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THE BIRDS AND THE FORESTS.

In the economy of nature the feathered branch of the animal kingdom and the major portion of the vegetable world are ever one and inseparable; one was created for the other; the life and well being of each depend upon the ability of its mate to protect it from insidious foes, tireless in their efforts to destroy first one and then the other.

While we are aware that upon the arid plains a few birds exist and that some are born in the frozen, treeless, Arctic wastes and follow the billows of the sea in search of food, apparently as free from attachment to forests as are the fish upon which they daily feed, yet upon general principles, and in general terms, forests are as necessary to the well being of birds, as are the birds indispensable for forest preservation.

I propound a mathematical proposition which is capable of conclusive demonstration. Given an old field, a worm fence and a bevy of birds; the invariable result will be a hedge row of trees and shrubs, bearing fruits and nuts, edible to the winged tribes of the locality.

The birds, creators of the forest, become also its protectors, and as a sequence their existence is maintained by the fruits of their own labors.

The Birth of a Forest.

Nature and man have different methods of forest planting. Nature is deliberate, man always in haste. Nature begins with the seed, man demands a tree already grown, to start with, the larger the tree the better. Nature designs variety, all sorts of trees mingled together, some of economic worth, many being valueless for commercial uses.

We view a forest: A hurricane sweeps through the wood leveling the timber by a single blast: miles of territory are cleared of all forest growths.

Time passes: The dead trunks feed the fire which completes this work of destruction.

Nature abhors a barren waste and in time begins the work of restoration. Birds fly across the treeless plain, bearing food for themselves and their young and deposit here and there such seeds as compose their food. Each stump serves as a perch for one after another of these songsters; every rock and crag make

favorite stopping places about which numerous seeds are sown.

Then squirrels come with their store of nuts for winter use, selecting choice spots for store-houses which become well filled as these graceful creatures ply often from yonder nut trees to their hiding places.

The wind blows briskly, and thickly fly the downy thistle, the cottony seeds of the willow and populus families; whirling with rapidity come the heavier winged seeds of liriodendron, ashes and maples, which alighting here and there, bury their heads neath the soft mud of the water soaked soil; further on the lighter seeds of elm are wafted, strewing the ground as with snow.

Seeds of herbaceous plants are scattered hither and thither as the winds and birds gather them up from the verdant spots, to be strewn where there are none. Gently the falling leaves from the adjoining forests, spread a light cover hiding the scattered seeds and affording protection from the elements. Soon the snowflakes fly thick and fast; a mantle covers the land. As the surface is melted by the sun and frozen when night comes on, the snow crust forms an ideal play ground for the wind, which shattering the seeds from cones of hemlock, pine and spruce, drives them fiercely over the snow until they are caught by some obstacle.

Spring comes, with rains; the rushing waters overflow their banks, picking up the twigs with clinging seeds, bear them further down the stream, and spreading over the treeless wastes, deposit them to sink into the yielding soil. With the warm, life giving sunshine of spring the seeds thrust downward their rootlets while upward reaches a bud, when two tiny leaves appear as harbingers of spring.

And thus a forest is born. Not in a day, or a year, for nature takes her own time and methods to accomplish her objects, yet in due time a natural forest covers the spot which accident or design had made barren. Here are beech, ash and maple, there are a clump of elms, a walnut and hickory alternating with blackberry briars and elder, hemlock with pine; trees of mammoth proportions and shrubs of low degree; ginseng, violet and twining grape strive for space to spread their roots and display their peculiar attractions.

Yonder chestnut will afford abundant nuts for boys and squirrels; these hackberries, cherries, grapes and elderberries will feed the birds which planted them; that oak may become a gnarled monarch among whose branches birds will twitter their songs of love, build their nests in safety and feed upon its countless acorns, which, as if to acknowledge its dependence upon the birds and small animals, it supplies in such abundance.

Certain birds plant nuts and acorns with systematic regularity, burying

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