

In memoriam Prof. Dr. J. Teixeira de Freitas

In April 1970 the ranks of helminthologists were suddenly and tragically depleted by the death of Prof. Dr. Joao Ferreira Teixeira de Freitas, a scientist of world renown.

He was born on March 15th, 1912 at Niterói, Estado do Rio (Brazil). After he had finished his university studies at the Faculty of Medicine (Nac. Fac. Med.) in 1934, he devoted all his life to intensive scientific and academic work centred on the famous Oswaldo Cruz Institute in Rio de Janeiro. He began working at this Institute as an ordinary member in 1936 and did not leave it until his death. Together with his teacher, Prof. Dr. Lauro Pereira Travassos, he was the pioneer of fundamental research on the fauna and systematics of helminths parasitizing both economically significant and free-living animals in South America. Their achievements were great. Prof. Dr. Teixeira took an active part in a series of arduous expeditions to various South-American countries. The rich collections of helminths obtained were dealt with partly by himself, partly with the assistance of his co-workers, in 234 original scientific papers which have become the foundation stones of our present knowledge of helminths in Brazil, Cuba and other South-American states. Inseparably connected with his name is the development of the taxonomy of helminths, especially those of the classes Trematoda and Nematoda, in which he identified and described altogether 224 species, entirely new to science; in addition he established and defined dozens of higher systematic categories. An exact scientific approach to the analysis of facts is characteristic of all works with which Prof. Dr. Teixeira quite unprecedently enriched helminthology on a world-wide scale. Particularly important is his contribution to the systematics

of nematodes from the families Strongyloididae, Trichostrongylidae, Oxyuridae, Heterakidae, Subulascariidae, Filariidae, Capillariidae and others. Apart from theoretic research he also devoted himself to the practical problems of helminthosis of domestic animals and of human helminthology. All his discoveries have also had a considerable influence on Czechoslovak parasitology.

Prof. Dr. Teixeira showed an equal zeal both in the scientific and in the academic field, first as associate professor at the Chair of Parasitology of the Medical Faculty and of the Agronomical and Veterinary Faculty, later as ordinary professor of parasitology in the Ministry of Public Health courses (state Corias) and in a series of courses on special and general helminthology at the Oswaldo Cruz Institute.

Apart from his scientific and academic activities it is necessary to mention Dr. Teixeira's abilities as an organizer. He started his career in this regard in 1933 as a member of the Biological Society in Rio de Janeiro; since 1942 he worked on the editorial staff of the *Revista Brasileira de Biologia*. Above all he demonstrated his powers in his own Institute where he headed the Helminthologic Laboratory since 1949. Since 1968 he was head of the Department of Zoology.

Prof. Dr. J. Teixeira de Freitas was a great personality in the world of science. He sacrificed all his life to unselfish, hard work on behalf of mankind. His name and work have been an example to all helminthologists and will for ever remain inscribed in the annals of this branch of science.

Honoured be his memory!

Dr. B. Ryšavý, D.Sc. and Dr. V. Baruš, D.Sc.