

THE NINETIETH ANNIVERSARY OF ACADEMICIAN K. I. SKRJABIN

Academician K. I. Skrjabin, the nestor of Soviet and world helminthology, celebrated his 90th anniversary on Dec. 7, 1968. On this occasion, many of his pupils and friends from the U.S.S.R. and from abroad came to congratulate him.

Academician Skrjabin is the last living biologist who accomplished work in this scientific field in its entirety and also the last helminthological polyhistorian. Academician K. I. Skrjabin was born in Leningrad December 1878. Following his father's wish he first visited a technical school, but then continued studying at the Veterinary college, where he started his career while still a student by publishing his first papers on anatomy. After his undergraduate studies he went to work as a volunteer in the Syr-Darjinsk region of Turkestan at the town Chimkent. After two years of practice in this region he left for Aulic-Ata (now Dzhambul) in southern Kazakhstan. At both places he came during his veterinary practice into contact with parasitic worms. His interests, however, were not centered only on helminths of animals, but also on helminths of man which he collected; on these he wrote his first helminthological paper. His collection of human helminths became so voluminous that when returning to Leningrad he found he could not cope with this vast material all by himself. Therefore, he went abroad to work on this collection under the guidance of Professor Fuhrmann in Switzerland and Professor Railliet in France. After returning to Russia he started to devote all his time to developing a new scientific field—helminthology. At first he met with greatest difficulties, distrust and lack of understanding but gradually overcame these initial difficulties with the help of his pupils. In 1920 K. I. Skrjabin was named head of the helminthological department of the Institute of experimental veterinary medicine and soon after that he became head of the

catheder of parasitology at the Moscow Veterinary Institute. There, helminthology was started to be developed on a scientific basis and gradually helminthological departments were established all over the U.S.S.R. Nowadays the network of helminthological institutes is very dense in the U.S.S.R. and work comprises a wide range of helminthological topics. For his great merits in medicine, veterinary medicine and biology numerous highest awards of recognition of his work were established to him (presentation of the Lenin prize for science, membership in various learned societies at home and abroad). The membership of academician Skrjabin in the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences is an expression of great thanks for the valuable help in developing helminthology and parasitology in Czechoslovakia.

Many delegates from the U.S.S.R. and from abroad came to congratulate academician Skrjabin on his 90th birthday. There were helminthologists from Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, from Roumania, Mongolia, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, the German Federal Republic, the U.S.A., Mexico and India. The importance of academician Skrjabin's work has been highly estimated all over the world and his publications, particularly his monograph on trematodes and nematodes, is used by helminthologists of all countries.

The celebration of the 90th anniversary was followed by a conference arranged by the Soviet Helminthological Society from Dec. 11—14. The participants were informed on the further perspectives of the development of Soviet helminthology. Increasing interests are paid to ecological, biochemical and physiological studies and also to phytohelminthology as an important help in plant production.

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