

Inanimate depravity is bad; but of all the forms of depravity that plague mankind insect depravity is the worst. The worst because insects are too everlastingly spry and numerous to get square with, and because they are utterly indifferent to human argument or protest. There was a colored revival the other day; it was going at express speed and plucking brands from the burning hand over fist, and it looked as if there would soon be another market for wings and halos. Then along came a small colony of hornets looking for trouble, and in spite of hymns, prayers, exhortations and frenzies, those hornets went at the colored brethren head and tail and scattered them, breaking the revival up into a disintegrated number of howling, shrieking, swearing, fighting coons, fleeing everywhere. Prayer can accomplish wonders, miracles, but it doesn't seem to have any sort of moral influence on hornets.

The hornet is a depraved and low-lived insect, whose ferocity and pugnacity put him outside the pale of all human sympathy. His cousin, the wasp, is in the same category; but, if you are looking for a nice, plain brand of depravity, we commend you to the fly, not only the *musea domestica* or house fly, but to all his relations, the mayfly, the sandfly, the gadfly, and all the other flies whether their names be Latin or plain English. The industrious ant can make it interesting for you if you sit down on his territory, and the gentle gipsy moth can give you something to think about if he catches you in the shade of his old apple tree; but even they are useful and respectable creatures compared with a fly. Neither the common house fly—the Latin gent called *musea domestica*—nor any of his relations, has one redeeming quality. He is active, frivolous, noisy, impudent, familiar, exasperating, nasty, ill-tempered, an enemy of peace, a foe of religion and morals, an asset

of profanity and a constant breeder of trouble. He is now in the community. He will come into the house as if he owned it; he will seek to drive those who live in it out; he will drive the cats frantic and goad the dogs to madness, and he will have his nose in every butter-plate, sugar bowl, milk pitcher, and everything else in the house not covered up. He laughs at screen doors and windows; he despises fly paper; he tortures bald-headed men and sleeping women; he loves to be slapped at and damned, and will express his joy soaring around your head and droning a war song. Come to think of it, the house fly has even the hornet beaten to a frazzle, for except when he is on a jag and running amuck, the hornet only delights in breaking up revivals, camp meetings and Sunday school picnics; while the house fly invades the home and respects neither age nor sex, hygiene or menu, and is depravity in its most loathsome form.

Human depravity is bad. The depravity of inanimate things is bad; but insect depravity makes the criminal activity of all the rest of nature seem virtue beside it. The Board of Health has declared war on the fly, but we will bet on the fly when it comes to industry, energy and attention to business, to being on the job all the time. As John Ruskin said, the fly is the finest living example of perseverance.

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If an unpopularity contest should be started in this burgh, there are a few people in the limelight who would be surprised at the enormous vote they would poll.

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"Her teeth are like stars," gushed the love-smitten youth,

In an outburst of joyous delight.  
And when they were married he  
found 'twas the teeth—

Like the stars, they came out every  
night.

JACQUES.