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Dr J.Lederberg,
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16th February 1949

Dear Dr Lederberg,

Thank you very much for your interesting letter on the subject of mutations, reversed mutations and related questions.

I should like to say that I am very much alive to the importance of these matters and follow with great interest all the work on genetic analysis applied to micro-organisms. In the little essay which I was bold enough to publish in 1946 I did in chapters 8 and 9 do my best to suggest that mutations and more strictly adaptive changes might well be the ends of a continuous spectrum.

In our own experience we have not so far encountered anything which has struck us here as compellingly suggestive of genic recombination but then we have always stuck to a very narrow range of organisms indeed. The reason for this is I think summed up in the last paragraph of one of the enclosed reprints (in the orange cover). Our angle is to explore the potentialities of physico-chemical models and certainly not to claim any universal validity for them.

I enclose some of the more recent reprints and trust that you will regard them in that spirit.

Yours sincerely,

C. N. Hinshelwood