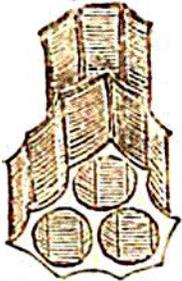


is the torture inflicted by these pigmy assailants, that the bravest travellers are not ashamed to fly the instant they perceive the terrific host approaching, which is of no uncommon occurrence on the Campos."

I shall now turn to those admirable creatures, which though, as a wise man observes, *they are little among such as fly, their fruit is the chief of sweet things*,* those Heaven-instructed mathematicians, who, before any geometer could calculate under what form a cell would occupy the least space without diminishing its capacity, and before any chemist existed to discover how wax might be elaborated from vegetable sweets, instructed by the Fountain of Wisdom, had built their hexagonal cells of that pure material, had closed them at the bottom with three rhomboidal pieces,

Fig. 96.



Portion of a honey-comb, to show that every cell, as it were, stands upon three.

and were enabled, without study, so to construct the opposite story of combs, that each of these rhomboids should form one of those of three opposed cells, thus giving strength to the structure that, in no other place, could have been given to it. Wise in their government, diligent and active in their employments, devoted to their young and to their queen, they read a lecture to mankind that exemplifies their oriental name—*she that speaketh*.† Whoever examines their external structure, as has been before observed,‡ will find every part adapted to their various employments.

These valued animals, so worthy of the attention of the sage, as well as the culture of the economist, are almost the only ones of the Order that are guilty of no spoliation, and injure no one: they take what impoverishes none, while it enriches them and us also, by the valuable products which

* Ecclus. xi. 3.

† Heb. דבורה.

‡ See above, p. 138, and Introd. to Ent. i. 481—497, and ii. Lett. xix.