

dence, which ought to be fostered. Some borrow tools and implements who can well afford to own them, and ought to do so. In like manner, some borrow newspapers and periodicals who can, and therefore should, subscribe for them. The *Country Gentleman's* correspondent referred to above, states that the Elmira Farmers' Club has been discussing this subject, that several members complained of having suffered inconvenience and loss by lending, and that the opinion was expressed that some parties could, and would, pay a fair price for the use of an implement or machine which they felt unable to buy. The result of the discussion was that a proposition was made to post up in large sign letters on the barn a notice like the following:—

"FARMING TOOLS TO LET.

For roller.....	50 cents per day.
" lumber waggon.....	50 " " " "
" grain drill.....	25 " " " "
" cultivator.....	12½ " " " "
" plough.....	12½ " " " "

and similar rates for other things, the days to count from the time the article is taken till its return, and to be returned in as good order as when lent, natural wear excepted."

This appears fair and equitable. It is a favour often to get the loan of an implement or tool, even if a moderate charge be paid for its use. An arrangement of this kind would be highly satisfactory to those—and there are such—who feel a delicacy about borrowing an article which they need occasionally, but do not possess. No doubt some would object to paying for a thing borrowed, but it would be the mean class of people who are always wanting something for nothing. Owners could of course use their discretion, and not exact payment from worthy neighbours who are unable to pay. The principle itself seems so manifestly just, that the wonder is it is not more generally acted on. It is not only just, but there is this advantage about it, that were it adopted, borrowed articles would be much more likely to be returned promptly.

#### BENEFITS OF A FARMERS' CLUB.

Some of the many advantages growing out of attendance at these useful institutions are forcibly stated by President Ferris, of the Onondaga Farmers' Club, N. Y., in an address from which we take the following extracts:—

"What have we learned? To stay on our farms, and attend to our own business. We have learned to summer-fallow with a good crop of corn; to take off two crops in place of one, at double the profit—members of this club are doing it—forty bushels of barley, and thirty bushels of wheat to follow, to the acre. We have learned that straw is worth from \$8 to \$12 per ton; that phosphates and commercial fertilizers have been of great benefit in some localities, and in others worthless; that a good sod, barn-yard manure and wood ashes are true friends of the farmer when rightly applied. We have learned to please the eye rather than the taste; we have lost thousands of dollars in trying to please the taste, hereafter we will try to get it back by pleasing the eye.

"We learned from a discussion of the water question, that to put wood ashes in a bag and put it into our cisterns, will purify the water; also, that the germs of disease which are thrown into the cesspools of city or country, sink into the ground and are carried long distances in veins of water, which is one great cause of spreading typhoid fever.

"I now come to the last question: 'What benefit have you been to the country, or to yourselves?' There is a great strife among the members of this club to get to the front; they are taking all the noted agricultural papers of the country; they are watching every experiment made by their neighbours, to seize upon everything that is successful, and get all the glory, and all the money they can out of it; and by so doing they are a benefit to the country and to themselves. The club deserves the support of every farmer who would be progressive."

A BEEKEEPERS' Association has been formed at Bloomsburg.

#### SKETCHES OF CANADIAN WILD BIRDS.

BY WILLIAM L. KELLS, LISTOWEL, ONT.

##### THE BLUE JAY.

The blue jay is a large and beautiful bird, but rather noisy and marauding. It generally frequents all parts of our woods, but is more partial to the low, soft wood lands than to the rolling hard wood tracts. When the stormy winds and withering frosts of autumn indicate the approach of winter, it generally retires into the densest woods, particularly the evergreen swamps, where it is chiefly found during the cold season of the year—for it is not migratory, but remains in Canada throughout the year, enjoying the luxury of our summer and autumn with delight, and sustaining the severity of our winter without harm. The blue jay has no song, but utters various notes, the most common of which, resembling the words "Pay-up, Pay-up," uttered in a loud, harsh and screaming tone, may be heard in our woods at all seasons of the year. The blue jay is twelve or fourteen inches in length; its plumage is a beautiful blue, mingled with white and ashen colour; its wings and tail are crossed with bars of black; its neck is encircled with a ring of black, and its head is ornamented with a crest of loose, silky plumes, which it can erect or depress at pleasure, but it is mostly erected when the bird is angry or excited. The blue jay builds a large nest of brambles and fine roots. The eggs are five or six in number, of a dull greenish hue, mottled with pale brown. The nest is placed in various situations: as in the root of a fallen tree; among the thick branches of balsam, cedar, or hemlock; and in the forks of high trees. It is an omnivorous bird, and readily devours anything eatable that comes in its way. During the winter it subsists on moss, buds, the seeds of evergreens, and occasionally on nuts and grain. The nuts it often finds in the rough bark of trees, where they have been deposited by nutcrackers and squirrels. When it has found a large nut, it carries it in its beak to a branch, where it holds it down with its foot and breaks it open with its strong bill. It sometimes makes a marauding visit to the barns of the back woods settler, where it feeds upon grain, and when disturbed flies off with an ear of grain in its beak, or uttering loud screams. It has sometimes been caught in a trap set to catch squirrels. In the early spring these birds will sometimes collect in large flocks on the borders of the woods, and devour the grain left uncovered by the harrow. At other times parties of them will visit the gardens and orchards, but they meet with little welcome from the farmer or his family, as plunder is well known to be their object. They will also attack and destroy the eggs and young of all other birds that are too weak to defend their nests, and while thus plundering, they will lift up their heads and in mocking tones mimic the distress of the parent birds; and when the work of spoliation is complete, they fly off to the woods uttering loud screams, as if exulting over the mischief they have done; but when discovered by the king-bird, robin, or blackbird in the vicinity of their nests, they are soon caused to retreat with precipitation and disconcerted notes. The blue jay

is a keen-sighted, shy, and cunning bird, and it is not always easy for the hunter to come within gunshot of it, as the smell of powder or the sight of a gun will send it, uttering defiant notes, into the tops of the highest trees or the depth of the densest woods. Yet it is an affectionate bird, and will defend its eggs and young with boldness and sagacity. Its progeny are often destroyed by owls, hawks, and nocturnal animals. The blue jay is abundant in the new settlements; but as it prefers the wild freedom of its native woods to scenes of cultivation, and loves not the presence of man, nor the sound of the woodman's axe, it is yearly driven further into the wilderness by the onward progress of civilization.

"The blue jay is of all birds the most bitter enemy of the owls of this country. No sooner has he discovered the retreat of one of them, than he will summon the whole feathered fraternity to his assistance, who, surrounding the glimmering *solitaire*, and attacking him from all sides, raise such a noise as may be heard half a mile off, the owl meanwhile returning every compliment with a broad, guggling stare. The clamour becomes louder, until the owl is at length forced to betake himself to flight, and is followed by his impudent persecutors until driven beyond their jurisdiction. The blue jay is not only bold and vociferous, but possesses considerable talent for mimicry, and seems to take great satisfaction in mocking and teasing other birds, particularly the sparrow-hawk, imitating his cry whenever he makes his appearance, and squealing out as if caught. This soon brings numbers 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 singles out one of the most insolent and provoking, swoops upon him in an unguarded moment, and offers him as a sacrifice to his hunger and resentment. In a moment all is changed; the jay's buffoonery vanishes, and loud and incessant screams proclaim the disaster."

MR. HENRY GRAY has sold his fifty acre lot in Hibbert to Mr. W. Delaney, for the sum of \$2,800.

SINCE the 1st of January Mr. Andrew Burrows, Carleton Place, has purchased 120 tons of pork from farmers in the counties of Lanark and Carleton.

THE County Councils of Peterboro' and Oxford have passed resolutions recommending that the grant to the Agricultural and Arts Association of Ontario be continued.

AN American has been defrauding farmers throughout the county of Oxford, by purchasing turnips for shipment, paying thereon about twenty per cent., and giving due bills for the balance. The due bills are now found to be worthless.

MR. SOLOMON CROSSEN, of Enniskillen, has sold his farm to Mr. Joseph Bostick, of Plympton. This farm, better known as the Steadman farm, consists of 200 acres, 100 cleared, with good buildings. The price paid is \$10,000, or \$50 per acre. Eighteen years ago this farm was a dense forest, and a frog pond, and a person could float a canoe over the greater part of it.