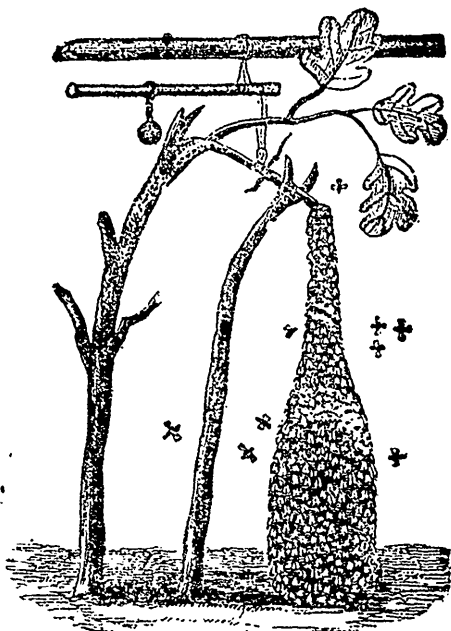


## NATURAL HISTORY.

## BEE SWARMING.

When bees increase so that there is not room for them all in the hive many hundreds of them go off in a swarm. This generally takes place after 10 o'clock in the morning. When they leave their hive they seem uncertain where to go ; and oftentimes they light upon a branch of a tree where they cling to each other and hang down, forming quite a large body as in the picture before the reader. Bees are very industrious and very useful. They make a great deal of honey, oftentimes flying several miles during the day to find flowers from which they extract the sweet to make their honey.



## USE OF THE PEACOCK'S TAIL.

The beauty of the peacock's plumage was a theme of admiration in the remotest times ; and the bird was sought after, as capable of adding splendor to the magnificence of Solomon. The chief display of this beauty arises from that arrangement of long and gorgeous feathers which spring from the space between the region behind the wings and the origin of the tail ; but the use of this to the bird itself has been a subject of doubt. At first sight it seems to be no better than a luxuriance of nature, and an encumbrance rather than a benefit. The action by which their splendor is outspread, has also been deemed

an absurd manifestation of pride. But men are imperfect interpreters of the actions of animals ; and a closer examination of the habits of this bird will afford a different explanation. The tail of the peacock is of a plain and humble description, and seems to be of no other use besides aiding in the erection of the long feathers of the loins ; while the latter are supplied at their insertion with an arrangement of voluntary muscles, which contribute to their elevation, and to the other emotions of which they are capable. If surprised by a foe, the peacock presently erects its gorgeous feathers ; and the enemy at once beholds starting up before him a crea-