“I notice at the Conantum house “,” of which only the chimney and frame now stand “,” a triangular mass of rubbish “,” more than half a bushel “,” resting on the great mantel-tree against an angle in the chimney. It being mixed with clay “,” I at first thought it a mass of clay and straw mortar “,” to fill up with “,” but “,” looking further “,” I found it composed of corn-cobs “,” etc. “,” and the excrement probably of rats “,” of this form and size “,” and of pure clay “,” looking like the cells of an insect. Either the wharf rat or this country rat. They had anciently chosen this warm place for their nest and carried a great store of eatables thither “,” and the clay of the chimney “,” washing down “,” had incrusted the whole mass over. So this was an old rats’ nest as well as human nest “,” and so it is with every old house.”

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