

## ONE OF OUR COMMON INSECTS.

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Most of our readers will recognize in the accompanying cut, FIG. 1, an object with which they are more or less familiar, although they may know little of its origin or the nature of its contents.

During the Winter months, when our trees and shrubs are leafless these curious silky structures are readily seen, and are found on many different trees and shrubs, but perhaps oftener on the twigs of apple trees and currant bushes than anywhere else. They are the cocoons of a very large and beautiful moth, called the Cecropia moth, (*Attacus Cecropia*,) which thus spends the winter in a quiet and torpid condition.

If you cut a twig on which one of these cocoons has been hung, and shake it, you will feel that it contains a heavy body which is to some extent moveable, and



FIG. 1.

you can feel a slight dull thud as it falls from side to side. This winter home of the insect is about three inches long, shaped something like a pod, tapering towards each end, and invariably fastened lengthwise to the twig. It is of a dirty brown colour; the exterior is very close and papery like, although much wrinkled, and is quite impervious to wet. Let us look inside of it; underneath the close exterior we find a mass of loosely woven threads of strong yellow silk which surround the dark brown chrysalis and fill the intervening space, the upper end of the cocoon where the moth is eventually to make its escape, being

much looser in texture than the other portions. The chrysalis itself, the object of all this care, is smooth, of a dull brown colour, and about one and a half inches long, and  $\frac{5}{8}$  of an inch broad in the widest portion.