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Title: Khlebnikov's Unpublished Notes on Pharmacology

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Khlebnikov's Unpublished Notes on Pharmacology

Introduction

The Russian expansion into North America, which began in 1741 with the discovery of Alaska by navigators Vitus Bering and Aleksei Chirikov, was challenging for a number of reasons, especially by the lack of adequate healthcare services at the time. Numerous communicable diseases such as measles, smallpox, and a plethora of sexually transmitted diseases, substantially decreased the life expectancy of early settlers. Native American cultures, which were shielded from European diseases for thousands of years, were unable to cure strange maladies using traditional herbal medicine.

The understanding of medicinal best practices among settlers in Russian America was practically non-existent. For over two decades all those in service to the Russian American Company used the services of ship doctors who came from the Russian Empire to the North American shores about once a year.

The colony of Fort Ross, built on the ancient site of Kashia Pomo settlement in California was no exception. Yet, despite the lack of standardized healthcare service, settlers of Fort Ross, in comparison to other RAC outposts, thrived in the medical field and in 1837 successfully defeated a major smallpox outbreak by providing preventative vaccination against highly contagious and fatal variola virus to all members of the community, including the Kashia Pomo.

Exploring the history of healthcare services at Fort Ross and in Russian America, researcher Igor Polishchuk and Volgda historian Dr. Yuliya Egorova stumbled upon unpublished "Notes on Pharmacology" by Kirill Khlebnikov, a loyal Company employee and author of numerous works on Russian conquest of the new world. These notes, dated 1820, when Khlebnikov was most active in California, resemble a systematic study of medicine and medical practices that Khlebnikov thought should be used to improve the lives of the settlers. The handwritten notes rediscovered in the State Archive of Perm Krai, Russia show that the explorer was seeking to obtain all possible medicinal knowledge from a variety of sources to address the medical concerns of Russian America. So far, Egorova and Polishchuk have managed to decipher some of the text.

We invite all those interested in healthcare of Russian America to review the scans of the archival documents presented to a wider public for the first time in this paper.

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ХЛЕБНИКОВ Кирил Тимофеевич

ДЕЛО

№ _____

Записки К. Т. Хлебникова

по фармакологии

1820

Начато _____ 19__ г.

Окончено _____ 19__ г.

На 2 листах

04
Фонд № 445
Склад № 1
Двад № 37

... sapientiam, et philosophiam, et astronomiam, et artem, et
... et philosophiam, et astronomiam, et artem, et
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Смѣсь Обнова Кавказская, Топарина

Масса съ сахаромъ Мухоморъ:

5 2

class. medicinalis
1815

Медведевъ подалъ въ Кавказъ рецептъ на смѣсь М. съ
травъ мѣся, и называетъ смѣсь эту Кавказскую и притомъ Обнова
смыслъ Кавказская и притомъ, полагая что въ ней каждаго вещества
Доктора Мухоморъ, Доктора Кавказа, Кавказская и притомъ называетъ; но полагая что
смыслъ ея въ ней не называетъ.

Caster oil for purges

Two Spoonful with the same quantity
of molasses, and as much hot water, is
an excellent purge in cholics, Dry-bellyach, but is useful
bloody-plat and gripplings in the bowels, ^{but is useful}
if it does not purge freely, in two ^{or three} hours
or three hours it may be repeated;
clysters may be given in the mean
time to hasten its operation. To make
a clyster, take half a pint of sea-
water warm, and sweeten it with
molasses - put in little lard - ^{course case}
or they may be made with water
of well strained and sweetened, or
chicken broth, which is nourishing. ^{or the best case}

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