

Busch Wilhelm

Buzz a Buzz: or, The Bees



Wilhelm Busch

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Preface.

EXPLANATORY

I must say a few words in explanation of the somewhat novel form which my new "Bee-Book" has taken, and which, doubtless, will be a surprise to the many Bee-Friends who are waiting with exemplary patience for the second edition of my original "Bee-Book," soon about to appear after an interval of thirty years from the publication of the first edition.

I happened last year to be at the Cologne Station, waiting for the train, and employed my spare time in looking over the book stall for something to read on my way to Aix-la-Chapelle. The stall was covered with books about the late War. I had returned from a visit to the Battle Fields of 1870, and was sick of the subject. I wanted something of a more peaceful nature, and I was turning away, without making a purchase, when a book met my eye entitled *Schnurrdiburr*. What that might mean I knew not, but the second title, *oder die Bienen*, was intelligible, and had attraction enough for me. I opened it, and saw it was profusely illustrated with very comical cuts. I paid my Thaler and carried away my prize.

The cuts are reproduced in the book which my readers have in their hands. The verses were written up to the pictures rather than translated from the German text; for alas! my German is very limited; enough for travelling purposes, but hardly enough to enable me to read a Bee-Book either serious or comical.

RIDENTEM DICERE VERUM QUID VETAT?

There is much truth lying hid under these comical stories; still more in the illustrations; and the notes which I have appended may be found useful even by serious Bee-Masters.

I promise my readers that they shall have the second edition of "My Bee Book" as perfect as I can make it, and with as little delay as possible.

I trust it may be much nearer perfection than the first edition, published under great difficulties, could be, and I hope it may have as many purchasers as this its forerunner.

W. C. C.

Frodsham, Cheshire,

September, 1872.

Prelude

Hail Muse etc.! Bring me Peggy,
My antient steed, now somewhat leggy;
Not him who on Parnassus green
Erst fed, and drank of Hippocrene;
But such, as to supply the trade,
At Nuremburg by scores are made. —
I mount him, and will now indite
A Bee-book for my own delight,
I'll sing of Johnny Dull: his pig,
Made by his bees exceeding big;
And of his daughter fair Christine,
Of her queer lover Dicky Dean,
And of his nephew rogue Eugene —
Of honey-robbers I will tell,
And bears, and bull-frogs, ghosts as well —
All which my readers may discover
Who con this true tale ten times over —
Or make ten other Bee Friends buy it;
For three and six I can supply it.

Fytte I. Bee Life

All hail! thou lovely month of May,
With parti-coloured flowers gay!
And hail to you, my darling Bees;
Much wealth you gain on days like these.
From morn to eve a humming sound
About the bee-house circles round.

The sentinels, in armour bright,
Keep watch and ward throughout the night;
And drive away, constrained by oath,
The mice, and toads, and Death's head moth.

At early dawn 'tis quite a treat
To see them work, they are so neat;
Some clean their house with brooms and mops,
And others empty out the slops.

The architects, by rule and line,
Their future cells with skill define;
The ever toiling workers these —
Meanwhile the Queen, she takes her ease;
Sole mother of the winged nation,
Her only work is propagation.

The egg she lays; the nurses hatch
That egg, and in the cradle watch.
The babe to swaddle, and prepare
The pap-boat, is their constant care.

All day, in regal state, the Queen
Encircled by her court is seen;
Their backs they never rudely turn:
Good manners they by instinct learn.

And when night comes she goes to bed,
And on the pillow lays her head;
Whilst by her side her faithful drone
Profoundly snores, for they are one.

They send for letters ere they rise;
For just at ten they ope their eyes.

The post office is in a flower,
Which opens at a certain hour,
Miss Crocus keeps it, fresh and fair;

The tresses of her flowing hair
They glitter like the purest gold;
And by her saffron cakes are sold.

Near is the pothouse where both grog
Is served to Bumble-Bees, and prog;
And when the Bumble-Bees get groggy,
Their intellect, like men's, is foggy.

On rose leaves they their letters write,
Here's one they either wrote or might.
"Great Queen, we hope you'll swarm to day";
"For 'is a lovely first of May."

The messenger this letter takes,
And eke a store of saffron cakes.

The Drones they neither work, nor can
Do aught but sleep on a divan;
And smoke their pipes through all the day;
Chibouks these love, and those a clay.
Such is their life – who would not be
A happy little worker Bee;
A Queen's too high for me, – a Drone,
Such laziness I let alone.

Fytte II. The Pig

Now Johnny Dull had once a pig, —
'T was far from fat, its bones were big.
To scratch his hide with all his might
Was this poor piggie's sole delight.

Once on a time it so fell out
He in the garden roamed about:
He chanced to have an itching mood;
The bee house quite convenient stood —

His hide he scratched; the bees rushed out,
And stung him well from tail to snout —
Ugh! Ugh! Ugh! Ugh! poor piggie cried,
Feeling these daggers pierce his hide.

John Dull, who heard the awful clatter,
Said, "Bless the pig! why what's the matter?"

He came, — he saw — , his porker, that

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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