

**OBSERVATIONS ON COW-POX, AND ON
THE NECESSITY OF ADOPTING
LEGISLATIVE MEASURES
FOR ENFORCING VACCINATION, IN A
LETTER TO MR. THOMAS BROWN,
SURGEON, MUSSELBURGH**

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Observations on Cow-Pox, and on the Necessity of Adopting Legislative Measures for Enforcing Vaccination, in a Letter to Mr. Thomas Brown, Surgeon, Musselburgh by Mr. Thomas Brown & Henry Edmondston

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MR. THOMAS BROWN & HENRY EDMONDSTON

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FOR ENFORCING VACCINATION, IN A
LETTER TO MR. THOMAS BROWN,
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OBSERVATIONS
ON
C O W P O X,
AND ON THE
NECESSITY OF ADOPTING LEGISLATIVE MEASURES
FOR ENFORCING VACCINATION,
IN
A Letter
TO
MR. THOMAS BROWN, SURGEON, MUSSELBURGH,
CONTAINING REMARKS ON HIS
"LETTER TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF LIVERPOOL,
CONCERNING THE PRESENT STATE OF VACCINATION."

BY
HENRY EDMONDSTON, A. M., SURGEON,
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE.

HEAR HIM FOR MY CAUSE!

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TO

WILLIAM MOORE, ESQ.

Surgeon,

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE,

THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS

ARE INSCRIBED,

IN TESTIMONY OF THE

AUTHOR'S

AFFECTIONATE REGARD AND ESTEEM

Preface.

THE formality of a long preface is not needed to explain why the public is troubled with the following communication, as my reasons for writing will be found scattered through it.

To the authors, whose works I have chiefly consulted, I return my very respectful acknowledgments. Many more might have been quoted, perhaps with advantage to the subject—certainly, with advantage to me—but my purpose was not to adduce a long string of familiar authorities on every point, but to discuss the general merits of the question. For any thing in the shape of original discovery, the readers of these remarks need not look. Dr. Jenner began, and Dr. Baron has ended, by leaving nobody any thing to do.

To the results of the practice at the Newcastle Dispensary, and the documentary statements connected with it, given towards the conclusion of the work, I would take the liberty of directing

particular attention. While they forcibly attest the great benefits which vaccination has conferred, and is capable of conferring, they serve to place in a conspicuous point of view the injurious tendency of those opinions which I have endeavoured, in the conscientious discharge of an important duty, to analyze and impugn.

I am sensible, that to some, these pages may appear uninviting, from their unvaried aspect, a defect that gradually arose from not anticipating the length to which the subject has unavoidably extended, and which, in consequence, it was too late to rectify when noticed.

"The question now before us is nothing less than, whether a discovery has actually been made, by which the lives of *forty thousand* persons may be annually saved in the British islands alone, and double that number protected from lengthened suffering, deformity, mutilation, and incurable infirmity. This is not a question, therefore, which is interesting only to the physiologist, or the medical practitioner; it concerns nearly every community in the universe, and comes home to the condition of almost every individual of the human race; since it is difficult to conceive, that there should be one being who would not be affected by its decision, either in his own person, or in those of his nearest connexions. To the bulk of mankind, wars and revolutions are things of infinitely less importance; and even to those who busy themselves in the tumult of public affairs, it may be doubted whether any thing can occur that will command so powerful and permanent an interest, since there are few to whom fame or freedom can be so intimately and constantly precious, as personal safety and domestic affection."—*Edinburgh Review*, 1806.—(*Article Vaccination.*)

"In a time surprisingly short, every moral obstacle, every geographical boundary, gave way; and nations, not less differing from each other in language, in habits, in religion, than in climate and every outward circumstance, speedily abandoned their prejudices, and eagerly received from the hands of strangers the proffered blessing. The aboriginal American, the followers of Brahma and Confucius, the blind and obstinate votaries to Mohammedan fatalism, alike concurred to embrace and cherish this salutary gift of their bountiful Creator.

"Who can know that a power has been put into the hands of man to control the greatest of all his physical ills, and not be sufficiently grateful for the boon? Who can reflect that there are those who disregard it, and not lament such obstinacy and blindness?"—*Dr. Baron's Life of Dr. Jenner*, 1827.