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ANTIRAT CAMPAIGN  
SHOWN IN NEW MOVIE

"The Modern Pied Piper," a two-reel motion picture just released by the United States Department of Agriculture, portrays in detail a city-wide antirat campaign. Uncle Sam himself appears in the role of the modern Pied Piper, stalking majestically into a city council meeting, and giving an agitated mayor and his worried counwilmen some fundamental advice on mode of procedure in ridding "Mostanytown" of rats.

The picture is based on Browning's story of the Pied Piper of Hamelin, presenting a whimsical quasi-modern version of the old tale of the piper who piped the vermin of Hamelin to a watery grave in the Weser. A mob storms the city hall of the rat-infested city with a "petition in boots," the mayor attempts to pacify the crowd and is howled down; Uncle Sam offers the good offices of the rat specialists of the Biological Survey; the offer is accepted, and a man from Washington visits the city and puts on a big anti-rat campaign.

In carrying forward this campaign demonstrations are made of various methods of rat extermination, such as traps, use of exhaust gas from auto motors, and particularly barium carbonate. Incidentally interesting pictures are shown of dogs and ferrets as ratters, and of boys killing rats in a temporary enclosure made about a rat-infested trash pile.

A particularly interesting feature of this film is the series of pictures of rats that serves to establish the fact that "Mostanytown" is overrun with rats. In these pictures "closeups" of rats are shown "licking the soup from the cook's own ladle," nesting "inside men's Sunday hats," interrupting "the ladies' chats," feasting from a filthy garbage pail and taking dessert in a spick and span cupboard, and in various other ways making life miserable for the denizens of "Mostanytown."

The picture lays stress upon the fact that rats cost the American public a sum running into hundreds of million of dollars a year, and an incalculable toll in human life and suffering, and points out that the extermination of rats by various methods must be supplemented by rigid rat-proofing of buildings to make any antirat campaign permanently effective.

The film is in two reels. It will be distributed through the education film service of the Department of Agriculture and the cooperating State institutions. Copies may be borrowed for short periods or may be purchased at the laboratory charge.