

All baits which have no natural odour, such as fish and cheese, are slightly flavoured with aniseed. Some difference of opinion as to the advantage of this exists, but the consensus of opinion seems to favour it. My experience points to the fact that black rats prefer biscuits or cake baits, and will seldom take fatty pastes.

The use of biscuits or tablets has the great advantage that the amount of toxic agent per bait made is easily controlled, and this compensates for the disadvantage that they are troublesome to make. I am of opinion that with rat bait, as with any other commodity, elegance of preparation is an asset for success, and we are continually experimenting to produce baits that can not only be easily made by unskilled operators, but sent out in such a form that the toxic dose per bait laid is known.

Fortunately many firms now provide preparations containing Barium Carbonate or Squills, the latter usually in the form of a liquid extract; nevertheless the supply at present of really elegant and effective raticides is limited.

To conclude, there is more in this subject than is generally supposed, there are many problems awaiting solution, and there is urgent need for continuing investigations.

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*In the discussion various speakers testified to the fact that the research work undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture was generally appreciated, and especially the efforts to discover an agent toxic to rats but harmless to other animals.*

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### **An Aspect of Rat Prevention.**

By W. H. DALTON, F.Z.S., F.R.H.S., Rat Destruction Supervisor for the County of Monmouth (Associate).

(ABSTRACT.)

**R**ATS can easily outbreed ordinary destructive measures so long as nothing in the other direction is inaugurated, and strictly carried out preventive measures directly influence the prevalence or otherwise of rats.

Concrete bases to buildings, concrete or adamant walls, and, in the case of out buildings, sheet iron in concrete bases or brick in concrete bases, coupled with an intelligent supervision to prevent ingress or egress of vermin always more than paid for the expenses entailed.

Driven to the fields and hedgerows by prevention of harbourage, the rat in the country has all it can do to hold its own in cold winters provided it cannot come in to feed and rest. Rat-proof protectors to stacks would largely prevent a source of supply in that direction, and an intelligent supervision in the feeding of stock and the leaving about of unnecessary food encouraging the presence of rats, is worth serious consideration. It is next to impossible to cut them off from large mangold or potato clamps, but it is not impossible to prevent their easy access to granaries and stores of meal in bins. Kept largely to the open, rats and mice have to contend not only with equally alert and quick enemies such as stoats, weasels, owls and kestrels, but they have to contend with their fellows for a supply of food. A diminution of the readily obtained forms of food would make life harder for them. In town centres the general idea is equally applicable, *i.e.*, prevent safe harbourage, then rats are compelled to travel from spot to spot and can only rest where invited by burrowing conditions. Relegated more and more to such few remaining spots, they can there be easily dealt with.

The existence in all districts for immediate destruction of all refuse by fire or heat again must handicap the rat population, and it is only in mines (where it is practically impossible to effectually deal with rats) that they can remain unmolested if precautions of this kind are generally and not exceptionally taken.

Open refuse dumps become excellent feeding and resting grounds for rats.

It is essential that more modern methods should be instituted for the immediate disposal and destruction of refuse by fire.

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### Vermin Repression.

By ALFRED E. MOORE, Hon. Director, The Incorporated Vermin Repression Society.

#### (ABSTRACT.)

THE main objects of the I.V.R.S. are to bring about the ordered, enduring, merciful, and *synchronised* destruction of rats and mice, and to work in close co-operation with the Ministry of Agriculture and other Government Departments. The Society is having a stiff fight against apathy, popular ignorance, and the disinclination of many authorities to use the powers conferred upon them by the Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919. It may