

<<昆虫记>>

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作者：亨利·法布尔

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译者：亚历山大·泰伊克塞伊拉·德·马托斯

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内容概要

由亨利·法布尔编著的《昆虫记》内容介绍：世界文学名著表现了作者描述的特定时代的文化。阅读这些名著可以领略著者流畅的文笔、逼真的描述、详细的刻画，让读者如同置身当时的历史文化之中。为此，我们将这套精心编辑的“名著典藏”奉献给广大读者。

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THE LIFE OF THE FLY

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章节摘录

In the uninterrupted circular procession there is no longer a leader, Each caterpillar is preceded by another on whose heels he follows guided by the silk track, the work of the whole party; he again has a companion close behind him, following him in the same orderly way, And this is repeated without variation throughout the length of the chain, None commands, or rather none modifies the trail according to his fancy; all obey, trusting in the guide who ought normally to lead the march and who in reality has been abolished by my trickery. From the first circuit of the edge of the tub the rail of silk has been laid in position and is soon turned into a narrow ribbon by the procession, which never ceases dribbling its thread as it goes. The rail is simply doubled and has no branches anywhere, for my brush has destroyed them all. What will the caterpillars do on this deceptive, closed path? Will they walk endlessly round and round until their strength gives out entirely? The old schoolmen were fond of quoting Buridan's Ass, that famous Donkey who, when placed between two bundles of hay, starved to death because he was unable to decide in favour of either by breaking the equilibrium between two equal but opposite attractions. They slandered the worthy animal. The Ass, who is no more foolish than any one else, would reply to the logical snare by feasting off both bundles. Will my caterpillars show a little of his mother wit? Will they, after many attempts, be able to break the equilibrium of their closed circuit, which keeps them on a road without a turning? Will they make up their minds to swerve to this side or that, which is the only method of reaching their bundle of hay, the green branch yonder, quite near, not two feet off? I thought that they would and I was wrong. I said to myself: "The procession will go on turning for some time, for an hour, two hours, perhaps; then the caterpillars will perceive their mistake. They will abandon the deceptive road and make their descent somewhere or other." That they should remain up there, hard pressed by hunger and the lack of cover, when nothing prevented them from going away, seemed to me inconceivable imbecility. Facts, however, forced me to accept the incredible. Let us describe them in detail. The circular procession begins, as I have said, on the 30th of January, about midday, in splendid weather. The caterpillars march at an even pace, each touching the stem of the one in front of him. The unbroken chain eliminates the leader with his changes of direction; and all follow mechanically, as faithful to their circle as are the hands of a watch. The headless file has no liberty left no will; it has become mere clockwork. And this continues for hours and hours. My success goes far beyond my wildest suspicions. I stand amazed at it, or rather I am stupefied. Meanwhile, the multiplied circuits change the original rail into a superb ribbon a twelfth of an inch broad. I can easily see it glittering on the red ground of the pot. The day is drawing to a close and no alteration has yet taken place in the position of the trail. A striking proof confirms this. The trajectory is not a plane curve, but one which, at a certain point, deviates and goes down a little way to the lower surface of the cornice, returning to the top some eight inches farther. I marked these two points of deviation in pencil on the vase at the outset. Well, all that afternoon and, more conclusive still, on the following days, right to the end of this maddance, I see the string of caterpillars dip under the ledge at the first point and come to the top again at the second. Once the first thread is laid, the road to be pursued is permanently established. If the road does not vary, the speed does. I measure nine centimetres in a minute as the average distance covered. But there are more or less lengthy halts; the pace slackens at times, especially when the temperature falls. At ten o'clock in the evening the walk is little more than a lazy swaying of the body. I foresee an early halt, in consequence of the cold, of fatigue and doubtless also of hunger. Grazing-time has arrived. The caterpillars have come crowding from all the nests in the greenhouse to browse upon the pine-branches planted by myself beside the silken purses. Those in the garden do the same, for the temperature is mild. The others, lined up along the earthenware cornice.

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