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The Utility of Birds as Insect Destroyers.

Mr. Ersson: The disturbance of the proper balance between the feathered and insect tribes is fraught with incalculable mischief, affecting the food, the health and the life of man. The weakening of a single link in the chain of being is usually productive of great loss. The reproductive power in nature is a most wonderful theme, and, as a rule, the lower and more worthless a class, the more prolific. Of all creatures, birds seem the most liable to suffer injury, and sometimes extermination, for the most unreasonable of charges. A most reasonable extract was printed in the *Daily Oregonian* of July 14th, from a writer in the *N. Y. Times*, which we hope to see in the *FARMER* also, that it seems almost impossible that our intelligent farmers can read without being convinced of the error—yes, crime—of thus wantonly destroying the birds as many of them are. Facts have come under my own observation that caused no little surprise that some of our first-class farmers are so very ignorant of the habits of the most common species of our birds, regarding the destruction of pestiferous insects. Stopping at the house of a practical farmer, some two years ago, not far from Portland, I found one of the boys engaged in killing the different kinds of wood-peckers that came into the large orchard that surrounded the house. I asked the lad why he allowed such wanton destruction of his best friends. His reply was a mixture of surprise at my seeming ignorance, and a characteristic superstition regarding the poor creatures, ever digging for a living, as he said, "Why don't you, you know that if we didn't keep them away there wouldn't be a live tree on the ranch in three years? They suck the sap right out of the tree." Misguided man! The gay-plumaged and hungry birds were seeking and devouring the real destroyers, as he soon found out, by my taking several of the birds just shot and opening their "crop" or "crop" showed him, not "sap" nor "buds," but *grubs*, some of them nearly an inch in length; a sort of beetles that were hibernating under the bark ready to deposit their eggs, where the young could bore into the tree as soon as hatched. I further took a knife, and cutting away the bark where we saw one of them "jacking," and exposed to his gaze a grub, the larva of a species of *Dipraster*; and then showed him that the chisel-shaped bill, propelled by powerful muscles, acting on a short neck, and his long tapering needle-like tongue were not fitted for "sucking sap," but for extracting the pest that instinct tells him is just where to find it. In short, I convinced the man, and he issued orders to "cease jacking." I have known farmers in this country, that, during the cherry season, would murder robins, orioles, cedar birds, etc., by the hundreds; and why? Because they are apt to charge and collect toll for their labor, in keeping in check the myriads of insects that would otherwise destroy ten times as much. The farmers of foreign countries, who have been thus indiscreet in destroying their friends, and who now hire children to destroy the cut-worm by hand, would be glad to discharge their indebtedness with the same pay claimed by the birds for far better and thorough work.

The State Agricultural Society of Oregon did a wise thing when they withdrew the premium of "best collection of native birds;" but they stopped too quick; when they changed it to "the greatest number of species injurious to the farmer," for it would be proven that there is not a bird in Oregon that does not do more good than injury to the agricultural interests of the State. It would have been better to have offered this premium for a collection of the insects—the true pests—injurious to the farmer; and, also, for devising methods in helping the poor birds exterminate them; and, also, to have adopted resolutions condemning the wholesale slaughter of "the innocents."

Rev. Henry Ward Beecher says: "The man that would shoot a robin, except in the fall, and then shoot and conscientiously for food, has in him the blood of a cannibal; and would, if born in Otaheite have eaten ministers, and digested them too."

Longfellow, in his legend of "The Birds of Killingworth," says:

"You slay them all! and wherefore? for the gain
Of a scant handful, more or less of wheat
Of rye, or barley, or some other grain
Scattered up at random by industrious feet,
Scouring for worm or weevil, after rain!
Or a few cherries, that are not so sweet
As the songs these uninvited guests
Sing at their feasts with comfortable breasts."

Mark the result:

"In orchards fed
Myriads of caterpillars, and around
The cultivated fields and garden beds

Hosts of devouring insects crawled, and found
No foe to check their march till they had
Made
The land a desert, without tree or shade."

"The town, like Herod, was devastated by
worms, because like him they had slaughtered
the innocents."

The Nimrods of this State are exceedingly
anxious about the rapid extermination of the
"game birds," that afford them the pleasure
of afterwards killing—birds that are truly
gratifying, and that will eat grain as quick
as insects; and therefore a law is passed pro-
tecting them. But the poor robin and his al-
lies, that keep in check the insect world, no
voice is raised in their behalf, and from every
side comes shot after shot until he is com-
pelled to let the beetle and cut-worm have
full sway or take them "on the fly."

O. B. J.
EAST PORTLAND, July 24, 1874.

Letter from Transportation Student, No. VIII.

Yaqina Railroad—A railroad from Umpqua Valley
to the head of navigation on the Umpqua River.

SALEM, July 24, 1874.

Mr. Editor: The energy which the citizens
of Benton county have shown in trying to
build a railroad from Corvallis to Yaqina is
praiseworthy. This railroad would, un-
doubtedly, have a considerable passenger
traffic. Whether it will have a great deal to
do in carrying away the wheat that is being
shipped from Oregon to the United Kingdom
will depend very much on whether the bar
at the mouth of the Yaqina can be so im-
proved as to allow large ships to come in
and pass out with safety. As the amount
which is being sent by way of San Francisco
abroad is becoming less every year, and we
hope that it will not be long until it will cease
altogether.

But it seems strange to me that the people
of Douglas county and Southern Oregon have
not united their energies in a similar man-
ner, in an effort to build a short narrow-gauge
railroad from some point on present railroad
in Umpqua county across to the head of steam-
boat navigation on Umpqua river, thence to con-
nect with small steamers for the mouth of the
stream, and there to connect with sea-going
vessels for San Francisco and other ports.
The distance directly across from the nearest
point on the railroad to a navigable point on
the Umpqua, I understand is only twenty-six
miles, and grading will not be over difficult.
The freighting on this railroad, short as it is,
and connecting boats, could be done at a
profit at three dollars per ton, which would be
a considerable saving to the farmers of that
section, and in fact a great advantage to
all Oregon. This route would be a favorite
one in traveling to and from San Francisco,
for it would shorten the ocean travel consid-
erably and save much time. It would be the
best mail route, as no ice or floods could in-
terfere with the carrying of the mails at any
time.

TRANSPORTATION STUDENT.

Around the Circle.

The representatives of the German holders
of our railroad bonds were in Portland the
other day, and on the eve of the departure
of the steamer, it was determined to give them
a view of the Willamette valley in one day.
They were accompanied by Mr. Gaston, and
a private team was placed on board the west
side train for St. Joe. A telegram from be-
low ordered another team to be sent over from
Beun & Davidson's stable to meet the party at
General Nesmith's. These arrangements
were duly carried out. The party proceeded
to St. Joe by rail, there took to their carriage
and made a rapid drive to Mr. Nesmith's
where they were met by the Salem men and
were hospitably entertained, and changing
teams they were whirled forward to Corvallis,
where another relay was procured and the
journey finished to Junction. A special
train met them at that place and they returned
to Portland, having completed for the first
time in history, the remarkable feat of swing-
ing round the circle of the Willamette valley
in one day. We learn that our German vis-
itors were really delighted with our country,
as well they might be. The day for the jour-
ney—Friday—was a peculiarly fine one,
and the country through which they passed
was rich and varied. The meadows were
sweet with new mown hay and golden har-
vocks stood waiting for the reaper in all the
counties of the Willamette, for they traversed
Multnomah, Washington, Yamhill, Polk,
Benton, Lane, Linn, Marion and Clackamas,
a galaxy of beauties that might satisfy the
expectations of any visitor whose home is
this side of Paradise.

The thermometer at Weatherford & Co.'s
stood July 28th, at 7 A.M., 62°; 12 M., 68°; 6 P.
M., 68°.

RECREATION.

(Synopsis of Rev. P. S. Knight's Sunday evening
Lecture.)

"If that is of a merry heart hath a continual
feast."—Prov., 17:22.

"Rejoice in the Lord always."—Phil., 4:4.

"I have known many that did not get a joy
in which they had no part."—Anon.

"There is no state in which our bounteous
God
Hath not placed joy, if men will seek it out."—Anon.

"Sweet recreation berrad, what doth ensue,
But moody and dull melancholy?"—Shakes.

—Shakes.

We are now in the midst of what, by com-
mon consent, has come to be regarded as the
vacation season. It is a time for the unstring-
ing of bows, for the relaxation of muscle and
mind from the strain of business and study.
These sultry summer days are the occasion
more properly than the cause of men's long-
ings for a respite from the varied forms of
toil. If hot sidewalks and dusty streets and
days of parching heat did not break up the
monotony of our busy life once in a twelve-
month, some other class of influences prob-
ably would do it. In these days of latitude,
it is not so much rest that we desire, and that
we need, as it is change—variation. We have
been kept on this daily and weekly round of
work so long that we want something differ-
ent, almost anything will do, only give us for
a little time a change. Let our lives run for
a little time in new channels. It is not our
incidental or accidental circumstances, but
our very nature, God-given and many sided,
that makes the recreations of our resting
season both welcome and necessary.

Many blunders are made in regard to this
question of recreation as in regard to every
other. It is one of the gravest blunders to
suppose that recreation can be either satisfac-
tory or beneficial to a person who never
seeks anything else. To spend all one's time
seeking amusement is to violate the very law
in human nature which makes amusement
necessary—the law which requires the soul to
be exercised on every side. To rest well,
a man must be tired. To eat well, he must
be hungry. To be either tired or hungry in
any true sense, man must work. The practical
side of his nature must be exercised first.
Then when weariness comes to that side, let
it be relaxed, and let amusement help the
other. Beware of a one-sided life. It is too
much of one thing that makes narrowness.
Go into a close room and look out through
the small window at the bright sunlight and
it will blind you. But go out and stand
where that same light may shed its floods of
glory all around you, and your vision will
not be dimmed but strengthened. Let the
windows be thrown open on every side that
the nature within us, as well as the plants in
our flower-pots, be not lopsided, but strong
to grow and branch out and bloom and bear
fruit on every side. If "all work and no
play makes Jack a dull boy," what may we
expect as the result of all play and no work?

It is also a great mistake to suppose that
fun-seekers and fun-makers are the happiest
people in the world. Very often the reverse
is true. To make a profession of fun-seeking
or fun-making is one of the surest roads to
melancholy. Few cooks will eat their own
broth. Few clowns enjoy their own jokes.
A little fun is good, but enough is enough,
and more than enough surfeits and begets its
opposite.

Another mistake is to suppose that elaborate
preparations and persistent seeking will
bring to us the fullest enjoyment of that
mirthfulness which is the spice of life. Fun
does not like to be chased. She is a whimsi-
cal deity that runs off or hides away in shades
when men go out fully equipped to chase her.
But she comes to them unbidden in all her
charms, at unexpected times and places, add-
ing her cheer to every feast, and breaking up
the dull monotony of life and lifting many of
its shadows by cheerful words that are
better than sunshine.

It is another mistake to suppose that a merry
heart depends on outward circumstances. We
are to seek to have created with our-
selves the source of joy. "He that is of a
merry heart hath a continual feast."—The
source is within, and it is unfeeling.

It is a mistake to suppose that innocent
mirth is inconsistent with dignity, wisdom
or religion. "As the crackling of thorns un-
der a pot, so is the laughter of fools."—but a
wise man's laughter may have health and
meaning and virtue in it. When true joy-
fulness finds a larger place in our hearts and
homes it will be better for us and every good
cause. Villains and hypocrites seldom laugh
save in a mimicking way. Men of honest im-
pulse and clear conscience bubble over with
genuine humor.

Finally, my friends, the true religion is in

itself a prime source of joy. "With joy
shall ye draw water out of the wells of salva-
tion." Our vacation rambles in forests and
mountains, our visits to watering places, our
tentings on hillside and sea-beach, we call
recreation, because these varied new experi-
ences are supposed to renew our energies for
the work of life. Let us remember that the
true religion is a recreation which works
in us day by day, fitting us as the years roll
for life, death, immortality.

THE COMMANDER OF THE LAKE DISTRICT,
General Wheaton went below on the
morning train and will remain at Portland
and Vancouver until early in August when
he will go south to meet General Hardis at
Jacksonville on matters connected with Mod-
ocoe war claims. His headquarters are at
Fort Klamath where he has command of the
District of the Lakes, including Forts War-
ner and Harney. He received rapid promo-
tion during the war and was Brigadier Gen-
eral of Volunteers. While his brevet rank is
Brigadier General his position on the
army roll is Lieut. Colonel of the 21st In-
fantry, and as he stands at the head of the
list the first change—which cannot be long
deferred and may come any moment—will
make him Colonel of a regiment, a distin-
guished position not often reached by a man of
his years, for Wheaton shows no scar from
war or Time but is in the vigor of life's fullest
prime and very deservedly popular and
respected.

PRODUCE HOUSE BUSINESS.—When in Port-
land we have always found the gentlemen of
the P. of H. Produce House up to their eyes
in business, and we learn their operations
have been both extensive and successful. As
their charges are very reasonable they have
an increasing custom, and in the dullness of
summer they seem to have all they can do.
The first three days of last week they trans-
acted business to the extent of \$18,000—\$2,000
per day—which would amount to two mil-
lions a year if kept up. We see no reason
why their transactions should not reach that
sum annually.

THE PATRONS HELPER.—Is the title of a
new Grange paper published at Des Moines
Iowa by N. W. Garrison, Secretary of the
State Grange of Iowa. Mr. Garrison was
here last Fall organizing Granges in our State.
He seems to be entirely devoted to the good
of the Order and to be versed in all its re-
quirements. Many of its members in Ore-
gon may desire to take the *Helper* as a means
of informing themselves more fully on all
points of interest.

Bradley Marsh & Co., of Portland occupy
a column in our issue, and make an an-
nouncement of great bargains they have se-
cured at auction and are prepared to give
their customers the benefit of at their Port-
land store. They have already secured an
immense trade and are bidding for the
country business by offering great bargains.

BAO FACTORY.—Messrs. L. Chesborough
& Co., are running their establishment night
and day. They have eleven bands on day
work and five on night work, with five saw-
ing machines running constantly. 80,000
grain sacks have been turned out so far this
season. They expect to manufacture about
200,000 between now and the first of Novem-
ber next.

Mr. A. J. Wheeler's semi-annual report
shows that there were sent and received at
this telegraph office for the six months end-
ing March 31st, 3,883 dispatches.

The house of Mr. Drury Stayton, of the vil-
lage of Stayton, on the Santiam river, in this
county, was totally destroyed by fire on Sat-
urday last.

A joint stock company has been formed in
the village of Stayton and vicinity, for the
purpose of building a flouring mill at that
place.

ABORIGINAL CELEBRATION.—We again
celebrate the anniversary of American independ-
ence in an appropriate manner by the
Indians upon the Grand Ronde
Reservation. At an early hour in the morn-
ing the day was ushered in by the discharge
of musketry, after which a procession was
formed, headed by the American flag, follow-
ed by all the Indians on the reservation. The
procession entered the church, where an ap-
propriate address was delivered by Rev.
Father Croquet. When the address was con-
cluded the Indians marched to a grove, where
tables were provided and a regular barbeque
was enjoyed. In the evening the observance
of the day concluded with a ball, in which
all the Indians on the reservation partici-
pated.—*Oregonian*.

From present indications the grain crop in
the locality of Summerville, Union county,
will fall short of last year's crop at least one-
half. The hay crop is almost an entire fail-
ure, and large fields of grain are being cut
for hay.

To Mount Jefferson, and Back.

SUBMITTY, July 27, 1874.

About two weeks ago, Mr. Editor, I took
my "summer vacation," which you know
with us farmers must come either before or
after harvest, and in company with Mr.
Hoover, a stranger who proposes to settle in
our State and is anxious to see our mount-
ains as well as our valleys, attempted a jour-
ney to Mount Jefferson up the North Fork of
the Santiam, the route of the new Cascade
mountain road.

Our object was to fish and prospect the
country somewhat as we went along and
enjoy ourselves in the mountains. Our
horses carried our blankets and supplies of
food, and took us the first day past Smith's
ferry and up the North Fork as far as
Pearce's place, twenty-five miles from home,
and still not in the mountains, but in a coun-
try of vine maple bottoms and fast hills that
is capable of being in fine made valuable for
cattle and sheep and of it for cultivation.
I should say that one third of the available
lands between Sublimity and the mount-
ains remains open to settlement, and that
includes some excellent hay lands. Mr.
Pearce says several very excellent claims
yet to be made near him. The time is coming
when all such lands will be eagerly sought
after. There is only one place above Pearce's,
occupied by a man named Smith, who does
not live near the road, so we did not see him.
The second day's journey took us twenty-
eight miles further up the waters of the North
Fork. We found some good land along the
route and a world of good timber, fir and
cedar, which can easily be brought down to
Salem for use, as there is not any serious ob-
struction to driving logs down the Santiam
and a little clearing will make the Mill creek
ditch navigable for them, so that they can be
brought here and sawed up. This business
can in due time be made profitable to log-
gers, to the owners of the ditch and to your
saw mills. At last we made observations
with the idea in our minds and came to that
disinterested conclusion.

Just before entering the mountains, and in
a delightful spot, to which a summer resort
would be both convenient and pleasant, we
found a great vein of soda and magnesia,
such as indicate the existence of the mineral
springs located elsewhere along the foot hills
of the Cascades, and I am confident that a
little search there will show the existence
of a first class spring of mineral water in that
favorable location. This would be another
advantage in favor of the new mountain
road.

It would do you townspeople a world of
good to outfit yourselves in a primitive way
and go up the North Fork as we did, depend-
ing on hook and line and your success as fish-
men for subsistence. I am an old fisherman
and love the sport almost as well as I love
Walton did, and I never saw better fishing
ground than in these mountains. We reached
entirely ignorant of trout's designs and rose
to the hook in the most unskillful manner.
And such trout! Great shining fellows that
weighed three and four pounds were every
day comers, but we captured one glorious
and one that we estimated at six pounds at
least. The largest speckled trout I ever
hooked. Fish were abundant and we feasted
on them with no lack of appetite or of food
to feed it on. For dessert we had some
wild raspberries and blackberries as we
went to eat, and the only drawback to our
pleasure was the presence of the myriad flies
that infest the mountains in July, but we
were happy in spite of their torment.

We camped the second night not far from
the base of Mount Jefferson, on a stream
where the trout was, if possible, more
abundant than ever. The next morning we
climbed a prominent spur that overlooked
the waters of Brightwood Fork, and from
there got a glorious view of the grand old
mountain, with its cloud-like masses of
everlasting snows, enduring there in frozen
majesty while we mortals sweat through
the heats of summer in the valleys below.
My companion for the first time stood face
to face with Nature in her mood of majesty,
and from the deep solitude of the mountain
wilderness, standing on a light that would
be grand elsewhere, looking up to that
supernal vision of eternal winter, rising above
the clouds, pinnacled above the storms, soli-
tary, save as in far distance others
of the snow-crowned sisterhood lifted
up their wintry brows to Heaven. And to
make the scene more harmonious and im-
perishable for memory, our view included
also a magnificent waterfall on the
Brightwood, pouring over a mountain
precipice a mile and a half away, with a vol-
ume of dashes, plunging torrent that sent
up its cloud of mist to worship at the foot
of the mountain, while the cadence of falling
waters, even at that distance, brought to our
ears the matin song the unhidden solitude
of Nature (I don't know if you know) who
will last in memory forever, and roose in the
wailing soul an unnumbered poem whose
rhythmic power shall remain, like the once
heard melody of unseen harpers, never for-
gotten and forever unequalled. With such
impressions on our minds we bid the heart
of the mountains adieu and turned our faces
homeward.

G. W. H.

NEW ENTERPRISE.—Mr. A. Assold of In-
dependence has started a semi-weekly pass-
enger and freight line between that place and
this city. His hack will leave Independence
on Tuesday morning at 5 o'clock and Friday
mornings at 7 o'clock. Returning will leave
the Cheenika hotel at four P. M., on same
days. Mr. A. will run by the way of Eola,
Passage six times and parcels and freight ac-
cording to the weight and bulk of the pack-
ages.

The sixth brick kiln of the season
at Sublimity is nearly completed.