

Reprinted from "The Journal of South African Botany", vol. XXIII, part IV, October, 1957.

SPARRMAN AS A CORRESPONDENT (Part II)

BY MIA C. KARSTEN.

(With Plates XXXV and XXXVI)

II. ANDERS SPARRMAN TO CAROLUS LINNAEUS.

Linnean Correspondence, Linnean Society, London.

FIRST LETTER

Suburb of Gothenburg, "5 dag Jul
[5th day of Christmas: 29th Dec.], 1771."

SPARRMAN had arrived at Gothenburg on the 8th. He has got several "naturalia" from Mr. STAF for investigation. They had been mostly collected during a voyage to China, viz. Cancer, Trichinurus, Gobius, Asterias, Boredo, Scolopendra, Plevronectes, Gorgonia.⁵¹—Some of them SPARRMAN has not been able to identify owing to lack of time.—The wind seems to be favourable, so he has received orders to go on board the *Castle of Stockholm*. So he only sends LINNAEUS some bad drawings of these animals. If LINNAEUS should believe the animals to be new, Mr. STAF certainly will be willing to send them for his inspection. He has been one of LINNAEUS's disciples, but later became a reader in economics and sheepbreeding. Now he is customs director at Gothenburg, and consequently has good opportunities of getting hold of "naturalia" from travellers who are glad to be able to please such an official.—A P.S. about *Sedum telephium* having cured a sailor of *Anasarca*⁵².—*Enclosure*: drawings of 3 fishes, 1 Cancer, 2 *Lumbrici*⁵³, with a note, in which he apologizes for bad drawings. The bad result is explained by numb fingers

⁵¹We have had these names checked, but three of them, viz. Trichinurus, Boredo and Plevronectes (Pleuronectes?) appeared to be obsolete and could not be found in the consulted zoological works. The other animals mentioned by SPARRMAN include a crab (*Cancer*), a fish (*Gobius*; perhaps *G. nudiceps*, the common Goby, a rock fish in pools, also found on the shores of the Cape Peninsula), a starfish (*Asterias*), a Centipede (*Scolopendra*), and an Alcyonarian (*Gorgonia*), a marine animal forming skeletons known as sea-fans (perhaps *Gorgonia flammea*, the Red Fan Coral?).

⁵²*Anasarca* is a dropsy of the subcutaneous or cellular tissue, characterized by inelastic swelling of the skin. It might be caused by excessive cold. *Sedum telephium*, L., the plant mentioned as a cure for this disease, is known for its medicinal properties. Orpine Stonecrop is the common name of this crassulaceous plant which has its habitat in the temperate regions of Europe and is also found in N. Asia.

⁵³Earthworms (pl. of *Lumbricus*).