this comparison as unfair. Had it been made with physiognomy, it would have been more just and more accurate.

Dr. Carpenter, in his lectures on the nervous system, advances some subtle physiological objections to popular phrenology. He laments the ignorance too frequently manifested by phrenologists of physiology, of which ignorance Mr. Combe's idea, that one part of the brain *peculiarly* may be the site of vivid movements, and Mr. Sampson's apparent abetting of Mr. Combe in that fancy, are striking and conclusive examples. Dr. Carpenter, moreover, quotes Dr. Holland as administering a reproving caution to phrenologists.

In thus adducing the authorities now quoted, I have vindicated my statement, that the most distinguished physiologists in Europe hold reserved opinions in regard to the popular phrenology of Mr. Sampson. As I observed, in the beginning of this communication, I must decline the useless and interminable task of noticing that gentleman's misapprehensions and most serious, though I doubt not involuntary, misstatements of my views and arguments. I must presume he has not comprehended, since he has never attempted to answer my principal argument against his theory of the applicability of phrenology to jurisprudence, and the proposal to treat all crime simply as disease. I have nothing to retract or modify in regard to my account of the case of Mr. Combe.* My having given in your pages the account in Mr. Combe's own words (though from the article not having been included in the list of articles printed on your cover it may have escaped Mr. Sampson's notice), is a sufficient proof of my willingness to allow your readers to judge for themselves, whether I had misrepresented Mr. Combe. Mr. Sampson's pertinacious defence of that gentleman, based, as I hope it is, on ignorance rather than dis-

* Mr. Sampson, in one of his letters, accuses me of culpable carelessness. I have to charge him, and on better grounds, with the same fault. He persists in accusing me of asserting that Mr. Combe believed the movements of the brain, which he describes to be *literally* muscular. Mr. Sampson seems to be unaware of the distinction between the words "analogous" and "identical." I must also inform him that the relative pronoun "which," that occurs in the tenth last line of my paper of Feb. 18, does, by the legitimate rules of English grammar, refer to the antecedent "resemblance," as well as to "muscular action;" and that accordingly (as I do not think Mr. Combe a fool) it was to the former of these antecedents that the word "which" was meant by me to apply. I have taken the trouble to enter into this explanation, in the hope of inducing Mr. S. to be less culpably rash in his asseverations for the future.

ingenuousness, yet surprises and pains me. The agreeable and gentlemanly tone of Mr. Davey's last letter makes me feel some regret in being obliged to inform him that I am still unconvinced by his arguments. I have only to add, that this discussion, so far as I am concerned, terminates here. I am, Sir, your obedient and obliged servant,

ROBERT DICK, M.D.

London, May, 1842.

ON THE
INFUSUM ROSÆ COMPOSITUM
By G. F. COLLIER, M.D.

ALTHOUGH for many years, and from the first introduction of quinine as an article of medicine, the infusion of roses has been the common solvent used by practitioners, it is no less true (as Professor Donovan and others have recorded) that the tannic acid of the French rose decomposes the disulphate of quina, and precipitates an insoluble tannate. Furthermore, one thousand grains of the petals of the French rose contain four grains of oxide of iron. I understand that it has been proposed to prepare the infusion of roses so as to exclude the tannic acid; and the infusion so prepared is certainly a better solvent of the salt of quinine. Various specimens have been submitted to me, from which the tannic acid had been excluded. But if the object of the menstruum be merely to retain a colour and odour, the disulphate of quina might as well be dissolved in water with acid as an intermode, and coloured with *syrupus rhæados*. I say then that the proposition, elsewhere deliberately made before a learned body as a pharmaceutical improvement, cannot be entertained, because the tannic acid and the trace of iron are the chief remedial principles of the French rose, and deprived of these the infusion is a mere colouring matter. In fact, it is an ingenious process for emasculating the remedy of what little virtue it possesses. In briefly recording my opinion of this mischievous innovation (which shows how necessary it is that the pharmacist should be regulated by those who have a knowledge of the remedial application of drugs), I will take occasion to add, that some of the foreign quinine in the market contains no small portion of insoluble cinchonine, and other impurities, and that the menstruum suggested in a formula of mine some time ago will suffice for its detection; forming with it an opaque cloudy mixture, instead of a clear brilliant solution.

OLD MEDICAL BOOKS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The successful career of the "Parker" and "Camden" societies, and the large number of curious and interesting

works which the *small* annual payment of one guinea has enabled each society to print and distribute amongst its members, has suggested to me that a society formed on similar principles for the republication of scarce and valuable medical works, many of which are only to be met with in extensive medical libraries, and are not accessible to the majority of practitioners, would meet with support from medical men. Each member of the "Parker" Society receives in return for his guinea four thick octavo volumes of standard divinity; and of course the same amount of subscriptions to a medical society of similar character would reproduce an equal number of medical works. Those individuals who cannot afford to indulge in the expensive luxuries of medical literature, or whose laborious duties leave no time for the search after scarce editions of works of real value, might thus have their literary taste cheaply and amply gratified. If you think this subject worthy of attention, perhaps you will insert these brief remarks in your widely-circulated periodical, in the hope that the suggestion thus offered may induce the influential members of our profession to come forward and establish so desirable a society. To mention the authors whose works might be reprinted with advantage to the profession, would at this stage be somewhat premature; this must be left to a judicious committee: but I cannot resist the temptation of saying, that should the seed sown by this letter take root and bear fruit, no name can be given to the society more appropriate than that of the great discoverer of the circulation, the immortal Harvey. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

FERGUSON BRANSON.

Sheffield, April 26, 1842.

* * We had rather that our correspondent had named some more of the generally inaccessible and valuable works that can fairly be considered worth reprinting. The literary societies which he has named consist of antiquarians. Now antiquarians—no offence to the craft—are gentlemen whose business it is to remember what everybody else may forget, and to pass by everything that others should stop and observe. They wear eyes in their polls, in order to see backwards; but men of science require those organs forward, that whoever retrogrades *they* may advance. If there be one class of men to whom the ancient history of their profession is next to useless, however interesting, it is the medical. No new great step will be made in medicine until it is effected by chemistry. What dusty volume that is "out of print" will help us in this department of the art?

THE LANCET.

London, Saturday, May 7, 1842.

NOTWITHSTANDING the progress of the Income-Tax through the House of Commons, and the certainty that its inequalities will be preserved intact, we consider it our duty to continue the discussion, and to recur to it until the medical profession shall cease to be taxed twice as much as the capitalists and landowners, who happen to have an ascendancy in the Legislature.

The question has not been brought very fairly forward in the House, but we shall briefly notice, in the discussion raised by Mr. ROEBUCK on schedule D, some of the arguments adduced to prop up injustice and false doctrine.

Light, which "comes to all," finds its way ultimately to the majorities of the House of Commons, notwithstanding the great ingenuity of the gentlemen who employ themselves in excluding it by painting and darkening the windows, or persuading honourable members to shut their eyes. Everybody out of Parliament understands that an income is the surplus of receipts after subtracting the loss, but a majority of the House was very near deciding that a man should be taxed for his receipts without deduction of his losses, if they were incurred in a business classed artificially in the Bill, under another schedule. Everybody out of Parliament knows that a "short terminable annuity" (in other words, a sum to be paid annually for one, or five, or twenty years,) is worth less than an interminable annuity, and that the two can only be taxed equally by reducing them to their "present money value;" yet a majority of the House of Commons has decided that all annuities are to be taxed sevenpence in the pound! This is robbery! Interest of money being 3 per cent. you have bought an annuity of 1000*l.* a-year, to run *three years*, for 2829*l.*—the Income-Tax will take 29*l.* 3*s.* of it annually.