

MEDICINE

New Measles Vaccine Successful in First Trials

Army Officials as Well as Parents Will Welcome It; Country Lads in World War Had Disease Severely

SUCCESS in vaccinating a small group of children against measles, widespread childhood ailment that often leads to pneumonia and serious ear trouble, has been achieved by Dr. Joseph Stokes, Jr., University of Pennsylvania Medical School, and Dr. Geoffrey Rake, Squibb Institute for Medical Research, New Brunswick, N. J.

Army officials as well as parents throughout the land will hail this promise of triumph over measles, announced at the University of Pennsylvania Bicentennial Conference in Philadelphia.

During the last World War, it was pointed out, measles became one of the commonest causes of death in the Army. This was because thousands of country

lads who had never had measles due to their relative degree of isolation during childhood contracted the disease after they got into Army training camps. Many of them not only had measles but a severe and often fatal pneumonia as a complication of the measles.

The new anti-measles vaccine was made by growing the measles virus or germ on fertile hen's eggs. Apparently the virus becomes weakened or attenuated while growing in this environment and when injected under the skin or placed within the nose it produces a very mild type of measles in some children and no symptoms at all in others.

Two groups of children in New Jersey and Philadelphia, with the permis-

sion of their parents and health authorities, gave the new measles vaccine its first trials. None of the children had ever had measles. One group was vaccinated and the other was not. Both groups were then given injections of measles virus from patients who had measles. The unvaccinated children came down with measles, but the vaccinated ones did not. This was most encouraging, but Dr. Stokes pointed out that the number of children in these trials of the vaccine was too small to be entirely sure of the value of the vaccine.

Permission to make the tests was readily given by parents as well as health authorities because neither group of children ran very much danger. In the first place, they were all likely to get measles at some time in their lives, since 98 out of every 100 children are susceptible to it. In the second place, the trials were made in spring, the season when measles is least likely to be followed by ear trouble, pneumonia or other complications. Besides this, the children all had the very best medical and nursing care to help them recover safely from the ailment.

Production of large amounts of the vaccine, it is said, will not be difficult and it can be preserved for long periods.

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HEREDITY

Scientists Amazed by Quads; Only One of a Kind in Four

"ALMOST a miracle," is what scientists say about four little Texas boys, nicknamed the Alphabetical Quadruplets because they are named Anthony, Bernard, Carl, and Donald—A., B., C., and D.

These Perricone quads seem to be the only all-male set now living in the United States. But that is only one of their unusual qualities, described by Dr. Iva C. Gardner, Baylor University psychologist, and Dr. H. H. Newman, biologist, in the current issue of the *Journal of Heredity*.

These quads are all what is known to scientists as non-identical—just four ordinary brothers who happened by the most remarkable chance to be born at the same time.

Quadruplets, like twins and other multiple births, may come about in two ways. The cells developing from a single egg cell, or ovum, may through a biological accident split apart and form two or more perfect individuals. The twins formed in this way are called identical because they are so exactly alike in physi-



ALPHABETICAL QUADRUPLETS

Anthony, Bernard, Carl and Donald surprise scientists because no two of them are alike. They differ mentally as well as in appearance. This photograph is from the Journal of Heredity.