he suggests that it is probable that three broods are reared when nesting begins early in April and only two when nesting is delayed by weather until May; the period between rearing one brood and commencing another averages ten days, making altogether 113 days or an average of four months devoted to the rearing of their young. There is confirmation of the observations of B. H. Ryves (*Brit. Birds*, August 1943), including retardation of egg-laying due to inclement weather. After the destruction of previous clutches the rapidity of egg-laying produced fresh eggs after intervals of only four or five days. An average of five young per pair is a normal seasonal increase. There are also interesting observations on the building of domed nests inside nest-boxes.

Powdery Mildew of the Rose

HORTICULTURAL beauty of the rose often depends as much on the foliage as upon the flowers. Powdery mildew caused by the fungus *Spaerotheca pannosa* is a very widespread trouble upon the leaves, particularly when roses are grown under glass. The disease can be minimized, but not controlled, by keeping temperature and humidity as low as possible for the growth of the plants. Mr. Wilbur D. McCellan has re-investigated the problem of control, chiefly by spraying methods (Cornell University Agricultural Experimental Station, Bull. 785. Ithaca, N.Y.; June 1942). Sulphur-containing sprays were found to be generally superior to those containing copper, though malachite green gave the best eradicant control. Good control without injury to foliage resulted from the use of particulate sulphur. Various wetting agents were also studied, and useful control was obtained by vaporizing sulphur at 112–115° C. A considerable reduction in the amount of mildew can be obtained by frequent syringing. The paper also includes descriptions of a method of measuring contact angles of spray drops, as a means of comparing their wetting power.

Mammalian Reproduction

THE title of a recent publication (1943) of the Imperial Bureau of Animal Breeding and Genetics fully indicates its contents. It is "Gestation Periods, a Table and Bibliography", compiled by J. H. Kenneth (Pp. 23. Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1943. 2*s*.). It contains a very long list of mammals with their common and scientific names, followed by the time in days of their gestation periods. The average time is given and also the minimum and maximum times where available. Where different times are given by different authorities, these are cited separately and all data are followed by references to the publications from which they are taken. In domestic mammals, separate times are given for the different breeds and in some instances for crosses between them. A number of workers will be grateful for this ready access to a scattered literature. A wide range of variation is shown from the sixteen days of the golden hamster, *Mesocricetus auratus*, up to the 426 days of the okapi, *Okapi johnstoni*, and 641 days of the elephant, *Elephas indicus*.

Health of Iceland

ACCORDING to the *Medical Officer* of November 13, the population of Iceland is now 121,579, of which 38,300 live in the capital, Reykjavik. The marriage-rate is 6·6, the death-rate 9·9 and infant mortality 35·9 per 1,000 live births. The chief causes of death are old age (1·6 per 1,000), closely followed by diseases of the heart and cancer, which both reach 1·3 per 1,000. Apoplexy, tuberculosis, pneumonia and accidents all rank about the same (0·8–0·9 per 1,000). Apart from influenza and pneumonia, infectious diseases are not important causes of death. Scarlet fever and erysipelas are of a much more virulent form than in Great Britain. 229 cases of tuberculosis were notified, of which 60 were non-pulmonary, and 104 cases were fatal. School medical inspection of children especially as regards tuberculosis is compulsory. Venereal disease is notifiable, and there has not been a diminution of cases during the last ten years. Occupation by foreign troops has been followed by more employment, more money, higher prices, longer working hours, housing difficulties, more accidents in factories and on roads and increase in immorality.

Typhus Fever in Bolivia

ACCORDING to the delegate of Bolivia at the eleventh Panamerican Sanitary Congress at Rio de Janeiro during September 7–15, 1942 (*Bol. Of. San. Panamer.*, 22, 590; 1943), typhus fever, which was formerly confused with typhoid fever, is an endemic disease which causes serious epidemics in Bolivia in the winter months. Its centre is the high Andean Plateau which has a million inhabitants, 90 per cent of whom are natives. The largest city affected is La Paz, which is in direct contact with the Indian population of the highlands as a trading, commercial and supply centre. The disease occurs only sporadically in the valleys, although they are inhabited by the same kind of natives as those on the plateau. During the Chaco campaign, when thousands of plateau natives were fighting among the rest of the inhabitants under lice-infested insanitary conditions, not a single case of epidemic typhus occurred, although in 1933 and 1935 the plateau was suffering from a great epidemic. During the last two years, cases of typhus have been uncommon and have been replaced by relapsing fever. The probable explanation of this is that the virus of the disease (*Rickettsia prowazeki*) is of a special type adapted to the Bolivian plateau and unable to flourish in a warmer climate, or that the lice in the valleys for some unknown reason do not transmit the disease.

Cerebrospinal Meningitis in War-time

ACCORDING to the July issue of the *Statistical Bulletin*, the organ of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company of New York, cerebrospinal meningitis recorded its most extensive outbreak in the history of the United States in 1943: the number of cases up to the end of July was more than 13,000, and the total for the year will probably exceed 17,000 cases. Practically every part of the United States has been attacked, the State most affected being Rhode Island. Earlier, the disease was at an extremely low ebb, but in 1942 new cases began to increase in number. A large proportion of the cases reported in 1943 occurred in Army camps. England has probably suffered from cerebrospinal fever more than any other belligerent in this War, especially during 1940 and 1941, when the number of cases was nearly ten times the average for the three previous years. As the result, however, of the introduction of sulpha drugs in 1943, the majority of cases are now cured and the treatment of the disease has been revolu-