

ISTITUTO SIEROTERAPICO MILANESE

"SERAFINO BELFANTI"

ENTE MORALE AGGREGATO ALLA UNIVERSITÀ DI MILANO

Direttore Scientifico: Prof. Augusto De Barbieri

Direzione Scientifica

Via Darwin, 20 - MILANO

TELEFONO n. 35.74.41 (5 linee)

Monday the 26th, March
1956

Dear Joshua,

Thanks for your note of March 18. Concerning reprints: 300 will be requested by the Istituto, and 300 by myself, ~~xxx~~ with a total of 600; the invoice for the total should be addressed to the Istituto. An invoice will be necessary for being able to effect the payment.

I find some difficulties in writing chapters II and V, the material for which has been accumulated and various drafts have been already written, and shall have to wait for a period of inspiration. Are you one of those fortunate people who can ~~write~~ sit down at any moment and write whatever necessary in good form ~~maxim~~ and style? I certainly am not.

As you spoke in your last letter about a reconstruction experiment to test for Jacob's hypothesis; I made a similar one some time ago but it is not quite conclusive. Here are the essential data: Various numbers of A (M-F⁺Az^S) and/or B cells (M-Hfr Az^R), were crossed to TL-F⁻(10⁹) cells on min. Prototrophs were tested for Az and F, with the results given:

No. cells		Az ^R		Az ^S	
A	B	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁺	F ⁻
10 ⁷	-	0	0	44	6
-	10 ⁵	0	41	0	9
10 ⁶	10 ⁵	1	34	2	11
10 ⁷	10 ⁴	3	4	37	2
10 ⁷	10 ⁵	5	23	18	2
10 ⁷	10 ⁶	2	16	1	7
10 ⁸	10 ⁵	2	3	39	6

I realise now that the experiment was unfair to Jacob there being an excess of F⁻; no doubt a great amount of infection of Hfr x F⁻ progeny takes place, but if the present data with an excess of F⁻ can be taken as good, not enough to explain the whole of observed recombination. Moreover, if the ~~xxxxxxx~~ Jacob's hypothesis is correct, there should be a ~~recombination~~ F⁺ → Hfr mutation rate of about 1 in 300, which seems rather in conflict with all the experience cumulated in thousands of isolates from F⁺ strains. It should however be of some importance to establish the F⁺ to Hfr mutation rate, and its bearing on the recombination frequencies. Have you any data, plans, suggestions?

All the best,
Yours, Luca.

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