

Prof. RNDr. Vladimír Rypáček, DrSc. *October 10, 1910

Professor RNDr Vladimír Rypáček, DrSc, Corresponding Member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, embodies a vivid example of the difference between the calendar and biological ages. When I met him recently, I had the impression that a very short time has passed since the day, when we celebrated his 70th anniversary, and, behold, we congratulate him on his seventy fifth birthday today. Time flies, but our honoured Professor Rypáček has hardly changed at all.



*Professor Rypáček also sets an example of how much work can be managed within 75 years. He has lived a rich and varied career of a plant physiologist, he studied higher plants, lichens, fungi, wood and soil. He started with the physiology of lichens, then he studied the pH buffering ability of plant tissues as a measure of their vitality. After the Second World War, he turned his attention to the lignification of cell walls and transferred his interest to the physiology of wood-destroying fungi. He founded a collection of the cultures of these specialized fungi, studied the decomposing processes of lignin and, at the same time, humification as a whole, the synthesis of humus compounds and the oxidative enzymes of the fungi and their influence on higher plants. His monograph *Biology of Wood-Destroying Fungi* (1957) has been translated into German (1960) and Russian (1967). He dedicated much effort to the problems of peats. His interest in the possible application of the research of his own and of the workers of his*

University department in forestry and agriculture, and his cooperation with the practical research are exemplary.

Professor Rypáček represents the scientist who is an excellent organizer and political worker. He has continued the tradition of his predecessor, Professor Vladimír Úlehla, in a dignified manner and he has created a centre of the development of plant physiology from the Institute for Plant Physiology at the Faculty of Natural Sciences of J. E. Purkyně University; the graduates of his school have succeeded in establishing further development of the plant physiology at other universities and in its acquiring a solid standing in the applied research. It was the fruit of Professor Rypáček's tactful and tactical dealing with people, of his art to know people and to utilize their faculties.

Although Professor Rypáček was born in Bohemia (on the 10th October, 1910 in Okrouhlá Radouň near Jindřichův Hradec) and his Alma Mater was the Charles University in Prague, he became a dedicated Moravian. After his graduation as Doctor of Natural Sciences (1934), he worked in the Department of Plant Physiology at Masaryk University in Brno, where he habilitated in the autumn 1945 and was appointed Professor of physiology and anatomy of plants in 1958. In the same year he became Doctor of Biological Sciences and was elected Corresponding Member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in 1965. During all that time, he held many university, public and political functions. At present, he is a scientific consultant of the Institute of Botany of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences.

The work of Professor Rypáček and its results have been appreciated by so many distinctions that their list would be about as long as this commemorative article: State Prize of Klement Gottwald, medals of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences "For Merits for Biological Sciences, Science and Mankind", medal "For Dedicated Work for Socialism", medals of many Czechoslovak and foreign scientific institutions, including the medal of the Cracow University. He was elected Honorary Member of the Polish Botanical Society (Polskie Towarzystwo Botaniczne), of the Czechoslovak Botanical Society of the Czechoslovak Acad. Sci., of the Slovak Botanical Society of the Slovak Acad. Sci. and of the Czechoslovak Scientific Society for Mycology of the Czechoslovak Acad. Sci. Professor Rypáček is the founder and Honorary Chairman of the Physiological Section of the Czechoslovak Botanical Society of the Czechoslovak Acad. Sci.

*Professor Rypáček has reached 75 years of age but he continues to work, to preside, to organize, to help, to inspire. The Physiological Section of the Czechoslovak Botanical Society together with the editorial staff of the *Biologia Plantarum* extend their greetings to their Honorary Chairman, and wish him as well as themselves that nothing changes in his life and activity in the years to come.*

BOHDAN SLAVÍK