

OBITUARY

R. Vanbreuseghem **1909–1993**

Many mycologists throughout the world will be deeply saddened to learn the death of one of the most important figures in medical mycology, R. Vanbreuseghem who died in Brussels on November 27th, 1993 whereas in Paris on the same day, the first meeting of the European Confederation of Medical Mycology took place, an initiative he had surely appreciated.

He was born in 1909 in Monceau/Sambre, a small industrial city of the South of Belgium. Medical Doctor of the State University of Liège in 1934, he got a diploma of tropical medicine in Antwerp at the Institute of Tropical Medicine and left Belgium for the Belgian Congo in 1935.

His research in leprosy resulted in developing an interest in dermatology later in mycology. In 1946, he returned to Europe and from that time on, he will devote all his time to research in medical mycology, first going to Paris where he had the opportunity to work with Maurice Langeron at the medical faculty and to participate in 1952 as a co-author to the 2nd edition of the *Précis de Mycologie*. He was appointed Professor at the Free University of Brussels (1954) and later in 1965 at the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp, where he created a course of specialization in human and veterinary mycology.

In 1953, during the 6th International Congress of Microbiology in Roma, he participated with other famous mycologists to the foundation of the International Society of Human and Veterinary Mycology and was one of the twelve signatories of the foundation document established later in Paris in 1954. He became the first general secretary from 1954 till 1968 and later President from 1969 to 1972.

He travelled widely throughout the world: 'field worker', he was frequently between two flights!

Nevertheless, he found sufficient time to write. In addition to a book entitled *Guide pratique de Mycolo-*



gie Médicale et Vétérinaire published in French in 1967, translated later in English, he was the author or co-author of over 350 scientific papers.

He was a member of numerous national and international societies and organisations, received many distinctions during his career and among them the title of Doctor Honoris Causa of the University of Montpellier in 1979.

He was a member of the Académie Royale de Médecine of Belgium and served as General Secretary and President of the Académie Royale des Sciences d'Outre-Mer.

His friends and students will remember him as a free-thinker scientist, a man who could support them when it was necessary.

Prof. Danielle Swinne
Antwerp, October 1994

Editor's Note. Dr Vanbreuseghem was a member of the Mycopathologia Educational Board from 1959 to 1960.