

Every comb, newly made, is white: but it becomes yellow as it grows old, and almost black when kept too long in the hive. Beside the wax thus digested, there is a large portion of the powder kneaded up for food in every hive, and kept in separate cells, for winter provision; this is called *bee-bread*, and contributes to the health and strength of the animal during winter.

Numerous as the multitude of bees may appear in one swarm, they all owe their origin to a single parent, which is called the queen-bee; and Rheumur assures us, that opening one of them, he found no less than five thousand eggs. This animal, whose existence is of such importance to the community, may easily be distinguished from the rest by her size, and the shape of her body. On her safety depends the whole welfare of the commonwealth; and the attentions paid to her by all the the rest of the swarm, evidently shew the dependence her subjects have upon her security.

The queen-bee is generally concealed in the most secret part of the hive, and is seldom visible but when she lays her eggs, in such combs as are exposed to sight. When she does appear, she is always attended by ten or a dozen