It is sobering to realise that as recently as the year in which On the Origin of Species was published, learned opinion was that diseases such as typhus and cholera were spread by a ‘miasma’, and suggestions that doctors should wash their hands before examining patients were greeted with mockery by the profession. The Cambridge Library Collection reissues milestone publications in the history of Western medicine as well as studies of other medical traditions. Its coverage ranges from Galen on anatomical procedures to Florence Nightingale’s common-sense advice to nurses, and includes early research into genetics and mental health, colonial reports on tropical diseases, documents on public health and military medicine, and publications on spa culture and medicinal plants.

The Vaccine Contest

When English surgeon William Blair (1766–1822) embarked on his career, he became familiar with the devastation caused by smallpox in urban areas. The virus was lethal to more than a fifth of the people infected, and the rest were at risk of long-term complications. The first effective vaccine against the disease had been developed by Edward Jenner, who had been made aware that smallpox infection was uncommon among milkmaids who had been exposed to a milder form of pox contracted from cows. Although Jenner’s vaccine was made available soon after its public announcement in 1798, the objections by various sceptics deterred many from embracing the procedure. In this 1806 pamphlet, Blair employs the format of a dialogue between an anxious parent and an ardent vaccination opponent to convince Londoners of the benefits offered by the new vaccine. His account is complemented by a report from the Royal Jennerian Society.
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The Vaccine Contest

Being an Exact Outline of the Arguments …
Respecting Cow-Pox Inoculation

William Blair
Cambridge University Press
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William Blair
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By William Blair

"Pride, False Faith, and Deposition."
"Reason, Religion, and Truth."
"Mild Humanity."

VACCINE CONTEST.
1839.

PRINTED FOR J. MURRAY, NO. 32, PIKE STREET.

LONDON.

Dr. Howell,

For the benefit of the Publicity to which I have added the following:

"When men have become so accustomed to system and to reason, it is high time

society, to impede the progress of the study of physiology and the progress of the
towards the total abolition of all the ignoramus, are the ignorant, the unscientific, the ignorant,

By WILLIAM BALIi.

ROYAL JENNERIAN SOCIETY.

THE VACCINE CONTEST.

An Exact Outline

PRIDE, LAITY, AND DESSTRUCTION.

REASON, RELIGION, AND TRUTH.

MILD HUMANITY,

VACCINE CONTEST.
Preface
During the preceding year, it was too manifest


TORS OWN LANGUAGE, in a new and vivid
ordinary performance; and, by placing THE DOC.
ject of the nation, or a description of that extra-
be lost time, though a nauseous and revolting task,
different purposes. The author judged it would not
revelations which have been provided for a
unimaginable perversion of the minds
and a deliberate perversion of its, suggested the idea of
A more sincere at this book awakened attention:

Dishonesty repugnant to common decency.
hoods—so plainly inconsistent with intellect—and so
enjoy—so full of inculcation—so abounding in false-
so evidenced to deceit—so mischievous in the end—
seemingly corrupt—so industriously misleading—
people has never passed a literary work, on any sub-

True will always bear looking in the face. It is
him of his temper.
newspaper paragraphs, and decry the brilliant
these select objections; whose putting hand-bills
his duty to read a certain pamphlet to one of our

AN

Reference.
Preface

"..."
Bloomershury, W. Blair,

On the 13th March 1802, the author, at a public meeting in the presence of the Prince of Wales, publicly and formally presented the design in which he had conceived the Vaccine discovery. This was with the best intention of humanity; to take up his pen in this important cause of mankind. He was never in prepared for the good of mankind. He was never in prepared to publish his work. In his diary, he recorded: "The author could not think of any day to publish his work. He was never in prepared to publish his work."

P.S. While this pamphlet was in the press, the author heard that Dr. Rovory had been announced otherwise have been locked for, on a medical subject, more learning in the unprofessional reader than could be found in the Vaccine contest, which are thus in-IX

Preface.