

THE SIXTIETH BIRTHDAY OF PROF. J. KRATOCHVÍL, D.Sc.

On January 6, 1969 Prof. RNDr. Josef Kratochvíl, Corresponding Member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, Director of the Institute of Vertebrate Zoology, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, Brno, celebrated in the prime of life his 60th birthday. This significant anniversary was at the same time connected with the 40th anniversary of his scientific career in the fields of arachnology, entomology, theriology, applied zoology and in the research of natural foci of infections. For many years J. Kratochvíl has belonged to the leading personalities of Czechoslovak zoology and entomology, and his professional and community activities are well known both in Czechoslovakia and abroad.

A native from Moravia, he graduated from the Natural Sciences Faculty of the Masaryk University in Brno in 1931 and qualified to become university lecturer at the same faculty in 1937. In 1945 he was appointed professor in applied entomology and later also in zoology at the Agricultural College in Brno.

On his initiative in 1954 the present Institute of Vertebrate Zoology, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, was founded and J. Kratochvíl was made its director. In 1955 he was elected Corresponding Member of the Academy.

As professor of the Zoological Institute of the Agricultural College J. Kratochvíl correctly assessed taxonomy and ecology of mammals as zoological problems which were almost untouched in Czechoslovakia at that time. After conducting faunistic research in some zoogeographically interesting regions of this country he released monographs on individual species of mammals, some of which represent important animal reservoirs. In this way his scientific activities became closely related with the studies of Czechoslovak parasitologists, with whom he has continued to cooperate for many years.

The publication of a monograph on the common vole (J. KRATOCHVÍL et al., „Hraboš polní — *Microtus arvalis*“, Praha, 1959) has become a pioneer work in the field of theriology and has won a great response abroad because

of its comprehensive concept, including epidemiological data and the importance of the common vole as host of endo- and ectoparasites.

His work in theriology has been associated with his activities in the research of natural focality of infections in Czechoslovakia, where he primarily solved the problems of animal reservoirs. He took an active part in Czechoslovak priority of complex investigations of natural focality of infections under conditions of cultivated landscape (the problems of the Rožňava epidemic, the foci in central Slovakia, the natural focus of leptospirosis in the High Tatras etc). His participation in these investigations in earlier years, mainly in Slovakia, greatly contributed to the solid theriological assessment of the existence of individual natural foci, so that his pupils (Nosek, Grulich and others) gained from his knowledge and insights and could develop further research in this field.

One of the chief works which resulted from these investigations on synanthropic relationships of mammals (together with B. Rosický) has become a fundamental work for further elucidation of this ecological phenomenon from the aspect of the dissemination of pathogenic agent (D. Povolný, V. V. Kucheruk, I. G. Galuzo, etc).

J. Kratochvíl has so far published more than 150 original scientific papers and monographs, 7 books, 9 textbooks for college students, more than 120 short professional and popular articles, and two volumes of „Applied Zoology“ serving as textbook for all agricultural colleges in Czechoslovakia. In this work extensive chapters are devoted to endo- and ectoparasites of domestic animals.

J. Kratochvíl succeeded in demonstrating the usefulness of applied zoology for a Central European country. His works concerning animal reservoirs will always be a basic source for further advances of Czechoslovak parasitology. He has given the impetus to new trends in the development of Czechoslovak vertebratology and founded a modern theriological school.

Prof. Dr. Bohumír Rosický, D.Sc.