

THE CANADA JAY.

Jays are a genus of the crow family. They differ from the magpie in their somewhat shorter bill and also shorter and almost even tail. They are the inhabitants of the forests and wooded districts, chiefly in the temperate parts of Europe, Asia, and North America, and feed more steadily on fruits, acorns, beech-nuts, insects, and berries than crows and magpies. They have, however, to some extent, the same omnivorous habits of the family, and rob nests of eggs and young birds in the absence of the old bird.

The American bluejay is smaller than the European bird, with the tail longer in proportion and the head handsomely crested with loose, silky plumes that it can erect or depress at pleasure. The general plumage is of a fine blue color, wings and tail marked by numerous bars, neck encircled by a black, velvety collar edged with blue. The tail is tipped with white and the thighs are of a dusky brown.

The jay, it is said, has no mean idea of his own personal attractions, and perhaps thinks his voice, which is harsh and grating, as charming as his plumage. Like the magpie and jackdaw, he is talkative and ready to imitate sounds. He has been known to so closely imitate the action of a saw that one would suppose a carpenter near by at work. Some of his notes, too, might, by a stranger, be mistaken for the repeated creakings of an ungreased wheelbarrow. All these he accompanies with various nods, jerks, and other gesticulations for which the whole tribe of jays are remarkable. He annoys the sportsman on his approach by such squalling as drives the deer away.

Says Gould, "Of all birds he is the most bitter enemy to the owl. No sooner has he discovered the retreat of one than he summons the whole feathered tribe to his assistance, who surround the bewildered, staring owl and attack him from all sides, raising such a noise as may be heard half a mile off, the owl meanwhile returning every assault with a broad, goggling stare. The war becomes louder and louder, and the owl, at length forced to betake himself to flight, is followed by the whole train of his impudent persecutors until driven beyond their jurisdiction."

"This bird is not only bold and vociferous, but possesses considerable talent for mimicry, and seems to enjoy great satisfaction in mocking and teasing other birds, particularly the sparrow-hawk, imitating his cry whenever he sees him, and squealing out as if caught. This soon brings a number of his tribe around him, who all join in the frolic, darting about the hawk and feigning the cries of a bird sorely wounded; but this ludicrous farce often ends tragically. The hawk, singling out one of the most insolent and provoking, swoops upon him in an unguarded moment and offers him up a sacrifice to his hunger and resentment. In an instant the tune is changed; all their buffoonery vanishes and loud and incessant screams proclaim their disaster."

When taken young the jay is very easily tamed, becomes very familiar, and, like its relatives the magpie and jackdaw, can be taught a variety of words and sounds, particularly those of a harsh and grating character.

The Canada Jay, of which we give you an illustration, inhabits the country from Hudson's Bay to the river St. Lawrence, also in winter the inland parts of the State of Maine and northern parts of Vermont and New York. When the season is very severe, with deep snow, they sometimes advance farther south, but generally return northward as the weather becomes milder.

The people of these parts of the country speak of the bird as feeding on black moss, berries, worms, and even flesh, and when near tents as pilfering everything it can come at. It is so bold as to even come to habitations or tents to eat meat out of the dishes. It watches the hunter while baiting his trap for martins and devours the bait as soon as his back is turned, and so the natives detest the bird.

It breeds early in the spring, builds its nest on pine-trees, and lays up hoards of berries in hollow trees. Mountain-ash berries and other berries left on the leafless branches of the trees are a treat to this with other Northern birds. This bird is eleven or twelve inches long, of a blue and bluish gray color, under parts brownish white, and less marked collar. The whole plumage on the back, as you may observe, is long, loose, and in great abundance, and serves to keep the bird warm.

There are several other varieties of the jay besides those we have already mentioned the Florida Jay, Columbia Jay, etc. Audubon considers the Columbia Jay, taken on the New Orleans River, the most elegant of the whole tribe of jays, the largest, from its tall, handsome crest to the tip of its long tail, more distinctly marked; and richer in color.

Many of the foreign jays, however, are considered exceedingly beautiful. The Chinese Jay is of two kinds, the red-billed and that with a bluish bill, and both are thought elegant birds. The Peruvian Jay is of a greenish cast, which, by insensible shades, assumes a bluish cast in different parts of the body.—*Ex.*

GIVING TO THE LORD.

BY ROSE THORN.

We will suppose a man who is a carpenter, working "by the job," as they say; or a woman who is a dressmaker. The income of either will be according to the work which they "happen" to find to do; therefore, uncertain.

To such I would suggest a plan which I have known tried with success.

regularly in church every Sabbath, settle upon some sum which you think will come within your means and make a trial of it. Ten cents every Sabbath will give five dollars and twenty cents in a year. If you think you can compass that, let the "tenths" accumulate in the "Lord's Box" until you have the whole amount for the year. You will then have a fund from which you can draw your ten cents every Sabbath with great satisfaction. It's like owning a whole bank. It would, no doubt, be more agreeable to draw out and give the whole amount at once than to give such a small sum each Sunday, but it wouldn't do you so much good. You will soon find out whether your ten cent giving is going to take all your "tenth" money or not, and so be able to increase or diminish the weekly allowance.

Just here let me beg of you, don't put all your "tenth" into the contribution box on Sunday. So arrange the weekly gift that a little extra money may accumulate and then be on the watch for opportunities to use it. To give to missions and all other regular church charities is good and right and needful, but there are some needs among us that I believe are not always known or appreciated.



THE CANADIAN JAY.

Provide yourself with a certain box or drawer which shall be dedicated to the Lord exclusively. Decide to begin with how much—what proportion—you will try to give to the Lord.

We will say that you are going to return to the Lord one-tenth of all he gives to you. Every time any money comes in, no matter whether the amount be great or small, count one-tenth and put it into your "Lord's Box," before any of the money is laid in your purse. Putting it in your purse, even for a short stay, makes you want to keep it.

Make this laying it aside a rigid rule and never allow yourself to break it. Consider that money to be the Lord's, and yourself no more at liberty to spend it on yourself than you are at liberty to spend your neighbor's money.

Now, then, if you wish to give something

I know children of parents, to some degree refined and educated, who are growing up without possessing a Bible of their very own. There are children who go in and out of our churches, attend Sabbath-school, who even sometimes have Christian parents, who are without Bibles because their parents find it just all they can possibly do to fit their children out in clothes that shall be decent to wear to church. We don't always know how seldom many of our neighbors have a spare dollar. As long as there is one family Bible the buying of separate ones for individuals is put off for a "convenient season" which never comes. I can count four boys this minute—bright, intelligent, nice boys, too—who have no Bible of their own, and I can guess some others. I believe it impossible for a Christian to make the growth and advance in Christian living which he ought on just the family Bible. He must possess

one of some kind which is his very own, which he can take wherever he goes, which he can mark as he chooses.

And now to go back. Let no one despise small givings. If you will try my plan you will be surprised to find how fast the "Lord's Box" will fill up, even though the "tenths" are quite small. Just see what only ten cents a week will amount to! Let me give you one or two items from a list I found once in an almanac. One cent saved each day and put at six percent interest for fifty years will yield \$950. Ten cents will become \$9,504. Twenty cents \$19,006, and so on. Would not that do some good? Putting it at interest with the Lord will accomplish more than putting it at interest in a bank.—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

HOW CHINAMEN NAME THEMSELVES.

The Chinaman's ways are peculiar, in nothing more so than in naming. According to the period of life he is in so is the name of a Chinaman, for he does not start away with a name from the beginning of his days and continue to bear it till the end thereof. At first the child bears the name of his father, whether legitimate or illegitimate; but the distinguishing mark varies according to the Province. At Peking, for example, the children of the same family are numbered, and, in describing Chang and his family, they would say "Old Chang," "2nd Chang," "3rd Chang," etc. In Canton, the family name is followed by the affix *ah* and an agnomen. For example, the two sons of Chang might be called Chang-ah-Bold and Chang-ah-Truthful; and the two daughters, Chang-ah-Silver and Chang-ah-Modesty. In Fokien, the agnomen is simply repeated. Thus of Chang's two sons, if the eldest be Chang-Honest, the second would be Chang-Honest-Honest, and so forth. When the Chinese child goes to school (as nearly all Chinese children do), it ceases to be known by its family name, being named afresh on its appearance before the schoolmaster. Thus Second Chang might be called Quick Runner, Bright Eye, or Twinkling Star; and he is registered by the name thus fixed upon, and known by no other to his master and schoolfellows. When the youth is engaged to be married, a fresh name is given him, and from that time forth his marriage relations designate him by that name only. Again, when a youth presents himself at the public examinations for an official post, he enters himself under a name of his own choice, and for all time to come that continues to be his official name. The names of Chinese mandarins, governors, and officials generally that appear in print are not the names by which these functionaries are known in private life—known to their marriage connections, their old schoolfellows, and their kith and kin. When a distinguished Chinaman dies, the names of his lifetime die with him, and he is thereafter spoken of and remembered by his posthumous name.—*Ex.*

A CLOCK OF SKELETONS.

We are told of a strange clock that is said to have belonged to a Hindoo prince. A large gong was hung on poles near the dial, and all about on the ground lay a pile of artificial human heads, ribs, legs and arms. The whole number of bones in the pile was equal to the number of bones in twelve perfect bodies, but the pile appeared to have been thrown together in the greatest confusion. When the hands of the clock indicated the hour of one, from out of the pile crawled first the number of parts needed to form the frame of one man, part coming to part with a quick click, and when completed the figure sprang up, seized a mallet, and, walking up to the gong, struck one blow. This done he returned to the pile and fell to pieces again. When two o'clock came two arose and did likewise; and at the hours of noon and midnight the entire heap sprang up, and marching to the gong, struck one after another his blow, making twelve in all, then returning fell to pieces as before.—*Popular Science Monthly.*

THE PROBLEM.

"The common problem, yours, mine, every one's, Is—not to fancy what were fair in life Provided it could be—but finding first What may be, then find how to make it fair. Up to our means."

—*Browning's Bishop Blougram's Apology*