

children now in Hanwell in whom the contagious character is only temporarily in abeyance, and is liable to resuscitation on the slightest cause of irritation. It is impossible to doubt that congregation is the cause, since it occurs in all places where large numbers of young children are kept together; and the admirable sanitary arrangements found at Hanwell fail to do more than keep it within bounds.

Now, considering that several hundred children are discharged yearly, and that undoubted evidence can be brought forward to show that they propagate the disease in the localities to which they are sent upon discharge, we say that it becomes a serious question whether the educational advantages offered compensate for the evils which are inseparable from the system. The more so as the expense incurred (at least ten shillings each per week) is amply sufficient to board them out on the Scotch system, of which Sir John McNeile speaks in unqualified praise. In reply to a question of Sir E. Colebrook at the Committee on the Scotch Poor Law,

Sir John said—"I am happy to say that very few children are brought up in our poorhouses. All deserted children, all orphans, all children necessarily separated from their parents by the condition and character of those parents, are now, in the large towns, boarded out in the country in the houses of peasants. There is a special inspector employed to look after them. They are clothed by the parochial board; they are sent to school at the expense of the parochial board; they are supplied with school-books at the expense of the board; and the result is the most satisfactory thing I have to report of the administration of the Poor Law.

"Sir E. Colebrooke.—Do I understand that the rule requiring all deserted or orphan children to be boarded out is universal?

"Witness.—Almost. The Board of Supervision have no positive authority to enforce it, but it is done by the exercise of influence on the parochial boards, by their own goodwill, and by their perception in the course of years of the great advantage of this system to the public. Never more than three are boarded in one house. The effects are such that ultimately they melt into the population, and you can afterwards find no trace of them, being undistinguishable from the people among whom they have been brought up. On the other hand, every child brought up in the poorhouse is a pauper in heart, and the first difficulty he meets with in the world sends him back to the poorhouse, as the only home he knows."

With a mortality two and a half times greater than ordinary children, and evidence like this before us, we repeat that an independent inquiry ought to be made before more institutions of this character are built.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

VACCINATION DIRECT FROM THE HEIFER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—From particular circumstances it was only two days ago that I first saw in THE LANCET of last week (May 15th) a short notice of vaccination direct from the cow, with reference to the experiments on this subject now being made by Dr. H. Blanc. I am far from wishing to say one word with the view of discouraging those experiments. If "animal vaccination," as it is termed, be as sure and successful a process as vaccination practised from the arm in the way we practise it, by all means let parents have their choice, so far as practicable, of the two modes of proceeding. If, on the other hand, it be a much less sure and a much less successful practice, let us stand by that which has stood us in such good stead, and before which small-pox has been gra-

dually receding for the last seventy years. In this respect, the balance of evidence at present is (as I think I have shown, "Handbook of Vaccination," pp. 95, 336) very strongly against animal vaccination. Dr. Blanc, whom I have had the pleasure of seeing, informs me that this has been in great measure from imperfections attending the early practice, which are now understood and avoided. It may be so; but other information I had recently from Paris was not to the same purport. It is a matter about which I hope to make personal inquiries, as soon as the very severe pressure of other engagements will allow; and meanwhile I am glad of any experiments which may help to throw light on the matter. At present, then, except that I would, in passing, enter a protest against any appeals to mere prejudice in support of this, as of any other, practice, it is not my purpose to enter into any discussion respecting it. Do its advocates really imagine that they are doing themselves any service by pandering to the prejudice, which is often entertained by the ignorant, that the prophylactic power of a vaccination is impaired by lymph being taken out of the vesicle? What tittle of proof can they advance for such an assumption? And when they talk of the ailments arising from the use of degenerate lymph (!), do they forget, or have they read of, the results of "bestial humours," of which so much is said, on grounds quite as good, I am sure, as any they can allege, in a certain portion of the early literature of vaccination. Appeals to prejudice are not only unlawful,—they are dangerous and double-edged weapons.

What I have now in view, Sir, in writing to you, is far apart from the merits or demerits of animal vaccination; it is simply to correct some misapprehensions which would appear to exist respecting the supply and quality of vaccine lymph in this country. The supply is spoken of as scanty, and the character as indifferent. Let us bring this to the test of facts.

As to scantiness of supply, I am afraid that a very few years ago the allegation could not have been denied. It is matter of history that, from the subdivision of vaccination that had taken place in England, the resources of the National Vaccine Establishment were about twelve years ago at an almost desperately low ebb; but from the steps then taken, and since steadily pursued, they are now amply sufficient. The stations on the staff of the establishment furnish weekly, from an abundant number of cases, lymph enough to meet all current demands; and other stations, already for other purposes in direct connexion with the Privy Council, are in reserve for any emergency. But much more than this. Under the operation of the new law and regulations, there has been already such a change in the system of public vaccination in England, that at this moment there could be organised for immediate use, out of public stations in London and other large towns, served by first-class vaccinators (not at present in any relation to the Privy Council other than that they are subject to the supervision now applied to all public stations) a second National Vaccine Establishment. By this I mean that we have at immediate disposal unutilised resources equal to the whole resources of the National Vaccine Establishment. And by the end of the year there will be materials at least equal to a third establishment, and I know not how much more to spare. I think, then, we are justified in speaking of scantiness of supply as a thing wholly of the past.

And now as to the character of the lymph. I suppose this is to be determined by the perfection of the vesicles it produces, and by its infective power. Let us take the last first. I have already put on record ("Handbook," p. 160), the almost uniform infective success of the lymph in use at the establishment stations. I will therefore take now the results which I witnessed last week on visits, quite casual and unexpected, at five public stations not in any connexion with the establishment, but stations which have sufficient resources, and good vaccinators. They were two of them in London, two in Liverpool, and one in Birmingham. What did I find? There were, at the five stations, 91 children for inspection, in not one of whom had the vaccination failed, and in whom altogether 446 insertions of lymph had resulted in 443 vesicles. And by every test which determines the goodness of a vesicle, these were as perfect as could be. But surely the best testimony that can be advanced as to the character of the vesicles resulting from the current lymph, is that of Mr. Ceely, who has so much larger

acquaintance than anyone else amongst us of those which result from lymph direct from the cow; and this testimony, given after special inquiry, is quite unequivocal as to "the perfectly satisfactory character of the lymph in use."

But if we take this very lymph, which when used direct from arm to arm produces these results, collect it in tubes, or store it on glasses or points, and then (perhaps after keeping it some time) send it over the country, will it give us similar results? Assuredly not. All processes of storage—no matter what they are—so interfere with the value and efficacy of lymph, that in the best hands the results would be far inferior, in average hands still less satisfactory, and in the hands of bunglers very unsatisfactory indeed. This proves a great deal against vaccinating with stored lymph; but what does it prove as to the character of the lymph itself? Dr. Blanc informed me, with regard to calf-lymph, that he had no reliance upon it unless it was taken direct from the animal: that this lymph in tubes was constantly disappointing him. So that the real remedy is not in altering the source of the lymph; it is in minimising the necessity for having recourse to stored lymph at all.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Athenæum, May 22nd, 1869. EDWARD C. SEATON, M.D.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As it is impossible for me to reply to the many applications I receive for cow-pox, I would feel obliged by your inserting this letter in THE LANCET.

I must decline to supply the profession with cow-pox collected on heifers for the following reasons:—1. Cow-pox taken from heifers does not keep in tubes or on points. 2. When used immediately after reception, it may succeed; nevertheless failures under those conditions still take place.

Vaccination with cow-pox can only be practised with real benefit *direct from the heifer*. From the testimony of others, and from my own personal experience, I can advance that under those circumstances *success is the rule*, and the results obtained altogether so satisfactory as to leave far behind any other system.

I understand animal vaccination possible as a part of our national arrangements only by adopting the following plan:—

1. For those who desire to benefit from the advantages of fresh lymph direct from the heifer, let them come to me, or to any other medical man who, like myself, will devote himself *entirely and exclusively* to animal vaccination. The question is a very simple one. If animal vaccination is really worth what we state it to be, the little trouble of having to come to me, or other similar vaccinators, should not for an instant be considered, nor stand in the way, when the health and welfare of those entrusted, or dear, to us is in question.

2. For those who have no objection to human lymph, or even prefer it, let them once or twice a week send or bring to me a few healthy children. From them lymph of first and second transmission can be collected in tubes (it then keeps very well), or vaccinate with it other children direct. The lymph, not being *far removed*, will still possess many of the essential qualities of cow-pox.

3. Let public vaccinators and private practitioners, or some enterprising surgeons in large provincial towns, follow my example, and vaccinate direct from heifers. To such I will always be happy to supply cow-pox (it takes always well on heifers even after a fortnight in tubes), and a few days at my place would be sufficient to teach them the *modus operandi*. Nor would it be necessary for such medical men to keep up a constant succession of animals; but only vaccinate from them when they have collected a few hundred children. By applying to me they would *at any time* get a fresh supply, as I intend always keeping a regular succession of heifers.

This week I have supplied cow-pox in tubes or on points to many of those who have applied for it. I have done so against my conviction, as my refusal might have been misconstrued. I have warned them all of the probability of failure.

I am willing and anxious, in a matter of such deep and general interest, to help in any way my professional brethren; and I cannot do so better on this occasion than by placing before them the case honestly in all its bearings. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

H. BLANC, M.D.

9, Bedford-street, Bedford-square, May 25th, 1869.

THE ELECTION OF COUNCILLORS AT THE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As a senior Fellow (by examination) of the College, I have been requested to become a candidate for one of the vacant seats in the Council at the next election.

It is the opinion, I believe, of the majority of the Fellows,—

1st. That no member of Council should be placed in the invidious position of being called upon to vote when his own interest is concerned.

2nd. That members of Council should not vote for themselves as examiners.

3rd. That the Council and Court of Examiners should, as far as may be, be distinct from each other.

4th. That, in the words of the charter of the 14th of September, 1843, the presidents and vice-presidents of the College should no longer be chosen exclusively from or out of the examiners of the College, but from or out of all the members of the Council indifferently; and that all future examiners of the College should be elected by the Council, either from the members of the Council or from other Fellows of the College.

5th. That students should be examined on the subjects they are taught, and taught those things upon which they are examined.

These principles I have long maintained, and shall hope to see carried out. It has appeared to me unfortunate that the Fellows of the College should have no opportunity of expressing their opinions upon these and similar subjects directly to the Council. The only occasions upon which they can indirectly do so are at the elections of members of Council; and upon these occasions no discussion is allowed.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Savile-row, May 24th, 1869. HENRY LEE.

MR. SYME.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Mr. Hugh Norris says, in this week's LANCET, that a step towards conferring some titular honour on Mr. Syme "would be hailed with acclamation by the profession not only in Great Britain, but throughout all Europe."

I am sure that Mr. Norris is right in this view, and I am also sure that I do not take upon myself too much in saying that it would be hailed with equal delight by the whole American medical profession.

There is no European name better known, more appreciated, nor indeed more venerated in my own country than that of James Syme. And I know that I speak the voice of my countrymen when I say that a baronetcy conferred on Mr. Syme would carry joy to the hearts of more than twenty thousand of his brethren across the Atlantic.

If his friends should ask for it, how could any Government refuse it, be his politics what they may?

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Faubourg St. Honoré, Paris, May 24th, 1869. J. MARION SIMS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I most fully concur in every sentiment expressed by Mr. Norris in your last number; but although ignorant how far your "very powerful voice" may influence the powers that be to confer on Mr. Syme the honour he so well merits, I know the potency of your advocacy with the profession, and therefore, as one of Mr. Syme's oldest pupils, retaining also a vivid recollection of personal kindness, as well as of valuable instruction received from him, I take the liberty of suggesting what I believe will be no less gratifying and cheering to him than any "titular honour,"—namely, an extensive and practical expression of that sympathy and respect from the profession to which his past distinguished career and present affliction entitle him, and which probably could be conveyed in no more agreeable manner than by establishing a Syme scholarship (in surgery?) in that University where he has been so long a distinguished professor. Such compliments are usually only