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ripe wheat and oats, eating much and threshing out more, so that it is lost to its lawful owner, it is not to be wondered at that the farmer loses his temper and says in his wrath that all birds are a nuisance: but these birds also do some good, though, as they have not acquired the knack of advertising it, their benefits are quite overlooked. If their case is tried impartially it may be found that even the Crow, like another celebrated personage, is not quite "so black as he is painted." I do not think the merits of the crows, or any of the so-called blackbird family, will be found sufficiently great to entitle them to protection, but their faults scarcely warrant their extermination, except in the case of the cow-bird, to be spoken of hereafter.

*Crow.* Twenty-five years ago the Crows of the Province of Ontario were as regularly migratory as the Robins. A few occasionally stayed through the winter with us, and their doing so was considered a sign that we would have a mild season. As the land has been brought under cultivation, and more particularly in neighborhoods where market-gardening is carried on extensively, the number remaining through the winter has steadily increased, so that the species may now be considered a resident one. In the vicinity of Toronto vast flocks gather at the close of the autumn, feeding on the refuse vegetables left in the market gardens outside the city, and resorting at night to some of the pine woods still left standing. In these they roost all through the winter. They may sometimes be pinched by hunger, but, unless the snow becomes too deep, they can generally get at the piles of manure drawn out on the market gardens, and other refuse left about the land. At this time they do no harm, and probably a little good, as they pick up many mice and insects in their foraging, but when spring opens they again scatter over the country and seek their nesting places. Seeding operations are now going on, and the first of the Crow's mischievous propensities asserts itself as soon as the grain has absorbed sufficient moisture from the ground to become soft and has slightly sprouted; then it becomes a favorite morsel for the crows. Corn is preferred to any other grain. I have rarely found any quantity of any other grain in the stomach of a Crow, and even when the birds have been seen feeding among the hills of sprouting corn and have been shot right on the spot, I have always found the stomach contained quite as large an amount of insect remains as of corn, the cut-worm forming one of the Crow's choicest articles of diet, and the question arises as to whether it is not better to let the Crow have a little corn and get rid of the cut-worm, than to let the cut-worm take off a lot of corn if we get rid of the crow. Later on I will say something about the history of this same cut-worm. It is always wisest "of two evils to choose the least," and it must be conceded that the corn-eating propensity of the crow is an evil; but it is certainly less than the evil done by the cut-worm. So perhaps, so far as the Crow's case goes here, it would be as well to call the balance even and give the Crow the benefit of it.

The next scene in the Crow's proceedings shows him with a lively and decidedly hungry family of four or five little ones, whose cravings demand constant attention from their parents; the variety of food supplied to these insatiable youngsters will vary somewhat according to the locality in which they are placed: in any case, no more grain will be taken by the parent birds; their food now will consist entirely of insects, mice and the young of other birds. Nor will they stop at the young if they can catch an adult small bird. Sometimes they will try to elude the vigilance of an old hen and will snatch up her chickens more adroitly than any hawk: ducklings fall easy victims to their cunning. It is at this season they do the greatest amount of mischief, by destroying the nests and young of more valuable birds, particularly of such as nest upon the ground. For this