THE LASKER AWARD

FOR

MEDICAL RESEARCH

PRESENTED BY

THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

TO

OSWALD T. AVERY, M. D.

1947

The Lasker Award 1947

presented by

The American Public Health Association

to

Oswald T. Avery, M.D.

For distinguished services through studies on the chemical constitution of bacteria

With unusual persistence, remarkable insight and extraordinary accuracy of observation, Oswald T. Avery has devoted the greater part of his scientific career to the study of the pneumococcus. Animated by an unsurpassed intellectual curiosity and a desire to conquer one of the most deadly enemies of man, he undertook to elucidate in logical sequence the biological activities, the immunological characteristics and the pathogenic properties of the pneumococcus. In this he so far succeeded that today it is fair to say that more is known about this organism than about any other human parasite.

Were this all it would be a unique accomplishment, but quite early in the course of his investigations he became interested in searching for a chemical explanation for the type specificity of pneumococci. As a consequence, he discovered and identified the capsular polysaccharides and demonstrated their role in determining this specificity.

He furthermore succeeded in throwing light on the immunological relationships of the intracellular constituents

of this organism. Through these discoveries he laid the foundation for his brilliant analysis in chemical terms of the antigenic constitution of the whole pneumococcus. He thus established a perfect pattern for the antigenic analysis of other micro-organisms both by himself and by others who have followed in his footsteps.

Among Dr. Avery's many brilliant contributions to scientific knowledge none has been more outstanding than his studies on the antigenic constitution of bacteria. Through them he is one of the founders of the science of immunochemistry. Because of them our comprehension of the complex problems of infectious disease has been immeasurably enriched.

Harry S. Mustard President
The American Public Health Association

George Baehr Chairman
The Lasker Awards Committee of the American Public Health Association