**Considerations on the propriety of a plan for inoculating the poor of London at their own habitations: with a view particularly to the arguments urged in defence of it / by the author of a late anonymous Letter to Dr. J.C. Lettsom.**

CONSIDERATIONS
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ON THE

# PROPRIETY

OF A

# PLAN FOR INOCULATING

THE

# POOR OF LONDON

AT

# THEIR OWN HABITATIONS:

With a VIEW particularly to the Arguments urged in Defence of it, by the Author of a late Anonymous LETTER to Dr. J. C. LETTSOM.

——————————jacebant
Corpora, paupertate et morbo dedita morti. LUCRET.

By Apollo.

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M DCC LXXIX.

# CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

IN all contagious diſorders where death may be the conſequence of receiving infection, it is as much a dictate of common humanity and common prudence to prevent the diffuſion of the diſeaſe amongſt the ſound part of the community, as to alleviate the diſtreſs of the patient, and to attempt reſtoring him to health. The welfare of an individual ought to be conſulted, but by means conſiſtent with that of the whole. That philanthropy which, in its eagerneſs to ſave ſome lives, overlooks the danger to which it thereby expoſes many others, is a falſe philanthropy, becauſe it counteracts its own intention. If, for inſtance, in the time in which the plague unhappily occupied ſo large a ſhare in our Bills of Mortality, it had been diſcovered, that the only effectual remedy conſiſted in the expoſure of the patient to freſh air, and if in conſequence of this diſcovery, thoſe who were ſuffering under this terrible malady were carried

about the ſtreets of the metropolis, inſtead of retiring to unfrequented places in the country, it is eaſily ſeen, that, though the patients themſelves might be relieved, the community at large would ſuffer by their mode of obtaining that relief.

This obſervation will apply to all contagious diſorders, in which the ſick are ſurrounded with an atmoſphere of noxious vapours, pernicious to thoſe who happen to breathe in it.

Amongſt others, it will apply to the Small Pox; with limitation indeed on the one hand, becauſe the diſeaſe can be received but once; but with peculiar force on the other, becauſe precautions reſpecting the communication of it are very much neglected.

The greateſt dangers, it is well known, are familiarized by habit; and it is certainly true, that the frequency of the Small Pox, ſince Inoculation has been ſo much in vogue, has very much diminiſhed the dread of it. That it is not, however, leſs fatal, the Bills of Mortality have clearly proved.

A com-

A compariſon has been made of deaths by the Small Pox, in proportion to the whole number of burials, in 42 years preceding the introduction of Inoculation, with deaths in the ſame number of years ſucceeding that introduction; a mode which ſeems unexceptionable for meaſuring the ſucceſs of Inoculation, becauſe, whether the number of inhabitants be more or leſs in one period than the other, the proportion in ſo extenſive a compaſs of years between the general mortality, and the particular mortality of this diſeaſe, will equally indicate the comparative ſtate of vigour or decline in which it ſtands.

The reſult of this compariſon is, that the Small Pox has increaſed very conſiderably in its fatality during the latter period. But it is ſaid, that this increaſing fatality cannot be owing to Inoculation, becauſe, upon examination, it appears to have exiſted during the former period of years. This is admitted with this addition, that the progreſs of mortality, during the latter period, has been rather accelerated than interrupted; for Dr. Jurin ſtates the proportion dying in 1000 by the Small Pox for the 20 years, from 1667 to 1686, both incluſive, compared with the proportion

dying

dying in the next 22 years, to be as 71½ to 72. But a ſimilar compariſon of the ſame number of years laſt paſt, ſhews the proportion to be as 77 to 105. How can this be accounted for? Suppoſing the unknown cauſe of the increaſe to have ſubſiſted in both periods, how happens it, that the amazing ſucceſs with which Inoculation has been attended reſpecting thoſe who were the ſubjects of it, has not corrected the virulence of the diſeaſe, and leſſened the number of its victims? This was the conſequence that Jurin, and the favourers of Inoculation in his time, expected from it; and this was the mode pointed out by themſelves for attaining a knowledge of this conſequence. The concluſion which preſents itſelf to a candid inquirer is, that the benefits derived to individuals have been more than balanced by the evils which have ariſen from diffuſing the contagion. The want of care againſt ſpreading ſo fatal and contagious a diſeaſe, has added to it new ſtrength, and enabled it to extend its conqueſts. The mildneſs of the inoculated Small Pox has concealed its ſting, and too much diſarmed the people of their caution. Theſe are natural and obvious ſuggeſtions. But they preſs hard upon a favourite ſyſtem, which venerates Inocula-

tion

tion almoſt to a degree of ſuperſtition, and will ſcarcely allow the practice, however conducted, to be tinctured with any portion of human fallibility. For this reaſon, great ingenuity has been exerted to evade them. Sometimes improvements in the air of London, and in the treatment of the ſick, have been ſuppoſed to alter the former proportion between the whole number dying, and the deſtruction occaſioned by the Small Pox; though the improved method of treating this diſeaſe be particularly notorious, and the advantages of air univerſally allowed. Others ſuppoſe a greater ſupply of new ſettlers from the country than in former times. But the metropolis of a great nation will always be the crouded mart of buſineſs and of pleaſure. One writer is of opinion, that the Small Pox is a permanent evil, propagated by contagion, and therefore not affected, like other diſorders, by the alterations in London which promote cleanlineſs, or by any particular conſtitution of the air [a]. Whilſt another writer attributes nearly all to an epidemic conſtitution of air, and ſuppoſes very little, if any thing, to depend upon contagion. This laſt writer, in

[a] Monthly Ledger, Vol. I. p. 525.

particular,

particular, thinks that the diſeaſe by Inoculation is ſcarcely infectious, and that there is no danger of extending the natural diſeaſe by it, though every precaution be omitted [b]: the endeavour to inculcate which idea directs his whole evidence, and pervades his whole treatiſe. The learned author ſeems *then* to have judged rightly, that the practice of the Society for inoculating the poor at their own habitations, could be defended upon no other principle. When he was forced from this entrenchment by a cloſe inveſtigation of his teſtimonies and his arguments, and by a plain appeal to facts, he caught hold of the ſum of good and evil; the horns of the altar, by which he hoped to ſave his ſyſtem from utter perdition. The controverſy which drove him to this ſanctuary, it pleaſes and ſuits the writer, whoſe letter I have now under conſideration, to call "frivolous." Others, depending upon vague and ill-founded eſtimates of the increaſed number of houſes in the metropolis, in oppoſition to calculations fairly deduced from the Bills of Mortality, contend for an increaſed population. And laſtly, the argument reſpecting the ſum of good and evil, which urges, that, granting ſome evil may be produced by an unguarded

[b] Examination of a Charge brought againſt Inoculation, by Dr. Watkinſon.

Inoculation,

Inoculation, more good accompanies it, has been echoed and re-echoed from different quarters.

Upon ſuggeſtions of this ſort, ſome of which contradict each other, and are neither ſupported by regular proof, nor by the ſum of probabilities, the plan for an indiſcriminate Inoculation of the Poor in London at their own habitations has been formed, in which it is boaſted, in ſpite of all precautions and reſtrictions which have hitherto been thought neceſſary in contagious diſorders, that narrow ſtreets, little courts where children are continually playing, houſes where every floor has ſeparate inhabitants, are proper places for giving riſe to a diſorder, whoſe identity is at laſt reluctantly confeſſed to reſide in its contagious quality [d]. And this paradox the anonymous writer of a letter to Dr. J. C. Lettſom, avows and maintains.

His firſt argument is meant to oppoſe the concluſion drawn from the Bills of Mortality, reſpecting an increaſe of deaths in the article of Small Pox, to avoid which he ſuppoſes an

[d] Letter to Dr. Lettſom, p. 21.

increaſe of inhabitants in this city, which he thinks may now contain a million; and he is ſurprized that the Bills indicate no ſuch increaſe by a greater number of burials, though his inference in favour of Inoculation muſt depend upon an increaſed number of inhabitants *without* a proportionate increaſe of burials. This "diſparity between the number of recorded deaths, and the augmented number of people," he ſoon after perceives to be a neceſſary appendage to his argument, and recites ſeveral reaſons which have been advanced to account for it. Such as a greater degree of ſalubrity of the air, diſcoveries in medicine, and the retirement of the opulent, who are ill of chronical diſeaſes, to die in the country. He however, at length, rejects them all, and declares the myſtery to be inexplicable; but he ſtill adheres to his opinion of an increaſed population, which is thus left in the air, like the flying Iſland of Laputa, without any viſible ſupport.

Though he thus miſcarries in his reſearches into the *cauſe*, it may be expected that he is at leaſt ſure of the *effect*; eſpecially when he appears to think the diſcovery of ſo much importance, that, to prevent, I ſuppoſe, fu-

ture

ture conteſts for the merit of it, he modeſtly declines that honour, and attributes it to his correſpondent, and to a writer in the Monthly Ledger, under the ſignature of J. S. The proof of the fact is conveyed in theſe words: "The Bills for the five years 1701— "1705, amounted to 105,453, thoſe for the "five years 1710—1714, to 113,277, and "thoſe for the five years 1771—1775, only "to 110,887; yet that there muſt have been "a very great addition to the numbers of "London within the preſent century, will be "allowed by every thinking man, who finds "no viſible diminution of population with "ſuch a prodigious augmentation of build-"ing [e]." And he ſubjoins a remark, that, in the ten years 1734—1743, both incluſive, the burials amounted to a far greater number than before, or ſince, which is well accounted for by the intemperate uſe of ſpirituous liquors during that period, and the conſequent unhealthineſs of the city. Now, not to inſiſt upon knowing who thoſe thinking men are that are able to make this *viſible* compariſon between the *preſent* century, and the *paſt*, I ſhall only obſerve, that he has extracted from

[e] Letter to Dr. L. p. 9.

the writer in the Monthly Ledger, to whom he alludes, but a ſmall portion of his reaſoning upon the ſubject. Yet the reaſoning which, in his own hands, is ſo forcible, that no "thinking man" can deny it, in the hands of that other writer, appears to him "not quite "concluſive." So what was of little or no value in the hands of another, became tranſmuted into ſubſtantial gold by the touch of Midas.

That writer ſtates his argument with candour and ingenuity [f]. He infers from a greater number of burials in the twelve years between 1674 and 1687, than in the twelve years between 1750 and 1763, the firſt being 252,786, and the latter 251,986, that the Bills of Mortality are not a proper baſis whereon to build calculations for aſcertaining the number of inhabitants; becauſe it would then follow, that the city was more populous in the firſt period than in the laſt; for the falſity of which concluſion, he refers to a map of London publiſhed in 1673, in which he obſerves a great part of Goodman's Fields, a part of Spitalfields, and all to the north of

[f] Monthly Ledger, Vol. I. p. 524.

Piccadilly,

Piccadilly, to be open ground. "Can it be "rationally ſuppoſed," he adds, "that all theſe "additions of building, to the amount per- "haps of one fourth of the whole city, have "added nothing to the number of inhabi- "tants?" It is certain, that in the large pariſh of Marybone, which comprehends a very extenſive tract of ground to the north of Piccadilly, and in that part of the pariſh of Pancras which adjoins to London, great additions have been made to the number of the houſes of the city; but that they have made none to the number of inhabitants, as calculated from the Bills, is plain, becauſe thoſe pariſhes are not included in them. That our anceſtors were ſatisfied with much leſs room than the preſent race of inhabitants, will be univerſally admitted; and that they ſuffered much from the cloſeneſs of their ſituation, together with their neglect of cleanlineſs, appears from the plague's having ſo great a ſhare amongſt the deaths of the laſt century [g].

The

[g] "The medium of annual burials in the 97 pariſhes "within the walls was,

"From 1655 to 1664—3264
1680 to 1690—3139
1730 to 1740—2316
1758 to 1768—1620

"This

The projection of the higher ſtories beyond the lower, in the ſpecimens which yet remain of the antient architecture of this city, is alſo a confirmation of the inconveniences which our anceſtors laboured under for want of room. It ſhould beſides be obſerved, that the calculations formed from the Bills depend not altogether upon the burials, but rather upon the births, as checked and compared with the burials. On the whole, it appears to me, that the Bills, which, though in ſome reſpects neceſſarily defective, are notwithſtanding kept with conſiderable care, eſtabliſh more

" This account proves, that though ſince 1665 Lon-
" don has doubled its inhabitants, yet, *within the walls*,
" they have decreaſed; and ſo rapidly for the laſt 30
" years, as to be now reduced to one half. The like
" may be obſerved of the 17 pariſhes immediately with-
" out the walls. Since 1730, theſe pariſhes have been
" decreaſing ſo faſt, that the annual burials in them have
" ſunk from 8672 to 5432, and are now lower than they
" were before the year 1660. In Weſtminſter, on the
" contrary, and the 23 out pariſhes in Middleſex and
" Surry, the annual burials have ſince 1660 advanced
" from about 4000 to 16000. Theſe facts prove, that
" the inhabitants of London are now much leſs crouded
" together than they were. It appears, in particular,
" that *within the walls*, the inhabitants take as much
" room to live upon, as double their number did for-
" merly.—The very ſame concluſions may be drawn
" from an examination of the chriſtenings."

Obſervations, &c. by Dr. R. Price, 3d edit. p. 191.

authentic

authentic data for calculating the number of inhabitants, than general reaſonings from the viſible boundaries of the city. In other points they are allowed their due weight. In eſtimating the value of life, and of annuities depending on life, they form in a conſiderable degree the baſis of the eſtimate, and it is an additional proof of their authenticity, that the value of life, as deduced from them, differs from the value of life, as deduced from obſervations made in other places, as great cities may, from various circumſtances, differ in point of healthineſs from each other, or from country pariſhes. This writer draws another argument from a variation in the ſalubrity of the ſeaſons, of the benefit of which he ſuppoſes the Small Pox, as a diſeaſe depending upon contagion, does not partake. A plea, which, though I apprehend not valid, admits, by endeavouring to account for the increaſed proportion of numbers dying by the Small Pox, the authenticity of the Bills. To conclude that London is more populous now than formerly, becauſe with a great augmentation of buildings there is no viſible diminution of people, is a concluſion which the premiſes will not warrant. For, beſides that a great part of thoſe additional buildings are

not

not within the Bills of Mortality, the eye is no proper judge of ſuch prodigious numbers as this city contains. A ſtranger, who had no other method of determining the number, but by a general view, could not poſſibly have aſcertained whether the army of Xerxes contained a million of men, or only 600,000. Such multitudes bewilder the eye, eſpecially when ſeen at different times and places, as they are promiſcuouſly diſperſed throughout an extenſive city.

" Admitting, however, that a greater num-
" ber of Small Pox deaths amongſt an equal
" number of people, has really occurred
" ſince than before the introduction of Inocu-
" lation," the Letter-writer wiſhes to aſſign other cauſes for the fatal increaſe.

Theſe cauſes are three.

Firſt, He urges, that " the dread of every
" evil is diminiſhed by habit; that the diſeaſe
" has been ſo long exiſtent in the metropolis,
" that it is become familiar to the inhabitants,
" who are conſequently leſs cautious of avoid-
" ing it." [h] It is however, I apprehend,

[h] Letter, *p.* 11.

rather

rather the frequency of the diſeaſe of late years that has thus familiarized it, than the ſmall addition which 42 years make to the whole duration of the diſeaſe in this country. The familiarity, which is thus deſtructive of caution, furniſhes a ſtrong argument for guarding better againſt the contagion; and the impropriety of increaſing the familiarity, and leſſening the caution, is the more manifeſt.

The ſecond ſuppoſition is, that "an in-"creaſed conflux of freſh people from the "country," has poured in upon the metropolis, "whoſe fears of the Small Pox have "been conquered by ſtronger incitements of "pleaſure or intereſt than their anceſtors "felt [1]." But this extraordinary acceſſion would augment the number of inhabitants, and conſequently increaſe the number of burials, which does not appear from the Bills to be true; and the diffuſion of the diſeaſe over the country, by the frequent Inoculations which have taken place of late years, muſt diminiſh the number of thoſe new comers, who are obnoxious to it, and counteract this ſuppoſition.

[1] Letter, p. 13.

The third aſſigned cauſe why the increaſe in queſtion ought not to be attributed to Inoculation, is, that it has exiſted from the firſt appearance of it in the Bills [k]: in proof of which, this writer brings the abſolute number of deaths by the Small Pox in ſeries of ten years each from 1657; forgetting that the abſolute number of deaths, which excludes all conſiderations of variation in the number of inhabitants, cannot give an accurate idea of the decline or increaſe of the mortality. The continuation of ſuch increaſe, however, under a milder ſtate of the diſorder, and an improved mode of treating it, infers a concluſion, which appears to me to ſtand in the higheſt degree of probability, if it does not amount to a demonſtration, that it is owing to the increaſe of contagion, and the neglect of precautions.

Having thus diſpelled the doubts which had been ſtarted concerning the authenticity of calculations deduced from the Bills of Mortality; and alſo ſhewn, that no cauſe can, with ſo much probability, be aſſigned for the continued increaſe of deaths by the Small Pox, as the diffuſion of contagion, it will

[k] Letter to Dr. L. p. 13.

be

be impoſſible to admit the application of the doctrine which the Letter-writer holds forth, "of preferring a greater certain good to a "leſſer contingent evil," ſuppoſing it to be true, and, as he thinks, not "objected to "in other caſes[1]."

But the unlimited admiſſion of ſo ſpeculative and obſcure a guide to human actions, as the opinion concerning the quantity of good and evil ultimately to reſult from them, is exceptionable and dangerous. All partial ill may poſſibly be univerſal good, but it does not follow that we are to do evil that good may come of it. In the common tranſactions of life, a man weighs in his own mind the benefits and the inconveniences, the good and the evil, which are likely to enſue, and determines according to the greater apparent good; but this right of determination muſt not be allowed to interfere with the life, the liberty, the property, or the reputation of others. An oppreſſed people may derive great advantages from the death of the arbitrary king, or the wicked miniſter, who oppreſſes them; but is it therefore lawful to aſſaſſinate him? Public benefit may ariſe from the circulation

[1] Letter, p. 14.

of thoſe treaſures, which a miſer keeps uſeleſsly hoarded in his cheſt; but is it therefore right to rob him? The fire of London in 1666 was a great calamity to the unhappy ſufferers, though, by making room for improvements in the city, it has been attended with very beneficial conſequences; but will theſe fortunate conſequences juſtify the perſons (if there really were any) who ſet it on fire, even ſuppoſing their motives were good, and that they actually intended theſe conſequences?

This laſt inſtance ſeems particularly applicable to the practice of the Society, only with this difference, that in the latter, *life* is concerned, in the former, *property*. Fires, ariſing from unknown accidents, are frequently breaking out in various parts of the city; to prevent which, they mean to ſpread a general conflagration throughout the whole, without aſking the conſent of the inhabitants, in the vain hope of conſtructing it anew in ſuch manner, as to prevent fires in future.

I hope to receive the Letter-writer's thanks for helping him to this ſimile, which I conceive, with ſubmiſſion, is more ſuitable to the inſtitution, than that which he has produced

of

of " puniſhment deſigned only for the guilty, " being ſometimes unhappily inflicted on the " innocent through the fallibility of human " judgment[m];" in which I own myſelf at a loſs to diſcover the point of ſimilitude. To act upon the principle in queſtion (the quantity of good and evil) both the one and the other muſt be ſeen and compared. In the inſtance before us of puniſhing the innocent, who is it that ſees, compares, and determines? Not the law; for it acknowledges no ſuch puniſhment. Not the judge, nor the jury; for if they ſaw the evil, if they knew the accuſed to be innocent, or accepted defective evidence, and yet condemned him to die, they would, in the eye of conſcience, be guilty of murder. It is the corrupt and perjured witneſs only that beholds the evil, and commits it for what falſely appears to him a greater good, the gratification of ſome preſent paſſion.

But it may be ſaid, that the Letter-writer alludes to thoſe rare inſtances, in which, without any corruption of evidence, guilt is imputed to the innocent by an uncommon concurrence of ſuſpicious circumſtances. This

[m] Letter, p. 14.

very

very infrequency, however, and the great caution which is uſed to prevent ſuch an unfortunate deciſion, deſtroy all ſimilarity between the practice of the Courts of Juſtice, and that of this Society. That the advantages of civilization bring with them ſome neceſſary evils is true: but it is alſo true, that the foundation of aſſociating for the purpoſes of civil ſociety lies in an union of intereſts, a conſent of parties, a mutual compact; of which ſolid foundation the complaint is, that this inſtitution is totally deſtitute, and therefore no ſimilitude will hold. A body of men, a ſociety, a ſtate, have no doubt as much right to determine *for themſelves* on a deliberate eſtimate of the probable reſult of meaſures as an individual; and in point of moral rectitude, are under the ſame reſtrictions with reſpect to other ſtates or ſocieties. With regard to their own members, they are not juſtified, according to the principles of natural law, in expoſing the life of a citizen, but in caſes of neceſſary defence, or for puniſhment of crimes [n].

The Letter-writer further obſerves—

[n] Puffendorf de Officio Hom. & Civ. Lib. 2. cap. 13.

" But

" But if this poſition is permitted to ope-
" rate againſt the practice in one inſtance, it
" muſt likewiſe operate againſt it in another.
" If the Society's Inoculations are condemn-
" ed, Baron Dimſdale's, mentioned in his
" Thoughts, p. 32, 33, as conducted under
" his own direction in the town of Hertford
" in 1770 and 1774, will not ſtand excul-
" pated [o]." If this indeed be true, it mili-
tates againſt the Baron's practice, whoſe pre-
cautions muſt then have been, in ſome degree,
ineffectual, but with ſtill greater force againſt
the practice of the Society, who inoculate
without any precautions at all.

Let us, however, inquire whether it be a
fact.

Baron Dimſdale, in his Thoughts [p] &c.
ſtates two modes of public Inoculation, which
have been practiſed in the county of Hertford.

The one, to inoculate as many of the inha-
bitants of any town or village as could be
perſuaded to ſubmit to it.—This is the plan
of the Society in London.

[o] Letter, p. 15. [p] P. 29.

The

The other, to inoculate, by general agreement of the inhabitants of a town or diſtrict, the whole of them together.—This is the plan of General Inoculations in the country, which, for obvious teaſons, is impracticable in London.

The Baron adds, that innumerable inſtances of the contagion being propagated by Inoculation have occurred in the firſt partial method; an objection which operates *à fortiori* againſt practiſing it in London.

But he has found the latter method practicable and effectual [q].

Can any line of diſtinction be drawn more clearly?

But the Letter-writer has doubtleſs his reaſons for deſiring to confound this evident diſtinction. He thinks, that the influence of

[q] The Letter-writer quotes a paſſage from the Thoughts, &c. expreſſive of the advantages experienced from this mode of Inoculation, and aſks, "Could the ableſt advocate for Inoculation have ſaid a ſtronger thing in its favour?" As if one, who had practiſed Inoculation ſo much, were not an advocate for it, when properly conducted.

a General

a General Inoculation at Hertford muſt have extended to Ware, becauſe the Inoculated would obey no reſtrictions, and therefore that there was as much probability of ſpreading the diſeaſe by a General Inoculation of the whole number of inhabitants at Hertford, as by inoculating in London, in narrow ſtreets, in little courts, on ground-floors, where children continue to play before the door during the whole illneſs. To recite this concluſion is to refute it. The Inoculation of a town or diſtrict in the country is a ſubject of public notoriety. Whoever chuſes may eaſily avoid the danger, and whoever wilfully runs into it muſt blame his own imprudence. If a man wantonly treſpaſſes on grounds, where notice is given that ſteel-traps and ſpring-guns are ſet, he muſt abide the conſequence of his own raſhneſs; but if theſe inſtruments of deſtruction are placed, without notice, in the public path, they who put them there muſt be anſwerable for the event. Reſtrictions, to which obedience is expected, muſt be practicable and eaſy; and if *ſuch* are neglected, the fault lies with thoſe who diſobey them, not with him who injoins them, nor with the practice, abſtractedly conſidered, to which they relate. It would be a doctrine entirely

novel, to charge to the account of the phyſician the patient's breach of his rules; or to blame the practice of phlebotomy (for inſtance) becauſe the impatience of the diſeaſed may have occaſioned the operator to wound a tendon. If the plan of Baron Dimſdale were adhered to, I do not apprehend, that the inhabitants at Ware, or the traveller at an inn in Hertford, could have been expoſed to hazard by a general Inoculation there. But if any inhabitant of Ware ſhould be imprudent enough to deſpiſe the warning, and ruſh into the danger; or if any inoculated patient at Hertford ſhould frequent the public inns, or aſſociate with the uninfected at Ware, it is a diſorderly conduct for which ſome remedy may be wiſhed; but it is no neceſſary conſequence of the practice of General Inoculation, nor does it involve any charge againſt the phyſician. The individuals alone muſt anſwer for their own raſhneſs or negligence. Adultery is too frequently conſequent upon marriage; but it is by no means the neceſſary reſult of that inſtitution, and therefore not marriage, but the guilty parties themſelves muſt bear the blame. The propoſed plan for Inoculating the Poor diſclaims all notice, and all precautions, and therefore muſt itſelf

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be anſwerable for the extenſion of the natural diſeaſe occaſioned by it, as the neceſſary inevitable reſult of the principles on which it is founded [r].

But the Letter-writer tells us, that "the "natural diſeaſe is a perpetual reſident in "London [s]," and in the ſpace of three or four years makes its progreſs through every diſtrict, however ſmall; that therefore the worſt Inoculation can do, is to accelerate its return; but that Inoculation has the double

[r] In a note, p. 18, and another, p. 33, this writer retorts upon Baron Dimſdale, and inquires, "What "care was taken in the two great families, whoſe ſer-"vants contracted the Small Pox from inoculated pati-"ents under the Baron's own direction? Should thoſe "ſervants have been permitted to remain in their re-"ſpective infected families?" Now, by taking advantage of errors in tranſcribing or printing, it may eaſily be proved, that in p. 17, this author has written falſe grammar. It is true that a printed liſt of *errata*, paſted on the firſt leaf, corrects the error. It was juſt ſo in the Baron's Obſervations &c. The omiſſion of a few lines is thus pointed out in the prefixed *errata*.

"P. 67. l. 3. after inoculated add, Both theſe had "given aſſurances of having had the Small Pox at the "time of being hired, on which account they were con-"tinued in the family without ſuſpicion of danger."

[s] Letter, p. 20.

advantage of anticipating an epidemic conſtitution of air, and diminiſhing the quantity of infecting matter.

The diminution of the quantity of infecting matter is admitted, as far as it regards the Inoculated themſelves, but no farther. For if Inoculation be juſtly chargeable with the extenſion of the natural diſeaſe, the quantity of contagion will be thereby increaſed.

That a quantity of contagion always exiſts in London, is evident from the weekly fatality; but at what irregular periods it returns in particular diſtricts, it is impoſſible to aſcertain. It is, however, a plain dictate of common ſenſe, that the more extenſive the cauſe is, the more extenſive will the effect be; and if Inoculation ſurely, in the mode propoſed by the Society, be allowed, as it now is, capable of propagating the natural diſeaſe, the increaſe of contagion, and of evil produced by it, will inevitably follow. The dreadful conſequences, which the Letter-writer enumerates as proceeding from the natural diſeaſe [t], furniſh therefore a ſtrong argument againſt the incautious practice which

[t] Letter, p. 22.

he

he defends, however mild, eaſy, or ſhort, the artificial diſeaſe may be.

But Inoculation "anticipates an epidemic "conſtitution of air." This epidemic conſtitution of air, like the wand of a magician, is ſuppoſed to be endued with qualities equally wonderful and occult; for, if we may believe the relator, it monopolizes the privilege of ſpreading the Small Pox, and will not ſuffer the natural contagion, though of a malignant kind, to operate within its own ſphere of action [u]: an incomprehenſible principle of repulſion, which another writer ſeems deſirous to attribute alſo to Inoculation [w]. The Letter-writer here deſerts his leaders, and expreſſes himſelf with more ſobriety. He repreſents an epidemic conſtitution to mean that ſtate of air, which facilitates the reception and operation of the variolous effluvia. The Small Pox is not a native of this country, nor can it be propagated here without contagion. All that ſeems intelligible of an epidemic conſtitution of air, as it relates to this contagious diſeaſe, and perhaps even to the

[u] Examination of a Charge, &c. p. 21. [w] Letter to Sir Robert Barker, p. 9.

plague

plague itſelf [x], is this. The air is an hetero-geneous fluid, abounding with an immenſe variety of particles perpetually exhaling from the whole family of nature, ſome of which are friendly, and ſome inimical to health and life. In proportion as the friendly particles abound, the air is in a ſalutary ſtate, and as the contrary influence prevails (as particularly in great heats and calms ſucceeding much moiſture) it becomes more noxious. In the former ſtate it poſſeſſes the power of diſſolving and aſſimilating, to a certain degree, the noxious effluvia ariſing from diſeaſed perſons; but if the quantity of theſe effluvia exceed the power of the air to diſſolve it, that circumſtance will reduce the air to the latter ſtate, in which the deſtructive extent of the diſeaſe will be proportionate to the quantity of undiſſolved contagious particles with which it is loaded. The air of a goal or an hoſpital, where the diſeaſed are crouded together in a ſmall ſpace, ſaturated with ſuch a miaſma, is a repreſentation in miniature of that diſtempered ſtate of air, which is called epidemic. Next to this, the cloſe chambers, the confined ſituations, in which many of the poor reſide in London, the narrow alleys, courts, paſ-

[x] See Mead on the Plague.

ſages,

ſages, where the want of circulation renders the air already unwholeſome, and perhaps barely fit for the functions of life, will, with the admiſſion of an infectious diſeaſe, give another ſtrong idea of an epidemic conſtitution. Thus the practice of the Society is well calculated to create this epidemic, which indeed this writer acknowledges and defends. "These narrow ſtreets and little courts," ſays he, "if they could boaſt a total exemption "from the natural diſeaſe, *would doubtleſs be* "*very improper places for the practice of Inocu-* "*lation*; but ſooner, or later, the natural "diſeaſe will moſt aſſuredly viſit them; and "the children of their inhabitants, when "actually under, or at leaſt when juſt reco- "vered from it, will as aſſuredly play with "their companions [y]; and where, in this "caſe, can be the difference between an epi- "demic produced by Inoculation in June "1779, and an epidemic produced by natural "contagion in June 1780? There is ſurely "no reaſon to ſuppoſe, that the ſubjects who "contract it in one caſe, would not have "contracted it in the other [z]." From all

Get out as ſoon as recovered in their moſt dangerous ſtate

[y] This is, however, a fact more eaſily ſuppoſed than admitted. The natural diſeaſe is moſtly too ſevere to permit theſe juvenile ſports.

[z] Letter, p. 25.

which

which it appears, that a promiſcuous Inoculation in cloſe confined places, which Dr. Watkinſon, and the phyſician to whom this Letter is addreſſed, repreſent to be attended with no danger [a], may poſſibly become the very hot-bed of an epidemic, and excite it before its natural period. But though there may be no difference between the miſchievous *effects* of the natural and artificial epidemic, can this writer really diſcern none in the *cauſes?* If, as is generally admitted, one in ſix die of thoſe who catch the natural diſeaſe, death [b] muſt be the *certain* conſequence of thus artificially extending it; and is there any other diſtinction between *afflictions* and *crimes*, than that the former are occaſioned by the

Have not People right to take Care of their own Lives & send for a Physician whom sick and would the Opponents prevent a Physician coming to them

[a] Examination of a Charge, &c. Letter to Sir Robert Barker.

[b] This argument cannot, with any propriety, be retorted againſt the practice of Inoculation, which, when judiciouſly conducted, and the ſubjects properly choſen, it will be difficult, I apprehend, to prove to be the cauſe of certain death to any inoculated perſon. Another evident line of diſtinction is, that thoſe who are inoculated, take the diſeaſe with their own conſent; thoſe who receive it from the inoculated, have no option in the caſe. This diſtinction cannot be too often inculcated.—There is no doubt, but that the inoculated Small Pox is leſs infectious than the natural; but that the one ſhould be caught by "the moſt inſtantaneous interview," the other only by "an approximation of ſome conſiderable duration," is a ſuppoſition without proof.

*hand*

*hand of nature*, the latter by the *hand of man?* If there be any earthly power competent to determine that ſome individuals muſt, againſt their conſent, be ſacrificed to the welfare of the whole, it muſt ſurely be that power alone, whoſe duty it is to ſuperintend that whole, to wit, the legiſlature or government. Yet Puffendorf is of opinion, that the ſtate itſelf has no right to deliver up an innocent citizen to certain death, without his own concurrence, to avoid the moſt imminent danger of ruin to the republic [c]. How much more forcibly will this opinion apply to a caſe, where not the ſtate, but a few individuals, claim this right, and where the innocent victims are many inſtead of one. Can a practitioner unfeelingly ſay to a parent, who has loſt a child by the natural diſeaſe thus anticipated, "If "your child had not died now, it *might* have "died in the next year?" Or is it probable that the parent would be ſatisfied with ſuch a reply? D'Alembert, in his Melanges de Literature (Amſterdam 1767) attempts to ſhew, that the advantages of Inoculation are very difficult to be eſtimated, if it be allowed that death may be the conſequence [d]. What would

[c] De Jure Nat. et Gent. Lib. 8. c. 2.

[d] The reader is deſired to remember, that nothing



which

would he have ſaid to this apology for ſpreading a fatal contagion, " that if death hap-
" pened now, it was nothing but an antici-
" pation of the evil, for it muſt happen at
" ſome period or other?" An argument which will equally juſtify manſlaughter, and which, I am perſuaded, the Society will not think themſelves obliged to the Letter-writer for producing.

This ſame doctrine reſpecting the anticipation of evil, is again held forth [e] in reply to Baron Dimſdale's objections, " that the So-
" ciety's practice may endanger the lives of
" many unhappy perſons, who may be in an
" ill ſtate of health, or unwilling to ſubmit
" to Inoculation, and yet are unable to avoid
" the infection," and that it is improper, on account of the miſerable ſituation of the London Poor, " their habitations in cloſe alleys,
" courts, and lanes, generally cold, dirty,
" and in great want of neceſſaries, even bed-
" ding itſelf; of aſſiſtance and care with reſpect
" to the exhibition of medicine and regulation

which has been ſaid is intended to militate againſt the practice of Inoculation cautiouſly conducted, and with conſent of parties.

[e] Lett. p. 29, 30.

" of

" of diet;" and it will terminate in the ſame conſequences. The author adds [f], " Thoſe " objections (of Baron Dimſdale's juſt cited) " would be valid, did not every one of them " militate infinitely leſs againſt Inoculation, " than againſt the natural diſeaſe, the occur- " rence of which that Inoculation is deſigned " to obviate. The mildneſs of the diſtemper, " in one caſe, muſt render all theſe circum- " ſtances of much leſs conſequence than the " ſeverity of it now renders them in the " other." He goes on to quote the aſſiſtance which Baron Dimſdale ſuppoſes may be obtained in the Inoculating Hoſpital from the patients themſelves, and ſubjoins this note: " The miſerable ſituation of the London " poor, the cloſeneſs of their habitations, and " every other peculiar of the city that can " tend to enhance the malignity of putrid " diſeaſes, muſt operate in favour of Inocu- " lation; as all theſe circumſtances muſt in- " creaſe the fatality of the natural diſtemper." All which proceeds upon the erroneous ſuppoſition, that the queſtion relates to the advantages derived to the inoculated themſelves; whereas what is contended for is, that theſe very circumſtances muſt increaſe the fatality

[f] Letter, p. 30.

of the natural diſtemper, extended as it would thus be by being caught from inoculated ſubjects.

From the nature of a contagious diſeaſe, which can only be received once, it is apparent that the infection muſt be circumſcribed in its extent by ſome certain limits. This limitation will take place, when all the inhabitants of any city or diſtrict have paſſed through the diſeaſe, except children and new ſettlers; for the old ſtock of inhabitants being exhauſted, the infection muſt inevitably decline for want of its uſual ſupport. In this ſituation the infection muſt ſink very much below the number of births and ſettlers, becauſe no other objects remain; and, according to the uſual progreſs of infection, only a proportion of thoſe who are liable to it will be infected in one year. The mortality will be proportionate to the extent of infection, and conſequently the Bills will ſhew a remarkable decline in the article of Small Pox. The heighth of this article in the Bills, is a manifeſt proof that London is not at preſent in this circumſtance, but ſupplies the diſeaſe in a conſiderable part from its old ſtock of inhabitants. This writer is however of a dif-

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ferent opinion, and concludes, that becauſe, according to his calculation, the total increaſe of London, by births and ingreſſors, is equal to the number paſſing annually through infection, there remains no uninfected ſtock of inhabitants, and that infection is confined to thoſe births and ingreſſors; a concluſion which, granting his premiſes, I have juſt ſhewn is impoſſible to be true, from the preſent high ſtate of the Small Pox mortality. If however this equality of the infected to the births and ingreſſors prevails, and ſhould continue to prevail, the Small Pox, in a ſeries of years, will be reduced to the limits before deſcribed; that is, whenever the infection ſhall have ſo accumulated, as to reach the whole inhabitants, excepting children and ſettlers. But when it is conſidered, that infection ſeizes only *ſome proportion* of the uninfected, it will appear that it is not probable this utmoſt extent of infection can ever be attained, unleſs by the aſſiſtance of art. For ſuppoſe what proportion you pleaſe of thoſe who are liable to it to be annually ſeized, the ſeries will proceed in an infinite progreſſion, but will never amount to the whole original ſtock. Even if this ſuppoſed ſtate were attained, it would be a mere temporary point; for the number

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of thoſe amongſt the births and ſettlers, who would annually eſcape infection, muſt ſoon accumulate into a large ſtock of uninfected inhabitants.

Baron Dimſdale's opinion is next cited [5], which amounts to this, " that though, in " general, greater caution is uſed amongſt " the rich, than it is poſſible to uſe amongſt " the poor in London; yet there has been, " both amongſt rich and poor, a want of " ſufficient care and attention to prevent the " contagion from ſpreading." It is difficult to perceive wherein the Letter-writer's argument is benefitted by this acknowledgment. If ſuch deficiency has occurred amongſt the rich, it will infer the neceſſity of a greater circumſpection amongſt *them*; but I believe the acuteſt reaſoner could never diſcern the propriety of releaſing the poor from all care in this reſpect, becauſe the rich have not been careful enough. He acknowledges that the Baron recommends a more circumſpect conduct, and ſeconds his recommendation in theſe remarkable words; " Humanity demands our " ſtricteſt attention in every reſpect to the " health of others. Whenever the Small Pox

[5] Letter to Dr. L. p. 32. 34.

*natural*

" *natural* or *artificial*, or indeed any other " dangerous diſeaſe of a contagious nature, is " in a family, it ſhould be made known in " the neighbourhood; and if any convenient " method of indicating it to ſtrangers could " be thought of, it might be uſeful, by pre- " venting an unneceſſary, and *often detrimental* " acceſs to ſuch infected places. A bene- " volent and conſiderate perſon would not, " in ſuch circumſtances, ſolicit his friends to " viſit him, nor would he permit (as far as " prevention was in his power) his children " or ſervants to viſit thoſe of others."

If examples were not every day before us of mens depending upon ſome precarious hope, to extricate them from their difficulties, when every reaſonable reliance was abandoned, it would be ſurprizing that a writer, capable of entertaining ſentiments ſo juſt and ſo benevolent, ſhould, in dependence upon the dangerous and fallacious doctrine concerning the ſum of good and evil, undertake to defend a practice, which avowedly defies all precautions, defeats the intention of making the diſeaſe known to the neighbourhood, by giving no opportunity of eſcaping from it, and

makes

makes every reſtriction that he adviſes impracticable, and conſequently uſeleſs.

Nor do theſe ſentiments better accord with the opinion which he expreſſes in the next page, that ſpreading the diſeaſe amongſt the horned cattle by Inoculation might be juſtified, becauſe " every man has an undoubted right " to do what he will with his own property, " till the diſpoſal of it be taken from him " by act of parliament." From whence it appears, that he thinks, where there is no act of parliament, there is no tranſgreſſion. I will not diſpute with him concerning the niceties of law; but I muſt have leave to remember, that there are ſuch rules of conduct as conſcience and natural law, " the firſt principle " of which is, that no man ſhould do to ano- " ther what he would not another ſhould do " to him." In this particular caſe of animals, Puffendorf thus delivers the poſition of natural law: " When they" (*i. e.* animals) " without any fault of ours, and contrary to " the nature of their kind, ſpontaneouſly " occaſion loſs to another, the owner ſhall " either make good the loſs, or give up the " animal [h]." If compenſation be proper in caſes

[h] Quando illa (animalia) citra noſtram culpam, et contra naturam generis, ſponte commota, alteri damnum dederint,

caſes where animals ſpontaneouſly do miſchief without the conſent or knowledge of the owner, ſtill more proper will it be when the owner himſelf is a party in the treſpaſs; and this may be the law of England, as well as of reaſon and nature, for aught I know.

Baron Dimſdale, it ſeems, has given it as his opinion [1], that it would be a beneficial law to enjoin "every pariſh, *with the exception of ſuch large places as ſhould be thought too populous to be included*, to offer Inoculation to all their poor, who ſhould be willing to admit of it." And he ſubjoins a reference to another part of the ſame publication, in which "collecting all the patients together in one houſe" is recommended. The Letter-writer, omitting the reference, affects to be ſurprized at this, conſidering Baron Dimſdale's inſuperable averſion to Inoculation without general conſent. But inoculating all the poor of a pariſh, who chuſe to ſubmit to it, *in a ſeparate houſe*, is the very mode of General Inoculation, which the Baron was contending for.

dederint, Dominus vel damnum ſarciat, vel animal dedat. De Officio Hominis et Civis. Lib. 1. cap. 6.

[1] Thoughts, &c. p. 65.

There is an original and fundamental error in the conſtitution of this Society, which cannot be extirpated by any alteration which they may have lately adopted, of offering medals to practitioners in medicine for inoculating the poor; for it makes no difference to the public, whether the phyſicians to the Society, or apothecaries to whom they give medals, are the inſtruments by which the natural Small Pox and its conſequences are extended.

The compliments which the Letter-writer is pleaſed to pay to his correſpondent, the conſulting phyſician to the inſtitution, and the inſinuations with which he has attempted to aſperſe the character of Baron Dimſdale, are equally foreign to the argument, and prove only that he had ſome other object in view than the ſimple inveſtigation of truth. From the general tenor of his conduct and writings the world will form its eſtimate of that gentleman's character, which neither needs the feeble ſupport of officious applauſe, nor is affected by the futile attacks of illiberal cenſure. The honours with which this writer has covered his friend will, doubtleſs, at a proper ſeaſon, be acknowledged in an agree-

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able reciprocation of civility; and the reſentment which he indulges againſt the Baron, however unjuſt, may yet be natural. A man, who is awakened from amuſing dreams of diſcovered treaſures or ſyſtems, is naturally enough diſpleaſed with the interruption, and may exclaim with him in Horace:

"Pol me occidiſtis, amici."

I have now gone through the whole of this writer's argument, and I truſt it will appear to the reader, that although Inoculation be a diſcovery, which under careful management may tend greatly to the public benefit, the neglect of precautions has already been attended with the unhappy effect of ſpreading the natural diſtemper; an effect which will in all probability be increaſed by this propoſed method of inoculating the poor at their own crouded habitations, without the conſent, or even the knowledge of the neighbourhood; and conſequently, that ſuch a mode of inoculating cannot be juſtified, either in a political or moral point of view.

THE END.

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