

at a very late one, but generally starts from its parent hive between ten in the morning to three or four in the afternoon, although instances have been known of swarms starting as early as seven in the morning, and as late as five in the afternoon. This instinct is useful enough to the proprietor who is anxiously expecting a swarm, as he need not commence his watch before seven or eight, and is released about four. It seems rather strange that the rightful queen should always go off with the swarm instead of remaining in office and sending the newly emancipated princess, if she may be so called, to take charge of the swarm. But so it is, and almost every queen-bee owes her throne to usurpation, and will in all probability, if she lives long enough, be dispossessed of it by the same means. She makes a terrible disturbance, though, before she does set off; and were the bees possessed of reason, we might almost think that they left the hive for the sake of peace and quietness. At all events the old queen uses her experience to some purpose, for she will not leave her former kingdom unless the day is a very fine one.

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So, gradually, quiet is restored. And then we may see the nurse-bees once more at work, engaged not only in tending the ordinary young, but in what may be called the culminating point of their annual labours, the helping forth into the world the royal scions, and from which they will supply their own queenless realm. They accordingly scrape away from one of the royal cells the wax that has been so lavishly bestowed upon it. Doubt not but they know which is the right one, that is to say, where lies the oldest of the young unborn queens. And here is exhibited another remarkable example of the bee-provision. The eggs in the royal cells were all laid with an interval of at least a day between each. Now that they are coming to maturity accordingly, they come not altogether, but in due succession, by which means the bees, as we shall see, have time to know how many of them they shall want, and be able to provide accordingly. In due time the royal pupa within obeys the stirring influences that call upon her to burst her cement, and she would at once emerge into perfect life, but that the nurse-bees, who keep watch and ward over her, knowing what is good for her better than she does herself as yet, imme-