

publications. Through an extended correspondence with foreign societies and our consuls abroad it is searching the world for new and valuable plants to acclimatize, new varieties of cereals to test, and, when found valuable, to distribute, thus finding and introducing into our agriculture the valuable products of all countries suitable and profitable for our cultivation.

"Agriculture is the great civilizer of the world. Its improvements and advancements mark national as well as individual progress. Whatever will add to its success, furnish it with valuable inventions and discoveries, are so many steps towards accomplishing the highest forms of civilization and human happiness. In this country with its broad and fertile acres, the cultivator of the soil is generally its owner. So large a proportion of our population being engaged in this pursuit, it must ever be a leading occupation. The great extent of our country and its capabilities make it necessary that there shall always be a great diversity of agricultural labor. To give direction to this diversified agriculture is one great purpose of the Department, and it will be able to lead the way in processes of culture, as well as selection of products and their varieties, in the different localities, and thus enable farmers to give attention to that culture which promises and secures the best results and rewards.

"Intimately connected with this subject is the land policy of the Government, about which I desire to make a few additional remarks. In the early days of the Republic our public lands were regarded as a source of revenue. It was expected from their sale to pay a large proportion of the expenses of the Government; but in later days it was found that, with expense of survey and sale, these expectations were not realized, and a new policy was adopted, and large quantities of the public domain have been used in constructing railroads, endowing colleges, rewarding military services, and stimulating immigration by giving homesteads to all persons who will live on and improve them.

"In this way this heritage of the people has largely contributed to the material development of our country. These grants have not always been wisely made, and in many respects have no doubt been great outrages upon the rights of the people. The future policy of the Government should be to so provide by legislation that our public lands should be preserved for actual settlers, and thereby furnish free homes to the landless. Concentration of large quantities in the hands of monopolists and speculators is the great curse of most of the Western States, and has and does impede agricultural improvement and development.

"Of our public lands about seventy-eight million acres have been granted for schools and colleges, over ten millions of which have been given to agricultural colleges. Two hundred million acres have been appropriated and given to build railroads and other improvements. About seventy-three million acres have been given to our soldiers, their widows and children. The Government still own about a thousand million acres. This vast domain as fast as it is surveyed is open to settlement under our homestead laws, which give every man or unmarried woman one hundred and sixty acres for the cost of survey and entry, upon living upon and improving the same for the time limited, which is five years, except a soldier, who, under the

bill passed by the House, is allowed to count three years of his term of service in the Army, or whatever term under that period he has served, as part of the five years' residence.

"In the year 1869 about two and a half million acres were given to homestead and pre-emption settlers. In the same year about eight million acres were converted from wild lands into farms, making some sixty thousand farms. We now have over six million real estate owners, being one in about every six of our population, and nearly one half of our whole population are engaged in the pursuit of agriculture.

"The whole landed property of England is now owned by thirty thousand persons, making one in every six hundred and fifty of its population. One half of its soil is now owned by about one hundred and fifty persons. Nineteen and a half million acres in Scotland are owned by twelve proprietors. In this country this extensive ownership of the soil, the sense of proprietorship resulting therefrom, encouraging independence of action and thought, constitute the corner-stone of our Republic. The multiplication of these free homes for the people, instilling into their minds the spirit of agricultural and mechanical progress, and education, and moral development, and improvement, will secure freedom, equality, and prosperity among our people, and perpetuity to our Government.

"In this grand work, with such support as should be and no doubt will be given to it, the Agricultural Department, in the future as in the past, will be an efficient and important aid to the other branches of the Government."

During the Franco-Prussian war, the French Doctors have been using Eucalyptus leaves instead of lint. The leaves are laid on the wounds, and it is said that their balsamic nature not only enables them to cure, but all unpleasant odour of the matter ceases. Last Fall we had an opportunity of seeing a splendid Eucalyptus tree, raised from Australian seed, in the house of one of the leading citizens of Pictou. We hope it is still in life and so leafy that the experiment may be repeated by some enterprising medical man in that County. Sixteen bad cases were treated successfully in this way at Cannes by Dr. Buckersley, an eminent physician.

A new species of globular Cactus is described as growing on the Sierra Nevada of California, close to the snow. It grows as big as a cabbage, is as round as a globe and completely covered with spines like a hedgehog, but of a snow-white colour. It is used instead of Asparagus. If introduced to Nova Scotia and found to be hardy, some of our enterprising nurserymen might make a fortune out of it.

Accompanied by a friend in the city who takes a warm interest in horticulture and currency, we recently paid a visit to the Conservatory adjoining the palatial

residence of Martin Black, Esq., and were received with much kindness by that gentleman, who pointed out the chief objects of interest. To pass from the dreary snow and leafless trees of Göttingen Street into a wilderness of green foliage and gay flowers, is to realize in a realistic form a mid-summer dream of sunny skies. Here were splendid bushes of Indian Azaleas in full bloom, *A. Indica alba*, of the purest white, *Victoria* delicately tinted with rose and purple and several deep red and crimson sorts. *Cobæa scandens* threw its gigantic wreaths overhead, its large and striking flowers, at first green, afterwards purple, giving a tropical aspect to the scene. The chaste *Solanum jasminoides* hung its pure white yellow anthered blossoms down against the vertical panes of glass, and the gay hyacinths diffused throughout the house a delicious fragrance. The red clusters of *Habrothamnus* were peculiarly showy, the plants being luxuriant and appropriately fencing in the lower part of the stage. At one end of the Conservatory there is a small pond for water-plants, with *Richardia Ethiopica* displaying its large green leaves and noble flowers of the most perfect opaline white that a painter could desire, and glancing down upon it were the deep cerulean blue stars of the little *Lithospermum*. Then, as a contrast to the latter, there was near by the brilliant yellow clusters of the *Cytisus*; and all through the house were manifold forms and shades of colour, peering out from among the green leaves, that were beautiful to look upon but would be tedious to enumerate except in a botanical Catalogue. Of the free flowering plants that are especially gay at this season, we may mention the *Cumelias*, red and white, the Double white, however, being our favourite, as it is, we believe, all the world over. There was a fine large *Cineraria*, purple and white, a genus of plants, admirably adapted for winter decoration. *Veronica Gloire de Lorraine* was showing, over its handsome glossy leaves, several large spikes of flowers, beautiful but rather dull, of a sort of lavender purple, as if mourning the fate of its native home. There were Chinese *Primulas* of many kinds and colours scattered about. *Chorizema* from Australia, Heaths from the Cape, and *Erica mediterranea*, the Bruyere Heath, whose large root is used to make Bruyere, or, as they are vulgarly called, Briar Root, pines; it is chiefly a native of the Landes, but grows also in Galway, in Ireland, being a remnant of the old Spanish and French Floras there represented. Of foliage plants there were many, and these are always beauti-