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INOCULATION
FOR
THE SMALL-POX
VINDICATED.

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INOCULATION

FOR

THE SMALL-POX

VINDICATED;

AND

ITS SUPERIOR EFFICACY AND SAFETY

TO THE PRACTICE OF

VACCINATION

CLEARLY PROVED.

BY GEORGE LIPSCOMB, SURGEON.

“Error has been frequently sanctioned by the reputation of great names; but it still continues to be *error*, unchanged in its nature and effects by the most general reception which the world may have been induced to give it, in consequence of a too ready submission to the dogmas of authority.”——LIPSCOMB *on Asthma*.

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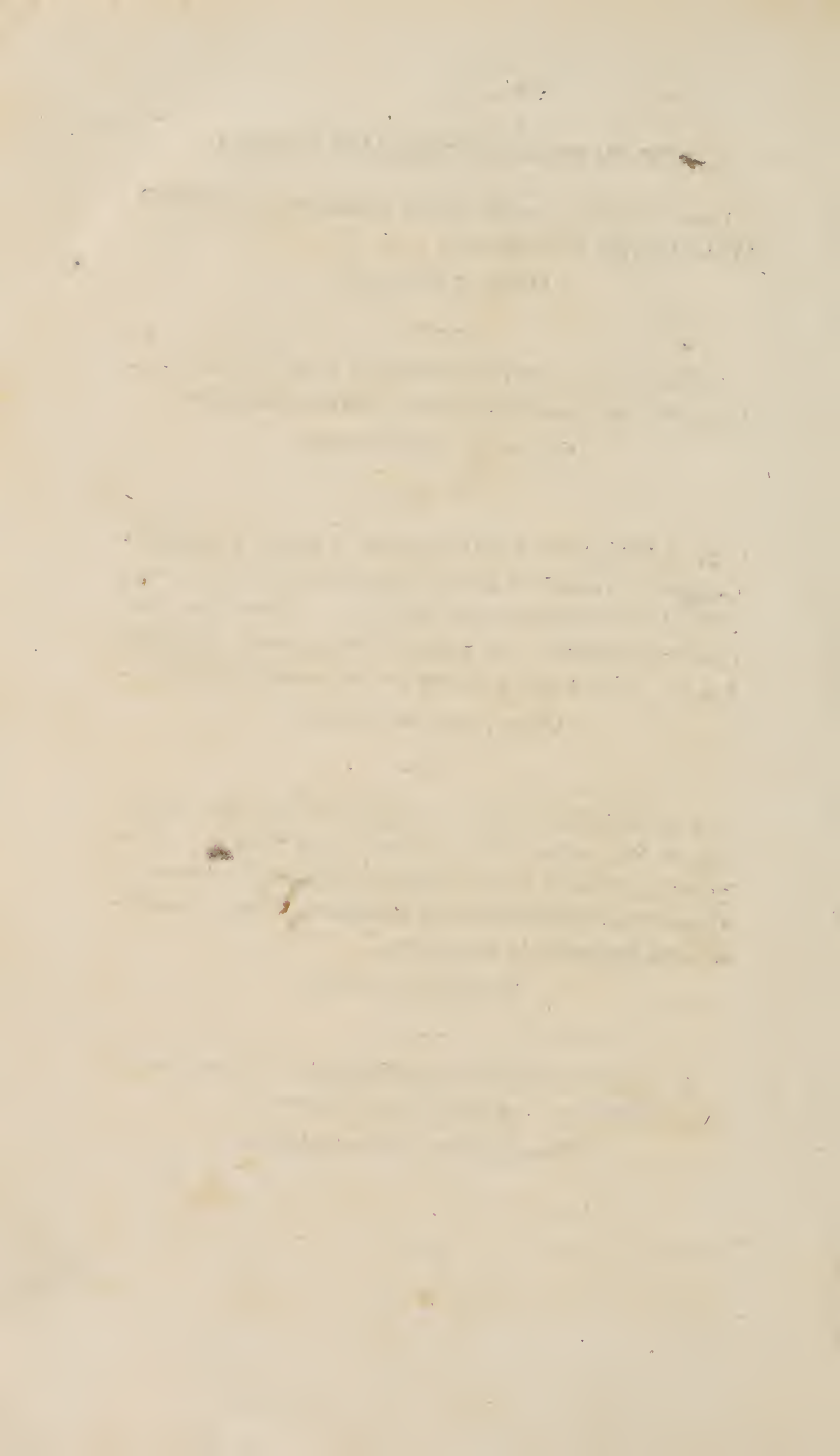
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INOCULATION

FOR

THE SMALL-POX

VINDICATED.

THE ferment of popular opinion respecting the cow-pox having, in some degree, subsided; and the torrent of fashion having been at length stemmed by the influences of reason and experience; the present time appears not altogether unfavourable to the introduction of a few remarks, which are designed to illustrate the arguments already adduced on the merits and consequences of vaccination; and to place in a clear and conspicuous point of view the fallacy of those doctrines by which the practice of it has been encouraged and supported.

I have often had occasion to remark, that the interests of Science are intimately connected with the liberality and candour of those

who walk in her paths. It is this liberality and candour which dispose men to hear without offence, and to adopt without reluctance, the suggestions of wisdom and experience; which teach them to correct error, and to advance improvement; to accept, to admit, and to encourage whatever is truly valuable, however repugnant to the fashionable and prevailing opinions of the moment. It is to this principle that Dr. Jenner owes the prompt reception of his doctrines relative to vaccination, at a period when neither the failure of the variolous inoculation in producing its wonted good effects, nor any indisposition in those practitioners who were best acquainted with it, to cherish and cultivate that *well-tried* and *well-understood* practice, afforded any particular grounds for believing that it would be suddenly discarded, to make room for an hastily-suggested innovation: and it is to the same principle that I now appeal, with the most perfect confidence that an impartial public will candidly examine the weight of the arguments which I have dared to advance in opposition to what I *believe* to be error, and in defence of that which I *know* to be

truth: and I conjure my readers, by every sentiment of integrity and virtue which adorns the character of Englishmen, not to suffer any false bias to warp or prejudice their minds, when their judgment and opinion are thus solicited on a subject closely connected with the happiness of society.

When Dr. Jenner introduced to the public, in the year 1798, his observations on the vaccine disease, it was remarked, that persons who had been affected with it, were for ever after secure from the infection of the small-pox; and several cases were adduced in support of that opinion. Hence originated the idea of vaccination: it being conjectured that the same disease, artificially communicated to the human system, would in like manner render it subsequently incapable of being affected by variolous contagion. Numerous experiments were made; and in order to ascertain whether those persons who had been subjected to vaccine inoculation were liable to be affected afterwards by the small-pox, it was recommended to practitioners to inoculate them with variolous matter as soon as they appeared to be perfectly recovered from

the vaccine disease. But although Dr. Jenner and others expressed themselves *perfectly satisfied* with this mode of proving the fact which they appeared desirous to establish, there were some who entertained doubts on the subject, and among them Mr. Lawrence, who ingeniously suggested the probability of the seeds of variolous infection being only smothered, or their activity suspended, and not eradicated by the *saturation*, as he termed it, of the juices with vaccine virus; and that after a certain time, and the cessation of such cause of suspension, some other cause might arise capable of exciting them into activity. Dr. Moseley also expressed the like suspicion; and, notwithstanding the vehemence with which the doctor's opinion was combated, sad experience has convinced us of the just grounds on which his suspicion was founded.

Dr. Jenner acknowledged, that although the cow-pox shielded the constitution from the small-pox, and the small-pox proved a protection against its own poison applied in future, yet that the human subject, as well as the cow, is again and again susceptible of the infectious nature of the cow-pox. This cir-

cumstance might have given rise to some objections, at first, to the introduction of vaccination : but it being stated that the cow-pox was a very slight morbid affection, neither accompanied nor followed by severe or dangerous symptoms ; that it was not communicable by effluvia, but only by the touch, or rather by the application of the matter in a recent or purulent state to an excoriated surface of the body, to which accident comparatively few persons were exposed ; all difficulties on this account were immediately obviated : and if the cow-pox had really possessed that superiority over the variolous inoculation which was at first asserted, the objection above hinted at would have been without doubt completely done away. Dr. Pearson of London followed Dr. Jenner on the same subject, and composed a series of propositions fairly and candidly expressing the just and proper grounds which practitioners in particular, and the public in general, were called upon to investigate, as the best means of determining whether the practice of vaccination ought or ought not to be adopted. Hitherto there appeared to be

an evident regard for the interests of science and of society in every thing which had been advanced on this topic : but when Dr. John Sims published the case of a gentleman at Bristol, who having had the cow-pox twice, was afterwards inoculated with variolous matter, “ and had the small-pox so feverely that “ his life was for some time despaired of,” by way of caution to those practitioners who seemed inclined to recommend the general inoculation of the cow-pox, a strange infatuation seems to have pervaded the minds of those who had previously adopted a favourable opinion respecting the new practice : and, although the fact was too well supported to be flatly contradicted or denied, it was not allowed to be capable of opposing “ volumes of evidence,” and “ clouds of witnesses,” which suddenly presented themselves with all the resistless obstinacy of the Macedonian phalanx.

It was not until after the publication of Dr. Sims's letter in the Medical Journal that Dr. Jenner's second pamphlet made its appearance : and in this work the author seems to have principally in view the means of distinguishing the real cow-pox from a spurious

disease which had been found destitute of the power of securing those persons to whom it had been communicated from subsequent infection by the small-pox : but even in the first publication Dr. Jenner expressed his fear lest sufficient attention should not be paid to discriminate between the true and spurious matter. Hence it is presumed that Dr. Jenner, even at that time, had seen some instances in which persons who had *apparently* had the vaccine disease, were afterwards found liable to variolous infection.

One of the propositions suggested by Dr. Pearson judiciously enquired—“ Is the cow-pox a shorter and safer disease than *the inoculated* small-pox ?” To this, two * gentlemen of the faculty, who, from the nature and extent of their experience, merited great attention, answered, that the cow-pox under their observation had appeared to be “ *by far* *the more* severe disease :” but others having tried vaccination about the same time, were of the contrary opinion, and considered it to be as much milder in its symptoms and ef-

* Mr. Drew and Mr. Forster, correspondents of Dr. Pearson.

fects than the inoculated small-pox, as that disease was known to be, than the small-pox communicated naturally.

Another of Dr. Pearson's propositions was, "Did the cow-pox never excite or predispose to other diseases?" The evidence by which this enquiry was to be decided upon, and therefore the fate of Dr. Jenner's discovery, required time and experience to bring to light.

Thus it appeared that the grand question before the public, and now that universal attention had been excited to it, which was fairly at issue, was, Whether vaccination was an equally safe and certain, and in any degree a milder, preventive of the small-pox than variolous inoculation properly conducted?

If practitioners had confined themselves to this simple question, much valuable time and great and laborious exertions might have been saved: but many who dedicated themselves to this investigation seem to have been more attentive to the *peculiar properties* of the new disease than to its *comparative merits*; many, in their enthusiastic approbation of the

discovery, seem to have almost forgotten the practice to which vaccination was to be opposed, and employed themselves in panegyrising the benevolence and philanthropy of the discoverer, rather than in fairly appreciating the value of his suggestions. Many among those, who were eager to introduce vaccination, spoke of it in terms which referred to the ravages of the small-pox naturally; and overlooked the beneficial influence of inoculation, which, when judiciously performed, had been found *indeed* capable of disarming that terrific disease of its primeval horrors.

It is but simple justice to Dr. Jenner to remark, that the doctor stated in the most unequivocal manner, that he thought “much precaution necessary in the progress of the enquiry.” Mr. John Hunter excellently observed, on a different occasion, that no man was fit to make *any* experiment who had not made *many*: by which I understand him to have thought that those accounts of experiments which are given to us by persons not frequently accustomed to minute investigation and analysis are seldom to be de-

pended on. Whatever Dr. Jenner or Mr. Hunter *might think*, or *may have said*, the experiments in vaccination have been, in many instances, conducted by strange agents. Country clergymen, farmers, and old women, have been made the instruments for ascertaining the consequences of this important revolution in medical science. I would not be misunderstood as intending to give offence to either of these classes when I say, that however respectable, useful, and necessary, they may be in their several stations, it is impossible that any of them should have been properly employed on this occasion: and greatly as I venerate and admire the learning and the moral worth of the clergy, greatly as I esteem and regard the honest and beneficial industry of the farmer, I can not help thinking that less mischief has been done by the third description of persons above alluded to, in the practice of vaccination than by either of the other—because *they have never published on the subject*.

When the practice of vaccination was introduced, great pains seem to have been taken to influence the minds of those whose situations in life, or the nature of whose studies,

rendered their opinions likely to make an impression in the circles in which they were conversant. It certainly did appear to be a very unfair, very unsafe, and consequently an unjustifiable mode of recommending vaccination, that false statements were made respecting the fatality of the small-pox and the danger of inoculation. I do not mean to charge the ingenious author of the discovery with any part of that misconduct, which is attributable perhaps to his followers and admirers only ; but it is an incontrovertible fact, that many false statements and reports of the fatality of variolous contagion have been published at different times, under the sanction of names of considerable weight and importance, which had a tendency to excite, on unfair grounds, a preference to vaccination in the minds of many persons, who, if they had been left to form an impartial judgment on the subject, would have resisted its introduction.

In London it was stated, that the fatality of the natural small-pox was much greater than a reference to any well-authenticated documents will countenance; and the average number of deaths in the inoculation hospital

at St. Pancras was mentioned as one in six hundred. This was much beyond the real truth: but it is scarcely worth while to cavil about it; because, in the Country, it was stated, on the authority of many opulent and respectable persons, who met for the purpose of *promoting* vaccination, that one person in six dies in the natural small-pox, and one in two hundred and fifty of those who are inoculated. The report from which I have made this extract is sanctioned by the names of several practitioners in a large commercial town; was avowedly composed for the purpose of introducing vaccination; and was circulated together with a letter from a distinguished public character in the neighbourhood, in which practitioners were called upon to promote and encourage the introduction of the cow-pox, by their “influence among the “poor.” If I may be permitted to avow the dictates of my mind, I can conscientiously add, that it revolts with indignation at the shocking idea of thus wilfully imposing on the ignorant; of thus exposing to probable destruction those who regard us in the light of friendly advisers; of thus manifesting the

disposition of faithless betrayers of the confidence reposed in the faculty as men of honour, integrity, and science. Was it by such insidious arts that the first rudiments of improvement were introduced into the world? Is it by such base and unworthy efforts that knowledge can be brought nearer to perfection? Rather let science perish than attempt to establish it on the ruins of justice and the wreck of truth!

It is well known that superstition not only had a tendency to retard the progress of inoculation, but that it did actually retard it. At a more enlightened period, however, and when its safety and success were generally understood, its effects meliorated, and its influence reduced under the controul of medical sagacity, some other cause must evidently have operated to prevent its being universally received; and it would have been wise and prudent if those who have wrested an argument in favour of vaccination from the prejudices which still remain against inoculation, and the reluctance which persons, not well acquainted with the subject, sometimes manifest, to submit to that safe and

certain practice, had candidly investigated the *true cause* of those prejudices and of that reluctance, and devoted a small share of their ingenuity and philanthropy in endeavouring to remove them. Instead of this, imagination seems to have been tortured in order to find suggestions capable of increasing the indifference of the public to inoculation, if not their prejudices against it, in spite of absolute want of proof and the experience of a century.

A dispassionate examination into the state of medical science would have convinced them, that the principles and the improvements in the practice of inoculation required only *to be known*, in order to ensure confidence and attention.

Strange as it may seem, it is an indisputable fact, that practitioners in general were less acquainted with this branch of professional duty than with almost any other. The truth is, that inoculation having lost the force of novelty, the power of conferring fame, or of acquiring riches, had for some years ceased to attract the particular regard of medical men. The facility with which it could be

performed, the slight attention which it seemed to require, and the comparatively few dangerous symptoms which it produced, had occasioned the practice to be transferred into select hands; and many physicians and surgeons of the greatest eminence, and in very extensive general practice, were not only averse from interfering with inoculation, and seldom attended patients in the course of the subsequent disease, but were even become unacquainted with some of the most important circumstances relative to its modern improvements. This must have been the reason why so little attention was paid to the injured fame of inoculation in the statements relative to its danger and fatality, and concurred with other causes to promote the rapid progress of vaccination. It is impossible to suppose that an innovation likely to be productive of important consequences would have been so suddenly, and I am sorry to add so *rashly*, encouraged, if a due regard had been paid to the evidence of long experience, and the testimony of those practitioners who only were capable of elucidating the subject of inoculation. If the real state of that practice, the

gradual and progressive improvements which had brought it to almost mathematical precision, and the absolute certainty of its being an *effectual* as well as a *safe* preservative against the small-pox, had been duly weighed, surely it would not have been so readily and pusillanimously abandoned to conjectures, which, however ingenious, have never amounted to proof; or arguments, which, however plausible, have never been conclusive. It is not my intention to deny that the discovery appeared primarily of sufficient importance to justify a fair and impartial investigation of its effects: but it is really wonderful that the suggestions so naturally occurring to Dr. John Sims and others, and grounded on incontrovertible facts, were not productive of hesitation, caution, and doubt, in the minds of all. It could not be unknown to any practitioner that variolous inoculation had in some instances unfortunately produced other diseases besides that intended to be communicated, or at least dispositions to produce or to be acted upon by diseases; and this circumstance was not forgotten among the arguments brought forward in support of the pre-

ference due to vaccination. Did it not occur to persons who thus argued, that careful and judicious practitioners have always attentively regarded the subjects from whom variolous matter was procured, to avoid the possibility of introducing other morbid affections; and that vaccine matter, being avowedly connected with a very severe and loathsome disease in the cow, and derived from the *most loathsome*, disgusting, and horrid disease to which the horse is liable, might possibly, and even probably, communicate to the human race some species or modification of other distempers which not unfrequently attack the cow and the horse? Did it not occur to them, that the bare risk of such consequences was in itself a formidable objection to the new practice of vaccination? Scrophula, the great opprobrium of medicine in all ages, and the most to be dreaded, not only on that account, but also because experience has taught us that it *has been* introduced into healthy children, or the seeds of it rendered active, by inoculation, must immediately present itself in the foremost rank of those effects which vaccination would be likely to produce, on account of

its evident similarity to the origin whence the cow-pox is said to be derived. Even if the glandular and cutaneous affections of the cow and of the horse escaped the notice of those who might be presumed likely to regard their favourite system with a partial "parent's fondness," other practitioners, less interested in the fate of this bantling of fancy, might naturally have been supposed not altogether blind to the probability of their being also capable of occasioning mischievous consequences in the human body.

Such doubts would have properly tempered the curiosity of the public; and the alacrity with which the practice of vaccination was unfortunately pursued, would have excited sufficient caution to prevent false positions relative to the original argument from being admitted, and would have instantly led to the detection of absurd conclusions. When it was asserted that persons who had undergone vaccination were immediately, or in a few weeks, or even months, after their recovery, subjected to variolous inoculation without the small-pox being produced, it would not have been necessarily admitted that *therefore* those

persons would remain “*for ever after*” incapable of being affected by contagion. When it was stated that no ill consequences would arise from the introduction of vaccine matter into the human body, it would not have been believed that the experience of a few months or a few years was sufficient to justify that bold and groundless assertion. But from the commencement of the discussion to the present hour, although a vast mass of theory has been industriously collected, to outweigh the cavils of the credulous, the fears of the timid, and the objections of the cautious, the supporters of vaccination have seemed rather to *demand* conviction as a tribute of respect due to the abilities of the discoverer and the rank of those who have encouraged the discovery, than to claim it on the fair ground of just reasoning or incontrovertible argument. At all events their reasoning is not correct, and their arguments may be easily subdued. Would to GOD that prejudices, which, once excited, cling so pertinaciously to the human mind, were capable of being eradicated with equal facility !

I have before animadverted upon the im-

propriety of attempting to undervalue the merit of variolous inoculation, by partial or false statements, in order to produce a more ready preference of vaccination than it might otherwise have obtained: to this may be added, that the zeal and assiduity which in so very short a space of time brought vaccination into fashion, and caused it to be so generally patronized, although called into action and excited, only by the futile arguments before detailed, were often unhappily substituted and mistaken for *real proofs* of the safety and efficacy of the practice. To me, indeed, the unparalleled ardour and unexampled anxiety which broke forth so suddenly, appeared, even at the very commencement of the business, a suspicious circumstance; and therefore, although I have been always disposed to regard the testimony and the suggestions of the learned authors who have employed their pens on this subject, with becoming deference and respect, and have not hitherto attempted to influence the opinions of others, I never hesitated on proper occasions, and when my sentiments were called for, fairly and candidly to declare the doubts and the fears which

rendered me averse from the practice of vaccination. I therefore never recommended it : and although, in many instances, I have been prevailed upon by the wishes of my patients, or the sollicitations of their friends, to inoculate with vaccine matter, I always believed it to be my duty, as an honest man, not to disguise my real opinion on the subject : at the same time I should have thought it highly unbecoming if I had on any occasion misrepresented, or in any degree attempted to pervert, the doctrines of others, who, however inconclusively or erroneously they may have argued, might nevertheless be entitled to my respect, on account of their benevolence and veracity. But while I was attempting to subject the arguments adduced in favour of vaccination to the common rules of reasoning, and to weigh them in an impartial balance, it gave me considerable uneasiness to perceive that the practice of it was every day extended by every species of artifice which could lead captive the human mind. The ministers of religion intermingled with the doctrines of faith and morality, dissertations on the matter of the cow-pox ; and connected

the joys of heaven and the blissful reward of virtue with a ready acquiescence in crude and ill-digested opinions neither established on the basis of reason nor supported by the foundation of truth. Newspapers and magazines teemed with medical intelligence, often useless and contradictory, but almost always positive. The mode by which vaccination was introduced to an admiring world was compared by one * writer to the promulgation of the gospel; another proposed it as the infallible means of counteracting the ravages of depopulating † war, and expressed his hope and his confidence that parents would consider the introduction of vaccination among their children as much a duty, as to initiate them by baptism into the class of christians: a third ‡ makes his rustic patients express their inconsiderate applause in blank verse, and exult with rapturous and ecstatic delight in the anticipation of consequences beyond the reach of probability, or the ken of mortal foresight. I might enlarge this list to almost endless extent.

* Dr. Trotter.

† Mr. Dunning.

‡ Rev. Mr. Finch.

The child of an engraver was *very opportunely* vaccinated: an elegant plate of the eruptions was published; and, although two physicians attended the child, and one of them performed the inoculation, a narrative of the progress of the disease was printed, entitled “Case of the Cow-Pox communicated by Inoculation *to his own Child* by Mr. J. W. Engraver.” Even the appearance and colour of the blotches, vesicles, and encrustations, have been termed *beautiful*; although in my humble taste for literature, or rather, correctness of expression, that appellation was never more shamefully misapplied, than for the purpose of describing a disease so loathsome, offensive, and abominable. The metropolis was crowded with institutions for encouraging vaccination, and the country stocked with committees eager to compass sea and land to make proselytes to their opinions. That fair, candid, temperate, discussion of the real merits of the discovery, which is so essential to the interests of science, and so congenial to the disposition of philosophical improvement, was thus stifled by authority, stunned by clamour, or drowned in prejudice. The meetings of the

committees before alluded to, were designed to *promote* vaccination, not to examine into the reasonableness of the practice; one side only of the question was heard there: and, though it be a somewhat indelicate observation, you could scarcely enter a church but the parson had the greasy heel of a horse in his mouth. In Geneva an exhortation was regularly delivered by the officiating clergyman, at the time of baptism, that the child should be immediately vaccinated.

Many persons, who wrote on the subject seemed not to have been content with considering vaccination even in the light in which Dr. Jenner himself originally represented it, as “a *milder* and *safer* preventive than inoculation;” but spoke of it, not only as mild and safe, but as the *only* remedy against the contagion of the small-pox; sung lofty pæans in honour of the discoverer; and hailed him the saviour of a western world.

From England the infatuation rapidly extended, through France and Germany, to the remoter regions of the earth; and from the banks of the Ganges to the mountains of Dalecarlia a new scourge was industriously

dispersed to afflict the children of men. England, who had received from the East the blessings of inoculation by the fair hands of an ingenious and accomplished female, thus repaid her vast debt of gratitude, by the introduction of a new train of evils incautiously drawn from the most polluted source of animal contagion ! In those countries in which the variolous inoculation was not well known, and where the practice of it had been restrained by the influences of superstition or prejudice, it was not at all strange that vaccination with its important promises of safety and security should be readily received and encouraged : nor would it have been very extraordinary if the French, who called it the “ most brilliant discovery of the eighteenth “ century, to which the whole world would “ be indebted for the annihilation of that “ most destructive scourge which had ravaged “ and desolated it for many centuries,” had, in the frenzy of enthusiasm, enthroned the discoverer among the deities of their Pantheon. Considering the levity and inconsistency of that volatile people, we might not have been surprized to have seen the bust of a Jenner

in company with the ashes of Marat or the statue of Robespierre : but it is truly astonishing that in a country like our own, where science and philosophy are more calmly, more effectually, and more generally studied, so many persons should have been imposed upon by fallacious reasoning ; and that those who by their education and endowments might have been thought least of all capable of being influenced by the contagion of vulgar misconceptions, should, as it were in a moment, have totally relinquished the use of their own faculties of reasoning and of reflection.

They might have detected the erroneous statements respecting the fatality of the small-pox and the dangers of inoculation by consulting many real and respectable sources of information. Dr. Percival's Medical Essays would have informed them, that forty years ago, long before the discovery of many of the most valuable improvements in the treatment of the small-pox, by which the mortality of that dreadful disease has been undoubtedly diminished, the average number of deaths was about one hundred and nine

in a thousand in London between the years 1762 and 1772, but at Ackworth in Yorkshire only about one in nineteen from 1747 to 1767. The annals of the inoculation hospital would have informed them, that even Dr. Woodville's * calculation, that one person in six hundred died in that institution, was not altogether so favourable a report as might have been made on the subject. Dr. Squirrell †, who has lately published in defence of inoculation, states, from *his own observation*, that during his residence in the hospital "not more than ONE out of a THOUSAND died;" ingeniously asking, "would not one out of a thousand persons taken into any house for three weeks together, and treated in the family way without inoculation, have died in the course of twelve months?"

If the arguments which were advanced in favour of vaccination, and the conclusions

* Woodville's "Reports of a Series of Inoculations for Variolæ Vaccinæ."

† Squirrell's "Observations on the Cow-pox, shewing that it originates in Scrophula, and that it is no Security against the Small-pox."

unwarrantably drawn from them, had been subjected to the rules of sound criticism—such as have been commonly used in examining the nature of every moral axiom and every philosophical proposition—the unreasonableness of the arguments and the unwarrantableness of the conclusions would instantly have been manifested. A little reflection on the proneness of mankind to be biased and influenced by the authority of great names, and to “chain up their speech even “from the desire of praise,” when persons eminent in station or distinguished by scientific attainment pronounce their authoritative decrees, would have put every impartial practitioner and every independent individual on his guard against the errors which too often spring from an exalted source. It would have occurred to every discreet person, that they who assent with so much promptitude are in general inconsiderate ; and that among the associates for the promotion of vaccination were many whose alacrity to enlist under the banners of experimentalists proceeded from a consciousness of that inferiority of talents which “keeps back from honour,” which forbids

to hope for distinction, and denies any other seat in the temple of fame than one of the subordinate niches. Such men may not unfitly be said to resemble those curs that, neither possessed of fleetness of foot nor sagacity of nose, never start the game nor catch it, and are of no use but to keep up the noise and number of the pack, and to exercise the huntsman's whip. The concurrence, therefore, of numbers is not in reality *always* so important a support to arguments or opinions as it may appear at first sight; seeing that many are often incapable of forming a right judgment, and that many spontaneously surrender their reasoning faculties to the influence of leading men. Not at all doubting the benevolence which pervaded the mind of the discoverer, and allowing every due degree of force to the enthusiasm which naturally accompanies discovery on important subjects connected with arts and sciences, it cannot be denied that an inconsiderate submission to hasty conclusions erroneously drawn from unsteady and illogical arguments must always deserve severe animadversion. Notwithstanding all obstacles, however, the dis-

coverer of vaccination, his friends, and the converts to his opinions, succeeded in their endeavours to render the practice fashionable; well knowing that fashion is often more powerful than reasoning, in its influence over the minds of the multitude.

Incredible numbers of persons have been vaccinated; but the original ground of objection and apprehension respecting its complete preservative powers remains the same, and must remain in full force until some means have been attained of determining whether vaccination be not merely a *temporary preventive* of the small-pox; and whether, after the practice of it, the human constitution may not, sooner or later, regain its disposition to be acted upon by variolous contagion. A few years can not be sufficient to establish complete proof of this important and necessary fact. In the case related by Dr. John Sims in the Medical Journal, several years must have elapsed after the gentleman had had the cow-pox before he received the variolous infection by inoculation. I am aware that many cavils have been made on this subject, and doubts started about the possibility of some

other disease having been mistaken for the cow-pox: but besides the improbability of this having been the case in the instance alluded to, on account of the familiar and intimate acquaintance with vaccine infection which has long prevailed very generally in the western counties, it is rendered still less likely by the circumstance of the person having twice suffered the disease with marks of unusual severity.

A reputable farmer in the country was vaccinated soon after the practice had been introduced into the midland counties: the usual symptoms of constitutional affection took place; the pustule on the arm went through the stages of inflammation and maturation, and very gradually dried up. No symptom or appearance was wanting which could have justified the respectable practitioner who attended, and others who saw it, in withholding the assurance that the cow-pox had completed its course, and secured him (*if it could secure any one*) from the future influence of variolous contagion. That nothing might be wanting to remove the possibility of doubt on this head, inoculation with variolous matter

was subsequently performed:—some appearance of inflammation and even suppuration followed, but no symptomatic fever took place; the pustule died away, and the patient continued well. After such a proof, to have doubted of the *preventive power* of vaccination might indeed have been thought deserving the severe epithets with which cautious practitioners have in the progress of this controversy been too often branded by the rash, the inconsiderate, and the vulgar: scepticism, with such a triumphant instance of the success of vaccination before our eyes, would have been denominated a schism of the deepest dye, and high treason against the infallibility of the Jennerian practice; and he who might be at a loss for words of his own to reprobate the non-conformists would probably have resorted to a quotation which had been previously applied with equal impropriety and rancour, and have called them “reptiles that
 “plant themselves in the high road of im-
 “provement, and try to hiss back all that
 “would advance.” But mark the event:—lulled into a dangerous security by the fallacious hopes instilled into his mind, the gentle-

man caught the natural small-pox some months afterwards, suffered all the anguish of its most terrific symptoms, was blind for many days ; but at length recovered, and lives to carry about with him the marks of his disappointed hopes, and a reproach to his too sanguine medical advisers. It is not on this case alone—on which, however, I lay some stress, because it happened within the circle of my own acquaintance—by which I support my disbelief of the preventive power of vaccination. Many other instances well authenticated have occurred, and if necessary might be adduced in evidence, in addition to several * which have been already made public. Among the numerous cases inserted in Dr. Squirrell's list, I shall take the liberty of alluding particularly to that of a child at Portsea, which can not but be considered by every person who admits its authenticity, and pays a becoming regard to the respectability and veracity of Mr. Weymouth of Portsmouth, and Mr. Fitzmaurice of Haslar, who saw the patient while under the influence of the disease,

* See Dr. Squirrell's "Observations."

not only as strong, but as most conclusive and invincible evidence of the insufficiency of the cow-pox to prevent variolous infection. Here the symptoms of the disease were so “very strongly marked,” that Mr. Fitzmaurice took matter from the pustule, and communicated the infection to two patients, who, after having gone through the disease, were both inoculated with variolous matter, and found to be insusceptible of its influence. Notwithstanding this indubitable proof, the child first vaccinated had, fourteen months afterwards, the small-pox produced by inoculation; “the arm took extremely well, and went on in a very satisfactory manner.” The issue of this striking case, and of another communicated by Dr. Harrison of Horncastle, to Sir J. Banks, also quoted by Dr. Squirrell, and of some others nearly similar, of which the particulars will probably soon appear, might have afforded me an occasion to retort with some degree of severity on those acrimonious revilers who have dared to accuse men of at least equal judgement, abilities, and learning to themselves of having “*wheedled*” a part of the community into a mistaken confidence in

their candour, with a view of preventing the *advantages* of vaccination from being ascertained : but I shall abstain from invective, and content myself with expressing an earnest hope that the public will no longer place a vain confidence in the boasted security of vaccination, which many well-attested facts have already concurred to disprove. But the certainty with which we may rely on the preventive influence of variolous inoculation may be readily ascertained by an appeal to the valuable and extensive experience of those practitioners, who have inoculated thousands and hundreds of thousands of patients, and who will further concur in establishing the most perfect assurance that a repetition of inoculation when the symptomatic fever of small-pox has been once experienced has never been known to produce a repetition of the disease.

It being established that vaccination is not a certain preventive of the small-pox, it seems scarcely worth while to enquire whether it be productive of a milder and shorter disease than the variolous inoculation. Soon after the introduction of vaccination in this metropolis it was discovered that a copious eruption

sometimes took place ; and as that circumstance had not been previously noticed by Dr. Jenner, it was supposed to be a new symptom, occasioned by the particular atmosphere of the inoculation hospital in which, I think, it first appeared. It was subsequently observed that this symptom occurred not only in the hospital but in private practice ; not only in London, but in various parts of the country : and although it was at first positively denied by some to have any immediate connection with the cow-pox properly so called, it was afterwards as positively asserted by others to have arisen in consequence of using matter taken from patients who happened to experience the disease with peculiar severity. It is certain, that these eruptions have appeared when the matter employed was procured with the utmost circumspection : that they have occurred in many patients vaccinated with virus procured by Dr. Jenner himself : that they have been in some instances very numerous, and very formidable in their appearance, very painful, and very tedious in their progress ; sometimes resembling almost exactly the eruption of the small-pox,

and sometimes degenerating into foul ulcers difficult of cure, or even impossible to be healed : that the ulceration of the pustule on the arm has continued in some cases for many weeks and even months : that an erysipelatous inflammation has accompanied or immediately followed the maturation of it, not only so as to endanger, but even to destroy, the life of the patient. The child of Dr. Smyth Stuart, the pathetic narrative of whose sufferings and death, as inserted in Dr. Squirrell's publication, affords a striking example of the malignancy of the cow-pox : this is, however, only one *among many* instances of the destructive consequences of vaccination. In my own practice I have met with a case as strongly and decidedly marked as that to which I have just referred. A beautiful child, perfectly free from disease, aged about six months, was vaccinated by a practitioner of respectability and eminence in the city, with the same matter with which, at the same time, other children were also inoculated ; and which had been selected with due precaution. All these children, excepting the first, went through the progress of the disease

without any bad consequences or unfavourable symptoms: but in this unfortunate victim of experiment the absorption of the vaccine virus was attended by erysipelatous appearances and symptoms of irritation. Tensefness and a livid colour of the skin almost universally ensued; and foul and corroding ulcers supervened. The face, neck, and shoulders, which had been covered with numerous unsightly eruptions, at length became one continuous surface of exulceration, discharging, through a filthy crust, matter so excessively virulent as to corrode the soundest parts with which it happened to come in contact. The sensation of itching appeared to be intolerable; and, after a long and severe struggle, and many ineffectual attempts to alleviate these dreadful sufferings, death closed the afflicting scene. Thus the boasted mildness and safety of vaccination fade before the light of experience; and such are the melancholy proofs which have been produced of its effects. On the other hand, variolous inoculation has been subjected to the test of experience for nearly a century. It has never been found productive of such distressing

symptoms as have sometimes (even already) been observed to follow vaccination. The mischief to be dreaded from introducing other morbid affections may be avoided by resorting to healthy subjects when matter is to be procured for the purposes of inoculation; but if the matter of cow-pox be derived originally, as Dr. Jenner states, from the grease in the horse, the alliance between that disease and scrophula* must naturally awaken our fears to the danger of vaccination as being the means of introducing other morbid affections indigenous in the horse or the cow: even if no proof had been adduced of the destructive influence of its own specific contagion. Vaccination is therefore not a *safe* practice, nor even *comparatively so*. Shall we then forsake the advantage of that experience which may be fairly considered as tantamount to positive proof and absolute certainty, for the vain and empty honour of being called the encouragers of ingenuity? Shall we thus sacrifice common sense at the altar of novelty, and yield to the dictates of fashionable innovation what calm philosophic reason calls

* See Dr. Squirrell's pamphlet before mentioned.

upon us, with her grave and authoritative voice, steadfastly and boldly to maintain? Let the interests of suffering humanity and the honour of the medical faculty forbid the thought. Let us hear with patience, but adopt with caution. Let us judge with candour, but decide with prudence: not submitting to the dogmas of pompous erudition nor the influence of hypothetical subtilty, nor suffering the faculties of our minds to be rendered torpid by the fascinating influence of great names.

On the whole, then, I assume that THE COW-POX IS NOT ALWAYS A CERTAIN PRESERVATIVE *against the contagion of the small-pox*:—that THE PRACTICE OF VACCINATION IS NOT ALWAYS SAFE, but sometimes occasions mischievous consequences, either directly by the violence of its own symptoms, or by introducing into the system other diseases besides that intended to be produced; or indirectly, by exciting into action the latent seeds or principles of diseases previously existing in the constitution:—that *the cow-pox is sometimes fatal* of itself, and that the diseases introduced or brought into action by it, may be also sometimes fatal, and can never

be completely guarded against; and therefore that, so long as variolous inoculation shall continue to be what it is at present, A SAFE, MILD, AND CERTAIN PREVENTIVE OF THE SMALL-POX, not fatal more than once in a thousand instances, not introducing along with it when taken from an healthy subject any extraneous disease, nor more apt to excite morbid action in the body, even when the seeds of disease exist latent in the constitution, than the cow-pox; *it ought in common reason* to be preferred before vaccination: and this axiom, being established on the maturest deliberation and the most perfect conviction, I pledge myself to defend against all opposers; for as I know that it *can not* be controverted by *facts*, it *shall not* be subdued by arguments.

In what has been advanced I trust that my readers will find the practice of vaccination opposed and discouraged on the fair ground of sound reason and experience; and I presume to hope that these pages will in some degree contribute to the downfall of an hypothesis, and to discountenance a practice, which have

been sufficiently proved to be fraught with uncertainty and danger; and thus assist in the great and honourable duty of promoting the welfare of society.

G. L.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE the preceding pages were sent to the press, I have seen a very humble effort, erroneously denominated "A complete Answer to all the Objections which have been advanced against the Practice of Vaccination." Futile in argument, contemptible in diction, puerile in dialectics, it *does not* satisfactorily answer, nor can it effectually combat, *even one* among the numerous weighty and formidable objections which the cautious and the wise will, in defiance of such publications, continue to urge with reiterated earnestness in the willing or unwilling ears of a deluded public. Facts incontrovertible, and reasoning justified by truth, and therefore invulnerable by such assailants, are the weapons which may be

brought to oppose these feeble darts of ignorance or prejudice.

The writer of the treatise alluded to, complains of the ingratitude of his countrymen, who, it seems, have vastly undervalued the discovery of vaccination. Now it has not been my fortune to hear that the noble person who was the principal instrument by which the real and lasting advantages of variolous inoculation were originally introduced into England ever received or was offered a reward for her philanthropy and zeal; and it would not have been more than justice to such a priority of claim if the panegyrist of Dr. Jenner had condescended to mention that circumstance. For my own part I have no hesitation in declaring that I think Dr. Jenner fairly entitled to a proper remuneration for much labour, study, and expence: but although I by no means grudge him the pecuniary compensation which he has received, it will not I hope be thought unbecoming to say, that I trust *ten thousand pounds* will console him for the loss of those laurels with which the suffrages of his inconsiderate admirers have decorated him, if time and experience,

the great arbiters of scientific discovery, should displace them from his brow : indeed I entertain so high an opinion of Dr. Jenner's benevolence and good sense, as to believe that he accepted the national grant as a compensation for industry exerted, and expences incurred, rather than a reward for the merit or utility of the discovery.

London, Sept. 25, 1805.

THE END.

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