understand well. But in this very thing Massieu was likely to excel. His study had been to possess himself with the full power and meaning of words, and the difficulty of the process had impressed upon his mind all the analogies, contrasts, and pictorial comparisons, by which he had possessed himself of their meaning. The two questions and answers which are placed first, stand far apart in the book from which they are taken. But the juxta-position in which they now stand strongly illustrates the whole subject. In possessing himself of the idea conveyed by the words desire, hope, enjoyment for his own apprehension, the happy idea of comparing them to a tree in leaf, in blossom, and in fruit, had occurred to him. So, when asked concerning hope, he says it is "the blossom of happiness," being so much of his pre-established similitude as the occasion required: but when asked of desire and hope, he answers for *hope* as before, and uses the tree in leaf to illustrate *desire;* and having got so far, he cannot resist throwing in the remaining member of his established similitude, although not involved in the question, by adding that *enjoyment* was a tree in

fruit. The accumulation of images by which he strives to answer, "What is God?" suggests merely the series of material comparisons by which he had been at different times taught or had striven to realize an idea of God. Many of these images, however satisfactory to him, and striking to us, are really vague and indistinct, and indicate only the dim shadow of an idea. "The *soul* of eternity," "the *eye* of justice," &c., are of this kind.

In fact, these admired answers seem to us to afford painful evidence of the labour and contrivance which even such a man as Massieu had to employ in affixing ideas to words. It was obviously an intellectual exercise in which he took pleasure; and this bore him on to the success which he eventually achieved, and which few others can be expected to attain. The traces of this process of intellection in his answers, give to them a kind of misty grandeur, well calculated to engage attention and to excite admiration.

It has been the intention of this chapter chiefly to produce such facts concerning the state of the deaf as have not been embodied in my own experience: and as the largest portion of such facts are contained in the account which Massieu has given of himself, his case has been exhibited in some detail. A few other circumstances, tending to illustrate the peculiar notions and condition of the deaf-mutes may here be added from other sources; and will suitably conclude the present volume.

Massieu's idea of hearing as "auricular sight" has already been examined: and it has been shown

that the born deaf cannot possibly have any correct idea of sound. These conclusions are corroborated by all which has been elicited from other persons in that condition. One who had been educated in an American institution was asked—

"Before instruction, how did you feel when you saw that there was a striking difference between yourself and other folks?"

"I sometimes felt surprised to see them speak quickly. I examined their tongues, speaking. I thought their tongues were not like my tongue. I wished to speak easily. I was sorry that I was deaf and dumb. I disliked to make signs."

"What idea have you of sound; or what do you think sound is like?"

"I cannot think what sound is like."

It would, however, seem this person at first conceived that the mere *motions* of the tongue communicated ideas visually perceived: and that when undeceived in this respect, was unable to substitute any other idea. Another, when asked the same question, respecting the difference between himself and other people, answered—

"I was much surprised at the speech of the folks, when I saw them speaking. I had much desire to speak and hear, but I could not speak and hear: but I thought that somebody had stolen my hearing when I was a young boy."

Of *Music*, it appears that even the educated deaf-mutes can only form any notion by reference to its *apparent* effects upon others who can hear. Observe how the writer of the following escapes from the painful attempts to define what he does not understand, to rest upon the tangible idea of the tarantula.

"Music is a copy or rule of voice. When a person sings, he looks in a musical book, and sings according to the musical rule. I am told that music is very lively. I know it is far more delicious than the fine food or drink. It is wonderful that music has the virtue of exciting the heart. It inspirits persons who are discouraged or look downcast. Martial music makes the soul brave. Melancholy music drops the tears from the eyes of persons. Many persons are transported by the sweet music. It is especially more striking that the sweet music is the sovereign remedy against the craziness caused by the bite of the tarantula,—a great and poisonous spider. Having been bitten by the spider a person becomes crazy. A number of musicians are immediately called. They play upon musical instruments before him. He is moved by hearing the sweet music. It removes his fatal craziness, and he becomes quiet, and is delivered from death. He cannot recognize his past craziness. The music casts the recollection of his craziness into oblivion. But the music cannot heal the deaf and dumb of this fatal craziness. But the deaf and dumb should be very careful, and flee from the tarantula. The deaf and dumb cannot enjoy music because they are destitute of the organ of hearing: but they should be contented, because they can be moved by poetry, while they read poems."

What most strikes one in the notions of the uninstructed deaf-mutes, so far as they have been reported by themselves after instruction, is the infantile character of their ideas. That this is still manifested, although in a diminished degree, may be seen by the letters which have been introduced

in a former chapter, and it is never wholly eradicated. This even imparts a childish expression to the countenance. It has often been observed, that the deaf-mutes always look younger than they really are, which is far from being the case with the blind. In fact, the mind of these unfortunate persons, when uninstructed, seems to *stand still* at a given point of childhood, which those who have hearing soon get beyond. When we see a grown youth, twelve, fourteen, or eighteen years of age, we instinctively give him credit for possessing ideas corresponding to his years; but if we succeed in establishing a means of communication with him, we are painfully surprised to discover that his mind is as that of a child six or seven years old. And as he grows up, it remains essentially in this condition; the chief differences between him and a child being, that the sentiments—those feelings of which the heart is popularly regarded as the seat—are as fully developed as in others of his own age; and that while the hearing child may be said, comparatively, not to think at all, the grown-up deaf-mute does think, but arrives at wrong conclusions for want of materials, or is checked by that want in his efforts to cast his thoughts beyond that barrier of puerile and abortive conclusions which shuts him in. A specimen of this natural condition of the uninstructed deaf is furnished in the following extract from the correspondence of a pupil of the Edinburgh School with his instructor; and it is stated that this is in accordance with the intimations received from others in the same condition.

"Before I came to school, I thought that the stars were placed in the firmament like grates of

fire, and that the moon at night was like a great furnace of fire. I did not know how the stars and moon were made; but I supposed that the people like us, above the firmament, kindled the moon and stars; and I did not know whether the stars and moon were made by art or not. I thought the world little, and round like a table, and was always intending to go to the end of it."

In further illustration of this point may be adduced the testimony of a most intelligent American lady (cited in a Report of the Birmingham Institution), who had been much in the world, and at a mature age became a pupil in an American Asylum: she stated, after instruction, that her friends had taken great pains to give her some idea of God, but all she had been able to apprehend was, that this name belonged to a number of strong men, living above the sky, who printed the Bible and sent it to us. The idea that the world must have had a Creator never occurred to her, nor to any other of several intelligent pupils, of similar age, and with equal advantages for acquiring ideas of religious truths. One of them ascribed every change of the weather to her parents, and called upon them to make it agreeable to her wishes, and vented her passion upon them when disappointed. Mrs. Phelan makes a similar statement respecting her interesting pupil:—"No idea had entered his mind of the existence of a Supreme Being. In proof of this, one of the first questions he continued to put to me was, whether I had made the sun and moon."

Cases of persons born deaf obtaining the use of hearing, are exceedingly rare; and it has very sel-

dom occurred that one who has become thoroughly deaf at any time of life, has recovered the lost sense. The recovery of the blind is much less infrequent. For my own part, many long years have passed since I have abandoned the slightest hope which I might once have entertained, of ever more hearing a sound in this world. I have almost ceased to desire it ; excepting on those rare occasions when I am enabled to realize a strong perception of the advantages to be found in that kind of society in which I am, from my present position, entitled to mingle, but from which my privation does, in a great measure, exclude me.

Besides, the condition in which three-fourths of life have been passed, has become in some sort natural to me ; and I somewhat dread to contemplate the change of habits which restored hearing would necessitate or produce, and the new responsibilities which it would impose. I fear that I should run wild under the influence of so great a change ; and that I should be no longer able to maintain the sedentary life which I have hitherto led, or keep up the habits of close application and incessant study, in which I have been enabled to find many sources of satisfaction and the means of some usefulness. Upon the whole, therefore, I am well content in the prospect of spending my remaining years in silence. I have often been urged to consult Dr. This, and try Mr. That, and to have recourse to this one application and that other nostrum : but I have done none of these things, and even such recommendations have mostly been painful to me ; lest they should seem to impose upon me the duty of making attempts to obtain that relief of which I really have no hope.

and which might not, at my time of life, be an unmixed good. Still, if *I knew* that any operation or application would awaken the aural nerve from its long rest, and restore the lost sense to me, I should probably think it my duty to risk the consequences of that great joy at which I tremble—not because I value it not, or because I do not appreciate it, but because I rate it so highly as to fear that the mind might be overwhelmed, and established habits broken up, by the mighty influx of new sensations, new ideas, and new hopes.

It is to be regretted that we have no accounts, so detailed as we could wish, of the early impressions of persons born deaf on obtaining a new sense. The paucity of information on this point is not surprising, as only four cases of spontaneous recovery are on record, and the cures by artificial treatment are exceedingly uncommon. Of spontaneous recovery, the most remarkable instance is that of the Mémoires of the French Academy of Sciences for the year 1703. A tradesman's son of Chartres, who had been born deaf, and was consequently also dumb, when about twenty-four years of age began to speak, to the great surprise of the whole town. On being questioned respecting the manner in which this change had been produced, the young man stated, that about three or four months previously all the bells of the town had been one day set a ringing, according to the custom of that country, on the first appearance of cloudy and stormy weather, in order to disperse it. He then for the first time perceived the new and unknown sense of hearing, at which he was much delighted. Some time after, a kind of watery humour was discharged from his left ear, and from

that time he heard perfectly with both ears. During the three or four months he listened only, but used to repeat to himself the words he had heard. He at length broke silence, though he could speak but badly. The divines put many questions to him concerning his past life, his ideas of God, of the human mind, and of moral good and evil. But on all these and the like matters, his mind was an utter blank. He had, indeed, frequented the church, and did there as he saw others do: but he had led a purely animal life, entirely taken up with the objects he saw around him, but without drawing from what he beheld, or from the actions he witnessed, any of the inferences which might perhaps *à priori* have been expected.

Another case is that of David Fraser, who was deaf and dumb from his birth till seventeen years of age, when he had an attack of fever, which went off in the natural course, without his being bled. In a few weeks after his recovery he perceived a kind of motion in his brain, which gave him much uneasiness; but at the same time he began to hear, and in process of time to understand speech. This naturally disposed him to imitate what he heard, and he attempted to speak. The servants of the house were much amazed to hear him; but several weeks elapsed before anything he said could be clearly understood. It is, however, remarked as a singularity, that long after, although he knew nothing of Gaelic, he spoke with the Highland accent, just like Highlanders who at his time of life had begun to learn the English tongue.

It is observable, that in both these cases, the persons whose hearing was restored, were obliged to remain a considerable time silent, till by obser-

vation and practice they had enabled themselves to speak, which they did at first very indistinctly. But in the case of the man called Oxford, reported in the Philosophical Transactions, the use of speech was immediately recovered, in an effort to cry out in a frightful dream. But in this case the man had only been four years deprived of speech, and during that time his *hearing* had not been affected.

This incident, however, naturally leads us to the most ancient anecdote of the deaf and dumb, which history has preserved. It is that of the son of Crœsus, which Herodotus thus relates :—" Crœsus had a son, who although in other respects not deficient, was dumb. During his prosperity, the father had used for his relief every means in his power, and among other things bethought him of sending to consult the oracle at Delphi. To his inquiries the Pythian thus replied :—

> 'O man unwise, of Lydia's realms the king,
> Wish not his voice within thy halls to ring;
> Better for thee that pleasure to forego :—
> The day he speaks shall be a day of woe.'

" When the fortifications (of Sardis, his capital city) were taken, a Persian, not knowing Crœsus, was about to kill him ; and he, seeing himself invaded, and not caring to survive his misfortunes, would have met the stroke of death. But his speechless son, seeing the Persian approach, moved with fear and agony, cried out—'Man, kill not Crœsus!' These were his first words, and from that time forward he continued to speak."

Larcher and others argue that the son of Crœsus had been speechless only, and not deaf and dumb. Most certainly, his dumbness only is mentioned in any of the recorded circumstances, and in the application

to and response from the oracle. Another response of the same oracle on a different occasion, contains a line which appears to allude to the same youth—

"I understand the dumb; and I hear him who speaketh not."

The proof does not, however, appear to me very conclusive. As dumbness is generally the effect of want of hearing, and is more conspicuous than the primary and greater privation, it is usually taken to represent *both* conditions; and if we say that a man is dumb, we are understood to mean that he is *both* deaf and dumb. This our usage would go for nothing, were the case not justly the same in the use of the Greek word κωφός. In the Gospel of St. Mark, the *deafness* of the deaf *and* dumb men whom Christ cured is expressed by this very word (Mark vii. 32, 37; ix. 25); while in the parallel passages in other Gospels, the same men are described simply as "dumb;" and in all those places their dumbness is expressed by this same word κωφός, which describes their deafness in these cited texts in which they are said to have been *both* deaf and dumb. On these grounds we incline to think that the son of Crœsus was both deaf and dumb; and the rather, as no difficulty is removed by supposing him only speechless: for although it is impossible that one deaf and dumb should speak without some practice, even when the impediments are removed, yet, as Mr. Cooley well remarks, in his translation of Larcher's Notes on Herodotus, "Is it not equally certain, that one deprived of speech by any organic malformation would be unable to speak, on the removal of the hindrance, without some previous exercise and training of the organs? The story of tongue-tied persons acquiring the use

of speech, from the impulse of strong emotions, is popular in all countries, but such a fact is unknown to medical experience." He, therefore, concludes that Crœsus had a deaf and dumb son; and that all the rest is fable. But the story appears to be too circumstantial to admit of this interpretation; and it would seem likely, that but for the oracle and the apparent suddenness of the cure, the fact of the youth's condition would never have been recorded. I am, therefore, led to the conclusion, that the son of Crœsus had some time before recovered his hearing, and, as in the cases already given, had been silently collecting words and acquiring the use of them, when the peril of his father revealed the alteration in his condition, somewhat sooner than might, without this strong impulse, have occurred. I am happy to contribute this hint towards the preservation of a story so beautiful in itself, and so true to nature, which my fellow-labourers in the great field of historical antiquities have begun to impugn.

THE END OF DEAFNESS.

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