THE LEICESTER SHEEP.

Our engraving shows a ram of the Border-Leicester blood, a race of sheep derived mainly from the famous Leicesters which came into prominence through the efforts of that pioneer in the modern art of breeding, Bakewell. Bakewell, it will be remembered, commenced with the original Leicester sheep, an animal of large frame, with heavy bone and coarse-grained meat, a flat-sided carcass and legs large and rough. It was a slow feeder and necessarily late in reaching maturity, weighing at two or three years, old 100 lbs. to 120 lbs. Seeing the necessity of obtaining in addition to the fleece, the largest possible increase of flesh in proportion to the food consumed, in the shortest period of time, he bred by selection most persistently and skillfully for these objects. This was commenced in 1755, and the result of Bakewell's breeding was the production of a sheep of such marked improvement that the receipts from hire of rams alone yielded $15,000 in a single season. The fame of Bakewell's sheep, the Dishleys as they were called, spread far and wide and importations of them were made for Gen. Washington's estate in Virginia. There a Dishley ewe crossed by a Persian ram gave rise to the Arlington race of long-wooled sheep, which became widely known.

The race of Border-Leicesters arose something more than a century ago, and early in the present century the improvement was carried farther by the use of Dishley rams by the border flock wasters. Now the border sheep have secured destinctive appellation and recognition at the English shows.

The characteristics of this breed, as given by Mr. John Wilson, are extraordinary aptitude to fatten and early maturity. He says: The most marked feature in their structure is the smallness of their heads and of their bones genrally, as contrasted with their weight of carcass They are clean in the jaws, with a full eye, thin ears, and placid countenance. Their backs are straight, broad and flat; the ribs arched, the belly carried very light, so that they present nearly as straight a line below as above; the chest is wide, the skin very mellow, and covered with a beautiful fleece of long, soft wool, which weighs, on the average, from six to seven lbs. On good soils, and under careful treatment, these sheep are currently brought to weigh from 18 to 20 lbs. a quarter at 14 months old, at which age they are generally slaughtered. At this age their flesh is tender and juicy, but when carried on until they are older and heavier, fat accumulates so unduly in proportion to the lean meat as to detract from its palatableness and market value.

The ram represented in the accompanying engraving, which is produced from a photograph, is from the Mertoun flock of Lord Polworth, in Berwickshire. The engraving does not indicate a pampered sheep, intended only for the show-yard; but the straight and broad back, the wide chest brought well forward, the well-sprung ribs and long quarters, the full and square rump, all bespeak an animal compact and symmetrical—a meat-maker of the highest order.—*Pacific Rural Press.*

THE floating of birds on and with the wind does not appear specially mysterious. It is now recognized that a breeze of air is a succession of denser and denser volumes, rushing in to supply the place of comparative vacuity, and thus to maintain pneumatic equilibrium. Passing along the surface of land or sea, this succession of densities possesses the properties of a wedge, tending to lift from the ground objects whose specific gravity is greater than that of air. Thus, on a windy day, thistledown, feathers, straw, paper, may be seen floating on the "wings of the wind;" and should the gale increase to a hurricane, trees, roofs and even cattle may be lifted from the earth. Inanimate objects being in this way capable of sustention, it is not surprising that a bird can adjust its wings in such a way as to appropriate to the full the floatative power of the wind.

A PLEA FOR BOYS.

Owing to a slight indisposition we must forego the pleasure of writing our usual message, but would emphasize the wisdom contained in the following plea for the boys, for with all of our heresy upon the woman question, we believe in boys, and daily insist that boys have some rights that their sisters are bound to respect.

Our theme is not a new one; it can never be old. As long as one-fourth of humanity is represented by the irrepressible boy, so long will the happiness and well-being of the boy be of moment to all.

I shall preface what I am about to say by relating an incident, the facts of which came under my immediate observation.

A sister and brother nine and seven years old respectively, whose home was in the far West, came to spend the summer with their grandparents in New England. It was a large many-roomed house to which they came, and upon their arrival a carpeted room with dainty belongings was assigned to the little girl, while the boy—

BORDER LEICESTER RAM.

no less dearly loved by his grandmother—was given a chamber, airy and comfortable, but guiltless of ornament save the glorious rays of sunlight that waked the little sleeper each returning morning

Judge of the surprise of the family, one afternoon, at finding all the little fellow's possessions—his box of clothing, his fishing tackle, his balls, his top, his miniature canoe—transferred to his sister's room, he averring, upon being questioned, that he liked pretty and tasteful things as well as his sister did, and that he was not going to stay it that old, bare room.

Now we do not say that every mother can give her boys pretty carpeted rooms; but we do insist that the boys should have their share of whatever of grace and beauty the house affords. If the little sister has two pretty pictures in her room, let her give one of them to the brother. If she makes a dainty cushion for her own toilet table, let one equally pretty be made for that of her brother.

Then there are the boy's own treasures. Give him the privilege of arranging them in his own way. Doubtless it will be oftentimes a very individual way; but what of that? Do we not every day sacrifice our own tastes for fashion's sake—for friends? Surely we can do at least as much for our boys.

I have in my mind the memory of a boy just in his teens, who for the first time was to have a room by himself. With his mother's help his treasures were given each its place of honor or convenience. Most highly prized of all was a gun, the gift of an older brother. His taste claimed its installment on brackets on the wall of his room, and the mother, stifling her woman's fear of fire-arms, gave him her help in arranging it there. The look with which he thanked her will be a pleasant memory for years.

Let us do all we can for our boys. Let us "make home attractive" to them, not only by filling our houses with things beautiful and tasteful, but by making them feel that they, not less than their sisters, have a share in its arrangements.

When the echo of children's footsteps shall be no longer heard in the house, and the tired hands have more time to rest, we shall be glad to recall the eager, happy face of the boy 20 years ago, as he stood by our side while we put the last strong stitches in the cover of his ball, or fastened one more bob on his cherished kite.

In the cradle, in his first suit of clothes which launches him on the world as the individual boy, in the transition from "little boy" to "big boy," from the "big boy" to the youth—let us stand by him with our help, our counsel, and our prayers.—*The Woman's Journal.*

ENCOURAGEMENT OF TREE-PLANTING.—The other day the American Association for the Advancement of Science met at Boston, and among other things done it recommended the encouragement of tree-planting. A committee was appointed to memorialize Congress and the State Legislature in regard to the important matter of the cultivation of timber. Among the practical means for promoting this business the association recommended the passage of a law for the protection of trees planted along highways, and the encouragement of such planting by relieving them from highway taxes; and by the appropriation of money to agricultural and horticultural societies, to be applied as premiums for tree-planting and for prizes for the best essays, and reports on the subject of forest culture. One very important recommendation was the enactment of stringent laws against the reckless firing of forests—a practice which leads to enormous waste of timber on this coast. It ought to be checked by the imposition of severe penalties. The association also recommended the establishment under favorable conditions of model plantations, as a means of encouraging the general planting of trees and their preservation.