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262 Chapter THE "UNDISCOVERED" DISCOVERY—STANLEY

istry and Biophysics of Viruses," written for Doerr and Hallauer's *Handbuch der Virusforschung*, published in 1938. In this discussion, I commented: "This phenomenon is virus-like, and it is because of this and the fact that it may become important from the standpoint of the chemistry of viruses that a discussion is included here." After describing the method of preparation and biological properties of the purified material, I ended the discussion with:

No chemical tests were made on these purified preparations, hence nothing is known about the nature of the active agent. It is to be hoped that the study of this agent will be continued because of its virus-like nature.

I was also interested in the RNA of tobacco mosaic virus. In 1942, Cohen and I reported the isolation of this RNA with an unusually large molecular weight and we reached the conclusion "that the nucleic acid exists in thread-like molecules, the length of which is that of the intact virus molecule." It is obvious that despite my 1938 writings, I was not impressed with the significance of the 1944 discovery by Avery, MacLeod, and McCarty or I would have prepared high molecular weight tobacco mosaic virus-RNA once again and tested it for virus

activity despite the fact that RNA was not suspected to have genetic properties. It remained for Fraenkel-Conrat to do this important experiment in my laboratory 14 years later. I have searched my memory and have failed to find any really extenuating circumstances for my failure to recognize the full significance of the discovery of transforming DNA. Some of the factors mentioned in the body of this paper may have had some influence, and with the outbreak of World War II in 1941 my laboratory effort was converted almost overnight to the development of preventative vaccines for our armed forces and this total effort continued until well past the end of the war in September 1945. But there should have been time for me to accord proper early recognition to the discovery of transforming DNA in 1944, and for my failure to do this I apologize. I am pleased to be able to record in this paper the fact that in 1947 Lasker Awards in Basic Research were presented to Drs. Avery and Francis.

This communication was developed from notes which were used in connection with a speech I presented on the occasion of the dedication of the Avery Memorial Gateway at the Rockefeller Institute in New York, Sept 29, 1965.

Am I sorry to think he had the Nobel Prize awarded in my name? As a prior Nobelist he was privileged to make nominations every year.

* GW 160 D652 vol? chap?

Chapter on Biochemistry + Biophysics of Viruses by W. Stanley.

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