

"There has been a miscalculation about the New Day, my dears," she began; "one can't expect people to be perfect all at once. That was our mistake."

"No, the mistake was entirely ours," said the Princess.

"Pardon me," said the Wax-moth. "When you think of the enormous upheaval--call it good or bad--which our influence brought about, you will admit that we, and we alone--"

"You?" said the Princess. "Our stock was not strong. So you came--as any other disease might have come. Hang close, all my people."

When the sun rose, Veiled Figures came down, and saw their swarm at the bough's end waiting patiently within sight of the old Hive--a handful, but prepared to go on.

THE BEES AND THE FLIES

A FARMER of the Augustan age
Perused in Virgil's golden page,
The story of the secret won

From Proteus by Cyrene's son
How the dank sea-god sowed the swain
Means to restore his hives again
More briefly, how a slaughtered bull
Breeds honey by the bellyful.

The egregious rustic put to death
A bull by stopping of its breath:
Disposed the carcass in a shed
With fragrant herbs and branches spread.
And, having thus performed the charm,
Sat down to wait the promised swarm.

Nor waited long... The God of Day
Impartial, quickening with his ray
Evil and good alike, beheld
The carcass--and the carcass swelled!
Big with new birth the belly heaves
Beneath its screen of scented leaves;
Past any doubt, the bull conceives!

The farmer bids men bring more hives
To house the profit that arrives;
Prepares on pan, and key and kettle,
Sweet music that shall make 'em settle;
But when to crown the work he goes,

Gods! What a stink salutes his nose!
Where are the honest toilers?
Where The gravid mistress of their care?
A busy scene, indeed, he sees,
But not a sign or sound of bees.
Worms of the riper grave unhid
By any kindly coffin lid,
Obscene and shameless to the light,
Seethe in insatiate appetite,
Through putrid offal; while above
The hissing blow-fly seeks his love,
Whose offspring, supping where they supt,
Consume corruption twice corrupt.

WITH THE NIGHT MAIL

A STORY OF 2000 A. D.

(Together with extracts from the magazine in which it appeared)

A nine o'clock of a gusty winter night I stood on the lower stages of one of the G.P.O. outward mail towers. My purpose was a run to Quebec in "Postal Packet 162 or such other as may be appointed"; and the