

While the percentage of deaths from tuberculosis as compared with other diseases is not higher in the churches, according to these figures, than in the country at large, the tuberculosis death rate, as shown by the church returns, is higher per thousand communicants than that for the general population in the registration area of the United States, which the census bureau gave as 1.67 in 1909.

The National Association does not, however, consider the statistics received from

ministers comparable from the point of view of accuracy with those reported by the Bureau of the Census. A sufficient number of returns from a great variety of churches have been received, nevertheless, to indicate that one of the most serious social problems the ordinary church has to consider, is that of the devastation of its membership by tuberculosis. The need for education from the pulpit and in the home is apparent. Every minister is asked to give this subject some attention.

## THE EMPIRE AND THE WORLD ABROAD

### Great Britain and the Rats.

Great Britain is asking the world to join it in a war for the extermination of rats, suggesting that a rat day be set aside each year and the activities of the civilized world devoted to the fight against the property-destroying disease-spreading rodent. This proposition has met with some favor in Parliament and an effort is to be made to make the plan world-wide.

Scientists in Great Britain have been studying the situation and have reached the conclusion that each rat destroys one cent's worth of grain or other property each day in the year, and, while no accurate rat census has been taken in the United Kingdom, the annual property loss is placed at \$75,000,000 in that country. A magazine writer recently placed the loss in this country, from the depredations of rats, at \$100,000,000 a year. He placed each rat's share to this contribution at 20 cents a year, instead of 36 cents a year allowed in the figures of the British investigators. There's a question, of course, whether the British rat has a better appetite or whether his food supply comes with less exertion than in the United States.

Jokes and the opinions of scientists aside, it has been established beyond question that rats spread the bubonic plague in San Francisco, and they have been tried and found guilty of being common carriers of other less dreaded but equally menacing diseases. They have deserved the death penalty for ages. This century should inflict it, in view of the work of

scientists in proving the rat a menace both to property and health.

### Public Health Administration in South Africa.

There has lately been published the text of a bill abolishing the offices of medical officers of health for the four provinces of United South Africa, also the Natal Board of Health, and for empowering the appointment of a medical officer of health for the union, with such number of assistants as may be found necessary. It provides that these should hold registrable medical qualifications, but not for their holding a public health diploma, an omission which, as the *South African Medical Record* has properly pointed out, surely ought to be rectified.

### An English Circular on Measles.

In Stepney, England, a special circular has been issued, in which Dr. Thomas, the Medical Officer of Health, warns the public that "Measles is the most dangerous of infant ailments, and causes more deaths than all the other notifiable fevers put together." The circular then continues:

Measles is highly infectious from the commencement of the attack and remains so for four weeks. No child should be deliberately exposed to the infection of the disease.

It must be clearly understood that it is