

## THE ENGLISH SPARROW.

Alas for the poor Sparrow, whose services by some are lightly thought of, and who is discarded as a nuisance. But such is the way of the world generally. A good and faithful servant, after years of faithful and honest endeavors to perform the duties assigned to him, is not unfrequently shown the cold shoulder, and sometimes kicked into the bargain. So it is precisely with the Sparrow. After he has cleared the orchards of caterpillars and our ornamental trees of these and other injurious insects, he is shown the cold shoulder. The clamor is now for his extermination; but like the rat, who is also useful in his way, both being associates of man, who have followed him from Asia in all his migrations, neither now are quite so easily got rid of, having once obtained a foot-hold.

Arguments have been adduced of rather a hypothetical character, and theories advanced that the decrease of insects is due either to insects or fungoid parasites, preying upon them. This may all sound very plausible in theory, but more enlightened investigation is required to make reasoners believe.

One fact is certainly patent, that with the introduction of the Sparrow, bugs of almost all kinds injurious to trees, have gradually disappeared. Our native insectivorous birds not being adequate to the emergency, hence the importation of the Sparrow was necessary.

In some places in Europe birds were slaughtered indiscriminately, and the result was a pest of caterpillars was allowed undisturbed sway, and the birds had to be brought back again.

If the Sparrow is annihilated, a new era of bugs will be inaugurated, perhaps worse than what we have experienced, then we will have a confirmation of his former usefulness.

His musical talents have not as yet been developed, but his song, although

short, is often repeated, giving quantity for quality. Neither is he gaudily attired, his forte is use and not ornament.

The Coney (rabbit), a native of Africa, at one time over-ran Spain, committed great devastation, just such as is done in the Australian Colonies at present. Some Savan advised the introduction of another African animal, the Ferret, the natural enemy of the Coney. The country was soon cleared of the destructive nuisance, but when the Coney was destroyed and the Ferret had no more to live on, he fell back on the hen-roosts for a living; but the last evil was of minor destruction than the first, and more easily kept in control.

So it is with the Sparrow, his natural food is almost exhausted; he must live; he will naturally fall back upon grain, and is but poorly remunerated for his services.

Evils apparently exist in the moral as well as in the natural world, and of such choose the least; it is better to submit to a minor evil, provided it prevents a greater. The Sparrow is, of course, a grain eater when he cannot get bugs to eat, but his good services amply repay all the depredation he does; besides, if too numerous, the Sparrow is more easily controlled than the bug pest, which has as yet defeated human ingenuity, especially the tent caterpillar, span-worm, codlin moth, and fall web-worm.

The introduction of the Sparrow as a vermin destroyer, is due to James Goldie, Esq. He at the time residing at Elizabethtown, New Jersey. Some parties interviewed him, representing the ravages done by the span-worm to the trees in the avenues, parks and squares of New York, and asked for a probable remedy; the reply was given to introduce the European Sparrow, advice which was acted upon; and as the Sparrow began to increase, a corresponding decrease took place in the