

rows were watched during one day, and they received food 187 times from the parents. A family of four song sparrows, 7 days old, were fed 17 grasshoppers and two spiders in 67 minutes. The flycatchers and swallows destroy vast numbers of flies and gnats that annoy horses and cattle. The food of the flicker or highhole consists largely of ants; 3,000 of these have been taken from the crop of a single bird. The food of the meadow lark consists of 75 per cent. of injurious insects and 12 per cent. of weed seed, which shows it is a bird of great economic value. A single robin has been known to eat 175 caterpillars. One bobwhite that was killed had over 100 potato bugs in its crop; another had eaten 500 chinch bugs. After the day-flying insects have ceased their work and gone to sleep, the night hawk is busy catching untold numbers of mosquitoes, moths and other insects. Prof. Harvey found 500 mosquitoes in the stomach of one night hawk. Hawks are especially equipped to catch moles, gophers, squirrels and mice, and they keep these harmful rodents in check. During the summer, a pair of red-tail hawks will destroy hundreds of squirrels, gophers and mice. The sparrow hawk lives mostly on grasshoppers, crickets and mice. One bird that was killed had eaten a gopher and 31 insects. The hawk hunts by day, and the owl by night. The work of the one supplements that of the other. Observations show that one owl consumed over 600 mice in 246 days. The barn owl will capture as many mice and gophers in one night as a dozen cats.

The worst enemy of the birds, apart from man, is the domestic cat. One, at a low estimate, will devour 50 birds in the nesting season on a single farm. A cat tax would doubtless do much to help the multiplication of birds. Pending its enactment, those who love to see and hear the birds near their home would do well to follow the suggestion made in a recent book, that the house-cat be prevented from roaming about during the time when young birds essay their first flight, by confining her within a large enclosure of wire netting.

The birds about a farm may be classed as natural resources. Some birds will destroy a large amount of fruit or grain unless driven from the trees and fields. In keeping the birds from eating fruit, we compel them to eat insects; thus, instead of being an injury, they are turned to real advantage.

Have we the right to clear the land of the natural food of the birds and then refuse them the fruit of our trees and the grain of our fields? Should we not provide them something in return for the good they do us, just as we provide for our domestic fowls? It is a sign of thrift when an orchardist or farmer tries to get the most out of the birds about him, instead of killing them off. If the birds insist on destroying fruit—there is always a little unused ground about a farm—why not plant a few mulberry trees or some evergreen blackberries along the fence, or in some out-of-way corner let a few seedling cherry trees grow for the birds? The number of birds that are harmful, including those that do slight injury, is so small that we ought to be able to control these. The number of culprits, all told, is but a small fraction of our birds.

A great many people give bird protection no thought at all, because they think it does not personally concern them or their welfare—does, not, to make it short, touch their pocket. Others say that it is nothing but sentimental effort. Yes, but that is not all, when we take this \$600,000,000 loss from insects into consideration. If we protect the birds, we destroy the insects. To destroy insects means to save the farming interests millions of dollars. Don't you make the mistake of thinking the agricultural situation of no concern to you because you happen to earn

your living by adding columns of figures or selling cloth over the counter, instead of hoeing potatoes. On the farms hangs the whole question of industry. If the crops are good, times are good; if the crops are bad, times are bad. To protect the birds, is to increase your own immediate business, whatever it may be. To deny yourself to bird protection is a form of ignorance almost as dense as to deny your children the advantages of schooling.

Before finishing my lecture, I wish to give you some additional notes on some questionable birds:

English Sparrow.—Five hundred and twenty-two stomachs examined. They contained mostly wheat, oats and corn, and the birds took little interest in insects. Of the insects the stomachs did contain, 47 kinds were harmful, and 50 kinds beneficial.

Crow.—Nine hundred stomachs examined. It was found that the quantity of forbidden food was so small that it was more than counterbalanced by the good done in destroying injurious insects and animals. Three per cent. of their food was found to be sprouting corn and one per cent. eggs and young of poultry and birds. Twenty-six per cent. of the entire food consists of insects, grasshoppers, May beetles, cutworms, etc. An important item in the crow's diet is mice.

Blue Jay.—Two hundred and eighty stomachs were examined, and the remains of birds' eggs were found in three, and birds in two. Seventeen per cent. of food of the year is corn, and 22 per cent. insects, such as grasshoppers and caterpillars.

The sapsucker drills holes in the bark of trees, not to get sap, as is commonly supposed, but to lure insects to the spot. The woodpecker remains with motionless body, and feeds upon insects at his leisure. True, he sometimes kills ornamental trees by his habits, but for one that does that, others are at work on forest trees which he cannot harm.

Experiments have been made to see if the sapsucker could live exclusively on the sap diet, but in each instance the birds died. Thirty-six per cent. of the solid food of the sapsucker consists of ants, wasps, beetles, bugs, flies, grasshoppers, etc.

To induce him to leave ornamental trees alone, plant dogwood, black alder, Virginia creeper, black cherry and juniper.

[We are glad to learn of the existence of this society, and trust that others of a similar nature may be organized in other parts of Canada. Before leaving this subject, we should be glad to hear from any of our readers who have made personal observations in regard to the work of the sapsucker or yellow-bellied woodpecker. Nellie Blanchan speaks of this bird as decidedly injurious to trees, an imputation which Mr. Merrilees, probably on as good authority, denies. In order that no confusion in regard to species may arise, each note of observation should be accompanied by a minute description of the bird itself. . . . Let us hear from you in regard to this matter.]

SOMETHING ABOUT THE VICTORIAN ORDER OF NURSES.

I. In the year of the Diamond Jubilee of her late Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, the intention to commemorate in some especial and definite form an epoch of such historical importance came from every part of the British Empire; thus, amid the general rejoicings in the motherland itself, congratulations from outer Britain poured in, and with them came the earnest requests from her scattered people that Her Majesty would graciously permit them to mark this crowning year of her glorious reign by some imperishable token of their undying loyalty and devotion. In such a request as this, it was not likely that the voice of the eldest daughter of the motherland, the big Dominion of Canada, would be silent. Thus it came about

that, through its Founder and President, Lady Aberdeen, the wife of our Governor-General, the petition of our National Council of Women of Canada was placed in the hands of our beloved Queen, and the royal consent was given, with most kindly words of appreciation, that Canada's women should have their memorial, too. "But," added Her Majesty, "I desire that every such memorial should take the form of ministering in one way or another to the sick and suffering."

And thus was the keynote struck, which vibrated as a chord of the tenderest music, and, finding its echo throughout the length and breadth of our land, first touched the sympathetic hearts of Canada's loyal women, and then, through them, reached the ears of husbands, fathers, sons and brothers, until, after much patient work, some misunderstandings and disappointments, but far more encouragements, there sprung into being a living, breathing monument to the memory of Victoria the Good, known and recognized as such throughout our country, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, as the Victorian Order of Nurses.

As long as she lived, Queen Victoria was the Patroness of the Order, and now her present Majesty Queen Alexandra honors it by continuing in the same relationship towards a work with which she, also, is in the fullest accord.

The Governor-Generals of Canada and their wives, each in succession from the founders of the V. O. N., Lord and Lady Aberdeen, have become its patrons, whilst upon its executive board of management stand the names of some of our country's leading men and women, past and present, the Central Training Home of the Order, in Ottawa, being the gift, in perpetuity, of Lady Aberdeen herself. The work is carried on upon wholly undenominational lines, the only claim upon its benefits being the need of the applicant for the same. It is not my purpose to offer accurate statistics of the actual growth and progress of this most beneficent work. I will just mention the names of some of the places where either as cottage hospitals or in district work the large staffs of Victorian Order Nurses are so successfully carrying on their errands of mercy: Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, Kingston, Yarmouth, N. S.; Almonte; Hamilton; St. John, N. B.; Halifax, N. S.; Vancouver, B. C.; Sydney, C. B.; Gravenhurst; Winnipeg; Baddeck, C. B.; Canso, and Truro, N. S.; Yorkton, Sask.; Dauphin, Man.; Harrington, Labrador; Arrowhead; Rock Bay and Fernie, B. C.; Shoal Lake, Man.; Copper Cliff, Ont.; Pictou, N. S.; Indian Head, Sask.; Brantford and Stratford, winding up my list by the mention of our own London, Ontario Branch, established two years ago, during which time no less than 1,714 visits have been paid by its nurse, including 1,336 in the first two years, and no less than 378 in the first three months of this, its third year; total, 1,714. All this, one nurse has achieved single-handed, and the crisis has come to us, as it has come to so many other centers, that a coadjutor must, in justice to the nurse and her work, be provided for her.

At a recent meeting in London, Ontario, the Mayor, some of the city clergy, and several members of the medical profession, were present, other medical men writing regrets for their absence, but all alike testifying to the unspeakable value of the ministrations of a trained Victorian Order visiting nurse in the homes of their patients.

One can write or speak more definitely of work with which one is in personal touch, and that must be the writer's excuse for making more especial mention of the London Branch. "The Farmer's Advocate" is read in many centers where the Victorian Order is carrying on its blessed mission of ministry, and if any of its readers would kindly tell us how, under similar financial strain, they have solved the problem of making

provision for a second nurse, when already it was a matter of difficulty to meet the necessary expenses for one, the London Branch would be very grateful.

For over two years, thanks to the generous initiatory grants from Ottawa, the parent centre of the V. O. N. work, London managed to make both ends meet—just that, and no more—but now that we must extend our borders or limit our usefulness, we recognize the necessity for still more definite efforts.

Thanks to the kind response given to the first plea made by the London V. O. N. to be placed upon the list of the city benefactions, \$200 have this year been granted to us, thus placing our branch upon the footing of so many other centers which have had the recognition and a share of the practical support of their civic authorities. This is one of our encouragements, but not the only one. We are hoping that the ministers of our several churches will consent, as some have kindly done already, to plead our cause on Victoria Day, for what day could be more fitting, and this year it falls upon a Sunday? We are also asking our fraternal societies, in loyal memory of the Diamond Jubilee of Victoria the Good, to gather for our treasury a few coins from their members; but most of all, and beyond all, we rely with greatest confidence upon the blessing promised by the Giver of All upon every effort made by the humblest of His servants, to minister in His name to the sick and suffering amongst whom our lot may be cast.

H. A. B.

The Quiet Hour.

"THESE . . . HAVE WASHED THEIR ROBES."

(Rev. vii.: 14).

"In Repentance, too, is man purified. It is the grand Christian act." Though these words of Carlyle's express a great truth, one of our readers has drawn my attention to the fact that I have seldom written an article on the subject of Repentance. Surely it is not because I underrate this "grand Christian act." I hope it is rather because I take it for granted that Repentance is already laid as a foundation in the lives of all who take the trouble to read the Quiet Hour. In the Epistle to the Hebrews we are exhorted to "leave" the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, and "go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." I suppose I have almost unconsciously taken it for granted that you—my dear friends to whom I speak each week—are trying to build a holy life on these necessary "principles." I don't mean that because you have repented of the sins of the days when you made no attempt to follow Christ, that now you have done with repentance for the rest of your life. Far from it. I only mean that because you are earnestly trying to be a faithful disciple, you cannot help repenting your many failures. Repentance must be a necessary part of a Christian's daily life as long as he finds himself so far beneath his ideal as he must be in this life. Though St. John says that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin, he is very quick to warn us that we are not, therefore, faultless, for he immediately adds: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." We must begin our Christian life with Repentance, and then the daily sorrow for having missed our mark will follow as long as we are aiming at perfection and find ourselves still very far from perfect. If we are to take our place in the great multitude which no man can number and stand before the Throne, clothed in white, it is very certain that we must, like the others, have "washed" robes; for only Christ has ever succeeded in keeping a robe spotlessly white all through life. God is ready to do His part, and to do it