

## The Cicada: leaving the Burrow

able, then the ceiling is smashed with a few strokes of the claws and the larva emerges from the well.

Everything seems to confirm that the Cicada's gallery is a waiting-room, a meteorological station where the larva stays for a long time, now hoisting itself near the surface to discover the state of the weather, now retreating to the depths for better shelter. This explains the convenience of a resting-place at the base and the need for a strong cement on walls which, without it, would certainly give way under continual comings and goings.

What is not so easily explained is the complete disappearance of the rubbish corresponding with the space excavated. What has become of the twelve cubic inches of earth yielded by an average well? There is nothing outside to represent them, nor anything inside either. And then how, in a soil dry as cinders, is the plaster obtained with which the walls are glazed?

Larvæ that gnaw into wood, such as those of the Capricorn and the Buprestes,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Capricorn, or *Cerambyx*-beetle, lives in oak-trees; the Buprestis-beetles are found mostly in felled timber.  
—Translator's Note.