
NEWS AND VIEWS

Congress of Human Genetics

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF HUMAN GENETICS will be held in COPENHAGEN, DENMARK, AUGUST 1-6, 1956. This congress is planned to cover all genetic aspects of normal and pathologic characters in man. Any person interested in the subject of human genetics and especially of medical genetics is invited to take part in the congress.

Provisional program and further information is sent on request.

The Secretariat of the First International Congress of Human Genetics,
The University Institute for Human Genetics, 14, Tagensvej,
Copenhagen, N., Denmark.

Polish Hematology in the Last Decade

Ten years have elapsed since the end of the Second World War and a new scientific life has developed in the ruins. The hematologic seed finds a fertile soil in this country. Here in Poland, hematology takes second place only to cardiology as the most active internistic discipline, which is proved by a number of monographic publications in the last few years. Two editions of "Diseases of the Hematopoietic System" by Tempka, "Atlas of Hematology" by the Lawkowicz's, "Diseases of Bloodforming Organs in the Light of Biopsy Investigations," "Hematology of Infectious Diseases," "Clinical Hematology" by Aleksandrowicz, "Electron Microscopy of the Blood" by Aleksandrowicz, Blicharski and Feltynowski, "Blood Preservation and Transfusion" by Hausman, "Blood Coagulation" by Niewiarowski, "Liver Pathology in the Light of Biopsy Investigations" by Kubicki and many publications of popular-scientific character represent the activity of the discipline at that period.

The first reports published in Poland on exotic diseases unknown till now in our country like Kala-Azar, tropical ague, come from the Second Internal Clinic of the Medical Academy in Krakow, directed by Prof. Tempka. This Clinic has performed the first biopsies of the thyroid and of the lungs, etc. Here also in the course of investigation of alkylamine therapy of hemopathy the first observations were made on anti-inflammatory action of nitrogen mustard. At present the Clinic works on the phase picture of tumor cells, LE cells, and on the blood coagulation problem.

The Third Internal Clinic of the Krakow Academy of Medicine, directed by Prof. Aleksandrowicz, also works chiefly on hematologic problems. In the 6 year existence of the Clinic there have been performed works of experimental hematology which have a preparatory character for the investigations of leukemias, like cytogenesis of the blood, comparative hematology of animals, electron microscopy, cytochemistry and cytoenzymology. The result of these investigations is the hypothesis of leukemic pathogenesis, constructively developed in cooperation with a number of laboratories. This Clinic together with the Department of Microbiology and of Pathological Anatomy described for the first time in Europe a case of bartonellosis in man. The cooperative monograph of the Director and the Assistants, "Clinical Hematology," closes a 5 year working period of the Clinic.

In the Krakow Pediatric Clinic Prof. Mikułowski continues his investigations of infantile hemocytopathies, while the biochemist Prof. Skarżyński discovers an interesting protein which binds vitamin B₁₂, called erythroglubuline, and Prof. J. Ackermann (Histology Department) continues leukemia investigation.

In Zabrze, Dr. Japa continues to investigate mitosis, cytogenesis of the blood, biopsy of tonsils, and other hematologic problems.

In a recently organized Medical Center in Łódź in the Clinic of Prof. Jakubowski, Dr. Kołodziejaska and Dr. Musiał continue their work on hematology, particularly with reference

to leukemias and reticulosis, and Dr. Wierzbowska works on the same problems in Marietti's Clinic.

In Poznań there work creatively the Director of the First Internal Clinic of the Academy of Medicine, Prof. Kwaśniewski, a former co-worker of Henning, and the Director of the Third Internal Clinic, Prof. Łabędziński. A young hematologist, Kubicki, has distinguished himself by a valuable work on liver biopsy.

In Wrocław Prof. Hirszfeld organized a Medical Laboratory which until recent times constituted the center of Polish serology. The activity of this institution surpasses by far the scope of this paper, dealing with morphologic hematology. In the Department of Pathology of the Wrocław Academy of Medicine there were formed new conceptions of coagulation mechanisms. Kowarzyk discovers new factors playing a part in the coagulation process, he applies in practice thrombin preparations, leaving foreign laboratories behind in his investigations. The Internal Clinic of Szczeklik and Falkiewicz actively combining the interpretation of experimental and clinical achievements with mathematics also notably contributed to our hematology. Much of this merit goes to the excellent school of a Wrocław mathematician, Prof. Steinhaus.

In Lublin (and now in Warsaw) Fleck builds an interesting conception of leukergy which first came to his mind while he was imprisoned in a German concentration camp in Auschwitz.

The year 1951 is noted for our hematology by the organization of a model Blood Service Center, i.e., the Institute of Hematology whose organizer and first Director was the late Prof. A. Hausman. The Institute under the present directorship of Trojanowski gathers the most prominent Warsaw hematologists and representatives of related disciplines like the clinicist Prof. Lawkowiec, the serologist Szyszkowicz and others. This new and ambitious research center already records achievements, particularly in the field of blood service and clinical hematology.

The Warsaw Internal Clinics continue their hematologic traditions. The Prof. Biernacki Clinic, previously directed by Prof. Orłowski, works on transfusion problems as well as on post-transfusion complications. The great activity of Migdalska is worth mentioning: she kept on watching the behavior of the blood-forming organ in industrial poisonings, hypertensive disease, collagenosis, etc. This Clinic popularized the therapy of marrow transplantations, particularly successful in curing diathesis.

Hematology is not a distant problem to Prof. Anastazy Landau, one of the seniors of our internal medicine: proof of it can be found in his papers dealing with metabolism in leukemias and with the successful therapy of acquired hemolytic anemias with nitrogen mustard.

In Bielsko the progress of knowledge of blood coagulation is being supervised by the senior and pioneer of fibrinolysis investigations, Dr. Rosenmann.

The animated scientific life of Polish hematologists found expression in 3 general Congresses in Krakow, Sopot and Łódź, and in a few conventions being organized twice a year. The abundance of problems discussed and the number of participants prove the great interest for this recently developed section of internal diseases. While considering our contribution to the world knowledge of the blood, we may stress, besides achievements in serology and blood preservation (Hirszfeld Institute), and blood service (Institute of Hematology), the facts of the knowledge of coagulation (Kowarzyk), leukergy (Fleck), leukemic pathogenesis, anti-inflammatory action of alkyloamines (Aleksandrowicz), etc. which have been several times positively appraised by the foreign scientific world.

Our modest contribution to world hematology can be appreciated by those who bear in mind the numerous war destructions of our country in the course of recent decades. It is clear that in a country where the soil is soaked with blood of the war victims there was no favorable atmosphere for constructive study on the therapy of blood diseases. The compensation for the tragic war years is for us nowadays the zeal of our scientists. Our research workers join the ranks of the world research army fighting for health and happiness of our species, of the army which sees a possibility of successful control of incurable diseases in a collective work, in an atmosphere of friendship and brotherhood among the nations.—*Professor Julian Aleksandrowicz*