

vacation, so unacquainted is he with the literature on chromosomal RNA. If this were not so he would have immediately appreciated that Heyden and Zachau (*Biochim. Biophys. Acta*, **232**, 651; 1971) failed to recover chromosomal RNA from calf thymus chromatin because they used no procedure which would have made it possible. Thus, chromosomal RNA is covalently bound to protein and the latter must be removed before the RNA can be recovered by phenol extraction. The pronase used by Heyden and Zachau, unable to digest even its own RNAase impurity, was clearly incapable of digesting the chromosomal RNA protein. In addition, the DNA-RNA hybridization conditions of Heyden and Zachau were unsuitable (very much too low product of RNA \times time) to reveal the hybridization of chromosomal RNA, even had they recovered it.

The over-interpretation, based on lack of knowledge of the field, which your molecular biology correspondent gives to Heyden and Zachau's article is matched of course by that which another of your correspondents has given to the findings of Clark and Felsenfeld (*Nature*, **229**, 230; 1971) concerning the structure of chromatin. One would hope that your correspondent would wish to conceal his lack of knowledge of and insight into nuclear matters instead of openly and publicly wallowing in it.

Yours faithfully,

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¹ *Nature*, **231**, 18 (1971).

Our molecular biology correspondent writes:

Attack may be the best form of defence, and I am happy to see that Professor Bonner has lost none of his legendary agility. His attempt to muddy the water by impugning the activity of Heyden and Zachau's pronase, however, savours of desperation; as well suggest that their

spectrophotometer is playing them false and all their RNA concentrations are wrong. Were the destruction of contaminating nucleases in relation to the autolysis rate of the protease as simple an issue as Professor Bonner makes out, less sweat would have been expended on the various chromatographic methods of purification that are to be found in the literature. The professor chooses, of course, to ignore that Heyden and Zachau took care to assay the activity of their pronase. However, the message implicit in his letter, on the dangers of overpurifying one's enzymes (at least if it is low-molecular weight RNA that one is after), will no doubt be widely appreciated. As to the hybridization conditions, I would merely direct Professor Bonner's attention to a paper by Sivopal and Bonner (*Proc. US Nat. Acad. Sci.*, **68**, 387; 1971), which will make it clear that Heyden and Zachau used both a higher RNA concentration and a longer time.

I am sorry that Professor Bonner has not divulged the nature of his complaint with my fellow Grub Street hack, who commented without his permission on the paper of Clark and Felsenfeld. We scribes of course have learned to bear with fortitude the periodic outbursts of scorn and abuse from splenetic *savants*, but it seems churlish to try to deny us even a little public wallowing.

British Diary

Monday, June 28

People and Roads: The Social Impact of Urban Transport Policies (8 p.m. discussion) Mr Peter Hill and Mr John O'Malley, British Society for Social Responsibility in Science, at the Museum Tavern, Great Russell Street, London WC1.

Thursday, July 1

Fellows' Open Day (from 10.15 a.m.) National Institute of Agricultural Botany, Huntingdon Road, Cambridge. AGM, Friday, 2.15 p.m.

Pancreatitis (5.15 p.m.) Mr J. Trapnell, University of London, at Westminster Medical School, 17 Horseferry Road, London SW1.

Friday, July 2

Intervertebral Disc (10 a.m. symposium) Bone and Tooth Society, at Princess Margaret Rose Orthopaedic Hospital, Fairmilehead, Edinburgh.

The Blood Supply of Skin Grafts (11 a.m.) Mr T. J. S. Patterson, University of London, at the Royal Postgraduate Medical School, Hammersmith Hospital, Du Cane Road, London W12.

Reports and Publications

not included in the Monthly Books Supplement

Great Britain

- Advisory Committee on Gas Council Researches—Report 1968/69. Pp. 12. (Leeds: The University, 1970.) [264]
- Education and Science in 1970—a Report of the Department of Education and Science. Pp. 96. (London: HMSO, 1971.) 60p net. [264]
- World Development Handbook. By Juliet Clifford and Gavin Osmond. Pp. xi+172. (London: Charles Knight and Co. Ltd, 1971. Published for Overseas Development Institute Ltd.) £1.50. [264]
- University of Oxford. Annual Reports, 1969-1970. Pp. 28. (Supplement No. 6 to the *University Gazette*, Vol. ci, April 1971.) (Oxford: The University, 1971.) 40p. [264]
- The Marine Fauna of the Cullercoats District. 5: Arthropoda 3c—Crustacea; Copepoda. By Jo. Boasanyi and H. O. Bull. (Report of the Dove Marine Laboratory—Third Series, No. 17.) Pp. 59. (North Shields: The University of Newcastle upon Tyne, Dove Marine Laboratory, 1971.) 371p. [264]
- The Control of Bovine Mastitis. Edited by F. H. Dodd and E. R. Jackson. (Papers given at a meeting organized by the British Cattle Veterinary Association and the Agricultural Development Association, held at Reading University, January 5-6, 1971.) Pp. 130. (York: The Agricultural Development Association, Cliftonfield, Shipton Road, 1971.) £1.40. [284]
- The Commonwealth Forestry Institute, University of Oxford. Forty-fifth Annual Report 1968/1969. Pp. 50. Forty-sixth Annual Report 1969/1970. Pp. 27. (Oxford: The Commonwealth Forestry Institute, University of Oxford, 1971.) [284]
- Bulletin of the British Museum (Natural History). Geology, Vol. 20, No. 3: Review of *Peramus tenuirostris* Owen (Eupantotheria, Mammalia). By W. A. Clemens and J. R. E. Mills. Pp. 87-113+4 plates. £1.30. Zoology, Vol. 21, No. 2: Bats from Ethiopia Collected by the Great Abbaï Expedition 1968. By J. E. Hill and P. Morris. Pp. 25-49+3 plates. £1.15. (London: British Museum (Natural History).) [284]
- University of Oxford. Report of the Second Committee on Student Health. (Supplement No. 7 to the *University Gazette*, Vol. ci, April 1971.) Pp. 29. (Oxford: The University, 1971.) 40p. [284]
- The Zoological Record, 1968, Vol. 105, Section 6: Vermes. Part 1 compiled by R. A. Bray, J. W. Coles and Stephen Prudhoe. Part 2 compiled by E. G. Easton. Part 3 compiled by S. Ware. Pp. viii+196. £3.50. 1968, Vol. 105, Section 11: Trilobita. Compiled by Sir James Stubblefield. Pp. iv+58. £1. (London: The Zoological Society of London, 1970.) [284]

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