

## My Head Trouble.

CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE.

**A**MONG the many mistakes of my life, I count this to be one of the greatest, that, instead of seeking an entire change as soon as I began to feel the approach of another attack, I have usually refused to admit the possibility of succumbing to it, and have struggled against it until no power of will was left for further conflict. Those who know how large a portion of my life I have lost by this disease will not be surprised at my unwillingness to quit my work, when to give it up often meant to forego opportunities never to be recalled. Besides all this, I have usually been so straitened for means that it has been very difficult for me to give up my necessary avocations.

With thankfulness to God I can truly say that few men have had better friends, and that there has never been a time when I might not have secured means for travel and change of occupation simply by applying to them. But I have received so many favors, often most unexpected and entirely unsolicited, that it is only with extreme reluctance that I have been able to ask assistance of even my most intimate friends and relations. It may well be that some of them will be pained to know that I did not do so, when a little timely aid might have preserved me from long periods of suffering and inactivity. For the many favors I have received from bee-keepers at home and abroad, and from personal friends and relations, I hereby tender my most heartfelt thanks.

No doubt some of my readers will blame me for spending so much time, when under the power of melancholy, in playing chess, even though I tempted nobody else to waste any time upon it. But I most devoutly believe, that, in fighting such a malady, the end fully justifies all means which are not in themselves immoral. If it were well, if it were plainly understood, and more fully realized, that, by dwelling too long upon painful subjects, we may at last lose mental control and become absolutely insane, there is no doubt that many who have strong hereditary tendencies that way might, by wise foresight and strong effort, counteract them. Let me relate the following true story to show:

About 50 years ago the Rev. Dr. Walker, who was a pastor of the Congregational Church in Brattleboro, Vermont, exchanged pulpits with me. On Saturday evening his wife spoke of the singular state of mind into which a well-known minister had fallen. He had been a very acceptable pastor, and had declined, but a short time before, an invitation from an institution of

learning, to solicit funds for them. As they still urged him to accept, he called a council of the neighboring ministers, who advised him not to accept the agency; whereupon (such often is human nature) he rejected their advice. From the beginning of his work, his health, which before had been unusually good, began to fail. He became discouraged and morbid; and in conversation with Mrs. Walker he contended that his afflictions were even greater than those of Job. On being reminded by her of a Christian brother well known to both, who, after an absence from home of a few days, found, on his return, his beloved wife dead, and her dead infant lying in her arms, even such an overwhelming calamity he thought was more bearable than those which had befallen him! At this point in the narrative I became too much excited to sit still. Rising to my feet I exclaimed, "Oh that I could see this unhappy brother, and warn him of the fate which, if he persists in cherishing these delusions, may soon overtake him! He is on the very verge of insanity, if not already insane. After the sermon next morning, Mrs. Rockwell, the wife of the superintendent of the insane-asylum of that place, said to us, "Do you know that Mr.——" (the very brother that we had been talking about) "was brought to our institution last night, quite insane?"

I once related this circumstance to a family circle, entirely unconscious that it could have any personal application. To my surprise, the father of the family privately said to me, with deep emotion, that nothing could have been told better adapted to influence for good one of his own children.

Oh, how often does some bereaved soul cry out in anguish, "I do well to give myself up to the indulgence of grief. I have no heart for any thing but lamentations for the loved ones who have been buried out of my sight"! No! poor afflicted soul, you do not do well when you neglect any positive duty. Beware, lest what you call "the burdens of grief" may be carried so far as to become rebellious murmurings against the divine will.

I cannot here forbear giving a short extract from Walter Scott's Antiquary. An old fisherman had lost his son in a storm at sea. His landlord makes him a visit of condolence.

"When he came in front of the fisherman's hut he observed a man working intently, as if to repair a shattered boat that lay upon the beach; and going up to him he said, in a tone of sympathy, 'I am glad, Saunders, that you feel yourself able to make this exertion.' 'And what would ye have me do,' answered the fisherman, 'unless I wanted to see four children starve be-