

**Reflections on the modern but unchristian practice of inoculation, or,
Inoculating the small-pox tried by scripture doctrines and precepts, and
proved to be contrary to the revealed will of God ... / By a Friend to Truth.**

Contributors

Friend to truth.

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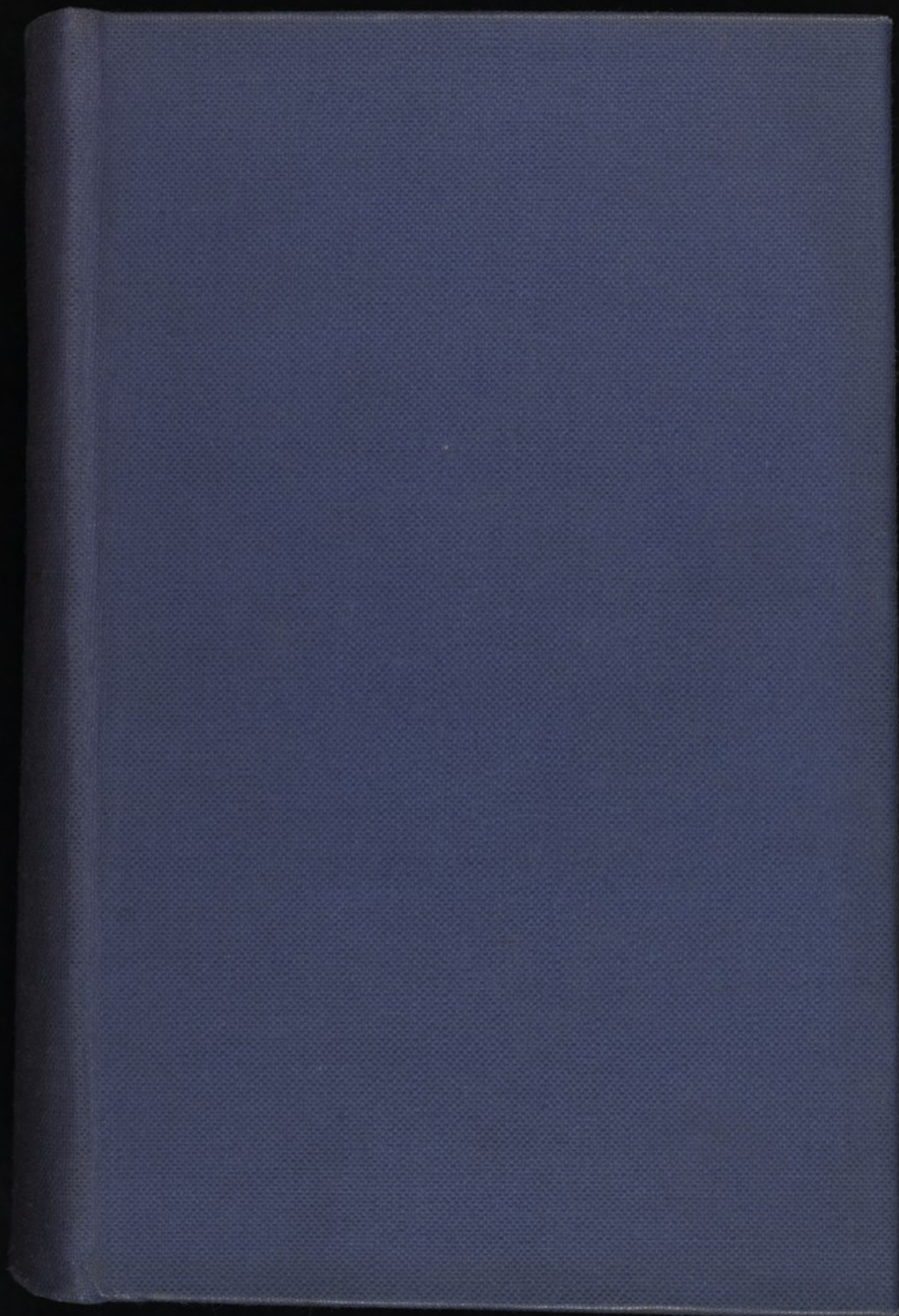
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others, totally to suppress them. Therefore, as the time now is of thoroughly examining this important subject, I have with fidelity declared them. And I heartily wish that method may take place, which will most conduce to the general good; which undoubtedly will be the case, if men will proceed upon firm and stable principles.

FINIS

R E F L E C T I O N S

O N T H E

Modern but Unchristian Practice

O F

I N O C U L A T I O N,

O R

Inoculating the Small-pox tried by
Scripture Doctrines and Precepts,
and proved to be contrary to the
REVEALED WILL of G O D :

Recommended to the serious Consideration
of all, but especially of those who really
fear God, and yet are Encouragers of
this Practice.

By a FRIEND TO TRUTH.

Prove all things, hold fast that which is good ; 1 Thes. v. 21.

Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God ; 1 Cor. x. 31.

Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ ; Col. iii. 17.

L O N D O N :

Printed, and sold by GEORGE KEITH in
Gracechurch-street. MDCCLXIX.

[Price Six-pence.]

REFLECTIONS

ON THE

Modern but Unchristian Principles

OF

INOCULATION

OR

Inoculating the Small-pox with the

Scripture Doctrine and Precepts

and proved to be contrary to the

Reverend Will of G. O. C.

Recommended to the serious Consideration

of all, but especially of those who profess

to fear God, and yet are Deceivers of

this People.

By J. W. C. M. D.

Author of the "Principles of the Christian Religion,"

and other works, published by G. O. C.

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REFLECTIONS, &c.

AS Inoculation for the Small-pox of late greatly prevails in our land, it may not be amiss to give some short account of its rise amongst us, which I would choose to do, in the words of a certain author, who hath published upon this subject. “ The Greeks (says he) are said to be the first nation that practised this method; the Turks are supposed to have borrowed it from them, and practised it with the greatest success, not only for the Small-pox, but also for the Plague itself; the frequent accounts we had of their great success, in almost putting a total stop to the fatality of this sore distemper, induced us to follow their example.” *So far this author.*

THUS we see it is in imitation of such worthy characters, as Turks and Pagans, that Inoculation is introduced amongst Christians, surely such preceptors afford no great credit to the practice. It most certainly becomes Christians to copy after better patterns, and to make the unerring rule of God’s word the rule of their conduct, and not to follow Turks and Heathens in a practice altogether antisciptural. Those who plead for Inoculating the Small-pox, seem very little concerned about having a sufficient warrant from the scriptures to justify their practice, but chiefly urge the success which attends it. The gentlemen of the faculty are frequently presenting us with advertisements in the public newspapers, shewing what great numbers they inocu-

late without the loss of a patient, they may honestly close every advertisement with the following additional *Nota Bene*; Sirs, ye know, by this craft we have our wealth, and have as much scripture to support our practice, as Demetrius and the Craftsmen at Ephesus had, for making silver shrines for Diana their goddess, which was so profitable to them, that they raised a mob to suppress the gospel, and support their craft.

It is much to be lamented, that any who truly fear God, should be so left to themselves as to tread in the footsteps of Turks and Pagans, in practising that which strikes at the perfections of the most High God, and manifests a very great distrust of his all-wise providence. Some are ready to charge those who are unwilling to submit to Inoculation, and argue against it, with being left to act under the influence of prevailing ignorance and obstinacy, it will be well if those who thus reflect are not found at last to act more under the influence of such principles, or under a spirit of delusion, notwithstanding the many prayers they may apprehend they offer up to God for a blessing on their practice.

If we impartially attend to the sacred oracles, we shall clearly see, that the sending of distempers is, what the Most High challenges as his prerogative alone; this the sacred pages abundantly testify. I shall only cite two or three passages out of many which might be produced. Moses speaking to the children of Israel, saith, *The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extream burning.*—Moreover, he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of, and they shall cleave unto thee. Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law,

*law, them will the Lord bring upon thee until thou be destroyed. See now, that I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. Deut. xxviii. 22; 60, 61; and xxxii. 39. Now, since the Almighty challenges these things as his sole prerogative, it appears to be a bold presumptuous insult offered to his sovereignty, for any to attempt to bring the Small-pox upon themselves, just when they please, it is nothing less than a practical bidding defiance to the power of God, and, as far as it is in the power of the creature, an attempt to rob him of his sovereignty. This is to strive with their Maker with a witness, which exposes them to that awful denunciation in Isa. xlv. 9. *Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker.*—*

ALL who fear God, profess to believe wisdom to be a glorious perfection of the divine nature, and that an all-wise God knows how to dispose of all persons much better than they can do it themselves; but does not their practice contradict this profession, who bring the Small-pox upon themselves, and families, just when they think proper, in order to be secure from God's sending of it, refusing to leave such affairs in the hand of God, marking out ways of their own to walk in? Thus, vain man, attempts to be wise, yea, wiser than God himself, in this affair, though he is born like the wild asses colt. Job xi. 12. This is not following the advice given in Prov. iii. 5; *trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding.* Nor that in Psal. xxxvii. 5; *commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.* Now, for any one who fears God, to say he desires to commit his way to the Lord, and to trust in him alone, and at the same time goes and is inocu-

lated for the Small-pox, this is plain sophistry, it looks like lying both to God and man.

It may be further observed, that not only the wisdom, but also the power of God, is struck at by this practice, as God has declared it in his word to be his prerogative alone, to send distempers to the children of men; so he is possessed of Almighty power to effect the same, which cannot be controuled by any. *God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God,* says David, Psal. lxii. 11; and in cxlvii. 5; he declareth him to be great, and of great power, and his understanding to be infinite; and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he doth according to his will, in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, *What dost thou?* Dan. iv. 35. The Almighty, and uncontrollable power of God, is manifestly displayed, in all the works of his hand. *For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-head, so that they are without excuse.* Rom. i. 20. Now Inoculation is an attempt to invade the power of the Most High; for they, who by this practice, have the Small-pox brought upon them, think to put it out of the power of God to send it to them. From hence we may conclude, it is no difficult thing to know from whence this practice comes, which tends to limit the power of the holy one of Israel: It comes not from God but from Satan. Whatever plausible pretences may be advanced in its favour, it is introducing an ungodly practice, from Turks and Pagans, into a Christian nation, certainly it is a most scandalous conduct for those who truly fear God, to be
followers

followers of infidels in a practice which cannot be supported by divine revelation.

THIS practice also carries in it a distrust of God's providence, as well as a refusal to submit to it. Some may reply, not so, we desire to trust, and submit to providence, in the use of those very means which you condemn. But be so honest as closely to examine your own hearts, and see whether a secret distrust of your being safely carried through the distemper, should God see fit to send it, was not the cause of your taking those measures, to bring it upon you, and that with a view to the security of life, if so, it is most certainly, a distrust of Providence, if not casting contempt upon it, Christians are directed to trust in the Lord at all times. Psal. lxii. 8. which they may safely do, seeing he is able to save, and to destroy. *For he maketh sore, and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole, he can deliver in six troubles, and in seven prevent any evil touching them that trust in him.* Job iii. 18, 19. Were christians to trust their lives with God, as it becomes them so to do, they would never be inoculated for the Small-pox, let this be denied if it can, it ought to be daily the concern of every christian to look to the Lord for grace, and strength, that while he professes to know God, he may not be so left to himself as by works to deny him.

WAS this distemper what every person must certainly have, it would be a far greater temptation to the practice, yet would not in the least warrant it; but it is a question whether a sixth part of the people who die in this nation ever have the Small-pox, and it is a merciful providence that God sends it to so few, and thousands who have been inoculated might never have had it, had they not brought it upon themselves.

But

But where will not slavish fear and unbelief carry some christians, even to act unbecoming their character, and quite contrary to the word of God, the Psalmist says, *It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in man; it is better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in Princes;* Psal. cxviii. 8, 9: but the christian who is inoculated practically says, it is better to trust in Inoculation, that I may have the distemper at the time I think best, than to trust God with sending it to me at the time he thinks best, or preserving me from it; his actions speak this, though he is ashamed to speak it in words; but God sees the very spring from whence every action flows.

THERE are other things much more becoming the christian, and agreeable to the word of God, when under fears of the Small-pox, than to run to such false refuges as the inventions of men for safety; I mean serious, solemn, and humble seeking to God for preservation from it, if it may be his pleasure, if not, at least an entire resignation to his sovereign will, and not to be anxiously solicitous about the event of things; but that he himself, and all around him, might be prepared for the all-wise disposal of providence; thus to act becomes the christian, adorns his profession, and is agreeable to the word of God, in which we are exhorted to be careful for nothing, but in every thing, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, to let our requests be made known unto God, and promises that the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus;" *Phil. iv. 6, 7.* But, alas! this way of proceeding is entirely hedged up by Inoculation, which is a tacit taking themselves out of the hand of God, as far as is possible for creatures to do, and putting themselves into the hand of a man to bring the distemper

distemper upon them, and to carry them through it with greater safety as to life, than if they had left themselves to the providence of God. This is far from following the directions of God's word, which says, "in all thy ways, acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths; be not wise in thine own eyes, fear the Lord, and depart from evil;" *Prov. iii. 6, 7.* Was scripture paid a proper regard to, a serious consideration of these, and such like passages, under a divine agency, might prevent christians from running headlong into such pernicious practices, which tend to dishonour God, and teach the people to slight his word.

ABUNDANCE of scriptures encourage us to go to God, under all the trials and afflictions which he is pleased to exercise us with; but there is not a passage to be found to encourage any person, under fears of the Small-pox, to employ a man to bring it upon him. The christian who doeth this, hath not one scripture to justify his practice, nor one promise to plead with God for his blessing upon it; nay, how dare any person attempt to ask God's blessing on that, by the practice of which he casts contempt upon his providence, by a wilful bringing the distemper upon his own body. This is really contending with God. *Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him; he that reproveth God, let him answer.* *Job xl. 2.* Those who bring the Small-pox designedly upon themselves, in order to prevent God's sending it, must answer for their conduct to him, notwithstanding the most plausible colours they may put upon it in the sight of men, for God searcheth the hearts, and trieth the reins of the children of men, so that the most artful cannot deceive him.

I AFFIRM no christian hath any warrant from the word of God to put his body, or worldly affairs, into such a situation, as that he cannot in faith draw near to God, and crave his blessing upon this, or the other affair he is engaged in. Now, the christian who hath just made an agreement with a person, for a certain sum of money, to bring the Small-pox upon him, in what manner he can go to God, for his blessing on such a bargain, seems to me a paradox. There is a passage of scripture, where, it is said, *They feared the Lord, and served their own gods*; 2 Kings, xvii. 33. So in like manner, the person may in words pray to the Lord, and, at the same time, put his trust in the man he hath bargained with to inoculate him. There is one petition of David's, however, which it is his duty to offer up. *For thy name-sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great*; Psal. xxv. 11. Many things are advanced in favour of Inoculation; and great numbers, by this means, have the Small-pox in a very safe and easy manner. Providence smiles upon it, many who are professors of religion approve of it, and practise it, from whence many conclude, it cannot be displeasing to God; but, notwithstanding all these pretences, it is forestalling divine providence, and bringing an infectious distemper, where God might never have sent it, could he have been trusted. Such persons cannot say, as the Apostle Paul did, in another case, *Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood*; Gal. i. 16. Now it is a conferring with flesh and blood, and with the temptations of Satan, and not searching God's word for direction, which supports the practice of Inoculation; and as it was brought hither from Turks and Heathens, who are without God's word, so it is embraced by christians who have the written word,

word, yet without producing scripture to support it, God may justly say to such, as he did to Israel of old. *And ye shall know that I am the Lord, for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments, but have done after the manners of the Heathens that are round about you ;* Ezek. xi. 12. The Apostle Peter's advice should be seriously considered by such persons. *Beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness ;* 2 Pet. iii. 17. Sin is of a hardening nature, and that professor who ventures to step out of the plain path of duty, into the by path of error, God alone knows where he will wander, or what his end will be.

WE are always to form our judgments of things, not from the vain conceits of men, but from the infallible word of God, which assures us, that *no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before him ;* Eccl. ix. 1. That is, no man may conclude he is in the favour of God, or that his practice is pleasing to him, from the most agreeable providences he may be favoured with. Neither is it in the least a proof that Inoculation is pleasing to God that success attends it, any more than the success which attended the arms of the great Turk some centuries past, (when a third part, if not more, of the then known world was brought into subjection to him) was an evidence of his religion and practice being pleasing to God. For neither love nor hatred can be certainly known from the dispensations of divine providence ; for *God causeth his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust ;* Mat. v. 45. And though God bears long with the workers of iniquity, his forbearance is no acquittance, though many persons are too ready to look upon it in

such a light, as Solomon says, *Because sentence against an evil work is not always executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil*; Eccl. viii. 11. From hence we may note, that, notwithstanding Inoculation is attended with the greatest success, that success is not in the least a proof that it is not an evil work, for we see that sentence against an evil work is not always executed speedily. God's tarrying long before he comes to take vengeance on the practice, is no more an evidence that the thing is lawful, than the prosperity of the wicked in this world is a proof that they are in the favour of God, which no christian will assert, if ten thousand are inoculated, and every one does well, it is no clear proof of its being pleasing to God, and though many who profess to fear God stand up for it. God's word says, *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil, neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment*: Exod. xxiii. 2.

ANOTHER thing brought to favour Inoculation, is, that it is not forbid in scripture, it is a certain sign of a bad cause when scripture negatives are called for, to set aside any practice, the church of Rome, when Protestants charge her with superstition, tells us, such and such things are nowhere forbid in scripture, the church of England, with regard to ceremonies, tells the Dissenters the same tale, as do indeed, one denomination of Dissenters against another, as to things wherein they differ, I say they all have recourse to this, it is not forbid in scripture. Now this negative argument is grown so stale, and worn so very threadbare, that I wonder any Protestant Dissenter should bring it in support of Inoculation, for almost all Popish ceremonies may be defended by the same argument, nothing can warrant the
practice

practice but plain scripture, or clear scripture consequences for it, which, however, may embarrass its advocates to produce; though, on the contrary, there is plain scripture, or clear scripture consequences against it. *To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.* Isa. viii. 20.

IF we diligently search the sacred scriptures, we shall find, that they are not so silent on this head as some may imagine; for God therein asserts it to be his prerogative, and his alone, to send distempers of any kind whatever to such places, and to such persons, as well as at such periods of time, as he in his providential disposal of things sees fit. And as abundance of scriptures do either imply, or clearly set forth, this, they do tacitly forbid any man, yea every man, to bring the Small-pox upon himself or others. The christian, therefore, when tempted to it, should reply with Joseph, *How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?* Gen. xxxix. 9.

INDEED some persons give very high encomiums of Inoculation, representing it as an exceeding merciful providence, that such a way is found out, to bring such a fore distemper upon persons in so safe and easy a manner: But to whom is it such a merciful providence? A few fine words are no proof of the thing; for as to all those to whom God purposes to send it, they shall every one of them have it; just as he appointed it, no man can set aside what he intends, so it is no merciful providence to such; and as to those who are inoculated, not a single person of them knows they should ever have had it, had they not brought it upon themselves; and so no one can prove it to be a merciful providence to any of them: but we are informed,

that some persons have lived under such a constant dread of the distemper, as almost unfitted them for their worldly affairs; but we find, that, by its being brought upon them in this easy manner, they are delivered from their distresses, and set at liberty from those gloomy apprehensions they had long laboured under. Well, but yet, no one can prove it to be a merciful providence even to these, for they would assuredly have been as safe without it; so that this great flourish of a merciful providence vanishes quite away; there is no truth in it.

DOUBTLESS Inoculation tends to take away those fears of death, and awful thoughts of a future state, which persons may labour under, from fears that the Small-pox may soon send them into an eternal world; but, being set free by this practice, they seem as if they had a lease of their lives; they think now they can go any where, and every where, without danger, or into any kind of business. The thoughts of death and eternity are set at such a distance from them, that they promise themselves long life, and much prosperity; like those of old, who said, *We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves; Isa. xxviii. 15.* And thus persons will go on, if grace prevent not, till death suddenly plunges them into an eternal world. The Lord only knows how many poor souls, by this practice, have been deluded to their eternal destruction: so that instead of a merciful providence, it may be justly termed a miserable one to such persons. Death will certainly come, and it may come suddenly although they have been inoculated. Our Saviour's advice is always seasonable;
watch

watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the son of man cometh; Mat. xxv. 13. Now none need be at a loss to know from whence Inoculation cometh, as its natural tendency so evidently supports the kingdom and interest of Satan in the world, by removing the serious thoughts of death, and an eternal world, from persons, which the word of God exhorts to the serious consideration of; ministers also from the pulpit, endeavour to fix the thoughts of death, judgment, heaven, and hell, upon the minds of their hearers; and indeed, such serious thoughts in the hand of the holy spirit have their use, in bringing about the new birth, without which none can be saved, for our Lord assures us, *Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God; John iii. 3.* So nothing which tends to take away serious thoughts from persons, can be looked upon to come in mercy.

BUT yet, some persons assert this practice must come from God, and not from Satan; because Satan is for destroying our lives, and not for preserving them; an empty argument indeed! for Satan is more set upon destroying our souls than our lives, and takes more pains to make men live wickedly, than to shorten their days, and could he be sure, men would always continue to live wickedly, no man knows but he would do all he could to lengthen their lives, out of his hatred to godliness, and desire to oppose God and holiness of life; therefore Satan, as permitted, may be the grand author of this practice, and bring the distemper easy upon the body, in order to draw persons off from a dependence upon God, with a view to the destruction of body and soul for ever.

A GODLY person should be exceedingly careful in this affair, lest, while he professes to know
God,

God, he doth in works deny him ; he should diligently search the holy scriptures, for a warrant for his practice, if God's word will not bear him out, he hath reason to fear he is Satan's agent in recommending it to others, if neither scripture precept, nor precedent, can be produced to make it appear lawful for a christian to bring the Small-pox upon himself, in order to prevent what he fears might be the fatal consequence of God's sending it, it is presumption to the highest degree, whatsoever is pleaded in its favour by any man. The Psalmist says, as for such as turn aside to crooked ways, *the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.* Psal. cxxv. 5.

EVERY christian who undertakes any uncommon thing, should be well satisfied that his practice is warranted by the word of God, else how can he go to God to ask his blessing upon it. If Inoculation be not God's ordinance, it is certainly a device of the Devil, and the greatest show of religion annexed thereto, either by secret or social prayer for a blessing upon it, it is to be feared, is only a mocking of God, and such persons are only sacrificing *to their own net, and burning incense to their own drag* ; Hab. i. 16. The Apostle says, *Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility, and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshy mind* ; Col. ii. 18. Now, for a christian to go to God to crave his blessing upon Inoculation is voluntary humility, since there is neither precept for the practice, nor precedent of it in any part of the written word. The Psalmist says, *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path* ; Psal. cxix. 105. Now, for any christian to defend Inoculation without producing scripture, he dishonours God by casting a slight upon his word.

God

God in his word gives his people the greatest encouragement to trust in him, and leave themselves, and all their concerns, with him, and not give way to slavish fears with regard to the security of their lives, *are not*, says our Saviour, *two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your father, but the very hairs of your head are all numbered, fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows*; Matt. x. 29, 30, 31. Certainly God's special providence tends to encourage his people to put their trust in him, and leave their bodies to his providential disposal; the Psalmist says, *They that know thy name will put their trust in thee; For thou Lord hast not forsaken them that seek thee*; Psal. ix. 10. Now what can hinder any christian, who pays a regard to the word of God, from leaving himself to the providence of God, with respect to the Small-pox? Certainly nothing can do it but Satan and unbelief; and it is the duty of every christian continually to be looking up to the Lord for grace and strength to withstand every stratagem of Satan, as well as an heart of unbelief.

INFIDELITY seems to be the principal ingredient in that complicated sin by which our first parents apostatized from God, and it is a sin all the posterity of fallen Adam are under the full power and influence of so long as they remain in their natural state, and indeed it is a sin which easily besets the people of God after they are renewed by his spirit and grace; were it not for this sin of unbelief, surely those who have committed their souls eternal concerns into the hand of the Lord Jesus, would readily leave their bodies to his providential disposal, and not trust to Inoculation for the security of their lives.

UNBELIEF

UNBELIEF was the grand sin which prevailed amongst God's people of old, which led them to forsake him, and fall into idolatry, which is complained of in Jer. ii. 12, 13; *Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid; be ye very desolate, saith the Lord, for my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.* This scripture seems awfully fulfilling in the present day, by those professors who put themselves into the hands of men, to bring the Small-pox upon them by art, with a view to secure their lives, which they are afraid to trust God with; they practically forsake the fountain of life, here is arrogance and unbelief to a high degree indeed! They seem to disregard the purposes and providence of God, who is the sovereign disposer of all things, who presume to bring a distemper of a pestilential nature upon their bodies, and that just when they please. Indeed, should an Atheist act thus, it would be no wonder; or, should a Deist take such a step, as he denies divine revelation, and as his natural reason is his sole guide in all his conduct, it would not be so much out of character; but the christian who hath God's word in his hand, and professes to make that the rule of his conduct, for him to act thus, is unbecoming his character, and reflects dishonour upon the glorious perfections of God, who is omnipotent, and none can withstand his Almighty power, he is also omnipresent and omniscient, and sees into the inmost secret recesses of our souls, and knows the secret motives of every action of our lives, for his eyes are upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give to every one according to his ways, and accord-

according to the fruit of his own doings;
Jer. xxxii. 19.

MANY persons who have no real sense of religion, are so shocked at Inoculation, that they would not submit to it upon any terms, they look upon it to be the most presumptuous thing that any man can do, that it is an endeavour to be above God himself, and, in truth, it may be difficult for any man to set aside the charge.

As the Small-pox is a distemper by which God is pleased to remove many out of time into an eternal world, this makes it appear indeed very formidable to human nature; so that thro' the power of Satan and unbelief, some, who fear God, who have not had it, are under slavish fears lest they should catch it, and die thereby. This causes them purely for the security of their lives to be inoculated: but every godly person should seriously consider, that Inoculation cannot in the least secure life, for every person inoculated would have lived to the same moment of time to which they may arrive, had not that been done: likewise every person who catches the Small-pox, and dies, would not have lived a moment longer had they years before been inoculated for it; for the number of man's days are certainly fixed by God. See Job vii. 1; *"Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?" "seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass; all the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change comes;"* Job xiv. 5, 14. There are so many things belonging to man and this world, wherein scripture is clear as to their being providentially, or some way or other, predestinated, decreed, or appointed, that it is hence highly rational to suppose all things are so; as for example, the last judgment and final salvation of

the faithful. Acts xvii. 31; *Because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.—When the wicked will receive their portion from God, the heritage appointed for them,* Job xx. 29. This will be, in the last end of God's indignation, *for at the time appointed the end shall be;* Dan. viii. 19, 11, 27; and then will the faithful receive their final salvation, they being appointed *not unto wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ;* 1 Theff. v. 9; Eph. i. 10, 11, 12.

AGAIN, Temporal punishments and their kind. Mich. vi. 9; *Hear ye the rod and who hath appointed it;* Jer. xv. 2, 3.—*Thus saith the Lord, such as are for death to death, and such as are for the sword to the sword, and such as are for the famine to the famine, and such as are for the captivity to the captivity; and I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the Lord, the swords to slay, and the dogs to tear; and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy;* See also Jer. xlix. 20; 1 Kings xx. 42; and many more particulars that might be collected; but these surely may suffice, and we may hence safely and rationally conclude all things do come to pass, (whatever vain man may imagine) according to the counsel of the great God's own will; *all things come of God;* 1 Chron. xxiv. 14; Psal. lxxv. 6, 7. But especially the people of God have abundant reason to be confident that their God has appointed all things for them, and may seek to God for direction, that their conduct may be suitable to his appointments concerning them; Abraham's servant was of this mind; Gen. xxiv. 14; *Let the same be she, that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac, and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.*

THE Scripture is clear with respect to God's appointing for his people, and bringing to pass
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what he has appointed for them; Job vii. 3; *Wearisome nights are appointed to me.* 1 Theff. iii. 3; *for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.* Psal. lvii. 2; *I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performeth all things for me.* Rom. viii. 28; *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.* Deut. iv. 7; *For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?* Isa. xlv. 11.—*Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I will also do it.* A practical belief of these things would cause the christian to leave himself to God's providence, with an humble resignation to his Sovereign disposal, without taking any unwarrantable measures for the preservation of life.

Not only our days upon earth are fixed, but also every distemper or disease, which God is pleased to lay upon us, and which at last may put a period to life itself, are all fixed by his decree. These things may appear contingent to us, but they are all bound up in the righteous decrees of God, which decrees of God are said to be (in the assembly's catechism) "his eternal purpose according to the counsel of his own will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath fore-ordained whatsoever shall come to pass; Eph. i. 11; being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;" which I quote, not because it was composed by that well-known assembly of divines, but because it is a composition which is consonant to the sacred scriptures. Now these decrees of the Almighty, which respect the temporal condition of men, are firm and unalterable, as well as those which

respect their spiritual and eternal condition. *There are many devices in a man's heart, but the counsel of the Lord that shall stand; Prov. xix. 21. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations; Psal. xxxiii. 11. For He is in one mind, and who can turn him, and what his soul desireth, even that He doth; He performeth the thing that is appointed for me, and many such things are with him; Job xxiii. 13, 14. — With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; James i. 17.*

Now, from hence, we may rationally conclude, with respect to the Small-pox, that God will not send it to one more or less, than those he, from everlasting, appointed should have it, and that they will have it at the very time, and in the particular place where, and according to the measure or degree which he hath appointed, whether more favourable or more severe, whether for life or death. All these things are fore-ordained of God, and shall certainly come to pass exactly as he, from everlasting, fixed the plan of them. This may safely be concluded from the many scriptures already cited, respecting the purposes and providence of God. Now, for any christian to take measures to bring the Small-pox upon himself, just when he pleases, is an attempt to subvert the divine decrees; and surely this must be great impiety indeed.

It is well known, and is on the most authentic record, that many have been inoculated two or three times, and yet could never receive the infection; and thus, wherein men deal proudly, God shews that he is above them by turning their wisdom into foolishness, and, in so doing, makes good his own word, in which he says, *My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; Isa. xlvii. 10. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed,*
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and who shall disannul it? Isa. xiv. 27. Neither men nor devils can disannul any of God's purposes, nor prevent his sending the Small-pox to any one person he has purposed to send it to.

IN the exercise of faith, the consideration of the purposes and providence of God serves greatly to calm the christian's mind under afflictions, as he knows that nothing comes by chance, but all things are appointed by his heavenly father, who hath promised that all things shall work together for their good.

It is strange, but so it is, that some persons who appear very zealous for the decrees of God, and will dispute for them with good arguments, and well support their principles; yet these very persons, for the security of their lives, have been inoculated for the Small-pox, which is very surprising, as well as stumbling to many of their friends and acquaintance. What should be the cause of their acting thus? Their practice is quite inconsistent with their principles; it is owing to causeless fears, unbelief, and Satan's temptations, so that such may easily see into whose service they have entered themselves. *Know ye not* (says the Apostle Paul) *that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or obedience unto righteousness;* Rom. vi. 16. We are exhorted in the word of God to practise *those things which are true, which are just, which are honest, which are pure, and lovely, and of good report;* Phil. iv. 8. But how Inoculation agrees with those virtues exhorted to, I must leave to persons of deeper penetration and better genius to solve, for to me it appears opposite to them all.

SOME may object to what has been said above, and say, that if all things are fixed by God's decree,

cree, then we need not avoid going into houses where the Small-pox, or even the plague itself, is; for if God hath not appointed us to have it, we shall not, though we go amongst it ever so much; and, on the other hand, has appointed us to have it, we surely shall, though we use all the means we possibly can to preserve ourselves from it; for we cannot prevent what he hath appointed.

To this, it may be replied, it is certain all God's decrees shall take place in every respect; yet this way of arguing is very presumptuous, and comes from Satan: as we may conclude, from what he said to our Lord when he set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said to him, *If thou be the son of God, cast thyself down*; Matt. iv. 6. What God has decreed remains a secret to us, until he is pleased to open it to us in providence: therefore as we are reasonable creatures, it is our duty to act as such, by making use of all lawful means for the preservation of our lives, and our health, and for preventing infectious distempers coming upon us, looking up to the Lord for his blessing upon those means, we may make use of; self preservation is an instinct in nature, in the brutal as well as the rational creation, which teaches to avoid danger, and going into places where infectious distempers are; and should it please God to send the Small-pox into the family where we are, we may lawfully separate ourselves from them that have it, or remove them to a more convenient place, as a proper means, under the blessing of God, to prevent the spread of it, provided we fail not in positive or relative duties in so doing, or against the golden rule of our Lord; *Matt. vii. 12.*

For as God hath appointed the end, so also all necessary means to accomplish the end, which
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are to be diligently attended to by us, as the use of all proper means and medicines to preserve health, or to remove disorders which may attend us, looking up to the Lord for his blessing upon them, desiring to leave all things to his providential disposal, to do which is the duty and interest of every christian. For God says in his word, *But who so hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil*; Prov. i. 33. But then, some may say, as means may be used for preserving health, why may not Inoculation be used? for, by this means, thousands have had the Small-pox without the least danger of death; therefore it may be looked upon as a means of preserving life; to this it may be replied, the difference is exceedingly great between making use of means, in order to bring an infectious distemper upon our bodies while we are in health, and making use of means for preserving health, or for the removal of disorders which may come upon us; and this latter is the only proper use of means and medicines, and not to bring infectious distempers upon it.

How can the christian, who is inoculated, look up to heaven for a blessing upon a practice which tends to fully the glory of the divine perfections, by taking the work out of God's hand. The distemper is not of God's sending, but of man's procuring. God hath no more concern in such a person's having the Small-pox, than he hath in any sin which is committed: therefore, to pray for a blessing on it, is it any thing less than to pray for a blessing on a sinful action? Every christian should pray with the Psalmist; *Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God, thy spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness: And again, search me O God, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be*
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any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting; Psal. cxliii. 10 — cxxxix. 23, 24. Whether the christian that is inoculated can go in such language to God, I leave to their own consciences on a careful review and examination of themselves.

BUT we are further informed, in favour of Inoculation, in order to make it appear more agreeable to christianity, that abundance of prayers are offered up to God for his blessing upon it, be it so; prayers, be they many, or few, alter not the nature of the thing in the least, that remains the same still: if the practice is pleasing to God, they are found in their duty who seek his blessing thereon; but if it be a sin, let the prayers be ever so numerous, which are offered up on that account, every petition is certainly adding sin to sin, and may draw down divine vengeance suddenly on their heads instead of a blessing, which is an awful consideration, and should have its proper weight upon the minds of every serious christian, and should be a caution to him not to pray for a blessing on any new practice, till he is fully satisfied it is agreeable to God's revealed will; had this been well observed, many a christian might have escaped the snare.

Now, suppose the Small-pox be much in any town, some of the inhabitants make use of one method, and some of another, in order for preservation; some go to God by prayer, desiring, if it may be his pleasure, he would put a stop to the spread thereof, that they and others may be preserved from it, humbly committing this case, and themselves into the hand of God, which they are encouraged to do by that promise, in Psal. l. 15; *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* Now others, who prepare for Inoculation, cannot consistently

sistently pray for a stop to be put to the spread of the distemper in the place where they are, while they are taking measures to bring it upon themselves, and endanger others; neither can they be said to leave themselves to the wise disposal of providence, which it is their duty to do, with regard to their having, or not having it, who have agreed with a person to inoculate them. Thus we see, notwithstanding the great boast of the many prayers offered up to God, on account of Inoculation, that prayer is hindered thereby, and the mouths of such as practise it, are stopped from asking those blessings which reason dictates, and revelation warrants us to ask for, for preservation from an infectious distemper, and that a stop may be put to the spread thereof, if it were the will of God. Doubtless those professors, who are inoculated for the security of their lives, may offer up words to God for preservation, tho' they think themselves in little or no danger. The assembly of divines tells us, "Prayer is an offering up
" of our desires to God for things agreeable to his
" will." Now every christian, who craves God's blessing on Inoculation, should first be well satisfied that it is agreeable to the will of God, for the greatest shew of religion can never justify any practice, which is not supported by the word of God.

FURTHER the christian, who is inoculated for the Small-pox, acts as a sovereign, he is determined to have it, and have it he will; whether ever God designed he should, or not, that he does not regard, yea and he will have it just when he pleases too, he will not wait to see whether God will send it or not; no, no, it is that he is afraid of, he dares not trust God to send it, lest he should die of it, he hath safer means as he thinks to make use of, than to trust God with such an affair as this. If he doth not speak this in words, his practice speaks it aloud. There is an awful scripture I would leave to the se-

rious consideration of all such persons, it is ushered in with a *Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man, that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord*; Jer. xvii. 5. It is recorded greatly to the honour of the children of God, that, in former times, they trusted in the Lord, under all the afflictions, trials, and temptations they were visited with, which is worthy of our imitation; but such christians act quite the reverse to this, who cannot trust providence with their lives, without being inoculated for the preservation of them, if such persons trust in God for the salvation of their souls, it is no better founded than it is for their bodies; it is to be feared they will meet with a sad disappointment another day.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the varnish which men endeavour to beautify the practice of Inoculation with, to make it appear plausible in the eyes of the world, they have not yet proved it to be of divine appointment, neither do I think they will ever be able, since the contrary is very manifest, as it strikes at the glory of the divine perfections, the sovereignty, wisdom, power, and goodness of God, distrusts providence, leads persons off from God to place their trust in man, and suffer an infectious distemper to be put into their bodies, which God might never have sent could they have left it to him; but being fearful of it, they are determined to be before hand with him, engage with a person to give him a certain sum of money to do it for them, for the security of their lives. Now doth the christian, who acts thus, shew any thing of christianity by such a conduct more than may be seen in a Turk or a Jew.

INOCULATION appears to me to be a sin of a crimson dye, and utterly unbecoming the christian name, as it does not appear to be in the least countenanced by the word of God; but is entirely repugnant to the whole current of the scriptures, as I think I have
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n some measure shewn in the preceding pages. Now, certainly, those who truly fear God, should make his word their only rule in this, as well as in all other affairs; and did they do so, we should not hear of their being inoculated, nor of their encouraging the practice.

WE read of many who came to our Lord Jesus Christ, when he was upon earth to be healed of their diseases, and he healed them; but we read of none coming to him to have diseases brought upon them; but, in the present day, persons apply to a Physician to bring a pestilential distemper upon them, certainly such conduct carries much more of Paganism than of christianity in its face; nay, it hath not the least appearance of christianity in it. We may therefore conclude, that Inoculation is much more excusable, and a sin comparatively small in Turks and Heathens, who are without a divine revelation, than it can be in those who profess christianity, who have God's word in their hand, and should be guided by it. Amongst all denominations of professing christians, who promote and follow the practice of Inoculation, none are more culpable than those who profess to hold Calvinistical doctrines, there is such a contrariety between their principles and their practice in this respect; for indeed many profess Calvinists, by using Inoculation, are become practical Arminians.

INOCULATION much better agrees with the gentlemen who are in the Arminian scheme; for as they (or at least many of them) look upon all things which befall us in this world to be contingent; so they, according to their principles, think they may make use of this practice for the preservation of life, as they do not look upon man's days on earth to be so fixed, but that by care, and diligent use of means, they may be carried to a greater length, or by negligence and carelessness they may be shorten-

ed, so that the principles and practice of the Arminians, and the Calvinists, while both use Inoculation for the preservation of life, seem in some sort to agree, supposing them both to act equally upon principle; but at the same time how preposterously strange is it to see any that profess the Calvinist doctrines and look upon man's days upon earth to be fixed, that he shall not continue here a moment longer nor die a moment sooner than the very time which God from everlasting fixed for his dissolution, suffer themselves to be inoculated for the preservation of life, or to prevent death by the Small-pox? Such would do well, when they are a little at leisure, to try to reconcile their principles and practice together, and if they cannot, honestly acknowledge that they have been mistaken.

It is generally allowed by those who call themselves christians, that Jehovah superintends all the affairs of the universe, and that so doing it is he who sends various distempers to nations, cities, families, and to particular persons, just when, and where he pleases; consequently it must be the duty of them who fear God to leave themselves to the disposals of his providence, and not to take any unwarrantable measures to bring the Small-pox upon themselves, whatever Satan may suggest, or unbelief insinuate to the contrary.

BUT after all if unbelief so far prevails to harden the hearts of christians, that they will be inoculated, notwithstanding it so clearly appears to be God's work and his alone to send the distemper to them if he hath appointed them to have it: how justly may God say to such persons, *Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded, but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my re-*
proof,

proof, I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh as desolation; and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you, then shall they call upon me but I will not answer, they shall seek me early but they shall not find me; for that they hated knowledge and did not chuse the fear of the Lord; they would none of my counsel, they despised all my reproof, therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices; Prov. i. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. an awful passage against such as slight God's word, and such would do well seriously to enquire whether they do not come under the character of slighers of God's word who practice Inoculation.

It is very manifest from the word of God, that all those who are chosen by God the Father, redeemed by God the Son, and regenerated by God the Holy Ghost, shall infallibly be saved; sin, Satan, nor all the powers of darkness shall never be able to pluck the least of them out of the Redeemer's hand, yet if any of them *forsake God's law and walk not in his judgments, if they break his statutes and keep not his commandments, then will he visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes. Psal. lxxxix, 30, 31, 32.* Now, should God be pleased to set home upon the consciences of such who practice Inoculation the evil of their conduct upon a death-bed, who knows the darkness, distress and anguish they may labour under when in the near views of an eternal world? And should God then permit Satan, who has been their seducer, to turn their accuser for that very sin he has tempted them to commit, they will then find it hard work indeed, and though they shall assuredly be saved, yet they may be said to be brought

brought to heaven as it were by the very gates of hell.

EVERY person who builds upon Christ the true and only foundation for eternity is safe, yet such should be daily looking up to the Lord to be kept from every snare which they may be liable to fall into, and should diligently search the holy scriptures for direction in all things, so that they may not be left to build upon this foundation, wood, hay and stubble, for the word of God says, *If any man shall build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is, if any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon he shall receive a reward, if any man's work shall be burnt he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire;* 1 Cor. iii. 12, 13, 14, 15. It appears plain from this scripture a child of God may be so left as to fall into such errors as may be termed wood, hay, stubble, whether this may respect gospel doctrines and ordinances misapplied, or some ungodly practice which a christian may be drawn into through the power of Satan and unbelief; this I leave, yet I think it intimates at least what an awful thing it is for any to act contrary to the revealed will of God, it must be highly displeasing to God when any of his children act such an ungrateful part, and they may justly expect he will visit them for their iniquities, and although for Christ's sake he will pardon their sins, and save them, yet it will be so as by fire, he will assuredly take vengeance on their inventions; Psal. xcix. 8.

I verily believe neither Satan nor his instruments ever spread any error in doctrine or practice with greater success to ensnare the people of God, than
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this of inoculation; perhaps he never put a bait upon his hook which was more eagerly caught at, or more greedily swallowed down by those who truly fear God, since he baited it for Adam and Eve in paradise; and it is a question whether any sin hath been committed since the fall of our first parents which is attended with more heinous crimes than Inoculation; it is a sin big with many sins, it is an act of rebellion, if not of high treason against the supreme legislator and governor of the universe, so that instead of wearing the amiable colours of a merciful providence, it justly merits the black character of monstrous wickedness, for it evidently wears the livery of Satan.

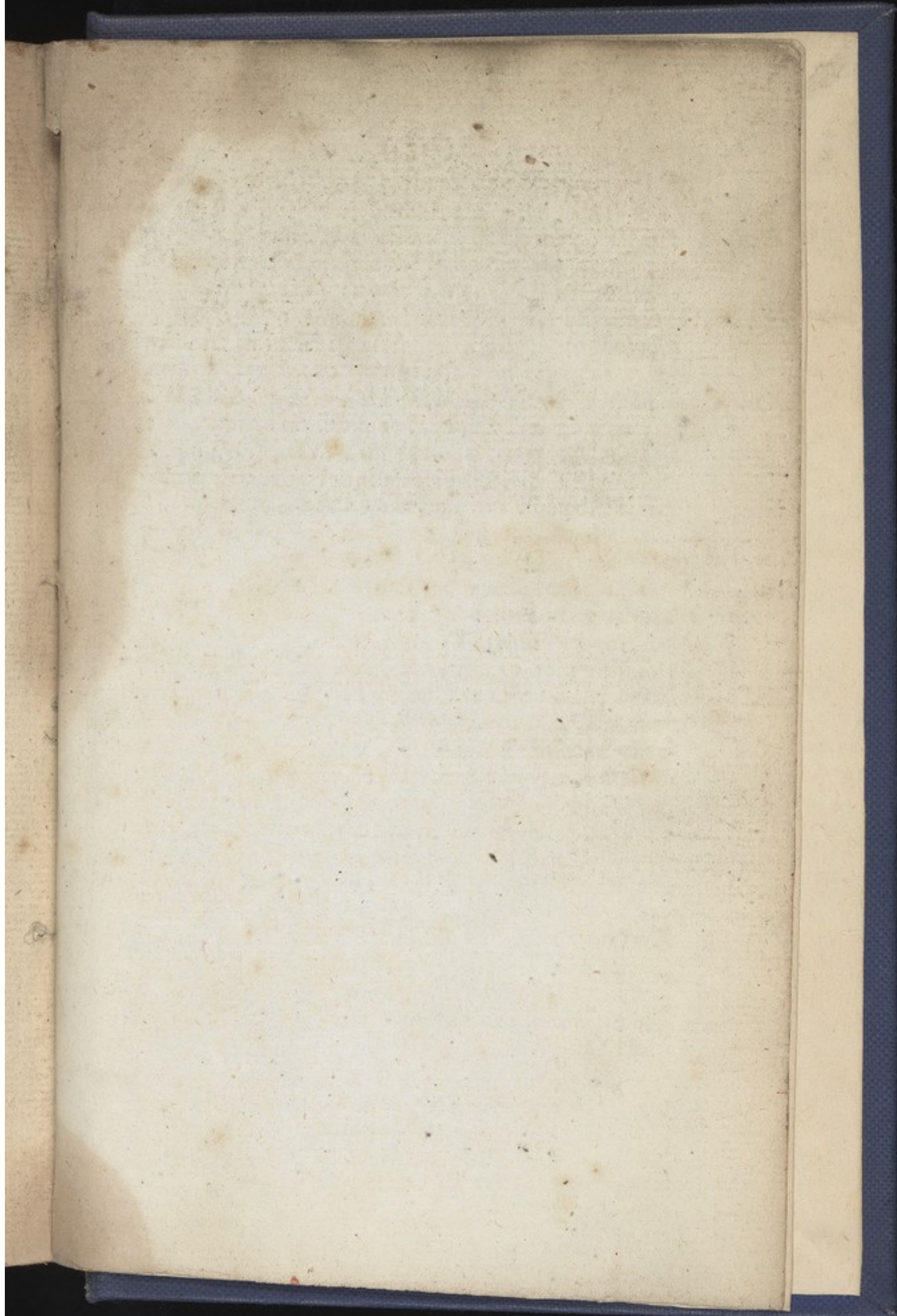
AND yet amazing it is, some who profess to fear God encourage it; but can such think the purposes and decrees of God can be set aside by man? That is impossible, for not one person whom God purposed to send the Small-pox to in a very sore manner, or designed to remove out of the world thereby, can be secured by Inoculation, as may rationally be concluded from the nature and unchangeableness of the divine decrees as has been shewn; the very practice appears to be a delusion of Satan, in which he employs two of his most faithful servants, which have drawn multitudes into the snare; just to mention their names, they are atheism and unbelief.

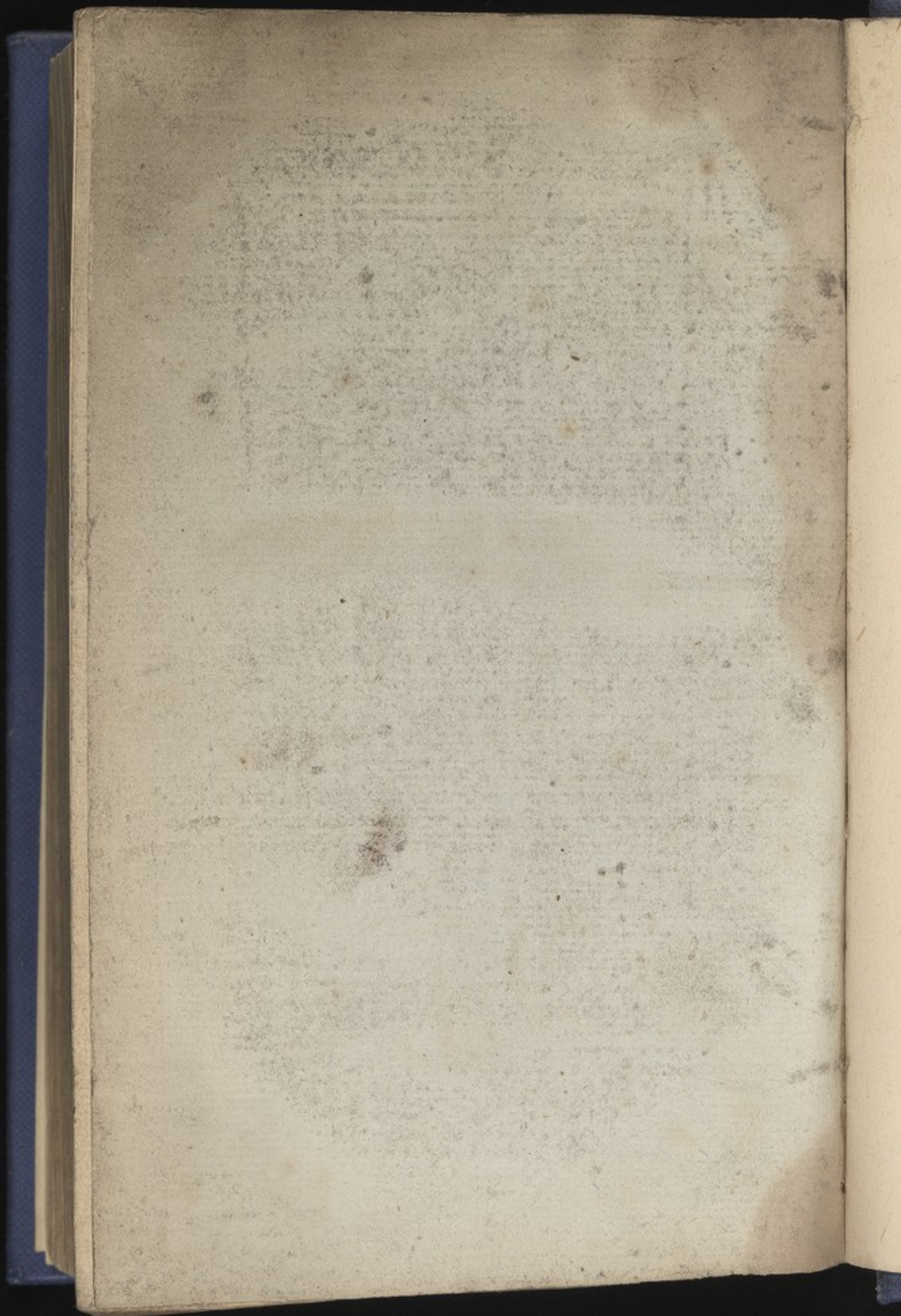
GOD is a God jealous of his own glory, and will not tolerate the least deviation from his revealed will, and as nothing in scripture will justify Inoculation, what nation upon the earth lies more exposed to the judgments of God than Great Britain doth? And have not spiritual, which are the most awful judgments of any, seized the people of God already? Is not their giving into a practice they cannot support by scripture, a sad evidence of it? And we have more reason to fear temporal judgments

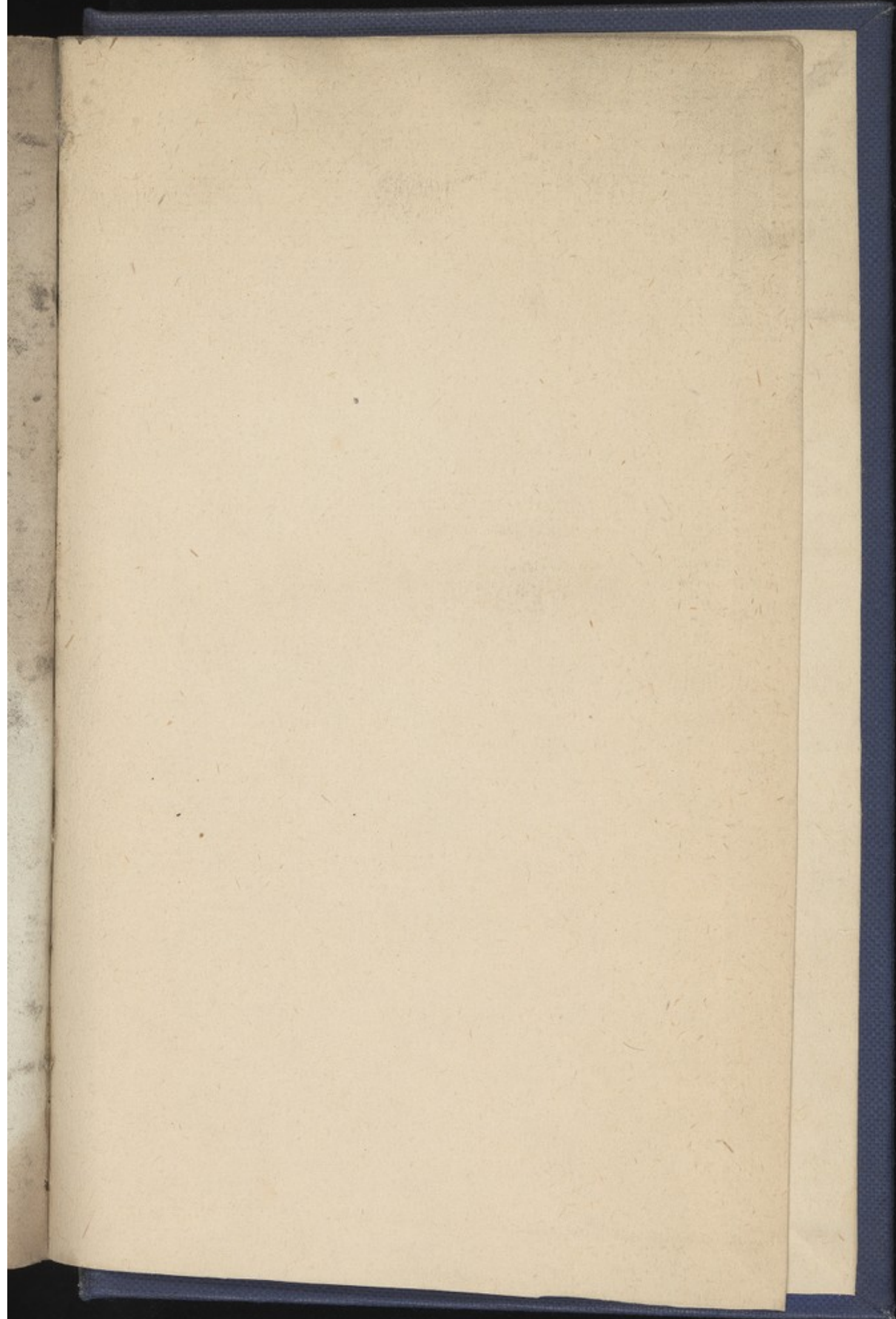
judgments will come, on account of the sins of God's people, than from all that open profaneness which abounds in the land, or those errors in doctrine which are in the midst of us, for God says in his word to his professing people, *You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities.* Amos iii. 2.

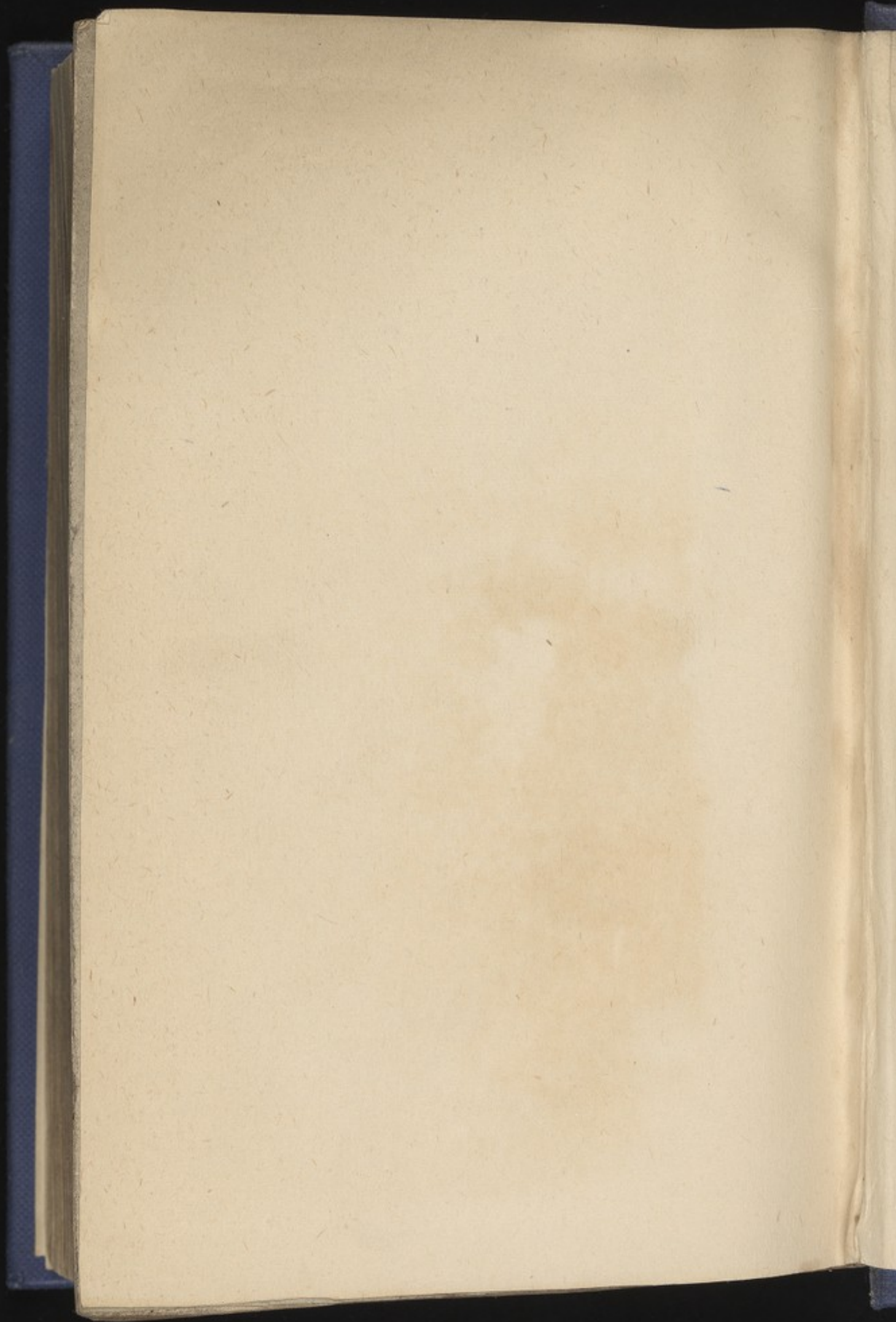
P. S. I understand a very popular gentleman hath run great lengths in defence of Inoculation, asserting that if persons refused to be inoculated and God should send the Small-pox to them, and they die thereof, it would be self-murder. Nay further I have heard he should say, if a master of a family should refuse to let his family be inoculated, and they should catch it and die thereof, he could by scripture prove it to be murder; but it will be time enough to believe him when he has produced his scripture proof. It would have been more becoming his function, and likewise have shewn more humility first to have produced two or three passages of scripture, if such could be found, which might set the practice of Inoculation in a good light, and thereby endeavour to convince persons of their duty, and encourage them to be found in it, than to endeavour to fright them into it by telling them awful stories about it. I was surprised when I first heard what this gentleman should say on Inoculation, but since I have heard more of his religious sentiments, my wonder has ceased; for I question whether he believes God hath fixed man's days upon earth to a time which he cannot pass, and if he disbelieves this great truth, it is no wonder he should think man may take any measures he may think proper, to carry out life to its longest period.

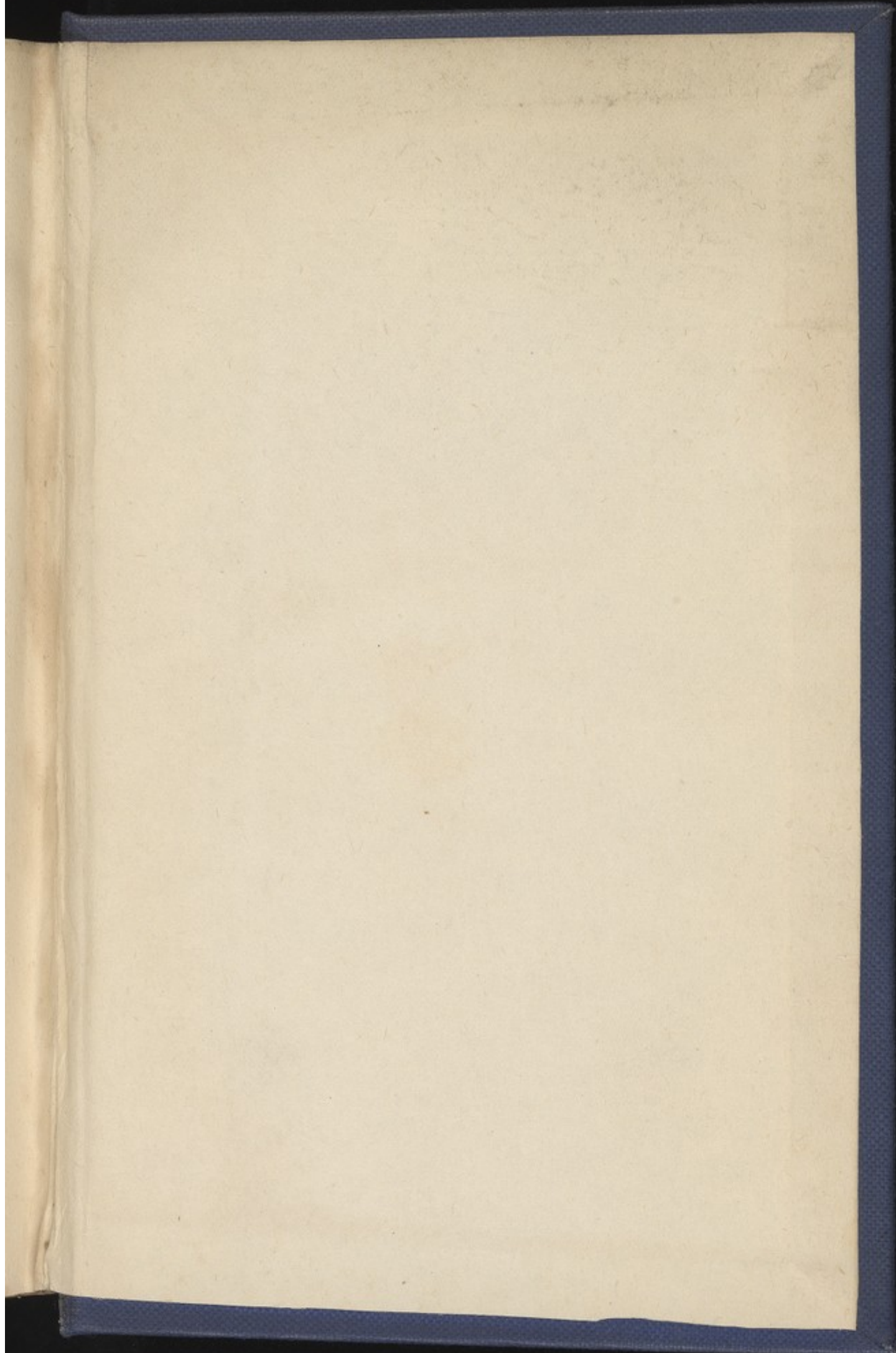
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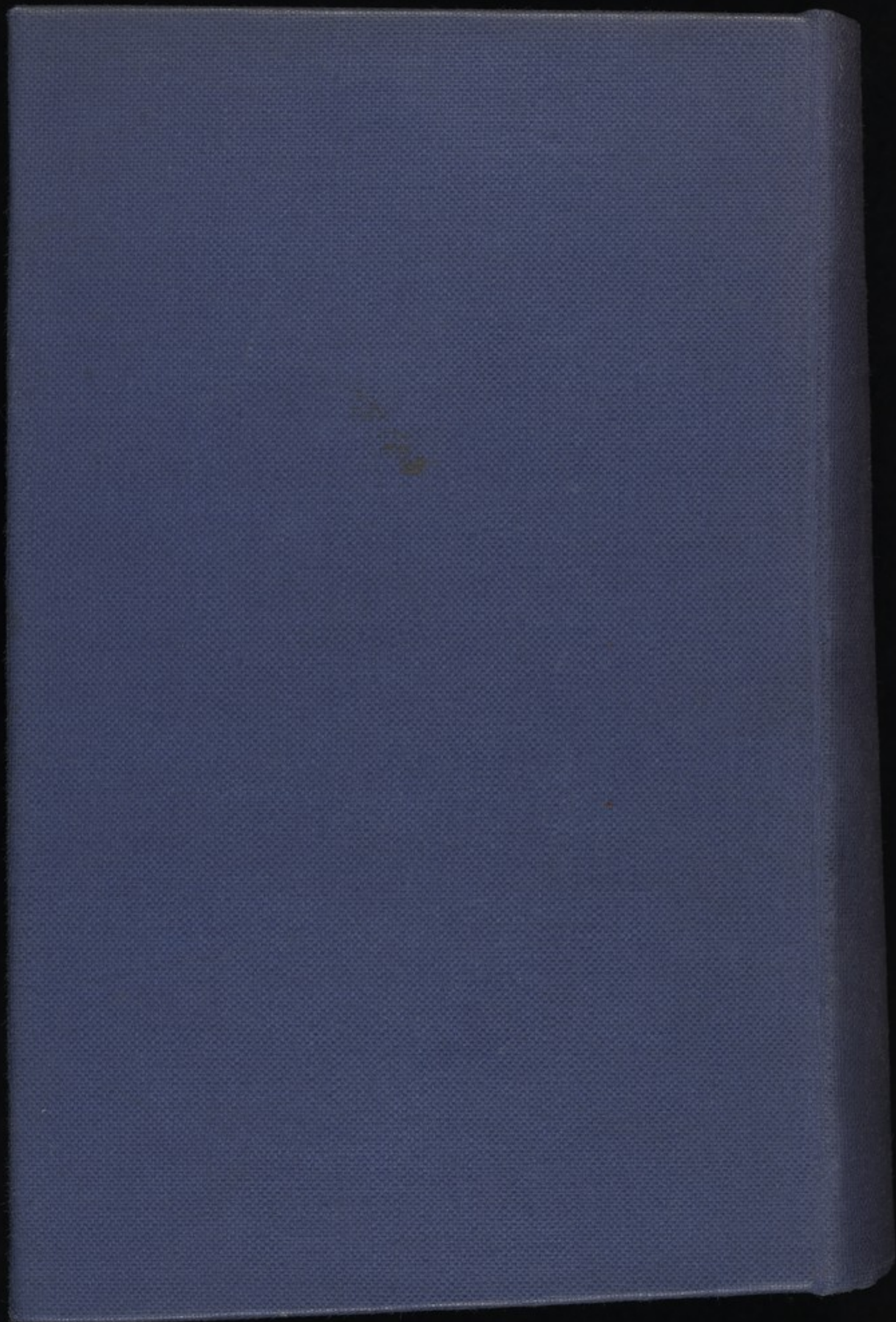












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