

Conclusions

1. The relationship between natural sciences and medicine has been much closer throughout the history of medicine in Transylvania than it is today: physicians would observe and analyse nature, hike across the Carpathian Mountains, put together botanical, zoological or mineral collections.

2. During the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries Transylvania had quite a number of scientists well educated that would dedicate themselves to different branches of science (philosophy, mathematics, literature, natural sciences).

There was also the specialised researcher that would mainly take up on one science and professionally engage in it (for instance the math specialist Bolyai Janos). Ignaz Edler von Born, born in 1742 in Cavnic (Transylvania) was a dedicated mineralogist. He had an important library and mineral collection and contributed to the foundation of the first international scientific society (Societat der Bergbaukunde -SDB).

3. The interdisciplinarity, the medical and natural sciences societies, the collections and the museums, all played a very important part in the development of the medical education and the foundation of professional medicine.

4. The twenty-first century physician uses a computer and learns about the new discoveries over the Internet but is oblivious to the knowledge on soil or water composition. Medicine today is getting harder to practice due to the great amount of information available. However, familiarity with some of the aspects of natural sciences (botany, geology, the chemistry of the soil and waters) would be a great addition to medical education and would contribute to the increase in the quality of the curing process. The curing process needs to always be simple ("Simplex veri sigillum" – "the main feature of the truth is its simplicity"), in the words of Boerhaave (a scientist, a practitioner and a professor, considered to be the founder of the clinical medical education).

References

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