

divided longitudinally, besides this rough cast, it appears to be covered with a coat of fine mortar, which is as smooth and regular as if a trowel had been passed over it; this coat is very thin, and soft to the touch; but before this adroit workman lays it, she covers the coarser earthy plaster-work with some coarse web, upon which she glues her silken tapestry.

All this shows that she was directed in her work by a Wise Master; but the door that closes her apartment is still more remarkable in its structure. If her well was always left open, she would be subject to the intrusion of guests that would not, at all times, be welcome or safe; Providence, therefore, has instructed her to fabricate a very secure trap-door, which closes the mouth of it. To judge of this door by its outward appearance, we should think it was formed of a mass of earth coarsely worked, and covered internally by a solid web; which would appear sufficiently wonderful for an animal that seems to have no special organ for constructing it: but if it is divided vertically, it will be found a much more complicated fabric than its outward aspect indicates, for it is formed of more than thirty alternate layers of earth and web, emboxed, as it were, in each other, like a set of weights for small scales.

If these layers of web are examined, it will be seen that they all terminate in the hinge, so that the greater the volume of the door the more powerful is the hinge. The frame in which the tube terminates above, and to which the door is adapted, is thick, and its thickness arises from the number of layers of which it consists, and which seem to correspond with those of the door; hence, the formation of the door, the hinge, and the frame, seems to be a simultaneous operation; except that in fabricating the first, the animal has to knead the earth, as well as to spin the layers of web. By this admirable arrangement, these parts always