

average about two skulls each, with other bones and fur. The number of skulls shows that during that time the owl had destroyed about three hundred mice.

It is probable that nearly all owls and hawks will take birds if they can get them ; but, that they habitually do so, is sufficiently disproved by the above mentioned methods of observation. Another good result which would follow a more general study of birds, would be a lessening of the wanton destruction of their nests and eggs. The habit of egg collecting was formerly very prevalent and is still sufficiently common to be a serious factor in the destruction of birds. It is unfortunate that many of our most valuable insectivorous and song birds are those which, from their habit of nesting near towns and in accessible places, are particularly liable to this form of persecution. The eggs of Bluebirds, Yellow Warblers, Goldfinches, Catbirds, Phœbes, Kingbirds, Woodpeckers, Swallows, and in fact of all those birds which are most valuable and worthy of protection, still find their way in large numbers to the pockets and other receptacles of the ubiquitous small boy. It should be the duty of every teacher to do what he can to prevent this. It is not sufficient alone to point out that it is against the law and punishable by fine or imprisonment, because, in order to make such a law effective, it is necessary to create a popular sentiment in its favor. Probably the most effective way to create such a sentiment is to call attention to the economic value of birds.

Aside from these very practical considerations, however, the study of birds has an educational value which is probably not exceeded by that of any other department of Nature Study. It should be borne in mind that the object of such studies is not the acquisition of technical knowledge ; but, as Dr. Fletcher has pointed out, "to train the mind" and to aid the learner to become "self-dependent." That is indeed a valuable system of education which, while accomplishing these important ends in the best possible way, also brings the student into close, even intimate, contact with his natural surroundings. If we "in the love of Nature hold communion with her visible forms," we have an unfailling source of interest and recreation which is of priceless value to those possessing it.