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Poetry as an Expression of Gratitude towards a Physician: Robert Bloomfield's "Song" for Doctor Edward Jenner, the Father of Immunology

Bir Hekime Minnettarlığın İfadesi Olarak Şiir: Robert Bloomfield'in İmmünolojinin Babası Doktor Edward Jenner İçin Yazdığı "Türkü"

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ÖZ

İnsanlığın tıbbi ve sosyal tarihinde, bir ülkede veya dünyada yaygın olan ölümcül virüsler veya diğer kötü hastalıklar nedeniyle yüzlerce, binlerce hatta milyonlarca insanın ölümüyle karşılaşılabilir. Pandemiler de, günümüz dünyasında yaşadığımız gibi, birçok kişinin ölümüne sebep olmuştur. Bugün, şimdiye kadar tahminen beş milyon insanın ölümüne neden olan Covid-19 adı verilen korona virüsü nedeniyle eşi benzeri görülmemiş bir pandemi yaşıyoruz. Ayrıca dünya tarihinde insanların içinde bulunduğu zor durumu hafifletmek, salgın hastalıkların veya pandemilerin yol açtığı aşım stresin üstesinden gelmelerine yardımcı olmak için şarkılar, şiirler ve diğer edebi eserler veya sanat eserleri ürettiğini de gözlemliyoruz. Edebiyat tarihine baktığımızda sadece bilimi değil, yeni şeyler icat eden ve yeni fikirler ortaya atan bilim adamlarını da takdir etmek için üretilmiş edebi eserlerin varlığına tanıklık ederiz. İngiliz şair Robert Bloomfield'in "Song, Sung by Mr. Bloomfield" isimli şiiri bunlardan biridir. 1803'te Doktor Edward Jenner'in doğum günü için yazılan bu şiir, çiçek aşısını icat eden hekime olan takdirinden dolayı günümüz okuyucusunun dikkatini çekmektedir. Bu bakımdan şiir, bilim adamına duyulan minnetin bir ifadesi olarak değerlendirilebilir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Bloomfield'in Jenner'a duyduğu sadece kişisel minnettarlığı değil, aynı zamanda diğer tüm insanların ona karşı hissetmesi gereken minnettarlığı nasıl ifade ettiğini ve böylece ölümcül bir hastalık olan çiçek hastalığına karşı aşıyı icat eden bilim adamının asil eylemine takdir edici bir yanıt oluşturduğunu göstermek için şiirdeki övgü unsurlarını vurgulamaktır.

ABSTRACT

In human medical and social history, one can encounter the deaths of hundreds, thousands or even millions of people caused by either deadly viruses or other worst diseases prevalent in a whole country or the world. Pandemic diseases are also the cause of many deaths as we experience in today's world. Today we experience an unprecedented pandemic due to a corona virus called Covid-19, which has caused the deaths of an estimated five million people till now. In the world's history, we have also observed that people have produced songs, poems, and other literary or artworks to alleviate the challenging situation and help people overcome the extreme stress caused by epidemics or pandemics. When we look at literary history, we witness the existence of literary works produced to appreciate science and the scientists who invented new things and came up with novel ideas. The English poet Robert Bloomfield's "Song, Sung by Mr. Bloomfield" is one of them. This poem, written in 1803 for the anniversary of Doctor Edward Jenner's birthday, attracts the attention of today's readers due to its appreciation of the physician who invented vaccination against smallpox. In this regard, the poem may be considered the expression of gratitude. The purpose of this study is to highlight the elements of praise in the poem to indicate how Bloomfield expressed not only his gratitude to Jenner but also the gratitude that all the other people should feel towards him, and thus constituted an appreciative response to the scientist's noble act of inventing vaccination against smallpox, a fatal disease.

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Introduction

*“I had a little bird, and its name was Enza,
I opened the window, and in-flew-Enza.”*

(A nursery rhyme during the Spanish Flu in 1918)

The tune in the epigraph is a children’s rhyme children sang while jumping rope during “a worldwide pandemic of a type of avian influenza which was dubbed the Spanish Flu” in 1918. It was sung to the melody of another nursery rhyme, “Ring around the Rosie” (“In Flew Enza”, 2018, no pagination). This jump rope chant and similar works give one the idea that even in very challenging situations, human beings produce songs, poems and other literary or artworks to alleviate the situation, help people manage their hardships, and overcome the extreme stress caused by deadly viruses, pandemic diseases or other worst diseases prevalent in a whole country or the world.

Throughout human medical and social history, the world has faced significant diseases, pandemics or epidemics that caused the deaths of hundreds and thousands or even millions of people, as in the case of the Spanish Flu in 1918, during which an estimated 20 million people died. We experience an unprecedented pandemic in today’s world due to a type of corona virus called Covid-19 and its current variants such as Delta and Omicron. Though not certain, according to the statistics, the number of deaths from Covid-19 has exceeded 5 million worldwide. Smallpox was also an infectious disease that has “existed since the dawn of the time”¹ (Bazin, 2000, p. 3). It caused many deaths during the great smallpox epidemics between 1775 and 1782 and various outbreaks of smallpox in all corners of the Earth at different times. Throughout human history, it is known that the outbreaks of this pestilence occurred in different parts of the world at different ages due to the contact of the peoples with each other (“History of Smallpox”, no pagination).

Edward Jenner (1749-1823)

Born in 1749 in Berkeley, Gloucestershire, becoming an orphan at age five and apprenticed to a country surgeon at age thirteen, Edward Jenner has never lost his interest in science and enthusiasm to search for and discover new things throughout his life. It is Edward Jenner who invented vaccination against smallpox due to his research on cowpox — an infectious disease that is similar to smallpox in nature and distinguishable from it by slight differences — and “Jenner’s work is widely regarded as the foundation of immunology” (Riedel, 2005, p. 21). Working as a country doctor, Jenner discovered in 1798 that people exposed to cowpox were immune to smallpox. Cowpox is a disease “felt to be a close relation to smallpox but presenting a much milder and seldom fatal form” (Kotar and Gessler, 2013, p. 48). It was common among the dairymaids and cowherds of Jenner’s rural village. Since smallpox was the most devastating disease endemic in Europe, this was a major find – potentially a miracle cure” (Fulford and Lee, 2006, pp. 146-147). Jenner is a scientist who “devoted the last years of his life to the cause of vaccination” (Bazin, 2000, p. xx). Despite the presence of immunity to smallpox in England before Jenner’s invention, the first scientist to

¹ See the first chapter entitled “On the Long Struggle of Man, before Jenner, to Fight Smallpox (1721-1798)” and devoted to an exploration of the extended history of smallpox, the initial treatments of the disease and the first practioners of these treatments till Jenner’s invention of the vaccination against smallpox in Hervé Bazin’s *The Eradication of Smallpox: Edward Jenner and the First and Only Eradication of Human Infectious Disease* (trans. by Andrew Morgan and Glenise Morgan. San Diego: Academic Press, 2000).

provide immunity against the disease by means of scientific ways and to show the medical prevention of the disease to the public was Jenner. “Jenner’s vaccine eradicated humankind’s deadliest infection, smallpox, from the face of the earth” (Offit, 2008, p. 31). Sophie Ochmann and Hannah Ritchie’s opening paragraph in one of their studies reveals the importance of Jenner’s invention:

Until today smallpox is the only human disease that has been successfully eradicated. The eradication of smallpox is therefore a major success story for global health for several reasons: it was a disease that was endemic – and caused high mortality rates – across all continents; but was also crucial to advances in the field of immunology as the smallpox vaccine was the first successful vaccine to ever be invented (2018, no pagination).

In the closing sentences of his work *Inquiry*², Jenner (1802) himself gives both the extent of the seriousness of the disease smallpox he fought against, and the extent of the significance of his research which he concluded with triumph:

To have admitted the truth of a doctrine, at once so novel and so unlike anything that ever had appeared in the Annals of Medicine, without the test of the most rigid scrutiny, would have bordered upon temerity: but now, when that scrutiny has taken place, not only among ourselves but in the first professional circles in Europe, and when it has been uniformly found in such abundant influences that the human frame, when once it has felt the influence of the genuine Cow Pox in the way that has been described, is never afterwards at any period of its existence available by the Small Pox, may I not with perfect confidence congratulate my country and society at large on their beholding, in the mild form of the Cow Pox, an antidote that is capable of extirpating from the earth a disease which is every hour devouring its victims; a disease that has ever been considered as the feverest Scourge of the human race (p. 130).

When we look at literary history, we encounter the existence of literary works produced to appreciate science and the scientists who invented new things and came up with novel ideas. The English poet Robert Bloomfield’s “Song,” written for the honour of Doctor Edward Jenner, is one of these works which carries the qualities of both a lyric poem and an ode and in which we see the praise of a scientist who invented the way of overcoming a prevalent and life-threatening disease. Jenner is reflected in the poem as the benevolent man of science.

The poem, written in 1803 for the anniversary of Jenner’s birthday, attracts the attention of today’s reader due to its appreciation of Jenner, who not only invented vaccination against smallpox but also granted it to the benefit of all humanity. Jenner is known to have refused “to patent his discovery, fearing doing so would raise the cost beyond the reach of the poorer classes” (Kotar and Gessler, 2013, p. 50). In this regard, the poem may be considered the expression of the gratitude toward Jenner for his philanthropic activities. The purpose of this study is to highlight the elements of praise in the poem to indicate how Bloomfield expressed not only his gratitude but also the gratefulness of all people to Jenner for his invention of the smallpox vaccine and thus constituted an appreciative response and a kind of genuflection to the scientist’s noble act of inventing vaccination against smallpox, a fatal disease.

² The work was thoroughly written with the 18th century English script. In the following extract, the words containing script unfamiliar to today’s reader have been written, by the author of this study, with the familiar script existing in today’s English.

Robert Bloomfield (1766-1823)

Robert Bloomfield is an English poet characterized as a “working-class poet” (Goodridge, 2013, p. 39). His works are appreciated in the context of other self-taught poets or bards such as Robert Burns, John Clare, Stephen Duck, James Woodhouse, Mary Collier, Mary Leapor and Ann Yearsley. Many others might be added. Born into a low-income family and being an orphan when he was only one (his father died of smallpox), Bloomfield had to work at the age of eleven. Thus, he was apprenticed on his uncle’s farm. Bloomfield learned to read and write at an early age when he was under her mother’s tutelage. His early reading “included Thomas Gray’s *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* and Oliver Goldsmith’s *The Deserted Village*, both of which were to influence him greatly in his own poetic compositions” (Matthew and Harrison, 2004, p. 280). Bloomfield was sent to London to become a shoemaker when he was fifteen. There, “Bloomfield taught himself English by reading the speeches of Burke, Fox and North in the London newspapers” (Blythe, 1999, p. 96), and his concern with poetry continued. His first poem, “The Village Girl” was published in 1786. The poem that brought Bloomfield a reputation is *The Farmer’s Boy*, which was firstly declined by several publishers but later published in 1800 and sold 25.000 copies in the following two years (“Famous Poet: Robert Bloomfield”, no pagination). The poem is credited as Bloomfield’s “most successful poem in commercial and critical terms, and the one for which he is best remembered” (White, 2013, p. 135). It is “a 1,500-line verse narrative of rural life in Suffolk”, and “Bloomfield’s literary fame still rested upon” this work (Mceathron, 2017, p. 152). The poem became so famous that it was published in America and translated into German, French, Italian, and even into Latin partially. In a study dealing with the function of the social classes in literary studies, Michael Scrivener (2012) states that the literary public largely accepted the works of laboring-class poets, and Bloomfield’s poetry volumes turned into bestsellers along with those of John Clare (p. 280). After his death, John Clare also praises Bloomfield in a letter to Bloomfield’s friend, Thomas Inskip, stating that Bloomfield is “the most original poet of the age and the greatest Pastoral Poet England ever gave birth to” (qtd. in Goodridge, 2013, p. 86). Bloomfield was also admired by Wordsworth and Southey (Romantic Circles, 2018, no pagination). The Romantic poets of the time spoke highly of Bloomfield³. In 1801, Bloomfield’s other work was published. It was *Rural Tales, Ballads, and Songs*, which “contains shorter poems in various metres, mostly vignettes and lyrics depicting the joys and vicissitudes of rural life and the folk ways of villagers” (Matthew and Harrison, 2004, p. 281). His *Wild Flowers; or Pastoral and Local Poetry* was published in 1806 and “sold well and attracted considerable notice in the reviews” (White, 2006, p. xxii). Bloomfield was a famous poet in his lifetime, but later, he tended to be neglected or forgotten because he was not among the mainstream poets in English literature. Fortunately, some important works have recently been held to promote

³ It seems certain that William Wordsworth read Bloomfield’s poems and he wrote, after Bloomfield’s demise, verses to the memory of the poet, published in *Blackwood’s Magazine* on September 1823. The lines read:

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie,
His daily teachers had been woods and rills;
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

Robert Bloomfield, *The Remains of Robert Bloomfield*. Vol. I. (London: Thomas Davidson, 1824), p. 171

Lord Byron also refers to Bloomfield in praise in lines 777 and 782 in his “English Bards and Scotch Reviewers”, which is a satire in verse, and in which he either attacks or praises the poets. See his *Selected Poems of Lord Byron*, ed. and intr. by Paul Wright. (Great Britain: Wordsworth Editions Ltd. 2006). pp.718-719.

awareness about Bloomfield's life and works; for instance, the Robert Bloomfield society was founded in 2000 (Robert Bloomfield Society, 2000, no pagination) and a revised edition of his selected poems edited by John Goodridge and John Lucas was published by Trent Editions in 2007. These efforts have encouraged academic studies related to Bloomfield as a poet and his works. The studies about him indicate that the works of the once-neglected poet have been studied in the literary context as well as its social and historical contexts (White, 2006, p. 17) because he is a working-class poet and his poems have the traces of the communal issues in the lives of the common folk.

Explanation and Interpretation of Bloomfield's Poem "Song" Written for Edward Jenner

The poem which is the primary concern of inquiry in this study was firstly published in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for June (vol. 93, p. 551); it also appeared in *The Lady's Magazine Or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex* in July (vol. 34, p. 383) (*Good Tidings; or News from the Farm (1804) Introduction*, no pagination). The poem also appeared in the book mentioned above, *Selected Poems*, published posthumously and bearing the title "SONG, SUNG BY MR. BLOOMFIELD / At the Anniversary of Doctor Jenner's Birth-Day, 1803"⁴.

Bloomfield's "Song," written to celebrate Jenner's victory against smallpox – one of the deadliest diseases in the world during his lifetime – is a poem between a lyric and an ode, which is actually "a much-practiced form of lyric" (Childs and Fowler, 2006, p. 160). Lyric can be defined as "a fairly short poem, usually expressing the feelings and thoughts of a single speaker in a personal and subjective way". "The lyric genre includes poetry intended to be sung, or clearly derived from a song tradition" (Bozkurt, 1977, p. 52). As a type of poetry, an ode may be defined as "a long lyric poem that is serious in subject and treatment, elevated in style, and elaborate in its stanzaic structure" (Abrams, 1999, p. 198). Emphasizing its other significant qualities Bozkurt (1977) defines an ode as "a ceremonious poem on a public or private occasion, in which personal emotion and general meditation are united" (p. 53). Bloomfield's poem comprises almost all the qualities of lyric poetry and an ode, excluding the ode's lengthy structure. The poem may be counted as a lyric as it is a relatively short one written to be sung, and revealing the poet's feelings and thoughts subjectively and expressively. Besides, it can be considered an ode as it is a ceremonious poem sung on a public occasion — during Jenner's birthday on 17th May 1803 — and its subject matter is a serious one — smallpox vaccination and its inventor. It also unites the poet's emotions and the public's feelings and thoughts on Jenner and his marvelous invention. Lastly and more significantly, it is a poem praising a victor, Doctor Jenner, and his hard-won victory. This poem is also an example of an occasional poem mainly in two respects: Firstly, it is being written to celebrate Jenner's victory over the epidemic disease, smallpox; and secondly, it is being sung on the anniversary of Jenner's birthday. An occasional poem is described as a poem "written to celebrate or memorialize a specific occasion, such as a birthday, a marriage, a death, a military engagement or victory" (Abrams, 1999, p. 197). Bloomfield may be thought to have intended while writing the "Song" to celebrate Jenner's invention and to memorialize Jenner and his invention; likely, Bloomfield did not want Jenner to be forgotten

⁴ Robert Bloomfield, *Selected Poems, Revised and Enlarged Edition*, ed. John Goodridge and John Lucas (Nottingham: Trent Editions, 2007), p. 87. (All future references will be to this edition, and only line numbers of the poem will appear within parentheses in the text).

and wished Jenner to be recalled forever. In fact, the last two lines of the poem prove this idea. In the analysis of the poem, this idea will be held again.

Bloomfield's "Song" is a lyric poem beginning with an apostrophe⁵, considered a common aspect of lyric poetry. The poem is not a long one; ; it consists of six stanzas with four lines. It begins with an address to an element of nature — a cow, from which the vaccination against smallpox is provided. The cow here may refer to all the cows and Blossom, that was the cow from which the dairymaid, Sarah Nelmes, was exposed to the virus of cowpox. This cow had particular importance during Jenner's initial work on smallpox. Through Sarah Nelmes's case, Jenner confirmed his idea that those with cowpox did not experience any dire consequences even if they got smallpox; in some cases, they were never affected by smallpox. To remember Jenner's initial work on smallpox, we can quote the part taken from *Smallpox: A History*:

In May 1796, a dairymaid named Sarah Nelmes presented with a rash on her hand that Dr. Jenner diagnosed as cowpox. She confirmed this by stating that one of her animals, a Gloucester cow named Blossom, had recently contracted cowpox. On May 14, 1796, Jenner took a bold step by inoculating a boy of eight years named James Phipps, son of his gardener. After making several scratches on the lad's arm, he effected an arm-to-hand transfer of matter from one of Sarah's pocks. James became mildly ill with cowpox but recovered within the week. Later exposure to smallpox proved his immunity (Kotar and Gessler, 2013, p. 49).

The cow is referred to as "mild beauty" and "sweet handmaid of Liberty" because it is the cowpox lymph — provided from the cowpoxed cow — that is used to benefit human beings; it is the protection against the fatal disease smallpox. Using the vaccination made of cowpox, man is made free from smallpox. So it is apparent that the speaker speaks as a man so informed and convinced of the benefits derived from cowpox. "Soul-cheering nectar" suggests the vaccination. In these lines, Bloomfield, as a nature poet, takes the cow as a natural element and appreciates it. This treatment of natural elements is common in Romanticism⁶. Knowing that Bloomfield is characterized as a Romantic-era labouring class

⁵ In its simplest sense, an apostrophe is "a poetic exclamation, colored by lament or acclaim". (David Mikics. *A New Handbook of Literary Terms*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 23. Apostrophe is defined by J. A. Cuddon as "a figure of speech in which a thing, a place, an abstract quality, an idea, a dead or absent person, is addressed as if present and capable of understanding" in *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. (England: The Penguin Group, 1998), p. 51.

⁶ As it is widely known nature was a recurrent theme in Romanticism, which was an influential artistic and literary movement originated in Europe toward the end of the 18th century and reached its peak in the first half of the 19th century. With its various elements, landscapes, seasons, plants and etc., nature fascinated English romantic poets so much and stimulated them to create verses about it. Natural phenomena and the beauty of nature took place in the poetry produced in the Romantic Age in English literature. English romantic poets such as William Wordsworth, Percy Bysshe Shelley and John Keats, among others, are the best known nature poets because glorification of nature is an integral part of their poetry. They all suggested that one can reach the truth by observing and studying nature. These poets depicted nature with its different dimensions and qualities and expressed their delight in nature and the rural life (as opposed to the urban life) through their poems. For instance, for William Wordsworth, nature is a divine being and the true happiness could only be achieved by being in harmony with nature. The theme of nature appears in Shelley's poetry as the primary source of poetic inspiration for the poet. His poetry contains the depiction of nature's beauty; he reflected the idea that there is a close connection between nature and the poet. For Keats, nature is a great source of inspiration. He employed many images of nature in his poetry. Keats reflected his love of nature with especially the vivid descriptions of flowers. He found a sensual appeal in nature through flowers with their vibrant colours and scent. What is common in the poetry of nature poets is their view that humankind is a part of nature and nature has a healing power over man. Though there are innumerable books, essays and other studies on Romanticism, there is a need to limit the numbers of the sources, from which the ideas above have been inferred, and which are suggested here. See *English Romantic Poets: Modern Essays in Criticism* (ed. by M.H. Abrams), (London: Oxford UP, 1975); *Bloom's Modern Critical Views: The Romantic Poets* (ed. and intr. by Harold Bloom), (New York: Infobase Learning, 2011); Willard Spiegelman, *The Lives and Works of the English Romantic Poets*. (USA: The Teaching Company, 2002), and *The Romantic Poets: A Guide to Criticism* (ed. by Uttara Natarajan), (Great Britain: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2007).

poet, we can say that his poems carry the qualities of Romantic Poetry and that the natural elements used in the poem contribute to the romantic vision in the poem. The poem's tone is felt from the very first lines of the poem; Bloomfield created an appreciative tone. The atmosphere, which includes the appreciation and love of the rural world, is sustained throughout the poem.

In the second stanza, the hope in man's heart due to the vaccination is revealed by the line "the cup may o'erflow, and new grapes still be growing" (Line 5). The second line in the stanza — "The eyes of the drinkers resplendently shine;" (Line 6) — suggests the idea that those getting vaccination become happy because vaccinated persons are known to become immune from that disease; it is also known that even if vaccinated persons are seized with the disease, they will have the disease in a mild form. The "bright nymph" may be associated with Doctor Jenner, whom the speaker asks for a grant. Addressing the grantor, the speaker implies that his gift is the vaccination against smallpox, by means of which people's hearts would be relieved and thus lead a happy life. The "bright nymph" may also be accepted as the cow that grants his lymph to humanity. The "gift overflowing" may mean both the liquid in the pustules caused by cowpox, used as the smallpox vaccination or the smallpox vaccination itself. The image of relishing wine may suggest enjoying life and living life happily and safely. As a general commentary on the second stanza, it can be said that Bloomfield, as a poet, engaged with the realities of everyday life. This aspect of his poetry may be attributed to its being a poem belonging to self-taught poetry. Julie Pirandi (2008) expresses this quality of self-taught poetry as such: "Self-taught poetry tends to be social, engage a wide audience, and touch on everyday realities" (p. 6). This quality of Bloomfield's poem is directly related to its realism. The poet did not create an ideal world and did not people it with imaginary and unfamiliar personages; instead, he took a real personage like Edward Jenner. Likewise, instead of expressing extraordinary and fantastic things which are the products of his imagination, he dealt with, in the poem, an issue such as a scientific invention that was momentous in his own time.

In the third stanza of the poem, "Beauty" represents Blossom, from which Edward Jenner provided cowpox lymph to inoculate people, with the attenuated virus, against smallpox. Blossom is "the cow who initiated the eradication of the smallpox"; and Jenner is known to have "treated her with all due respect" (Bazin, 2000, p. 54). "Rosebud" may represent the pustules over the udders of the cow caused by cowpox. But interestingly, they are the remedy for smallpox. In the second line of this stanza — "Its guardianship rests with the friends of our cause." (Line 10) — , the poet seems to have adopted Jenner's cause. According to the speaker, this is not only Jenner's cause but also all humanity's cause because many people are affected by smallpox; due to this disease, some people become blind. Blindness is one of the devastating effects of smallpox on the people who seize the disease. Blindness may be taken here as a representative of the ill outcomes of smallpox. We know that death, disfiguration over the faces of victims other parts of their bodies, disorders in the skin of the patients, and blindness are the most common consequences of smallpox. The speaker identifying with the physician or becoming the spokesperson of the physician says that they cannot and should not be indifferent to the people made blind by smallpox. Immediately after asking whether they would be indifferent to the blind, the speaker reacts with an enthusiastic expression, "No!" Jenner is righteously reflected in the poem as the benevolent man of science through the expression "mercy and peace are the first of our laws". In this stanza, the poet's glorification of the scientist is maintained by reflecting Jenner's qualities as a devoted scientist. Here we can remember that Jenner was "revered for offering his discovery to the world free of charge so that vaccination might not be deprived to those

who could not afford it” (Kotar nad Gessler, 2013, p. 71). Generally, in this stanza, Bloomfield seems to have used both georgic elements such as a cow or specifically Blossom and the realistic elements such as the reality of smallpox. This quality of the poem, the mingling of romantic and realistic elements, may be a common aspect of working-class poetry. The poem’s dealing with a social issue such as vaccination is obvious evidence of the sociability of the poem. Romantic elements such as nature and the love of human beings are also reflected along with its sociability.

In the first two lines of the fourth stanza — “Wave, streamers of victory; be bravery required; / Be sails, in all climes, still with honour unfurl’d;” (Lines 13-14)) — Bloomfield describes the place where Jenner’s victory is celebrated; streamers are waving and unfurling there. Here the speaker addresses the streamers to wave — an act whereby, the poet speaker thinks, Jenner’s triumph won by using his bravery would be rewarded. Besides, the speaker tells us that the streamers would travel to every part of the world and appear in various countries as the signs of Jenner’s hard-won victory. These lines can also reflect a mixture of reverence and love towards Jenner, the inventor of the life-protecting scientific method.

In the following lines of the same stanza, Jenner’s philanthropic act is emphasized once again, along with the others’ philanthropy. It is known that Jenner did not quit his work on smallpox vaccination after he invented the vaccination; instead, he continued to produce the vaccination and sent vaccines to the other physicians or medical men so that they could inject the vaccination into the people in their city, town or county or village. The phrase “all lovers of man” may imply those medical men struggling against smallpox with the help of Jenner to eradicate this epidemic disease. The line “ ’Tis to banish the fears, and the tears of the world.” (Line 16) gives the reader the idea that they were working for just one aim: to eradicate smallpox. Edward Jenner and the other doctors and practitioners are appreciated here as they work for the global annihilation of smallpox. The feeling that arises in the reader throughout the stanza is philanthropy.

The first two lines of the penultimate stanza are “All nations shall feel, and all nations inherit / The wonderful blessing we place in their view;” (Lines 17-18). In the light of the history of the eradication of smallpox, we can infer from these lines the idea that the life-saving invention of Doctor Jenner, i.e. the smallpox vaccine, was offered for the service of the other countries. Jenner did not claim any right to the smallpox vaccine because he was such a person having humanitarian feelings toward all people regardless of their nationality or race. Jenner is known to have “made no attempt to enrich himself through his discovery” and “devoted so much time to the cause of vaccination that his private practice and his personal affairs suffered severely” (Riedel, 2005, p. 24). In the next couplet of the same stanza, Jenner wins plaudits due to the grandeur of his achievement, along with his granting his invention to all humanity without receiving any material interest from anyone and any nation.

In the poem’s last stanza, the first two lines read: “From the field, from the farm, comes the glorious treasure, / May its life-saving impulse – all fresh as the morn – ” (Lines 22-23). Bloomfield, in these lines, again focuses on the source of the life-saving vaccination; for this reason, he mentions the places such as “field” and “farm,” where cows live. The vaccine is seen as “the glorious treasure” because it is a splendid invention. Since the vaccine was a novelty in those times, and additionally, as mentioned earlier in the study, since Jenner’s scientific method was the first vaccination in the world, we can say that it resembles a fresh morning. Symbolically, morning in poetic diction represents newness, originality, birth, and a new beginning. Therefore, Jenner’s vaccination may be thought to be a new beginning in human history. Owing to his invention, a novel time has come, and a new path has opened before humanity.

In the last couplet of the poem, Bloomfield tells the reader that Jenner's invention is prevalent worldwide; besides, it will exist in the future. Future generations will make use of his remarkable invention. In the last line, the poet seems to have created an extended concept of time through the line "Till Time has forgot, when his Jenner was born" (Line 24). According to the poet, even in an extended future, Jenner's invention will be known or recalled in the future world; and as the future generations will not forget Jenner, he will live forever. As the poem praises Jenner in this way, it can be thought that by writing this poem, Bloomfield aimed at making people, in the future, know Jenner and memorialize him.

Conclusion

Taking into consideration Bloomfield's poem as a whole, it can be said that Bloomfield, through this poem, brought forward new subject matters such as vaccination and the physician who invented it. Besides, he employed both romantic and realistic elements in his poem. The reflection of the natural elements provides its romanticism, and its touch on a scientific and social issue makes it a realistic work. The general feelings pervading the poem are gratitude, praise, love, joy, and philanthropy. The poet presents the readers with gratitude towards Doctor Jenner in an exquisite manner. His appreciation of the physician is provided in the poem by employing the original metaphors, images, and symbols such as "mild Beauty," "Sweet handmaid of Liberty," "A soul-cheering nectar," "gay rosebud," "streamers of victory," "unfurl'd" streamers, "new grapes" which are expected to grow, "bright nymph," "the blind" and "the wonderful blessing". As can be seen in the explanation and interpretation of Bloomfield's poem in the above part, Bloomfield expressed not only his gratitude but also the gratitude of all people, even that of those who did not live in Jenner's time but today, because we know that if Jenner had not invented the smallpox vaccine, even today people might have died or disfigured or become blind due to smallpox. As the speaker in the poem, Bloomfield revealed his sincere sentiments toward Jenner, the most powerful of which is gratitude. The love and reverence that are reflected throughout the lines are not only towards Jenner but also towards nature, which is represented in the poem through Blossom, that was the cow from which cowpox lymph, i.e. the material for smallpox vaccination, was provided in the initial stages of Jenner's work. It has also been observed in the poem that the philanthropic quality of Jenner is emphasized and glorified.

Bloomfield's poem is a deserved praise for Doctor Edward Jenner. He not only invented the smallpox vaccination through his scientific explorations, observations, and findings but also paved the way for later studies in the field of immunology. At the end of this study, it can be thought that through his poem, Bloomfield aimed to make people know Jenner, respect him, and commemorate him even in the future. Then this study is proof that Bloomfield's purpose has been realized.

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Appendix

SONG, SUNG BY MR. BLOOMFIELD

At the Anniversary of Doctor Jenner's Birth-Day, 1803

Come hither, mild Beauty, that dwell'st on the mountain,
 Sweet handmaid of Liberty, meet us to-day;
 Thy votaries philanthropy ask from thy fountain,
 A soul-cheering nectar wherewith to be gay.
 The cup may o'erflow, and new grapes still be growing; 5
 The eyes of the drinkers resplendently shine;
 But grant us, bright nymph, with thy gifts overflowing,
 To lighten our hearts, and to relish our wine.
 Is Beauty's gay rosebud a prize worth ensuring?
 Its guardianship rests with the friends of our cause. 10
 Shall we mark unconcern'd, what the blind are enduring?
 No! mercy and peace are the first of our laws.
 Wave, streamers of victory; be bravery requited;
 Be sails, in all climes, still with honour unfurl'd;
 All lovers of man with our cause are delighted; 15
 'Tis to banish the fears, and the tears of the world.
 All nations shall feel, and all nations inherit
 The wonderful blessing we place in their view;
 And if in that blessing a mortal claims merit,
 Oh! Jenner—your country resigns it to you! 20
 From the field, from the farm, comes the glorious treasure,
 May its life-saving impulse – all fresh as the morn –
 Still spread round the earth without bounds, without measure,
 Till Time has forgot, when his Jenner was born.

Robert Bloomfield (1803)