

**Rats**

(Philadelphia Press.)  
It is doubtful if anybody will dispute the general agreement that rats are noisome creatures. Nobody wants them around. They are voracious, they are destructive, they are dirty—they are a nuisance generally wherever they congregate. They plague the farmer whose feed bins they invade; they gnaw holes where there ought not to be any holes; to men below decks they constitute one of the few drawbacks of life at sea; to women who encounter them in dark corners at home or abroad they are a source of terror, though not necessarily of danger.

In short, they are unquestionably one of life's pests, serving no useful purpose—useless, or at best superfluous, even as scavengers, for they prefer good food to bad and thus play a not unimportant part in boosting the cost of living. They sustain life and health at the expense of their betters. Therefore from the standpoint of social economy, to say nothing of the public health and comfort, to exterminate them is a public as well as a private duty.

There are amply good and sufficient reasons for warring against rats. They ought to go. As has been fully demonstrated in the past, they perform no useful service any more than do flies, an equally pernicious pest. But apparently they are not so grievous a menace to health as some have feared. And if that is a fact it is a comfort, because throughout the history of man's supremacy in the animal kingdom he has never been able to circumvent, much less exterminate, the rat.

**The Menace of Rabies.**

(Walter Peet, in Harper's Weekly.)  
The first striking symptoms in a rabid dog is almost invariably a decided change in its disposition. It either becomes more cross, irritable and sulky or shows unusual friendliness and wants to be continually petted. Obviously in the latter state it is a most dangerous menace to its owner, who easily may be infected through a scratch on the hand or by a bite during unusual playfulness. In either case the dog soon becomes extremely restless, lying down, then almost immediately getting up to run around nervously for a few seconds and again lying down. This rotation it keeps up without interruption for some time. The dog is easily startled, growls and barks at the least provocation. The owner or keeper who knows its disposition will easily discern this change, and by simply shutting up the dog securely for observation will obviate all further danger.

The Pasteur treatment has been proved beyond peradventure to be a specific prophylactic against rabies. It will prevent the development of the disease if administered properly and if used in time. The report of Jules Viala, of the Pasteur Institute of Paris for 1910 (Annales de l'Institut Pasteur) states that during the year 1910 401 persons received this treatment without a single death resulting from any cause—rabies or any other. During the last 10 years 7,380 persons have been treated of whom only 21 have died from all causes, a mortality of 28 per cent. The record in this country is almost as good.

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A curious freak on the part of wasps was recently discovered in Maryland. The wasps were noticed going in and out of a lock that secured a workshop door. The owner of the shop had the lock removed to satisfy his curiosity about the doings of the busy workers. He found a nest inside. The cells were made of mud and were full of larvae. There were several dead wasps inside the lock. As the lock was in daily use, the wasps could not have had a peaceful home.

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