Emil Schwarz
1865–1955
OBITUARY

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On April 2 of this year, Emil Schwarz, one of the outstanding hematologists of our time, died from coronary thrombosis in his ninetieth year. He received his medical degree from the University of Vienna, Austria, in 1889; there he also reached the rank of an associate professor of medicine in 1912. He retired from active duties in 1934. When the storm of the Hitler psychosis swept over Vienna in 1938, Emil Schwarz escaped, bodily and psychologically unharmed, to the United States. He found a place to work at Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago. Here, at the age of over 70, he started a new career in hematologic research with a zest and enthusiasm which could only evoke admiration in anyone who observed this phenomenon. In 1952 he was elected an honorary member of the International Society of Hematology.

In his first scientific paper, published in 1888, Dr. Schwarz described some fundamental details of the mitotic division of embryonic cells. The significance of this early observation has only recently been re-emphasized.1 In 1914, he published an extensive monograph on the eosinophilic leukocyte in health and disease.2 He was the first to postulate an interrelationship between the blood level of the eosinophilic cells and the function of the adrenals which has also been rediscovered in recent years. Another monograph3 deals with the histologic aspects of the leukocytes in infectious mononucleosis. It still remains one of the best descriptions of this disorder.

During his “American period,” he produced the fundamental investigations on the granulopoiesis of the megakaryocyte.4–6 He demonstrated that in some instances of idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura this process of granulopoiesis is defective. He wrote a profound paper on the maturation and proliferation in normoblastic and megaloblastic erythropoiesis.7 His last years were devoted to the interpretation of the histology of extramedullary megakaryocytopoiesis.8 He also was the author of a delightful little monograph on chlorosis, a disease he had seen frequently in his mature clinical years. He considered chlorosis as a distinct malady which has become practically extinct due to changes in our living conditions.

The most impressive feature of Dr. Schwarz’ personality was his universality. He was a “walking encyclopedia” not only in his specialty but also in botany, zoology, philosophy, mathematics, physics, and German, English and French literature. He was on intimate terms with all great musical works. His was a rich and creative life. Anyone who knew him will miss the grand old man. —Karl Singer, Chicago.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Karl Singer