



Prof. NIKOLAI ALEXANDROVITCH KRASSILNIKOV

### *Obituary*

Soviet and world microbiological science has suffered a serious loss. NIKOLAI ALEXANDROVITCH KRASSILNIKOV, Professor and Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, died suddenly in his 77th year on July 11, 1973.

Since 1935 NIKOLAI ALEXANDROVITCH KRASSILNIKOV has headed a department at the Institute of Microbiology, USSR Academy of Sciences, in Moscow. In 1953 he organized the Department of Soil Biology at Moscow State University which he has headed since.

The scientific interests of KRASSILNIKOV ranged wide and embraced such problems as the biology of various groups of microorganisms, their systematics, relationships between microorganisms and relationships of microorganisms with higher plants. His fundamental works in the biology and systematics of actinomycetes have become known around the world: "Ray Fungi and Related Organisms" (1938), "Manual of Ray Fungi" (1941) and also "Manual of Bacteria and Actinomycetes" (1949) which was based on quite new principles of classification. NIKOLAI KRASSILNIKOV was one of the pioneers in the study of microbe antagonism and the formation of antibiotic substances by microorganisms, which was generally recognised to underlie the modern theory of antibiotics. Part of KRASSILNIKOV's scientific works was devoted to questions of agricultural and soil microbiology, particularly the study of the role of microorganisms in raising the productivity of plants, suppression of the phytopathogenic organisms of the soil, quests for microbial plant and animal growth stimulators and inhibitors.

During his last years NIKOLAI KRASSILNIKOV concentrated on completing investigations in the systematics and biology of actinomycetes that were generalized in his book "Ray Fungi (Higher Forms)", published in 1970. KRASSILNIKOV's researches in theoretical and applied microbiology have made him widely known both in the Soviet Union and abroad.