

IVth International Congress of Protozoology

IVth International Congress of Protozoology was held in the picturesque city of Clermont-Ferrand, France on 2.—9. September, 1973. Its principal organizer and president was Professor Pierre du Puytorac of the University of Clermont around whom is assembled one of the most active French teams in protozoology.

There were about 700 participants at the Congress who presented more than 470 reports covering practically all aspects of modern protozoology: About 21 % of all papers were devoted to biochemistry, physiology and chemotherapy, 18 % of papers discussed the fine structure and cytology of protozoa, 13 % of reports were concerned with various aspects of parasite-host relationship in parasitic protozoa, 9 % papers reported respectively on the life cycles and morphogenesis, ecology, contractility and motility. About 7 % of papers were taxonomic in character and 6 % dealt with genetics. 4 % discussed immunology as applied to protozoa. A glance at the abstracts of papers read at the Congress ("Progress in Protozoology", Université de Clermont, U.E.R. Sciences Exactes et Naturelles, 1973) reveals that ciliates are the protozoa most frequently used as objects of research (35 % of papers.) Other protozoa then follow in this order: sporozoa (24 %), flagellates (19 %), amoebae (12 %), microsporidia (3 %).

A rather unusual pattern was successfully introduced by the French organizers in the way the papers were presented. The bulk of papers was read either in one of the four Sections ("Parasitism," "Ultrastructure", "Biochemistry," "Trypanosomes") or in one of the 27 Round Table discussions which concentrated on more specialized themes, e.g. "Cycles of development of coccidia", "Intra- and interspecific variations in parasitic protozoa"

"Acquisition of parasitic character in free-living protozoa", "Unusual hosts for parasites under natural and experimental conditions", "Cycle of *Toxoplasma* and closely related organisms", "Structural and physiological relationships between host cell and parasite in vivo and in vitro", "Practical problems in the field of coccidiosis research". The chairmen of individual Round Table discussions then presented the most important results from the respective sessions to the general audience of the Congress. This allowed to communicate immediately the present "state of art" of many topics to the participants. Further plenary sessions were reserved for lectures of general importance, e.g. "Mechanisms of pathogenicity among parasitic protozoa" etc. The results of Round Table discussions will be printed in the second volume of Congress materials under the name "Actualités protozoologiques" which is due to appear in January 1974.

The importance of the IVth Congress consists not only in the fact that it assembled prominent representatives of protozoology but that it summarized in a certain way the actual state of protozoology and showed the problems to be solved in the future. The significance of the Congress either for the basic research or for the applied disciplines is immense. It confirmed that protozoa are not only invaluable model animals in the field of cytology, biochemistry, biophysics, physiology, genetics, immunology etc., but remain also parasites of great medical and economic significance.

The French colleagues should be warmly congratulated on the excellent way in which the Congress was organized and are largely responsible for its success and the atmosphere of friendly cooperation which set the tone of the meeting.

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