

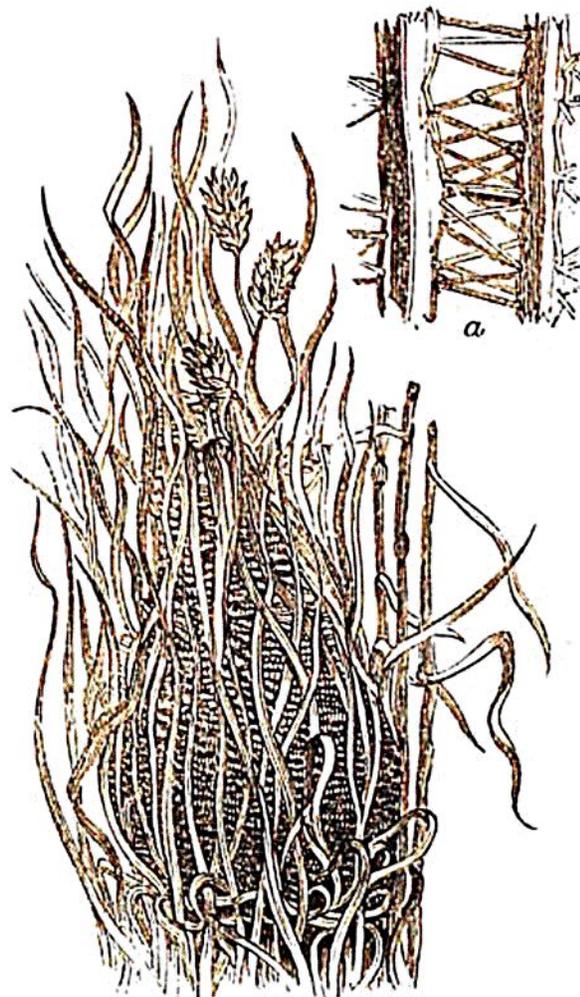
afterwards given in detail by Professor P. Savi. It is called by the Pisans *Becca moschino*, and is a species of the genus *Sylvia*.*

In summer and autumn it frequents marshes, but in the spring it seeks the meadows and corn-fields; in which, at that season, the marshes being bare of the sedges which cover them in the summer, it is compelled to construct its nest in tussocks of grass on the brink of ditches: but the leaves of these, being weak, easily split, so that it is difficult for our little sempstress to unite them, and so to form the skeleton of her fabric. From this and other circumstances the *vernal* nests of these birds differ so widely from those made in the autumn, that it seems next to impossible that both should be the work of the same artisan.

The latter are constructed in a thick bunch of sedge or reed, they are shaped like a pear, being dilated below and narrowed above, so as to leave an aperture sufficient for the ingress and egress of the bird. The greatest horizontal diameter of the nest is about two inches and a half, and the vertical is five inches or a little more.

The most wonderful thing in the construction of these nests is the method

Fig. 111.



Nest of *Sylvia cisticola*. a. Portion of the nest, showing the stitching of the leaves.