

a chemist. A small dose of this compound kills instantly the fish that come in contact with it. Lately three English investigators, Tattersfield, Ginningham, and Morris, have showed that this drug can also be used to kill harmful insects. And here the plants of this group, which are still under cultivations, may play an important part in the warfare of man against insect.

PROMISES UPSET IN HEREDITY THEORY

Modern theories of heredity may be refuted by experiments now being made at Stanford University by Professor L.L. Burlingame of the Department of Biology on a plant known as the Clarkia. On first investigation this plant appeared to be contrary to the accepted laws of heredity; however, experiments are being continued to prove that that is merely an explainable deviation.

The present theory is that in every plant or animal there is a definite number of units, known as chromosomes. These units work in pairs. Man has 48 of these pairs. These chromosomes furnish the means for transmission of hereditary characteristics.

The Clarkia appears to have a varying number of pairs. The correct number seems to be four, but there have been counted from five to eight pairs in the sex cells and from two to seven in the body cells. This is in defiance of all knowledge of heredity.

Professor Burlingame discovered this wide variation while experimenting in hybridization of this plant in the garden. Upon noticing the inconsistency of the plant, he began a thorough study of its properties. He is attempting to prove that it may be explained by the chromosomes having broken up into smaller particles, but still remaining unchanged in their original quantity. If this were true, the smaller parts would be the same size as the sum of the proper number of full sized chromosomes. Owing to the irregularities in their shapes, however, great difficulty is being found in measuring them.

This is the only known case in which the number of chromosomes varies though there may be others yet undiscovered. Professor Burlingame believes that the explanation will be in accordance with the laws as they are now understood, and is attempting by experiment to confirm his theory.

DON'T DRINK METHANOL! ITS POISONOUS

Methanol, the synthetic alcohol which is now being made cheaply in Germany, is just as poisonous as the similar wood or methyl alcohol, despite claims that the foreign product, because of its high purity, is harmless. This statement is made by Dr. Reid Hunt, of the Harvard Medical School, in "Industrial and Engineering Chemistry", following a series of experiments.

"The results with the German (synthetic) methanol were the same as those obtained with pure methyl alcohol obtained from wood distillates," says Dr. Hunt. "It can confidently be predicted that the use of the synthetic methanol as a beverage or as an adulterant will be followed by the same disastrous effects to life and vision as have characterized such uses of wood alcohol. Those who are circulating the report that the synthetic methanol is not poisonous are not only stating an untruth but are assuming a grave responsibility, for death or blindness