

The Anti-Vaccination Movement.

THE discovery of vaccination, like other epoch-making events of a scientific character, has met with opposition, abuse and ridicule, chiefly from English-speaking people, and described by writers of authority as metaphysicians, religious fanatics and faddists, persons who from time to time imbibe distorted, pernicious and intoxicating ideas derived from a few misguided scientists, who seized with their own infallibility, often glibly discuss and dogmatize upon questions regarding which they possess little practical knowledge, scientists who often advance false statements and distort facts and figures, which are readily believed by the faithful, notwithstanding the same have been discarded by the highest sanitary authorities of the most cultured nations of the world as unworthy of consideration. The majority of the faithful, if they possess any scientific knowledge at all, would be of better service to the state if they applied it along their own particular calling in life, where possibly they might pose as authorities and critics, and be expected to dogmatize, but who, certainly, are a pernicious element in the community and ill-fitted to be the guides of public opinion in matters appertaining to preventive medicine. As the result of the action of these misguided opponents of the doctrine of the efficiency of vaccination in successfully preventing the spread of smallpox, many of the present generation, like their ancestors of biblical history, have been pleased with the prophesying unto them of smooth things, and themselves knowing still less than their false prophets, have unwittingly accepted their teachings. To such we commend the facts presented in this pamphlet for their careful perusal.

The same or similar arguments were used against vaccination as were advanced against Franklin's discovery regarding electricity, by over-pious religious fanatics, who regarded both lightning and smallpox as God's punishment for sin. It is to be noted, however, that but few clergymen have brought forward the religious objection, the objectors being those in the narrowest circles of the excessively pious laymen.

Perhaps the most persistent class of objectors have been those of a politico-legal character, raised in connection with compulsory vaccination, the line of argument being directed particularly at the principle of "compulsion," as being contrary to the free-will and liberty of the individual, the argument