ment of *Patella* as described by Patten.[2] The shell first appeared on the second day, and by the seventh day resembled closely the shell of small metamorphosed specimens collected in the field.

Considerable material and data are at hand and it is hoped that the work may be resumed, and that a full report on the embryology and larval development of this species can be presented at a later date.

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A BOX TRAP FOR COTTON RATS[1]

THE demand for wild caught cotton rats of the genus *Sigmodon* for research on the chemotherapy of filariasis has stimulated the trapping of these animals in various southern localities. The box trap shown in Fig. 1 has proved sufficiently successful in practice as

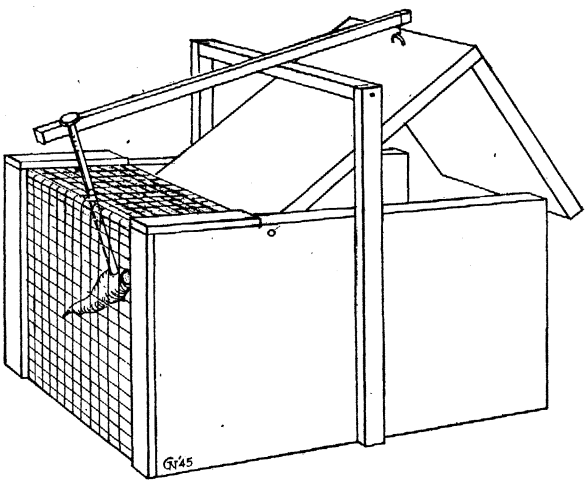

FIG. 1

to warrant making its description available to others. Made of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch lumber, its outside dimensions are $12 \times 6\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The handle, which also serves to support the trigger mechanism, increases the overall width by 1 inch and makes the total height $9\frac{1}{4}$ inches. The door is made of two pieces of wood nailed together so as to comprise the front and two thirds of the top of the box. Two nails are passed through holes drilled in the sides of the box, and driven into the top of the door near the back edge to form a hinge. A cross piece just behind the door gives rigidity to the box in addition to that supplied by the handle, and furnishes a support for the edge of the galvanized hardware cloth (one-third inch mesh) covering the balance of the top as well as the back of the cage. This wire, the edges of which are covered with wood strips so as to protect the operator's hands, makes it possible to see what is in the trap, and also provides a base for the trigger, which consists of a 20d nail and a piece of wood $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2} \times 11$ inches, the latter loosely wired to a staple driven into the front edge of the top of the door. A notch, one-sixteenth inch deep, is cut into the nail with a hacksaw $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the head, and is filed to a taper on the upper side only. Since the nail head under which the lever supporting the door is placed, is slightly curved and the notch in the nail shallow, the mechanism releases at the slightest touch, but is not too sensitive to jarring. The bait, such as a piece of carrot or bread crust, is placed on the point of the nail. The possibility of hooking the nail to either side of any one of the squares of the wire mesh is of great convenience when the effect of the weight and varying center of gravity of the bait is considered.

Trapping on the mainland of Galveston County, Texas, has proved best in fields which have neither been plowed, burned nor pastured for several years. The labyrinthine runs can be located under the lodged dead grass of a previous year. Those in current use are easily recognized by the absence of green growth or debris in the center of the run. Traps are set to the side of the run with the door facing the run, a convenient location being where the run crosses a rabbit trail. In carefully chosen fields about one trap in five can be expected to yield a rat each night of trapping.

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DISCUSSION

THE SUPPORT OF EDUCATION IN A DEMOCRACY

IN an article in the June 22, 1945, issue of SCIENCE Dr. E. V. Cowdry points out that private institutions of higher learning are finding it increasingly difficult to survive because of financial difficulties engendered by a number of causes. Among these causes may be listed a diminution of donations, decrease of income from investments and dependency of private institutions upon students' fees.

Dr. Cowdry offers three reasons for the support of private institutions: their training of leaders in business, in the professions and in science and letters;

[2] W. Patten, *Arb. aus d. Zool. Instit. der Univ. Wien*, Bd. 6, 1885, pp. 149–174.

[1] The work which formed the basis of this paper has been supported in part by a grant from the John and Mary R. Markle Foundation for the study of filariasis.