

Sunday

(1958)

26 Oct.

About 11⁰⁰ this AM I had gone to the lab to clean up the grant applications I've been working on (to the essential exclusion of my lab work in recent weeks!). I'd gotten up rather early, had some coffee for breakfast + left while Esther was having her best night: a "Australian" party at home — The Craffords from Melbourne (history), Phyllis Rountree; May Chadwood + the Pedric Osboms (Popularity line). I was to work at the lab until about 12³⁰, then pick up Phyllis + Margaret for brunch + then see Phyllis off to her plane: → Columbus → Denver; SFO → Sydney.

at 11³⁰ ± there was a call from a Mr. Lindquist of the "Tidning" newspaper in Stockholm — the NY correspondent. He explained his call to my astonishment that Beadle Tatum + I were to be co-recipients of the Nobel prize in medicine this year. I was rather incredulous: he insisted the AP was quoting the rumors and he was quite sure it would be announced Thursday. It is no surprise, of course, that Beadle should be honored this way + it is especially courteous for Tatum but I am still quite astonished (as I was for the NAS last year). To be added on I'd just had the impression that this kind of distinction in biology should go to the venerables and veterans and it is a bit of a shock to be elected that way. Of course in physics quite young men, e.g. Willis Lamb, have been awarded this way too. But I'm worried enough at beginning up a lab career that this kind of thing has some dreadful connotations: I guess I just can't believe in memorializing the live + beating. On the whole I'm a little afraid the fear + bother more than outweigh the ecstatic satisfactions, the cash and the prestige factors that might help in getting my lab going. Perhaps I'm exaggerating the fears; I was glad enough to be off the coast of Tami, however!

Anyway I should have guessed sooner: several clues make some more sense now! — before Kline's emigrative correspondence (beginning earlier he'd come this year, then beginning he was coming to the US); Leo Goldberg's request for a photograph; a telephone interview yesterday or Friday by ~~some~~ Day Nagelbacher reporter; George's request for a bibliography last spring. (I suppose he did allow to me that George did have something of the sort in his mind then, but hardly this year.)

* NSF; General statement to Fred Stone for NIH;

NIH - Nossal; NIH - Tg. Grant; NIH - Hanafin from U-W.

how the trouble is it is by no means certain & there must be
some possibility it is a mistake; I am rather nervously awaiting
the Bulletin to be picked up locally as I'm sure I'll have no
peace after that!

I do feel as much as ever that the nonsense ought to be abolished
but I don't have the courage to write it head on & I'm afraid it would
raise even more fears and perhaps affront Ed & Braden in a
rather nasty way. The best I can do is to be as inconspicuous about
it as possible and make some reference to the obsolescence of personal dis-
tinction in scientific ~~distinction~~ life. I could write a paper on the functions:

The functions of the N.P.: to attract public attention (and arouse its
understanding and support for some achievement in science — we
(assoc.) have to struggle to solve this problem. Good & bad aspects;
misunderstanding in rank of hero in science, no matter who must
paralyze legend of people who do not truly share in recognition but
merely get secondary ~~benefit~~ benefits.

conclude to this. But probably the less said the better.

What a mixed lot it is! The "distinction" was set out to the world & to the public for
that somehow has grown up around it. 1908 was Ehrlich - Hatzekisoff;
Muller was 1916 and to think of it did NP give him such a treat? ? ?
? have to think about scheduling trip to STO in December — by jet?
I suppose just have to ensure that all our plans will be upset.