IRISH LAMENTATION.

Cold, dark and dumb lies my boy on his bed;
Cold, dark and silent the night dews are shed;
Hot, swift and fierce fall my tears for the dead!

His footprints lay light in the dew of the dawn,
As the straight, slender track of the young mountain fawn;
But I'll ne'er again follow them over the lawn.

His manly cheek blushed with the sun's rising ray,
And he shone in his strength like the sun at midway,
But a cloud of black darkness has hid him away.

And that black cloud forever shall cling to the skies;
And never, ah, never, I'll see him arise,
Lost warmth of my bosom, lost light of my eyes!

SABINA'S VACATION.

"Two weeks—two whole weeks!" said Sabina Gray. "How shall I ever pass them away!"

Sabina Gray was emphatically a working woman. For three years she had sat behind the cashier's desk in a great lace and ribbon store on Chestnut street, making change, adding up long rows of figures, deciding whether this coin were spurious or that banknote counterfeit, balancing her books every night as precisely as if it were to be her last, and commencing anew every morning as regularly as the clock struck eight—until, one sultry afternoon, the battalions of figures seemed to reel and grow dim before her eyes, and they carried her home in a dead faint, to the breathless horror of her mother, her consumptive brother, and the two sisters who taught school and spent all their wages in gay clothes.

She must have change of air, said the doctor, and rest—entire rest—from her duties!

"Bless me!" said poor Mrs. Gray. "And we with only two dollars left after the rent is paid and the grocer's bill is settled!"

"And it will never do for Sabina to give up her situation, when we need her salary so much," said Elinor, the eldest of the school teaching pair, who had just bought an imitation gold necklace.

"Of course, it is out of the question," said Belinda, the second girl, who was saving up for a silk gown.

"Very well," said the doctor, brusquely, "In that case, you may as well order her coffin at once."

And he went out, with small ceremony.

"Horrid, heartless bear!" said Elinor.

"Doctors never do have any nerves," said Belinda.

But the little consumptive lad tied his faded handkerchief around his neck, and pulled his cap over his ears, and went down to Mechlin & Marabout's to tell his simple story.

"If you would please let her off for a few days, sir," said he to the head man. "Because the doctor said she must have rest, and I don't think she will have the courage to ask you herself."

The head man, although he looked so bearded and majestic that Bobby's heart sank within him, had yet a kind heart.

"You are a good boy," said he. "Yes, tell Miss Gray that she can have two weeks—her salary to go on just the same—from Monday next."

And Bobby sped home, like an arrow out of a bow, to tell the good news

The next question was where was Sabina to go? Hotels, fashionable resorts, crowded boarding houses, were out of the question for an individual of her slender means.

"There's Cousin Alyssa Streeter has an elegant cottage at Long Branch," said Mrs. Gray. "She used to spend six weeks at a time with me when we were girls together, and my father was a well-to-do farmer. I will write to her. She will be glad to receive you."

"But, mother," said Sabina, her pale cheeks flushing up, "I have never seen her."

"What difference does that make?" said kind Mrs. Gray, who believed all the world was as kind and loyal as herself.

"She married a rich New York broker," said Miss Elinor. "I often wondered that she did not invite us there.'

"And she has got a rich son," added Belinda. "Maria Middleton saw him once. A perfect Adonis! I say, Ina, how I wish I could go with you!"

Mrs. Gray wrote; and after some delay, in which two of the precious vacation days were lost, a brief and rather frigid note came back. Mrs. Streeter regretted to hear of the ill health of her cousin's daughter—regretted still more that her house was full of guests at present, but would endeavor to find a room somewhere for Miss Gray, if it was *absolutely necessary* (these last words were underlined) that she must come at this particular time.

Sabina made a little grimace, as she read the letter which her mother handed her.

"Must I go, mother?" said she.

"I don't see that there is any choice left for you," said Mrs. Gray, sadly.

"It will be the worst dose of medicine I have ever taken yet," said Sabina.

So she started with her little traveling bag and the blue-lined bonnet that made her face took like a newly blossomed violet, so sweet, and fresh, and innocent. But instead of taking her ticket for Long Branch, she bought one for Mauch Chunk instead.

For there in the leafy wilderness that skirts the beautiful Lehigh river, lived old Aunt Mehitable Cooper, who wove rag carpets for a living.

In the family discussions no one had mentioned Aunt Mehitable. She was old and she was poor; but in her secret heart Sabina felt that she had rather go to Aunt Mehitable, in her one-storied farmhouse, than to share the elegance of Mrs. Streeter's Queen Anne Cottage at Long Branch.

"I will write to mamma when I get there," she thought. "I know Aunt Hetty lost a daughter once, and perhaps that will make her none the less glad to see me; and perhaps I can help her about her carpets; and I know there used to be such lovely wild flowers in the woods around the Lehigh river.

"Well, I am beat!" was Aunt Hetty's characteristic ejaculation, as her grandniece came up the path through the woods, her belt stuck full of ferns and wild flowers. "Why, it's Mary Gray's darter Sabiny, ain't it? I knew you by your blue eyes and the way you smiled at me."

"I've come to visit you, Aunt Hetty," said Sabina.

Then she told her simple tale.

"You're welcome as flowers in May," said Aunt Hetty—"that is, if you can sleep on the calliky lounge in my bedroom, because I've got a boarder—a city young man. Come out here for three weeks to fish."

"Oh!" said Sabina.

"But he's real pleasant," added Aunt Hetty. "No more trouble than a chicken. His name is—bless me! here he comes now. Adam, this is Sabiny Gray. Sabiny, this is my boarder."

Sabina had been half inclined to be vexed at the idea of this delicious solitude being invaded by any one save herself, but one glance at the handsome, frank face of Mr. Adam disarmed her; and they were presently the best of friends, chatting away on the doorstep, while Aunt Hetty baked biscuit, set forth a comb of new honey, and produced a dish of wild strawberries whose fragrance perfumed the whole room, and broiled some delicious spring chickens of her own raising.

And after tea Aunt Hetty took Sabina out to the shed to see the carpet loom, where the bright colored rags glowed like sections of a kaleidoscope.

"Why don't you lock the door, Aunt Hetty?" said Sabina.

"La, child!" said the old woman. "What should I lock it for? Nobody comes here but artists to sketch the old house—they won't wait until I get the north chimney fixed up again—and the neighbors to see about jobs of carpet weavin'! I've a deal of time to work since Adam come. He milks for me every night, and brings home the cattle, besides keeping me in fresh fish all the time. He lights the fire for me, too, of a morning, and fills the kettle, and brings in wood for all day!"

"Oh!" thought Sabina. "Mr. Adam is a poor young man, is he, working for his board? Well, I'm a poor young woman, and I must do the same."

"Well, Aunt Hetty," she said, cheerily, "I'll cook the dinner for you to-morrow, and sweep the house—and you must teach me to weave rag carpet."

"La, me, Sabiny! that arn't no way to treat company!" said Aunt Hetty. "You're here to go walkin', and gather posies, and freshen up those white cheeks of yours a bit!"

"Yes, Aunt Hetty, I know," said Sabina, coaxingly, "but I would rather help you a little, too—just a little."

So the next day she tied one of Aunt Hetty's gigantic checked aprons around her, and cooked the glistening spotted trout which Mr. Adam brought home and afterward she washed the dishes and wove half a yard in red and blue rag carpet, which chanced to be on the loom, before she went walking.

"It is such a wild, lonely life," she said to herself. "I should like to weave rag carpet always!"

She lost her way in the woods, of course; but what cared she for that? It was only to follow the blue windings of the river Lehigh till she reached home—and, before she was half-way there, Mr. Adam overtook her, and they had a pleasant walk back to the cottage.

There is no place like a summer glen for becoming well acquainted, and presently he had told her that he had come to Mauch Chunk to get out of the way of a houseful of company at home.

"My mother wants to marry me to an heiress," said he, as they sat resting on a mossy log by the river side. "A young woman with green eyes, a muddy complexion, and a temper as crooked as her nose!"

"Oh, you could never do that," said Sabina.

"Not at all!" said he, with emphasis. "My ideal is a blonde, with light brown hair, blue eyes, rather a low brow and—"

He stopped suddenly.

Sabina's face flushed. Was not this the exact description of the fair countenance at that moment mirrored in the river?

"And now tell me why you came here?" said he, as if to change the conversation.

"I am a shop girl," said Sabina—"a cashier, rather—in a Philadelphia store. I have ten days' vacation to spend here. I was to have been sent to a fashionable cousin in Long Branch, but—but I preferred to come here. Now, Mr. Adam, we must hurry back. I am to get tea for Aunt Hetty."

"We will hurry back, by all means," said he. "But you mustn't call me Mr. Adam. Say Adam."

"That would be very familiar," said Sabina.

"My name is Adam Streeter," said he. "And I certainly shall not permit you to say Mr. Streeter."

Sabina started.

"Streeter?" she said. "Are you Alyssa Streeter's son?"

"I am."

"It is Kismet!" cried Sabina, laughing. "I came here expressly to get away from you."

He bit his lip.

"I comprehend," said he. "You are the pretty working girl whom mother was so afraid of. Perhaps that was one reason why she was so anxious that I should come out here trout fishing."

And both the young people burst out laughing, until the gray old rocks echoed again.

Was it at all strange that, under the circumstances, Adam Streeter and Sabina Gray fell in love with each other?

At the end of the two weeks, Mrs. Gray came to Mauch Chunk to bring her daughter back to the city.

Sabina was at the train to meet her, and drove her home in Neighbor Hawkin's wagon, through the Lehigh woods.

"Bless me, darling—how plump and rosy you have become," said the widow, heartily kissing her daughter.

"Oh, yes, mother," said the girl; "I have grown quite, quite well again! And I have learned to make the loveliest rag carpet you ever saw, all out of odds and ends. And—and I am engaged to be married to Cousin Alyssa Streeter's son Adam."

"Dear me!" ejaculated the bewildered old lady.

"Isn't it strange that all these things should happen in so short a time?" said Sabina, brightly.

As if love—the rogue—did not always come upon us swiftly and silently, like the flight of a golden winged bird.

The time had come for the out-blossoming of Sabina Gray's heart—that was all!

An Indian Delicacy.

The Indians scattered along the foot-hills of the Sierra are a quiet, inoffensive people. They do not appear to be governed by any tribal laws, yet adhere to many of their old traditions. The tide of industry and civilization sweeping over and around has left them greatly modified by the contact, and although they retain the original characteristics of the race, in some respects they are much improved. One or two men of superior ability and industry form a nucleus around which others less ambitious gather. Here they fence with brush and logs a tract sufficient for their requirements of hay-making, pasturage, etc. They invariably build their cabins upon the most sightly point, even when the spring that furnishes their water is half-way down the hill. This habit has no doubt descended from a warlike ancestry, and is no evidence of an æsthetic delight in hazy valleys and misty mountain tops. Their gardens are not an assured success when water is plentiful and the weather propitious. They cannot always wait for their maturity. Many of them are industrious and find remunerative work at wood-chopping, sheep-shearing, etc.

Although they often indulge in the food of civilized nations, the acorn is still a favorite article of diet in every well-regulated wigwam. The process of converting this bitter nut into anything like palatable bread is curious. Under the branches of a grand old pine I found them at work. They had shucked and ground in the usual manner a large mass of the acorn meats; a number of circular vats had been hollowed out of the black soil, much the shape of a punch-bowl. Into these was put the acorn pulp. At hand stood several large clothes-baskets filled with water, and into these they dropped hot stones, thus heating the water to the required temperature. Upon the mass of crushed bitterness they carefully ladled the hot water, making it about the color and consistency of thin cream. Not a speck appeared to mix. A buxom muhala stood by each vat and with a small fir bough stirred the mass, skillfully removing any speck that floated upon the surface. The soil gradually absorbed the bitter waters, leaving a firm, white substance, of which they make bread.

I asked to taste of it, at which they said something in their language and all laughed. I asked again, and after more laughter I was handed a small particle upon a fig-leaf, and found it sweet and palatable. They began at once to remove it, and so adroitly was this done that but a small portion adhered to the soil. They spread it upon the rocks, and in a short time it was fit for use. This, I am told, they mix with water, pat into thin cakes and bake before the fire.

DeKalb's Impressions of Washington.

The recently published life of Baron DeKalb, written by Frederick Kapp, gives at length the story of this brave but unfortunate French officer, who fell at Camden in the Revolutionary war. DeKalb was a trained soldier, and seems at first to have looked upon Washington's military character with a contemptuous eye. His first impressions of Washington are thus given in a letter to De Broglie:

"I have not yet told you anything of the character of General Washington. He is the most amiable, kind-hearted and upright of men; but as a General he is too slow, too indolent, and far too weak; besides, he has a tinge of vanity in his composition, and over-estimates himself. In my opinion, whatever success he may have will be owing to good luck and to the blunders of his adversaries, rather than to his abilities. I may even say he does not know how to improve upon the grossest blunders of the enemy. He has not yet overcome his old prejudice against the French."

His later estimate of the American commander was much more just. In a letter to Henry Laurens, which Mr. Kapp prints from the manuscript, he writes: "I cannot but observe, in justice to General Washington, that he must be a very modest man, and the greatest friend to the cause, forbearing public complaints on that account, that the enemy may not be apprised of our situation and take advantage of it. He will rather suffer in the opinion of the world than hurt his country, in making appear how far he is from having so considerable an army as all Europe and a great part of America believe he has. This would show, at the same time, he did and does more every day than could be expected from any General in the world, in the same circumstances, and that I think him the only proper person (nobody actually being or serving in America excepted), by his natural and acquired capacity, his bravery, good sense, uprightness and honesty, to keep up the spirits of the army and people, and that I look upon him as the sole defender of his country's cause. Thus much I thought myself obliged to say on that head. I only could wish, in my private opinion, he would take more upon himself, and trust more to his own excellent judgment than to councils, but this leads me out of the way."

Mr. Crisp showed at a recent meeting of the Microscopical Society, London, a very curious microscope bearing the date 1772. Besides possessing other peculiarities, it had three objectives attached to a sliding plate at the end of a nosepiece in a manner similar to that adoped in the construction of the modern Harbey and other microscopes.

How the Fort was Saved.

There came to my hut, sir, one summer's day, crawling painfully on hands and knees, an Indian of the tribe I am talking about. He had been bitten by a snake—a "moccasin," if my memory serves aright. I took him in, out of the sun, and gave him nearly all the cordial I had in the hut. For days he lay like a dead thing, and I was beginning to think about where I'd bury him, when he opened his eyes and spoke. I gave him the cordial now in tea-spoonfuls. I nursed him almost day and night, hardly ever leaving him. But he was on his feet and well again at last, and if ever tears were in a red skin's eyes they were in his when he bade me good bye. I hadn't been much at the fort during the red-skin's illness, and they were getting alarmed about me, when one forenoon Doddie and I came clattering over the drawbridge.

A few months flew by so quickly, sir, because I was in love, you know; and one evening in autumn the dog barked; next moment my red skin stood before me with a finger on his lip.

"Hist!" he said; and I drew him into the hut

Oh, sir! Tom Morris was a mad man when he was informed by that poor friendly red skin that at twelve that night the fort would be attacked by a wandering tribe of red skins, and every one in it murdered save Mary, who was to be dragged off into captivity.

I thanked the Indian, blessed him, then burried to the stable and brought Doddie out. The saddle was broken; it must be a bare-back ride. There was time if we met no accident. It was now eight o'clock, and I mounted, waving adieu to the Indian, and rode away eastward in the direction of the fort. In an hour I was at the river. Here the main road branched away round among the mountains. There was no time to take that. My way lay across the ford and through the forest, cutting off a long bend or elbow of the river, and coming out at another ford, within a mile of Ellis Fort and Farm.

I headed Doddie for the stream, and we were soon over. I knew the path, and the moon was up, making everything light as day.

But look ahead! That glare was never the moon's light. Alas! no, sir; it was fire. The forest was in flames. I think to this day it was done by the savages to intercept me. In half an hour more, sir, the flames were licking the grass within ten yards of our pathway, and running in tongues up the bark of the trees.

Doddie neighed in fright, reared, and I was thrown. Next moment I was alone in the burning forest. To fly from the fire was impossible. I threw myself on my face in despair. Oh! the agony of those few minutes! But even then I believe that I thought more of poor Mary and her father than of my own wretched end.

All at once I started to my feet, for a soft nose had nudged me on the arm. It was Doddie, and in an instant we were flying again through the forest. I think we might have made the ford, but my horse now seemed to lose all control of himself, and I of the horse, for the bridle broke.

Doddie made for the river above this ford, and then he took a desperate leap into the deep water. But he was quieter now, and it was easy to head him down the stream, and at last we were once again on *terra firma* with the broad river between us and the fire. We blew up the bridge and barricaded the gate immediately on my arrival—and not a whit too soon, for half an hour afterwards the fort was surrounded by howling savages. Our relief came next evening, in the shape of mounted soldiers; and I feel sure, sir, that it was that grateful Indian who sent them.

Smuggling as a Fine Art

A boatman on the St. Lawrence talked in this manner in relation to smuggling on that river:

"Yes," he continued, in reply to a question regarding his smuggling. "I traveled into New York ports for a good many years and I reckon they all knew I was smuggling', but I never got nabbed but once, and that was by a detective that got on at Havana with me and got into me by sayin' that he was smuggling'. I lost ten thousand cigars that time and gave it up. How was it? Wall, I knew they was up to all sorts of dodges, so I brought a load of cocoanuts and watermelons, enough to fill a schooner, and a good pile of them that had private marks I had hollered out so that some would hold three hundred cigars as nice as you please, the cigars being packed in rubber bags. I got 'em into the Fulton Market dock all right. They arrived just about two weeks after I did, and I was unloadin' 'em, when up steps this identical chap what got in with me on the boat, with and officer and seized the hull business. He kept out of reach of my hands, I kin tell you, but I'd jest like to have grasped him for a minute. They would have gone through all right if I hadn't given it away like a fool.

"But the fruit dodge was an old one. I had a friend, who worked the di'mond racket, that put me up to it. There was'nt an inspector in New York but what knew him. I left Rio with him one trip and he had over $50,000 worth of di'monds that he wasn't goin' to pay duty on. Where d'ye suppose he had 'em? Wall, in his state room he had as big a bunch of bananas as ever you saw; some green and some ripe, and the green ones he had slit on the side next to the bunch on the inside, and in each one was a stone and in some two or three. Wall, when we got to New York the inspectors came aboard and one walks up and says: 'Hello, Senor, what you got this time?' 'That's for you to find out,' said the Spaniard, laughing. And so they took him down, and the way they went over his things was a caution. They examined everything and even looked in his hair—he had black curly locks like—but they had to give it up. When they got through he says: 'Wall, gentlemen, you've had some hard work. Set down and have some wine and fruit.' So he orders a bottle of wine and begins pickin' off some of the ripe bananas, and there they set for an hour or so within three feet of them stones and didn't know it. He never turned a hair; he had nerve, I tell you.

'The tricks he had,' continued the admiring friend, 'would fill a book. One time, you know, there was a fashion for box toes and his were box, sure enough, and the toe of each were holler and held half a dozen stones. The buttons on his coat were holler, too, and made to shut with a spring, and so it was. One time he'd have an umbrella that would hold half a dozen; then he'd have some stowed in an opera glass. He had a watch that looked all right—showed the works on one side and the hands on the other, but between 'em you could hide a thousand dollars or more of small stones. There was—'

'Hold on a minute, Bob,' interrupted the angler.

The smuggler stopped rowing and the boat shot into the deepening gloom of a little bay.

The lights on the bay had been left far behind and the only sound that could be heard was the occasional splash of some restive fish as it leaped from the water, the hoarse croak of a bullfrog and the creaking of the limbs in the woods.

'I thought I heard the splash of a net,' exclaimed the angler.

'I heard something myself,' answered the boatman. 'Slosh, I reckon.'

'Isn't that a boat in shore there?'

The oarsman gave a pull and the next moment the boat ran up on the beach; the sentinel flashed a dark lantern and sprang out, illuminating two Canadian fishermen, who were sitting on the side of their boat trying to appear at ease.

'Well,' said the inspector.

'Well,' retorted the men in concert.

'Going to make a haul to-night?'

'I guess not,' replied the spokesmen of the two; we're only studyin' natur.'

'I didn't know folks were so fond of nature about here,' said the inspector; 'but I shall have to trouble you to point out that net, all the same.'

'P'int it out yerself,' was the answer. 'Who said anything about having a net?'

Taking out a grapnel the inspector threw it over and began to haul around the spot, but all to no purpose. 'They had a net, I'll take my affidavit,' he said. 'The way they do, when they think any of us are about, is to throw it overboard and sink it, taking the bearings. I've hooked several that way, but I guess this is a still hunt.'

No net was to be found. Either it was concealed in the bushes or was coming in another boat. As the two suspected fisherman rowed off the game protector said: 'We can't follow them all night, but I expect they will haul somewhere before morning.'

'The only article that is smuggled now on the river,' said the inspector as they pulled homeward, 'to amount to anything is oil, and that they take over whenever they get a chance. I was pulling along the Canadian channel recently, when suddenly I ran into a boat and nearly sunk myself. We had it hot and heavy for a few moments. I went for the fellows for not carrying a light and they for me for running into them; but they were extremely anxious to get off, and when I swung alongside I found that it was a big flat-bottomed boat, loaded down with three or four barrels of oil. They thought I was a custom house inspector and begged off, tried to bribe me and everything. After keeping them on the jump for twenty minutes I told them that I was only a game inspector, and after some choice language they got off and over all right. You see, it is impossible to prevent smuggling; it would take an army of men to stop it. But it is not what it used to be in years gone by.

Tacubaya, Near the City of Mexico.

The attractions of Tacubaya and San Angel are their pure air and lovely gardens filled with magnificent trees. With a little care, the trees and plants of all climes grow here side by side. The houses have windows, with iron bars and sashes with glass (opening in French fashion) on the street, but the large gardens are in the rear or on the side of them. A few gardens have large iron gates. Those of the Mier, Barron and Escandon families are handsome, and that of Mier, at the entrance to the "Calle Real," is really monumental. Pines, elms, poplar and willow, pear, apple and peach trees grow in fraternal neighborhood with the palm, the banana and the cactus. Fuschias, lilies, violets, heliotropes, pansies, honeysuckles and geraniums flower all the year round. The geraniums grow to an immense height (I have walls covered with them to the height of twelve and sixteen feet), on espaliers, like apricots and grapes. Their flowers are of many varieties and shades, from pure white and light pink to the richest crimsoned, purple and lilac, and some are variegated with these tints; their shapes vary from the "rose" to the "cinq-feuilles." The calla-lily flowers exuberantly in the shade of the trees, above which the aromatic eucalyptus rears its head far beyond the pines, and then throws out immense branches. Roses of all kinds are now flowering (March 18,) and the apple, pear and peach trees are in bloom. Fig-trees grow beside them and yield delicious fruit in the autumn.

One can sit out of doors all the year round with comfort. In winter, a hat and wrap are needed, and the sun's direct rays are often pleasant. In other seasons, light woolen or cotton clothing is comfortable, and one seeks or shuns the sun according to the weather and hour of the day. Afternoon showers are very frequent in summer, but the soil in Tacubaya is so sandy and high that one can get out soon afterward, without rubbers, and not wet the feet. In winter, the wind has a drying effect on delicate skins (commonly called chapping) but it is a trifle when compared to the moist and weakening heat of the tropical coast and lowlands.

He Wore One.

I was sitting on the front seat of an open car the other day, gazing abstractedly at the driver, when all at once I was startled by seeing a fat woman who sat in the seat behind me reaching past my head to give him a terrible prod in the side with the point of her umbrella. My first impression was that it was going to be a case of aggravated assault, but I soon discovered that she only wanted to stop the car, for she presently got out and went on her way as coolly as if nothing had happened. To my surprise the driver did not even turn round, and the only apparent effect of the blow on him was a sudden indescribable noise, such as is heard when a sudden kick forces a little of the wind out of a football.

"Excuse me," said I, "do they often hit you like that?"

"Very frequently, sir," was the reply.

"I should think it would hurt you."

The driver took his hand from the brake and smoothed down his coat behind.

"Feel there."

I did so, and encountered a protuberance.

"What's that?" I asked.

"A pad, sir."

"What's it for?"

"For the points of umbrellas and canes, sir. I always wear one."

The Hollow Spaces of Houses.

The floor of an ordinary dwelling house consists of boarding supported upon wooden joists which run into or lie upon the walls, and to the under edges of which are nailed the laths which carry the plaster of the ceiling below. Beneath the flooring, therefore, of every room, save those which are next to the ground, extends a series of parallel spaces, each more than a foot wide, from eight to twelve inches high, and as long as the room is wide. As most houses contain either partitions formed of upright timbers secured to the joists and covered on both sides with lath and plaster, or have furring strips attached over the interior surface of the outer walls, or else are liberally furnished with both partitions and furring, it is evident that very commodious concealed quarters are furnished by our builders for the accommodation of vermin free of expense. If rats and mice think, what fools they must reckon us poor mortals! What a low idea they must conceive of the intelligence of creatures who, though on the one hand they keep cats and set traps, on the other provide for the accommodation of *Mus musculus* and *Mus decumanus* a series of communicating corridors and chambers ramifying over almost the entire surface of the walls and floors and opening upward into the roof and downward into the basement. If a gray-bearded old rat could reason about human beings after the same fashion that certain human beings reason about the intelligence of animals, we can imagine him soliloquizing: "These two-legged, muzzle-less and bare-skinned animals must be endowed with but a low degree of intelligence, for during the whole of my life, and, according to tradition, for many a year before I was born, they have built their houses so as to give us the most pleasant quarters possible, and yet I know that they hate our race and would kill us all if the could."

Who has not heard in the dead of night when the cars are silent, after the midnight revelers have ceased and ere the street dealers make morn hideous, a party of mice holding high carnival in the partition or floor? They race, they squeal, they tumble over each other, they seem to be rolling marbles or bobbins about (perhaps they are). In fact, they have a good time generally, while the would-be sleeper, his heart beating with the nightmare caused by the rough awakening, wishes he could transform himself into a ferret and kill the whole gay company.

There is no reason for all this save human stupidity, and the reasoning rat would be right. A properly constructed house would not furnish runs for rats. Every wood partition ought to be filled in perfectly solid with brick, concrete or some other material, and every floor joist should be exposed. The objection to this is the expense. Partitions filled in with brick and plastered on both sides cost more than a row of posts covered with lath and plaster; and regard for appearances exacts that, if the under side of the floor boards and three sides of each joist are visible, these exposed surfaces should be planed smooth, stained or painted and perhaps adorned with mouldings or chamfers. Moreover, the boards of the floor must be drier and more carefully selected, or a double layer must be laid, in order to prevent dust from falling through. But the additional cost of these essentials can be often set off by economies in another direction. The lower parts of rooms are now overloaded with dados, wainscot and heavy woodwork round doors and windows, etc. Some of this could be dispensed with where economy was an object.

A good floor can be made by laying the joists flat, so as to have three inches of woodwork throughout. In large rooms this needs a beam or two. Light blocks of lime concrete are manufactured for partitions, and are a vast improvement on wood. The entire house, walls, internal and external, and all floors, can be built in one solid monolith of cement concrete, and this would, of course, be rat-proof, and would afford no harbor to more dangerous enemies. It must be remembered that the hollow spaces of walls and floors may conceal decaying matter of various kinds compared with which rats and mice are innocent and amusing.

Mad All Over.

A great big hulk of a giant, having enough whisky aboard to make him annoying, was hanging around the foot of Second street the other day and abusing everybody who passed. A boy finally said to him:

"If you had any sand you'd tackle that hackman over there."

"Sand, sonny; why, I've got a wagon load of it. Where's the victim?"

"Under the porch there, in the chair."

The giant walked over and crushed "hacky's" hat over his eyes and asked him how all the folks up Fighting Creek were getting along, but inside of a minute and a half he was the "lickedest" man in Detroit. When the hackman got through mopping him the boy handed him a newspaper to wipe the blood off his nose, and said:

"You are big enough to eat him up."

"Jess so, sonny," replied the giant as he tenderly nursed his nose, "but it don't foller that because I'm bigger'n a curry comb I kin swaller one. The difference between us is that he's in a hurry to lick some one and drive off, while I've got a hull week's time and don't keer to fight until I've called names and got mad all over."

Tobacco in England.

Raleigh gave Queen Bess a pipe of tobacco to smoke on his return from his Virginia expedition. "The Queen graciously accepted of it; but, finding her stomach sicken after two or three whiffs, it was presently whispered by the Earl of Leicester's faction that Sir Walter had certainly poisoned her. But her majesty, soon recovering her disorder, obliged the Countess of Nottingham and all her maids to smoke a whole pipe out amongst them."

THE average minister may know nothing about the peculiar game of poker, but he will respond to a "call" if the pile is large enough.