

To the Memory of Professor Doctor Hans Schmid



On March 24, 1977 Professor Hans Schmid was to celebrate his 60th anniversary, an occasion for which I had accepted with greatest pleasure to act as spokesman of the congratulators. However, what was to be a happy duty turned into a very sad one when Hans Schmid completely unexpectedly passed away on December 19, 1976, and instead of celebrating his jubilee, his colleagues, his collaborators and his students mourned his death.

Hans Schmid was born in the Canton of Aargau, Switzerland. His family moved to Vienna where he went to school and to University. He took his doctorate in 1939-41 under Professor Ernst Späth on the theme "Natural Cumarine and the Aldol". After his father's death the family returned to Switzerland and Hans Schmid was engaged as an assistant to Professor Paul Karrer at the Institute of Chemistry at Zurich University. By 1945 he was Lecturer and in 1947 was called to become Associate Professor for Organic Chemistry, at his age of 30 the youngest University professor in Switzerland. In 1959 he was promoted to Professor and Director of the Institute of Organic Chemistry as successor to Professor Paul Karrer. During the following

17 years the Institute was modernized and expanded under his direction so that today it is considered to be among the best.

The 400 scientific publications of Professor Schmid have made him known in professional circles all over the world. His main interests were concerned with Chemistry of the natural occurring substances in plants and insects, photochemical and mechanistic studies. Thanks to his open mind for new methods and new working fields in chemistry his lectures were exciting and lively. In recognition of his scientific work he was honoured with the Werner-Prize of the Swiss Chemical Society in 1946, was nominated to become a member of the German Academy of Natural Sciences LEOPOLDINA in 1968, and in 1974 the University of Fribourg named him honorary doctor. He presided the Swiss Chemical Society from 1970 to 1972 and he was Chairman of the Swiss Committee for Chemistry since 1972.

I should not like to end without pointing to his human qualities. He took a genuine interest in the work and the problems of his friends, colleagues, coworkers and students and helped wherever necessary. When in 1956 Hungarian and in 1968 Czechoslovak students left their countries, he engaged himself intensively in assisting them.

His infatigable instigations, assistance and guidance, his contribution to the Science of Chemistry and his genuine humanity will remain unforgettable to his innumerable friends, colleagues and collaborators who will preserve a precious memory of Hans Schmid.

M. Viscontini