

# **THE LIFE OF THE WEEVIL**

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The life of the weevil by J. Henri Fabre

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**J. HENRI FABRE**

**THE LIFE OF  
THE WEEVIL**



THE LIFE OF THE WEEVIL.

**'THE INSECT'S HOMER'**

*Maurice Maeterlinck*

**THE LIFE OF  
JEAN HENRI FABRE**

THE LIFE OF JEAN HENRI FABRE, The  
Entomologist. By the Abbé AUGUSTIN FABRE.  
Translated by BERNARD MIALL.

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Illustrated with Plates in Colour by E. J. DICKWOLD

**HODDER & STOUGHTON LIMITED**  
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THE WORKS OF J. H. FABRE

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THE LIFE OF THE  
WEEVIL

BY

J. HENRI FABRE

*Translated by*

ALEXANDER TEIXEIRA DE MATTOS, F.Z.S.

HODDER AND STOUGHTON  
LIMITED                      LONDON

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*Translator's Note*

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I HAVE gathered into this volume the essays on Weevils contained in the *Souvenirs entomologiques*, lest I should swell unduly the number of volumes devoted to Beetles, of which there will be three in all, or four if we include the present book.

Chapters I. and VII. to IX. have already appeared, wholly or in part, in an illustrated miscellany, entitled *The Life and Love of the Insect*, translated by myself and published by Messrs. Adam and Charles Black (in America by the Macmillan Co.), and Chapter V. and parts of Chapters XI. and XII. in a similar volume, entitled *Social Life in the Insect World*, translated by Mr. Bernard Miall and published by Messrs. T. Fisher Unwin Ltd. (in America by the Century Co.). I am permitted by arrangement with the firms named to retranslate and reissue the chapters in question for the purpose of this collected and definitive edition of Fabre's entomological works.

I am also under no small obligation to Mr. Miall, who has given me the benefit of his assistance throughout.

ALEXANDER TEIXEIRA DE MATTOS.



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*Chapter i*

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## THE OLD WEEVILS

IN winter, when the insect takes an enforced rest, the study of numismatics affords me some delightful moments. I love to interrogate its metal disks, the records of the petty things which men call history. In this soil of Provence, where the Greek planted the olive-tree and the Roman planted the law, the peasant finds coins, scattered more or less everywhere, when he turns the sod. He brings them to me and consults me upon their pecuniary value, never upon their meaning.

What matters to him the inscription on his treasure-trove ! Men suffered of yore, they suffer to-day, they will suffer in the future : to him all history is summed up in that ! The rest is sheer futility, a pastime of the idle.

I do not possess this lofty philosophy of indifference to things of the past. I scratch the piece of money with my finger-nail, I carefully strip it of its earthy rind, I examine it with the magnifying-glass, I try to decipher its lettering. And my satisfaction is no small one when the bronze or silver disk has spoken. For then I have read a page of humanity, not in books, which are