

flight from blossom to blossom, gathering the honey that must have been spread with such a lavish hand in that queen of gardens.

Amongst the ancient Egyptians the bee was the hieroglyphical emblem of royalty. I do not know whether it became the emblem of royalty to them from the fact that something analogous to a monarchy has frequently been erroneously supposed to exist in a bee-hive. True, there is one of the members of the colony known as the queen, who, at certain seasons, is the object of particular regard on the part of all the other members, but only because the instincts of all are variously directed towards her, at that time, as one indispensable to the objects for which the bee-community exists; but, beyond the fact of having this attendance upon her, those who make a study of the subject, tell us that there is no evidence whatever of anything like the authority exercised by the queen.

To modern nations the bee furnishes an example of all that is inspiriting and patriotic. The patriotism is there, at any rate. You do not find the members of a bee community taking exception to the way in which the affairs are managed. There is no clamoring for promotion, but each insect fills the place for which it was intended, without questioning.

They all co-operate towards the common benefit of the community, and agree that "union is strength," since in repelling invasion or avenging aggression, the whole community becomes as one, inasmuch as their several energies are directed to the one object of the preservation of their hive; and, as to the inspiration, no one can deny that an interview with a bee that means business, is decidedly and intensely inspiriting. The interviewer is inspired with feelings of—well, they need not be recounted here, as everyone who has had the pleasure of an interview with the bee, can supply the ellipsis to suit himself.

As a mathematician, the bee can prove Euclid mistaken, when he said, "There is no royal road to learning," since it is a geometrical par excellence, and reached that state, too, without any of those weary interviews in which the human student questions the advisability and accuracy of the Great Mathematician's geometrical plans, but in which the student invariably comes out second best.

Look, for example, at the mathematical ingenuity exhibited by the bee in the formation of the cells in the comb of the hive. They are hexagonal in form, the shape which, as every mathematician knows, will combine the great-

est economy of space and material, since the hexagon being perfectly regular, there can, therefore, be no interstices between, and, consequently, every atom of space is economized.

Besides the hexagon, the bee constructs other mathematical figures of various forms that are necessary to the strength and continuance of the hive. And then, in respect of the construction of these mathematical figures, the bee is always ahead of the human student again, for it never make mistakes. All its proceedings are founded on sure and infallible principles, and you never find a bee unwise enough to question those principles.

The bee furnishes a lively testimony to the proverb "Familiarity breeds contempt." With what supreme and wholesome contempt for the insect are you permeated after an interview, in which the bee, to say the least of it, has been decidedly familiar, and how feelingly you remark to yourself that you will keep it at a distance evermore.

What a lesson is furnished to us, too, in the provident industry of the bee. Observe, will you, how instinct, which is merely a blind impulse as far as the bee is concerned, leads it to provide for a possible future, to care for its young, to provide, in fact, in every way for the healthful continuance of the community; while man, whose superiority over the insect is asserted in the fact that he is provided by the Creator with reason, the noblest of all God's good gifts to man, will look upon to-day only as the day before to-morrow, and defer being prudent to old age, looking forward to a promise of wisdom as a patron of his latter years, and who, when he arrives at old age, finds that his years have far outstripped his wisdom, and that he has now neither the opportunity nor the capability for the wisdom that might have been his portion had proper prudence been exercised in his earlier years.

In studying the habits and work of the bee, we cannot help referring to the instinct shown in their work to a higher power, which makes the instinct subserve the highest ends for which it was created, and we must conclude also that the Creator, in showing His perfect work in the bee, has also shown His perfect love to man. May we have, in a measure, the true philosophy displayed by that insect.—California Fruit Grower.

--- Purity of Italian Bees. ---

Beside me lies a letter in which I find this question: "Can pure Italian bees have more than three bands?" The purity of the Italian