

March 15, 1954

Prof. R. G. E. Murray  
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Dear Murray:

Thank you for your interesting letter of the 10th. I am of course delighted to continue our exchange of publications.

For the past couple of months, the emphasis of my cytological work has been on single cell studies with living material. I am just about getting ready to go back to work on fixed and stained materials. You will recall my professed disinterest in detailed studies of the nuclear cytology of our material, except insofar as this will be unavoidable. I am also arranging to begin a study of lysogenic induction in various strains in connection with the mechanism of transduction by phage.

I was struck by your remark on E. coli C. I had heard the same account from Weigle and Lieb, but a strain labelled C that we had formerly received from Weigle does not show such anomalous behavior in my hands and with my methods. Would you be kind enough to send me a transplant of your strain C on which your cytological studies have been made? If I continue to fail to find any peculiarity of the kind you mention, I will of course be happy to exchange slides or other materials to attempt to resolve the basis of the difference.

You asked about my difficulties with the pH of the stain. I simply found that when I made up the stain in buffer sufficiently concentrated to control the pH that staining at pH7 was extremely slow and weak. This difficulty was mitigated either by omitting buffer or by controlling the pH at around 5.1 with potassium phosphate M-10. It may be that some of my difficulties were traceable to other effects of solution strongly buffered at 7.

I was interested to hear of the initiation of your new Canadian Journal of Microbiology. I hope that as time goes on, it will be possible for this journal to establish a particular area of specialization that will give it a character distinctive from that of the Journal of Bacteriology, aside from its geographic designation. There is certainly a basis for dissatisfaction with the overlong backlog of

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the Journal of Bacteriology, but my own feeling, which I hope will not be too strongly expressed as Editor, is that this could be mitigated with more careful editorial selection and with more attention on the part of writers to economy of expression. Judging from some of the manuscripts that have come to me, I am not sure that in this country at least there is much need for further access to publication in this field. This may be somewhat too jaundiced a view.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg

JL:mg