Henri Lazard 11 rue Cernuschi
Paris 17 - june 11, 1949

Dear Dr. Lederberg,

I have just been reading your interesting paper in Proc. nat. Ac. Sc. april '49.

you state p. 183:

'these heterozygotes... have provided an unexpected confirmation of the sexual basis of genetic recombination in this bacterium.'

I think that previously one used to consider that sexuality in bacteria might happen once out of 10^5 or 10^6?

I would like to ask you if you consider that sexual phenomena may occur more frequently in bacteria than used to be considered? Time seems quite near where one thought that no sexuality whatever could occur in bacteria and I have the impression that recent work is tending to modify, maybe to a large extent such an opinion? (maybe of course that I am quite wrong) As such a change – if it does actually occur – might have an important bearing on a research I am doing in the human physiopathological & therapeutical fields I would appreciate if you would give me your opinion and advice on this question which is out of my direct field of work.

I hope you won't mind me asking such a question. The gap is <u>much</u> smaller between microorganic genetics and human genetics, and then human physiopathology & therapy than what we have been accustomed to think until now.

With Kind regards

Sincerely yours

H Lara