

My life-long friend Otto Braun-Falco (OBF) will celebrate his 90th birthday

Our friendship started in the late 1950s. I was impressed by papers appearing regularly in German journals by an unknown author. Since only the last name was given in the journal, the gender was not established. I had guessed that the author was female; however, it proved to be male, Braun-Falco himself.

By chance the famous Alfred Marchionini contacted me because he was looking for a young German sharing his ideas of friendship and cooperation between young scientists of different nationalities, who would work for him at München University and continue his international activities. He asked me to help him to find such a person and organized a wonderful boat trip, a "Rheinfahrt", to the Lorelei, inviting not only me but also Otto and another German Fritz. After long talks, Alfred decided that Otto would be the best as researcher and as propagator of his ideas.

Otto and I started our scientific activity almost at the same time. We both regarded dermatology as the aim of our life. However, Otto believed that morphology is a very important part of any clinical research and was mainly involved in clinical studies. I, myself, also recognizing the importance of morphology, started research in immunology and immunogenetics in cooperation with the Institut Pasteur and partly with H. zur Hausen (Cancer Research Center, "Krebsforschungszentrum"). Otto was mainly involved in the description of skin diseases and various dermatological problems. He worked on his book, which started as a small manual in cooperation with Kein-

ing, followed by his own small textbook, which already showed great potential of the author. I predicted that it would be a bestseller, with many editions and my forecast came true. The Braun-Falco textbook became famous and has been translated into many languages. Otto became recognized as a Great Master.

We both were elected to the International Committee of Dermatology; Otto was the first and the only German elected at that time to the highest international position. The members included the most prominent dermatologists such as Jadasohn, Degos, Sulzberger, Pillsbury, and Lapiere.

Very soon after being appointed to this prestigious association, Otto became its President. He received many honors and became a celebrity, but in spite of that remained the same, appealing personality.

An important part of his activity was the German-Polish cooperation, started by Alfred Marchionini, continued and developed by Otto. After the death of Alfred, Otto took over the German-Polish cooperation, which became formal, with Prof. Christophers and Dr. Wenning being actively involved. In spite of his extremely busy life, Otto was always present at the election of new fellows ("Stipendiaten"), and presided at the ceremony awarding the fellowships.

I am very happy that the fellowships presently have the name of OBF. This makes our international cooperation more prestigious. It is a great honor to be the recipient of an OBF fellowship.

Dear Otto, dearest friend, I cannot find the right words to express our deep-

est gratitude for this unique international historic cooperation between formerly hostile nations.

In spite of many friends and all possible honors, the life of Otto was very difficult. His wife was paralyzed after poliomyelitis, when they both were medical students. She was treated for many years by immunosuppressive drugs and suffered because of severe side effects. It was touching how he cared for her all his life. Of his four grandchildren, one is also named Otto – will he be "OBF der Zweite" (OBF the second)?

Dear Otto, you should be proud of your achievements and happy that your life has been so fulfilled.

Stefania Jablonska

Corresponding address

Prof. Dr. S. Jablonska
 ul. J. Dabrowskiego 77 m 27, 02-503 Warszawa
 Poland
