

**A correspondence with the Board of the National Vaccine Establishment /  
[Thomas Brown].**

**Contributors**

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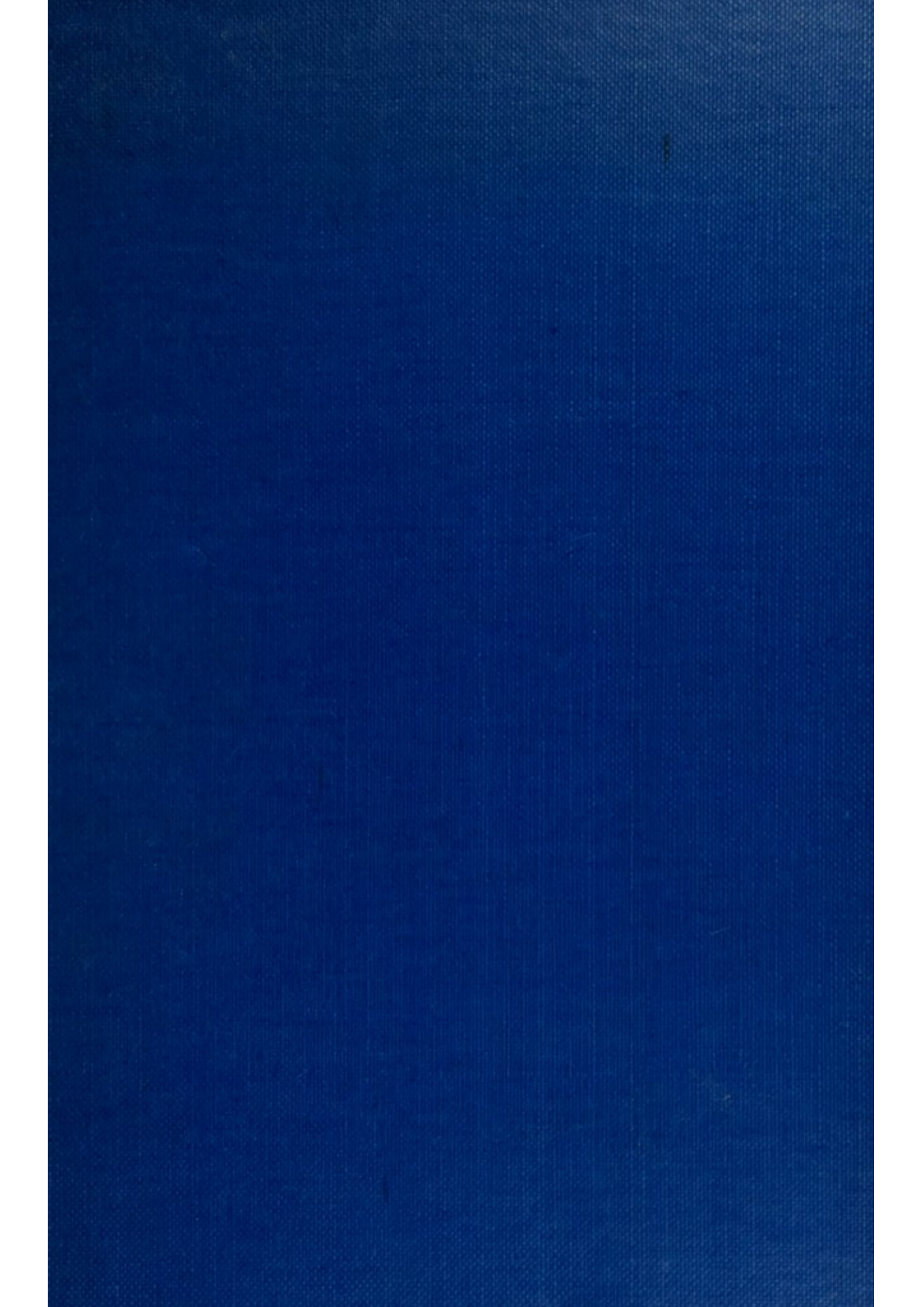
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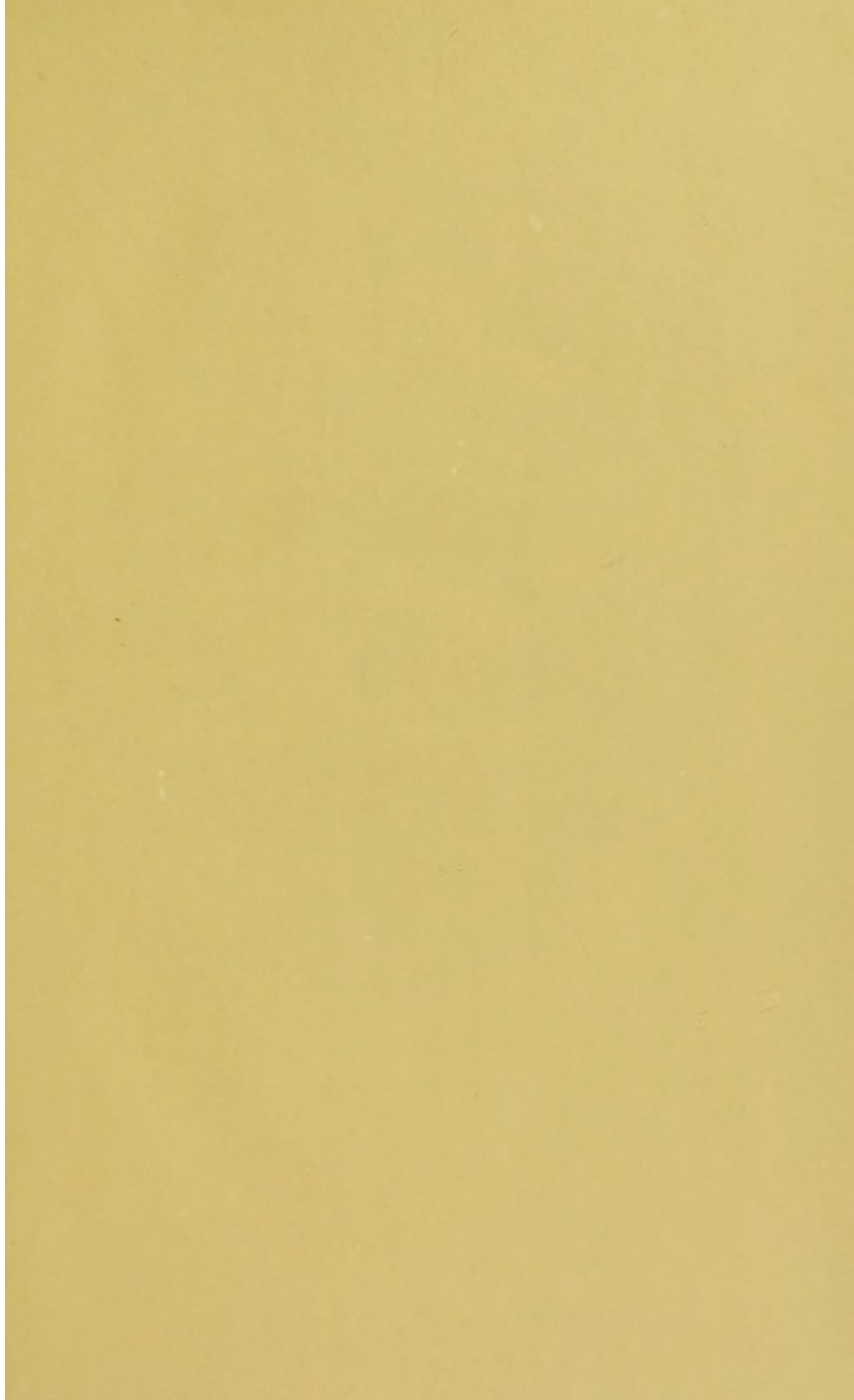
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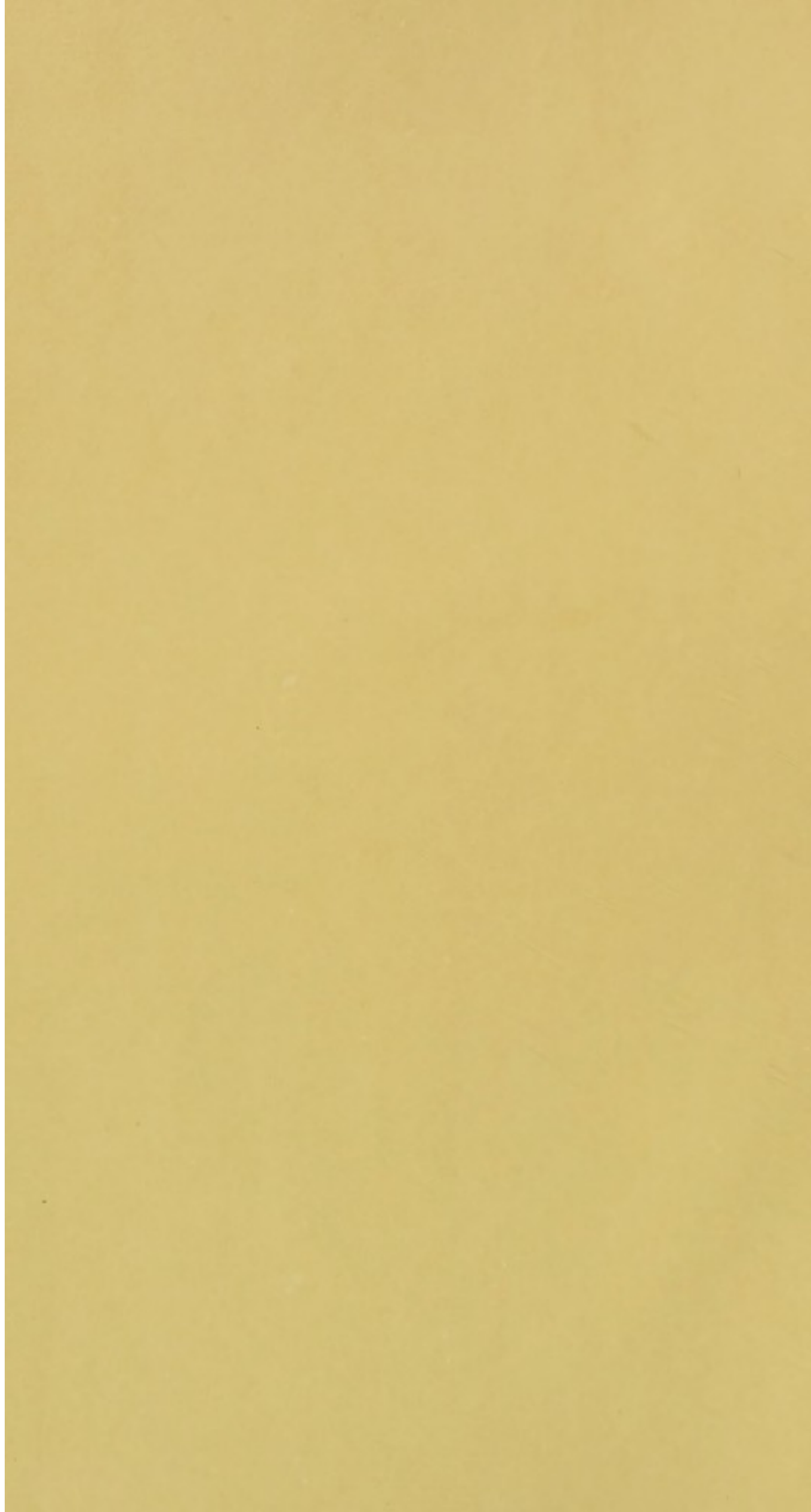


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15677/B

A

CORRESPONDENCE

WITH

THE BOARD

OF THE

NATIONAL VACCINE ESTABLISHMENT.

BY

THOMAS BROWN, SURGEON,

MUSS. EDINBURGH.

LONDON :

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1810.

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THE CORRESPONDENCE

OF

1810

By Charles and Elizabeth Johnson



CORRESPONDENCE,

&c. &c.

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*To the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for  
the Home Department.*

SIR,

I HAVE taken the liberty to leave the enclosed packet open for your perusal, and I flatter myself from the importance of the subject in a national point of view, you will have the goodness to read it.

I am, Sir,

With the greatest respect,

THOMAS BROWN,  
Surgeon.

*Mussleburgh,  
Feb. 16th, 1810.*

*To the Board of the National Vaccine Estab-  
lishment.*

GENTLEMEN,

FEELING as I do on the very important and national subject of vaccination, I should be insensible to the duty I owe the public, and deficient in respect to you, did I not avail myself of your public invitation to lay before you the following observations.

As I have already submitted to the public my opinions upon this important subject, I flatter myself you will readily perceive, both the necessity and propriety of attending anxiously to every circumstance which can possibly lead, not only to a just, but also as decisive, and speedy a determination, as is consistent with the great interests which the subject involves. You must, also, gentlemen, permit me to add, that I hope such anxiety will appear to

you both natural and commendable, when I trust I may, without being exposed to the charge of vanity, put forward my claim to the merit of having opposed Vaccination on the rational grounds of experiment and experience. I must beg leave, therefore, humbly, but seriously, to urge for your most immediate and attentive consideration, how far it is consistent either with the liberal and scientific views of the profession, or with the conscientious discharge of the duty which in this case you owe to the *World*, to come forward in the face of the most authentic and progressively increasing evidence; against a host of the most decisive and conclusive communications; and with the positive knowledge of the daily secession, not only of the most respectable individuals of the profession, but even of societies, (expressly established for the propagation of the discovery,) from the opinions which they once entertained

favourable to vaccination, and not only, take no notice of such seriously adverse circumstances, but even to persevere in boldly recommending to the public confidence a discovery, in which so many imperfections are, even to yourselves, known to exist. Before you could have ventured to have adopted such a line of conduct, you must certainly be prepared, not only to deny, but to refute the following chain of confirmed evidence.

1. That while we were busied in carrying on the practice of inoculating for the small pox, the circumstances which rendered us doubtful of the complete and satisfactory effects of the process were, the want of a constitutional affection, and the absence of an eruption of pustules. That these circumstances are also requisite for the satisfactory proof of the existence of any of the exanthemata—Nay, that the existence of distinct symptoms, seem requisite for the

diagnosis of every disease to which the human body is liable.

2. Does not the process of vaccination in general consist in nothing, but the local phenomena of the punctured point, at all times without the evidence of any *distinct* constitutional affection, and only *occasionally* with any *sensible* derangement of the system?

3. Was it not a matter of fact, that all the characteristic marks of a constitutional affection of small pox, were obtained from every variety of inoculated pustules; and that a very great variety in the size, figure, colour, and extent of the inoculated pustule existed, without any prejudice to the perfection of the constitutional affection?

4. Is it not also incontrovertible, that the local process of vaccination admits of a prodigious variety with regard to the appearance of the vesicle and areola, without any prejudice to the powers of the

process, in enabling the constitution to resist the tests of inoculation and exposure to the epidemic small pox, applied soon after the individual has passed through the phenomena of vaccination ?

5. If this resistance to the tests of inoculation, or exposure to the epidemic small pox is uniform, directly after the local process is completed, notwithstanding this variety, with what consistency, or regard to truth and fair induction, can it possibly be contended, that a vesicle, or vesicles of the most distinct and perfect appearance, attended with the most characteristic areola, can be alledged to have been only local, merely because small pox have afterwards occurred ?

6. Is it possible to contend for this admission, when there are the most *authentic and progressively increasing conclusive evidence* of the occurrence of small pox after the most perfect phenomena of vaccination ;

and that all, or most of these cases are in general allowed to have been modified by the vaccine influence?

7. Can such modification take place, without the influence of cow pox having been exerted constitutionally?

8. Is it not a matter of fact, that upon having recourse to the test of inoculation with small pox virus some years after vaccination, the phenomena which ensue are not only widely different from what were found to occur when this test is employed soon after vaccination, but even the most characteristic local and constitutional phenomena can be obtained; and these appearances are produced with the greater facility and certainty, in proportion to the distance of the period from vaccination?

9. Is it not also equally certain, that cases of small pox after vaccination, were not known or heard of, until the second, or third year after the introduction of the

discovery ; that every succeeding year has produced such instances, not only rapidly increasing progressively in number, but also in severity and fatal terminations ; and that the number of such cases are met with in the respective situations, exactly in proportion to the early introduction of the practice, and extent of population ?

10. Are not the accounts from various quarters of the world already assuming the same aspect they have put on in this country, when at the same period from the commencement of vaccination ; and that in order to explain and defeat the cases of small pox which have already made their appearance, the miserable excuses of perfect, imperfect, local, and constitutional vesicles ; the contemptible evasions of chicken-pox, flea-bites, and rashes ; and the uncandid and illiberal pretences of difficulty and intricacy in conducting the process, are employed ?

11. Do not the whole phenomena, facts, and history of vaccination, together with those we are acquainted with, relating to variola, rubeola, scarlatina, &c. and even the action of mercury in the cure of syphilis clearly shew, that a specific action may not only exist minus in the system, but even in various degrees, and that in proportion to the extent of their action, so may the permanency of their influence be estimated?

12. Do not then the whole history, and phenomena of vaccination clearly evince this negative tendency, and that this fact, together with the coincidence of the authentic and conclusive evidence of small pox, occurring in numbers, increasing in a ratio, proportioned to the distance of the period from vaccination, unequivocally prove the constitutional influence of cow pock, to be partial, feeble, and temporary?

Lastly: Is it possible then, that the

public can be requested to place their confidence in the process of vaccination, for protection against the severe and fatal disease of small pox?

After the publication of my Inquiry into the Antivariolous Power of Vaccination, together with my reply to the report of the surgeons of the Edinburgh Vaccine Institution, I deem it, Gentlemen, quite unnecessary to enter here into any farther discussion of the subject—every day produces some new and striking evidence, and calls loudly for a distinct, explicit, and decisive declaration. Reflect only for a moment, and observe what must be the effects of such hesitation, and indecision on your part—every hour that passes is accumulating the anxiety, distress, and danger of individuals, and increasing in an incalculable proportion, the public confusion and disaster that must ultimately ensue. For Heaven's sake step forward, and avert the

danger to the community, and the disgrace of our profession. It is impossible we can have even the shadow of an apology, if we shall only yield to the most numerous, obvious, and disastrous facts—facts which appear to me sufficient to subdue, the most obstinate, and the most stupid of mankind. Remember, Gentlemen, you have a duty to discharge, not only to this empire, but to the world. It was here the practice began and emanated, and of course the lives of the universe are in our hands—we acted at the commencement with a truly laudable and philanthropic anxiety and zeal, let us still shew, that we are actuated by the same feelings, and demonstrate to the world the grand and virtuous example, that we are not only sensible of, but also ready to acknowledge, and willing to correct, our errors.

I have now, Gentlemen, presented you with what appears to me a faithful sum-

mary of the practice, and probable consequences of vaccination. In having done so, I am satisfied I have simply discharged my duty to the public, and to the profession. I beg leave to assure you, it would have given me much greater pleasure to have been able to remain a faithful friend to the discovery, but surrounded as I was with the most decisive evidencē, that was impossible. I trust, however, I am still open to conviction, and as the Board perseveres in recommending the practice, I should think myself honoured, if they will condescend to favour me with their opinion upon the present state of the subject.

I am,

Gentlemen,

Your respectful and humble servant,

THOMAS BROWN.

*Feb.* 14. 1810.

*National Vaccine Establishment,*  
*Feb. 23, 1810.*

SIR,

I AM desired by the Board of this Establishment to acknowledge the receipt of your address on the subject of Vaccination, and to present their thanks for your communications.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient  
humble servant,

JAMES HERVEY, M.D.  
Reg.

*Thomas Brown, Esq.*

*To the Board of the National Vaccine Estab-  
lishment.*

GENTLEMEN,

\* I BEG leave to offer my warmest thanks for your condescension in acknowledging the receipt of my observations, addressed to you on the subject of vaccination. I must, however, express my sincere regret, at your not having judged it necessary or proper to grant me the information I requested; and shall take the liberty to suggest, for your serious consideration, some farther observations upon the subject.

When I determined, Gentlemen, to address you, it was not merely with a view to your, or my own satisfaction: it pro-

\* This letter was also accompanied with a few lines, soliciting the attention of the Secretary of State.

ceedd from an anxious wish to produce consequences, which should quiet the public apprehension, and protect the character of our profession, both of which appeared to me to run no small risk of danger and degradation, if you persevered in the line of conduct you have hitherto adopted. Even as an individual, I must feel particularly interested in the issue of this subject. You surely cannot be unacquainted with the violent and disgraceful opposition I have met with; indeed I am convinced from what has passed in London, those means must be fully in the view of the Board, and that they are now perfectly aware of the shame and disgrace which they have heaped, both upon the individuals, and the profession. I must however remark, there was not even a shadow of an apology for the conduct of the Edinburgh Vaccine Institution. My sentiments, I must be allowed to say, were offered to the pub-

lic under very different circumstances, from I believe the whole of those who have hitherto opposed vaccination. They were presented after nearly nine years steady perseverance in the practice: they were offered to the public, after having individually used the most general, and violent efforts for its extension: they were brought forward, after having been remunerated for about 1,200 cases, and in the face of a steady adherence and attachment of the whole of my patients to the practice; and they promulgated doctrines, which were supported by experiment and experience, and which, I believe, every candid and unprejudiced medical practitioner will readily allow contained nothing, but what may be considered as a fair medical discussion. But what is still more singular, and presents mankind in a humiliating point of view, is, that this opposition should proceed from a body of men

whose official situation required the most cautious, candid, and liberal procedure, as representing and maintaining the character of the profession upon this subject; as having or ought to have had, the most ample information by publications and communications; as being made use of in the tenth year of the discovery, when it has been acknowledged by the oldest vaccine institution in the kingdom, that the most undoubted and conclusive evidence of the occurrence of small pox after the most perfect vaccination, have increased progressively every succeeding year. I do not hesitate to assert, that if any medical gentleman will take the trouble to peruse, merely the different publications by those who style themselves the friends of vaccination, he will be astonished and confounded at his having so implicitly followed the practice. I can assure you, Gentlemen, had I even been so fortunate

as only to peruse sooner Dr. Jenner's different publications, but more especially his remarkable letter to Dr. Willan, in 1806, I should most certainly have acted with greater circumspection, and had not run myself headlong into the awkward, but now necessary dilemma, of so positively and distinctly contradicting myself. This situation, however, after the proof I have met with, I determined to encounter, and rather expose myself to the charge of inconsistency, ignorance, and presumption, than persevere in criminally pressing upon the public, without farther examination, a practice, in which so many imperfections and uncertainties appeared to exist. How then can it be credited, that four respectable individuals should have not only laid aside their sense of perception, but absurdly condescended to call to their assistance medical practitioners, who had never vaccinated a single individual. That

they should have been so destitute of candour and honesty, as meanly to solicit the assistance and protection of reviewers, who had not the smallest experience upon the subject; that they should have resisted with the most determined repulsion every fact, which has been gradually accumulating with uniform, and progressive force: that they should have been so illiberal and uncandid as to adopt a mode of defence wholly inconsistent with all discussion; and to be so infatuated and prejudiced as to produce a report, which I will venture to affirm, will not only remain a monument of their medical abilities, but will for ever produce, in the minds of the authors, the most poignant distress and regret.\*

\* The Edinburgh Vaccine Institution had recourse to a mode of defence, which, although insignificant and contemptible, yet is worthy of being noted, as affording

But I repeat, Gentlemen, these personal considerations would never have compelled me to trouble you on the subject. From the opinions I at present entertain, I feel highly alarmed for the public comfort and happiness, and deeply anxious for the dignity and honour of our profession. If my fears and apprehensions shall prove to be well founded, society must be thrown into universal consternation. The parent, the husband, and the child, must be exposed

the most decisive proof that trick and chicane did not entirely belong to those whom they styled wicked and designing. They requested the editors of the papers to insert the advertisement of their report upon my Inquiry, immediately below my reply to that report, with the view of conveying to the public an impression, that they had published a second report, &c. which in fact was really supposed to be the case by many. It is evident, had they not wished to convey such an idea, they would have either made no application whatever, or requested the editor to insert their report immediately preceding my reply.

to the most dreadful state of anxiety and distress ;—their intercourse with the world must be timid, limited, and vexatious ; and every source of comfort blasted by the most distressing apprehensions. The best, most useful, and most respectable characters ; the dearest friends, and the most tender connexions, must be involved in danger, and snatched from us in a moment.

Recollect, Gentlemen, your past conduct has loaded you with an awful responsibility.—You are not only considered as the guide and guardians of the public safety on this subject, but you also represent, on this occasion, the whole profession. The great majority of our brethren are regulated by your conduct : their natural and commendable attachment and respect, for what ought justly to be considered superior authority, stifles and destroys every adverse fact, and every reasonable

inference, and the apprehension of being exposed to the charges of singularity and presumption, compels them to silent acquiescence. You must surely, however, be aware, that the plea of deference to constituted authorities, cannot avail any set of men in matters of science, far less in one, which involves the lives of the universe. We must all deservedly be branded with infamy and disgrace, for such extraordinary and criminal complaisance and timidity ; and we must forfeit, for ever, all title to public confidence and esteem.

Neither, Gentlemen, can our having already acknowledged without reserve the utility of the discovery, by granting national rewards ; nor our anxiety for preserving the consistency and accuracy of the profession ; nor the necessity of renouncing the defence which we keenly opposed to the indecorous and unreasonable efforts of the anti-vaccinists, be possibly urged as any

excuse, for refusing to adopt the virtuous and honourable alternative, of confessing and proclaiming our errors.

I shall not, Gentlemen, here enter into the consideration of the nature and abundance of the proof which this subject affords, of the violent opposition which the blindness of system opposed, to the numerous, obvious, and consistent facts which presented themselves, against the perfect antivariolous power of vaccination. I shall only take the liberty to remind you of the late striking proof of the effect of party in the Walcheren expedition, and the alarming influence of opinion, and how readily the public interest, and the sacred cause of humanity, can be sacrificed to the systematic, and party sentiments of individuals. If one Board can be found to have acted in a manner, so derogatory to the obligations which ought to regulate the conduct of members of a liberal profession, how

much reason is there not to tremble, for the motives of another. Fortunately, however, both the public comfort and the honour of our profession can still be preserved, by your simply condescending to institute a public inquiry into the present state of vaccination. The members of the profession too in this kingdom will be discharged, by this step, from every duty and exempt from all censure, and will prevent the medical profession in any other part of the world, from claiming the shameful and distressing advantage and pre-eminence, of having detected and exposed our obstinacy, blindness, and credulity. You must, Gentlemen, undoubtedly be convinced, that both parliament, and his majesty's government, were entirely guided in their determination by the authority of the Royal College of Physicians. You must be satisfied, both of them have, in this business, delegated to your establishment their au-

thority and confidence ; therefore you must be aware, they expect from you a faithful discharge of the important trust committed to your care. You must perceive the necessity of coming forward, and either explicitly declaring, and distinctly proving, that all the facts which have been brought forward since the report of the Royal College upon this subject, cannot, nor ought to have any weight in shaking, or destroying the public confidence, or, that they really are entitled to attention and respect, and suggest the most serious doubts of the extent and perfection of the antevariolous power of vaccination ; and that it cannot be any longer recommended to public confidence, before it undergoes a thorough investigation. If vaccination really possesses the merits we at first ascribed to it, it must not be given up from clamour, prejudice, or erroneous opinions ; but if it shall be

proved to be an imperfect, and temporary antidote, it is evident, the sooner we renounce the practice the better.

Indeed, Gentlemen, so much am I convinced of the necessity and propriety of an immediate investigation, that as the warmest and best friend to Doctor Jenner, I should advise him to come forward, and acknowledge the adverse circumstances which have lately occurred,—declare that his only object was to introduce a practice, which from experiment and experience, appeared to his judgment, to possess advantages of the greatest importance to the public;—acknowledge the daily accumulation of the most authentic and conclusive evidence, and declare his anxiety that it should no longer be persevered in, without a thorough investigation. It is evident neither Dr. Jenner's character, nor that of the discovery, could be hurt by the mea-

sure. Every medical gentleman must allow it possesses ante-variolous powers to a certain extent ; that the phenomena which attended the discovery were sufficient to encourage the most flattering prospects ; and that Dr. Jenner acted as a correct inquirer, and is entitled to the public remuneration he obtained. I beseech you then, Gentlemen, allow an immediate opportunity for a fair investigation,—grant every necessary information both to the profession and to the public,—neither be guided by vaccinists nor antivaccinists,—call for evidence from men of experience,—men who have not shewn, or declared themselves to be guided by party, or influenced by system. If the facts which have been brought forward are false and impotent, a victory is gained, and the public convinced of the blessings of vaccination—if they are real and important, the world will be extricated from confusion, distress, and misery, and

the medical profession of this empire, saved  
from ignominy and contempt.

Gentlemen,

I am,

With profound esteem and respect,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS BROWN.

*Mussleburgh,*

*March 12th, 1810.*

*Whitehall, March 19th, 1810.*

SIR,

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Ryder to return you his thanks for the favour of the perusal of your letter addressed to the Board of the National Vaccine Establishment. And in reply, I beg to inform you, that no time has been lost in communicating it to that Board accordingly.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

Humble servant,

J. BECKETT.

*Mr Thomas Brown,  
Surgeon, Mussleburgh.*

*National Vaccine Establishment,  
March 30th, 1810.*

SIR,

THE Board of this Establishment have desired me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 12th instant, and addressed to them under cover to the Right Honourable Mr. Secretary Ryder: and I am directed to inform you “that they have delivered their sentiments on the present state of Vaccination in a report lately submitted to His Majesty’s Government, which were founded on the result of the most extensive investigation of the subject, and which, having taken the observations contained in your letter into consideration, they conceive to be a sufficient answer thereto.”

I am, Sir,

Your very obedient

Humble servant,

JAMES HERVEY, Reg.

*Tho. Brown, Esq.*

*Mussleburgh.*

MR. BROWN offers most respectful compliments to the Right Honourable Mr. Secretary Ryder, and begs leave to thank him for his attention in perusing his former communications to the Board of the National Vaccine Establishment. The present communication *completes* all that appears necessary for Mr. Brown to state to the Board at present, and he still takes the liberty of leaving it open for Mr. Secretary Ryder's perusal. The length of the observations he hopes will not deter Mr. Ryder from perusing them, and Mr. Brown flatters himself that although the arguments are somewhat medical, yet Mr. Secretary Ryder will have no difficulty in comprehending their extent and force as applicable to the subject.

Mussleburgh,  
April 3rd, 1810.

MR. BROWN'S most respectful compliments to the Board of the National Vaccine Establishment—acknowledges the receipt this day of their letter of the 30th ultimo.—Mr. Brown, in consequence of not having been favoured with an answer to his inquiries, had proceeded to complete the observations he intended to lay before the Board; and although their letter received this day satisfies him so far, that the Board have proceeded to lay their sentiments upon the present state of vaccination before his Majesty's Government, yet, as they have neither informed Mr. Brown, whether such statement is to be made public, nor expressed the most distant hint what these sentiments are, he judges it most prudent, under all the circumstances of the correspondence, to forward the observations he had completed.

Mr. Brown also begs leave frankly to inform the Board, he judged it proper, in

a subject of this importance, to leave all his communications open for the inspection of the Secretary of State, or any other of his Majesty's Ministers, and considers himself at liberty to make any use of these communications he may think proper, and will be regulated in this respect entirely by the nature of the observations the Board have forwarded to his Majesty's Government.

*Mussleburgh, 3d April, 1810.*

*To the Board of the National Vaccine  
Establishment.*

GENTLEMEN,

I AM extremely sorry you have not judged it expedient, either to acknowledge the receipt of my letter dated the 12th ult., or to grant me the information I requested. You must, Gentlemen, allow me to observe, that after the advertisement you addressed to the public, offering assistance to practitioners in every part of the United Kingdom, it certainly comes with a very bad grace, to refuse it when so distinctly demanded. If you were not, Gentlemen, prepared, or did not conceive it necessary to return me an answer in detail, you might surely have condescended to give a general opinion, and endeavoured either to remove or confirm my doubts upon the subject. If you do not, however, judge it prudent

or proper to satisfy an individual, I beg you will only consider what must be the effects of such hesitation upon the interests of the community. You must certainly be fully aware of the extensive and alarming diminution which has taken place in the practice of vaccination in the capital, and throughout the whole kingdom, and that the public are suspended in their opinions what practice to adopt. What your sentiments are, I shall not pretend to determine; but this, Gentlemen, I am confident of—you will readily confess it is absolutely necessary to recommend either vaccination or inoculation, and that you by no means wish the public should follow neither, which must undoubtedly be the result, if nothing is done in the present emergency, to remove their doubts and apprehensions. If such conduct is much longer persevered in, it is evident, a very large proportion of the infant population

of the kingdom must, from the present apathy of the public, be involved in the fatal effects of the epidemic small-pox; and I have no hesitation, Gentlemen, in declaring, that such consequences must be attributed to the effects of your partial attachment to the discovery.

But, Gentlemen, whatever are the motives for your conduct, I am determined your example shall not have the smallest influence upon me, but shall proceed to lay before you some circumstances connected with the present state of vaccination, and which I flatter myself you will honor with a careful perusal.

In proceeding with these observations, I shall confine myself to an examination of the reasons adduced by the Original Vaccine Institution, in their advertisement, for still recommending a further perseverance in the practice; more especially as the defence they make, is what

can only now be contended for in favour of the discovery.

I shall begin with observing, that from the advertisement of the Institution, this question is reduced to a very narrow compass. It is now distinctly and unequivocally admitted, that the cow-pock is proved, by the most conclusive and increasing evidence, to be an imperfect and uncertain preventative of small-pox; and even the phenomena and effects of the vaccine infection are allowed, after "ten solid years," to have been imperfectly understood and investigated.

And here, Gentlemen, I trust I may be allowed to observe, without exposing myself to the charge of vanity, that what my publications have contained upon the subject of vaccination, have called forth this declaration, and have been in a great degree conducive, not only to reproduce a more serious attention to the subject, but have been instrumental in exposing and

destroying all the contemptible windings and doublings ; all that odious and frightful mass of entrenchments ; and have given the evidence which the subject afforded, a just application.

The first reason given by the Institution, for still recommending the practice, notwithstanding such<sup>o</sup> admissions, is, “ because a very large proportion of vaccinated persons have been unsusceptible of the small-pox, on trial of the most decisive tests.”

It is very surprizing, and much to be regretted, that the Institution should have made such a material omission, as not even to hint at what they mean by a very large proportion. But whatever were the reasons for so singular an oversight, I apprehend, in order to expose the folly and danger of their advice, we might merely refer to the declaration of the Institution, “ that now, however, each subsequent year has progressively increased the number of authentic

and conclusive evidence." Independent, however, of this unsurmountable admission, it is to be observed, that it is not only admitted by the author of the discovery, but now proved by the whole history and phenomena of vaccination, there is every reason to conclude, that the effects of the vaccine vesicle in enabling the constitution to resist the variolous influence, is regulated in its extent, by the degree of perfection of the local process of the vaccinated puncture; also, there are the most satisfactory evidence, that specific actions may exist in various proportions in the system, and in proportion to the extent and severity of the symptoms which indicate their influence, so may the permanence of their effects be estimated. As vaccination, therefore, even in its most perfect and approved form, possesses no quality which indicates a more steady or extensive influence upon the system, than what is

obtained from all the varieties which the phenomena of the process can undergo, and over the production or prevention of which varieties, described as indicating an imperfect or partial action, we have no controul; and at all events, as the vaccine process in no instance produces symptoms which can be supposed capable of accomplishing a perfect and permanent impression, it is impossible to conclude, that any form of the process can be supposed capable of resisting, for an extensive period, far less permanently, the influence of the variolous contagion. But, independent of the proof arising from the mere process of vaccination itself, when we examine the different results which experience has produced, we shall find the most ample and decisive evidence of the improper and fallacious advice given by the Institution. We may first observe, that in the certainty and consequences of variolous contagion

exerting its effects upon the human body, every thing depends upon the accumulation of contagious matter, and the duration of the period, extent, and mode of application. There is not a member of our profession of the smallest experience, but must have observed these circumstances distinctly exerting their influence upon every contagious and epidemic disease, and must also have met with many instances, where individuals have resisted the influence of the infection at one period, even although placed in favourable circumstances for the operation of the epidemic, and still have afterwards been subjected to the disease in its most severe and even fatal form. The cases of small-pox also which have occurred after cow-pock, have clearly shewn, that wherever the individuals have been exposed to the epidemic in a concentrated and permanent form, the previous influence of vaccination has uni-

formly yielded, and permitted the variolous contagion to exert its power upon the system. Indeed, so much was I convinced of this principle being correct, that in many of those cases which fell under my own observation, where small-pox succeeded to vaccination, before making any inquiries, or even entering the house, I told the parents exactly the situation of the cases. These circumstances—the extent and severity of the source of variolous contagion, together with the length of the period from vaccination, uniformly decided the progress of the infection in the families; and according to these particulars I gave my prognosis of what would ensue, and was seldom or never contradicted.

In examining, Gentlemen, carefully the history of the cases I have published, in my Inquiry into the antivariolous Power of Vaccination, you will distinctly find how uniform and exact these circumstances

were in their influence; indeed you will observe, few or none escaped at the distance of six years after vaccination, who were either attending school, or exposed at home to severe cases of small-pox, or in the immediate neighbourhood of a general epidemic; that very few escaped in such situations even at four years, and that the greatest number who resisted the contagion, were either within four years, or not exposed to such a concentrated and extensive application of the contagion. These particulars, you will also observe, did not attach solely to my practice, but readily included those cases of vaccination belonging to other practitioners. Nay, indeed, you will find them regularly extended in several families, to from two to four children in one family, although vaccinated by different practitioners, and also done by the same practitioner in the same family, at the interval of years.

In examining the proportion of my vaccinated cases which were found to resist the influence of the variolous epidemic, you will observe, that only seven or eight escaped when the small-pox existed under the same roof, when there were eighteen subjected to their influence. With regard to the cases vaccinated by other practitioners, it appears there were about thirty who underwent the variolous contagion, and only twelve or thirteen escaped.

Although, from every information I have been able to collect, these circumstances have in general been found to apply to all the proof which has hitherto occurred, yet I beg leave, Gentlemen, to trouble you with the relation of two instances which lately occurred, and which will serve as an illustration of my opinions upon this subject.

A very decent family had two children vaccinated by a very respectable surgeon ;

they were each vaccinated by one puncture in both arms, when about ten months old. The mother states, that the vesicles in both were large, and the areolæ so extensive, as to have been ordered to apply hair powder, and the cicatrices of the four vaccinated points are now large and distinct. The medical gentleman infected several lancets from both of the children, expressed himself perfectly satisfied, and did not suggest the smallest doubt. The family consisted of four or five other children, who had all been inoculated for small-pox. The oldest of the two, who were vaccinated June, 1809, was now past nine years of age, and the other past seven; they both attended school. The eldest became sick on the 10th of June, and an eruption to the extent of some thousands of pustules took place a few days after; these pustules were confluent in several places upon the face and body, went through the common pro-

gress of such a species, and began to decay in about eight days ; he had considerable fever, and remained in bed the whole period. Upon comparing all the circumstances of this case, I distinctly stated to the parents and others, that the other child would also sicken, and pass through the disease in a distinct form, and only requested the mother would give her an opportunity of being frequently with her brother, and occasionally lying, only in the bed which he had occupied for a short time, upon having his own made. This she readily consented to, being satisfied with the observation, that if vaccination made her secure, she might do any thing ; and if not, the sooner all were satisfied, the better. Accordingly, on the 24th she sickened, and had an eruption of about four hundred pustules. The same surgeon attended both cases, and unequivocally allowed them to be cases of small-pox, but endeavoured to

get rid of the embarrassing and vexatious situation, by having recourse to the hackneyed and omnipotent harmonizer of discord, imperfect vaccination; none of the other children ever complained.

The other instance was from a case which I had inoculated for small-pox. The family consisted of eight children; the three oldest had passed through the small-pox by inoculation, and the other four had been vaccinated; they were all done by myself. The youngest, now about six months old, was inoculated about the first of May, in consequence of the occurrence of many cases where small-pox had succeeded to vaccination. The child passed through the disease very safely, but the eruption extended to about two hundred pustules. It occurred to me, from the cases I had already met with, that I should be able to infect some of those who had undergone vaccination. The two oldest of

the four were now about from five to seven years old, and had begun to attend a school; the two youngest were from three to four and a half years, and were constantly beside the child now under the small-pox. I requested the mother to give the whole every chance of being infected. She informed me the two oldest were seldom in the house, and slept in a separate apartment, but the two youngest always slept in the same room with the inoculated child, sometimes in the same bed, and were constantly near the child the whole day. Although the youngest of these two had not yet arrived at that period which, in my opinion, permits, with any degree of probability, the exertion of the variolous influence, still, under such circumstances, I suspected the child might be made to undergo the variolous contagion. Being solicitous to ascertain the correctness of my opinions, at one of my visits, the child

under the small-pox, being just taken out of bed, I placed the youngest where the other had been. Before I left the house, the child had fallen asleep, and I requested the mother to allow her to take out her nap. About the tenth day after the eruption upon the inoculated child, the two youngest became sick, which after continuing moderately for two days, ended in a measly eruption succeeded with about twenty small pox, which disappeared in three or four days.

But to return, Gentlemen, from this digression ; although from what I have already stated, it would appear small-pox have succeeded to vaccination, in the proportion of two to one, still I do not mean to infer, that this is the proportion of the present state of the practice of vaccination. I only wish it to be understood, that we cannot build much upon the seeming great proportions which have still resisted the

small-pox ; and that it would be speaking more correctly, and consistent with facts, to say, they have not yet undergone the small-pox ; because, in order to render the assertion clear and satisfactory, the Institution must prove—"the very large proportion"—have been distinctly and permanently exposed to the variolous contagion, in a concentrated form, and at a proper distance from vaccination ; because, all those who have had any experience in inoculation for the small-pox, know perfectly, they have very rarely, in proportion to the number inoculated, been able to trace their power of communicating the infection. Nay, that even in severe cases of small-pox, children in the same family have frequently escaped, and have afterwards undergone the disease. It is also a matter of fact, that there are many circumstances which influence the action of epidemic diseases, and it is well known to

every practitioner, there are peculiarities of constitution, not only less susceptible of variolous contagion, and always undergo the contagion in a mild form, but even altogether, resist the influence of the small-pox.

But there are two or three singular circumstances which attend the evidence upon this subject, and which, in my humble apprehension, are insurmountable—viz. in all those cases where small-pox have been introduced into a family, only those who had been vaccinated were influenced by the contagion, while the whole of those who had passed through the small-pox, whether from natural or inoculated contagion, uniformly and completely resisted the power of the epidemic a second time.—Also, those individuals who have been subjected to small-pox, after vaccination, have in general exceeded the period of two or three years after the vaccine process,

and in proportion to the distance from vaccination, so have the instances increased in number and severity. Lastly—those cases where small-pox have succeeded to vaccination, have in general been confined to the lower orders of society.

These peculiarities appear to me decisive. It surely would be unreasonable to contend, that the uniform exemption in the one case, and the regular and frequent exertion of the variolous influence in the other, can be owing to any thing, but the feeble, partial, and consequently temporary influence of vaccination. It certainly would be the height of folly to insist, that the gradual and progressive increase of cases of small-pox after cow-pock, every successive year, can be ascribed to any other cause, but the gradual diminution and extinction of the vaccine influence; and it must be madness itself to maintain, the profession have all been so base and

wicked, as to have vaccinated the rich perfectly, and the poor imperfectly.

This last peculiarity can be readily and satisfactorily explained, and is of great consequence to this question in many points of view.

We all know the higher classes of society uniformly avail themselves either of inoculation or vaccination; and as they all in general attend schools, where the whole are on a footing in that respect, and even in their amusements, are still amongst themselves, it is evident contagion cannot reach them so readily. But what shews this to be the true and only explanation, is, that wherever such individuals have been placed, in opposite circumstances, we find the same result uniformly follows. This fact, too, far from being held out as a bait and recommendation to the lower orders of society, ought to be considered as the strongest argument against the prac-

tice. I am afraid those very individuals who flatter themselves with this exemption, consider it as a convincing proof of the efficacy of the discovery, and reject with disdain, and even horror, every effort to expose the fallacy and imperfection of vaccination, will eventually prove to be the only sufferers. Nay, the great danger of the practice, will be found to lie in those circles, because, as it may be now considered as proved, that the process of vaccination is at best an imperfect protection, they may avoid the influence of small-pox, while the power of vaccination is yet capable of mitigating the variolous influence, and, afterwards, when busily engaged in all the variety of social life, may be exposed to, and infected with the small-pox, when all the influence of the vaccine process is exhausted, and left completely at the mercy of the epidemic. This peculiarity also affords a clue for explaining

a very important particular relative to this question:—why a great number of practitioners have not met with many, nay any cases of small-pox succeeding to vaccination. It is well known that those gentlemen who are at the head of their profession, and in large cities, have very little connection with the lower orders. It may also be further observed, that this fact affords a very strong reason for the apparent smallness of the number of cases, where small-pox have occurred after vaccination, because people of these classes of society never think of calling in medical aid, even in severe cases of small-pox: it therefore cannot be expected they should think of assistance in cases where the disease has assumed the mildest form. This fact explains why so few cases have come to the knowledge of even the hospital vaccinators, because unless their other practice led them to the spot where such cases

existed, they could never be heard of. Indeed it may here be observed, that hospital practice, in this respect, is not entitled to superior authority, but is even liable to many objections. The vaccinators are entirely at the mercy and discretion of the lowest class of paupers: they never set eyes upon the patient after the mere introduction of the virus: all farther connection is at an end; and they have no access to hear of the future security afforded by the practice; therefore, although those gentlemen appear to have vaccinated thousands for the hundreds of other practitioners, still they do not, by any means, afford reasons in the same proportion for concluding, their opinions or practice, are entitled to more weight and attention. Nay, indeed, when the conduct of many of these institutions is further considered, I am afraid it will appear they are entitled to very little of the public confidence, and have

allowed their duty in the investigation of truth, to be subdued and corrupted by an intemperate zeal, and distressing anxiety for supporting the consistency of their own opinions. It is impossible to conceive, that sensible men, accustomed from their profession to the analysing and weighing every variety of proof, should have either been so blind, or so obstinate, as to contend for the complete and permanent power of vaccination, and still allow themselves to state facts, and to suggest reasons and doubts demonstrative of the imperfect powers of the process; that they should have admitted some vesicles to give only a modified and partial security; and granted others to possess a perfect antevariolous influence, but still confessing, they are not capable of distinguishing the appearances which indicate such variety of action. Nay, that men still maintaining the character of integrity and honour, and

still retaining the faculties of reason and reflexion, should shamefully assert, when cases are brought before them, which have been vaccinated by themselves, who are afterwards attacked with small pox—if the case is unequivocally small pox, they declare it must not have been properly vaccinated, and if it is a mild form of the disease, and not possessing all the features of the most regular affection, it is proclaimed to be chicken pox; although small pox are epidemic all round, nay even exist in the same house. The books too of the vaccine institutions are also converted into the odious instruments of defence and confusion—if any of those cases which are succeeded with small pox, have not presented themselves regularly until the scab has formed, nay even dropped off, they declare with the most consummate effrontery, they must be considered as having been imperfectly vaccinated, and refuse to admit them as evidence

of the imperfect power of vaccination. But what credit can be given to the assertions and statements of such bodies, when after sending deputations to inspect cases of small pox succeeding to vaccination, they were either entirely suppressed, or mutilated? Nay more, what title to respect can such declarations have, when after asserting the perfect and complete protection afforded from the vaccine process, they have not hesitated to caution those who had undergone vaccination, not to go near the epidemic small pox?

I shall not so far forget myself, or the respect which I owe to your judgment, as to expose the shameful fallacy and deceit of such despicable policy, but shall content myself with returning to the words of the Institution, "that as every successive year has progressively increased the number of authentic and conclusive evidence, and that after ten solid years the phenomena

of the discovery have been partially investigated"—it must be the height of folly and desperation to contend for the propriety of persevering in the practice upon this ground.

The second and third reasons given by the Institution are, "that the small pox subsequent to cow pock is, (a very small proportion of cases excepted) a much milder affection than the slightest cases of inoculated small pox; and that the chance of death in such cases is far less than even in inoculated small pox."

The answer to these reasons has in a great measure been anticipated by what we have already stated in opposition to the first; but it is further to be observed, that these reasons cannot, nor ought to have the smallest influence, because from all the proof the subject has yet been capable of, it has distinctly appeared, that not only has the number of instances of small pox

succeeding to vaccination, progressively increased every succeeding year, but also have become severe and dangerous. Besides this uncontrovertible fact, it is also to be observed, as all the phenomena which attend the vaccine process exhibit a partial and negative tendency; that as the antevariolous power which it imparts to the constitution is found directly, and for some time after, uniformly to resist the influence of small pox; and as experience has confirmed, that the variolous contagion readily exerts its power over the constitution in a few years after, in a ratio, progressively increasing with the distance from vaccination, what other conclusion can possibly be drawn with any regard to truth, or fair induction, than, that in a few years more, the antevariolous influence may become completely extinct, and the individual left to the mercy of the full power of the epidemic. It is also not to be for-

got, that if a numerous, severe, and fatal attack of small pox has been found not unfrequently to occur at the distance of only seven or eight years from vaccination, what reason have we not to tremble for the consequences, when we come to be removed twenty and thirty years? The idea is dreadful and distressing in the extreme. It is, in my opinion, quite irrelevant to bring forward Dr. Jenner's instances where individuals have been found to resist the action of the epidemic for these periods, because these cases are not in sufficient number to warrant any such conclusion, when it is considered how frequent the cow pock is in the city of Gloucester, and allowing them to be correctly stated, there are many cases resting upon the same authority where it failed to give protection against the variolous influence; but even granting no such contradiction existed, there is neither difficulty nor impossibility in supposing

them to have been instances, either of peculiarity of constitution unsusceptible of small pox, or to have been kept in a state of impregnation with the vaccine influence, by being constantly exposed to successive attacks of the cow pock from milking, which repetition of the disease Dr. Jenner not only allows to be possible, but even gives many instances of.

With regard to the argument in favour of continuing the practice of vaccination arising from the number of deaths which have hitherto taken place in those instances where small pox have succeeded to cow pock, I beg leave to observe, that although this may be the fact at the present period, of which I am by no means convinced, still it is evident from what has been already observed, we cannot expect it to continue so long. But allowing it really is, and were to remain so, I apprehend the cases are widely different. In the small pox inoccu-

lation, you adopt a decisive practice attended with a known risk, to obtain a positive and permanent advantage; in the other you have recourse to a substitute, not only precarious and uncertain in its operation, but even at best, in its consequences, only imparting a doubtful and temporary security. In the one you can enter into all the duties of social life without terror or apprehension; in the other not only the chance of death, but the great probability of an attack of small pox more or less severe hangs over you, and blasts all the comforts and happiness of life.

The fourth and last reason given by the Institution is more singular than all the preceding, and appears to me, to be a most flagrant and melancholy proof of the alarming influence of system over the human mind. It is impossible to explain upon any other principle, that a body of men remarkable for acuteness and abilities,

should gravely advise the public to continue a practice, where security can only be obtained by what they term simply, a second inoculation.

It certainly must have escaped the attention of the Institution, that there was a necessity for being more explicit upon this point. They have left the public at a loss to know, whether it is a second inoculation with cow-pock, or small pox virus they intended to recommend. To me it is evident to a demonstration, they could never have intended to recommend a second vaccination; because it is impossible, and not credible, so very respectable a body should so far forget themselves as to contend, a second process could possibly be stronger, or possess superior or different powers from the first, nor can it be credited that the Institution intended to propose a succession of vaccinations. They surely must have overlooked, that the expedient

they recommended was acknowledging a circumstance, which if true, must strike effectually at the root of the discovery. The Institution evidently forgot, they were assenting to the partial, feeble, and temporary power of the practice of vaccination, because the success of either a second vaccination or inoculation implies, that the effect of the first must have been exhausted ; for according to all our information and experience upon the subject, if the vaccine influence still remained, neither the second process of the one nor the other could produce any regular phenomena, nor exert any constitutional influence. And surely the Institution are not prepared to adopt the singular opinion of Dr. Jenner, that the punctured point may influence the constitution at the third day from the introduction of the virus, (see his letter to Dr. Willan) or to allow, which is the only other alternative, that the production of a vesicle at-

tended with an areola can be obtained at pleasure, and afford no proof of a constitutional affection.

If, however, the Institution really intended to recommend a second, or a succession of vaccinations, and supposing it practicable to obtain such a repetition of the vaccine process as to secure an exemption from the variolous influence for some years, I will only beg leave, Gentlemen, to inquire, what human being possessed of common sense and common feeling, will either credit, or put confidence in such a trifling and contemptible expedient ; more especially, too, when it appears both from experience and the authority of Dr. Jenner, that the vaccine process imparts the extent of its antivariolous influence, in proportion to the perfection of the local phenomena, therefore, the individual cannot possibly determine when he ought to repeat the process ; and even if he should

be inclined to adopt the safe plan, and repeat it soon, then the process cannot be obtained with any satisfactory symptoms, and every thing becomes confusion and obscurity. Even allowing the facts stated by Dr. Jenner their fullest weight and authority, they would only amount to this; that the cow-pock when communicated from the cow by milking, is capable of giving permanent security from small pox, but surely no one can possibly contend, that the practice can be carried into effect, if the public are under the necessity of becoming milkers in the County of Gloucester.

If, however, the Institution intended to recommend a second inoculation with small pox virus, which I have no doubt was the intention of the expression, I shall only, Gentlemen, inquire, who can with any degree of confidence expect, that any class of parents are so destitute of reason and affection as to adopt a practice, which

requires two processes for the security of their children ; that in complaisance to the aukward predicament of the profession, they will allow their dearest concerns to remain for some years liable to the influence of the small pox epidemic, when it appears they may undergo, either from an imperfection of the vaccine process, over which we have no controul, or from exposure to a concentrated varibulous contagion, not only a severe, but even fatal form of the disease ; or, that they will not at once prefer one process, which if properly conducted, they will escape in general with only, or nearly the same symptoms that would attend the second inoculation ?

If we shall carry our observations on this point a little farther, we will find still less prospect of benefit from such a singular remedy for the defects of the vaccine discovery. Whatever, Gentlemen, shall be the result of this practice as an antidote to

the dreadful scourge of small pox, still it will serve to illustrate and confirm two or three important points, with regard to the animal economy—viz. that laws which have been considered as confirmed by long experience, cannot, and must not be given up, or overturned by any single phenomena, however striking and positive it may appear ; that the effects of every diseased specific action upon the human body, are to be estimated with regard to permanency and extent, from the distinctness and severity of the symptoms with which they were accompanied ; and that the influence of severe diseased specific actions, may be set aside and opposed by circumstances, which are partial and trifling in their operation, and possessing no distinct and characteristic symptoms, and to many of which causes, we may be occasionally, and even frequently exposed, but that such

impressions cannot be relied on, and are likely to prove temporary.

If these principles are well founded, and which I contend, Gentlemen, our experience in vaccination has completely substantiated, with what regard to truth or justice can the Institution contend—a second inoculation could have long ago been recommended by them as an effectual means of securing the individual? It is evident from these data, that it could not be “long ago” employed with advantage, because it could produce no regular local effect, consequently no constitutional disease could follow, and of course no farther security imparted.

In proposing, then, a second inoculation with small pox virus, with a view to secure permanently the system, we must allow the vaccine influence to be so much diminished, as to permit the distinct exertion of the variolous inoculation, because if it shall

be had recourse to at an earlier period, it will only produce local phenomena resembling vaccination itself, and incapable of imparting any permanent impression to the system. Again, it is evident, if we shall wait until the distinct symptoms of small pox inoculation can be obtained, we not only subject the individual to the same distress he would have undergone from having been subjected to variolous inoculation at the commencement, but he also incurs the disadvantages of having run, in the interim, considerable risk of being infected by the epidemic, and the mind of the individual, and all concerned, agitated with distressing apprehensions.

For these reasons I apprehend it is absurd to propose proceeding with the vaccine discovery, aided by such frivolous and vexatious expedients—In my opinion, if such is the state of the facts, there can be no doubt, it ought infallibly to

be condemned as unworthy of farther confidence, and the practice of a second inoculation with variolous virus only, recommended—nay, pressed upon those, at a proper period, who have already placed their confidence in vaccination.

We have already seen, that the only difficulty these individuals labour under, and one which the extent of our present experience unfortunately cannot altogether remove, is,—at what period should they be advised to undergo their second process. So far as my experience goes I would advise, they should not submit to the variolous inoculation sooner than six years after vaccination, at which period there is every reason to conclude, such local phenomena will be obtained, as shall produce distinct constitutional symptoms.

If unfortunately this trial should not produce such consequences as are judged necessary for the security of the indivi-

dual, we must at the distance of a few years more have recourse to a second trial. This disappointment, however, need not excite any additional anxiety or distress, because the individual will be almost certain, if he should in the mean time be exposed to the epidemic contagion, it will only be able to communicate a mild form of the disease, because as far as our experience goes, there are comparatively few instances of a severe disease taking place sooner than six years after vaccination, and from the inoculation with small-pox producing no regular effect, a distant proof is afforded, that the antivariolus influence still exists, and no great risk is incurred from delaying a second trial for a few years more.

Having now, Gentlemen, endeavoured to prove as fully as is consistent with the nature of this communication, that the reasons given by the Original Vaccine In-

stitution, recommending to the public a farther perseverance in the practice of vaccination, are, from every experience improper and fallacious, I shall proceed to lay before you a few general reflections on the subject.

The first point, Gentlemen, which I shall take the liberty to call your attention to is, that some of the warmest admirers of the practice, and among those are Dr. Willan and Dr. Jenner, admit, a partial and temporary security may be obtained from certain appearances of the vaccine phenomena,—nay that the extent of this security is regulated by the degree of perfection of the local process, while Mr. Bryce and others equally zealous friends to the discovery will not allow of such modified actions and security, but contend, that if it imparts any influence to the system, it must be complete. It was easy to see such an admission must be

received with great aversion by every determined and prejudiced friend of the discovery, because, it was a distinct acknowledgment of the imperfection of the practice, and must if true ultimately overturn the whole. It is a matter of fact and must be universally acknowledged by every practitioner of experience, that "if upon the introduction of vaccine virus, a vesicle is produced, attended with more or less of an areola, or circular inflammation, continued for two or three days, with, or without symptoms of constitutional derangement, we may conclude, that the vaccine virus has exerted every effect upon the constitution it is capable of, and if the vesicle remains whole, and afterwards forms a dark-coloured scab, or crust, which in two or three weeks drops off and leaves a scar, we may consider the disease as having run its natural course. If the person is now made to undergo the test of

inoculation, and exposure to the epidemic small pox, he will be found to resist them both."

"It also appears from experience, and the authority of all who have written upon the subject, that although the vesicle should vary considerably in size, colour and figure; the erysipelatous inflammation be of greater, or lesser extent; sometimes circular, and sometimes jagged and irregular, either with, or without constitutional derangement; and whether or not, a dark coloured scab is formed, falling off at a certain period, and leaving a small or large scar, yet still the *same* effect is found to be the consequence, and the most *perfect* resistance given to every test. To say that all this is not enough, that this may be all obtained, and still the vaccine influence not constitutionally exerted, is a solecism beyond all comprehension. It surely cannot be seriously urged, that these effects

may be obtained, without the vaccine vesicle exerting any influence; that the constitutional effect is exerted in the *one* case, and *local* in the other, although an *equal* resistance is made to the *same* species of proof; that if the same results are found to follow from one cause, that the one is *complete* and the other *incomplete*; or that if any difference, or variety in the phenomena, should really constitute a different disease, that "still the *effect should be the same.*"\*

The next important fact, Gentlemen, which I beg your best attention to is,—it is generally allowed, the local process of vaccination possesses no characteristics from which it is possible to judge of the constitutional influence having been perfectly imparted, and it is even granted that no dependance can be placed upon the ap-

\* See Brown's Inquiry.

pearance or actual existence of constitutional symptoms. Several expedients have been proposed to remove this distressing dilemma, but none, not even Mr. Bryce's test, as I have elsewhere shewn, are intitled to the smallest confidence. It is really, Gentlemen, curious to observe, the awkward and whimsical situation, which too great anxiety and zeal for removing every objection against the practice has brought both parties into.

Dr. Willan has observed, "that Mr. Bryce's test of double vaccination will fail, if the fluid employed for the second puncture be taken from the person's own arm, when the vesicle is one of the irregular kind, *which produces disorder of the constitution, but affords only an imperfect security against small-pox.*" It is evident according to the respective doctrines, that Mr. Bryce having obtained, as must be concluded from what he has written on this subject, the

test of double vaccination from all appearances of vesicles and areolæ, (and which I not only aver, but will prove is the fact) must either surrender this favourite improvement, or maintain these vesicles are all perfect, and the vaccine influence constitutionally imparted. On the other hand Dr. Willan not being able to deny the test of double vaccination, and having distinctly allowed an imperfect or incomplete antivariolous influence, must either renounce such an opinion, which possesses a powerful and complete remedy for every possible failure or untoward event, or find out an expedient for reconciling such opposite opinions.—He accordingly gives the paragraph quoted above.

It is evident, however, if a second inoculation from one of these irregular vesicles, was to be followed with the appearance described, to form Mr. Bryce's infallible test, of course it must be admitted,

the disease has been imparted in the most perfect and constitutional form. Again, if Mr. Bryce was to admit such a fact, he must of course agree to the possibility of a constitutional influence being imparted by such imperfect vesicles, and therefore his test could be of no use. Indeed Mr. Bryce appears to be fully aware of the dreadful consequences of this doctrine of modified action and partial security; for if it was admitted, then the advocates for the perfection of the practice, are reduced to the absolute and insurmountable necessity of admitting one, of two circumstances, either of which are sufficient to overthrow the whole discovery: viz. that although the vaccine phenomena exert a constitutional influence, yet in one case it may be complete, and in another incomplete; or that there are two kinds of cow-pock virus, possessing an antivariolous power, but the one complete and the other incomplete; and

yet both possessing characters which cannot be distinguished from each other. This is certainly so absurd a doctrine, that no man in his senses can possibly assent to it;—nevertheless, it is precisely the amount of our experience in the practice, if we shall persevere in contending for the possibility of obtaining a perfect and permanent form of vaccination, but the moment we admit a feeble, partial, and temporary action, every difficulty vanishes—all confusion is at an end—no contradiction exists, and harmony pervades the whole subject.

The next circumstance, Gentlemen, deserving your serious consideration is, the plea that the local phenomena of vaccination are so intricate and nice of distinction, none but the most acute and experienced in the process, can undertake to vaccinate with precision and effect.

This might be readily granted, if those Gentlemen would be so good as conde-

scend to notice, what really are the appearances to be depended upon: but when we find all of them admit, that the whole process may readily undergo every possible variation, that no one circumstance can be pointed out as characterizing the existence of its perfect or imperfect constitutional effects, and that all the variety of phenomena, and other cross and untoward events attend the practice, even when in the hands of Dr. Jenner and others, who contend for superior information, it is impossible to discern upon what grounds they can insist, experience has any advantage. The assertion, that Dr. Jenner and his nephew have vaccinated many thousands, without being succeeded in any one instance by small-pox, is in my opinion entitled to but very little weight in determining this question. Independent of the many other reasons which, I am afraid, might be urged with too much truth, I

shall only observe, that experience has now shewn Dr. Jenner's cases are equally mortal with his neighbours. But even waving this unfortunate fact, before this assertion could, or ought to be allowed any authority, Dr. Jenner and his relation must shew, that in point of fact, there exist such circumstances in conducting vaccination, that few or none but himself and his nephew, can be able to judge of, and sufficient grounds made out, for producing a complete change in the whole circumstances of the affection, so as to cancel all those cases, principles, and instructions, which were at first given by himself on the subject. But with what justice can such charges be applied against the practice of any medical gentleman? Shall they not be allowed capable of ascertaining the existence of a vesicle and areola?—Shall they not be supposed able to conduct vaccination, when Dr. Willan has allowed a lady in Monmouth, instructed by Dr. Jenner, to have

vaccinated 1600 in the most perfect manner?—Shall they be but little better, nay not so well qualified as clergymen and females?—Shall the immense number of instances which uniformly resisted the tests of inoculation and exposure to the epidemic?—Shall the annihilation of small-pox wherever the practice was introduced to any extent—the total want of any case where small-pox succeeded to vaccination for a few years after the introduction of the discovery ; the striking fact, that whatever quarter of the world the discovery was introduced into, its effects have been uniform at the commencement, in subduing and preventing the epidemic disease?—Shall these circumstances, I say, not be allowed to prove, it is uncandid and unhandsome in the extreme, that such charges should be made, or even countenanced, by one medical gentleman against another—that there is no difficulty in conducting the process of vaccination ; and that there

are no grounds whatever for insinuating more mistakes were committed at the commencement of the practice.

But to conclude, how is it possible Gentlemen, for men professing still to retain the faculties of reason, to persevere in recommending without reserve, a practice, whose source is involved in confusion and mystery ; where the facts, which gave origin to the practice, are loaded with obscurity, and the most direct contradiction ; which is incapable of influencing the system in a regular or positive manner ; where many of the phenomena, resemble those produced from matter possessing no specific influence ; whose effects, so far as they can be ascertained, are, in general, merely local ; when no one certain criterion exists of the attainment of the permanent effect of the process ; when we are obliged, in order to explain matters satisfactorily, and consistent with the complete

antivariolous power of vaccination, to make a total renunciation of every principle which was agreed upon at the commencement of the practice, and considered as matters of fact, and to replace them with others, which, while they assist in removing some vexatious and disastrous facts, were totally discordant with the proof which the subject admitted of; when we are compelled to employ the frivolous and foolish distinctions of local and constitutional; perfect, imperfect, spurious, and genuine vesicles; to the disgusting necessity of employing tests for ascertaining the existence of the disease, and to employ the contemptible evasions of flea bites and chicken-pox. But when to this terrific and disgusting chaos, we shall add our total ignorance of the nature and source of the small-pox contagion; its virulence, its activity, its ancient, extensive, and dreadful effects; above all, if we shall add the au-

thentic and conclusive proof of the frequent and progressively increasing evidence of small-pox succeeding vaccination, little room is left for hesitation \* It would surely be most unreasonable for us to continue to recommend, and the public to grant their patronage, under such glaring inconsistency, and such positive testimony of the defects of the practice. It certainly would be most absurd to suppose the profession would still follow a practice, when they must be assured the tenderest concerns of the community must be exposed to sickness and distress, however safe the result may be. But it would undoubtedly be downright madness to imagine the public will persevere in the practice of vaccination, when it appears they may undergo

\* I had very lately an opportunity of seeing a gentleman from Jamaica, who informed me that such had been the numerous instances of small-pox succeeding to vaccination there, the inhabitants were perfectly satisfied that it did not prevent the small-pox, but had hitherto rendered the disease milder.

the small-pox in their most distressing and dangerous form. I apprehend, Gentlemen, in the present state of things, inoculation with variolous matter is both what we should recommend, and they should adopt. It is a practice possessing the most satisfactory characters; it is propagated from the same disease it means to combat; produces an affection similar in all its prominent characters; it is in general mild and safe, and its consequences are complete and satisfactory.

I have now, Gentlemen, completed all the observations which this mode of communication admits of, or the present state of the subject requires; and which, together with my publications, have discharged my duty to the public. I sincerely hope they cannot be productive of mischief, but may lead to consequences which will prove beneficial to the cause of humanity.

Before closing this correspondence, it is

a duty incumbent on me, Gentlemen, to apologize for the liberties I have taken in the discussion ; and if the language or opinions I have expressed have appeared to you harsh or offensive, I can assure you it proceeded from no disrespect to the Board, but from an anxious desire to be explicit and distinct, and to avoid that criminal complaisance, which, while they evidently entertain a different opinion, some authors have so stifled and obscured their sentiments, as to have increased the confusion upon this important subject. I can also with the greatest sincerity assure you, I hope your efforts may be successful in retrieving and establishing the character of vaccination ; but you must permit me to observe, I have not now the smallest ray of hope that our fond and flattering expectations will be realized, but that experience will be found rapidly to multiply the facts, and strengthen the observations

I have made; that, whatever the nature of your resistance shall be, it will ultimately be overcome, and vaccination will be found, from daily experience, to be only a temporary expedient, and unworthy of public confidence. I am,

Gentlemen,

With the greatest respect,

Your most obedient,

THOMAS BROWN,

SURGEON.

*Mussleburgh, April 2, 1810.*

*Mussleburgh, April 23, 1810.*

SIR,

THE Board of the National Vaccine Establishment having informed me, that they have drawn up, and delivered into his Majesty's Government their sentiments upon the present state of vaccination, which they observe, as it embraces the consideration of the observations contained in my letters, they conceive to be a sufficient answer thereto.

I hope, Sir, after the correspondence which has taken place, you will see the propriety of my anxiety upon the subject, and I flatter myself you will have the goodness to give me an answer to the following particulars: viz. Whether or not the Board were solicited by his Majesty's Government to give in their report, and what is the date of it; also what are the sentiments of the Board, and if his Ma-

jesty's Government intend to adopt the opinions of the Establishment, and to publish their report.

I am, Sir,

With the greatest respect,

Your most humble servant,

**THOMAS BROWN.**

*To the Right Honorable the Secretary  
of State for the Home Department.*

*Whitehall, April 26, 1810.*

SIR,

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Ryder to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22d instant, containing certain queries respecting the proceedings to be adopted in regard to the National Vaccine Establishment; and I am to acquaint you in reply, that it is not customary to communicate the intentions of Government to individuals.

I take this opportunity of informing you, that your second letter,\* addressed to the Vaccine Establishment, has been duly forwarded to that Board.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient

humble servant,

J. BECKETT,

*Mr. Thomas Brown, Surgeon,  
Mussleburgh.*

\* Third.

*Mussleburgh, May 2, 1810.*

SIR,

I WAS duly favoured with yours of the 26th ult. and beg you will have the goodness to acquaint Mr. Secretary Ryder of my extreme regret, for having requested information which it is not customary for his Majesty's Government to grant. It was far from my wish or intention to enquire, what were the intentions of Government with regard to the Vaccine Establishment, but it was certainly natural, and in my apprehension not improper, to enquire, what were the sentiments expressed in the report, and whether or not it was the intention of his Majesty's Government to publish them; more especially when that report was the result of my correspondence with the Board of that Establishment, and when they referred me to it for an answer to my communications?

I beg leave also to observe to you, for the further information of Mr. Secretary Ryder, that if Government should not deem it requisite to publish the report of the National Vaccine Establishment, I shall consider it my duty to bring the subject before the public in another form.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient

humble servant,

THOMAS BROWN.

*To J. Beckett, Esq.*

THE Board of the National Vaccine Establishment have received Mr. Brown's letter, and Observations upon Vaccination, and beg to return him their acknowledgments for the favour of these communications :

Having taken his Observations into consideration, they feel it incumbent upon them to inform him, that, however satisfied of his zeal upon the subject, they find nothing, either in his facts or arguments, to countervail the evidence and opinions in favour of vaccination, submitted to the Board from every other quarter, and particularly from the Cow-Pock Institution in Dublin, the last report of which they have inclosed for his perusal.

*By order of the Board of the National  
Vaccine Establishment,*

JA<sup>s</sup>. HERVEY, M.D.

REGISTER.

May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1810.

H

*Mussleburgh, May 23, 1810.*

MR. BROWN acknowledges the receipt of the communication from the Board of the National Vaccine Establishment, dated the 17th current, and signed by Dr. Hervey.

Mr. Brown offers his thanks for the attention of the Board, in inclosing for his perusal the report of the Cow-Pock Institution in Dublin, and assures them he will not fail to avail himself of this mark of attention in the Board, and of the information which the report contains.

Mr. Brown is afraid, from the nature of the communication which he has had the honor just now to receive, he must consider it as containing, if not the form, at least the substance of the report which the Board have given in to his Majesty's Government; that Government have resolved to continue their patronage to the efforts

of the Board, for the propagation of vaccination; and that neither the public, the profession, nor himself, will be favoured with any farther communication; Mr. Brown, therefore, begs leave to solicit the additional favor—if the Board will say so by the return of post; because, if no other communication is intended, he will directly proceed to lay the whole correspondence before the profession and the public. In doing so, Mr. Brown takes the liberty to inform the Board of the National Vaccine Establishment, that if his professional avocations should permit, he will publish the correspondence in London, and in that case would be happy to pay his respects previously to the Board, from which he flatters himself some alteration and amalgamation may be produced in the sentiments of either party; and from their collision, perhaps, truth may be elicited.\*

\* No answer was received to the above.

*London, June 7, 1810.*

GENTLEMEN,

I SHALL now proceed to avail myself of your favour of the 17th ult. and of the report of the Dublin Cow Pock Institution which it inclosed, to submit for your consideration, some remaining observations upon the subject of vaccination.

In the first place you must permit me to observe, that your kindness in inclosing this report as evidence upon this subject, is in my opinion, to say the least of it, unguarded in the extreme. You surely must be fully aware, that no city, nor even country in the universe, are, or can be better qualified, to afford proof of the utility or advantage of vaccination, than those in which you have the honour to reside. Nay, Gentlemen, you must be convinced, that the evidence here, is, on this subject, justly entitled to superior in-

fluence and attention, and possesses at all events, a seniority in experience, and I make no doubt you will not dispute, also, a more than equal share of abilities for discharging the duties of our profession. At any rate it is clear, that the evidence of one cow-pock institution ought to be as good as another, and it is not credible, and indeed improbable, for that over which you preside, and those in other parts of the kingdom, to yield in point of credit and respectability to the one, whose report you condescend to avail yourself of. Therefore to seek for protection from any other source, betrays a conviction, that the evidence is not altogether satisfactory at home, and that an equally decisive, and apparently convincing declaration, cannot be obtained from similar bodies in this country.

With regard, Gentlemen, to the report itself, you ought to have been aware, that

it possesses no further proof in favour of vaccination, than what has been stated, and asserted by the advocates of the discovery over and over again, and still rests its defence upon the evidence, arising from the occurrence of small pox after vaccination, from the effects of the epidemic contagion; and from those appearances produced by the application of the small pox virus, in the way of inoculation. I have neither time nor inclination, Gentlemen, nor indeed does it appear to me necessary, after what will be found in my Inquiry and Reply, to enter into any further examination of these points. You must however permit me to inquire with regard to the first head of the evidence—are you prepared to come forward and seriously deny that cases of small pox have not taken place after the most perfect appearances of the vaccine process; that these cases have not increased in a ratio proportioned

to the distance from the commencement of vaccination, and determined to avail yourselves of the miserable excuses which were once employed to defeat the occurrence of such adverse facts.

With regard to the second division of the proof, viz. those appearances which succeed to inoculation with small-pox virus, some years after vaccination, I must take the liberty to observe, Gentlemen, you do not seem to have been aware, that the report itself contains the most satisfactory proof of the facts upon the subject, and points out either the direct contradiction, and wayward result of these experiments, or suggest doubts of the veracity and observation of the reporters.

The report almost in the same breath observes, “that twenty children were vaccinated five or six years ago without producing *small-pox*.”—“Nineteen have been lately inoculated with small-pox mat-

ter at the Foundling Hospital, but with no other effect than *local inflammation*.”—“And Mr. Bryce has inoculated *about* twenty children who were vaccinated from eight years to five months, and shews *clearly and satisfactory*, says Mr. Bryce, “that a *pustule with a surrounding inflammation*, are as readily produced *five months after vaccination as at the end of eight years*, consequently that the security is as complete at the latter period as at the former.”—Now, Gentlemen, I really must beg your most serious attention to those declarations—what are we to think of them—one course of experiments makes no attempt whatever at a description of the phenomena, and content themselves with observing, that small-pox were not produced; another describes their whole set of momentous experiments by saying, that only local inflammation followed; and lastly, Mr. Bryce declares, that pustules and surrounding inflamma-

tion can as readily be produced at the distance of five months, as eight years.—It is below the dignity of human reason to consider declarations, containing such flagrant opposition, as satisfactory proof upon the subject. I shall not, Gentlemen, condescend to make any further use which this opportunity affords, of impeaching the credit of vaccine establishments. I may safely leave the task to themselves, and shall merely take the liberty to request, they will take care and arrange whether or not, they will adhere to the production of local inflammation, pustules, or the production of small-pox.

But before leaving this subject, I beg leave to ask you the following questions, and to assure you it would give me infinite pleasure to have an opportunity of perusing your answer.

1. What does the inoculation either of small-pox or cow-pock consist in?

2. What are the appearances which take place when we say the inoculation has failed?

3. What do we say to our employers when we can produce no pustule and surrounding inflammation?

Having finished those observations which appeared to me necessary with regard to the facts contained in the report of the Dublin Institution, I shall now call your attention to that part of your letter, wherein you are pleased to observe, "that you find nothing either in my facts or arguments which can countervail the information you have derived from every other source." If you can prove this, Gentlemen, to be the case after what you term a full investigation, I here promise to beg pardon, both of you and the public, for having thrown the smallest stigma upon the discovery. But you must forgive me for observing, that I entertain the strongest

doubts of the nature of your complete investigation, and hugely suspect, if you will favour the public with a full and particular account of your scrutiny, it will be found to be comprised into the short space of a few weeks ; will have begun and ended with my correspondence ; and that the whole of your evidence is drawn from <sup>v</sup>hat must be justly considered, (after what we have already had occasion to observe)—polluted sources. Every person who has attended carefully to the operation of the human mind must grant, that if any man, or any body of men, have once distinctly adopted, and violently defended an opinion, and also condescended to attribute the basest motives for the conduct of those of an opposite opinion, it is the very perversion of the human understanding to apply to such sources for impartial information, and it would be the summit of ignorance to contend, that such authority ought to be con-

sidered as conclusive. I must, Gentlemen, be allowed to say, that I firmly believe your evidence which “my facts and arguments cannot countervail” will be found to be derived from cow-pock institutions; from individuals forming its members; from persons who have already publicly declared their sentiments in favour of the discovery; and even in many cases, the statements will be found to be the production of those who may be said to have never practised, either inoculation or vaccination, but have formed their opinions, merely from the comparative evidence of publications, and do not possess the means of confirming or ratifying a single fact connected with the discovery, and unless you will publish the whole of your authorities, it must be concluded you have not discharged your duty, and the public are at liberty to reject your investigation, as fallacious and inconclusive.

But, Gentlemen, that this is not too hasty a conclusion, you will please to recollect, with what eagerness the Royal College adopted the defence, which the number and conduct of the first opposers of vaccination afforded, and with what care we all followed the example. Now, however, I trust you will allow the list is increased both in numbers and respectability, and doubts are not only entertained, but strongly expressed, by intelligent individuals, and even by the most ancient and respectable institutions, expressly established for the propagation of the discovery,\*

\* The declaration of the Original Vaccine Institution, published in January last, speaks for itself, and the act of suicide committed by the Royal Jennerian Society, shews, as clear as noon-day, that all is not right; because, if they were perfectly satisfied of the efficacy of the discovery, the more sources for the propagation of the discovery the better, and the more effectually would the objects of your Board be obtained.

The expectations, too, of the Royal College of retain-

the rapid diminution also in the extent of the practice, more especially in the city in which you have the honour to reside, already shews, that vaccination is attended with the most serious and obvious defects.

But, Gentlemen, in order to put an end to all the violent disputes upon this subject, I beg leave to suggest the following plan for procuring information, and which I am convinced would obtain such evidence as must satisfy all parties. I should advise, in the first place, as a matter of necessary precaution, that The Board of the National Vaccine Institution, should increase its number, by receiving into its bosom and confidence, a few respectable medical practitioners, who are enjoying the friendship of Dr. Adams to the cause, deserves to be mentioned ; but notwithstanding their shameful coquetry, they have not only jumbled the comprehension and perspicuity of the Doctor, but have not even retained him in a state of neutrality towards vaccination.

known to entertain doubts upon the subject, and to be less sanguine in the success of the discovery—that they should write letters to every town of any extent in Great Britain, and request the medical practitioners there, and in their neighbourhood, to make out a statement of the number of cases of small pox which they have met with succeeding to vaccination, without any excuse or reserve, and also the appearances and effects which they have found to take place, upon inoculating with variolous virus, those who had undergone vaccination: that they should candidly inform them, a variety of adverse circumstances have occurred inimical to the perfection of the discovery; and that the most authentic and conclusive evidence of small pox succeeding to the most perfect vaccination, has increased every successive year; that they wish practitioners to lay aside all former prejudices

and opinions ; that they do not wish them to avail themselves of the excuses of perfect, imperfect, local or constitutional, genuine or spurious, chicken-pox, or bug bites ; but to state simply the facts, and to include every case, whether they have occurred after their own vaccination, or that of any other practitioner ; and lastly, that every practitioner in the kingdom should henceforth report to the Board, every case of small pox-which succeeds to vaccination.

I have now, Gentlemen, finished those additional observations, which your favour of the 17th seemed to demand ; and before concluding this letter, I beg leave to call upon you in the most serious manner to reflect upon the subject. I must say, that what I have submitted to your consideration, is entitled to some other answer, than those I have already had the honour to receive, and it is impossible even for the

Board to imagine, the public can be satisfied with such laconic communications on so interesting a subject. I trust I have endeavoured to examine the evidence which has occurred, in a fair and rational manner, and have clearly shewn, with such proof, it is utterly impossible to proceed with the practice of vaccination, without making a more particular inquiry into its merits, as a means of effectually securing the constitution against the dreadful disease of small-pox. I trust, Gentlemen, you do not mean to practise the dogmatism of a Moore, or, without any title to divine origin, imitate the oracular brevity of the Delphinean goddess—nor I hope, do you mean any longer to defend the discovery, by still contending, that I have been influenced by wicked or personal considerations.\* I can assure you, gentle-

\* The defence made by the vaccinists in ascribing pecuniary considerations to its opponents, appears to

men, I abhor and despise such motives as much as any member of the profession; and unless you can bring forward a full and professional refutation of the facts and arguments I have submitted, your authority must become inefficient and extinct. Only reflect what must be your feelings, if two or three years more experience, shall prove the practice to be unworthy of public confidence—while I endeavoured to place before you such evidence as seemed sufficient to arrest our attention and stagger our faith—you have

me ridiculous and absurd; it is well known that the cow-pock has been more generally adopted by all ranks; that practitioners are equally paid for the one species of inoculation as for the other; that those who formerly suffered from the effects of the epidemic small pox were of a description where no other professional emolument could be obtained but the sensation arising from the exercise of humanity, and I will venture to affirm that no practitioner has felt his income diminished since the introduction of vaccination.

not only persevered, in taking no notice of such adverse facts, but have boldly recommended unlimited confidence in the discovery. I readily admit, that until the late accumulation of evidence, no just foundation existed for exciting doubt and apprehension in the mind of the public, or requiring the particular interference of the Board; but after the explicit declaration of so respectable, ingenious, and experienced a body as the Original Vaccine Institution; the extinction of so zealous, and so interested a society, as the Royal Jennerian, and the alarming diminution in the extent of the practice, I must say, that if the result shall be the total rejection of the discovery—what blame will not attach to your conduct? If small-pox shall resume their influence over those who have submitted to the vaccine process, “ I would not for the wealth of worlds

have the reflexions which ought to harrow your souls.”\*

I shall only, Gentlemen, make one observation more:—I think I can perceive from your conduct a design, to allow the facts themselves, silently, and gradually to produce the extinction of the practice, by which means you conclude not only the credit of Dr. Jenner, but parliament, government, and institutions, will be saved, and the public will be told, that if it had not been for the opposition it encountered, the discovery would have effectually answered every expectation. But, recollect, Gentlemen, this defence contains a gross libel upon the people of

\* See the conclusion of Dr. Thomson's Cheap Tract upon Vaccination. I am extremely sorry to see a sensible professional man addressing the vulgar upon a subject, which admits of so much doubt, and requires so much investigation; and availing himself of all the zeal and warmth of religion to serve his cause.

Great Britain, and is in direct opposition to the experience of the world ; for it has been uniformly found that—*Magna est veritas, et prevalebit.*

I am, Gentlemen,  
Your most obedient humble Servant,  
**THOMAS BROWN.**

*To the Board of the National  
Vaccine Establishment.*

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