

The Life of the Grasshopper

the poet for these blunders, which were generally believed at the time and perpetuated for very long after, until the observer's searching eyes were opened. Besides, it does not do to look so closely at verses whose chief merit lies in harmony and rhythm.

Even in our own days, the Provençal poets, who are at least as familiar with the Cicada as Anacreon was, are not so very careful of the truth in celebrating the insect which they take as an emblem. One of my friends, a fervent observer and a scrupulous realist, escapes this reproach. He has authorized me to take from his unpublished verse the following Provençal ballad, which depicts the relations between the Cicada and the Ant with strictly scientific accuracy. I leave to him the responsibility for his poetic images and his moral views, delicate flowers outside my province as a naturalist; but I can vouch for the truth of his story, which tallies with what I see every summer on the lilac-trees in my garden.