

queen-mother goes from one to another, dragging with much effort her fruitful womb. The nurses form a respectful retinue. One egg, one only, is laid in each cell. In a few days—from three to six—there comes from this egg a larva, a little white worm, without legs, bent like a comma. Now begins the nurses' delicate work.

"They must every day, and several times a day, distribute nourishment to the little worms, not honey or pollen in its natural state, but a preparation of increasing strength such as delicate stomachs need at first. It is, in the beginning, a liquid paste, almost tasteless; then something sweeter; and finally pure honey, nourishment at its full strength. Do we offer a slice of beef to a crying baby? No, but milk first and then pap. Bees do the same: they have honey, strong food, for the strong; and weaker nourishment, tasteless pap, for the weak. How do they prepare these more or less substantial foods? It would be hard to say. Perhaps they mix pollen and honey in different proportions.

"In six days the larvæ, called *brood-comb*, have attained their development. Then, like the larvæ of other insects, they retire from the world to undergo metamorphosis. In order to protect its suffering flesh at the critical moment of its transfiguration, each larva lines the inside of its cell with silk, and the working-bees close the cell with a cover of wax. In the silk-lined case the skin is cast off and the passage to the state of nymph accomplished. Twelve days later the nymph awakes from the deep sleep of the second birth; it shakes itself, tears its