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CONFERENCE ON PARASITOLOGICAL PROBLEMS HELD

At the Fifth conference on parasitological problems, held in Leningrad 2 - 8 April 1949, new light was thrown upon the importance of the ticks Ornithodorus papillipes as carriers of tick-borne relapsing typhus by experimental data on the trans-ovary transmission of spirochetes from the infected tick female to its first and second generations and possible even further.

Field work being conducted in the environs of Saratov from the base of the Saratov Zoologico-Veterinary Institute is directly related to the problem of steppe reforestation; progress has already been made in determining changes of tick fauna in relation to their geographical expansion.

A number of reports on fleas dealt with the importance of some forms in transmitting causative agents of malignant diseases. Some other reports submitted were: the ecology of the Ceratopsyllus mokzeckyi; the role of fleas in transmitting tularemia; and a simple and effective method of drawing fleas away from their habitats. A new development in biology is the study of the relationship between the vermipsilla of Kirgiz SSR and its host and the development of measures to eliminate the latter.

The exhibition of four parasitological films, "Tick-borne Encephalitis (Academician Ye. N. Pavlovskiy)," "Nidi of Japanese Encephalitis (P. A. Petrishchevaya)," and "The Fight Against Subcutaneous Gadflies of Large Horned Cattle" demonstrated the importance of this form of propaganda of parasitological methods in the control of parasites and carriers and also revealed the importance of scientific documentation in parasitological research.

Having reviewed the accomplishments of Soviet scientific research institutions and authors in the study and mass application of new insecticides, the conference deems it necessary to: (a) extend the application of hexachlorane substances to a wider circle of phlebotomic ecto-parasite carriers -- gamma-hexachlorane substances are worthy of special attention in this respect; (b) obtain factory production of aerosol bombs (Nikolayev with collaborators), aerosol paper, insecticide candles, and insecticide emulsions from DDT and hexachlorane; (c) intensify work in protecting men and animals from vermin when in the open by using new and sturdier screening devicies and concentrate

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on wider utilization of Ye. N. Pavlovskiy protective screens; (d) extend work on the study and application of various activators for increasing the biological activity of certain insecticides; and (3) continue the search for new synthetic and plant insecticides from local materials.

Biocenotic studies of burrows will define the northern borders as to the spread of sandflies (Phlebotomus) and ticks of the Ornithodorus family. This will aid in determining the outlines of areas of diseases spread by them, i.e., papatacci fever, tick-borne relapsing typhus, etc. Conference members emphasized the importance of very close coordination between parasitologists and doctors giving medical assistance to reforestation workers in connection with the possible appearance of diseases due to contact with natural nidi of infectious diseases.

Searches for the natural nidi of tick-borne rickettsiosis are particularly recommended, since vast spaces in the southeastern sections of the Ukraine, the territories between the lower Don and Volga, the northern Caucasus, parts of the north shore of the Caspian, and the steppe territory of Kazakh SSR, not having been investigated, form a blank space on the map showing the geographical propagation of tick-borne rickettsiosis from the Mediterranean Sea, through the Balkan peninsula, southern Rumania, and the Tavricheskiy peninsula to the steppes of West Siberia, Mongolia, and further east.

If the first task of parasitologists is to clarify the general composition of external parasite and carrier fauna and determine these with epidemiological and epizootological significance, then the subsequent problem is to carry out comparative quantitative study of these forms to clarify their seasonal dynamics and conditions in their active attacks on men and animals using appropriate methods for collecting the required materials. Steppe fauna may serve as a source for the appearance of parasites and disease carriers; for example, the steppe zone is an endemic area at tick-borne rickettsiosis transmitted by the ticks Dermacentor nuttalli, Dermacentor pictus, and others.

All parasitological studies linked with steppe reforestation must be directed toward working out measures to prevent men and animals from being infected with infectious and parasitic diseases which may be caused by changes in parasite and carrier fauna under new agricultural conditions.

A number of reports touched upon problems relating to the further development of endemic parasitology (mosquito fauna of Gor'kiy Oblast', ixodid ticks of Georgia, Kirgiz, Belorussia, areas along the lower Volga, etc.). A detailed study of endemic parasitology of infectious diseases in West Siberia should be planned in particular. The problem of planning endemic parasitological studies will be included in the Sixth Conference on Parasitological Problems.

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