



### PROFESSOR PÁL GREGUSS IS NINETY YEARS OLD

The editorial board of *Acta Biologica Szegediensis* has the pleasure to offer congratulations to ninety-year-old Professor PÁL GREGUSS with affection and reverence. Earlier, when he was eighty and eighty-five years old respectively, we already gave a detailed account of his career (*Acta Biol. Szeged.* 16/1—2 and 21/1—4) characterized by active educational, scientific, pupil-upbringing and science disseminating work. The Department of Botany, where he was head for 25 years, published — as a token of its esteem — the bibliography of Professor Greguss's writings in 1978. His comprehensive scientific, educational and science disseminating and popularizing activity is shown by that list containing 306 books, scientific publications, lecture notes for university and college students, popular science books and other works.

His creative activity is still undiminished, despite his advanced age. In the last five years, he brought out eight publications and for the time being five more are in press, contributed to Hungarian as well as foreign learned journals. Not more than a few people know that Professor GREGUSS is not only a prominent biologist but also an art collector. His collection of paintings is particularly precious. His home is a real museum, where besides his various collections the documents of his resplendent scientific career can be found.

The editorial board would like to give expression to its high esteem for Professor GREGUSS by publishing fascicules 3-4 of volume 25 as a collection of papers written by a number of Professor Greguss's disciples. At the same time, this is an expression of gratitude on the part of the disciples.

PÁL GREGUSS was born in Torna, on 31 December, 1889. After completing his elementary and secondary studies, he went on to the Teachers' Training School in Arad where he studied under JÁNOS WAGNER. Since the days of his youth, he took a *kenn* interest in botany and he went to collect specimens to various regions of the country. Even as a student he won several prizes by describing the findings of his collecting field trips.

Having obtained his teacher's diploma, he *pursued* his studies at the Central-School Teachers' Training College in Budapest, under the renowned botanist GUSZTÁV MOESZ. His monograph, "A suriani tengerszemek kovamoszatai" (*Diatoma* of the mountain lakes at Surian) was awarded by the KÁROLY Szilberszki Millennial Prize" by the Association of Natural Sciences.

In 1913, he obtained diplomas as central-school teacher and gymnastics master; then he went on to university in Budapest; in 1914, he joined the army but he made his best, as much as possible, to pursue his studies. In 1916, he carried out researches in Prague, at the Pharmacological Institute, under Professor WIECHOWSKY. Also in 1916 he took his doctor's degree at the University in Budapest. At this time, his attention was primarily given to the phylogeny of the vegetable kingdom and in 1918 he published a paper, "Ein Gedanke zur polyphyletischen Entwicklung der Pflanzenwelt."

In 1919, he was appointed lecturer to the Teachers' Training School and, later, to the Central-School Teachers' Training College (both institutions were in Budapest), and there he worked till 1928. During this time, he wrote about 15 textbooks, approximately 40 papers in educational subjects and several scientific publications, as well.

In 1927, the University in Budapest conferred on him a university readership (Privat-Dozent) on the basis of his monograph "A szárnyas növények ivaros szaporodása" Sexual evolution of cauline plants (Cormophyta). A little later, he was appointed lecturer in botany and charged with organizing the Department of Botany at the University in Debrecen.

In 1928, he was appointed head to the Department of Botany of the Central-School Teachers' Training College; in 1940 he became head of the Department of Botany in the University in Szeged and the Director of the Botanical Gardens.

His popular science book, "Növények csodálatos élete" (The wonderful life of plants). It received the honourable title: "The most beautiful book of the year". was published in 1933, his textbook, "Bevezetés az öröklés tanba" (Introduction into genetics) in 1935.

His first xylotomical papers were written with reference to Ferenc Móra's excavations; in 1939, he revealed that during the Magdalenian culture fir and cembra-pine forests thrived in the countryside surrounding Szeged. In his palynological monograph, published in 1940, he gave a description even of the underwood of these forests.

When identifying various prehistoric charcoal fossils, he discovered how difficult it was to identify these, because there was no basis for comparing them. Nevertheless, he wrote, as a first attempt, his monograph, "A hazai őshonos lombosfák meghatá-



rozó kulcsa, szövettani alapon" (A key for identifying the autochthonous deciduous trees of Hungary, on a histological basis) in 1938. From that time on, his interest has been increasingly given to xylotomy. His monograph, "A közép-európai fák és cserjék meghatározása szövettani alapon" ("The identification of central-european dicotyledonous trees and shrubs based on xylotomy") was published in 1945. This book has aroused keen interest abroad as well as at home, and an increasing number of researchers appealed to him for help when it came to identifying some fossilized or carbonized wood remains. Among these identifications, pine fossils caused particular troubles. Consequently, he set himself to investigating into the xylotomy of pines. His thesis submitted to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences for a doctor's degree in biological sciences in 1955 was also treating this problem: "Az élő nyitvatermők xylotómiája" (Xylotomy of the living Gymnosperms). Later, this work was published, too, and it has been used since as a basic reference work all over the world. His monograph, "Holzanatomie der europäischen Laubhölzer" was published in 1959. In 1965, a revised edition was brought out, not only in Hungarian but also in English. His paper, "The phylogeny of sexuality and triphyletic evolution of the landplants", containing his original theory first published in 1918, attracted considerable attention throughout the world.

He retired in 1965, at the age of seventy-six, but he has continued his researches with undiminished enthusiasm even after-wards. His recent monographs are the following: "Fossil Gymnosperm Woods in Hungary from the Permian to the Pliocene" (1967) "Xylotomy of the living Cicads" and "Einführung in die Paläoxylotomie", both published in 1968; "Xylotomy of the living Conifers" (1972). In addition to these monographs, he contributed several scientific papers to Hungarian as well as foreign learned journals.

The number of Professor Greguss's works is over 300. 25 of these publications are books. His exceptionally rich interests have covered several branches of the biological sciences and created in more than one field works of permanent value. He published 5 monographs in natural philosophy, 12 in plant physiology, 15 in external morphology, 41 in plant histology, 5 in botanical taxonomy, 3 in plant geography, 30 in plant phylogenetics and theory of evolution, 10 in genetics, 58 in palaeo-ontology, 5 in palynology, 8 in plant ecology. The number of his various school and university textbooks and lecture notes is 36. He has performed a widespread science disseminating and popularizing activity, as well, with 25 papers published in this field. In 1979 was published his lengthy autobiography "My Life" in Hungarian.

Professor GREGUSS has met with a well-deserved and widespread recognition. In 1956, he was conferred a doctor's degree in biology by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In 1955, 1959 and, for the third time, in 1965, the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic awarded him the golden grade of the Order of Labour and nad in 1958, the silver grade of the Kossuth Prize. He received 6 gold, 5 diamond and 3 iron pedagogical-diplomas, too. He was twice pro-dean and once dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences of the University in Szeged and, for one term, he was Rector of the same University.

Professor GREGUSS is the honorary member of several Hungarian and foreign learned societies. He has been and is even now in close and far-ranging scientific connection with more than 600 researchers. Hungarian as well as foreign experts have named a number of living and fossil plants after him.

Besides his very substantial scientific and educational activities, Professor GREGUSS managed to set up a Department of Botany at the University in Szeged, reorganized the Botanical Gardens of the University and made it well-known all over the world. From among his many hundred students, some became University or College professors, readers, and doctors and candidates of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

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The editorial board of *Acta Biologica Szegediensis* wishes Professor PÁL GREGUSS to continue his creative scientific activity for many years to come, to instruct and educate young people and to come every day to visit and to work at the Department of Botany where he was head for 25 years.

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