

60th Birthday of Professor Jozef Tomko



Professor Dr. Ing. J. Tomko, DrSc., head of the Department of Pharmacognosy and Botany, Faculty of Pharmacy of the Komenský University in Bratislava, born December 12th, 1921 in Pavlova Ves, finished his secondary school studies in Liptovský Mikuláš and graduated at the Slovak Technical University, Faculty of Chemical Technology in 1946. In 1950, he got his Dr. and in 1969 his DrSc. degrees.

He worked in the Institute of Chemistry, Slovak Academy of Sciences, where, under his leadership, various foreign students postdoctored. At this time, he was a part-time lecturer at the Faculty of Natural Sciences of the Komenský University and later, at the Slovak Technical University in Bratislava. Since 1971 he was an external leader of the Department of Pharmacognosy

and Botany, in 1973 he was appointed a full-time professor and the next year also the head of this Department.

The whole life of Professor Tomko was devoted to the study of natural substances occurring in plants; his first contributions in this field concerned the alkaloids present in poppy, particularly their isolation employing ion exchangers. A great progress he made with alkaloids of the genus *Veratrum* and the discovery of new types of bases, namely those having an unusual pyrrolidine substitution in the side chain, stimulated invitations to present lectures abroad. In 1966—1967 he was a visiting professor at the Ohio State University.

This field of interest has been continued at the University; he published, in addition to textbooks for students, more than one hundred original papers in specialized chemical journals and a chapter on *Veratrum alkaloids* in the well known monograph on alkaloids edited by R. H. F. Manske in the USA.

He is one of the founders of the school of natural substances and participates in the scientific life in Slovakia. He is a long-time active member of the Czechoslovak Chemical Society, Chairman of the Slovak Chemical Society, member of the Advisory Editorial Board of This Journal, of various examining boards and commissions. He has been awarded the Hanuš Medal of the Czechoslovak Chemical Society, Silver Medals of the Komenský University and Slovak Chemical Society and a Gold D. Štúr Medal for merits in natural sciences.

We remember the birthday of Professor J. Tomko with a heart-felt wish, may he continue working as enthusiastically as he did for so many years and may he enjoy a good health for many years to come.

Z. Votický