

they be actuated by sympathetic and affectionate emotions, it is evident that the constant watchfulness and attention which the weak would demand, would necessarily retard the rate of their movement, and doubtless lead to the destruction of the entire flock. Here it is plain to the most obtuse intellect that instinct or reason, the latter, as I conceive it to be, operates for individual and family good.

Granting that instinct or reason does sometimes act for individual and family preservation, in the manner described, the writer does not feel at liberty to admit that in every case that may arise in which the weak and disabled are sacrificed, that it is done for the material benefit of the physically able and robust. How the destruction of the weak and newly developed ant can result in good to the colony, it is difficult to conceive in view of the fact that not the slightest effort to escape the danger by continued flight is undertaken, the sole object being to hide the immature away from impending danger, either in the natural galleries or underneath adjoining objects. A vigilant and powerful enemy, under these circumstances, would have very little difficulty in carrying out the very spirit and letter of his programme.

There seems to be one of two theories for the writer's selection wherewith to account for in anything like a satisfactory manner, this strange and abnormal habit upon the part of an insect which has been proverbially distinguished for its kind and affectionate disposition towards the tender beings committed to its trust—either to attribute it to an utter unwillingness and repugnance to witness its *proteges* made the servants of a hostile race, or to the survival and exhibition of a habit which was in vogue far back in the buried ages of the past, when this species of *Formica* was migratory or of a roving disposition.

That a feeling of utter repugnance sometimes takes possession of the nature of some forms of animal existence, when the objects of their solicitude and care are or are about to be reduced to a state of confinement, and impels them to a course of action which bears the semblance of inhumanity, will be patent to all from what follows.

In the summer of 1873 a friend of the writer's having procured a pair of the young of *Turdus migratorius*, Linn., placed them in a cage and hung the latter on a tree, close to his dwelling, where the parent birds could still administer to their temporal well-being. All went well for several days, and the parents, who had busied themselves in the intervals of feeding in their attempts to relieve their offspring, finding all their