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LET us now, in order to form a clearer conception of the bees' intellectual power, consider their methods of intercommunication. There can be no doubting that they understand each other; and indeed it were surely impossible for a republic so considerable, wherein the labours are so varied and so marvellously combined, to subsist amid the silence and spiritual isolation of so many thousand creatures. They must be able, therefore, to give expression to thoughts and feelings by means either of a phonetic vocabulary, or more probably, of some kind of tactile language or magnetic intuition, corresponding perhaps to senses and properties of matter that are wholly unknown to us. And such intuition well might lodge in the mysterious antennæ—containing in the case of the workers, according to Cheshire's calculation, twelve thousand tactile hairs and five thousand "smell-hollows"—wherewith they probe and fathom the darkness. For the mutual understanding of the bees is not confined to their habitual labours; the extraordinary also has a name and place in their language, as is proved by the manner in which news good or bad, normal or supernatural, will at once spread in the hive—the loss or return of the mother, for instance, the entrance of an enemy, the intrusion of a strange queen, the approach of a band of marauders, the discovery of treasure, &c. And so characteristic is their attitude, so essentially different their murmur at each of these special events, that the experienced apiarist can without difficulty tell what is troubling the crowd that moves distractedly to and fro in the shadow.—The Life of the Bee, Maeterlinck.

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