

John Howard's Winter's Journey. By WILLIAM A. GUY,
F.R.C.P., F.R.S., &c. De la Rue and Co. 1882.

This is a most interesting little book, containing an account of Howard's journey in 1773-4, which is chosen by Dr. Guy as "both a central point from which to survey the acts which precede and follow, and as a typical example of Howard's method of procedure." The title does not do justice to the book, for it is really a graphic sketch of Howard and his work, and an attempt to represent his true place in history, namely, as that of the unconscious founder of a method of *preventive*, as distinguished from *palliative*, philanthropy.

Howard had been a feeble infant ; he could never, it seems, be called robust. An attack of gout led him to become extremely abstemious. He was short of stature, and was compared by one writer to "a little French dancing-master." He was extremely active in his manners. He had a long arched nose, a pouting under-lip, a wide, square forehead, and full, piercing eyes.

Dr. Guy replies to the question, "Were there no weaknesses or defects of character which ought, in the interests of truth, to be mentioned by those who exult in the rare excellence of his public life?" as follows:—

Yes, Howard was by no means free from eccentricities. His first marriage to an invalid widow twice his own age, however tenderly she may have nursed him, and however grateful he may have felt towards her, must be set down as a sort of eccentricity. So also may the vanity which led him to boast of the docility of his child, and to call friends to witness examples of it. Perhaps, too, there was something which may be called eccentric in his love of solitude, a condition more easy to praise than to bear, bad for all children and for most grown-up men and women, and if to some constitutions a wholesome tonic, one that should never be prescribed but in small and divided doses. In the same category may, perhaps, be included the extreme assertion of his dignity as a man in his dealings with Pope, Emperor, and Czar. . . . Whatever the defects of Howard's character may have been, we ought, in forming an estimate of his character, never to forget that no stain rests upon his morals.

These facts are of interest in relation to the subject which has most interest for the readers of this Journal—the insanity of Howard's only son. He was the offspring of a second marriage which took place in 1758. Seven years afterwards the son was born, namely, in 1765. The mother's health was

very delicate, and she died a few days after his birth. With him Howard resided about four years. Then the child was sent to a girls' school, afterwards to three other schools, and was then transferred to the Edinburgh University. From Edinburgh he went to Cambridge, and it was here that symptoms of insanity first showed themselves. They were attributed, "as his father knew to his shame and sorrow, to some circumstances affecting the son's health which happened at Edinburgh."

To this cause and to hereditary predisposition, whether from only one parent or from both, Dr. Guy attributes the son's madness.* It is stated that insanity did not prevail among Howard's ancestors, "but there are obvious reasons why this inquiry should not be pursued further."

He rejects the common charge that Howard's training was in any sense the cause of his son's insanity. He denies there being any proof that he treated him with harshness, and he quotes Dr. Monro, who was called in, to confirm his position.

Stern he certainly was. Once the son was walking with his father in the garden, when the latter said, "This walk was planted by your mother; and if you ever touch a twig of it, may my blessing never rest upon you." Howard said he never struck his son in his life. Dr. Aikin is quoted as saying, "Howard's method was free from everything hasty, violent, and capricious, and consisted in a very steady, cool, and uniform course of discipline and authority, in such points alone as were thought important to the child's welfare."

Dr. Guy says, "the father has been called an enthusiast," and asks, "Might not that which was enthusiasm in him have developed into madness in the son?"

The reply is made in these terms:—

If the enthusiasm here spoken of is that which most founders and reformers of religious sects and systems have displayed, if it is taken to mean that earnest and excited state of mind which shapes itself into burning words, which attracts crowds and sways the masses, Howard was singularly free from it, and of this his biographers afford strong and conclusive negative evidence. Howard never had a single illusion of the senses, or delusion of the mind; he was not subject to fits; he never evinced a sudden, or even a gradual change, marked change of character; he never undertook any enterprise with obviously inadequate motives and means; nor was he even so absorbed by

* In Baldwin Brown's *Memoirs* the author states that he has *authority* for saying that a hereditary tendency to insanity existed in some branches of his family, on which side is not stated.

the work he had in hand as to neglect the duties belonging to his position as a landlord, or to ignore the claims of individual sufferers with whom he chanced to be brought in contact. His letters from abroad contain the most minute instructions as to the management of his property at Cardington, and his will gives proof of a lively recollection of those he had left behind, and a generous discrimination of their several claims upon his posthumous bounty.

Let it then be well understood that if Howard was an enthusiast at all, he was one of a type quite unique. He neither changed, nor developed, nor degenerated in the thirty-four years of which may be fitly called his public life. What he was in his dealings with his fellow-captives in France, that he continued to be when ministering to the troops in Russia. So strong and firm was the fibre of his mind that it neither gave way before the strongest religious emotions nor yielded in the slightest degree before the fatigues, privations, and diseases to which his travels exposed him (p. 8).

Letters from the youth's uncle, Mr. Edward Leeds, to Mr. Lilburne, the agent of the Cardington estate, have been placed by Mr. Whitbread in Dr. Guy's hands, in which there are special references to young Howard's insanity, derived from the monthly reports of the well-known Dr. Arnold, in whose asylum at Leicester the patient was placed.

In the first letter, Feb. 11, 1792, he is described as being in a "very distracted state;" in others, as "sometimes better, sometimes worse;" in one a prospect of amendment is mentioned. In Dec. 10, 1795, a more detailed account is given by Mr. Leeds. "My nephew continues in the same hopeless way, sometimes better, sometimes worse. His bodily health is generally good, unless when reduced by his fits of frenzy, during the continuance of which he, with invariable obstinacy, refuses either to move or eat, subsisting for days together on spoon-meats forced down his throat. These fits the doctor (Arnold) informs me increase in violence, but happily are not of so long continuance, otherwise his life would be endangered." In 1799 (March 8) the patient was "neither better nor worse than he has been for several years." However, he died on the 26th of the following month.

We are glad to have the very general opinion of Howard's cruel severity to his son dissipated. It is one thing to have been stern, and to have had, as Dr. Monro says Howard had, "some strange whims about his son's education," and another to have been what popular notions have represented Howard, a father who neglected his only son in order to visit prisons, or when he did not neglect him, treated him with frightful severity.

To all interested in Howard, and especially those who on any ground may be prejudiced against him, we strongly commend this book by Dr. Guy, who, if a fervent admirer of his hero, is always fair in letting the reader know what has been said by his detractors.

Die Medicamentöse Behandlung der Psychosen, von Dr. Brosius, Director der Heilanstalten, Bendorf-Sayn.

This is a reprint of a short article in the "Deutsche Medicinische Wochenschrift." Dr. Brosius here appears defending some sceptical utterances which he had previously made, holding that the course of insanity is scarcely ever arrested or shortened by medicines, and that "the view that mental derangements recover without drugs is already old," older, we daresay, than medicine itself. "The increased fineness of our diagnosis," he observes, "has not increased the number of our recoveries." The learned doctor seeks to prove this by giving us selected statistics of different asylums. In some few or no drugs are given; in others the apothecary's bill is a large one; and the percentage of recovery is as good in the one set as in the other.

We do not deny that this statistical line of argument, if faithfully conducted, can furnish us with important lessons; but for a controversy of this nature a lengthened and exhaustive inquiry is needed, and this cannot be completed in half a page. Dr. Brosius tells us that during the 25 years his asylum has been in existence out of 160 patients thought to be curable 82, = 50 per cent., recovered without the use of medical agents save in two cases. It is clearly open for an adversary to reply that as Dr. Brosius' experience is mainly confined to treatment by the expectant method, he could only be trusted to classify as recoverable, cases likely to get well without medical treatment, and that if he had made greater use of therapeutic methods for the rest, he might have had more recoveries. As Dr. Brosius' asylum is a private one, he can, we suppose, choose his own patients, or at least reject those he does not like. His division into curable or incurable may be correct, but until the principles are clearly known to us, it is not likely that it will be quietly accepted as a basis for a statistical argument. Dr. Brosius quotes with applause the axiom of Dr. Stark that the most important and efficacious means of treatment and cure is in