

Inoculation and Intolerance

An 18th Century Experience

IT is in my mind to leave some small account of my Proceedings in regard to having my son and youngest Daughter Inoculated, it appeared a great & weighty thing, & notwithstanding all any could or might say I was not willing to rush forward as a horse rushes into the Battle, but do believe in my measure I Did weight [wait] to feel & was favoured with that calmness and Satisfaction of mind the World nor no one in it was able to give or take away,—before I was willing to proceed in it,—but Oh how I was tried after it was Done it is not in the power of words or pen to set forth, through the Ill nature of Wm. Johnson one of the Church wardons so called who prevailed with some of the leading men of our Parish to prevent my having the use of the pest House for which I Did not previously ask beleving I had as much right to it as any one in the Parish as knowing it was Used for that purpose a short time before, however the matter was put into theire Arms not in the least suspecting I should be refused my right as a Parishioner, it being Built & kept in repare by the Parish Viz. out of the Poors rate, therefore in corse mine or any Persons else for that use—my House being like a shop somebody often coming to the Mill, what to do now I knew not as I could hire no place out of Town, I cannot express my anxiety lest any one should take the Disorder through us.—Mary Chapell Niece to neighbour Parkins wear inoculated at the same time & Hannah Bailey of Chesham who ware to have been with mine, but being Disapointed as above her Aunt H. Parkins said to me what must we do now the mater is put in & cannot be stoped my House is my own is large & good room backwards you shall come here if you please, which for the Present gave some small relief to my Destressed mind Destreset lest any should take the Disorder but Oh what a storm did there arise when the above was put in practice. Several Others in the Town ware inoculated the neighbours greatly inreaged at our Friend for taking us

in a Vestory was called to indeavour to stop Inoculation my landlord Jn. Roper said if I had not had a lease he would have turned me out lmeaditly—they concluded at the Vestory to ruin the kind Widow for taking us in if any one should take the compleant from us and Die of it, saying a Simelor case had been tryed & coust a Man £500 very Great Danger indeed there was not only from that House but from another Just by—close to the rode where seven had it & some there as with us very full then Oh then the Depth of Distress that covered my mind there is no tounge can tell. I could git but little rest night nor day nor had I any appetite for Vitual My Desires & Cry was to that God that hearest in Secret that he would be pleased in his unmerited mercy and condesending Love to stop the Infection from Spreading those Power alone I did believe was all sufeciant & the Lord of Infinite Condesending mercy was pleased to heare & interpose so that no one took it through us for ever Preased be his worthy name saith my soul—it was remarked by the D^r as a very singular Curcomstance The wind continued the whole of the time in a q^r to blow the Infection from the road & he said tho all men have been against us God hath been for us.

RD. LITTLEBOY

From a MS. in the possession of Anna L. Littleboy, the writer's great-granddaughter.

Richard Littleboy's lease of the Lower Mill, Berkhamsted was dated 1786 and expired 1791.