

cination, quarantine, and the ticket system. Vaccination applies only to small-pox, and I take it that it would be impossible to obtain an Act of Parliament making it compulsory, unless perhaps during a panic caused by some unusually severe epidemic. There remain only quarantine and the ticket system. The former would, as it appears to me, involve a needless interference with the liberty of the subject which would in some cases cause real hardship, and would on that account probably fail to obtain the sanction of Parliament. It would also, I believe, be found more costly and more difficult to work than the ticket system, which would be only an extension and further application of the principles which already guide us in dealing with cholera.

It has been suggested that tramps wishing to evade the system might exchange their tickets, but this might be prevented by the insertion of one or two easily taken measurements on the Bertillon system, such as the length of a foot or a finger. With regard to common lodging houses used by tramps, I fancy that most of these are already registered under the Public Health Act, and I think there would be no great hardship in requiring that those referred to by you as being privately supported should also be registered, and the same sanitary regulations applied to all.—I am, etc.,

C. GORE RING,

July 17th.

M.O.H., Keswick.

#### PROFESSOR CROOKSHANK'S EVIDENCE BEFORE THE VACCINATION COMMISSION.

SIR,—The article in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of July 14th, on Professor Crookshank's evidence before the Vaccination Commission, is of the greatest value at what would seem to many to be a crisis in the vaccination question as a whole, and not the compulsory section of it, which has been cleverly put forward as a kind of subway by which the citadel of the prophylactic might be attacked insidiously, and some think overwhelmingly. Professor Crookshank's is a sudden, and would be by many considered a scientific, attack at the very first principle of the whole vaccination question, which in your article you have focussed into inoculation *versus* vaccination, or variola *versus* vaccinia, as prophylactics against variola. The point focussed is the following: "Vaccination with cow-pox is no protection against small-pox, although inoculation with variolous matter is." As one who has seen both extensively practised, and have myself intentionally pitted the former, vaccination, against the latter, inoculation, and come off victoriously with vaccination, I think I can claim a right, if anyone can, to ask from the Professor the proof of facts, not the deductions of theory. While doing this, I know, as regards this country, I am asking for the evidence of a practical impossibility. Then why, I ask, did not the Royal Commission on Vaccination call for these proofs of facts? And the members of that Commission cannot say they did not know that these proofs were available, as I repeatedly offered to supply them, and to submit to any species of cross-examination which any member thought fit to subject me to. I was promised that I would be examined in my turn, and have the evidence of the secretary in support of this. Further, feeling that time was passing, I did everything I could to be examined, but without success. I was deliberately shunted, and on asking a professional friend, who could reply with some amount of authority, why evidence such as I could give, and which I had fully submitted to the Commission, together with copies of my pamphlet entitled *What is Efficient Vaccination?* was not called for, I received the characteristic reply, "Your evidence is not wanted." It is only *pro bono publico* that I enter into these details, but when a certain evening paper with strong antivaccinist proclivities hinted that certain officials, and others considered as experts in vaccination, declined to be examined, though called on for their evidence, I wrote to that and other papers stating that not only had I never been asked to give evidence, but that I was denied the opportunity of giving my evidence in favour of one of the greatest blessings vouchsafed to humanity, and this though I was one of the first to offer myself as a witness, and had complied with every requirement necessary in submitting the points on which I was prepared to give evidence. The evening paper in question declined to insert my letter. I have no wish to take up more of your valuable space, but

as the Royal Commission on Vaccination has seen fit to deny me the privilege of appearing before it in support of scientific vaccination, yes, and of its immense superiority to even the most scientific inoculation, conducted on true Pasteurian lines of cultivation, I herewith challenge Professor Crookshank to defend his theory, which you have focussed, as against my practice as just given, before a professional gathering at the meeting of the British Medical Association at Bristol, the lines of my attack being those given in my pamphlet on *What is Efficient Vaccination?* page 10.—I am, etc.,

Blackheath, S.E., July 16th.

ROBT. PRINGLE, M.D.,  
Brigade-Surgeon-Lieutenant-Colonel.

#### RESEARCHES ON VACCINIA.

SIR,—In a recent number of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL a paper was published by Dr. Ruffer and Mr. Plimmer giving an account of certain protozoa found by them in vaccinia "pustules."

Through the kindness of Dr. Ruffer I have had an opportunity of examining some of his specimens, and was able clearly to make out in them the bodies which he and other observers, more particularly Guarnieri, believe to be of a parasitic nature.

Whether this be so or whether the appearances seen are merely the result of epithelial irritation of a non-specific nature,<sup>1</sup> I must join issue with those observers who believe these bodies to represent the special organism of vaccinia, especially as they can be "grown" in the corneal epithelium of the rabbit—an animal which my own experiments appear to show is insusceptible to this disease. Moreover, I demonstrated to the Norwich Medico-Chirurgical Society in February last certain small bacilli which appear always to be present in large numbers in the vaccine vesicle of man and of the calf, provided that the vesicle be examined before it has attained maturity. If the lymph be taken with all precautions as to cleanliness, including previous removal of the uppermost layer of epithelium, these bacilli are present often in very large numbers, while other micro-organisms are conspicuous by their absence. These bacilli (which cannot be found in later lymph, or only in extremely small numbers, possibly for the reason that they have given rise to spores) I hope to have the opportunity of demonstrating at the Bristol meeting. Dr. Klein informs me that he has also invariably found similar bacilli in vaccine and variolous lymph, so that, although I have not seen his specimens as yet, I cannot but think that they must bear a definite relationship to these diseases. Unfortunately, neither Dr. Klein nor myself have been able to cultivate them up to the present on artificial media.—I am, etc.,

Cromwell Crescent, S.W., July 15th.

S. MONCKTON COPEMAN.

#### THYROID TREATMENT IN OBESITY AND EXOPHTHALMIC GOÏTRE.

SIR,—May I crave the privilege of the insertion of the following few remarks on the important subject of thyroid treatment (1) in obesity and (2) in exophthalmic goitre?

1. In obesity: The booming of the thyroid treatment by irresponsible writers in the lay press has naturally called forth some comment in the columns of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL. Mr. Yorke-Davies concludes from his experience that in ordinary cases with a properly-constructed dietary the thyroid treatment is useless, but that undoubtedly in certain conditions of the blood it forms a valuable adjunct. As apparently he has always combined the thyroid treatment with dieting, it is a little difficult to say how far the former has affected his results in the few typical cases which he publishes. My own experience of the treatment of obesity with thyroid has been much more limited, for the reason that, after a careful trial of it more than a year ago, I came to the conclusion that it did no good. I treated a woman, aged 53, weighing 16 st. 3½ lbs., for three months, first with 5 minims of Brady and Martin's thyroid extract twice a day, and secondly with one of Burroughs and Wellcome's tabloids three times a day, at the same time allowing her to continue her ordinary diet. In the first two months she lost 8½ lbs..

<sup>1</sup> Cf. D'Arcy Power: "Some Effects of Chronic Irritation upon Living Tissues" (BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, October 14th, 1893).