

## British Cleanings.

### Weather Prophets.

Mr. W. H. WITTE, the recognised weather "medium" of the *Mark Lane Express*, in his forecasts some six months since, predicted that the present season would be a productive one. On the other hand, Mr. Thos. Du Boulay, another weather clerk, who occasionally enlightens the same paper with his "predictions," expressed a directly contrary opinion. "Two of a trade cannot agree" is an old and somewhat truthful adage, and as if to furnish another verification of it, those two glibbed weather seers appear likely to get to "eggheads" in attempting to decide who has been right. Aspersion is the usual exchange current among quacks, and of this there seems to be no lack in the debate between these parties. In a recent number of the *Express*, Mr. Du Boulay hints rather plainly that the dryness of the season has "preternaturally excited" the feelings of his rival, and that in consequence he has been caught napping. For ourselves we confess to little faith in weather predictions vented any great length of time beforehand. A careful observation of the weather, direction and force of the wind, and the registered indications of the barometer and thermometer furnished from a variety of points, may enable philosophers like Mr. Glasher, or the late Admiral Fitzroy, to calculate with some accuracy the probable weather at a given place a few days previously, but the six months' predictions that are sometimes ventured, are in our opinion, mere guesses, wholly unworthy of reliance.

**AN EXTRAORDINARY EGG.**—A British exchange states that "a hen belonging to Mr. G. Jameson, Cowpen North Pit, near Newcastle-on-Tyne, recently dropped an egg weighing 3½ ounces, and measuring in length 7½ inches, and in circumference 6½ inches."

**BRUTAL CHIMNEY SWEEPING.**—A British exchange states that a man was recently sent to prison at Leeds for attempting to brush his chimney by pushing a dog and eat down it from the top. The dog remained in the chimney for four hours.

**SHEEP SHEARING EXTRAORDINARY.**—The *Irish Farmer's Gazette* reports that two active shepherds have lately been displaying their surprising powers. At Killoughram they shored for Messrs. Purdon the large number of 225 sheep in 15 hours, each sheep turning off an average of over 7 lbs. to the fleece. This feat, we believe, has never been surpassed.

**EAGLES DESTROYING LAMBS.**—We learn from the *North British Agriculturist* that the sheep-farmers in Skye are complaining very much this season of the depredations committed by eagles amongst their young lambs. At Glenbrittle, ten lambs were carried away in three days to one nest. The nest was reluctantly destroyed as it was that of the first golden eagle known to breed there for many years.

**MANURE—PITS AND TANKS.**—Professor Voelcker recommends that "the sides and bottoms of manure pits should be rendered impermeable to water, either by clay-pudding or hydraulic cement; that the bottom of the manure-pit should be in a slightly-inclined position, so as to carry the liquid manure and drainings into a manure-tank, which should be close by. The tank should be provided with a pump, so as to return the liquid matter to the heap in dry weather. The heap should likewise be well trodden."

**SWARM OF BEES IN A THUNDER STORM.**—An English paper has the following:—The unusual sight of a swarm of bees in a thunder storm, was lately witnessed at Pevensy. Between three and four in the afternoon an inhabitant observed a flash of lightning, which was followed by a heavy peal of thunder, and on looking out of the window he saw a swarm of bees on the wing. By this time the rain descended in torrents, to the great discomfiture of the bees; however, when the tempest had abated they had all cleared off."

**A POPULATION COLUMN.** The *Fortnightly Review* has a curious calculation which may be interesting to those who discuss the subjects of population, war, pestilence and famine. It states that "the number of human beings living at the end of the hundredth generation, commencing from a single pair, doubling at each generation (say 30 years), and allowing for each man, woman and child an average space of four feet in height and one foot square, would form a vertical column having for its base the whole surface of the earth and sea spread out into a plane, and for its height 3,674 times the sun's distance from the earth. The number of human statura thus piled one on the other would amount to 160,790,000,000."

**CULTIVATION OF DARTMOOR.**—The English papers report that a large portion of Dartmoor will shortly be brought under cultivation, a company with a large capital being in progress of formation. Mr. John Lee, a gentleman of London, has taken upwards of 20,000 acres of the north quarter of the moor, from the Duchy of Cornwall, and has already sub-let it at a profit. The crops on the moor are reported to be very healthy, and are likely to be very prolific this season. At Bratton Clovelly, near the moor, the cultivation of the silkworm is being carried on extensively, and with success. The trees on which the worms feed are imported from Japan, and flourish vigorously on the moorland soil.

**THE BIRMINGHAM POULTRY SHOW.**—We learn from an English Exchange that the prize list of this show, which will be held at Birmingham in November next, includes the astonishing number of 129 classes, 96 being for poultry and 33 for pigeons. The prizes are liberal and numerous, ranging from £5 to £1, and in addition there are a large number of silver cups and special prizes offered by amateurs and patrons. We cannot reprint the prize list, suffice it to say that premiums are offered for old birds, young birds, hens, pullets and single cocks, of almost every variety, and in fact for almost every colour of every variety. In pigeons, the birds compete in pairs, except in the case of Pouters and Carriers, which are to be shown singly.

**FLAX PROSPECTS IN EUROPE.**—A Dundee trade report contains the subjoined remarks on the flax trade:—The reports of the flax crop in France and Belgium are very discouraging, the drought having been most injurious to the growing plant. The dry weather will make the straw rather short in Ireland; but it is expected the crop will be an average one. There are conflicting accounts regarding the appearance of the plant in Russia; but from the most reliable source, it does not appear that the crop will be a bad one. Viewing the present state of the flax trade in all its aspects, the most experienced people think that the recent very considerable advance in prices in Russia and here is not fully warranted, and that speculation abroad has much to do with the rise. It is very possible that present prices may be maintained; but it would be most injurious to the trade were they to go much higher, as it will keep back orders, and probably land the holders in large stocks of dear goods. Great caution is therefore necessary in all operations at such a time."

**AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATIVE STORES.**—The *Englishman's Magazine* has an article showing the benefits of the co-operative system to the agricultural population with some examples of its application. We select the two following, believing that what has been done in these cases may be carried out in others:—  
"At Clipston, in Northamptonshire, there has been a society in existence for three years and a quarter; during their last quarter they have sold goods to the amount of £506, being an advance of £100 on any previous quarter. After paying the expenses of management and interest at 5 per cent. on all paid up shares, they were able to give a dividend of 1s 10d in the pound on the purchases by members, several of whom have cleared from 10s to £17 in the three years and a quarter of the society's existence. One member was in debt £3 when he joined the society; he has now paid off every farthing he owed, and has £11 in the society at the present time. This man has a wife and six children to support out of his scanty wages, and he declares that if he had not joined the Co-operative Society he could not have struggled on. Clipston is a village of 800 inhabitants. Secondly, Whitfield is a village in Northumberland, with a population under 400, fourteen miles from Hexham, the nearest market town of any size, and eight miles from a railway station. Upon the incoming of a new rector in 1860, the idea of co-operation was started, and such was the effect produced by the discussion of the subject, that the whole parish—squire, farmers, and labourers—determined to become

co-operators, and raised a capital of £274 in £1 shares; at the end of the first year the capital increased to £296. The sales amounted to £1,884; 5 per cent. increase was paid on the capital, and a dividend of 1s in the pound on members' purchases. At the end of the second year the capital had increased to nearly £395. The sales amounted to £2,118; the interest on the capital remained as before, and two dividends were paid of 1s and 2s on members' purchases; the stock, £500 in value, carried up to £20 to depreciation, and £10 as the beginning of a reserve fund."

**BEES IN LONDON.**—We learn from the *London Times* that not a little excitement and astonishment was caused in New Burlington Street by the circumstance of a swarm of bees alighting on a cab which had just drawn up at a restaurant. A man having procured a hive set to work, and with assistance succeeded in securing the whole of the unexpected visitors, and took them away. The *Gardener's Chronicle* accounts for the circumstance as follows:—"We have heard from Messrs. Neighbour, of Regent Street, the real facts of this case. Having a swarm of bees on its way into the country, they temporarily placed the hive on the leads of their house, giving the bees their liberty. From some reason best known to the bees, they suddenly issued from the hive, and after flying about for a few minutes the swarm collected on a cab standing in the neighbourhood, much to the astonishment and dismay of the driver and his fare. A man in the employ of Messrs. Neighbour was fortunately able to secure the bees in a hive, and consign them to a place of safety. The cab driver was appeased by being liberally compensated for the loss of his fare."

**ANOTHER OUTBREAK OF SMALL POX AMONG SHEEP.**—We learn from the *Mark Lane Express* of July 10th, that at the last meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society, a letter was read from Professor Simonds—the Society's veterinary inspector—reporting that another outbreak of small pox had taken place among a large flock of sheep on the Sussex Downs. Professor Simonds says:—"The flock consists of about six hundred ewes and lambs; and up to the time of my visit, 17 animals were known to be affected, and it was hoped that my examination would not materially increase this number. Such, however, did not prove to be the case, for no less than 48 were found by me to be diseased to a greater or less extent, thus bringing up the number of infected animals to 65."

As the greater portion of the Downs is unenclosed, there is every probability that the disease will spread; although every effort and precaution will be promptly used to arrest its progress. The *London Gazette* publishes the following notification:—"In pursuance of powers contained in the Acts to prevent the spreading of contagious or infectious disorders among sheep, cattle, and other animals, the Lords of the Privy Council have issued an order regulating the removal of sheep or lambs to or from the parish of Southase, near Newhaven, Sussex, where the sheep-pox, or variola ovina, now prevails."

**FAILURE OF THE APPLE CROP.**—The *Scottish Farmer* devotes an editorial to the discussion of this question. Our contemporary states in substance that throughout the entire extent of Great Britain the crop will be an almost total failure. The cause is attributed to the destruction of the blossoms and young leaves by caterpillars, and more especially by those of that most ruinous insect to fruit trees—the winter apple-moth. The following are among the remedies suggested by the writer: Dusting hot lime thickly over the trees as the young caterpillars come into existence. Syringing about the same period, and occasionally for a week or two after, with soap suds or weak tobacco water. Shaking the tree suddenly to make them fall off, when they may be destroyed by spreading a sheet for their reception. On special favorite trees by repeated watching for and pinching them in the rolled up leaves. In the *pupa* state by deep hoeing and digging. In the *fly* state by applying round the stems collars of wood, or other soft material, saturated or smeared with bird-lime, tar, turpentine, oil or other substance not injurious to the tree, and over which the moths cannot pass. "As the females commence their ascent immediately after night fall, advantage has been taken of this to destroy them, going round with lanterns and examining the stems; this must be repeated as long as insects are found, and the search continued from an hour to an hour and a half each night. Burning grass roots, weeds, and rubbish, under and to windward of the trees, so as to annoy both the moths and the larvæ with the smoke, has also been found a good preventive." The moth is stated by our contemporary to be the *Geometra crumata* of Linnaeus, or the *Chimrobittia crumata* of Stenhen.