seaports and recently in the trenches, as we shall long remember. The population in these localities is largely indigenous.

The present methods of control involve the organized killing of rats. Rat battues may, in a measure, remove rats from the selected localities, but killing a large fraction of the rat population in a given place increases the proportion of food available for the survivors and the albinos show what survivors can do when well fed.

In the view of the public interest in the reduction of the rat population I have ventured briefly to call attention to the relation of the food supply to the general problem, since a recognition of the relation will assist in making plans for the effective control of this animal.

HENRY H. DONALDSON

THE WISTAR INSTITUTE

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE SOUTHAMPTON MEETING OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

ARRANGEMENTS are in progress for the next annual meeting of the British Association, to be held in Southampton from August 26 to September 2, under the presidency of Dr. Horace Lamb, formerly professor of mathematics in the University of Manchester. Presidents of the several sections have been appointed as follows: *mathematics and physics,* Dr. G. C. Simpson, director of the Meteorological Office; *chemistry,* Dr. C. H. Desch, professor of metallurgy in the University of Sheffield; *geology,* Professor W. A. Parks, of the University of Toronto; *zoology,* Mr. C. Tate Regan, keeper of zoology in the British Museum (Natural History); *geography,* Mr. A. R. Hinks, secretary of the Royal Geographical Society; *economics,* Miss Lynda Grier, principal of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford; *engineering,* Sir Archibald Denny; *anthropology,* Dr. Thomas Ashby, director of the British School at Rome; *physiology,* Dr. A. V. Hill, professor of physiology in University College, London; *psychology,* Dr. C. E. Spearman, Grote professor of the philosophy of mind, University of London; *botany,* Professor J. Lloyd Williams, of University College, Aberystwyth; *education,* Dr. W. W. Vaughan, headmaster of Rugby; *agriculture,* Dr. J. B. Orr, head of the Rowett Research Institute, Aberdeen. Among the principal items already set down for discussion are transport problems, to which the sections of economics and engineering will devote two days, with special reference to the railway centenary of the present year; the cost of farming and the marketing of agricultural produce (sections of economics and agriculture); the functional significance of size (zoology and physiology); the ignition of gases (chemistry and engineering); tidal lands (geography and botany); variations in gravitational force and direction (physics and geology); recent investigations upon vocational guidance (psychology and education); the distribution of animals and plants in relation to continental movements (geology, zoology and geography); the acquisition of muscular skill (physiology and psychology), and discussions on health in schools, the disciplinary value of subjects, the training of teachers and the teaching of biology. Professor Parks, of Toronto, as president of the geological section, succeeds the late Dr. Willet G. Miller, the Ontario government mineralogist, who was to have occupied the chair of the section.

LEGISLATION RELATING TO THE SCIENTIFIC WORK OF THE GOVERNMENT

A BILL providing for a medal of honor and awards to government employes for distinguished work in science, the plan for which was originated some time ago by Dr. E. Lester Jones, director of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey, was introduced into the house of representatives on February 19. The bill, which follows, was referred to the committee on the library:

Be it enacted by the senate and house of representatives of the United States of America in congress assembled, that the president of the United States is hereby authorized to present, in the name of congress, a medal of honor and written testimonial to scientific workers of the federal government whose labors have contributed to the advancement of scientific knowledge or applied its truths in a practical way for the welfare of the human race.

SECTION 2. The official designation of the medal shall be the Jefferson Medal of Honor for Distinguished Work in Science.

SECTION 3. That recommendations to the president of persons to be considered for the honor contemplated in this act shall be made by a commission of three persons, consisting of one representative each from the National Academy of Sciences, the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences and the American Engineering Council, who shall serve without salary.

SECTION 4. That not more than five scientific workers shall receive the medal in any one year and that the persons so honored shall receive the sum of $100 on the presentation of the medal and testimonial and thereafter, annually for life, a sum of money the amount of which shall be fixed by the commission making the award; said sum to be not less than $100 and not more than $500 per annum, which said sum shall be exclusive of salary or pension.

SECTION 5. There is hereby authorized an appropriation of $1,500 to defray the expenses of securing a suit-