

My meeting with Szent-Gyorgyi was the catalyst that led to my important discovery, and then to progress toward the solution of the problem that has been central in my life. These events occurred over a five-year period. I recounted them by means of letters because they best captured the development of what I learned.

May 4. Law and Life

I hope that you, Mary, and the girls are doing well. We haven't all been together for quite a while. I remember the day one of your daughters pushed my oldest son off the back porch of my house. After you left he said to me, "Daddy, don't invite them again, they play too rough!" I doubt he would say the same thing now. Raising him and his brothers has proved to be an exciting experience. Their adventures never seem to fall into a pattern, so it's hard to mitigate the damage or shape the events so that they teach some worthwhile lesson. I never say, "My son wouldn't do that," because I think they're capable of almost anything. My mother would say to me, after I had done something that drove her to a state of exasperation, "You ought to have one like you." Well, I had three. Raising a daughter, in contrast, has proved to be relatively free of stress. I suppose that has also been your experience!

William, I recently met the famous Albert Szent-Gyorgyi. He is an old man now, perhaps peculiar in some respects, but he still has a very lively mind. The meeting was really quite an event for me because Dr. Becker had drawn much of his inspiration from Szent-Gyorgyi. He too had been trained as a physician and had always been concerned with why and how people got sick. You can't study such a broad question from a narrow perspective, so he had branched into many areas of science. During our dinner, he told me, "If you want to build a house you need a strong foundation, and the bigger the house the bigger the foundation must be. I want to build modern medicine." As he said that he extended his arms from side to side as far as they would reach.

He studied anatomy first, and then progressed down the levels of organization, to organs, cells, molecules, and ultimately to atoms and elec-