OBITUARY

Louis Lowenstein—1908-1968

Friends and colleagues of Louis Lowenstein throughout the world were shocked and deeply grieved to learn of his sudden death on March 23, 1968 from a myocardial infarction. He was in Puerto Rico at the time, recuperating from a previous severe myocardial infarct.

Louis Lowenstein was born in 1908, in Nashville, Tennessee, into a family of talented individuals. He, himself, was an accomplished violinist and tennis champion of Nashville for several years.
A graduate of both Vanderbilt University and Vanderbilt Medical School, Dr. Lowenstein soon demonstrated that he was a tenacious worker. He developed an early interest in hematology working with Dr. H. S. Cunningham, Professor of Anatomy at Vanderbilt, on supravital staining techniques. Following House Officer training at Vanderbilt and Ohio State University Hospitals, Dr. Lowenstein became associated with the McGill University Faculty of Medicine and the Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal, Canada in 1937. At the time of his death he was Professor of Medicine and Director of the Division of Hematology at McGill University Clinic. In 1960, he served as President of the American Society of Hematology.

Early in World War II, although he was still an American citizen, Louis Lowenstein volunteered for service in the Royal Canadian Air Force. He entered as a Flight Lieutenant and was discharged, at the termination of hostilities in 1945, as a Wing Commander. During the War he served in France, Holland, Belgium and Germany. He was in charge of the only RCAF Mobile Field Hospital overseas, and was twice mentioned in dispatches.

Louis Lowenstein's great care, patience and tenacity are perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in his long-term studies on anemia and malnutrition in pregnancy. He showed that there were still population groups in North America in whom significant folate deficiency occurred during pregnancy, despite the fact that this was considered a rarity as recently as 15 years ago. Well known also are Dr. Lowenstein's works on megaloblastic anemias, iron deficiency, hemolytic disease of the newborn, blood coagulation, polycythemia, effects of drugs and hormones on blood, and blastogenesis in the mixed leucocyte culture reaction, to mention but a few. In addition to his research contributions he developed a Division of Hematology which is unique on the Canadian scene as a training ground for both those individuals destined for a career in Clinical Hematology and those wishing to pursue a career in Research.

Scientific publications provide a living testimonial for the scientist, but one would be remiss in failing to discuss Louis Lowenstein the man. He can perhaps be best characterized as a gentle-man not principally in the matters of charm and decorum (though he never lacked either) but rather in the unique quality of personal charity. Louis Lowenstein travelled widely throughout the world not only in connection with his professional duties, and always had a buoyant, wholesome interest in his fellow man.

Though totally integrated into the life of his adopted Canada, Louis Lowenstein never forgot his native land and native city, Nashville, where he remained equally at home with an ever growing number of friends. He often functioned as a sort of honorary member of the Hematology group at Vanderbilt Medical School.

News of Louis Lowenstein's untimely death was felt as a deep personal loss by the Vanderbilt Hematology group, professional, technical and secretarial, as well as by the staff of the Royal Victoria Hospital and the many who knew him well in the Faculty of Medicine at McGill. People from all
walks of life gathered at his Memorial Service at Temple Emanu-El to express their gratitude for the many services Louis Lowenstein rendered his community, Canada and humanity, and for his dedication in his personal ministry of service to his fellow man.

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