

that live about the shores of the lakes and rivers that these fish frequent. Even the larvæ of the troublesome mosquito serve in this way a useful purpose. Both domesticated and wild fowl feed to a great extent upon insects, the latter especially during the nesting season. So without taking time to go more into details we see that many insects may be friends in this important matter of providing food for us.

A third manner in which insects may act as our friends is as scavengers. If all the dead animals and plants, including trees, of course, were to lie undestroyed on the surface of the earth, they would soon make an intolerable condition of affairs. But in the summer no sooner does an animal or plant die than there gather to it various insects that quickly hasten the process of decay. Some of the insects that feed on dead animals are carrion beetles, rove beetles, blow-flies and flesh-flies. Any one who has watched how quickly a dead horse or smaller animal becomes a seething mass of insect life will readily understand why it has been said that a blow-fly can destroy a dead ox as quickly as a lion.

In the case of trees we have all seen beautiful pines that have been cut down or fallen and allowed to lie for a year or two in the forest, and then, when they are examined, are found to be perforated in numerous places by borers. These borers are the larvæ of certain kinds of beetles, chiefly long-horned beetles. We feel disappointed at the injury to the tree, but in nature the insects while feeding themselves on the wood are at the same time serving a useful purpose, because these holes allow the more rapid and deep entrance of diseases and so hasten greatly the rate of disintegration of the tree. We see, therefore, that insects help us greatly by removing dead animals and plants, and thereby giving back to the earth the substances of which they are composed and at the same time making room for other animals and plants to take their place.

The fourth way in which insects serve as friends is by many useful kinds helping to control injurious kinds. One class of insect that helps in this way is known as parasites, and another as predaceous insects. The latter merely capture their victims and feed on them as a lion would capture and devour a smaller animal, but the former kind pass all their larval stage either in or