

soapy water are also recommended for contact with mustard gas that has not done serious injury, and hot water, soap and soda scrubbing for lewisite contact if blisters have not developed. The difficulties of providing for cats and birds, or of devising a gas mask for any animal, are stated to be considerable. Research is continuing in this work.

#### Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

It has been reluctantly decided to close the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, for the present owing to the impossibility of providing adequate air raid shelters in the Gardens. It will be readily understood that should an air raid occur and the Gardens were at all crowded with visitors, grave risks might be incurred. Not only would there be difficulty in evacuating the public before the gates were closed, but there would also be the practical impossibility of their being able to find sufficient shelter outside or means of transport to their homes. Even were it possible to provide air raid shelters, owing to the large extent of the Gardens and the six different means of entrance, the public would scarcely be likely to discover the shelters, however well labelled, at a critical moment, unless a large staff of wardens was available. Since so many of the staff have had to be detailed for guarding the Herbarium and other vulnerable spots in the Gardens, as well as the employees, there is no one who could be detailed to look after a large body of visitors. Adequate steps, it is hoped, have been taken to safeguard the collections in the Herbarium, the museums, etc., and work is proceeding so far as possible on normal lines.

#### The Toll of Accidents

THE Inter-Departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation of Persons Injured by Accidents has issued its final report (H.M. Stationery Office. 3s. 6d. net). The report refers to the loss to the community resulting from injuries by all classes of accidents as being "enormous", and the cost must run into many millions of pounds annually. Fractures in particular are dealt with, and the Committee recommends in the first instance concentration on the provision of fracture services, and concludes that the treatment of fractures can be satisfactorily carried out only in specially organized hospital departments. Some 15 per cent of all fractures are due to road traffic, and 29 per cent to industrial, accidents, and the Committee recommends a revision of the Road Traffic Act whereby the limits imposed on the amounts recoverable for the treatment of road accidents may be abolished. The Committee considers that every hospital with a medical school should have an organized fracture service, and that a period of training in a fracture department should be an obligatory part of medical students' training. Questions of organization and finance of fracture services are considered, and under the Workmen's Compensation Acts it is recommended, with certain reservations, that so long as the patient requires treatment by the fracture service he should continue to receive compensation as for total incapacity.

#### New Laboratory for Virus Research

THE Squibb Biological Laboratories, New Brunswick, New Jersey, have established a new laboratory for the study of filterable virus diseases. Dr. Raymond C. Parker, biologist of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, has been appointed head of the laboratory, which will operate as a unit of the Biological Division of E. R. Squibb and Sons. The new building is a continuation of a programme of expansion which began in 1938 with the dedication to pure science of the 750,000-dollar laboratory of the Squibb Institute for Medical Research. Among the common diseases caused by filterable viruses are smallpox, rabies, equine encephalitis, measles, chicken pox, poliomyelitis, and the common cold. No specific product for the prevention of four of these diseases—the common cold, poliomyelitis, chicken pox, and measles—is yet available.

THE new virus laboratory, which was opened during a tour of the Squibb Institute and the Biological Laboratories on September 6-7, is housed in a specially constructed building, and is equipped for work with chick embryos and tissue culture, two of the techniques for work in this field. The actual working quarters consist of a large general laboratory equipped with every facility for chemical and histological work, a general preparation room for washing, drying, packing, and storing the various materials that are used, two special culture and operating rooms provided with filtered ventilation, a spacious incubator room, an animal preparation room, a bleeding room, and ample animal quarters. The arrangement of the rooms is such that the air of the culture suite proper is protected at all times from the air of the general laboratory and office quarters on one side, and of the animal rooms on the other. It is also possible for visitors to observe every step of the work in progress without entering any of the various rooms of the culture suite.

#### Experimentation and Disease

THE thirteenth Stephen Paget Memorial Lecture was delivered at the annual general meeting of the Research Defence Society on June 13 by Sir Edward Mellanby, who took as his subject "The Experimental Method in the Conquest of Disease" (*The Fight against Disease*, 27, Nos. 2 and 3). After a tribute to the memory of Stephen Paget, Sir Edward referred to the exhibition in an anti-vivisection office window of models of dogs suffering from rickets (incidentally, models of his own experimental animals), and remarked that it is difficult now to find throughout Great Britain children suffering from the same kind of deformity. Sir Edward Mellanby then proceeded to give instances in which the experimental method had solved the nature and causation of various diseases. In the case of facial paralysis ('Bell's palsy'), in 1844 Bell surmised on anatomical grounds that this form of paralysis was caused by paralysis of the facial nerve, and demonstrated the truth of this surmise experimentally by cutting the facial nerve in an