

**A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF
THE PLAGUE: WITH
OBSERVATIONS ON ITS
PREVENTION AND CURE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649349043

A Brief Description of the Plague: With Observations on Its Prevention and Cure by Richard Pearson

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RICHARD PEARSON

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BY

RICHARD PEARSON, M. D.

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.

LONDON:

Printed by J. Moyes, Greville Street, Hatton Garden;

**FOR THOMAS UNDERWOOD, 32, FLEET STREET,
AND 40, WEST SMITHFIELD.**

1813.

PREFACE.

By a strict enforcement of *quarantine*, this country has hitherto been preserved from the dreadful calamity of that pestilence, with which the southern parts of Europe are at this time afflicted; and by an unremitting perseverance in the same precautionary plan, we may still hope to avert the impending evil. Yet while there is the smallest possibility of the *quarantine* being evaded (particularly in the instance of clothes or merchandise) *in a single instance* (which single instance would be adequate to the production of the most extensive misery) *it behoves us to be fully prepared against the introduction of the epidemic.* Hence the author conceives it to be the bounden duty of medical practitioners, in every part of the United

Kingdom, but more especially of those who reside in the sea-port towns, to make themselves acquainted with the symptoms of the plague, with the nature of its contagion, the manner in which it is propagated, and the most effectual means of prevention.

With this intention the present small treatise has been published, which the author would not have ventured upon, had this been the first time of giving his attention to this important subject. But as far back as the year 1788, when he was attending the hospitals at Vienna, his attention was directed to this inquiry, by the conversation among medical men of that capital, on the plague, in consequence of the then rupture between Austria and the Porte. He then consulted the best writers on the subject; and some years after (viz. in 1799) he was induced to translate *De Mertens' Account of the Plague* which raged at Moscow in 1771.

On the present occasion he has derived great assistance from *Dr. Russell's* book; a work which contains a vast stock of valuable information on the subject, but which is by far too

bulky and diffuse to answer the purposes intended by the present publication. He has also been much indebted to a smaller work published by *Dr. Lange*, under the title of *Rudimenta Doctrinæ de Peste* *.

To the information derived from these and other sources, he has added the more recent observations made by the French and British medical practitioners, who accompanied the military expeditions, from their respective countries, to Egypt; the former in 1798, the latter in 1801.

Thus he has endeavoured to give a summary statement of whatever is most interesting in regard to the history, propagation, prevention, and cure of the plague; a statement which, he hopes, will not be unacceptable to the medical profession, in the present circumstances of the country.

In particular, he flatters himself that, under

* Martini Lange, M. D. &c. *Rudimenta Doctrinæ de Peste, quibus additæ sunt Observationes Pestis Transylvanica, Anni 1786. Editio altera. Offenbach, 1791.*

the sections which relate to the PREVENTION and CURE, he has introduced *some new suggestions*, which may not be deemed unworthy of notice.

London, Oct. 12th, 1815.

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