



Philosophical Magazine Series 1

ISSN: 1941-5796 (Print) 1941-580X (Online) Journal homepage: <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/tphm12>

II. Letter from Professor De Carro to Dr. Pearson, on the vaccine inoculation

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To cite this article: J. De Carro (1801) II. Letter from Professor De Carro to Dr. Pearson, on the vaccine inoculation , Philosophical Magazine Series 1, 8:32, 305-308, DOI: [10.1080/14786440108562647](https://doi.org/10.1080/14786440108562647)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14786440108562647>



Published online: 25 Jan 2010.



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reason, to judge of what is fit for the art, and that it is which makes it an art indeed: a trifling skill will enable a man to become a mere imitator. It must be observed, however, that if our composition does not rise above common nature, it will be less interesting than a more indifferent local scene, fitted to increase our topographical knowledge.

From the whole of our inquiry it results, that the mind should never cease from its pursuit after whatever is beautiful or grand; let us then, by an abstract inquiry, endeavour to create a nature of our own, if possible, more dignified and noble than the one that strikes our senses: we should feel an enthusiasm in our pursuits not to be satisfied with any perfection short of divine.

II. *Letter from Professor DE CARRO to Dr. PEARSON, on the Vaccine Inoculation.*

DEAR SIR,

Vienna, Oct. 22, 1800.

I CANNOT wait any longer to communicate to you my further success in the vaccine inoculation. A dreadful epidemic small-pox has given this autumn a new lustre to that practice, which, from the sensation it has created in this city, is not likely to be ever laid aside.

This extension of practice, which hitherto has been entirely, or nearly so, in my hands, has enabled me to estimate the accuracy of your observations on the inefficacy of a cow-pock that comes too rapidly to its height, and which does not follow the laws of that disease. I must candidly confess, that until this autumn I had not a very exact idea of the vaccine pustule; that is to say, I knew very well how it should be to correspond with the description of the English inoculation, such as I had seen it on my own children; but I was not aware that it must be absolutely so, and that every appearance after inoculation was not to be looked upon as a true vaccine. The astonishing likeness of my vaccine pustule in my sixty last inoculations has given me a true knowledge of it, and I scarcely believe that I can in future be mistaken.

On

On the third or fourth day, one perceives a slight elevation and redness; it increases in a vesicular form till the 12th or 13th day, and contains always the most limpid fluid: a fever comes on the eighth or ninth day, or sometimes is not perceptible: the beautiful areola appears on the seventh-day, and increases till the crust is entirely formed: this crust begins commonly on the twelfth day, and becomes quite black.

I have had some cases originating from count Mottet's matter, where a patient had received the small-pox by inoculation, and three by natural contagion: one of these has retaken the vaccine in its perfect form. Luckily for the success of the inoculation, the parents of these children were advised previously of the idea I had of the imperfection of their former vaccina; and they were not surprised at it, after having had a great difficulty in believing that the superficial crust that it had formed would be sufficient to preserve them from future infection.

I have had two cases where the children were already infected with the small-pox at the time of the vaccine inoculation, and where it showed itself, as usual, without interrupting in any degree the course of the cow-pock. One of them proved excessively mild; the other is still dubious.

I have had two cases where the inoculated spot gave signs of inflammation only on the twelfth day, and where the pustule has been perfectly regular and complete. That was the same subject that had been seven months ago inoculated with the imperfect cow-pock.

I have not yet seen any pustule either of the *fugitive* or of the *variolous*-like appearance, although, according to Dr. Woodville's observations, they should appear more commonly where the small-pox is epidemic. There never was, perhaps, so disastrous an epidemic at Vienna as that we have now. It is certainly owing to it that people think so much now of the cow-pock, against which they have been exceedingly incredulous. I hope to have it in my power to continue it all winter. By the last accounts I have of the progress of the vaccine inoculation at Geneva, it is exceedingly rapid. Some eruptive cases have lately been observed there; but I need not enter into these particulars, as you will have them immediately

immediately from Doctors Petchier and Odier, or from the *Bibliothèque Britannique*. I have had lately two opportunities to make experiments upon persons who have *undoubtedly* had the small-pox in their infancy. They are both medical men, and consequently their testimony is more admissible than that of most others. Upon the one, the vaccine matter produced no effect whatever; and upon the other, a very small superficial vesicle appeared, which changed soon into a crust. In one word, there was not the least appearance of the true and usual cow-pock pustule. They confirm *your principle, that one cannot have the cow-pock after the small-pox*. One single circumstance vexes me in my vaccine practice: it is the frequency of inoculations that fail; that is to say, where no pustule nor inflammation is produced. I can scarcely attribute it to my method, which is the common puncture of most practitioners. I make it as superficial as I can, to avoid, as much as possible, to draw blood, which I believe can wash off the matter. I make one puncture on each arm. I see that in England, as well as abroad, inoculators are divided upon the advantages of the puncture or of the incision. You and Dr. Jenner seem to make use of the puncture: Dr. Woodville recommends strongly the incision. At Geneva they prefer the incision; and here the puncture. I propose now to make comparative trials; and to inoculate my first twenty patients in one arm with the puncture, and in the other with the incision. The difficulty of making the most superficial incision without drawing blood, has hitherto induced me to recommend the puncture. Upon the whole, I dislike much to be so often under the necessity of repeating the inoculation. You will oblige me very much by favouring me with some particulars upon this point.

My second patient, where the two diseases have gone on together, has had also a very favourable small-pox. Two similar cases in England authorise you to believe that the cow-pock can render the small-pox milder when they attack the same subject together.

The medical world is waiting with impatience for the work you have promised in your *Statement*; and I join my request to those that must already have been addressed to you upon

upon the publication of a work that must throw the greatest light on a subject which engages now the attention of all civilised nations. Whenever my materials shall be sufficient, I purpose writing a complete treatise on the subject for the use of the continental physicians, and such persons as are not in the way of collecting from the various sources of information which a little zeal and activity have opened to me.

I have the honour to be,

Dear Sir,

With the sincerest esteem,
Your most obedient humble servant,
J. DE CARRO.

P. S. I sent lately some vaccine matter to Lord Elgin at Constantinople for the inoculation of his only son.

III. *Letter from JOHN BRANSON, Esq. Surgeon, to
Dr. PEARSON, on the Vaccine Inoculation.*

DEAR SIR,

Doncaster, Nov. 23, 1806.

IN my last letter to you I mentioned my ideas respecting *the insusceptibility of the vaccine contagion to a person who had previously had the small-pox*. I am still of the same opinion, as I have never yet been able to produce the true vaccine pustule in a person who had before undergone the small-pox; but I have lately had a case from which it would appear that, if both diseases are introduced into the system about the same time, they will both be received, and proceed through their regular stages, without being at all affected by each other. A child was inoculated for the cow-pock, after it had been for some days exposed to the contagion of the natural small-pox, on Friday the 26th of September. The arm went on in the usual way till Wednesday evening following, when the child was seized with fever, and in the evening of the next day the small-pox appeared. The eruption was confluent, and particularly so about the inoculated part, on Monday the 6th of October, which was the eleventh day from the inoculation of the vaccine matter, and the fifth from the commencement of the fever of the small-pox. I
inoculated