

Dominion Medical Monthly

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COMMENT FROM MONTH TO MONTH

Are the British militant suffragettes insane? Their tactics, or crimes, can only be paralleled by the extreme ways and means of the anarchists, who never hesitate to employ arson and bombs, which have culminated in murder.

Or are they hysterical? And is the militant movement an epidemic of hysteria?

There seems to be no scientific word properly applicable to the condition known as "hunger strike."

Sitophobia has been mentioned, but sitophobia or sitiophobia is a morbid dread of taking food, so great that often the sight or smell produces vomiting.

Possibly a better appellation would be sitiirgia, a term for hysterical anorexia, as proposed by Sollier.

Whatever the condition may be, there seems now to be a developing opinion that some neurosis constitutes the basic principle, which first manifests itself in the employment of so-called militant methods which lead to criminal acts. The crisis comes in the "hunger strike."

The "hunger strike" calls for forcible feeding, which meets with disfavor from humane and intelligent people, *i.e.*, as it is administered often by unskilled and inexperienced persons in prisons and jails.

Forcible feeding as practised in hospitals for the insane is not made much ado about. As practised on criminals, however, it has not proven a success.