

Agricultural Intelligence.

WOOL PRODUCTION.—We learn from the *Grand River Sachem* that "the flock of Mr. James Young, Township of Seneca, consisting of 57 Leicesters, averaged 7 lbs. of wool per sheep. 16 yearlings averaging 8 lbs. per fleece. We doubt whether many farmers can beat this."

THE CROPS.—An experienced farmer who has travelled through Waterloo, Perth and Middlesex, states that the crops look luxuriant everywhere. The spring wheat is especially good, and remarkably strong. The recent rains, followed by the present fine weather have been the cause of a wonderful progress in all kinds of vegetation. As prices seem likely not only to maintain themselves, but to advance, there is reason to believe that, should no untoward event present itself, another year of prosperity for Canada is about to dawn, despite the Fenians. —*Free Press.*

USEFULNESS OF INSECT DESTROYING BIRDS.—At a recent meeting of the Acclimatization Society of New Zealand, a sum was voted for the purpose of procuring Australian magpies from Melbourne and Hobart Town, it being considered the cheapest and best bird to introduce for the destruction of caterpillars and insects; as from trials made in the Society's gardens they have been found not to possess the same destructive propensities as their English namesakes, of eating eggs and young chicks. It was also proposed that £50 should be sent to England for the purchase of small birds.

CROP PROSPECTS IN THE STATES.—A Rochester paper says there is "a prospect for a fair crop of wheat in Western N. Y. In some localities the fields are very promising, Pittsburgh papers think there will be a poor crop of wheat and other grains in Pa. Ohio will have wheat enough for bread and seed, and a few millions of bushels to spare. In some parts of Illinois all the crops are looking well. Exchanges admit an average yield of two-thirds the usual amount of wheat which is a great abundance. Other crops promise their usual amounts. In Wis. an ample harvest of wheat, oats, and potatoes is expected. The prospects of an average wheat crop in Mich. are good. Ind. is set down for only half a wheat crop, but corn, oats and grass never looked better. In Iowa, crops of all kinds have a fine appearance. A large yield of corn and a fair one of wheat is anticipated from Kansas. Agricultural reports from Minnesota are favourable."

SHEEP IMPORTATION.—The *Quebec Chronicle* says:—"We had the pleasure, on Monday, of inspecting a magnificent flock of Sheep, arrived in our port per steamer *Achilles*, on the 12th, which left London on the 12th May. The flock is part of a selection of fifteen rams and twenty ewes, from the very best Lincoln and Leicester breed that England can produce. They were selected by Mr. Joseph Kirby, of the firm of Kirby & White, of Milton, County of Halton, C. W. They are still detained at Point Levi, in compliance with an order in Council prohibiting the importation of Sheep. We may add that they appear to be in excellent condition, notwithstanding the long sea-voyage; and that they are pronounced, by some of the best judges of stock in this district, to be the finest lot of Sheep ever brought to this port. As a proof, we need only mention the fact of the live-weight, at fourteen months old, being 250 lbs. At the same age, six of them clipped 10½ lbs. of clean washed wool. We cannot praise too highly the spirit of enterprise which prompted this importation, and we hope it may be imitated by many of our farmers. We may add that a sample of the wool, measuring twenty inches in length, can be seen at our office."

The Household.

Homedale Farm.

THE SWARM OF BEES.

Mr. Perley was of opinion that as far as possible a farmer should have every form of rural industry going on upon his premises. He had therefore early in the spring bought, a hive of bees as a foundation for an apiary. It was an ordinary box hive, and contained a good strong stock, with an ample supply of honey to last until the storing season should arrive. To qualify himself for their management, he bought "Langstroth on the Honey-Bee," and "Quinby's Mysteries of Bee-Keeping Explained." These books and the various articles on bee-keeping which appeared in the *CANADA FARMER*, he read with great

avidity, and became deeply interested in the world of wonders revealed in the habits of these wonderful insects. He found that many ancient modes of procedure with bees were exploded, and the patient researches of Huber and others had thrown floods of light upon the whole subject of bee-keeping. He was interested to learn that by blowing a few puffs of smoke into a hive, the bees could be rendered so tame as to admit of their being handled with impunity. Many other points brought out in the publications above mentioned, struck him very forcibly, and he was especially pleased with the accounts he read of bee-management with moveable-comb hives. He regretted that his own stock was not in a hive of that description, and determined that any future swarms he might obtain should be put into the improved hives. He was glad to find as he pursued his investigations on the subject, that bees could be transferred from the common box hive to the moveable-comb hive. He ascertained that either at or shortly after swarming, was a good time to effect the change. Fearing lest he might not manage it well on the first attempt, and not liking to risk his whole stock, he concluded to postpone the transfer until after the first swarm had come off. Shortly before swarming-time, he took care to be provided with one of Thomas' Moveable-Comb Observing Bee-Hives, and with this on hand, together with a protector and a pair of bee-gloves, he was ready for operations whenever the bees might please to sally forth.

These bee proceedings did not escape the notice of the young folks. The hive was a frequently-observed and carefully-studied object, though prudence dictated keeping a respectable distance from it. As usual in regard to all matters of family interest, the bees were more than once discussed by the home circle. Charles had been watching the hive one day in early spring and noticed the bees returning with their thighs and legs laden with yellow stuff. Very naturally he took this for honey, and duly informed papa, mamma, and the entire family of what he had seen. He had made a slight mistake, however, which his papa corrected. It was not honey but pollen with which the bees were laden. "What is pollen?" asked Charley. "It is the dust of flowers," replied Mr. Perley. "What do the bees collect it for?" enquired Charles. "To feed the young bees with," answered his father. "Many experiments have proved that young brood cannot be reared without it. It forms their principal food." "What makes it stick to their legs," asked Charley. "They are provided," said Mr. Perley, "with a spoon-shaped hollow, or basket on their hind-legs to hold the pollen as they gather it, and they always heap up their little basket and carry as much as they can so that it streams down their legs." Another time, Charles and Lucy had been looking at the hive, and were struck with the industry of the bees, and the haste they made on their errands. They spoke of this in-doors, Lucy remarking, "What a hurry the bees are always in going out and coming back to the hive." "Yes," said Charles, "they move as if somebody was after them to punish them if they ventured to lag a bit." "Bees," remarked Mr. Perley "have always been considered an example of diligence. As such they teach a lesson to us. Lucy can repeat that nice little hymn which speaks of this." So Lucy recited the well-known lines of Dr. Watts:—

"How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour,
And gather honey all the day
From every opening flower.

"How skillfully she builds her cell,
How neat she spreads her wax,
And labours hard to store it well
With the sweet food she makes.

"In works of labour, or of skill,
I would be busy too,
For Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.

"In books, or works, or healthful play
Let my first years be past,
That I may give for every day
Some good account at last."

Swarming time came at length, and one fine day toward the end of June there was a great commotion

about the hive. The bees rushed out in great excitement, and commenced whirling round and round in the air above the hive. Before long they began to move away, still flying round and round, and mixing among each other in a most singular manner. Fortunately they did not go very far away, but clustered all in a mass upon a branch of one of the apple-trees on the edge of the orchard. Mr. Perley soon made his preparations for hiving them. Placing a table a short distance away from where the bees were hanging, he put his hive on it, dropped the bottom-board, and laid a goose wing near by. Next he put on his veil and india-rubber gloves to guard against accident, and protect him from being stung. Then taking a basket large enough to hold the bees, he cautiously approached them. The bough hung down with their weight so that he could reach it from the ground. Holding the basket close beneath the cluster of bees with one hand, he gave the bough a sharp shake with the other, so that the living mass fell softly into the basket. He then shook them out of the basket upon the table just behind the hive, and taking the goose-wing began to brush them carefully toward the entrance. Very soon the greater part of them were in the hive, and the rest soon followed, so that in about a quarter of an hour they were all in except a very few stragglers. The hive was then removed to a stand near the old hive, and having shaded the new hive from the sun, Mr. Perley left them to settle down in their new home. The children watched the process at a safe distance, and were not a little pleased when it was well over, for they were somewhat afraid their papa might get stung in spite of his veil and gloves. Charles thought it a very simple operation, and told his papa he thought he could do it. "Well," said Mr. Perley, "I am glad you think so, for perhaps the bees might swarm sometime when I am not at home, and then I shall be very much pleased if you can succeed in hiving them. If such a thing happens and you manage to do the business, I promise that you shall have a nice present of some kind to remember the bees by." Charles inwardly hoped he might get the chance, quite as much for the credit of doing the thing, as for the reward his papa had promised him. Indeed he was quite interested in the bees and and thought he should like to know more about them. The hive into which the new swarm had been put, had glass sides and little doors fastened with buttons, and both he and the rest of the family anticipated much pleasure in watching the bees when they got fairly to work.

(To be continued.)

To Preserve Spring Rhubarb.

PREPARE the rhubarb as follows:—Take 1 lb. of the stalks after they are pared, and cut them into short lengths, and put them into a quart of a pint of water previously boiled with 6 oz. of loaf sugar and simmer the fruit in it for about ten minutes. It will then form a sort of compote, which is preferable to the undressed rhubarb for spring tarts.

For *rhubarb jam*, to each pound of the young stalks, pared and cut as above, add an equal weight of good sugar in fine powder; mix them well together, and let them remain about a quarter of an hour, then turn them into a preserving jar; heat them gently till tender, then boil them rapidly, stirring them well for about half-an-hour. This jam will be of excellent flavour, and will serve well for open or laid tarts.

Another way is to boil gently together, for three hours, an equal weight of fine sugar and rhubarb stalks, with the juice and grated rind of a lemon to each pound of the fruit. When the true flavour of the fruit is much liked, the lemon-peel should be omitted. A very good jam may be made with 6 oz. less of sugar to the pound, by boiling the rhubarb gently for an hour before it is added.

Rhubarb jelly is a novel supper dish. It may be made as fine as apple jelly, but requires longer boiling before the sugar is added, and a little isinglass may be requisite.

For *rhubarb wine*, to every pound of bruised green stalks put a quart of spring water; let it stand three days, stirring it twice a day; then press it and strain it through a sieve; and to every gallon of the liquor put 2½ lb. or 3 lb. of good loaf sugar; barrel it, and to every five gallons add a bottle of white brandy; hang a little isinglass in the cask, suspended by a string, and stop it closely; in six months, if the sweetness be sufficiently off, bottle it for use, otherwise let it stand in the cask somewhat longer.