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FLAVONOIDS AND BIOFLAVONOIDS, 1985

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 7TH HUNGARIAN BIOFLAVONOID SYMPOSIUM SZEGED, HUNGARY, MAY 16-18, 1985

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As a new link in the chain of Hungarian Bioflavonoid Symposia, the 7th meeting was held in Szeged, Hungary, May 16-18, 1985. The aim of the Hungarian Bioflavonoid Symposia has traditionally been to establish an international forum for the exchange of ideas for scientists covering, in the widest possible sense, the special fields involving flavonoid research: chemistry, biochemistry, phytochemistry, plant physiology and taxonomy, pharmacology, and clinical practice. The lectures are never divided into sections, a principal aim of the symposia being to allow the participants also to become acquainted with the recent work and latest results obtained with flavonoids in fields other than their own. This interdisciplinary approach is believed to be highly stimulating.

The present meeting was attended by participants from 15 countries. The valuable contributions of 44 lectures covering different fields, yet all dealing with flavonoids or closely related compounds, are included in this book. The editors feel that the several newly discovered biological actions of flavonoid compounds, and the elucidation of the mechanisms of these actions by modern methods, might be of particular interest to the reader. Such readers may be engaged either in isolating, synthesising, or investigating the mode of action of flavonoids, or employing them as new medicinal agents. We hope this volume provides new information that will be found useful and interesting by chemists, botanists, pharmacologists, medical doctors and all those whose work is in any way concerned with the research and uses of flavonoid compounds.

It is the Editors' pleasant duty to acknowledge with gratitude the financial support of several pharmaceutical and chemical firms in Hungary, which materially assisted the organization of the 7th Hungarian Bioflavonoid Symposium.

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OPENING ADDRESS

PROF. DR. M. GÁBOR

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Seventh Hungarian Bioflavonoid Symposium has been organized to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the discovery by Rusznyák and Szent-Györgyi in Szeged of the therapeutical effects of flavonoids.

In opening this Symposium, I think it is appropriate to try to give you a brief historical survey of flavonoid research in Hungary.

In 1935 Szent-Györgyi isolated a substance from lemon juice which decreased the permeability and increased the resistance of the capillary wall. Chemical analysis indicated that this substance was a flavonoid and it was named "citrin". Bruckner and Szent-Györgyi (1937) found that "citrin" was composed of hesperidin and eriodictiol glycoside. Huszák (1937) reported on the fate of parenterally administered "citrin".

A significant part in the research in Hungary was played by Jeney, who in 1936 reported the favourable effects of flavonoids on intact and poisoned isolated frog heart. Other internationally recognized experts in flavonoid chemistry included Zemplén, Bognár, Farkas and their schools.

The discovery in Szeged called attention to the biological action of flavonoids, and from 1940 onwards many papers were published by foreign researchers on the effects of flavonoid compounds, such as catechins, leucoanthocyanidins (procyanidins), tea catechis, rutin, etc.

Twenty years after Rusznyák and Szent-Györgyi's discovery the first flavonoid conference was organized in the United States under the name "Bioflavonoids and the Capillary", where Szent-Györgyi gave a lecture entitled "Perspectives for the Bioflavonoids".

I should mention that the Working Committee for Flavonoid Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences organized the First Hungarian Bioflavonoid Symposium in Szeged in 1965. Our international symposia are now held every 4 years; the previous one was organized by Professor Wagner in Munich.

Numerous congresses and conferences have been devoted to the flavonoids in Europe during the past twenty years, all showing the growing interest in these compounds. In two months' time, a symposium "Plant Flavonoids in Biology and Medicine" will be held in Buffalo.

Fifty years after the pioneering work by Rusznyák and Szent-Györgyi, the question naturally arises as to the explanation of the renaissance in flavonoid research. The answer is clear: chemists have synthetized new flavonoid derivatives with previously unknown biological effects; phytochemists have isolated numerous new flavonoids from many plants; biochemists have demonstrated the most varied effects on different enzymes; and an ever increasing number of pharmacologic effects have become known through variations of the chemical structures of the flavonoids and related compounds. This research has led to the discovery of many new drugs that can be applied for therapeutic purposes.

Hungarian flavonoid researchers started the useful work on these interesting natural, semisynthetic, or synthetic compounds here in Szeged, and I am sure that this present conference will provide us with accounts of many new results, and will give ample possibilities for the mutual exchange of experience. Let me wish every success to all the participants in this meeting.

I declare the Symposium open.

ADDRESS OF WELCOME by

PROF. DR. L. FARKAS

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the great pleasure of welcoming you to this symposium on behalf of the Working Committee for Flavonoid Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

In his opening address Professor Gábor told us about our great traditions and the pioneering work of Hungarian scientists in this field. Our Working Committee for Flavonoid Research was established twenty years ago to facilitate and support the further contribution of Hungarian researchers to the chemistry, biochemistry and all other scientific or practical aspects of this interesting group of natural compounds. Moreover, an important aim of the Committee has been to ensure that our work in Hungary remains correctly integrated with that of others in the rest of the world.

This Seventh Hungarian Bioflavonoid Symposium seems to confirm again that our efforts have not been in vain. Just the fact that you all have honoured this meeting by coming to Szeged from distant countries and from various parts of Hungary is a sure mark of your appreciation, which makes us - the organizers of the present and former Symposia - proud and happy.

It is your presence and contributions which will certainly make this Symposium meaningful. We are convinced that the free exchange of our experience and ideas, discussions about the latest results and most promising trends of future research, and the possibility of doing so in person for three or four days, will be rewarding and enjoyable.

In this spirit, wishing you a useful and pleasant stay in this characteristically Hungarian town, Szeged, I extend a cordial welcome to you.

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