

Rotha Mary Clay, The Medieval Hospitals of England. Methuen & Co. London, 1909.

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APPENDIX A

OFFICE AT THE SECLUSION OF A LEPER

[Translated from the *Manuale ad Usus Insignis Ecclesiae Sarum*, printed in *York Manual, &c., Appendix*, Surtees Society, Vol. 63. p. 105*] (sic)

*The Manner of casting out or separating those who are sick with leprosy from the whole.*¹

First of all the sick man or leper clad in a cloak and in his usual dress, being in his house, ought to have notice of the coming of the priest who is on his way to the house to lead him to the Church, and must in that guise wait for him. For the priest vested in surplice and stole, with the Cross going before, makes his way to the sick man's house and addresses him with comforting words, pointing out and proving that if he blesses and praises God, and bears his sickness patiently, he may have a sure and certain hope that though he be sick in body he may be whole in soul, and my reach the home² of everlasting welfare. And then with other words suitable to the occasion let the priest lead the leper to the Church, when he has sprinkled him with holy water, the Cross going before, the priest following, and last of all the sick man. Within the church let a black cloth, if it can be had, be set upon two trestles at some distance apart before the altar, and let the sick man take his place on bended knees beneath it between the trestles, after the manner of a dead man, although

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by the grace of God he yet lives in body and sprit, and in this posture let him devoutly hear Mass. When this is finished, and he as been sprinkled with holy water, he must be led with the Cross through the presbytery to a place where a pause must be made. When the spot is reached the priest shall counsel him out of Holy Scripture, saying : "Remember thine end and thou shalt never do amiss." [Esclus. vii. 36.] (sic) Whence Augustine says : "He readily esteems all things lightly, who ever bears in mind that he will die." The priest then with the spade (*palla*) casts earth on each of his feet, saying : "Be thou dead to the world, but alive again unto God."

And he comforts him and strengthens him to endure with the words of Isaiah spoken concerning our Lord Jesus Christ :— “Truly He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet did we esteem Him as a leper smitten of God and afflicted” [Isa. iii. 4, Vulgate] (sic) ; let him say also : “If in weakness of body by means of suffering thou art made like unto Christ, thou mayest surely hope that thou wilt rejoice in spirit with God. May the Most High grant this to thee, numbering thee among His faithful ones in the book of life. Amen.”

It is to be noted that the priest must lead him to the Church, from the Church to his house as a dead man, chanting the *Responsorium Libera me, Domine*, in such wise that the sick man is covered with a black cloth. And the Mass celebrated at his seclusion may be chosen either by the priest or by the sick man, but is customary to say the following :—

Introitus. Circumdederunt me. Quære in *Septuagesima*.

Collecta. Omnipotens sempiternus Deus, salus æterna credentium.

Epistola. Carissimi, Tristatur quis vestrum.

Resp. Miserere mei.

Vers. Conturbata sunt. Alleluya. V. Qui sanat.

Si in Quadragesima, Tractus. Commovisti.

Evangelium. Intravit Jesus in Capharnaum.

Offertorium. Domine, exaudi.

Secreta et Postcommunio in communibus orationibus.

Communio. Redime, Deus, Israel ex omnibus angustiis nostris.

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When leaving the Church after Mass the priest ought to stand at the door to sprinkle him with holy water. And he ought to commend him to the care of the people. Before Mass the sick man ought to make his confession in the church, and never again ; and in leading him forth the priest again begins the *Responsorium Libera me, Domine*, with the other vesicles. Then when he has come into the open fields he does as is aforesaid ; and he ends by imposing prohibitions upon him in the following manner :—

“I forbid you ever to enter Churches, or to go into a market, or a mill, or a bakehouse, or into any assemblies of people.

Also I forbid you ever to wash your hands or even any of your belongings in spring or stream of water of any kind ; and if you are thirsty you must drink water from your cup or some other vessel.

Also I forbid you ever henceforth to go out without your leper’s dress, that you may be recognized by others ; and you must not go outside your house unshod.

Also I forbid you, wherever you may be, to touch anything which you wish to buy, otherwise than with a rod or staff to show what you want.

Also I forbid you ever henceforth to enter taverns or other houses if you wish to buy wine ; and take care even that what they give you they put into your cup.

Also I forbid you to have intercourse with any woman except your own wife.

Also I command you when you are on a journey not to return an answer to any one who questions you, till you have gone off the road to leeward, so that he may take no harm from you ; and that you never go through a narrow lane lest you should meet some one.

Also I charge you if need require you to pass over some toll-way (*pedagium*) through (?) rough ground (*super apra*), or elsewhere, that you touch no posts or things (*instrumenta*) whereby you cross, till you have first put on your gloves.

Also I forbid you to touch infants or young folk, whosoever they may be, or to give to them or to others any of your possessions.

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Also I forbid you henceforth to eat or drink in any company except that of lepers. And know that when you die you will be buried in your own house, unless it be, by favour obtained beforehand, in the Church.

And note that before he enters his house, he ought to have a coat and shoes of fur, his own plain shoes, and his signal the clappers, a hood and a cloak, two pair of sheets, a cup, a funnel, a girdle, a small knife, and a plate. His house ought to be small, with a well, a couch furnished with coverlets, a pillow, a chest, a table, a seat, a candlestick, a shovel, a pot, and other needful articles.

When all is complete the priest must point out to him the ten rules which he has made for him ; and let him live on earth in peace with his neighbour. Next must be pointed out to him the ten commandments of God, that he may live in heaven with the saints, and the priest repeats them to him in the presence of the people. And let the priest also point out to him that every day each faithful Christian is bound to say devoutly *Pater noster*, *Ave Maria*, *Credo in Deum*, and *Credo in Spiritum*, and to protect himself with the sign of the Cross, "Worship God, and give thanks to God. Have patience, and the Lord will be with thee. Amen."

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~Footnotes

1. This is identical with the 3rd Ordo given in Martene, lib. iii. c.x., from the Ritual of Bourges and Sens issued by the command of Cardinal Borbonius (Henderson).

2. Domum (Henderson) ; or, reading Donum (with Martene, etc.) we may translate this :— "may obtain the gift of everlasting salvation."

-end Appendix A-