

and actual cases, and neglect of them may lead to misdirected efforts, expensive failures, and even positive harm. The destruction of species harmful in one direction has often caused incalculable damage in others, far outweighing the benefit expected.

Innumerable examples can be cited where the disturbing of the balance of nature has resulted disastrously, in cases of both removing from and adding to a fauna. Under changed conditions, some of the most innocent seeming species have developed unsuspected harmful traits and others apparently the most worthless have been seriously missed when removed. The balance of nature is too delicately adjusted to warrant our interference, until after exhaustive investigation and careful weighing of evidence pro and con. Even then, the problem is too complicated for any one to confidently prognosticate the final resultant conditions, and a certain amount of doubt always remains until practical results test the conclusions.

Leaving out the practical economic questions altogether, common humanity prompts us to destroy life only when necessary. Man having great power for good or evil in nature has consequently equally great responsibilities. It is not enough to prove that a species is "useless" to justify its persecution; it must be proven to be actively harmful before such a course is justified, not in a slight degree, but in a manner that seriously threatens our welfare. Even then the edict of extermination or persecution should only be pronounced when all other remedies fail. The neglect of this responsibility invariably reacts upon our heads. Even should we not thereby destroy unrecognized friends, we foster a disregard for lower life amongst our people that is often evidenced by the slaughter of other harmless or beneficial species. Bounties upon destructive hawks such as the Goshawk, and Cooper's Hawk have time and again been death warrants to Sparrow Hawks and others whose influence is decidedly and actively beneficial to the farmers and mankind in general. The placing of shot guns in the hands of irresponsible persons at all seasons tends to nullify our game laws, valuable species suffer, and protective measures are made more difficult to enforce.