

REPLY

TO THE STATEMENT OF DR. EPPS RELATIVE
TO THE CLAIMS OF THE ROYAL JENNERIAN
AND LONDON VACCINE INSTITUTIONS.

DR. EPPS, in his letter inserted in THE LANCET of last Saturday, seems very indignant with the report of the National Vaccine Establishment, wherein it is stated, that "if it should be left henceforward to the discretion and good sense of the nation to continue the practice of vaccination from the resources of individuals, such a determination would find the country unprepared and unprovided with the means of defence," &c. The Doctor, in reply, says, "The only ground on which this institution can lay claim to its continuance, at an expense of 2500*l.* a year to the country, is, that medical men in private practice, *not being able to keep a supply of proper vaccine matter, no other institution would exist*" (on the removal of the national) "*to procure the supply.*" * * * But this is not the fact; for the supply of vaccine matter has been for the last twenty-five years, and is at the present moment, kept up at the Royal Jennerian Vaccine Institution, without the receipt of even a yearly guinea *from the government.*" And the Doctor goes on to state the number of persons vaccinated at the stations, and the number of charges supplied to applicants at home and abroad. The Doctor thus concludes, "Nothing but a conviction that the part quoted from the report did not express the real fact, would have induced me to appear before the public," &c.

How far the Doctor himself has expressed the real fact, will appear from the following statement:—I must premise, that in the course of my practice, I vaccinate gratuitously all who apply, amounting annually to several hundreds. Not many months ago, I was called on to vaccinate in one morning about fifty, and in my anxiety to meet such call, I did apply by letter to the London Vaccine Institution for a supply. Two or three charges were sent inclosed in a printed circular, stating, that in July last the governors had come to the resolution, "that vaccine ichor should be supplied to the life governors and annual contributors *only, free of expense*, after the first day of August last." This printed circular, as if not sufficiently explicit, was clenched by the following pithy remark of the secretary:—

"Sir, you must subscribe if you expect to be supplied with vaccine matter in future."
A. JOHNSTONE."

This application was followed up by sending to me the inclosed circular, and that,

again, by a personal application from Mr. Curry. I must suppose that Dr. Epps was not aware of this resolution, else he would have been sufficiently ingenuous to mention it. As it bears so closely on the question with regard to the National Institution, the effect of this resolution will obviously be, to narrow and circumscribe the sphere of utility of these institutions, and to cause many individuals to withdraw their support; for any show of illiberality and narrow views in a London Society, will certainly have such an effect.* How far medical practitioners are to be considered fair objects, on whom to levy a forced contribution, considering that in general they invite and persuade all poor families to submit to vaccination, and that they are not the less earnest in this, because their attention and care are to be gratuitous, I will leave others to judge.

MEDICUS.

* While the above resolution remains unrepealed, the London Vaccine and Royal Jennerian cannot be considered as "exerting themselves and aiding others to the utmost in the good cause of dispensing the blessings of vaccination."

THE LATE WESTERN HOSPITAL.

A TRIAL which excited considerable interest, both in and out of the medical world, came on in the Court of King's Bench on Thursday last, between Mr. Sleigh, late of the "Royal Western Hospital," and Mr. Pope of Manchester Square, for a libel alleged to be contained in an advertisement which appeared on the wrapper of THE LANCET, and in some of the morning papers of June, 1830. The advertisement, which reflected in the severest terms on the character of Mr. Sleigh as surgeon of the "hospital," was signed by Mr. Pope, the Rev. Dr. Dibdin, Dr. Ayre, the Rev. Basil Woodd, Mr. W. N. Beechey, and other gentlemen.

The defendant pleaded both the general issue and a justification. After the examination of numerous witnesses, among whom were the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Duke of Wellington, and Lord Dunboyne, Lord Tenterden stopped the trial by expressing his opinion that the justification which had been pleaded was most amply made out, and that a nonsuit must be entered. This was accordingly done, and the plaintiff being unable to obtain his costs for which he asked, is chargeable with the expenses of both parties. We may possibly say something more of this trial next week. We are now just going to press.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have been compelled by a press of matter again to omit several letters and articles.