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## THE REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD, GREAT BRITAIN.

**T**HE report of the Medical Officer to the Local Government Board, for 1886, has just been issued.

Former reports have always been held in high esteem by students of preventive medicine, says the *British Medical Journal*, (from which we take the following synopsis,) not because they bear the stamp of authority, but because they are known to have emanated from men who have toiled consistently in the cause and have won general respect. The report now published fully maintains the high standard reached by its predecessors. Everyone of its 467 pages and numerous illustrations is worthy of study. It is a pity, therefore, that the report could not be brought out a little earlier in the year:—

**VACCINATION.**—In the first of these divisions the supervision of public vaccination occupies a considerable proportion of the time of the staff, and we hope it has had a commensurately beneficial effect in keeping up the standard of efficiency in vaccination. As regards the use of animal lymph, we are especially glad to find that the experience of another year has confirmed the previous observations as to the identity of result obtainable by the employment of the animal and the human lymph furnished to the National Vaccine Establishment. Complaints of injury occurring from vaccination, public and private, were

received during the year from five sources, and had reference to fourteen vaccinations. They were all duly investigated, and of the fourteen cases the person said to have been injured could not be heard of in two, whilst in others the ailment was palpably unconnected with vaccination. There was no allegation of syphilis. The cases which had more or less relation to vaccination were all of erysipelas, and six fatal cases were inquired about. Three of these occurring in the Sudbury Union formed the subject of special report by Dr. Airy. They turned out to be altogether independent the one of the other, except for their occurrence at the same time in a neighborhood where erysipelas was considerably prevalent.

**SMALL-POX HOSPITALS.**—The question of the spread of disease from small-pox hospitals continues to receive attention in the Department, and in the present volume some statistics, which have been carefully prepared by Mr. W. H. Power, are published, the object being to secure additional evidence of the correctness of the presumption put forward by the Department in former reports, and now very generally accepted, that small-pox infection has habitually been distributed from each of the metropolitan hospitals over considerable areas, most conspicuously at the commencement of epidemic periods. As regards