

The Government of France has established what is called a "Commission of Inquiry," for examining into the condition of French Agriculture. It holds its sessions in Paris. It receives statements and opinions from the leading agriculturists of the Empire. District exhibitions are to be held in various parts of France, and the Society of Agriculture will act as a National Society.

The *Prairie Farmer*, published at Chicago, says: "Six car loads of hops were sent from Oshkosh to New York, about four weeks ago, and the agent who accompanied them writes that he has made several sales at ten cents, but has not been able to make one of them stick." It is to be hoped that Wisconsin will produce no more hops next season than are required for home consumption.

A new cattle disease has appeared in England. The symptoms are dullness, increasing to extreme prostration, difficult breathing, small and frequent evacuations, colourless urine, membrane of the mouth discoloured and ulcerated as in the cattle plague, pulse weak but not rapid, and the temperature does not rise. The disease is not inflammatory, and *post mortem* examinations show that the blood has been poisoned.

A process of artificially drying and curing hay and sheaves of grain in wet seasons has been brought before the notice of British agriculturists. The process, which has been subjected to the test of actual experiment, consists in passing the hay or sheaves to be dried through a shed supplied by a furnace, and fanned with a continuous current of hot air. The method is endorsed by the approval of some of the best agriculturists in the kingdom.

The most extensive farmer in France is M. de Candaine. His farm in Touraine is valued at two million francs, and the income he derives from it is considerably above 500,000 francs a year. He sells every year one thousand head of fat cattle, and has on his farm a distillery, a beet and starch sugar factory, and a large linen and woollen factory, and all his factories and farm buildings are lighted with gas. His farm is said to be the most productive in Europe.

It is estimated from reliable data that something over 15,000 acres of hops were poled in Wisconsin alone in the spring of 1868, and that 25,000 acres more were planted. Again, it is estimated that 15,000 acres, producing 1500 pounds per acre, will supply all the hops needed in the United States for one year. If these calculations are correct, it is easy to see where the hop business has been driven, and what prospects of profit are before the hop grower. New York, Michigan and Ohio also produce largely, and when a wide margin is allowed for failure caused by lice, &c., over production must still ensue. No wonder the hop growers of the West are turning hop poles into fire wood and fence rails. Farmers should learn from this the danger of rushing headlong into the growing of special products.

Every day we receive testimony that money expended in reclaiming swamp land is not lost. Near our large cities, land is valuable owing to market facilities, and many tracts hitherto deemed worthless are being brought under the plough. Mr. Pike, the New York opera house proprietor, recently purchased 4000 acres of Jersey salt marsh meadows, at a cost of about \$16 an acre. After draining and reclaiming it at an average outlay of \$83 an acre, he is now offered \$900 per acre for the entire property, thus yielding him a profit of millions, if he chooses to close the bargain.

PRIDE OF ACRES.—The bane of agriculture in one half of the Republic is the idea that a man who owns four hundred acres is probably four times as rich and prosperous as he who owns and tills one hundred. As a general practice, Southern and Western farmers have depended on a hundred acres, plough three inches deep, for three thousand bushels of corn, when the same store could have been gathered from fifty acres, ploughed six inches deep, and well manured.—*Am. Ex.*

A CURIOUS SUPERSTITION.—Mr. W. C. Ledger, M.A., writing in the *Athenæum*, says "A horse's head has been dug up from beneath the floor of a room in the house I write in. It was buried there, I am told, to cause an echo in the room. Can any of your readers throw light on this very curious practice? Some years ago, a horse's head was introduced into one of the parish churches in a city in the south of Ireland, and placed under the organ by an enthusiastic parishioner, with the object of giving increased effect to the music!"

STEAM IN AGRICULTURE.—It is estimated that there are now at work in England about 300 steam ploughs, and that these ploughs are securing some remarkable effects in English agriculture. Half a million acres, perhaps more, have been deeply and thoroughly pulverized by this style of ploughing. It is said that a steam plough, penetrating to a depth before unknown, and moving with a rapidity of four miles an hour, breaks up and disintegrates the soil four times more than the ordinary horse plough moving at the rate of two miles an hour. By the depth to which the plough penetrates, new elements are brought into the working soil, and surprising crops are the consequence.—*Globe.*

THE STEAM PLOUGH.—The steam plough has lately invaded France, at the instance of M. Leconteur, editor of the *Journal d'Agriculture Pratique*. The preliminary trials were a grand success, and the opinion was openly expressed that the day is not far distant when steam will, to a great extent, displace the horse in farm operations. The great obstacle in the way of the introduction of steam ploughs is the want of capital. It seems to us that this may be obviated by the method we have adopted in some sections of the country in relation to the threshing machine. Let some enterprising man procure a good machine and do the whole work of a neighborhood.—*Country Gentleman.*