

The Life of the Grasshopper

peared is fairly probable, though there is nothing in the condition of things to tell us so; but, if we consider the capacity of the well and the extreme difficulty of finding room for so great a volume of rubbish, our doubts return and we say to ourselves:

"This rubbish demanded a large empty space, which itself was obtained by shifting other refuse no less difficult to house. The room required presupposes the existence of another space into which the earth extracted was shot."

And so we find ourselves in a vicious circle, for the mere subsidence of materials flung behind would not be enough to explain so great a void. The Cicada must have a special method of disposing of the superfluous earth. Let us try and surprise his secret.

Examine a larva at the moment when it emerges from the ground. It is nearly always more or less soiled with mud, sometimes wet, sometimes dry. The digging-implements, the fore-feet, have the points of their pickaxes stuck in a globule of slime; its other legs are cased in mud; its back is spotted with clay. We are reminded of a scavenger who has been stirring up sewage.