

*" We hear from mathematicians that bees have... solved a recondite problem, and have made their cells of the proper shape to hold the greatest possible amount of honey, with the least possible consumption of... wax in their construction.*

...

*[A] score of individuals work even at the commencement of the first cell. I was able ... to show this fact, by covering the edges of ... the extreme margin of the circumferential rim of a growing comb, with an extremely thin layer of melted vermilion wax;*

...

*[T]he colour was most delicately diffused by the bees as delicately as a painter could have done with his brush by atoms of the coloured wax ... worked into the growing edges of the cells all round. The work of construction ... a ... balance struck between many bees,... all trying to sweep equal spheres, and then building up, or leaving ungnawed, the planes of intersection between these spheres.*

...

*The bees, of course, no more knowing that they swept their spheres at one particular distance from each other, than they know what are the several angles of the hexagonal prisms and of the basal rhombic plates. The motive power of the process of natural selection having been economy of wax... "*

From The Origin of Species by Charles Darwin