THE ACTION OF VITAL STAINS BELONGING TO THE BENZIDINE GROUP

The brilliant advances in our knowledge of the chemistry of aniline dyes, brought about naturally by the enormous commercial importance which the dyes possess, has been brought to bear, and will in the future be brought to bear, we believe, in the solution of some important problems in biology. The dyes possess peculiar advantages; especially is this true in the case of those of them which undergo little or no chemical transformation when injected into the living body. To this class of dyes, as we hope to show later, belong the benzidine or substantative dyes. It might be inquired immediately whether vastly more important results could not be secured from the study of dyes which, on the contrary, are known to suffer definite chemical changes within the body, for it might be supposed, for instance, that valuable light could be thrown on oxidative or reductive processes peculiar to certain cells or tissues. It was, of course, with motives not far removed from these, that Ehrlich first seriously attempted the use of dyes to solve the problem of the relation between pharmacological action and chemical constitution in his classical essay on this thesis in 1902. When we insist, however,

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