

repeated invitations made to it to be vaccinated. Here and there may be found one or two who have looked into the question from a lay point of view, and have not been convinced; others there are who resist on the score of what they term "defence of individual rights." There have been at all times those who, as Bacon phrases it, "are so sensible of any restraint, as they will go near to think their girdles and garters to be bonds and shackles." Whatever the alleged reason may be, it cannot be gainsaid that the opponents of vaccination are comparatively few in number. That being so, it is, I submit, a matter for the grave and careful consideration of Parliament whether, in order to conserve the safety of the whole, these people should not be required to fall in with the majority. Short of making vaccination compulsory, it would be a wise proceeding on the part of the Legislature to place in the hands of the Governor in Council the power to declare an area in which a case of small-pox exists an infected area—and require all inside that zone to be vaccinated. In this way the danger would be very much lessened. Every unvaccinated person in a community must be regarded as a menace to the safety of the others. Were all protected against small-pox, quarantine and most of the other restrictions might at once be rescinded. The anti-vaccination camp is after all a small one, and its members are known. It is the legion composed of those who say "I don't disbelieve in vaccination, but there will be plenty of time when small-pox comes," which offers the greatest bar to complete and efficient vaccination, *summum semper vis inertia*. There is some truth in the assertion that they will have good warning of the advent of small-pox in the colony, yet recent events, both in New Zealand and Tasmania, have illustrated the justice and truth of the observations made upon the subject in my last report to you. It reads like a tale from a romance, or a prearrangement with fate. A man living in a country town far removed from our sea-coast, declares, "Surely I am safe, and if not, fair warning of the advent of the enemy is assured." This could not be gainsaid, yet the fact remains that this man was but one remove from the only person who has died from small-pox in these waters for many years. The connecting-link—the only thing interposed between this apparently safe position and absolute contact with a virulent case of small-pox—was the attendant. There is no safety outside of vaccination. Distance from the coast-line, isolation, or carefulness may remove some of the dangers, but there can be no guarantee unless the individual himself is protected. Every facility for vaccination and revaccination has been offered, and it is pleasing to record that a great number of people have availed themselves of the services of the departmental officers in this direction. The number of Public Vaccinators has been increased in almost every town, and special officers have been appointed to wait upon employees so that as little time might be wasted as possible. The old argument, the one upon which most of the opposition was based—namely, the danger of transmitting such diseases as syphilis and consumption—has been removed since the law has required all vaccinators to use only calf-lymph, and that supplied by the Government.

The detailed reports with regard to the "Gracchus" cases have already been submitted to you.

The accompanying diagrams, which are taken by permission from Dr. Elkington's report to the Launceston authorities, prove clearly, as all recent data do, the absolute truth of the earlier claims made for vaccination. "No one under twenty years of age that had been vaccinated in infancy contracted small-pox." Thus is shown the value of vaccination even when attenuated by time. It has truly been said that Jenner's claims to immortal memory rest as much upon the smooth cheeks and unscarred faces of the people as upon the averted deaths from small-pox.

#### RETURNED INVALID SOLDIERS.

The examination of our invalid troopers, the holding of Medical and Pension Boards, occupied a very great deal of time during last year. The various officers did a large amount of extra work of an exacting and difficult nature.

The question of the transport of colonial troops was the subject of a Royal Commission. The evidence tendered, among other things, showed that the accommodation usually set aside for the soldier while at sea could, with great advantage, be increased. Not the least useful of the lessons learnt during the late South African struggle pertained to the treatment of the sick and wounded, and the transport of soldiers to and from the seat of war. The fact that thousands of examinations were made will give some idea of the amount of extra work which fell to the officers of the Department. The arrival of the troopship

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