

head is not (from a medical point of view) in harmony with the laws which govern a placid nervous system, and is therefore, to that extent *unpleasant*. But when that thunder in all its terrible proportions expends its fury in loud and deafening peals suggestive of the simultaneous crash of ten thousand crates of glass (that side downwards)—when countless arrows of electric fluid shoot forth with uncertain range and plant their fiery lines and bastioned contours in dangerous proximity to—

“The fairy spot
Where steals the soul to sleep.”

—BUNYAN'S PIL. PROG.

—then—then it is, that the nervous fabric becomes so paralyzed that the sufferer, in the exercise of a patient resignation, seeks a tranquil solace in the discussion of—a *weed*! [It may not, perhaps, be superfluous to add that I “lit-up” at this critical juncture.]

There is a sublimity—an indescribable sweetness of repose, in the enjoyment of a quiet “puff,” which other and more pretentious occupations do not confer on prostrate humanity. Still, I confess, I felt cheerless and disquieted; for (to quote Chaucer) “ever and anon” amid the tumultuous roar of “Jove’s dread clamours” the celestial flood-gates sent forth their mighty torrents, penetrating every fissure and cavity, transporting pools into reservoirs and brooks into rivers! Such were the features of that memorable storm as I lay in awe-struck contemplation of the grand sublimity of the picture, when—*pat-a-pat! pat-a-pat! pat-a-pat! pat-a-pat!* a succession of lachrymal spurts, entering from the roof above, fell heavily on one of my cheeks and rolled over into the nearest orb—shutting up that delicate organ with the rapidity of a “stopper from the right shoulder!” [“Gem” number three, please—with the usual courtesies.]

Recovering from the effects of this casual inconvenience I took a sweeping survey of “the situation,” and thereby discovered a picture which I will now endeavor to pourtray. I have already stated, and I now repeat—*there was a roof on the house!* That roof had been converted into an enlarged modification of a *duiry-sieve*. Through innumerable ventilators which had been formed and perforated by the action of the previous year’s “tropicals,” that precious roof admitted into my sanctum a series of brooks and rivalets, converging into a central stream or flood which thus received the waters of a thousand slender but faithful tributaries.

Unhappily I was not alone in my misery, for I perceived a mighty multitude of ants moving down the walls in seven separate columns from a *point d'appui* placed beyond the ceiling. Proceeding *en echellon* they bivouacked on the bed-posts, curtains, and mattress, and then quietly located themselves *in, under, around, above, below*, every habitable square inch of that luckless cot and its appurtenances!

Nor was this all. An exodus of rats, accompanied by their respective families, then flew past, in search of happier homes, as if acting in concert with the insect tribes which preceded them. [It is needless to say that the ancestors of these fugitives had in earlier ages excavated certain portions of the foundations, which now afforded ample accommodation for these, the homeless wanderers of posterity.]

But the greatest horror of all had yet to come. The rats had