

POOR DOCUMENT M2035

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, JULY 14, 1921

DOES NOT BITE FOR BITING'S SAKE

Black Fly Does It for the
Kiddies—Only the Female
Can Cause Humans Worry.

(Toronto Mail and Empire.)
Walter Collins O'Kane in the Boston
Evening Transcript traces the criminal
career of the black fly from the time it
is an innocent egg through the period
when it is an amphibious wriggler, then
a pupa and then the mature fly. Mr.
O'Kane holds no brief for the black fly,
as for some strange reason he neglects

to say, but he holds that there are good
and bad black flies. The good ones are
the males. They do not bite. They
have an apparatus that looks as though
it once were made for biting, but in the
course of evolution it has lost this
power. Nevertheless, we do not warm
to the male black fly, for we gather
that it is indirectly responsible for the
blood-sucking tendencies of its mis-
tress.

Why She Bites.
If there is to be a defence offered for
the female fly it might be framed in
these historic words, "I did it for the
kiddies." The female does not bite, we
understand, because of any mere ap-
petite or craving for human blood or the
blood of some other animal. She does
it because she has found it impossible
to lay her eggs unless stimulated to
do so by a considerable slug of gore.
The writer says, "Careful study and
dissections of black flies that had en-
gorged with blood and similar studies
of those that had not, disclosed a pro-
gressive growth and maturity of eggs

within those that had fed on blood and
a lack of it within those that had not."
So we learn that the female black fly
bites merely to be able to bring into the
world some hundreds of other black flies
that will bite next summer, or perhaps
later on in the year. There is a plain
reason for her biting and existence gen-
erally, but we find no excuse whatever
for her shiftless mate.

Where They Breed.
We learn, too, that when a female
sometimes has an extra large cargo of
eggs to deliver one meal is often not
sufficient. She will take her bite and
retire to lay her eggs, and after laying
a couple of hundred, will find it neces-
sary to lay off and take some more
nourishment before delivering the rest
of them. One might look forward to the
day when all mosquitoes shall be de-
stroyed. Over such great areas as the
Panama Canal zone they have been
practically exterminated and continue
to retreat before the advance of civil-
ization. If the stagnant water is either
drained away or covered with oil the
mosquitoes cannot come into the world.
They can breed only on stagnant water.
But no such hope can be held out with
regard to the black fly. It does not
breed in stagnant water, but in the
swiftest running streams, and to abolish
them it would appear necessary to abol-
ish the streams as well.

The Wrigglers.
Says our authority, "The larvae, or
wrigglers, of the black fly live attached
to smooth rocks or to almost any object
just beneath rapidly flowing water.
Where a mountain brook boils down
over a boulder bed or where it flows
swiftly in a thin sheet over a smooth,
worn side, in such places the larvae will
be abundant. But the streams of
meadows and of more level country
breed millions as well. Here every
grass blade that bends to lie just be-
neath the surface of the water may
carry a dozen or a score of the wrig-
glers." The reason the larvae, or wrig-
glers, are deposited under water is
because it is from the water that they
derive their nourishment as they strug-
gle up to blackflyhood. This food is
supposed to consist of microscopic por-
tions of animal matter. When the fly
is ready to lay its eggs they are de-
posited either just at the surface of the
water or just beneath. The eggs must
have moisture, for if they dry out they
soon lose their vitality. Black flies have
been observed to actually go under
water for a fraction of a second and de-
posit their eggs.

The Best Protection.
We shall not detain you with a long
history of the black fly's development,
nor what probably occupies its
thoughts in the months that elapse from
the time they are an egg until they be-
come the proud possessors of eggs of
their own. Sometimes the period does
not occupy more than five weeks. Some-
times it consumes six months, but what
happens to a black fly that is born in
the fall we do not know. In the north,
as a rule, we have two generations of
black flies in a season. Further south
they have four or five. Mr. O'Kane

makes the sensible remark that there is
only one certain protection from the
flies, apart from moving out of their
country. That is to wear leather gloves
and a net over the head. It may also be
weights were as necessary as the iron
box, because, while merchants met from
time to time, and placed a common value
on the guineas, doubloons, Mexican and
Spanish dollars that came over their
counters, there was always danger of loss
through coins which had been swarted
or filed. It was, therefore, not until the
tradesman had determined whether the

coins tendered him were of standard
weight, or, if not, how much they lack-
ed, that he was willing to accept them.
A sea captain, just home from a
cruise, leading a small procession of sail-
ors carrying bags of treasure, landed by
a guard armed with stout cudgels or
cutlasses, was no uncommon sight on
Water street in those days, and as often
as not these little bands turned into the
stone warehouse at the head of Collins'
wharf. There Enos Collins and his
partner, Joseph Allison, still continued
to be important factors in the diminished
trade of the port, even after the lucra-
tive opportunities of the French and
American wars had vanished. The pre-
ceding years of adventure had left the
firm not only vastly enriched, but occu-
pying a high place in the commercial
world, because of their daring exploits.
It was these men who had been most
successful in running the French block-
ade with shipments of flour and provis-
ions for the support of Wellington's
army in the Peninsula and eluding the
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