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Historical papers published in the year 1959-1971 by pharmaceutical botanists in Warsaw

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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.



HISTORICAL PAPERS PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1959—1971 BY PHARMACEUTICAL
BOTANISTS IN WARSAW

The Department of Pharmaceutical Botany, Warsaw Academy of Medicine, is chiefly interested in experimental research both botanical and biological. Its scientific works belong to: taxonomic plant anatomy, chemotaxonomy of plants, numerical taxonomy (botany), cell and tissue culture, study of effects of chemicals on dividing cells (biology).

Some staff members of the Department are also devoted to the study of the history of pharmaceutical botany. They published six papers in series B of the Polish „*Studia i Materiały z Dziejów Nauki Polskiej*” (Studies and Materials for the History of Polish Science), in the years 1959—1971.

1

M. Furmanowa, Z. Michalska, A. Parczewski, I. Zarębska: *The Herbal by Marcin of Urzędów*. No. 2:1959 p. 233—313.

The Polish Herbal by Marcin of Urzędów is the first original our medico-botanical work. It appeared in print in 1595, 22 years after the death of its author.

The Herbal is composed of two books. The first the larger one and the first part of book II contain a description of medical herbs and trees. They are arranged in alphabetical order of their Latin names. Marcin gives in most cases a description of the plant, its blooming time, its growing places and often an illustration.

Those plants described by Marcin that were now identified are arranged according to Wettstein's system. The list contains 406 species of plants. In his Herbal Marcin is giving extensive informations as to medical action of plants. We are often amazed seeing the perfect estimate as to the value of a plant and its proper application in medicine. Many plants contained in the Herbal are now well known as raw materials for drugs having cardiac, sedative or stimulating properties. Drug plants are recommended to be used internally as well externally.

We find in Marcin's work information concerning household, cosmetic prescriptions and remarks on hygiene. Beside much knowledge and wisdom there is much prejudice and superstition in the Herbal. In the chapter before last in the book dealing with ores we find descriptions of mineral raw materials and their medical action. The last section of the Herbal contains 35 chapters describing drugs of animal origin, foodstuffs and substances for drugs preparation.

Herbal by Marcin of Urzędów may be considered to be the first Polish textbook of pharmacognosy.

2

H. Bukowiecki, M. Furmanowa: *Drugs and medicaments in military hospitals of Kościuszko's Army and American revolutionary Army*. No. 12:1966 p. 3—40.

Our knowledge of the medicaments applied in military hospitals of Kościuszko's Army and American revolutionary Army originates from two military pharmacopoeias.

Pharmacopoeia Castrensis et Nosocomialis Exercitus Nationalis (1794) which is commonly called Kościuszko's Pharmacopoeia was the main subject of this paper. The Lititz Pharmacopoeia (1778) published in USA was useful to the comparative

study with our military pharmacopoeia. The number of drug plants in Kościuszko's Pharmacopoeia is twice as much as in Lititz Pharmacopoeia, that of chemicals only about a half. There are not many common medicaments in both pharmacopoeias, they are distinguished in this paper by the mark.

The biggest difference between both pharmacopoeias is that Kościuszko's Pharmacopoeia includes a large *Index Morborum et Medicaminum quo ad vires medicas et chirurgicas* which does not exist in the Lititz Pharmacopoeia. That is the reason it is most interesting to scientists. The knowledge of the Lititz Pharmacopoeia is very common in USA thanks to facsimile reprints. It is our duty to make facsimile reproduction of valuable and very rare Kościuszko's Pharmacopoeia. It should be known to all Polish historians of botany, pharmacy and medicine.

3

H. Bukowiecki, B. Bełdowska: *Plantae Karoanae in Herbarium Generale at Warsaw University*. No 14:1968 p. 75—122.

Ferdynand Karo (1845—1927), an eminent herbalist and pharmacist of Poland, was at the end of his life honoured with the highest distinction of the Polish Botanical Society, becoming a Member of Honour of this Society. The scientific career of Ferdynand Karo can be distinctly divided into two periods: one of them he spent in Poland, the other in East Siberia. The first period lasted from 1857 to 1887, the other from 1887 to 1913.

Ferdynand Karo was a born botanist. Already as twelve-years old boy he used to like floristic excursions in the company of his teacher dr Milde. Some specimens of orchids and other plants collected by Karo in the vicinity of Wrocław have been preserved till now in Herbarium Generale which is now in the possession of the Institute of Systematics and Geography of Plants of Warsaw University. The labels, in the handwriting of the young botanist, are written in Polish. Ten years later Ferdynand Karo left Szkoła Główna University in Warsaw where he had accomplished studies at the Department of Pharmacy. In the same year 1867 Karo published in „Oesterreichische Botanische Zeitschrift” a contribution to the description of flora of the vicinity of Warsaw.

The times were disquiet, floristic excursions seemed suspicious for Cossack patrols. Karo had to be careful because he had been imprisoned and found guilty during the January Uprising for taking part in an insurrectional mail.

The successive stage of Karo's work both pharmaceutic and floristic in Poland were: Łosice, Częstochowa, Lublin. The results of his research on flora were published either in Polish or in German.

During the Siberian part of his scientific career Karo stayed in Irkuck, Nerczyńsk, Błagowieszczeńsk and Zejska Przyszań. He did not remain long in Irkuck, but he noticed here a beautiful shrub *Rhododendron dahuricum* L., which now in the Botanical Garden of Warsaw University reminds us of our compatriot. A few years's stay in Nerczyńsk was also very fruitful for Karo. There he collected the specimens which were published as *Plantae Karoanae* and *Plantae Karoanae dahuricae* by Joseph Freyn in „Oesterreichische Botanische Zeitschrift” in the years 1889, 1890, 1895 and 1896.

Many years of hard work in Błagowieszczeńsk over Amur and in Zejska Przyszań over Zeja, a tributary of Amur, also yielded a rich crop to Karo's work — a herbal on which Freyn based his *Plantae Karoanae amuricae et zeaënsae*, published in „Oesterreichische Botanische Zeitschrift” in 1901, 1902 and 1903.

Before the outbreak of the World War I, Ferdynand Karo come back to his country. For a short spell of time he took position of a manager in a chemist's

shop, later he was an advisor in herbarium problems and finally he became a librarian and a curator of the collection of Warsaw Pharmaceutical Society, which embraced also a section of floristic specimens. In 1925 his 65th anniversary of active work as a pharmacist was celebrated. The authors of this paper have investigated the questions: which herbarium specimens collected by Karo have been preserved in Herbarium Generale at Warsaw University? and which of the preserved ones represent new species?

Out of almost a hundred thousand herbarium specimens investigated, the authors singled out 493 species. The sign + is given to the new species (thirteen in number) which were discovered for science by Ferdynand Karo.

The collection of Karo helped to discovery of a new species in Poland. Dr Irena Kucowa from Cracow established the rank of a species of *Galium Karoi* sp.n. which used to be collected by Karo in Olsztyn near Cześćochowa.

4

H. Bukowiecki, M. Kostyniuk, R. Figurski: *Some botanical old books in Załuski Library*. No 16:1969 p. 3—14.

Załuski Library was founded in Warsaw in 1747, six years earlier than the famous British Museum Library in London, founded by Sir Hans Sloane, the physician and apothecary to the king. After the fall of the State of Poland in 1795 Załuski Library was transported to Petersburg. After it had been claimed back it was incorporated into the collection of the National Library in Warsaw and together with the National Library it was in greater part destroyed by fire during the Nazi occupation. Out of the total number 300 000 volumes 12 000 volumes were saved and are now available mainly in Warsaw University Library. These comprise scores of old books on botany. The authors have chosen for the purpose of the present discussion 9 volumes of the XVI th century, 2 of the XVII the century and 2 of the XVIII th century.

In 4 volumes Polish glosses have been found concerning the local names of plants, especially medical ones.

This paper bears the character of a temporal report. It ought to be continued in order to take the full advantage of the existence of hundreds of Polish glosses which constitute a very interesting monument of Polish botanical nomenclature of their times.

5

H. Bukowiecki, M. Furmanowa, J. Sujka: *Medical herbs in Pharmacopoeia Regni Poloniae (1817)*. No. 16:1969 p. 15—53.

Pharmacopoeia Regni Poloniae, published in Warsaw in 1817 and written in Latin, is the first Polish pharmacopoeia, officially recognized by the state as valid in all dispensaries of the country called the Kingdom of Poland (which was a political body formed according to the will of Alexander I at the Congress of Vienna after the final fall of Napoleon who had previously called into being the so-called Duchy of Warsaw).

The Pharmacopoeia of the Kingdom of Poland was, for its times, a serious work based mainly on the Prussian Pharmacopoeia of the year 1813 which was generally considered to be the model one.

Pharmacopoeia Regni Poloniae contains three parts. 1) *Materia Pharmaceutica* (which gives in the alphabetical order descriptions of plant, animal and chemical raw materials), 2) *Praeparata et Composita* (set also in alphabetical order and

furnishing prescriptions how to prepared drugs, some of them quite complicated), 3) extensive Index.

The authors attempted to find answers to the following questions: 1) what species of plants were compulsory in Polish dispensaries arranged according to the requirements of the *Pharmacopoeia Regni Poloniae*?, 2) where did they come from: were they native or foreign or even exotic?, 3) in what form (bark, roots, herbs, resins, balms etc.) did they come to the herb storehouses of the dispensaries?, 4) what drugs were made in the local laboratories?, 5) are these raw materials of the 1817 still used in modern medicine? 6) what new materials have won general estimation in modern times?

6

H. Bukowiecki, M. Furmanowa: *On changes in the nomenclature of some medicinal plants in the post-Linnaean period*. No. 21:1971 p. 47—57.

In the history of botanical nomenclature the year 1753 opens the modern era. From that time, that is from the publication of Linnaeus's *Species Plantarum* all species of flowering plants supplemented with dates of publication and bibliographical annotations have been collected in the monumental *Index Kewensis*. This *Index* has been appearing since 1895. It can be compared to the most comprehensive dictionaries called by philologists thesauri (e.g. *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*). From this thesaurus the authors draw examples of homonymy of Polish medicinal plants fairly frequent in the Latin nomenclature.

It appeared that several botanists used sometimes the same name to denote completely different species. One example is the name *Pinus silvestris* applied by Linnaeus, Baumgarten, Gouan, Laureiro, Miller and Thunberg to six quite different plants.

Taxonomy becomes an increasingly precise discipline. This task is fulfilled by the *International Codices of Botanical Nomenclature* published since 1952. Owing to international cooperation and authority of these *Codices* it is unlikely that anyone should dare create homonyms.

The Warsaw pharmaceutical botanists published some other papers in: "Acta Societatis Botanicorum Poloniae", "Comptes rendus mensuels de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences et des Lettres", "Quarterly Journal of the History of Science and Technology", "Polish Pharmacy", "Quarterly Journal of Warsaw Academy of Medicine" and *Monographs from the History of Science and Technology*.

The review of these historical papers will subsequently be reported.

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„Z dějn věd a techniky na Slovensku”. [T.] VIII. VĚDA. Vyd. Slovenskej Akadémie Věd. Bratislava 1977, 478 s. ilustr., bibliografia w notkach, streszcz. niem.

Na ogół niewiele wiemy o stanie badań nad dziejami nauki i techniki na Słowacji. Publikacje z tej dziedziny docierają do nas sporadycznie. Każdorazowo jednak jesteśmy nimi faszynowani zarówno ze względu na gruntowne ujęcie tematu¹, jak i wysoki poziom edytorski poszczególnych wydawnictw. Dotyczy to także najnowszego tomu „Z dějn věd a techniky na Slovensku”, rocznika wydawanego

¹ Myślę przede wszystkim o wydanej w Bratisławie w 1970 r. książce Š. Butkoviča pt. *História slovenského drahého opálu z Dubínka*, której recenzja ukazała się w 1972 r. w „Kwartalniku Historii Nauki i Techniki” (nr 1 s. 140—142).