

**NARRATIVES OF TWO FAMILIES EXPOSED  
TO THE GREAT PLAGUE OF LONDON, A.D.  
1665; WITH CONVERSATIONS ON  
RELIGIOUS PREPARATION FOR  
PESTILENCE. REPUBLISHED, WITH NOTES  
AND OBSERVATIONS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649015221

Narratives of two families exposed to the great plague of London, A.D. 1665; with conversations on religious preparation for pestilence. Republished, with notes and observations by John Scott

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Cover @ 2017

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REPUBLISHED, WITH NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS,

BY JOHN SCOTT, M. A.

VICAR OF NORTH FERRIBY, AND MINISTER OF S. MARY'S, BULL,  
&c.

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MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTION

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PRINTED FOR R. B. SEELEY AND W. BURNSIDE :  
AND SOLD BY L. B. SEELEY AND SONS,  
FLEET STREET, LONDON.  
MDCCLXXXII.

*e 11/5.*

PRINTED BY L. B. SEELEY AND SONS, WESTON GREEN,  
THAMES DITTON.

## PREFACE,

BY THE EDITOR.

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SOME four or five and thirty years ago my attention was attracted, at a book-stall in London, to a small duodecimo volume, neatly bound, and lettered on the back, "PLAGUE FOR SOUL AND BODY." The title page furnished the *rectification* of this grotesque labelling: "Preparations for the Plague, (Preparations) as well for Soul as Body." —The work is anonymous—printed at London "for E. Matthews at the Bible, and J. Batley at the Dove, in Paternoster Row," in 1722. This was a time when the plague, which had com-

menced at Marseilles in 1720, was still raging in France, and was making such progress towards our own shores as induced the government of that day to adopt measures, similar to those which are now employed to prevent, by the blessing of God upon them, the introduction or diffusion of another fatal disease amongst us, which is calculated to have carried off, in various parts of the world, as many as fifty millions of our fellow creatures within the last fourteen years!—In particular we may observe, that at the period referred to those *prayers* were first introduced, which are now by public authority again used amongst us.<sup>1</sup>

I purchased for sixpence the little volume I have described: and, on perusing it, found it to contain, in the form of a history of a family shut up in London at the time, an Account of the great plague of A. D. 1665, which is highly

<sup>1</sup> Christian Observer, Nov. 1831.



interesting and affecting, and at the same time free from those minute and revolting descriptions, which sometimes make us turn away from such narratives with horror. This is followed by a series of Conversations between the members of another family, exposed to the same awful visitation, on the spiritual preparation requisite to fortify the mind in the prospect of such a calamity, and to secure our meeting it *unharm'd*, if it should really come.

Several friends, to whom I lent the volume, read it with no less gratification than it had afforded me: and, during the many years that I have now had a family about me, it has been so much a favourite among them, that I found I could seldom afford a greater treat to my children, than by allowing them the use of "the Plague Book."

The *Conversations* I conceive to be of a highly useful character, as well as entertaining. Very forcibly indeed do

they seem to me to press upon the conscience the necessity of living prepared for death and eternity ; strikingly illustrating the happy effects of so doing on the one hand, and, on the other, the unhappy consequences which follow from the neglect of it, whenever danger arises.

On these grounds, and in consideration of the scarcity of the book—of which I have never seen, or, properly speaking, heard of another copy—<sup>1</sup> I have often entertained the thoughts of reprinting it, at least in an abridged form. This, however, has hitherto remained among my unexecuted purposes. I hope the work may have been reserved

<sup>1</sup> In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1826 appeared, in the numbers for April and July, some extracts from the narrative portion of both parts of the work—communicated by Mr. W. Hamilton Reid. That gentleman, however, did not point out the source from which he had derived them ; but only observed that they were “not in any popular author that he had read,” but were “among the many traits of former times collected during his limited researches into the antiquities of the great city.” From the *Gentleman's*, the first, at least, of the extracts was transferred to the pages of the *Youth's Magazine*—an evidence that it was esteemed interesting.

for a time when it may be more seasonable, and therefore more useful. To young persons, in particular, I dare promise that it will afford much interesting information; while I hope it may at the same time, by the blessing of God, make very salutary impressions on their hearts.

In republishing, however, I have not thought it necessary to give the whole of the volume. It contains discussion on the contagious nature of the plague, (which was then disputed, as that of the Cholera is now,) and many things on medical and economical provision against it, which do not concern general readers, or perhaps readers of any class in the present day. All these therefore I have dropped; and other parts I have abridged: thus reducing the former division of the work by more than one half. The latter division admitted of less retrenchment: though this also is reduced in size.

As no known author was answerable