

The Cicada: leaving the Burrow

four years in the ground. This long life is not, of course, spent at the bottom of the well which we have described: this is just a place where the larva prepares for its emergence. It comes from elsewhere, doubtless from some distance. It is a vagabond, going from one root to another and driving its sucker into each. When it moves, either to escape from the upper layers, which are too cold in winter, or to settle down at a better drinking-bar, it clears a road by flinging behind it the materials broken up by its pickaxes. This is undoubtedly the method.

As with the larvæ of the Capricorn and the Buprestes, the traveller needs around him only the small amount of free room which his movements require. Damp, soft, easily compressed earth is to this larva what the digested pap is to the others. Such earth is heaped up without difficulty; it condenses and leaves a vacant space.

The difficulty is one of a different kind with the exit-well bored in a very dry soil, which offers a marked resistance to compression so long as it retains its aridity. That the larva, when beginning to dig its passage, flung back part of the excavated materials into an earlier gallery which has now disap-