security by false representations, promulgated, too, by that press which should ever be ready to warn, to guide, and to shield. Venal, indeed, must be that system which holds out encouragement to impostors and rogues.

Sir, your obedient servant,
Halifax, March, 1847. FRED. SMITH GARLICK, M.R.C.S.

ON THE TERM "CEREBRO-SPINAL."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I read in Mr. Wharton Jones's critical letter to the President and Council of the Royal Society the expression, "*cerebro-spinal system*." Have I misunderstood your late articles on the subject when I supposed them to imply that this expression is incorrect? Is there such a system? Is not this supposed cerebro-spinal system in reality two—the *cerebral* and the *spinal*?

It has often struck me that *two* words, properly employed, would give the least thinking person a good idea of the divisions of the nervous system. The cerebral relates to all that is *without* us; the spinal, to all that proceeds *from without* to *within*, and *from within* to *without*; the ganglionic, to what passes *within* us.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
March, 1847.

SPECTATOR.

THE PHYSIOLOGICAL COMMITTEE OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As the authors of the Report of the Physiological Committee of the Royal Society, which is impugned in a document furnished by Mr. Wharton Jones in the last number of *THE LANCET*, we beg leave to say, that while we altogether deny the justice of the imputations conveyed in that document, whether they regard our good faith or our scientific accuracy; and whilst our opinion as to the excellence and originality of Mr. Beck's researches, remains unchanged, we are, nevertheless, disposed to submit to any imputations from the same quarter, rather than take any share in prolonging an agitation set on foot by disappointed expectants, on the character of which an opinion has been already pronounced in the Society itself, by a very significant majority.—We remain, your obedient servants,

London, March, 1847.

W. SHARPEY,
R. B. TODD.

HOLLOWAY'S "LIFE" PILLS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The whole profession is under great obligation to you for your exposure of quackery, and especially of the wickedness and knavery of the advertisements and paragraphs so liberally scattered through the columns of the journals of this country. The following case appears to me to support your position:—

On Tuesday last, my partner was summoned to visit an old man, aged seventy-seven years, said to be dying. On his arrival, he found that, lured by the specious promises of a "speedy cure" for "the gravel," under which he supposed himself labouring, held out in the advertisements, the old man had purchased a box of "Holloway's life pills," and had taken them, according to the direction, in increasing doses, till at length a severe diarrhoea had set in, under which he sunk, three or four hours after my partner had seen him. We have made a return of his death to the registrar-general, and have fully stated our opinion of the cause of death.

There is, perhaps, no part of the kingdom in which quackery, in all its forms, is so rampant as in the manufacturing districts of West Yorkshire. The proprietors of "Sartin cures for rheumatism," "Worm powders," and "Paste for toothach," take their stand in rows in our market-place; bone-setters and professed curers of "certain diseases" fill our second and third class public-houses; while, last but not least, that worse than "do-nothing absurdity," homœopathy, has found a professor in—I regret to say it—a regularly educated surgeon, who, having retired from his profession, has succeeded a well-known political enthusiast in the stewardship of the Fixly estates, in this neighbourhood, and is blowing his "bubbles"—a better term, I think, than globules—in every direction through the district.

Do you not think it possible, Mr. Editor, that the comfortable position of the stewardship of Fixly may be tainted with some infectious miasma, which is certain to produce the disease of quackery in some form, political or otherwise?—I am, your very obedient servant,

Halifax, Feb. 1847.

ANTI-QUACK.

REGULATIONS OF THE NAVY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—My object in troubling you with these lines is to direct your attention to the injustice sustained by the medical profession in the Royal Navy, in being obliged to pass through the gun-room.

Having completed their professional education, and arrived at adult age, they are placed on an equality with young officers who are learning seamanship, or clerk's duties, who have been afloat from their boyhood, and are unacquainted with the necessity of retirement for the purpose of study. Being without a cabin, they are obliged to spend their time with these young gentlemen, in whose society they too frequently neglect scientific pursuits, and the prosecution of their professional studies.

The assistant-surgeon is the only officer entering the service at an adult age who is placed in the gun-room; for the chaplain, naval instructor, and second lieutenant of marines, go into the ward-room at once, and have a cabin; and efforts are now being made to put the first engineer into the same mess, and give him the rank of a commissioned officer.

Surely it is time that young medical men should receive their due. They are an educated and a gentlemanly class, and of all the officers in the service, the most capable of advancing our knowledge of natural history; but to do this effectually, they require encouragement; for in their present position, retirement and study are almost impossible.

If placed in the ward-room, and granted a cabin, the assistant-surgeon in the navy would only be on an equal footing with his brother officer in the army.

No inconvenience could follow this arrangement, unless a respectable uniform and increased pay might succeed to it, and be so considered; whilst the service would be benefited by the entry of gentlemen of property, as well as of talent, as is the case in the army.

There are many of high attainments now in the navy list; but the number would be increased by the alteration, and the country repaid by the prevention, perhaps cure, of the diseases of our stations, as the pathology of these fevers, so necessary to a rational mode of treatment, would be studied with that ardour characteristic of scientific men.

I beg leave, Sir, to request that, being a member of the medical profession yourself, and the editor of a journal devoted to the support and improvement of that profession, both in itself and its external relations, you will advocate the rights of the assistant-surgeons of the Royal Navy, asserting their claims to be made ward-room officers, with a cabin, and a respectable uniform.

Changing the title to second surgeon might contribute to overcome that jealousy which would exclude an assistant-surgeon from the upper mess.

In concluding, I venture to predict as great an improvement among the medical officers of the service, as first and second surgeons, as that which has already taken place since the days of the old surgeons and their mates.

I enclose my name and address in confidence, and beg to subscribe myself your humble servant,

March, 1847.

AN ASSISTANT-SURGEON IN THE
ROYAL NAVY.

DISPUTED PERIOD OF GESTATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I should be much obliged if yourself, or some of your numerous correspondents, could throw some light upon this case, which involves the welfare, almost existence, of a young and at present deserted child:—

Two men, A and B, had intercourse, unknown to each other, with a young woman of delicate health; and after many years, she was delivered of a female child, nine calendar months and three days after sexual intercourse with A, and nine calendar months less five days after similar intercourse with B; or at the end of 279 days after intercourse with A, and at the end of 271 days after intercourse with B—that is, a period of eight days elapsed between the periods of intercourse between the two men; and the woman had no female ailment in the meantime, and it is not believed she knew any other man. She went her full time, had a good labour, and produced a fine healthy girl; had a plentiful supply of milk, and had better health during her pregnancy and suckling than at any other time. She, however, suckled her child too long, got excessively low and nervous, it is believed worried herself