understood in independence of a political system of classification and social control, is extraordinary.

ROLAND LITTLEWOOD
Middlesex Hospital Medical School
London W1

Relationship of Mood Alterations to Bingeing Behaviour in Bulimia

SIR: In their study of 12 patients with bulimia, Kaye *et al* (*Journal*, October 1986, **149**, 479–485) have presented an example of the use of paradox in treatment. Subjects were first told they were entering hospital for a study rather than for treatment. They listed their favourite binge foods before admission and every effort was made to obtain these. They were given a private room and encouraged to take as much time as they needed to achieve the "desired effect" of their binge and vomit, having been supplied with a tray of 5000–6000 Kcal of food for the purpose. This was followed by the attentions of a physician as soon as the binge and vomiting was completed to the subjects' satisfaction. It would be interesting to know whether such a programme had any effect on the subjects' bingeing and vomiting behaviour. Could this be a model for a novel treatment approach?

SALLY BROWNING
University of Bristol
Bristol BS2 8DZ

Is There a Lithium Withdrawal Syndrome?

SIR: The paper by Mander (*Journal*, October 1986, **149**, 498–501) contains problems and an attractive enigma. The author used the words "withdrawal" and "relapse" interchangeably: they are not so. In any chronic condition, whether on or off treatment, in a stable state, making any change to that regimen (e.g. stopping lithium) is likely to effect a reaction (e.g. a relapse). The author proves this point. The pursuit of the question as to whether there is a withdrawal effect on stopping lithium that increases the number of relapses in the early stages can only be shown if there is a fall in the relapse rate lower than expected for a period after the withdrawal syndrome has ended. However, the theoretical relapse rate can never be known since the withdrawal syndrome "shadows" it. How can one distinguish a withdrawal state causing relapse and relapse alone?

S. P. HAWKINS
C. L. SHEPHERD
St Woolos Hospital
Newport, Gwent NP9 4SZ

CORRIGENDA

Journal, October 1986, **149**, 471–474 (P. Thompson). In Table I (page 472) the number of patients with 4–9 seclusions in 1984 should be 7 and not 1.

Journal, November 1986, **149**, 592–602 (W. A. Arrindell & P. M. G. Emmelkamp). The second sentence of the fourth paragraph of the 'Results' section (page 598) should read as follows: "On neuroticism, the partners scored as high as partners of other patients and as high as maritally non-distressed males, and significantly lower than maritally distressed males ($P < 0.0001$), who as a group had the highest mean score (Table I)". The first sentence of the 'Sexual maladjustment and sexual dissatisfaction' section (page 598) should read "Agoraphobics were found to rate their sexual relationships with their marital partners as less adjusted than maritally non-distressed females did, but as significantly more adjusted than those of female non-phobic psychiatric subjects, and as 'adjusted' as the sexual relationships of maritally distressed female subjects".

Journal, November 1986, **149**, 631–635 (R. Noyes *et al*). The following should be added to the penultimate paragraph (page 634): "Anxious patients often report unsatisfactory interaction with physicians and alienation from them as well (Clancy & Noyes, 1976). In fact, their hypochondriacal attitudes and behaviour can seriously disrupt the doctor–patient relationship, resulting in unsatisfactory treatment (Pilowsky, 1980)."

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

Notes and News

We desire to draw attention to the usefulness of the "After-care Ladies Working Society" in aid of the association of the after-care of poor and friendless female convalescents on leaving the asylums for the insane. The object of this Society is to assist poor female convalescents, after leaving asylums, with gifts of clothing according to the special requirements of each case. The annual subscription is five shillings. Gifts of dresses, etc, are thankfully received. Communications on the business of the Society to be addressed to Mrs Richardson, Parkwood House, Whetstone, N.; or Miss Hawkins, Chaplin's House, Colney Hatch, N. – *Eds.*

Reference

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Researched by Henry Rollin, Emeritus Consultant Psychiatrist, Horton Hospital, Surrey.

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