

and study books on arboriculture, they need never employ the peripatetic tree butcher. It would be pleasant pastime for them to walk among their trees in hours of comparative leisure, and give them what training and tutoring they need. The money thrown away on tree-slaughtering tramps would, in course of time, buy a collection of books on orchard and forest-tree management. Orchards and shrubberies would become scenes of delight and sources of profit, instead of being eyesores and encumbrances, as they too often are.

As for shade-trees in villages, towns, and cities, they grow, if at all, under difficulties. The minority plant them, and the majority destroy them. Mischievous urchins break their backs while they are mere saplings. The ubiquitous cow cures the itch between her horns by rubbing them until they are uprooted. When they get large, if they succeed in so doing, the municipal councillor or alderman who is Chairman of the Committee on Streets and Sidewalks, launches the tree-butcher at them. If a common-sense man, who knows a little about tree-life, holds the office of chairman of said committee for a few years, there is, by-and-bye, a change. Some nincompoop succeeds him; forthwith there is a crusade against the trees; and in the course of a few hours a whole town is despoiled of its leafy beauty.

The mutilation of trees, and their unnecessary destruction, has led to the organization, in various parts of the United States, of improvement associations, to which the municipal authorities commit the superintendence and charge of this matter. Thus those who have made the subject their study, and take an intelligent interest in it, give the ripe fruits of their knowledge and experience to the public. It is an eminently wise arrangement. That a turn in the wheel of municipal government should put the power of tree mutilation and destruction into the hands of a barbaric ignoramus, is a contingency against the occurrence of which there ought to be an effectual safeguard. But the evil will never be thoroughly corrected until the people at large are schooled into at least the primary principles of arboriculture. Sometime in the distant future, possibly, this will be considered as important a branch of general education as the study of abstract mathematics.

AGRICULTURAL AND ARTS ASSOCIATION.

At a recent meeting of the Council of the above-named body, Mr. Chas. Drury, of Crown Hill, was elected President, and Mr. McKinnon Vice-President, for the ensuing year. Mr. Graham was re-appointed Treasurer. The following gentlemen were declared elected as members of the Council:—Division No. 1, P. McKinnon, South Finch; No. 2, Ira Morgan, Metcalfe; No. 3, Joshua Leffe, Gananoque; No. 4, J. B. Aylesworth, Newburgh. A resolution was passed thanking Hon. S. C. Wood for the hearty manner in which he had co-operated with the Board, and obtained the passage in the Legislature of the amendments to the Agriculture and Arts Act. The scheme of Prof. Mills in regard to agricultural education and competitive examinations was briefly considered, and laid over to a future meeting. Monday, 18th September, was fixed as the

date of next Provincial Exhibition, which was decided to be held at Kingston—a decision which would have been much more graceful and welcome had it been arrived at months ago. We are glad that in this particular wise counsels have prevailed, though tardily. Mr. Albert H. White was appointed General Superintendent of the Exhibition. The next meeting of Council was appointed to be at Kingston, April 12th. It was decided to advertise for printing tenders in both Toronto and Kingston daily papers. A report of the Committee on Finance was presented, recommending that the salary of the Secretary be fixed at \$1,800 for the present year, with a special allowance of \$200 to employ assistance in reference to the Herd Book; that Prof. Smith's account for \$100 be paid; that the Solicitor be instructed to recover the amount still due by the late Secretary; and that the recommendation of the Secretary to obtain expert reports on the live stock at the Exhibitions and print them, be adopted. The report was adopted without discussion. The Council then adjourned.

SKETCHES OF CANADIAN WILD BIRDS.

BY W. L. KELS, LISTOWEL, ONT.

THE PAUPER, OR COW BIRD.

The plumage of the male of this species is deep black, except the neck and breast, which has a brownish hue; that of the female is of a brownish colour. Its length is eight or nine inches. It generally goes in parties of six or eight, and frequents the pasture fields, and the margins of the woods in the older settlements, being seldom found in the newly-settled districts. It is often found where cattle and horses are feeding—sometimes in the shadow or among the feet of these animals. Its object there is probably to procure the flies that are disabled by the whisking tails of the quadrupeds, or to feed on grubs that are found in their excrements. The affectionate care which is exhibited by most birds for their nest and eggs is not evinced by the cow bird. It neither makes a nest, hatches its eggs, nor feeds its young. These obligations it imposes on other species, by depositing its eggs in their nests. The nests generally chosen as the cradle of its progeny are those of the sparrows and warblers, notably the chipping bird and the weaver; but the same bird deposits only one egg in the same nest. This is of a grey colour, spotted with brown. The young paupers do not, like the young cackoos of Europe, try to evict their fellow-nestlings, but their superior size and voracity is a heavy tax on the industry of their foster-parents, and often causes their own young to starve to death. When impelled by the only maternal impulse with which nature has endowed her, the female leaves her companions, and goes in search of a nest of some other bird, her mate usually follows, and while she is seated he perches on some neighbouring branch, and by a peculiar note gives her warning if danger approaches. Should she find a nest the eggs of which have been for some time incubated, which she either knows by instinct, or discovers by breaking one, she does not deposit an egg therein, but goes to seek another where incubation has not yet commenced.

After the harvest, these birds collect in large flocks and make southward, and they are seen no more until the return of summer recalls them again to the budding woods and emerald fields of Canada.

THE BOBOLINK.

This much-admired and beautiful bird arrives in Canada in the early part of June, and in the meadows where it takes up its summer residence, forms one of the chief objects of attraction; for its many-noted jingling song, which it warbles with much animation, and over the performance of which it seems to pride itself, is generally heard "from early dawn till dusk of eve" for about six weeks, or from the time of its arrival until the young are fledged. It often sings standing on the fence, a stump, or a tall stalk of weed or grass, but frequently sings while hovering over the clover tops, or circling round the field; its wings meanwhile keeping time to the mellow music of its notes. The length of this bird is between seven and eight inches; the general colour of the male is black, the back and wings being ornamented with patches of white and yellow; that of the female is dusty brown, with darker mottlings. The male only is gifted with the power of song, and his conduct towards the female seems cruel, as he will pursue her with great ferocity whenever she makes her appearance above the grass; hence her time, until the young are able to fly, is mostly passed in concealment. After this the males suddenly disappear, and the females and their young assemble in large flocks, and feed upon the fields of grain until they take their early departure for more southern latitudes.

The bobolink is not found in the backwoods, nor until the country is pretty well cleared up does it make its appearance in the rural districts. Its nest is made upon the ground, among the grass and clover; the eggs are four to six in number, and of a light blue colour, spotted with brown. It feeds upon insects and various kinds of seeds and grain. In the Southern States it is called the rice bird. It is found there in vast flocks, and commits great havoc in the rice fields.

THE *Sarnia Observer* of the 7th instant says:—

"The current number of the *RURAL CANADIAN*, the new agricultural paper, of which Rev. W. F. Clarke is editor, may be taken as a fair specimen of what that journal aims to be. The selections and original articles are of the practical sort that will commend themselves to Canadian agriculturists, as they are specially adapted to the conditions of agriculture in this country. This is an advantage which few, if any, of our agricultural journals possess, as their theories and advice are based generally upon results achieved under conditions of soil and climate foreign to this part of the continent. Mr. Clarke's experience and practical knowledge enable him to select what is suitable, and criticize from a Canadian standpoint the new theories and processes recommended by contemporary publications. The *RURAL CANADIAN* should have an extended circulation among Canadian farmers."

Mailed free to any address, for one year, on receipt of \$1.

THE honey crop of the United States for the year 1881 is estimated at 207,000,000 pounds; and it was not a good year for honey, either.

MR. H. BRANTON, of Talbotville, has disposed of his farm of 100 acres to G. Farnley of London township. The price paid was \$8,000.

FRESH strawberries and cabbage from Florida were sold in the Bonsecours market, Montreal, a fortnight ago, the strawberries being sold at \$1 per quart.