

its larva in the stomach of any bird. In its native home in Europe it is seldom so very destructive as here, for the reason that a small four-winged fly, *Pteromalus puparum*, an insignificant looking little creature, is a parasite on the larva of this butterfly, and hunts its victims with the greatest assiduity; alighting on their backs and thrusting its slender ovipositor through the skin of the larva, it deposits a number of eggs there, which hatch into tiny grubs, and these feed upon and eventually destroy the caterpillar. By the constant efforts of this little parasite the cabbage butterfly is prevented in Europe from becoming a very serious pest. Fortunately this little friend has also been introduced here from Europe, although in what manner is not known, and is rapidly spreading, following in the wake of its prey, and where the parasite has fairly established itself this butterfly, with its numerous progeny of green caterpillars, soon dwindles in numbers so materially as shortly to cease to be so grievous an evil. The butterfly spreads faster than its enemy and is usually several years in advance of it, but we may confidently anticipate that sooner or later this small fly will do for us what it has done for Europe—keep this troublesome insect within due limits. Many other similar examples might be given.

Further, the help of friendly parasitic insects is so much more efficient because it is in most instances discriminating. As far as is known, the little parasite referred to attacks only the larva of the cabbage butterfly, and in like manner many other parasitic species are restricted in their operations to a single species, while in other instances they are confined to a genus or a group of similar species. This is not so with insectivorous birds; they in most instances devour alike the useful and the injurious species, and the question may well be raised in many instances whether the good they do is not more than counterbalanced by the number of useful insects they devour. Recent observations on the family of thrushes by Mr. S. A. Forbes, of Illinois, seem to show that their insect food consists largely of beetles belonging to the Carabidæ, a family every member of which is useful, since they feed both in the larval and beetle states exclusively on other insects.

The field here open is a wide and inviting one, on which I trust some of you will enter. I have but touched upon it; as the results of more extended observations are recorded the opinions here expressed may need modifying. I desire to do justice to the birds.

During the month of August last it was my privilege to visit the Great