

by his swiftness, leaving his home to the troublesome sparrows. "

From the east, came the energetic white race to America, and lived there by suffrance at first, till waxing strong, they seized all and their whilom hosts were ousted from their ancient possessions, and are now but a fast dying remnant. And do not we find a precise epitome of this occupation in the history of the English sparrow. A few pairs were brought from the East, and their presence was suffered, until they multiplied and grew strong enough to possess themselves of city after city, driving out the bluebirds and swallows. Where this will end we do not know; we may yet have to take up arms against the intruder; it may be that he is to man, a harmless, or even a beneficial bird; he is certainly very amusing for the energy and vivacity he displays at all times; yet I cannot like the sparrow. I regret his introduction when I see our own birds retreating before him.

But we may still hear the Bluebird's gentle warble, and almost wonder wherein lies its charms, for it is scarcely worthy to be called a song, for it is too soft to be strong, and too sweet to be rich, and yet so soft and sweet, that to every ear it is enchanting. Its pleasing suggestion of innocence is well felt by the enthusiastic John Burroughs, who, with admirable fitting of sound and sense, makes his bird murmur — "*Purity! Purity! Purity!*"

• Another question for students to settle is, — Do the males arrive before

the females, as with some birds? It has been said that all the bluebird's notes are call-notes. Is he then calling for his mate, when first we see him

"Shifting his light load of song
From post to post along the cheerless fence?"

Having found a help-mate and won her in the usual way, that is, by much battling with his many rivals, and bill-ing with his future bride, he, with her aid, sets about the spring cleaning of the old nest, if perchance it has not yet been required by the prolific sparrows. This is still early in the spring and at this time, although the Bluebird is professedly an insect eater, his proper food is so scarce that he will be found to subsist largely on buds, young catkins and any other soft vegetable growths that may be obtained.

This is one of the birds that were brought before the tribunal of the government Commission. The penalty of outlawry was to be inflicted if it should be proven that this was an injurious bird to agriculture. But the balance of evidence was in his favor.

Dr. Brodie investigated the subject some time ago, and showed that while the Bluebird was chiefly insectivorous, it also lived partly on berries and seeds; while of the insects that it destroys, some are beneficial to man; yet an impartial judge cannot study this bird's life without becoming his friend. One of the largest peach-growers in Georgia has about 500 semi-domesticated Bluebirds in his orchard. He carefully protects them and greatly prizes their services in de-