On the origin of the vaccine inoculation / by Edward Jenner.

Contributors

Jenner, Edward, 1749-1823.

Publication/Creation

London : G. Elsick, 1863.

Persistent URL

https://wellcomecollection.org/works/xsh6qbd6

License and attribution

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection 183 Euston Road London NW1 2BE UK T +44 (0)20 7611 8722 E library@wellcomecollection.org https://wellcomecollection.org

ON

THE

ORIGIN

OF THE

VACCINE INOCULATION.

By EDWARD JENNER, M.D. F.R.S. &c.

London :

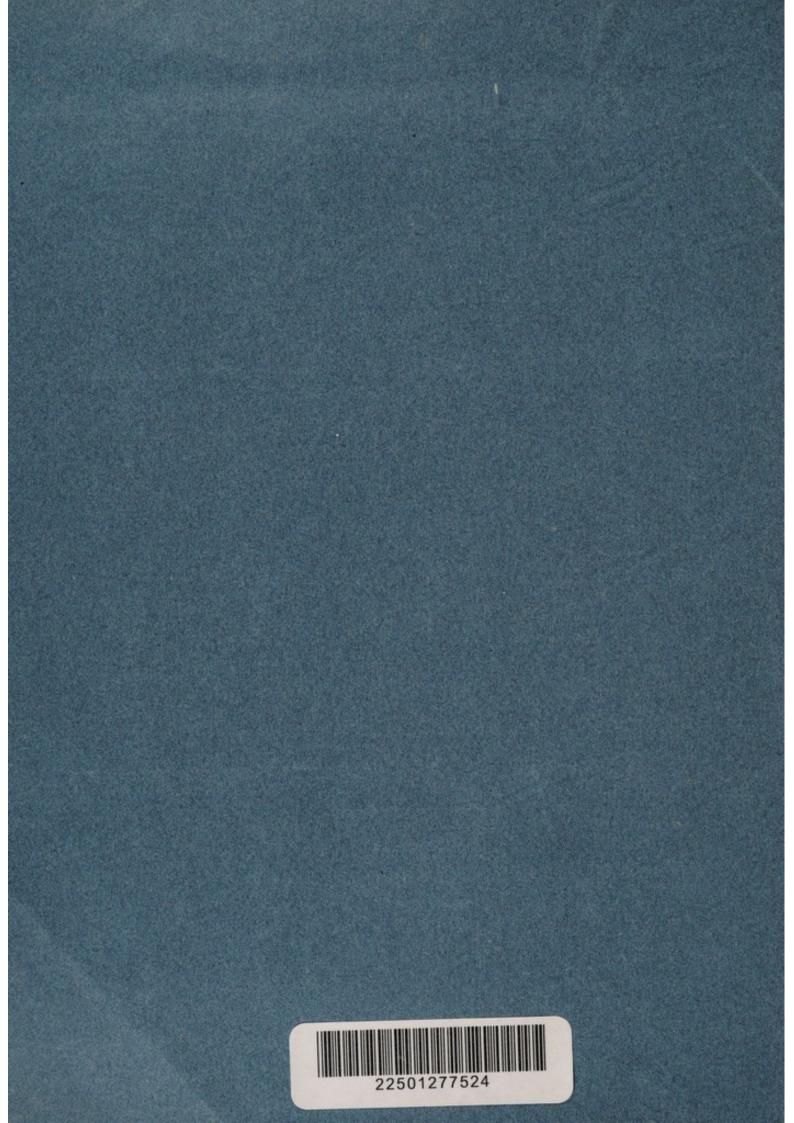
PRINTED BY D. N. SHURY, BERWICK STREET, SOHO.

1801.

LORDOR:

Reprinted by G. Elfick, 22 Leinster Terrace, 201. MDCCCLXIII.

E 1863



ON

3 3

THE

ORIGIN

OF THE

VACCINE INOCULATION.



4251

BY EDWARD JENNER, M.D. F.R.S. &c.

London :

PRINTED BY D. N. SHURY, BERWICK STREET, SOHO.

1801.

LOLDOL:

Reprinted by G. Elfick, 22 Leinster Terrace, IA. MDCCCLXIII.

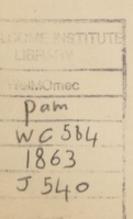


80

Reprinted

1

From an original copy in the possession of J. B. CURGENVEN, Esq.



I AM induced to give the following concife Hiftory of the Origin of Vaccine Inoculation, from my frequently obferving that those who only confider the fubject curforily, confound the cafual Cow Pox with the Difease when excited by Inoculation.

EDWARD JENNER.

Bond-ftreet, May 6, 1801.

Digitized by the Internet Archive in 2018 with funding from Wellcome Library

https://archive.org/details/b30477165

THE ORIGIN

ON

OF THE

VACCINE INOCULATION.

MY inquiry into the nature of the Cow Pox commenced upwards of twenty-five years ago. My attention to this fingular difeafe was first excited by observing, that among those whom in the country I was frequently called upon to inoculate, many refisted every effort to give them the Small Pox. These patients I found had undergone a difease they called the Cow Pox, contracted by milking Cows affected with a peculiar eruption on their teats. On inquiry, it appeared that it had been known

В

among

among the dairies time immemorial, and that a vague opinion prevailed that it was a preventive of the Small Pox. This opinion I found was, comparatively, new among them; for all the old farmers declared they had no fuch idea in their early days—a circumftance that feemed eafily to be accounted for, from my knowing that the common people were very rarely inoculated for the Small Pox, till that practice was rendered general by the improved method introduced by the Suttons: fo that the working people in the dairies were feldom put to the teft of the preventive powers of the Cow Pox.

In the course of the investigation of this subject, which, like all others of a complex and intricate nature, presented many difficulties, I found that some of those who feemed to have undergone the Cow Pox, nevertheles, on inoculation with the Small Pox, felt its influence just the same as if no difease had been communicated to them by the Cow. This occurrence led me to inquire among the medical practitioners in the country around me, who all agreed in this sentiment, that the Cow Pox was not to be relied upon as a certain preventive of the Small

Pox.

[3]

This for a while damped, but did not extinguish, my Pox. ardour; for as I proceeded, I had the fatisfaction to learn that the Cow was fubject to fome varieties of fpontaneous eruptions upon her teats; that they were all capable of communicating fores to the hands of the milkers; and that whatever fore was derived from the animal, was called in the dairy the Cow Pox. Thus I furmounted a great obstacle, and, in confequence, was led to form a diffinction between these difeases, one of which only I have denominated the true, the others the fpurious, Cow Pox, as they poffefs no fpecific power over the conftitution. This impediment to my progrefs was not long removed, before another, of far greater magnitude in its appearances, ftarted up. There were not wanting inftances to prove, that when the true Cow Pox broke out among the cattle at a dairy, a perfon who had milked an infected animal, and had thereby apparently gone through the difease in common with others, was liable to receive the Small Pox afterwards. This, like the former obstacle, gave a painful check to my fond and afpiring hopes: but reflecting that the operations of Nature are generally uniform, and that it was not probable the human conftitution (having undergone the Cow [4]

Cow Pox) fhould in fome inftances be perfectly fhielded from the Small Pox, and in many others remain unprotected, I refumed my labours with redoubled ardour. The refult was fortunate; for I now difcovered that the Virus of Cow Pox was liable to undergo progreffive changes, from the fame caufes precifely as that of Small Pox; and that when it was applied to the human fkin in its degenerated ftate, it would produce the ulcerative effects in as great a degree as when it was not decomposed, and fometimes far greater; but having loft its Specific properties, it was incapable of producing that change upon the human frame which is requifite to render it unfusceptible of the variolous contagion: fo that it became evident a perfon might milk a Cow one day, and having caught the difeafe, be for ever fecure; while another perfon, milking the fame Cow the next day, might feel the influence of the Virus in fuch a way, as to produce a fore or fores, and in confequence of this might experience an indifpofition to a confiderable extent; yet, as has been observed, the specific quality being loft, the conftitution would receive no peculiar imprefion.

Here

Here the clofe analogy between the Virus of Small Pox and of Cow Pox becomes remarkably confpicuous; fince the former, when taken from a recent puftule, and immediately ufed, gives the perfect Small Pox to the perfon on whom it is inoculated : but when taken in a far advanced stage of the difease, or when (although taken early) previoufly to its infertion, it be exposed to fuch agents as, according to the eftablished laws of Nature, caufe its decomposition, it can no longer be relied on as effectual. This observation will fully explain the source of those errors which have been committed by many inoculators of the Cow Pox. Conceiving the whole process to be fo extremely fimple, as not to admit of a miftake, they have been heedlefs about the ftate of the Vaccine Virus; and finding it limpid, as part of it will be, even in an advanced stage of the pustule, when the greater portion has been converted into a fcab, they have felt an improper confidence, and fometimes miftaken a fpurious puftule, which the Vaccine fluid in this flate is capable of exciting, for that which poffeffes the perfect character.

During the inveftigation of the cafual Cow Pox, I was ftruck

[5]

[6]

ftruck with the idea that it might be practicable to propagate the difease by inoculation, after the manner of the Small Pox, first from the Cow, and finally from one human being to another. I anxioufly waited fome time for an opportunity of putting this theory to the teft. At length the period arrived. The first experiment was made upon a lad of the name of Phipps, in whofe arm a little Vaccine Virus was inferted, taken from the hand of a young woman who had been accidentally infected by a cow. Notwithstanding the refemblance which the puftule, thus excited on the boy's arm, bore to variolous inoculation, yet as the indifpofition attending it was barely perceptible, I could fcarcely perfuade myfelf the patient was fecure from the Small Pox. However, on his being inoculated fome months afterwards, it proved that he was fecure.* This Cafe infpired me with confidence; and as foon as I could again furnish myself with Virus from the Cow, I made an arrangement for a feries of inocula-

* This boy was inoculated nearly at the expiration of five years afterwards with variolous matter, but no other effect was produced beyond a local inflammation around the punctured part upon the arm.

tions.

A number of children were inoculated in fucceffion, one tions. from the other; and after feveral months had elapfed, they were exposed to the infection of the Small Pox; fome by Inoculation, others by variolous effluvia, and fome in both ways; but they all refifted it. The refult of these trials gradually led me into a wider field of experiment, which I went over not only with great attention, but with painful folicitude. This became univerfally known through a Treatife published in June 1798. The refult of my further experience was also brought forward in fubfequent publications in the two fucceeding years, 1799 and 1800. The diffruft and fcepticifm which naturally arofe in the minds of medical men, on my first announcing fo unexpected a difcovery, has now nearly difappeared. Many hundreds of them, from actual experience, have given their atteftations that the inoculated Cow Pox proves a perfect fecurity against the Small Pox; and I shall probably be within compass if I fay, thousands are ready to follow their example; for the fcope that this inoculation has now taken is immenfe. An hundred thoufand perfons, upon the fmalleft computation, have been inoculated in thefe realms. The numbers who have partaken of its benefits

[7]

benefits throughout Europe and other parts of the Globe are incalculable: and it now becomes too manifeft to admit of controverfy, that the annihilation of the Small Pox, the most dreadful fcourge of the human species, must be the final result of this practice.

PRINTED BY D. N. SHURY, BERWICK STREET, SOHO.

