

The 50th anniversary of Prof. Dr. Milan Mrciak

An outstanding European acarologist, prominent Czechoslovak parasitologist, Professor in parasitology at the Natural History Faculty of the Comenius University in Bratislava, Dr. Milan Mrciak will be 50 on December 23, 1973. His name and activities will be always connected with the advancement of zoology and its related branches at the Natural History Faculty Comenius University and with the foundation of studies on mites and other ectoparasites in Slovakia.

He was born in Liptovský Mikuláš. In 1950 he began to study biology at the Natural History Faculty of the Comenius University in Bratislava and in 1954 graduated from the Natural History Faculty of the Charles University in Prague. After his graduation he took a post of assistant parasitologist at the Parasitology Department of the Biological Institute, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in Prague, where he began to study a difficult group of mites of the superfamily Gamasoidea. Here he worked until 1960 when he became head of the Zoology Department, Natural History Faculty, Comenius University in Bratislava. Simultaneously he was appointed Assistant Professor in parasitology. In 1961 he received his Candidate of biological sciences degree (CSc) and in 1964 he qualified to become Associate Professor in parasitology. In 1971 he was appointed Professor in parasitology.

Professor Mrciak was the first scientist in Czechoslovakia who presented a survey of mite species of the order Parasitiformes and their distribution in this country, analysed their significance in natural foci of diseases and made important contributions to zoogeography and ecology of mites, primarily Gamasoidea. He also laid the foundations for the knowledge of mites of the order Parasitiformes in other European regions on the basis of acarological materials obtained personally or made available by foreign research centres. He participated in many scien-

tific expeditions abroad, namely in Albania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Poland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark, which greatly contributed to the studies of acarofauna of these countries. In the Balkans he paid a special attention to Yugoslavia. He made also important contributions to Parasitiformes from Romania, Hungary, Austria, Greece, Finland and Mongolia.

Professor Mrciak has not limited his research to mites only. Some of his papers deal with the problems of theriology and insect physiology.

Apart from his intensive scientific activities, Professor Mrciak devotes his organizational efforts to the development of zoology in Slovakia. He has the credit of the fact that a new Department of General Zoology and Animal Physiology was established at the Natural History Faculty, Comenius University in Bratislava.

An excellent tutor, he has trained a number of students, who see in him a paragon of teacher and scientist of the Socialist epoch, and who propagate the high repute of the Systematic and Ecological Zoology Department. His scientific-organizational activities are also extensive. He is a member of Scientific Boards of Special Biology, both of the Slovak and Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences; a member of the Government Committee for Zoonoses; a member of the Coordination councils for State Projects; a member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, Biological Section for biological research in developing countries. He is a member of scientific councils of the Comenius University, Natural History Faculty, and president of the State Examination Board etc.

The Czechoslovak parasitologists wish Professor Mrciak on the occasion of this anniversary much success in his scientific and educational work and good health for the sake of further advancement of biological sciences in this country.

Prof. Dr. B. Rosický, D.Sc.