

## Professor Walter Marget – an appreciation

Walter Marget will celebrate his 60th birthday on August 1st, 1980. Almost half of his lifetime I shared his paediatric academic career with him. In 1951, one year after myself, he joined Walter Keller's team at the University Children's Hospital in Freiburg; he went with me in 1961 from Freiburg to Tübingen and from there to Munich in 1967. It is a pleasure for me to write the preface to an edition of "Infection" dedicated to him and I am enjoying it even more knowing that he, the great editor-in-chief, is not aware of this edition being printed.

Walter Marget had been obtaining a microbiological training with Prof. Rodenwaldt and Prof. Habs in Heidelberg for 4 years when he was called to the University Children's Hospital in Freiburg by Walter Keller to establish an "in-house microbiology" parallel to the "in-house virology" committed to Oskar Vivell, in German paediatrics at that time an extremely unusual undertaking.

This task became Marget's vocation. He promoted research and control of hospital infections and became an internationally renowned expert on efficient and rational administration of antibiotics in general and clinical practice.

Already in the late 50s he carried out investigations on infectious diseases spreading in hospital – a first order problem of today – studying *E. coli* enteritis of infants and staphylococcal infections. He made remarkable contributions to the "modern" nosocomial infections by showing that the difficulties do not depend as much upon problematic germs but upon problems displayed by the patient and the necessary technical devices, especially in intensive care units. On his initiative an extensive pilot study was undertaken to record and systematically control all infections acquired by the patients in 5 hospitals in southern Germany. The appointment of his coworker Franz Daschner as clinical hygienist to Freiburg was a rewarding, or should I say "logical" acknowledgment of his successful activities in this field.

He set an example by his investigations of urinary tract infections during infancy starting in the 60s in Tübingen and developing into a comprehensive study of more than 2000 infants as screening and extended partly to a prospective examination. It resulted in a great number of useful findings concerning diagnosis and therapy as well as it initiated fundamental research about the pathogenet-

ic significance of the Lipoid A of *E. coli* endotoxin for pyelonephritis.

In the many years until today testing of the efficacy, of dosages and of blood levels of newly developed antimicrobial agents in children of different age groups, especially in newborns and young infants, as well as application of a favourable combination of antibiotic drugs based upon pharmacokinetic studies, has been never ending daily work. The high standard of these endeavours were underlined by several international symposia organized by Walter Marget in Sils-Maria (Switzerland).

Notwithstanding all science Walter Marget remained faithful to his principles with which he started years ago under Walter Keller: He became a paediatrician undergoing full training and being on duty without cuts – and remained a paediatrician as Clinical Supervisor and Head of Division. But scientific research is his life elixir; the ups and downs between failures and triumphs – well known to every research worker – are a stimulation to his work. He carries out his achievements so cheerfully that he seems to accomplish them almost without any effort. This is due to his intuitive understanding for the essential, hardly ever wasting time and energy on unrewarding matters.

Many a candidate for a doctor's degree have learned from him to look at and deal with problems of clinical infectiology and prophylactic and curative control of infections. Two of his coworkers, Dieter Adam and Franz Daschner, have become highly successful academic teachers. The division for Antimicrobial Therapy and Immunology of Infectious Diseases in Munich is well known and many visitors and visiting doctors from Germany and abroad come to see it every year. We clinicians, paediatricians and paediatric surgeons of the Dr. von Haunersche Children's Hospital are so used to the ever-present assistance and advice of his division that we cannot imagine what work would be like without it. It is a fully integrated division in every respect, scientifically outstanding and independent on the one side, but effective and present in the entire hospital. I am extremely grateful to Walter Marget realizing this my ideal of the function of a division in a clinic so perfectly.

My deepest respects to the physician and researcher, happy birthday to the friend!

*Klaus Betke*