

*Life of Dorothea Lynde Dix.* By FRANCIS TIFFANY.  
Houghton, Mifflin and Co., Boston. 1890.

(Second Notice.)

Resuming our notice of this interesting work—interesting at least to all who care for the humane treatment of the insane—we take up the thread of the biography, so well written by Mr. Tiffany, at the point where Miss Dix returned from England to the United States, resolved not to take her ease in spite of the temptations to do so, but profoundly impressed with the conviction that she had some great duty in life to perform. The Editor sketches the condition of the insane in New England at this period. It is said that on coming out of church Miss Dix overheard two gentlemen speaking in such terms of indignation and horror of the treatment to which the prisoners and lunatics in the East Cambridge (Massachusetts) gaol were subjected, that she forthwith determined to go over there and look into matters herself (p. 73). Miss Dix began to teach in this gaol and found that there were no stoves in the room where some insane prisoners were confined. Failing to induce the authorities to obtain one, she appealed to the court, and succeeded in her application. Shortly afterwards she became acquainted with Dr. S. G. Howe, the well-known instructor of Laura Bridgman, and with Charles Sumner, who warmly seconded her efforts to improve the condition of the inmates of the prison. Unfortunately this was only a sample of what was to be found in the other prisons and almshouses of Massachusetts. Her memorial addressed to the Legislature, one of many, is a matter of history. In it the following sentence occurs, written in the year 1843, when she was about 40 years of age:—

“ I proceed, gentlemen, briefly to call your attention to the present state of insane persons confined within this Commonwealth, in *cages, closets, cellars, stalls, pens—chained, naked, beaten with rods, and lashed into obedience* ” (p. 76).

Miss Dix's remedy for the deplorable state of the insane was a new asylum. Her memorial was referred to a Committee of which Dr. Howe was the chairman, and Miss Dix's statements were endorsed. A resolution was introduced recommending the erection of additional buildings in connection with the State Lunatic Hospital at Worcester (Mass.). A Bill was passed by a large majority, and thus Miss Dix achieved her first Parliamentary victory.

Then follows the history of the succession of benevolent enterprises undertaken by this indomitable woman, for the understanding of which we refer the reader to the book itself. We cannot, however, omit the unexpected success she obtained in her appeal to Mr. Cyrus Butler, an account of which we heard from her own lips.

“He was a man of large business capacity, who ultimately left an estate of £800,000, but who, like so many men absorbed in the pursuit of wealth, had contracted a passion for accumulation that rendered it well-nigh impossible to persuade him to give a dollar away. . . It was a singular interview. For some time, through sheer force of life-long habit, Mr. Butler sought to put her off by diverting the conversation to the weather. Preserving her temper and self-control, Miss Dix pleasantly adjusted herself to the humour of the scene, until finally, feeling that the thing had gone far enough, she arose with commanding dignity and said: ‘Mr. Butler, I wish you to hear what I have to say. I want to bring before you certain facts involving terrible suffering to your fellow creatures all round you—suffering you can relieve. My duty will end when I have done this, and with you will then rest all further responsibility.’ Miss Dix then told her story. Mr. Butler listened with spell-bound attention, and then abruptly said, ‘Miss Dix, what do you want me to do?’ ‘Sir, I want you to give £10,000 towards the enlargement of the insane hospital in this city (Providence).’ ‘Madam, I’ll do it,’ was his answer.”

Everyone who knows anything about asylums for the insane has heard of the “Butler Hospital,” but comparatively few are aware of the origin of the name. It was here that the well-known and esteemed Dr. Ray resided and wrote his classic work on the “Medical Jurisprudence of Insanity.” His successors have been worthy of the institution and the first superintendent. The memory of one who died in the early prime of his life—Dr. Goldsmith—lamented by all who knew him on both sides of the Atlantic, should be fresh in the minds of the readers of this Journal.

It must be remembered that but few States had built at that time any asylums for their insane. It was Miss Dix who was the means of founding the asylum at Trenton, New Jersey. She herself christened it her “first-born child.” It is an interesting circumstance that in her declining years she here found a quiet haven in which she could anchor her now frail bark till the end of her days. Forty-two years after its

establishment we visited her, and found her still able to feel an interest in the progress of the humane treatment of the insane in her own country and in Great Britain. Three years later she passed away to her rest at the age of 85.

To fill up the interval is to write the history of her life, and this cannot be done within the limits of a review. It will always remain a remarkable circumstance that a woman could carry out and sustain such a revolution on behalf of the insane in the United States, and could effect so great a change in their condition in Scotland. It is the less necessary to refer in detail to her benevolent and spirited work in that land, as we have already described it in the obituary notice of Miss Dix in this Journal (October, 1887).

During the war she worked as a nurse in the most devoted manner among the wounded. "She was very unpopular in the war with surgeons, nurses, and any others, who failed to do their whole duty, and they disliked to see her appear, as she was sure to do, if needed. . . . She was one who found no time to make herself famous with pen and paper, but was a hard, earnest worker, living in the most severely simple manner, often having to be reminded that she needed food" (p. 341).

Less known, but scarcely less remarkable as showing her wonderful energy, was her mission to the Channel Islands in 1855. When at York in poor health, after her invasion of Scotland, she felt bound to inquire into the unsatisfactory condition of the insane in Jersey, of which she had heard something when in Edinburgh. At that very time a young Dutchman, Dr. Van Leuven, had drawn up a report on the provision for the insane in that island. On our showing her this pamphlet her interest was excited, and she requested us to obtain more definite information from the doctor. His reply was, "If Miss Dix will come to Jersey I will give her a hearty welcome, that she may counterbalance the odious *insanity trade* now begun." In July, 1855, Miss Dix visited Jersey. Writing thence to Dr. Buttolph, she says:—"I took a carriage and drove with Dr. Van Leuven to the hospital—found the insane in a horrid state, naked, filthy, and attended by persons of ill-character, committed to this establishment for vice too gross to admit of their being at large. . . . After faithful inspection of the forty insane in the cells and yards, I drove with my letter of introduction to Government House; the Governor not at home. At three o'clock drove to look at a site for the hospital, les Moraines. I approved of it for our use, if it could be had a free gift; we then proceeded to

visit several insane persons in private families—a sad, very sad scene. Went early, Wednesday, to General Touzel's; had a long conversation wholly on business affairs. He went with me to see the governor, who received my evidence in the case (Mr. Potheary's), summoned the Attorney-General, thanked me for the information, and would resume the subject. Next we took up the Jersey Hospital question. I was promised all the Government support, but had to *fight* my way with three dozen members of the States. Thursday, drove into the country, still surveying farms, and seeing the scattered insane. In the evening some members of the Committee of the States called. Friday, other members called, and settled that the full Board of fifteen should be summoned to an extra meeting if I would attend. I consented to remain till the full Board reported, and *not* present the subject to the Government at home, if they would do the work without" (p. 269).

The Committee resolved unanimously to build a hospital for the insane with the least possible delay. It is sad to have to record that the good intentions which were then professed did not take practical effect until seven years afterwards. In 1862 the Local Parliament ("States") decided to build an asylum. This was opened six years later (1868). So slowly was the proposal brought about, although the Committee of the General Hospital had minuted a resolution in December, 1855, recommending the States to erect a building for the insane in consequence of "having received much important information from an American lady, Miss Dix," as also the reports of medical men appointed to visit asylums. We are able to state from an inquiry recently made of the Superintendent of the Jersey Asylum, Dr. George Moore, that the number of patients on December 31, 1890, amounted to 140, the number of admissions since the opening of the asylum being 741.

We cannot leave the episode of Miss Dix's visit to the Channel Islands without paying a tribute of respect and admiration to the young Hollander who was fired with enthusiasm on behalf of the insane in his own country and in Jersey, where he went to reside for the benefit of his health. He was a native of Utrecht, where we first met him in 1853. He received his education at Leyden, but studied in Berlin and Vienna. In 1848 he visited England with Dr. Everts,\* subsequently the Superintendent of the Meerenburg Asylum, near Haarlem. Dr. Van Leuven acted as the Assistant Medical Officer, and threw his whole mind into his arduous

\* See Obituary Notice in this Journal, Oct., 1883.

duties, the result being a complete breakdown in his health. When in Jersey the States appointed him to examine and report upon the asylums of France. The report appeared in November, 1853, and does him the highest credit. When, in spite of change of climate, the disease of the lungs under which he laboured made rapid progress, he returned to his native land in May, 1857. With difficulty did he make the journey, so great was his exhaustion. Let the remainder of the story be told by a Jersey paper of the period. "He arrived at the railway terminus at Utrecht, and from thence was conveyed in a carriage to the home of his childhood. Retaining his mental faculties to the last moment, he pointed out to the companion of his journey the objects of interest between the railway and the town. A few minutes more and he will cross his father's threshold—but not in life. The carriage stops. There is the house. There is his father. He places his wife's hand in that of his father. 'Be kind to her,' are his last words. They lift him to bear him to his boyhood's fireside, but they bear a corpse."

It is only right to record and hold in respectful remembrance the names of men like Dr. Van Leuven, who worked side by side with Miss Dix in endeavouring to forward her noble purpose.

We conclude our notice of the biography before us with the editor's description of the close of the good American philanthropist's life:—

"The end came on the evening of July 17th, 1887. For a month she had been growing steadily weaker. Still with her habitual fortitude, and that desire to pass unobscured through the portal of death, so characteristic of believing natures, she had begged her dear friend, Dr. Ward, to avoid the use of anodynes, and to tell her distinctly when the last hour was at hand. This was not to be. Although Dr. Ward had given his pledge that he would apprise her as soon as he saw the end near by, it came as unexpectedly to him as to her. He was sitting at the tea table when the nurse suddenly ran down to report that Miss Dix was sinking away rapidly. Mounting the stairs, on opening the door, just as his eye fell on her, she breathed a quiet sigh, and all was over."

The burial took place in Mount Auburn Cemetery, near Boston, Mass. Occurring when, in the height of the summer heat, so many are away at the seashore or in the mountains, a few friends only stood by the grave. Communicating to her English friends the intelligence of her last illness and death,

Dr. Nichols, who had been so long and intimately associated with her throughout her great career, closed with these words his letter to Dr. Tuke :—

“ Thus has died and been laid to rest, in the most quiet, unostentatious way, the most useful and distinguished woman America as yet produced.”

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*The Principles of Psychology.* By WILLIAM JAMES, Professor of Psychology in Harvard University. Two Vols. American Science Series. New York: Henry Holt and Co. 1890. London: Macmillan and Co. 1890.

Professor James modestly declares in his preface that he does not hope for many readers of his “fourteen hundred continuous pages,” a number that no one “can regret more than the writer himself.” As a matter of fact, no one but the writer will regret them, for by allowing himself ample space, Professor James has not only been able to make his own theories clear and his book entertaining by abundant illustration, but by copious extracts from the works of other writers he enables his readers to judge fairly of his argument or contention with their opinions, without imposing upon him the trouble of hunting up authorities, or running the risk of receiving a false impression by misinterpretation.

Rarely in a scientific work does one gain (as one cannot help supposing) an impression so vivid of the personality of the writer—of an honest, simple, kindly man, with a remarkably unprejudiced mind, ready to entertain every suggestion, even to the extent, in some cases, of apparent inconsistency; generous to those from whom he differs, while merciless in setting forth their errors; immensely industrious, and with unbounded curiosity and ready memory, shown by his familiarity with the works of many kinds and of many nations; of great ingenuity and perspicuity, with a certain uncertainty of conclusions, sometimes decided and definite, sometimes leaving the reader in doubt whether at another time he might not think in another way. A “spiritualist” (or “common-sense”) man, in his assumption of the origin of thought, he is a materialist of materialists in his theory of the emotions, and in some respects of the “association of ideas,” although, while accepting in places