

The Leicester Anti-Vaccination League

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The Leicester Anti-Vaccination League was formed in 1869. The stalwart little band of pioneers, numbering less than twenty persons, laboured on, until they grew numerically to such an extent that, whereas in 1867 over 94 per cent. of the children born were vaccinated, in 1897 only 1.3 per cent, of the infants were subjected to the trying ordeal. And that low percentage of vaccinations in the last-mentioned year was arrived at in spite of—and perhaps, to some extent, as the natural outcome of—many thousands of prosecutions against defaulters. These were instituted under the oppressive Act of 1867, and resulted in the infliction of fines, the levying of distress warrants, and the commitment of parents to prison. Obviously, those figures demonstrate that the people of Leicester were following the lead of the Anti-Vaccination League, and that not one class only, but all sections of the townspeople, were equally resolute in their opposition and detestation of the hateful legal enactments.

The experience of the terrible smallpox epidemic of 1871-73, when many thousands of vaccinated persons contracted the disease, and several hundreds died as the result of the alleged "protection" (!) having lamentably failed in its hour of trial, produced in the minds of the thinking people of Leicester pronounced hostility against the blood-polluting quackery, which was found to be more baneful in its ultimate results than the disease it was supposed to prevent. [LEICESTER: SANITATION versus VACCINATION BY J.T. BIGGS J.P.](#)

See: [The National Anti-Vaccination League](#)