NEWS AND VIEWS

The following letter has been received from Dr. S. J. Thannhauser of Boston.

To the Editor:
Dear Sir:

S. Estren, M.D., John F. Suess, M.D., and William Dameshek, M.D., published under the title, "Congenital Hypoplastic Anemia Associated with Multiple Developmental Defects (Fanconi Syndrome)," a case report of a girl with hypoplastic anemia in association with other congenital defects. G. Fanconi reported for the first time, in 1927, "Familial Hypoplastic Anemia." Since then several authors, as quoted by S. Estren, et al., referred to this syndrome as "Fanconi Syndrome." G. Fanconi also described in several papers an entirely different syndrome comprising tubular kidney dysfunction, hypophosphatemia, renal glycosuria, rickets and disturbed metabolism of amino acids. Sturzenegger as well as McCune and co-workers, and recently Fuller Albright referred to this remarkable syndrome as "Fanconi Syndrome."

In attaching the name of Fanconi to two entirely different syndromes first described by this author, there is apt to be confusion. I would suggest to the authors who study the etiology of these different syndromes to designate the syndrome in a different way but certainly without curtailing the authorship of G. Fanconi.

Yours very sincerely,
S. J. Thannhauser, M.D.

Dr. S. Estren, 1489 East 8th Street, Brooklyn, New York, replies as follows:

Dear Doctor Thannhauser:

At the time the paper in question was in preparation it was known that Dr. Fanconi had described at least two and possibly three separate syndromes to which his name has since become attached. One of these was the congenital hypoplastic anemia syndrome; another, that of "renal rickets." I have been unable to find others, although I believe that there is at least one other in the literature. Certainly the indiscriminate use of the eponym "Fanconi" for entirely unrelated disorders is potentially confusing, although in actual practice the very knowledge of the existence of two separate disorders probably has

obviated such confusion. (A parallel problem is perhaps to be noted in the two diseases described by von Recklinghausen and generally considered, at least until recently, to be unrelated.)

Personally, I think your suggestion is certainly a valid one, but cannot suggest a simple terminology which would be as descriptive of the disorders as the ambiguous term 'Fanconi.' The respective terms 'Fanconi's anemia' and 'Fanconi's renal rickets,' although less equivocal, are hardly more descriptive. Probably the best solution is to use the lengthier terminology (as in the title of our article) and append the eponym 'Fanconi.' This is one case in which, I believe, an eponymic designation is desirable in describing a disorder.

Sincerely yours,

S. Estren, M.D.

The editor has received the following letter from Dr. J. Alexandrowicz of Cracow, Poland.

February 12, 1947,

Thank you very much for your recent letter. I have great pleasure to comply with your request and enclose a short review of the present status of hematology in Poland. Before giving you the outline I should like to tell you what conditions we worked in during the difficult times of the German occupation.

Doubtless you know that for seven years our colleges and universities were closed. Our professors were arrested by a mean trick. They were called to the university allegedly to discuss the opening of the new academic year and were there arrested and sent to concentration camps in Sachsenhausen, September 9, 1939. Many of them never returned; they died the death of martyrs. In other towns it was much the same. For instance in Lwów many professors were killed. Our scientific institutes were either destroyed or their equipment was appropriated and taken to Germany; now with the help of UNRRA they have been re-equipped. Our scientists if they escaped concentration camps were deprived of the conditions necessary for work but risked their lives in carrying on secret instruction in the 'Underground Universities.' I am sure you know to what dangers and persecution non-Aryan persons were exposed. A handful of them was saved in this country, thanks to friends who risked their lives to help them. It is not surprising that under the circumstances any development was virtually impossible, nevertheless our scientific achievements deserve mention. I present these achievements in outline, giving in turn the work of our four Universities and other centres.

The leading Polish hematologist is Professor Tadeusz Tempka. He was one of the first in the world and the first in Poland to introduce Arinkin's method of sternal puncture biopsy. The results which he published are well known and often quoted in hematological literature. His hematological investigations are concerned primarily with Addison-Biermerian anemia. He showed that this disease is a panmyelopathy; he called attention to the changes in the bone marrow and especially in the myelograms. He found and described the so-called 'Riesenstabkernige.' Then he found the existence of the Castle intrinsic factor in normal human saliva. Besides the Addison-Biermer's disease he distinguished the group of 'acastloses,' the reverse of 'asideroses.' His biotical investigations concern lymphadenograms and splenograms. Lately he has been working on pulmograms, and the biotical investigations of neoplasias. During the German occupation he was deprived, as were other professors, of the possibility of carrying on clinical work and wrote a large Handbook of Hematology which is now being printed.

He and Doctor Kubiczek investigated the characteristics of the normal and pathological splenogram. Among a number of works that of Kubiczek on the normal and pathological lymphadenograms is of great importance, as also are casuistic reports of biotical diagnosis of diseases such as kala-azar which appeared here during the repatriation of the population from the East, the syndrome of Pancoast, diagnosed during life by the help of the pulmogram, and many others presented at the meeting of the Medical Association in Cracow, 1946.

Dr. Japa Joséf after his return from England is continuing his investigations of mitosis in leukemias and other blood disorders. He introduced a new aceto-carminc staining technique. He also made a study of the development of megakaryocytes and he put forward a new theory explaining the mechanism of haematoipoiesis in pernicious anemia. Under the direction of Professor Tempka, J. Aleksandrowicz, M. Spis, and J. Kostrzewski are working on the elaboration of the method of investigating the function of reticular tissue by means of the intrasternal injection of India ink solutions and other finely dissemi-
nated substances. As a result of these experiments, they observed that the phagocytosis by histocytes and granulocytes of the ink was weaker during infectious diseases.

In his latest studies, J. Aleksandrowicz has written on "Myelosis Erythroblasta" and on a case of reticulo-sarcoma diagnosed during life by means of lymphadenograms. His latest work is a monograph, "Disorders of the Blood-forming Organs in the Light of Biophysical Investigation of Bone Marrow, Spleen and Lymphnodes," in which he puts forward among others the proposal of unification of hematological terminology and classification of blood disorders, and gives his view on the histogenesis of certain blood cells.

In the Biological Institute, Professor Skowron and his collaborators are investigating the influence of thiouracil on the blood forming centres of rabbits.

In the Dermatology Clinic, Prof. Walter Franciszek and Lejman Kazimierz worked out a method for the biophysical investigation of skin diseases with the aid of hemoderogram.

Prof. Kowalczykowa Janina, the head of the Anatomical-Pathologic Institute, elaborated the problem of mycosis fungoides. The basis of this disease is the overgrowth of the active mesenchyma which gives this disease character bordering between inflammation and neoplastic processes. A similar position is occupied by Kaposi's sarcoma. With Dr. J. Cetnarowicz, she described an atypical reaction of the R-E system under the influence of carbon monoxide intoxication. With B. Skarzynski, J. Aleksandrowicz, and J. Japa she is carrying on control investigations on the characteristic leukemic reactions following the injections into animals of extracts of human organs affected by leukemia.

In the Pathology Institute, T. Rymar investigated the changes in the morphology of platelets in human and artificial animal anemias.

In my next letter, I shall send you a review of Polish hematology at our other universities.

Yours sincerely,

D. Julian Aleksandrowicz, M.D.