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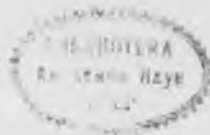
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AFRIKAN NIKOLAEVICH KRYSHTOFOVICH, who was elected a Foreign Member in 1946, died on 8 November, 1953, the eve of his sixty-eighth birthday. He had been for many years the leading palaeobotanist in the U.S.S.R., and made notable contributions to various branches of geology and botany. Born of a banking family on 9 November, 1885, at Krishtopovka near Pavlograd, in what was then the province of Ekaterinoslav, he was educated first at Pavlograd classical gymnasium and then at the Novorossisk University of Odessa. While still a student he published notes on the recent flora, and at the same time began to investigate some of the Jurassic and Tertiary plant fossils of his native Ukraine. His first appointment was botanical, and he was soon travelling in various parts of Siberia amassing material for publications on the living flora. In the period before the first World War the iron curtain was in one of its temporary states of disrepair, and the young Kryshstofovich took the opportunity, between 1909 and 1915, of visiting Egypt, Japan, Austria, France, England, Germany, Italy and Sweden.

In 1914, having already fifteen palaeobotanical papers to his credit, he was appointed to the Geological Committee, while continuing botanical work at Odessa University. In the succeeding years his numerous journeys in many parts of Siberia and the Far East yielded material of both recent and fossil plants, on which he published voluminously. Amurland, Ussuriland, Sakhalin, Japan, the Philippines, were followed by two years at Vladivostok, and in 1924 he returned to Leningrad, leading a double life at the Komarov Botanical Institute (systematic botany and professorial duties) and the Geological Committee (palaeobotany and stratigraphy). Here he was stationed—if the term is appropriate for such an inveterate explorer—for a quarter of a century, moving to Moscow in 1950.

During this period he was an active member of various academies and societies, geological, botanical and geographical; he travelled, wrote and taught, and he was the recipient of a Stalin prize.

Kryshstofovich's palaeobotanical work was largely on Mesozoic and Tertiary floras; apart from several papers on Devonian plants he left most of the Palaeozoic to Zalessky, and later to Marie Neuburg. He was particularly interested in the stratigraphical value of plant fossils, and their use as indicators of past climatic and geographical changes. His investigations in Russian Sakhalin showed that collections of plants which Heer had lumped together as Miocene in fact represented a series of floras ranging from Lower Cretaceous into Tertiary. Much of his detailed work on Asiatic Mesozoic floras was brought together in a paper on the "Baikalian Formation of the Angara Group" (1933) with a long English summary, followed by another on the "Baikalian or Continental Mesozoic of the U.S.S.R." which appeared in the Reports of the XVII International Geological Congress (1939). With V. D. Prinada he issued a booklet on the Mesozoic flora of the U.S.S.R., with keys for the identification of species. He often summarized the results of his detailed studies in papers written in English and published in English, American and Japanese journals. Thus in the "Evolution of the Tertiary Flora in Asia" (*New Phyt.* 1929) he discussed the climatic zonation of Tertiary floras and proposed the name Poltavian for the Eocene tropical belt which extended from southern England through the province of Poltavia to south-eastern Asia, distinguishing it from the more temperate Turgayan floral belt to the north. His only contribution to the *Quarterly Journal* was an obituary notice of M. D. Zalessky in 1948.

In a useful account of Russian geological investigation in the Pacific region (1926), he wrote that it was desirable "to render obligatory the publication of summaries of papers written in languages using a non-Roman alphabet (Chinese, Japanese, Russian) in English, French or German. English should perhaps be given preference, as being the most desirable language for that purpose at the present time." It was not Kryshstofovich's fault that some of his later papers lacked an English summary. He compiled an Anglo-Russian geological dictionary, and unsuccessful efforts were made in 1945 to get this published in England; it does not seem to have been printed anywhere yet.

He was concerned either as author, editor or translator with a number of text-books and works of reference. A *Kurs Paleobotaniki* went through several editions and was eventually expanded into a text-book (1945). To the *Palaeontology of the U.S.S.R.*, of which he was one of the editors, he contributed a bibliography and catalogue of all records of fossil plants from the U.S.S.R. (1941). He translated (and enlarged) R. Kräusel's *Die Paläobotanischen Untersuchungsmethoden* (1932) and also translated (and adapted) Seward's *Plant Life Through the Ages* (1936). He was at the time of his death editor of a geological encyclopaedia (of which Vol. 1, A-L, appeared in 1955), and of the *Acta*, series VIII, *Paleobotanica*, of the Komarov Institute; a volume in this series on the Oligocene flora of Kazakstan appeared in 1956. A booklet on the history of palaeobotany in the U.S.S.R. also came out in 1956. A full list of his publications, running to some 350 items, may be found in the *Slovar Russkie Botaniki*, vol. IV, 1952, pp. 508-19 (up to 1950) with a supplement in an obituary notice by Grubov and Dorofeev in the *Bot. Zhur.*, vol. 39, 1954, pp. 305-12. These sources, which have been consulted in the preparation of this notice, also provide fuller information on his work and career. He inspired numerous pupils and assistants, and in his friendly geniality as well as in range of interests, approach to palaeobotanical problems, and prolific output, he may be considered as the Russian counterpart of our A. C. Seward. And in view of Kryshstofovich's activities it is pleasingly appropriate that a volcano in the Kurile Islands has been named after him.

W.N.E.