these patients are secretive about their slimming pills. This, and the diminishing amounts of the drug being prescribed, may make doctors less likely to think of this eminently treatable disorder when faced with paranoid and depressive symptoms arising in an atypical setting.

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Corrigendum

Journal, October 1987, **151**, 552–554 (I. J. McLoughlin & M. S. Bhate). On page 553, "Parkes (1964) describes a typical mourning..." should read "Parkes (1964) describes atypical mourning...".

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO
The address in Psychological Medicine

In the Psychological Section, the excellence of the Address of the President, Dr Gasquet, was in inverse ratio to its length. One-sidedness is the common failing to which medical men are all more or less disposed, be the department of medicine to which they devote their energies what it may. Probably the temptation is nowhere greater than in the sphere of Psychological Medicine. A class of men with exceptional experience, devoting their attention to the phenomena of insanity, whether as consultants or superintendents of asylums, obtain a very special knowledge in regard to them. They find that a great amount of ignorance prevails as to their nature and origin, and that the physical aspect of insanity is even now too much ignored in some quarters. Impressed with the importance of this error, they dwell, in season and, as some may think, out of season, upon the relations between brain and mind, matter and spirit, and the corporeal changes out of which mental aberrations arise. Naturally the physical treatment of insanity is put prominently forward. Formerly we heard much about the moral treatment of insanity; now-a-days it is rarely mentioned. Dr Gasquet proclaims its importance; he utters a timely warning against the exclusive study of the physical nature of the disorder. He yields to none in the belief that it is a symptom of disease of the brain, but he says – and says truly – that we commit a grave error when we lose sight of the psychical element. Dr Hughlings Jackson took great pains some years ago to re-word the references he had up to that period made in his writings to the relations between mind and brain. He had written, he told his readers, as if mind and brain were identical, whereas he should have been more explicit in representing the latter as the organ of the former. In the same paper, he defended Herbert Spencer from the charge of materialism. Dr Gasquet clearly does not think that psychological medicine can be regarded as synonymous with cerebral medicine, or that the most perfect knowledge of the physiology of the brain, and the pathological changes discovered after death in the insane, will tell us all that we ought to know if we would grasp the true nature of insanity in its entirety, and would treat it in some better way than a mere physicist would, if consistent with his one-sided apprehension of mental phenomena. There is no danger of Dr Gasquet's protest leading to a reaction to the opposite extreme. The merely metaphysical study of mental disorders has passed away, never to return. It is, however, wise to consider whether we have not lost as well as gained by the tremendous change which has occurred in our estimation of its value, and whether we must not hasten to recover what we may have too hastily permitted to vanish in the psychical study and treatment of lunatics. To this end the Address of the President of the Section of Psychology (or more correctly, Medical Psychology) will form an important and much-wanted stimulus.

Reference

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