

now know that serotonin is involved in depression, obsessive–compulsive disorder, anxiety disorders, aggression, schizophrenia and goodness knows how many other psychological disorders, yet we proudly tell our patients with depression that their illness involves a problem with serotonin. To complicate matters further we now have to tell them that there are countless different versions of serotonin.

‘Biological reductionism’ occurs in all spheres of biology. It is time that this reality was accepted and ceased to be used for devaluing the arguments of those who profess what some others may deem politically incorrect theories. I make a special plea to journal editors, as the frequency of this retort is such that free (and potentially legitimate) speech is at times being compromised.

Abed, R. T. (2001) Evolution and psychiatry (letter). *British Journal of Psychiatry*, **178**, 179.

Rose, S. & Lucas, P. (2001) Evolutionary psychology revisited (letter). *British Journal of Psychiatry*, **178**, 573.

C. H. Cantor Noosa Junction Specialist Centre, Suite 5, Cnr Eugari Street and Sunshine Beach Road, Noosa Junction, Queensland 4567, Australia

One hundred years ago

General hospitals and mental diseases

OUT-PATIENTS suffering from mental disorders have been for long treated at St. Thomas’s Hospital and elsewhere. The results of experience have shown that good work has been done in relieving many sufferers and in avoiding the necessity for asylum care in not a few cases. The quarterly court of governors of the Newcastle

Infirmary has decided to institute such a department, as reported by the *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* of Nov. 1st. Dr. G. H. Hume, in bringing forward the motion, pleaded for the fundamental ideas of prevention and cure, and it has been decided that a physician, qualified as the rules require and occupying an appointment in a public asylum in Northumberland or Durham, should attend at the

infirmary one day in each week and prescribe for the out-patients placed under his care.

REFERENCE

Lancet, 24 November 1900, 1515.

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

Corrigendum

Specificity and heterogeneity in children’s responses to profound institutional privation. *BJP*, **179**, 97–103. Authorship of this paper

should read: M. L. Rutter, J. M. Kreppner and T. G. O’Connor and the English and Romanian Adoptees (ERA) study team.