

THE
VACCINATION INQUIRER
AND
HEALTH REVIEW.

*THE ORGAN OF THE LONDON SOCIETY FOR THE ABOLITION OF
COMPULSORY VACCINATION.*

HE WHO KNOWS ONLY HIS OWN SIDE OF THE CASE, KNOWS LITTLE OF THAT.—*J. Stuart Mill.*

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QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

ON 28th March Mr. P. A. Taylor asked the President of the Local Government Board whether it is a fact that there is no well-ascertained case of spontaneous cow-pox on record; whether it is a fact that the common practice for many years has been to inoculate the calf with the virus of human small-pox, thus causing, in the words of Sir Thomas Watson, "a vast amount of mitigated small-pox"; whether it is a fact that within the last few years the mortality from small-pox at the Hague and other cities in Holland and Belgium (whence he proposes to obtain fresh lymph) has been enormously large; and whether he will bring in a Bill to abolish compulsory vaccination.

Mr. Dodson said he did not know what his hon. friend would consider a "well-ascertained case of spontaneous cow-pox," but cases of outbreaks of the disease amongst cows were specifically mentioned in the treatises on the subject, as well as in the evidence before the Select Committee in 1871.* He was informed that it was not a fact that the common practice had been for many years to inoculate calves with the virus of human small-pox.† He had no statistics as to the mortality from small-pox in Belgium, but in Holland the mortality in the epidemic of 1870-72 was very large indeed. There was nothing to show what proportion of the cases were vaccinated, and it must be borne in mind that neither in Belgium nor in Holland was vaccination compulsory. He had no intention to bring in a Bill to abolish compulsory vaccination.

PARLIAMENTARY POPERY.—One who carries disease with him is ostensibly dangerous. This, and this only, justifies legislation against him. But when a man or child is ostensibly healthy, no case is made out for legislation at all. To enact that a healthy person shall have a disease lest hereafter he get a worse disease, is a form of despotism hard to parallel; and what is peculiarly disgraceful, it is directed against innocent infants alone, because they are helpless—it does not dare to attack us adults. Let parliament enact that every M.P. shall be at once vaccinated, and that it shall be done from arm to arm every four or five years, as the doctors may determine,—if Parliament will enact such orders concerning children. The law now says to a parent—"We are alarmed to see that your child has no disease. Cow-Pox (for the public good) it must have, with the chance of other hideous diseases: submit, or else make yourself a criminal." Such legislation implies that Parliament is a Medical Pope, and justifies no end of monstrous violations of sacred personal rights.—F. W. NEWMAN.

* Perhaps so; but Professor Simonds, of the Royal Veterinary College, says that in his long experience he has never seen a case of cow-pox, or of bull-pox, and that he questions the existence of the disease. Moreover, the editors of the *Veterinarian* have advertised repeatedly for a case of cow-pox in vain.

† In this reply an evasion is effected under the words a "common practice." The practice has been common enough, but how common? Every well-informed vaccinator knows that an immense quantity of the lymph in circulation has been derived from the inoculation of cows with small-pox. Mr. Dodson of course speaks "as informed" by the vaccine officials of the Local Government Board.

AN INQUIRY BY DR. STEVENS.

THE child of Mr. George Daniell of Lake, Sandown, Isle of Wight, was vaccinated in two places on 8th January by Mr. Meeres, the public vaccinator. It was a healthy child; as Mr. Daniell writes, "the strongest and finest baby we have had born to us, and we have four children living." After the vaccination, the child's health began to fall off. It started and cried at nights, and had a difficulty in breathing. Four weeks after vaccination, the arm had not healed. Mr. Meeres was sent for, and told the mother to take great care of the child. She asked if there was any danger, and he, Dogberry like, replied, "Not if it gets no worse." Dr. Barker was called in on 17th February. He found lymphatic swellings, and said the child's blood had been poisoned. No improvement took place. The child was affected all down the side on which it had been vaccinated. The leg seemed completely paralysed. The foot mortified. After four hours of convulsions the child died. Dr. Barker certified the cause of death in this fashion—"Pyæmia (? from vaccination)."

The report of the case getting abroad and causing considerable excitement, the Local Government Board sent down Dr. Stevens to investigate and report. The inquiry was held on 31st March in presence of the *Guardians*. The whole drift of the medical evidence was directed to get rid of Dr. Barker's certificate, and to conjure up another cause for the blood-poisoning than the true cause, vaccination. Thus MEERES, the vaccinator, testified—

He heard the child was ill and saw it on 29th January. There were indications of imperfect breathing in the right lung. The child *seemed* to have had an attack of pneumonia, which had left a certain amount of weakness behind. He had never seen a case of pyæmia in a child three or four months old.

Mr. BLAKE.—Assuming the child died from pyæmia—

Mr. MEERES.—I don't think the child did die from pyæmia.

Mr. BLAKE.—Assuming it did, and that vaccination did not cause it, what would you think was the cause?

Dr. STEVENS.—We cannot go into such speculative matters.

Dr. BARKER was then called and was freely permitted to speculate concerning the cause of the pyæmia. He thought it *might* have originated thus. If the child had had pneumonia, it *might* have broken down the lung, pus *might* have been formed, and that *might* have got into the blood, and caused death. He was of opinion that the child *had* died of pyæmia. He was aware that Mr. Meeres was of a different opinion, but he had nothing to do with that.

Asked why he prefixed a note of interrogation to "from vaccination" in his certificate, he replied—

There was a great deal of agitation in the district about vaccination, and I put in the query to show that I was doubtful as to vaccination being the cause of death. The mark was put there solely for the information of the Registrar, and it was a question if Daniell *had not rendered himself liable to prosecution for having used the certificate for other purposes than registration.*

Mr. BLAKE.—You do not mean to say that a person has not a right to know what his child dies from? Besides he can at any time obtain a copy of the certificate as entered by the Registrar.

Then ensued a passage of fencing—

Mr. BLAKE.—When you wrote the certificate of