

down a form perhaps familiar under some other name. The bibliography, however, seems fairly done, and the work can be unhesitatingly recommended alike to the student and the practitioner. Its extraordinary cheapness, too, is not the least of its merits.

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*Suicide: Its History, Literature, Jurisprudence, Causation, and Prevention.* By WYNN WESTCOTT, M.B. London: H. K. Lewis: 1885.

THE author has written this book in the hopes of diminishing the amount of suicide. He has been encouraged by the consideration that there are but two books in the English language devoted entirely to this subject. He takes occasion to quote against Forbes Winslow's *Anatomy of Suicide* an unfavourable criticism from the *Athenæum*. About a more recent work on the subject Mr Wynn Westcott observes, "The thoroughly scientific statistical work of H. Morselli, of Turin, has been recently published in an English form, but it is hardly a readable book, consisting almost entirely of statistics; and the subject, moreover, is treated from an Italian standpoint." We have not got Forbes Winslow's book, but having read the learned work of Enrico Morselli, *Il Suicidio*, Milan, 1879, we cannot agree with this description. In his book of 512 pages, enriched with maps and statistical tables, Professor Morselli has room for every aspect of suicide. To say that it is "an almost entirely statistical work" is not giving a fair idea of the book, which has been translated into English in the international scientific series. It is a larger and more complete work than Mr Westcott's, and shows more learning and maturity of thought. Nevertheless, in our opinion 200 pages, the length of the essay under review, is quite enough for the subject; indeed, the author could have well made his book shorter, had he kept from introducing common-place reflections, and raising questions on matters where there can be no doubt whatever, such as "some sorts of fish, as salmon, have been noticed to throw themselves out of the water, but it seems very doubtful whether this act is meant to be suicidal." His list of notable suicides is either too long or too short,—too long, as it gives questionable cases like Richard II. of England, J. J. Rousseau, General Pichegru, and Abdul Aziz, the Sultan of Turkey, with obscure cases like T. Craddock, a baker, or W. Green, a weaver, who threw themselves off the London Monument, whilst it leaves out names like those of Charles Blount, the deistical writer, and Maitland of Lethingham, the celebrated Scottish statesman. A little more care on the part of the author would have saved him from making droll statements, such as that Goethe, in the Sorrows of Werter, "exalts suicide as the end of one's existence," or that the unfortunate Afghan surgeon, Mahomed

Ismail Khan, who poisoned himself in 1883, "could not return to his Indian home, having lost caste there." But Mohammedans have no caste, and Afghanistan is not in India. The author's experience as deputy coroner for Central Middlesex has enabled him to observe a large number of cases of suicide, and he found "that in 20 per cent. only had the deceased ever exhibited symptoms of insanity obvious to the friends and relations."

In this book the reader will find full information about the state of English law and the attitude of insurance companies in regard to suicide. We do not think writing books calling attention to the subject is the best way to dissuade people from destroying themselves. Religious influence is the most powerful deterrent, suicide being much rarer in strict Catholic countries, and amongst Mohammedans, as the canons of the Church and the Koran forbid self-murder, but it is met with in all countries more or less; and though it is absurd to hold that all who seek escape from the evils of life must be insane, suicide is generally the result of bad health and a morbid state of mind, which moral advice and religious faith have failed to combat with success.

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*Rome in Winter, and the Tuscan Hills in Summer; A Contribution to the Climate of Italy.* By DAVID YOUNG, M.D., late Professor of Botany in the Grant College, Bombay. London: H. K. Lewis: 1886.

DR YOUNG, in writing this work, has attempted to supply a want which he considers exists in English medical literature for a work treating of Rome and its climate. He has been fortunate in hitting upon a very attractive title, and it may be said at once that he has produced an attractive work. But the *Tuscan Hills in Summer* receive by no means the same attention as does *Rome in Winter*, with which our author chiefly concerns himself. The scope of the book will be understood from the following passage in the preface,—"The principal elements in the climate are briefly described, the prevailing diseases are compared with those of England and northern countries generally, and the type of diseases likely to receive benefit in Italy is dwelt on at some length, while the sanitary state of the city, and the important and increasingly interesting subject of malaria are also considered." Dr Young is strongly of opinion that Rome is not the unhealthy city it is generally believed to be. He enters a vigorous protest against the habit of recording deaths as from "fever caught at Rome," when there is no evidence in proof of the statement, and nothing to show that the fever may not have been caught elsewhere. He points out that the death-rate from typhoid is lower in Rome than in any other European capital or Italian city, at the same time admitting that there is some ground for the belief that a fever does exist which is