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R. Stanier

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Dear Joshua:

Enclosed is a copy of André's and my publicity effort for the Pasteur anniversary.

In answer to your question about the general acceptance of Cohn's assertion — both with respect to bacteria and to blue-green algae — it seems to me that the answer is fairly simple. In eukaryotic algae, fungi and protozoa, simple microscopic observations very early revealed phenomena of various kinds — conjugation, gamete release and fusion, production of structurally distinctive zygotes — which could be more or less unambiguously interpreted as concomitants of a sexual process. Hence it was evident that at least <u>some</u> members of these assemblages were capable of undergoing sexual reproduction. It was the failure of microscopists to observe comparable phenomena in <u>any</u> representatives of the bacteria & blue-green algae which led to the dogma of asexuality. To this should be added, of course, that the analysis of sexual processes in eukaryotes led to the establishment of a certain idea of the nature of sexuality which made it no doubt very difficult to entertain the possibility that bacteria might handle matters differently. I think there is an analogy here to the difficulty of accepting the notion of a bacterial photosynthesis which didn't conform to the rules of the game in plants. Once natural laws of wide validity are established, there's a natural tendency to treat them as universal.

All the best from Germaine & myself,

Roger

STANIER