

roosting places, when the Swallows to turn out, the g that we lose a whose value is dear seems to be to make it suc.

n the season of them interfere with theirs. In son's Thrushes, finch, and the Sparrows and a pretty close ls which were used.

l not be over- ot weed. This s and destroys ties constantly s quite cleared

tin, the Barn in, all regular tionally occurs is not readily

out them the e an unbear- chiefly that f the country nt so abound

men, partly he necessary affords them tely is dis-

e their food tly occur in and then the of our lakes

female ants lf were she

permitted; the Swallows, fortunately for us, however, interfere and gorge themselves upon these creatures, the Purple Martins particularly, destroying vast numbers of them, even after the ants have divested themselves of their wings; when this has taken place the Martins alight on the ground pursuing them there with the greatest activity.

The Chimney Swift, which closely resembles the Swallows in its habits, except that it never alights on the ground even to obtain the materials for its curiously constructed nest, may be mentioned in connection with them, its economic value being equally great.

Night Hawks. All the Swallow tribe gather their food during the day, and the hotter and brighter it is the more active they seem to be; the Chimney Swift's period of greatest activity is the early morning and late evening. The Night hawk and Whip-poor-will commence their work at dusk and keep it up till sunrise. Their food consists, for the most part, of the large night-flying moths and beetles; on one occasion, however, I found the stomach of a Whip-poor-will filled with the large female wingless ants, which could only have been obtained from the ground, and in all probability in the day time. The common June bug is a favorite article of food with both these birds, and as this is a very destructive insect both in its larval and mature stages, the birds are entitled to our best consideration for the good work they do in lessening its numbers. None of the Swallows, Swifts or Night Hawks ever under any circumstances take any vegetable food, nor have they any habits that are open to objection of any kind, so that our utmost efforts should be put forth to preserve them and encourage them to build about our premises.

I have heard one or two people state that they did not like Swallows about their houses because they brought bed bugs; how such an idea got into any person's head is difficult to understand, and let me say most emphatically that there is no foundation for the belief whatever. Swallows, like all other living creatures, have their insect parasites, but no parasite affecting the Swallows will ever trouble human beings.

CONCLUSION.

There are other families of birds more or less directly beneficial or injurious to our interest, but space will not permit an extended notice of each. I hope enough has been said to impress upon the mind of every one the great value of the majority of our birds to the agriculturist.

I have seen some estimates of the amount of damage done to the crops by insects in various countries, including our own Province, and although they usually stand at some millions of dollars annually, I believe they are much below the mark. It is difficult to form an estimate of the yearly loss from this cause to ordinary field crops, because the plants are crowded so thickly together that a large proportion may be destroyed in the earlier growing stages without being noticed, and it is only when the matured crop fails to reach the expected quantity that we realize the fact that something has gone wrong, but unfortunately it is then too late to remedy the matter. In our gardens we can more readily see the amount of injury done by insects, and can take measures to reduce it, but in spite of our efforts the loss is still enormous, and consider what it would be if we had not the birds to assist in keeping down the swarm of insect life. The great trouble now is that we have not a sufficient number of birds to keep the balance between vegetable and insect life in our favor.