

BIOLOGY

Experiments Successfully Predict Animal's Sex

➤ EXPERIMENTS have been successfully completed which indicate that scientists may soon be able to control the sex of animals.

Dr. Manuel Gordon, who performed the research while working at the University of California, reports that he was able to predict correctly the sex of almost 70% of 167 rabbits obtained from 31 litters in his experiments. Further developments and "refinements" in the technique used could mean important advances in the breeding of domestic animals.

Using a method of sex control based upon electrical properties of the sperm cells, Dr. Gordon was able to separate "male" or Y chromosome carrying sperm cells from "female" or X chromosome carrying sperm cells. An electrophoresis apparatus, a chamber containing positively and negatively charged poles with an electrical potential between them, was used. When a solution containing the sperm is placed in the chamber, the female-producing sperm migrates toward the anode and the male-producing sperm toward the cathode.

While the technique is believed to be original in its details, it is based on the general principle originated by the Russian scientists. Many details of the work of the Russian scientist Vera Schroller, who reported the control of sex in rabbit offspring in the 1930's, are lacking.

A report of Dr. Gordon's research will appear in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (Oct.).

Science News Letter, October 19, 1957

MEDICINE

Find Better Drug for Stopping Blood Clots

➤ A SUBSTANCE that may help heart patients by preventing their blood from clotting has been isolated by Dr. Eugene J. Towbin, Veterans Administration Hospital, Little Rock, Ark., the VA has announced.

The anticoagulant has not yet been fully identified, but in animal experiments it shows promise of being better than the presently used ones. Anticoagulants now administered to patients can cause bad reactions unless doses are carefully controlled.

The new substance, believed to be a protein, is found in most animals and human tissue. It prevents blood clotting by stopping the formation of the substances that go into the clot.

The unidentified clot preventer acts on the clot-forming process at an earlier stage than do other anticoagulants, Dr. Towbin said.

Anticoagulant drugs are widely used to prevent death-dealing clots in the kind of heart attack known as coronary occlusion and in conditions where blood clots form in the veins.

Scientists at the hospital have been attempting to extract the drug in chemically pure form for the past six months.

Science News Letter, October 12, 1957

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