OPINION 17

Conservation of the Generic Name Staphylococcus Rosenbach,
Designation of Staphylococcus aureus Rosenbach as the
Nomenclatural Type of the Genus Staphylococcus
aureus Rosenbach, and Designation of a Neotype
Culture of Staphylococcus aureus Rosenbach

Gibson (1953) asked the Judicial Commission to issue an Opinion on the status of the generic name Staphylococcus Rosenbach and Micrococcus Cohn. In 1954 the Editorial Board issued a preliminary statement. Work is being done to distinguish these two genera, but it is not proposed to deal with the generic name Micrococcus at this time. However, the animal pathogens and saprophytes are clearly defined and it is appropriate to deal with Gibson's proposals concerning Staphylococcus.

Rosenbach 1884 used both the binomial Staphylococcus aureus and the illegitimate trinomial Staphylococcus pyogenes aureus, but he never used the binomial Staphylococcus pyogenes. The binary combination Staphylococcus aureus Rosenbach is recognized as the nomenclatural type of the genus Staphylococcus Rosenbach 1884.

In the absence of a designated type culture, Shaw, Stitt, and Cowan (1951) proposed FDA 209-P (NCTC 7447) as a neotype culture. However, later Cowan, Shaw, and Williams (1954) withdrew this proposal because the strain had phage characters typical of strains from cattle. Since Rosenbach had been describing strains from infections in man, it was thought better to propose a strain of human origin (NCTC 8532).

Breed (1956) and Evans, Bradford, and Niven (1955) approved the choice of NCTC 8532 as neotype strain as it has all the characters recognized in modern work as typical of the pathogenic strains. On the other hand, Thatcher and Simon (1957) expressed a preference for strain FDA 209-P (NCTC 7447).

The Judicial Commission and the International Committee on Bacteriological Nomenclature approved the following Opinion (No. 17) at their meetings at Stockholm August, 1958, during the VII International Microbiological Congress.

Opinion 17

1. The generic name Staphylococcus Rosenbach 1884 is conserved and placed in the list of nomina generum conservanda.

2. Staphylococcus aureus Rosenbach 1884 is recognized as the nomenclatural type species of the genus Staphylococcus Rosenbach 1884.

3. The strain labeled 8532 in the National Collection of Type Cultures, London, is designated as the neotype strain of the species Staphylococcus aureus Rosenbach 1884.

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