

as yet too soft for exposure. When this envelope is eaten, the little snail finds its nutriment, more or less, in the vegetable soil around it, and from which it continues to derive materials for the growth and consolidation of the shell. It remains thus concealed for more than a month, when it first issues forth into the world, and, without respect of persons, attacks the vegetable productions around, returning often to an earthly aliment, probably still necessary, for the due growth and hardening of its portable house. These snails cease feeding when the first chills of autumn are felt, and, associating in considerable numbers on hillocks, the banks of ditches, or in thickets and hedges, set about their preparations for their winter retreat. They first expel the contents of their intestines, and then, concealing themselves under moss, grass, or dead leaves, each forms, by means of its foot and the viscid mucus which it secretes, a cavity large enough to contain its shell. The mode in which it effects this is remarkable; collecting a considerable quantity of the mucus on the sole of its foot, a portion of earth and dead leaves adheres to it, which it shakes off on one side; a second portion is again thus selected and deposited, and so on till it has reared around itself a kind of wall of sufficient height to form a cavity that will contain its shell; by turning itself round it presses against the sides, and renders them smooth and firm. The dome, or covering, is formed in the same way: earth is collected on the foot, which then is turned upwards, and throws it off by exuding fresh mucus; and this is repeated till a perfect roof is formed. Having now completed its winter house, it draws in its foot, covering it with the mantle, and opens its spiracle to draw in the air. On closing this, it forms with its slime a fine membrane, interposed between the mantle and extraneous substances. Soon afterwards the mantle secretes a large portion of very white fluid over its whole surface, which instantly sets uni-