

VACCINATION.

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His Worship the Mayor delivered the following lecture on vaccination to the Public Vaccinators and other Physicians and Citizens, on Friday, the 20th October, 1876 :—

Gentlemen : It has been suggested to me by some of your body that, in addition to the directions issued by the Board of Health, for the guidance of vaccinators, something might be said to meet the objections urged by some active but mistaken writers against the practice of vaccination. Had similar articles been written against the practice of setting fractures ; of reducing dislocations ; or of removing dead parts from living bodies, I should have thought it useless to reply : for if surgeons contend that a dislocated bone should be reduced, the profession—I speak of its more experienced members—is almost equally unanimous in favor of the practice which some so persistently, and so unfortunately, denounce. It is something to array oneself against the general belief. To follow quietly in the footsteps of those who, in all things else, medical, are our guides, brings with it, to the mind, less *eclat*, than to take up arms in what may be considered a safe warfare—safe, perhaps, to the combatant, but fraught with terrible mischief to those most interested. To prove to the unprejud'ced, that vaccination exerts a protective influence over the economy, would be an easy task, for the writings of thousands, from the time of Jenner to our own day, are before us for the purpose ; but to attempt to convince those who persistently close their eyes to the overwhelming evidence of almost every country and government in the world, including our own, would be as fruitless as was the effort to convince the disbeliever in matter of the reality of the missile which almost knocked off his too unyielding head. In deference, however, to wishes expressed and suggestions offered at a meeting on Wednesday last, I venture some observations on this disease, now unfortunately too prevalent, and on the means which science has furnished for its prevention. Small-pox has its “periods of dormancy, and its periods of activity,” at one