

March 11, 1944

Dear Luria:

I am ashamed of myself for not having answered your good letter sooner, especially as I think about you often and wonder how you are getting along and when you will return. You surely have had more than your share of trouble for a long while to come and I hope you will soon be back at work again with the old zest and enthusiasm, - and success. On the other hand I sometimes long for an opportunity to do exactly what you are doing, - reading some of the things not remotely connected with science that one wants so much to do. But I'd prefer not to go through what you have in order to satisfy that craving.

I got a letter from Delbrück recently inviting me to talk to their Science Club. He said you could tell me what an unexciting group it is. It doesn't sound like such, but I've never met Delbrück and I am accepting mainly because I'd like the chance to get acquainted with him. God knows what I shall talk about to a group like that. Have you any suggestions as to subject or level of presentation?

My work continues to yield surprises. It is still too early to tell what it is going to add up to. I have evidences that seem on the surface at least to point in opposite directions. On the one hand, there is much evidence supporting the idea that the cytoplasmic factor is indeed at times a part of the gene, as I long suspected on general grounds. On the other hand, there is some evidence, not yet entirely complete, that the cytoplasmic factor may become lost from a clone, or a part of the clone, during the course of long-continued reproduction by simple fissions; and while this doesn't actually prove that the cytoplasmic factor was not a part of the gene, it is at least somewhat favorable to its non-nuclear, cytoplasmic localization. I have been hammering away exclusively on the question of the localization of the "cytoplasmic factor" in the cell, trying to devise crucial tests of whether it ever is in the nucleus. But there is, damn it, still a hell of a lot yet to be done on this, and this kind of work necessarily goes slowly.

We will all be most happy to have you back and hope it will be very soon.

Yours,

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