

Yarrell, the author of the standard work on British Birds, says:—"Their young are fed for a time with soft fruits, young vegetables and insects, particularly caterpillars, and so great is the number of these that are consumed by the parent birds and their successive broods of young, that it is a question whether the benefit thus performed is not a fair equivalent for the grain and seeds required at other seasons of the year."

Macgillivray, author of an elaborate and critical History of British Birds, says:—"The seeds of various plants, such as the field mustard, *Sinapis arvensis*, the charlock, *Raphanus raphanistrum*, the chick weeds and mouse ears, *Stellaria* and *Cerastium*, as well as of the field and garden pea, *Pisum sativum*, are also gathered; and in summer it partly subsists on insects of various kinds, which also afford the chief nourishment of its young."

Dressor, the author of the recently published magnificent work on the Birds of Europe, says:—"In open places where there are a few trees in the towns, such as the gardens in the squares or in the parks, it is eminently useful in ridding the foliage of the insects which would otherwise destroy the leaves and tender shoots; and its utility in this respect has led to its being introduced into the United States, where in the main streets there are avenues of trees which, previous to the introduction of the present species, were rendered bare and leafless by the ravages of caterpillars. During the breeding season insects, whenever they are to be had, form the staple food of both old and young birds. Mr. Snell says that it is very fond of the seeds of *Polygonum aviculare*; and it may occasionally be seen to catch the common white butterflies (*Papilio brassicæ et rapæ*) on the wing, though not so frequently as one could wish. It destroys, however,

myriads of the small smooth caterpillars and larvæ which feed on the buds of the trees, and is one of the best guardians of the orchard. It is true that it also takes toll of the fruit, but one can well spare a little when one reflects how much the crop of fruit is dependent on its active labors in destroying these noxious insects."

The authors referred to speak of the sparrow being a consumer of the seeds of weeds; this is the case with almost all the Fringillidæ, and I have observed the snow bunting (*Plectrophanes nivalis*), and the mealy redpole (*Linota linaria*), on many occasions very busy with the seeds of different weeds which got the better of us in this land of weed luxuriance, as it is also the land of caterpillars and vigorous insect growth. We want not only abundance of *Passer domesticus*, the common sparrow, but of as many similarly disposed birds as we can get, for the little birds of the country don't make any headway against the insect pests. During last summer the trees in my "bush," and in all other "bushes" that I saw, swarmed so with caterpillars that walking in them was most unpleasant, we got so covered with caterpillars.

Pray let everyone advocate the careful preservation of so useful a bird. Better let the sparrow have a little of fruit and everything else, than let the insect pests have nearly all, or all, as the case may be. I did not secure a single one of my cabbages this year owing to the ravages of the caterpillar of the white butterfly. I did my best, trying to catch the insects with the butterfly net, but they stole a march upon me and the caterpillars were abundant. Did not I wish for a flock of the English, or any sparrow that would do the work.

All the small birds and thrushes (*Turdus migratorius*, the "Robin" in-