

## THE PLUM SPHINX MOTH.

*Sphinx drupiferarum* (Smith & Abbott).

BY E. B. REED, LONDON, ONT.

As this moth pretty generally makes its appearance in our plum orchards from year to year, I have thought it advisable to give a short history of its different stages for the benefit of our fruit-growers.

It is a member of a family of moths to which the great naturalist Linnæus gave the name of *Sphingideæ*, on account of the resemblance he conceived some of their caterpillars bore, in certain positions, to the notorious Egyptian Sphinx, and which our artist has faithfully represented in the engraving of the larva—fig. 1. While the ravages caused by this caterpillar are fortunately not very extensive, yet it generally appears in different localities from time to time in numbers quite sufficient to cause considerable annoyance to the plum growers of those regions. Its conspicuous size, when full grown, and its bright green colored body, and mauve stripes, make it tolerably easy of detection; while the leafless twigs, the result of the voracious appetite necessary to sustain its huge carcass, are sure to cause the eyes of the observant fruit-grower to make diligent search after this monster leaf-eater.

The larva (fig. 1) is hatched from an egg deposited (probably) singly on the under side of the leaf.

Mr. Wm. Saunders has kindly allowed me to make use of his notes on the appearance of the young larvæ.

On the 2nd of July, a pair of *drupiferarum* were brought to him which had been taken *in coitu*. They were confined together in a seidlitz box. The next day the female began depositing eggs, continuing to do so for two or three days.

"Egg: Length .07 inch; slightly oval; surface smooth; color pale yellowish green. In from 6 to 8 days, the young larvæ made their appearance, having eaten their way out through the side of the egg. In some cases one half or more of the egg-shell was eaten; in others only a hole just large enough to allow of the escape of the larva, while in a few cases it was almost entirely consumed.

July 10.—Some out this morning, length .22 inch; head very large, rounded, pale yellowish-green, with a few very short whitish hairs; mandibles tipped with dark brown; body above pale yellowish-green, with a few whitish slightly elevated tubercles on every segment, from each of which arises a single short fine hair, those along each side of the dorsal line dark brown, the others yellowish white. The tubercles are arranged in a double transverse row on the middle and hind segments; caudal horn .10 inch long, nearly erect, black, thickly covered with very short stiffish black hairs slightly furcate at the apex. Each tip terminated by a pale brownish hair longer than the others; under surface similar to upper."

The larva, when full grown, measures about three or three and a half inches. Its color is a beautiful apple green. The head is also green, with lateral dark