

Editorial.

On the Wing.

Hearing that some great changes were about to be inaugurated at Ottawa in regard to agricultural affairs, we took a trip to the capital, and arrived just as the evidence was being taken in regard to a monstrous undertaking, namely, the formation of a Dominion Bureau of Agriculture and Statistics, and the establishment of experimental grounds near Ottawa, including the distribution of seeds, plants, etc., by the Government, the appointment of numerous Government officers, etc. The principal evidence we heard taken, considered we should have something similar to the Washington Bureau, which costs \$500,000 annually. The witness instanced the great good it had done in encouraging the orange, silk and tea culture, etc., etc. He considered that our farming lands might be doubled in value by the cultivation of the beet root and the manufacture of sugar. He stated that it would cost \$300,000 to establish one factory complete. Cattle would gain in weight five and six pounds per day when fed on the refuse from the factory. He considered that the severity of the cold in Manitoba would not be an obstacle against the production of beet-root sugar in that part of our Dominion. Another witness gave evidence in regard to insects, and the veterinary faculty desired more power. In fact it appeared to us that there was a grand opening to saddle the farmers with an intolerable burden which would tend to increase their expenses, open doors for innumerable hangers-on—all nominally for the benefit of agriculture, but the main aim appeared to us to be to gain position, gain office, or gain patronage and cash, which would be a continual burden on the farmers, and would, instead of building up the independent yeomanry of our country, tend to make the farmers serfs and slaves to the office-holders, which class of the community is far too rapidly increasing. We believe that all these Government appointments and expenditures should be brought about only by a direct vote from the farmers personally, not by proxies.

We were called on to give our evidence, which is, we understand, adverse to others'. We consider that the plan would not be worth its cost, that it would tend to check private enterprise, that farmers, if left alone, will spend their money to the best advantage, that the nurserymen and seedsmen will furnish the best kinds of seeds and plants much cheaper and much better than paid officials will, that editors will furnish the most valuable information and that the farmers will patronise, aid, support and encourage those who work for them.

The main idea to be grasped in the matter is from what source the scheme emanated, whether from the farmers themselves or from designing office-seekers.

We were requested to remain to give evidence with regard to emigration. We suggested that as about \$600,000 was granted for emigration purposes, that the distribution of a few thousand copies of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, with properly prepared information, would tend to induce a better class of emigrants than by issuing so much fulsome matter that

was looked on as such by the most intelligent of the British farmers, and tended to induce a pauper emigration. It has been suggested by a prominent Reformer that the ADVOCATE deserves a subsidy, but, thank goodness, the paper never had a subsidy and never wanted one; but for the good of the farmers we would distribute the ADVOCATE in the manner mentioned at the actual cost of producing it.

While in Ottawa we waited upon Sir John A. Macdonald and the Hon. E. Blake, and left bound volumes of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE with them, also pointing out to these gentlemen what private enterprise had done for the education and advancement of the farmers, without the aid of Government patronage.

When in Toronto we stepped into GRAND'S HORSE REPOSITORY AND SALE ESTABLISHMENT.

This is a double decker. The large spacious sale room, offices and box stalls are all on the ground floor. An easy ascent is made at one corner of the building to the upper floor, where there is space enough for hundreds of horses. There were scores of people walking about or in groups, discussing the points of this draft horse, that pony, or the other cob. A person would be rather fastidious not to find suitable specimens of the equine race here, for we have not yet seen at any sale such a large and varied lot of horses under the charge of one man. The present manager of this establishment appears to have the confidence of the public to a much greater extent than the former manager ever had. In the stabling on the ground floor were also to be seen the part of Mr. Carroll's Jersey herd that had been sold the previous day; the prices realized had been satisfactory. Mr. Carroll is not closed out of this class; he only sold his surplus, reserving the best as stock animals on his farm, which he did not bring to the sale.

A very large concourse of people were assembled in the auction room, awaiting the sale, which was just about to commence; but we were obliged to leave to keep an appointment. Mr. Grand intends to keep up this new departure, that is, to add thorough-bred cattle to his monthly sales. He finds his central position gives him great facilities for this, and his sale room is spacious, so that he can accommodate animals and visitors.

We were recently in Hamilton, and called at the seed establishment of

MR. J. A. BRUCE,

a leading seedsman.

"How is business?"

"Very good, although a foreign wholesale firm has been selling seeds below what it is possible to procure really good seeds for; but as we never keep anything but the best, we may have lost a few dealers in the country who regard price and bulk rather than quality. But we are keeping and gaining ground from dealers who supply the best to their customers."

Mr. Bruce has always maintained his high reputation, and deserves the name he has gained. His word and his seeds could always be depended on, and he never descended to trickery or false pretences.

"Is there anything new or of importance being introduced this year?"

"No, we are just going on in the usual way. But there is a little stir in black barley. Some

pork feeders claim that the black barley will make better pork than any other kind of feed. There are to be prizes offered this year on the carcasses of fat hogs, to be judged on the merits of the meat and the cost of production. It is expected that the hogs fed on black barley will surpass those fed in any other way. This is an important point. The black barley is no new cereal; we have had it for years. It is a sure crop, yields well, makes an excellent stock feed, and is much heavier than the white varieties. The advantages claimed for it are that it can be raised cheaper and surer than corn, and can be raised where peas and corn cannot; that it will make an excellent substitute for the pea, and allow us to starve out the pea bug."

We secured a little black barley for any of you who are living in distant localities to try, and to enable you to get a start in localities where it is not procurable, we will send three pounds of it to any one who will send us in one new paid subscriber. Three pounds properly cared for may produce you sufficient seed to sow three acres next year. Try it and report results.

PETUNIAS AND COLEUS.

Last year, when in Hamilton, we saw some of the finest Petunias we ever beheld. We made enquiries and was informed that they were raised by a market gardener, who was an enthusiast in Petunias and Coleus. He directed his principle attention to hybridizing and their cultivation. We took a drive to his garden and greenhouses, about one and a-half miles from Hamilton, and secured a few plants, took them home, and planted them in our garden. Such monstrous, beautiful, variegated, cut leaved, double Petunias, and such Coleus we had never before seen. Mr. Read is the name of this enthusiastic propagator. A plain man, without any pretensions, one who little knew the value of his goods or his work, as he had only followed this hybridizing for his pleasure. During this visit to Hamilton we went to see him and found him in bed, where he had been for months. His head was as sound as a bell, although his poor body was on the wane. He had been taken with some spinal affection, which he attributes to his constant stooping over the Petunias in the hot sun. He would be in this bent position for hours together in the hottest weather. One of his Coleus he has called after his wife, Madame Read, almost as variegated as the one of which we give an illustration of in this issue, and a beauty it is. It is from such close application, such enthusiasm, such unremitting trial and care as Mr. Read has shown, that the greatest improvement is made. Common flowers have been turned to the beauties that now adorn our homes. What a contrast between the Petunias we have described and the plain unvariegated single thing, which cannot be compared with the magnificent specimens raised by this enthusiast! Although unable to get into his propagating houses, his wife and sons have these plants to work with, and may with care be sent to all parts of this continent. Such plants will be sought for by all the lovers of the beautiful. If you want the best collection of Petunias or Coleus send to Mr. Read.