

syphilis. Is it conceivable that these negative experiences could be adduced if the vaccine lymph of children with latent hereditary syphilis were an appreciable danger to the public health? Thirteen years ago it devolved upon me (as medical officer of the Board of Health), to make the widest possible enquiries, both of scores of public departments and institutions, and also of many hundreds of individual practitioners, in our own country and on the continent of Europe, with a view to elicit all existing experience on the validity of objections which had been alleged against vaccination; and on that occasion I, of course, gave great prominence to the point which is here raised. One of the four questions which I circulated was the following:—"Have you any reason to believe that lymph from a true Jennerian vesicle, has ever been a vehicle of syphilitic, scrofulous, or other constitutional affection, to the vaccinated person; or that unintentional inoculation with some other disease, instead of the proposed vaccination, has occurred in the hands of a duly educated medical practitioner?" The answers which I received on this, as on each of my other points, from 542 members of my profession, are, as regards syphilitic inoculation, only just short of being an absolutely uniform "No." The alleged cases (of inoculation) were thrown into real insignificance by their relation to the main body of testimony. Men of the oldest and largest consulting practice in the United Kingdom; men who were believed to have seen every variety of disease and accident to which the human body is liable; our leaders who had taught medicine and surgery to the mass of the profession; physicians and surgeons of our largest metropolitan and provincial hospitals, in England and Scotland and Ireland; physicians who