

materially from their ravages, but the ship-worm, where it gets head, does him incalculable injury: destroying piles as far as they are under the water, and everything constructed of timber that is placed within their reach, to which they are as injurious as the boring wood-louse;\* they even attack the stoutest vessels, and render them unfit for service. Their object, however, is not to devour the timber, but, with the same view that the pholads bore into the rock, to make for themselves a cell in which they may be safe from their enemies; their food is probably conveyed to them in the seawater. These animals cannot exist in fresh water, they pierce the wood by means of what Carus calls boring shells moved by a double-bellied muscle. The valves of the shells of this animal are emarginate or bilobed, both lobes are beautifully scored at the margin, but in different directions, the furrows in one being much the finest and receiving those of the other. The mode in which these animals bore has not been ascertained, probably it is by the rotation of their valves. Sir E. Home describes them as protruding a kind of proboscis which has a vermicular motion, and which he supposes to act as a centre-bit while the creature is boring. The shells, by means of their ridges, probably act like those of the pholads, as rasps. They bore in the direction of the grain of the timber, deviating only to avoid the track of others.

Various are the animals whose function it is to attack substances from which the vital principle is departed, nor are those, we see in the foregoing instance, which are submerged, always exempted from this law. Fortunately, the aquatic animals, that prey upon timber, fall very far short of the terrestrial ones, in their number and in the amount of the damage they occasion, and their aversion to fresh water is the safeguard of our bridges and other buildings

\* *Limnoria terebrans*.