

them and having found them to be of no direct use to the organism, may have reduced them to a vestigial condition. Truly vestigial organs, therefore, would be those that have arisen in heredity qualitatively as parts *de novo* on account of gene-mutations and have persisted in heredity notwithstanding the plain stamp of inutility they might have obtained later. Herein then perhaps lies the rationale of a problem left quite open by the unbiased mind of Sir Charles Darwin.

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OBITUARY

ALEXANDER BOGOMOLETS

(1881-1946)

IN the death of ALEXANDER BOGOMOLETS the Soviet people have lost one of their best and most devoted scholars. He was born sixty-five years ago within the dreary walls of Kiev prison where his mother had been imprisoned for revolutionary activities by the Czarist regime. As a child he was marked for his exceptional abilities. After a brilliant high school career he joined the medical faculty in Odessa University in 1900, passed his final examination with honours in 1906, and was appointed Assistant Professor of Pathology. His researches on "Structure and functions of suprarenal glands both in the healthy and sick organisms" got him his doctorate in 1909. After one year's work in the physiological laboratory at Sorbonne he was appointed Professor of General Pathology in Saratov University which post he held till 1925 when he was elected Professor of Pathological Physiology at the Second Moscow University. On the death of Bogonov, Bogomolets succeeded him as the Head of the First Blood Transfusion Institute, Moscow.

Bogomolets' researches and contributions are varied and many. He established the lipoid nature of the secreta of cortex of suprarenal glands and originated the idea of iono-endocrinous regulation. He attached great import-

ance to the reticulo-endothelial system and its role on longevity and immunity. He showed that the disturbances in the functions of this system led to a number of ailments and to premature old age. By causing immunity in animals using elements of reticulo-endothelial system he obtained a serum which was used in the U.S.S.R. with particular success during the war in the treatment of wounds and fractures. Bogomolets and his school undertook intensive study of conditions which facilitate longevity in certain parts of U.S.S.R. and elaborated modes for preventing premature old age and prolongation of life.

His publications include important works in the sphere of immunity, anaphylaxis, allergy, pathology of blood circulation and mechanism of the action of blood transfusion. In 1929 he was elected member of Academy of Sciences, Ukrainian S.S.R., of which he subsequently became President. In 1932 he was elected member of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. He achieved the highest honours possible in the Soviet Union; twice he was elected deputy to Supreme Soviet of U.S.S.R., and was the Deputy Chairman of Supreme Soviet of Ukrainian S.S.R. He was one of the recipients of the "First-class Stalin Prize".