

moment overspreading a district, and at another disappearing. It is fatal in direct ratio to its epidemic character. Cases occurring sporadically (here and there in spots), are not so fatal. It is the most contagious of all diseases; and this is a point on which I wish to insist, for some industriously endeavor to circulate the belief that small-pox drops upon individuals as rain drops from heaven—touching this one and sparing that! It is communicable in every way; “by inoculation, by breathing a contaminated atmosphere, by the contact or vicinity of fomites.” It is infectious in the early febrile stage; infectious before and during the eruption; and infectious “so long as any of the dry scabs resulting from the original eruption remain adherent to the body.” It may be caught, therefore, from the living body; it may be caught from the dead body; or it may be caught from clothing and furniture near the living or the dead body. So much has this foul disease been dreaded, that different nations in time past endeavored to mitigate the malady by communicating it artificially. The Brahmins in India engrafted the virus; so also did the Turks; and the Chinese were in the habit of putting some of the crusts into the nostrils. The practice of inoculating with small-pox virus became more or less general in Europe, and “its efficacy in mitigating the severity and the danger of the disease” was considered to be very great. While it is estimated that one third of those who take the natural small-pox die, not more than three or four in a thousand are destroyed by the ingrafted disease. Curschmann states it to have been about two per cent. But the time for small-pox inoculation is past, as the law has forbidden it.

Eighty years ago a chance observation was matured into a rational and scientific form by a mind deeply imbued with the best principles of sound philosophy. A disease, mild in form and safe in character, was substituted for the inoculation of the Greeks and Chinese. In 1798 Jenner published his first important paper. In 1799 the first public institution for vaccination was established in London; and in the following year it was introduced into France and Germany; and the practice of vaccination has now become general over the whole educated