

were rigidly enforced in the contaminated area. The war was on, but the victory was far from won.

The situation is serious. "The terrible thing about the Mediterranean fly," Cyrus French Wicker declares in the September *Current History*, "is that from no place where it has yet become strongly established has it ever been exterminated or expelled. . . . This is no unimportant or insignificant foe! This terrible and unconquerable enemy can cause our country more damage than any war in history."

But the danger of the fruit fly is only one of the numerous pests of the insect world that man is attempting to combat. The gypsy moth and the brown-tailed moth in the New England States keep thousands of men busy every spring and fall combating their advances into our forests. In the cotton belt of the South the boll weevil is the dreaded enemy. This weevil that came across the border from Mexico destroys approximately two hundred million dollars' worth of our cotton every year! In the Central States the corn beetle is fought by the farmer. In some localities this enemy ruins 75 per cent. of the corn crop. And while the farmer is fighting this pest, his neighbouring fruit grower in California is spending 45,000,000 dollars annually to protect his groves from scale insects and other pests. Add to these the Japanese beetle, the peach borer, the Mexican bean beetle, and the alfalfa weevil, and you begin to see the array of enemies in their millionfold strength that man must constantly fight.

With all our scientific research and combative measures, we are losing against the onslaught. As one writer, describing the Mediterranean fruit fly, has ably written in the *Orlando Evening Reporter-Star*, "It is the deadlier war between species and species, between world-bestridding man and one of the countless kinds of insects that are trying, blindly and unknowingly but none the less desperately, to eat him literally off the planet. Tick and warble fly threaten his meat, chinch bug and corn beetle threaten his bread, and now comes this latest addition to the long list we already have to fight in America, to snatch the ripe fruit away from his hand."

With an ever-increasing population to consume fruits and vegetables man must find a way to combat the tiny enemies or starve to death. "Our best entomologists agree that we cannot hope to drive out these insidious destroyers of our crops and gardens," declares Henry W. Hough; "the most we can do is to check them—perhaps for but a little while."

"Should we," Professor Wicker concludes pessimistically, "of all nations, fail now in our endeavour, our world may, as some scientists affirm, be turned over within the course of a few centuries to the insects, and man will have lived in vain."—*Signs of the Times*.—Insect-eating birds are our main ally.