Title: Khlebnikov’s Unpublished Notes on Pharmacology

Author(s): By Kirill Khlebnikov

Source: Fort Ross Conservancy Library

URL: http://www.fortross.org/lib.html

Unless otherwise noted in the manuscript, each author maintains copyright of his or her written material.

Fort Ross Conservancy (FRC) asks that you acknowledge FRC as the distributor of the content; if you use material from FRC’s online library, we request that you link directly to the URL provided. If you use the content offline, we ask that you credit the source as follows: “Digital content courtesy of Fort Ross Conservancy, www.fortross.org; author maintains copyright of his or her written material.”

Also please consider becoming a member of Fort Ross Conservancy to ensure our work of promoting and protecting Fort Ross continues: http://www.fortross.org/join.htm.

This online repository is brought to you by Fort Ross Conservancy, a 501(c)(3) and California State Park cooperating association. FRC’s mission is to connect people to the history and beauty of Fort Ross and Salt Point State Parks.
Khlebnikov's Unpublished Notes on Pharmacology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 Kray, 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.
Дело

Записки К. П. Хлебникова
пo фармакологии

1820

Начатo ______________ 19 г.
Окончено ______________ 19 г.

На 2 листах
Caster oil for purges.

Two spoonfuls, with the same quantity of molasses, and as much hot water, is an excellent purge in cholics, dry-bellies, but perhaps bloody-stool and gripings in the bowels. If it does not purge freely, in two or three hours it may be repeated; a distemper may be given in the mean time to hasten its operation. To make a distemper, take half a pint of sea-water warm, and sweeten it with molasses—put in little hops-lad, comes up. They may be made with water, gravel strained and sweetened, or chicken broth, which is nourishing.