

We all know that the common cut-worm causes great loss every year in spite of the fact that almost all our ground-feeding birds eat great numbers of them and that the birds that feed among the trees and on the wing destroy very many of the moths which produce them, and so we can easily imagine what the result would be to the crops if these creatures were allowed to increase unmolested by their natural enemies; so prolific are they, that I believe the increase of one season would provide a sufficient number to clear off all the crops we cultivate.

A constant war is being carried on between the insect world and the vegetable kingdom. The laws of nature would keep the balance about evenly adjusted. But man requires that it should be inclined in favor of the plants he cultivates for his own use. To obtain this end it is necessary that we should carefully protect and encourage all the forces that will work on our side against our insect enemies, and while they are not the only ones, yet the birds are the most important allies we can have in the struggle. We cannot very well increase their number or efficiency by any artificial means, but we can protect them from such of their natural enemies as occur in our own neighborhood, and we can encourage them to remain and breed about our farms and gardens. If this was done all over the country generally we should find ourselves amply repaid for the small amount of trouble expended, by the protection they would give our plant life against its destructive enemies.