

fowls, make money out of this business. Other thousands are continually embarking in this enterprise, who will succeed, in the main, as their predecessors have done and are still doing.

You have plenty of land, ample pastures, and, as a rule, know how to cultivate good poultry. Why not wake up, and so share in the certain profit that may be availed of through this simple work, so manifestly appropriate to your general vocation?—*Poultry World*.

For the Canadian Poultry Review.

What Becomes of the Birds?

What becomes of the birds? is a question, to my mind, easier asked than answered. Every animal if not killed, dies at some time a natural death from old age or other causes, but what becomes of the birds is something I cannot satisfactorily account for. They do not increase, neither do they apparently decrease. There are always plenty, still not too many, and why they do not increase to an enormous extent is what bothers me. They are not killed, they do not die, still they do not increase, "What is the reason?" One may say, well, it is one of nature's laws to preserve its balance. I know it is, but how the balance in bird life is maintained I, for one, don't know; and why they don't swarm in myriads is something I can't account for. I have said they are not killed, and they do not die; of course some are killed, and no doubt all do die, but how few apparently die a natural death.

Reader, did you ever find a dead bird in the woods, one that you had reason to believe died from old age or a natural death? If you ever did, I never, and I have spent many a day in the woods and fields with dog and gun and cannot call to mind eve. having found a dead bird, which I had reason to think died a natural death.

The average life of our common birds: the robin, blue-bird, and black-bird is from eight to twelve years; perhaps few live to attain the latter age. I have kept them in confinement 10 years, and no doubt in their natural state they would live a few years longer. This length of life for one common bird, one would think, and by their constant breeding, would cause them to increase to such an extent as to become a plague, still they do not. Then what becomes of them? Take our blackbird, perhaps the most common bird we have, have seen them in the early fall in the marshes in countless thousands; I have seen such flocks as were simply innumerable. Now take this bird as a criterion; say his average life is eight years; say, if you please, five years. The greater proportion of them mate and raise young every year; say, if you will, some are bachelors and old maids, but there is no

doubt that by far the greater majority mate and breed every season, now what becomes of the enormous increase year after year from time immemorial from such countless numbers? We have no proof that they die; we know that few are killed by the agency of man; then nothing is left which we know of to decimate their numbers but vermin, such as hawks, foxes, skunks, weasels, mink, &c. Well, I have seen more blackbirds in one flock than would feed half the vermin in Ontario or in one State a whole year. They do not die for want of food; they are not perished by severe weather, because they do not stay where severe weather is; they do not die of fatigue on their journey of migration and we have no evidence of their greater mortality during their winter sojourn in the Sunny South than while they are with us.

In the common order of things, say a flock of 50,000 blackbirds, I think I have seen many more than that in a flock, or at least in one marsh, of not very large extent either; now supposing there are 20,000 breeding pairs in that flock. Say they increase one year 60,000, second year 200,000, what would this one flock arrive at, at this rate of increase in fifty years, allowing for natural deaths. We have not figures to enumerate them; there would be no room in the world for any other kinds of birds. But notwithstanding that, we have no apparent reason that these figures will not hold good. We know they do not; we know there is a reason why they do not but we do not know what that reason is. We know the birds do not increase; we don't know why they do not. We know they do not decrease: we don't know why. We know they die; still we have no proof of it. In short we don't know what becomes of the birds.

× ROADS.

The Cultivator and Country Gentleman.

This splendid weekly is on our table, and we can confidently recommend it as one of the very best journals of its class on this continent. It treats of all subjects appertaining to the farm, the garden, and the fireside, and is specially marked for the practical and instructive character of its articles, as well as for their number and variety. The aim of the editors seems to be to exclude everything except what may have an immediate bearing on their specialties; and they are very materially aided by a large staff of correspondents of experience in the several departments. This popular paper, now in its forty-eight year of publication, is published at Albany, New York, by Luther Tucker and Son, at \$2.50 per annum in advance. It will always be a welcome visitor in our sanctum.