ferent times; when retiring to the neighbouring plains, or woods, they repose for some time, and then the females return to the water, and commit their eggs to the waves. This business despatched, they endeavour to regain, in the same order, the country they had left, and by the same route, but only the most vigorous can reach the mountains. The greater part are so weak and lean, that they are forced to stop to recruit their strength in the first country they reach. When arrived again at their habitations, they have a new labour to undergo, for now is the time of their moult. They hide themselves in their subterranean retreats for this purpose, so that not a single one can be seen: they even stop up the mouth of their burrows. Some writers, however, affirm that they change their shells immediately after their oviposition.

The respiration of these land-crabs, for a long time, had puzzled comparative anatomists.—They could not explain how animals, breathing by gills, could subsist so long out of the water without these organs becoming useless. M. M. Audouin, however, and Milne Edwards, cleared up the mystery by the discovery of a kind of trough, formed by the folds which line and constitute the parietes of the branchial cavity, and destined to contain and preserve a certain quantity of water proper to moisten the gills. One species* has more than one pocket, or vesicle, filled with that fluid. This trough exists in the horsemen land-crabs,† but it is smaller, and a spongy mass furnishes the requisite moisture. The gills of the land-crabs, in other respects, do not differ from those of the tribe in general. God, when he formed these animals, would not separate them from their kind by a different mode of respiration, but by this compensating contrivance he fitted them for the circumstances in which he decreed to place them, and for a long sojourn out of the water.

* Gecarcinus Uca. † Ocypode.