

member of the British Mycological Society, serving as secretary during the period 1936-42 and becoming a vice-president in 1942.

### Botany at University College, Leicester

MR. T. G. TUTIN has been appointed lecturer in charge of the Department of Botany, University College, Leicester. Mr. Tutin obtained his degree at Cambridge (Downing College) in 1930. He was demonstrator in botany at King's College, London, during 1938-39, and assistant lecturer in botany at Manchester during 1939-42. Recently, he has been working for the Admiralty. He visited British Guiana in 1933 and was a member of the Percy Sladen Trust Expedition to Lake Titicaca, Bolivia, in 1937.

### Military Health Services in the U.S.S.R.

STRIKING figures in regard to the decreased death-rate among wounded Soviet soldiers were given by Dr. S. A. Sarkisov, professor of neuropathology at the Moscow Institute of the Brain, in the course of an address to the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain on February 8 on the health services of the Soviet Union. He said that modern warfare, involving huge armies, with its extreme mobility, its complicated tactics and strategy, and its swift wedges driven into almost completely devastated areas, has changed the whole structure of the organization of the medical service and lays entirely new demands on it, especially where first aid is concerned. Further complications are added by the use of new and powerful weapons such as mines, splinter bombs and so on. Whereas in the War of 1914-18 the majority of wounds were caused by bullets, in the present War they are due to mine and other splinters. These provoke grave wounds, extremely susceptible to infection. Despite all this, important progress in wound treatment has been made. During this War there have been only isolated cases of gas gangrene; the percentage of amputations is considerably lower than during 1914-18; the death-rate caused by bladder wounds has been reduced to a very great extent. Further improvements have resulted in a remarkable decrease of the death-rate among wounded men in the hospitals. This rate is now only 1.1 per cent, and the percentage of wounded men who have returned fit to the front is now 73 per cent. During 1914-18 it was 40 per cent. In addition, there have been no epidemics in the U.S.S.R. This is all the more significant when it is remembered that the considerable medical problems connected with the large-scale transfer of industries to the eastern parts of the country took place in the early stages of the War.

### The Cinematograph Film in Medical Education

IN a leading article on the uses of the film for medical education, the *Lancet* (601, Nov. 4, 1944) reminds us that Dr. Braun filmed the mammalian heart in 1897 and, in that year also, Schuster, of Berlin, filmed the abnormal gait of some of his patients. The first surgical operation was filmed by the famous French surgeon, Doyan, in 1898. Yet in 1941, the *Lancet* directed attention to the fact that academic circles in Great Britain had then scarcely noticed "this new weapon". Those who were medical students in Manchester in the days of that great and progressive teacher of physiology, Prof. William Stirling, will remember the thrill they had when Stirling returned one day from Paris, to which

he was a frequent visitor, with a film of trypanosomes in the blood. This must have been about 1906-10.

Since those days the film has become a different thing. How valuable it may be we may learn from the articles by C. J. Longland and Ronald McKeith and by B. Stanford in the *Lancet* (*loc. cit.*, pp. 585 and 588). Longland and McKeith deal with the present use of the film for medical education, and the supply of films and information, giving a valuable list of organizations from which medical films can be obtained. They also discuss the use of medical films abroad, the question of how they can help medical education, plans for their use and the job of their production. Stanford gives his article to this problem of production and to the scope of the medical film. In the same issue of the *Lancet* (p. 615) is a note on the apparatus used in one of the laboratories of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., for cinematography, and on another, more elaborate apparatus for high-power cinemicrography designed by R. McV. Weston (see also *Nature*, November 4, 1944, p. 573).

### The Research Defence Society

THE annual report of the Research Defence Society, published in the *Fight Against Disease* (32, 2; 1944), records further progress during 1943 and a gratifying response to the appeal for funds made in 1943. This has given the Society an additional £140 a year and an addition of £530 to its invested reserve, which now stands at its highest figure in the Society's history. But its total annual receipts of about £1,000 compare sadly with the statement also made, that opponents of animal experiments have spent, during the last thirty-two years, some £750,000 of charitable money in their efforts to stop experiments requiring the use of animals. The Society hopes, nevertheless, to resume its full activities after the War, under the presidency of Lord Hailey, who succeeds the late Sir William Bragg. The annual report directs attention to the success of diphtheria immunization and to the importance of vaccination in the control of smallpox demonstrated by the recent outbreaks in London and Glasgow. The Society's publications on these and similar subjects are being used to counter systematic efforts to prejudice mothers against protection of babies against smallpox and diphtheria by sending them misleading pamphlets at hospitals and nursing homes.

The present issue of the *Fight Against Disease* contains, in fact, short articles on the part played by animal experiments in the study of various grave diseases, which should be valuable in countering anti-vivisection propaganda. The late Sir John Ledingham contributed a list of important advances due to, or greatly helped by, experiments on animals, among which are the prevention of diphtheria, tetanus (the menace of which has been virtually excluded from the British and American Armies during the present War), typhoid, cholera, plague, rabies and smallpox; the diagnosis of syphilis, typhoid and paratyphoid, typhus, tuberculosis in cattle and such virus infections as influenza and yellow fever also require the use of animals; the sera for the detection of human and animal blood stains in criminal and other investigations are obtained from specially immunized animals; and animals also provide the sera used for the treatment of diphtheria, tetanus, gas gangrene, dysentery, typhus and other diseases.

Sir William Savage discusses the relation of animal experiments to the control of typhoid and other