

I observed that people were no less anxious to avoid contact with me than I with them. The consul received me kindly, and knowing that I came from an uninfected country invited me to dinner. The French consul did the same; the other consuls were already shut up, and most of the merchants would have no communication with the outer world. The same evening, on going to take leave of my own consul, I found him about to take stricter precautions, as he had heard that three persons in Salines were attacked. I returned to sleep on board.

Next day I landed to pay my respects to the French consul, and was at once warned that of the three persons attacked two were dead, and the third was dangerously ill. Other persons too had been seized. I went straight to my own consul, who had cut himself completely off and I could only talk with him through the grating or barrier which on such occasions is put across the door. I found the French consul still at large, and he told me that all along the Syrian coast, as well as inland, the presence of plague had been suspected for two months past; but they had received scant news thence, and hoped the disease had not spread. As I had to touch at these ports this was another unpleasantness for me, but still I resolved to go back on board, and with the first fair wind to leave Cyprus, in hope of finding better luck in Syria. I bid the Tuscan consul farewell, and embarked that evening.

Cyprus had been free from plague for 30 years, and now it was brought by some sailors saved from the wreck of a Turkish xebec from Alexandria, which foundered off Paphos. Nicosia, whither the survivors had gone for refuge, was first attacked. I learned later that the disease had spread over the whole island, and did not cease until June of that year, 1760, after the deaths of 22,000 persons.

On February 8 I left the roadstead of Salines, and the next day arrived at Caifa in Syria, the season not allowing us to anchor at Acre, a port eight miles to the north.