

(No. 112.)



1883.

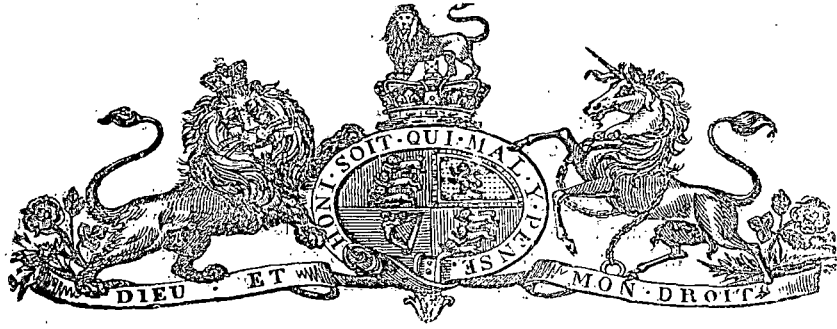
T A S M A N I A.

H O U S E O F A S S E M B L Y.

“THE VACCINATION ACT, 1882 :”

REPORT BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OF VACCINATIONS
UP TO THE 29TH DAY OF AUGUST, 1883.

Laid upon the Table by the Premier, and ordered by the House to be printed,
September 5, 1883.



Vaccination Office, 29th August, 1883.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, requesting me to furnish a Report up to date of the working of "The Vaccination Act."

So little time has elapsed since the introduction of itinerant vaccination that it is hardly fair to judge of what it may be capable by the work at present performed.

To the Vaccinators the system is entirely new, and experience is needed to enable them to adopt the best measures for carrying it out.

In my annual Reports to the Government I have frequently had occasion to mention the general apathy which exists amongst the classes for whom gratuitous vaccination is more particularly intended; and that with a very large number there is a positive objection to the operation, induced in great measure by the many articles which have appeared in the public prints setting forth not only the many evils which follow the operation, but also pronouncing it to be useless as a protective measure. Only when cases of small-pox have appeared in the other Colonies have these persons been induced to bring their children to the Vaccination Offices, and immediately the scare has subsided the usual apathy and disinclination are exhibited.

Although a Compulsory Act and several amended Acts have been passed by the Legislature, the penal provisions of these Acts have never been enforced.

The present amended Act was passed at the latter end of October, 1882, and as only two months remained to the end of the year, this time was taken up in printing the notices to parents, schedules, &c.

I am informed by the Registrar that although all expedition was used in preparing the necessary forms, the notices to parents could not be issued before the 1st January, 1883; and therefore the return of defaulters by the Deputy-Registrar to the Vaccinators could not be furnished, nor the enforcement of the penal clauses carried into effect before October next.

I mention these particulars to show that the present Vaccinators have been working under all the disadvantages which existed in those years when there was no scare of small-pox. Yet, the number of cases vaccinated has been greatly in excess of the number operated on in those years.

In 1881 there was a small-pox scare, the influence of which lasted to the early months of 1882. This having died out, very few children were vaccinated for the last nine months of that year.

The following table shows the numbers vaccinated in the three years before the small-pox scare, and in the present year:—

Vaccinations performed by from 20 to 30 local Vaccinators—	
1878	802 cases
1879	273 "
1880	412 "
Total in three years	1487
Vaccinations performed by two itinerant Vaccinators in less than Six Months in 1883	
	1222

Thus, in less than six months two itinerant Vaccinators have performed nearly as many vaccinations as from 20 to 30 local Vaccinators performed in three years.

But no system of vaccination can be successful unless the penal clauses of the Act are strictly enforced, and until this is done no fair judgment can be formed of the success or otherwise of the present system.

In writing to the Vaccinators for their returns, I took the opportunity of asking their opinion as to the probable efficiency of the present system.

Dr. Payne, the Northern Vaccinator, writes:—"Speaking for myself, I do not think that the present system, so far, has increased the number of vaccinations done publicly, but then there was a small-pox scare whilst the old Act was in force. Of this fact I am certain, that under the present system children are much more effectually vaccinated than they were previously."

Dr. Willes, the Southern Vaccinator, writes:—"So far as my experience goes, the present system is essentially a sound one, and is well received by the people. As Vaccinators, too, become personally known, and their mode of performing their duties is found to be satisfactory, and the result harmless, as well as efficient, I believe that opposition will well nigh cease. I am not dissatisfied with the results of my own exertions; for, where no large numbers of children have been brought, I think the way has been opened for future successful work."

There is an omission in the last amended Act which it would be well to supply. With reference to children born after the passing of the Act, the Superintendent of Police of the District is the person appointed to proceed against defaulters, but in the case of children under 14, born before the passing of the Act, no person is appointed to prosecute in cases of non-compliance.

I append a Return of the number of cases vaccinated in the Northern and Southern Divisions of the Colony.

In conclusion, I would beg to express my opinion that when the Vaccinators have had some experience, so that they may be able to adopt the most effectual method for carrying out the work, and when, by the enforcement of the penal clauses of the Act, parents are compelled to have their children vaccinated, the system will be found much more efficient than the former one, not only with regard to the numbers vaccinated, but also (and this is of paramount importance) to the effectual protection of those who have undergone the operation.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,
GEORGE TURNLEY, *Superintendent of Vaccinations.*

The Honorable the Chief Secretary.

RETURN showing the Number of Cases vaccinated in the Northern and Southern Divisions of the Colony during a Portion of the Year 1883.

NORTHERN DIVISION.		
From 21st February to 31st March.....	195	
„ 1st April to 30th June.....	262	
„ 1st July to 18th August ...	82	
		539
SOUTHERN DIVISION.		
From 25th February to 31st March.....	75	
„ 1st April to 30th June.....	457	
„ 1st July to 18th August.....	151	
		683
Total Vaccinations in 1883.....	..	<u>1222</u>

GEORGE TURNLEY, *Superintendent of Vaccinations.*