

Ernesta Jeremiasza Neifelda prace i poglądy przyrodnicze

E.J. Neifeld's works and ideas on natural history

SUMMARY

E.J. Neifeld (1721-1773) is known for his work as a physician – he worked at Leszno, in western Poland – and for his editorship of the first Polish scientific medical journal, “*Primitiae physicomedicae*”. The current paper presents in some detail Neifeld’s chemical analyses of mineral waters which he performed at Altwasser (Stary Zdrój) and Gimmeln (Jemielno). In this medical works, Neifeld propagated the latest scientific discoveries of this times, such as the advances in understanding the circulatory system, and the results of microscopic investigations of blood and human sperm. Neifeld postulated that there exists a special electric fluid (*materia electrica*) which fills all bodies, including the human body, and which is released from a body by friction. He also hypothesized that the red corpuscles of blood could be charged with electricity within the circulatory system when they produced friction in the walls of capillary blood vessels. Apparent in this hypothesis, as well as in Neifeld’s views on various other natural phenomena and on the physiology of the human organism, is a tendency typical in the 18th century, namely that of resorting to the use of speculative conjecture without experimental verification.

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