

“It need not be said that the bees’ pedagogic methods are not the same as ours. Man, as much mind as matter, if not more, turns his attention above all to the generous impulses of the heart, the noble aspirations of the soul. With bees education is purely animal, and is governed by the dictates of the belly. The kind of food makes either the queen or the working bee. For the larvæ that are to discharge the functions of royalty the nurses prepare a special pap, a royal dish of which only they know the secret. Whoever eats of it is consecrated queen.

“This strengthening nourishment brings about a greater development than usual; for that reason, as I told you, the larvæ destined for royalty are lodged in spacious cells. For these noble cradles wax is used with prodigality. No more hexagonal, parsimonious forms, no thin partitions; a large and sumptuously thick thimble. Economy is silent where queens are concerned.”

“It is, then, without the actual queen’s knowledge that bees make other queens?”

“Yes, my friend. The queen is excessively jealous, she cannot endure in the hive any bee whose presence may bring the slightest diminution to her royal prerogatives. Woe to the pretenders that should get in her way! ‘Ah! you come to supplant me, to steal from me the love of my subjects!’ Ah, thine Ah, that! It would be something horrible, my children. Read the history of mankind, and you will see what disasters crowned heads, brought to bay, can inflict upon nations. But the working-bees are strong-minded, they know that nothing lasts in