

NOTE A.

EXTRACTS FROM PROCLAMATIONS issued for the enforcement of QUARANTINE at Malta, in 1813.

The following short extracts from these proclamations will convey some notion of the stringency with which quarantine was enforced, particularly in Valetta and Floriana, where they were carried out to the letter. They are well deserving of perusal, and the attention of all interested in the subject of plague; for to them may be fairly ascribed much of the sufferings in 1813.

5th May.—Embargo continued on the shipping—the courts of judicature, the theatre, and other places of public resort closed—the respective offices of government limited to indispensable exigencies—medical persons, aided by other responsible inhabitants, to visit the districts allotted to them.

7th May.—Persons appointed to visit the several quarters of the town, and the lieutenants and other persons appointed for districts to consider themselves branches of the Board of Health, and to report to that Committee in order that means may be taken to punish the disobedient—dogs and cats to be kept in their respective houses—crews on board of ships to consider themselves in quarantine—to avoid all intercourse and crowding—no one permitted to sell linen in the streets—no one allowed to beg.

10th May.—The masters of the principal part of any house to watch the families in the mezzonini's and of the lower apartments(?)—to purify every house in the island, and to burn all useless clothes and rags.

12th May.—Recommendation to the inhabitants to remain shut up in their houses, or, being obliged to go out, to avoid touching any person or thing that can convey infection—to employ a person who is not admitted into the house to purchase the necessaries of life—to have a tub of water at the door into which meat and vegetables are to be thrown and well immersed previously to being touched by the family—money to be passed through vinegar—bread if received hot to remain untouched till cold—papers to be smoked—linen to be washed in the house, and such as may already have been given out, to be received in water and remain therein at least 12 hours before

it is touched—the chief of every family to enforce those on his dependants, and those not conforming to be allowed to quit the house.

15th May.—Prohibited throwing nuisance into the street under a penalty of eight ounces—recommends that every one should avoid all intercourse, and to keep themselves retired and at a distance from all unnecessary or incautious communication—the punishment of death to any one concealing the disease.

19th May.—Ordered “that those who cannot show a reasonable and well-founded motive for leaving their houses, will be considered disobedient, and punished by the police magistrates.” Recommends a general purification of clothes and houses.

21st May.—Accommodation provided for healthy persons from infected houses.

22nd May.—Communication with the shipping to cease after sunset—no boat to ply after eight o'clock—no passage boat to carry more than five persons—the Marina Gate and wicket to be shut after eight o'clock.

24th May.—A reward of 400 dollars for the detection of “those endeavouring to defeat the beneficent intentions of Government.”

29th May.—No person to change his place of residence or to admit any one to become an inmate without permission—all shops to be shut from sunset till six o'clock in the morning—no shop to be kept open during the day without a written authority.

From sunset till sunrise all the inhabitants are to remain in their respective houses—all the foregoing to be observed “under the pain of incurring the punishment awarded to a breach of the quarantine laws.”

1st June.—No person to go beyond the limits of the district(?) The deputies to prevent all persons from assembling, and to prohibit every unnecessary communication between families(?) Any acting in disobedience to these orders to have their whole family placed in the most rigid quarantine. All commercial operations not indispensable to be suspended. The lining of calesses to be removed.

12th June.—No one to pass to Vittoriosa, Senglea, or Cospicua.

15th June.—No one to leave his ship without a written permit. No person to be permitted on board any ship. When any person is taken ill no one to leave the ship until the case is reported to the visitors.

19th June.—That money shall be passed through vinegar; and many recommendations as to all kinds of food.

29th June.—Extraordinary Council of Health established, at which the Governor presides.

8th July.—All vessels in port to be considered in quarantine, "and no hired boat to approach them unattended by a guardian from the Health Office."

11th July.—All passes to cease to be valid from the 14th instant.

13th July.—All communication suspended in regard to the towns of Vittoriosa, Senglea, Cospicua, and Calcara of Vittoriosa, between each other and all parts of the island. The communication between Valetta and Floriana to cease.

17th July.—"No person residing in Valetta or Floriana shall go abroad even within the limits of his respective district, unless *between the hours of 6 and 10 o'clock* in the morning, each of which hours will be notified by the sounding of the great bell of St. John's church." That between the above-mentioned hours all unnecessary communication is to be avoided. Only one person from each family to be permitted to go to the market of the district. "That at the expiration of the time above specified the venders at the different markets shall quit their stalls; the shops shall be shut, and all the inhabitants shall be obliged to *retire within their respective places of abode until the following morning.*"

16th July.—Pigeons, fowls, and poultry of every description to be confined, and cats, dogs, and other animals to be prevented going out. No clothes of any description to be exposed in the balconies, windows, or doors. Persons transgressing any of the articles in the proclamation to be arrested, and rendered *liable to corporal punishment.*

1st August.—The punishment of death to any person changing his residence without special permission from the Council of Health; the same to any one concealing their illness; the same to persons guilty of entering an infected house; the same to persons wilfully concealing the illness of others; the same for the concealment of any article ("even though not susceptible of infection.")

2nd August.—All permits, whether to town or country, to cease. That the proclamation of the 17th July authorizing persons to go out to market between the hours of 6 and 10 in the morning *be annulled*, "and that no inhabitant of Valetta or Floriana, with the exception above provided for, shall be at liberty to go abroad into the street, without subjecting himself to the most prompt and rigorous punishment awarded by the laws of quarantine."

4th August.—That "the inhabitants of each district be invited to form themselves into a guard for the maintenance of good order, cleanliness, and the strict observance of quarantine."

10th August.—"No person to shoot or go out in the pursuit of game under the severest penalties."

17th August.—Antonio Borg shot for having been discovered concealing the pestilential disease with which he was affected.

22nd August.—Considering the number of hands required for the cotton harvest, prohibits every one, under the severest penalty, from gathering it, but orders it to be consumed by the cattle.

25th August.—That all the cotton of this year is to be considered an infected article.

27th August.—Population prohibited buying fruit at the barriers.

10th September.—Cordons of troops ordered to surround the casals of Zebbug, Birchircara, and Curmi.

4th October.—Congratulates the inhabitants on the declension of the disease.