

"Scientific and practical achievements in Soviet helminthology" — a conference held in Moscow from December 6—8, 1973

In December 1973, a conference was held in Moscow to commemorate the 95th anniversary of the late academician K. I. Skryabin, the renowned scientist and founder of the scientific branch of helminthology. As indicated by the title, the working programme of the conference was devoted mainly to an evaluation of research results achieved by Soviet helminthologists, and to the perspectives and principal assignments of Soviet helminthology in the near future. The conference was arranged by the All Union Helminthological Society, the Helminthological Laboratory, Academy of Sciences, U.S.S.R. and the All Union Helminthological Institute "K. I. Skryabin", All Union Academy of Agricultural Sciences. It was attended by several hundred Soviet helminthologists and by delegates and scientists in this field of science from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia.

The working programme of the three-day-conference was this: Day 1 — plenary session with five contributions devoted to the historical role and importance of K. I. Skryabin in establishing the Soviet helminthological school. The heads of the delegations and several other participants from various countries paid tribute to K. I. Skryabin's valuable help in the development of helminthology in the various socialist countries.

The programme of the next two days was divided into eight specialized sections dealing with these topics: general helminthology, medical helminthology and helminthozoonoses, sanitary helminthology and helminthoses of livestock produced on an industrial scale, information on new anthelmintics and their application in veterinary medicine, epizootology, forecast and control of helminthiasis, immunology, and allergy, pathogenesis and biochemistry of helminthes, ichthyohelminthology, phytohelminthology. The wide range of problems discussed at the conference is indicated by the number of sections and topics. The number of papers delivered surpassed one hundred, and approximately 200 delegates participated in the discussion.

The Czechoslovak delegation headed by academician B. Rosický participated mainly in the working programme of the section on general helminthology. In the two-day sessions of this section, Soviet and foreign scientists delivered

more than 20 papers, and approximately as many participated in the discussion. Members of the Czechoslovak delegation presented two papers: Ryšavý, Baruš, Moravec "The possibility of utilizing antagonistic interactions between larval trematodes of the families Echinostomatidae and Schistosomatidae in the biological control of human schistosomes"; Prokopič "The composition of the helminth fauna of the host in association with nutrition and the external environment". In this section, the papers were devoted to problems of biology, population ecology and helminth specificity, to the results on morphological and biometrical variability of helminths in connection with investigations of the host forms, to acute systematic and faunistic problems, and to helminth geography. The debates in all sections offered a clear picture of the immense scientific base and wide range of helminthological research in the U.S.S.R.

In the afternoon of the third day, the conference was closed by a plenary session evaluating its course and discussing also problems concerned with the organisation of the All Union Helminthological Society which, at present, has more than 2,000 members. The results of the Soviet helminthological school as presented at the conference, and the outlines of further steps to be taken in its planned development were highly appreciated by all participants. The Organizing Committee is to be congratulated for producing such successful conference, and for providing favourable conditions for a wide exchange of information in all fields of helminthology, and ample opportunities for establishing new working contacts among scientists from various countries. The course of the conference showed clearly the dynamic development of helminthology in the U.S.S.R. and in other socialist countries.

Honourage was paid to the late academician K. I. Skryabin by the publication of a collection of papers called "Problems of general and applied helminthology" (Publishing House "Nauka", Moscow 1973, 398 pp.), containing 81 original papers by Soviet and foreign helminthologists. The publication of this collection of papers was highly appreciated by all concerned.

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