

The discharged pistol, found in the morning lying in the bath, and a wound in the chest that had perforated the lung and cut the pulmonary artery at its root, revealed the tragic close of the storm. It is much to be regretted that we have not a fuller and more minute report of the condition of the brain by the gentlemen who made the *post mortem* examination, which gives the following conclusion:—

"From the diseased appearances found in the brain, taken in connection with the history of the case, we have no doubt that the act was suicidal, under the impulse of insanity.

"JAMES MILLER, W. T. GAIRDNER,
"A. H. BALFOUR, A. M. EDWARDS."

From the statements often made by Mr. Miller of the intense paroxysms of head pain long suffered by him, it is my belief that the brain substance was not the seat of his disease, but that it was located in the covering membranes, and most probably in the external one, the *dura mater*; for had the brain substance proper been diseased he would have suffered little, if any, pain; and there would have been physical symptoms, such as partial paralysis, impairment of speech articulation, failure of memory, etc., etc., of which no mention is made, and the intellectual powers would not have remained active and apparently sound, as they did up to his very last day, when he completed his last famous work, the "Testimony of the Rocks." The intermitting character of his head pain is perfectly accordant with a chronic inflammation of the *dura mater*.

One fact is very manifest—the brain of Hugh Miller was not fitted to hard work. It is hard to say what his end might have been had he remained a quarryman or a stone-mason; but in that case who would have gifted us with "The Old Red Sandstone," "The Footprints of the Creator," and the "Testimony of the Rocks," to say nothing of his powerful religious articles in support of the Non-Intrusion party in the Church of Scotland? We know what *has* been; we know not what *might* have been. Had he remained in humble life, and avoided mental overstrain, he might have escaped a suicidal end; but are we sure that he might not have passed through that lingering living death which so many regard as the gravest of all visitations? One thing we know: every lover of the science of geology will hallow his memory, and thank him for the light shed in his works on the pages of the great stone book which he loved so well to interpret.

I could very easily, from the materials at my command, multiply these illustrations of the disastrous consequences of persistent overwork of brain. The list of victims is a long and mournful one, but I am warranted in supposing that to most of you the names that would make it up, and the histories of the individuals, are already not unknown.