

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO**Post-graduate study of insanity**

In a paper read before the Psychological Section at the Bournemouth meeting of the British Medical Association, Dr Francis Walmsley called attention to "the desirableness of throwing open our asylums for the post-graduate study of insanity." The subject is one which does not admit to discussion, as it so manifestly deals with a desideratum in the sum total of medical education. This desideratum is daily making itself felt in connexion with our Lunacy Laws and operations; and the more the medical practitioner can furnish his mind with information in this direction, the less irksome will he find his troubles with lunatics become, and the more will he succeed in furthering the proper and efficient working of lunacy legislation, on behalf not less of the insane persons themselves than of the community in general. The great difficulties in the matter are a certain lack of interest in questions on insanity as a study which the general practitioner must necessarily feel, and, still

more, the want of sufficient time to devote to the practical study of insanity in the asylums of the country. Dr Walmsley has, we think, done well to bring up the subject again, and in referring to the many excellent and useful reasons why "the rich and valuable stores of information which our asylums contain should be rendered available to the whole body of the profession." He says that there is a general agreement that the time has come for urging asylum authorities to meet this want, and give the profession this opportunity for completing an important branch of their study. "Such a course must necessarily lead to an interchange of views between the profession at large and the permanent staffs of our asylums which manifestly must result in benefit to both, in good to the patients and in profit to the whole community."

Reference

Lancet, 5 September 1891, 594.

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