

A STEAM PLOW FOR THE PRAIRIES.

In the *Prairie Farmer*, Chicago, Illinois, of the 10th inst., Bronson Murray proposes that a premium of \$50,000 be raised by subscription of one hundred persons, paying \$500 each, to be awarded for a perfected steam plow suited to farm use, and capable of performing the labor at an expense not greater than the average cost of performing the same work under the present system. He offers to be one of the hundred subscribers, and wishes the subscriptions secured to the Illinois State Agricultural Society, and the premium to be offered by it, under such rules as an Executive Committee may direct.—He asserts that there is not a farmer who cultivates 500 acres of prairie land, but can well afford to unite in the proposed subscription. He is confident that the steam plow would long since have been invented, had the capital of mechanics been equal to their inventive genius. In this opinion we cordially agree with him. It would be a most inestimable boon to farmers on the prairies if they could plow their stubble lands quickly after the crops are removed. The benefit of the steam plow to them would be quick plowing,—doing as much by one plow in one day as is now done by five or six with teams, which cannot be driven beyond a certain speed. When Mr. Murray came to the prairies fourteen years ago, there were no harvesting machines in use; but he felt confident they would soon be, and this determined him in settling in Illinois. His hopes have been realized regarding harvesting machines, and we trust they will also be realized respecting a prairie steam plow. Its working expenses may be as great as plowing by present modes, but if it does the work in less time, with fewer hands, (as we understand it), farmers will be satisfied.

At a meeting of the Farmers' Club, held at the American Institute, New York, on the 9th inst., Judge Meigs read an account of an English farm locomotive of 16 horse power. It weighed 9 tons, was stated to move easily over soft fields, and ascend pretty steep inclines. Its inventor had spent \$50,000 in making experiments, and he was now satisfied with its performance. It draws a gang of plows with ease. Our friends in Illinois would like a steam plow of much less weight than 9 tons; it is too heavy for general use, but no doubt smaller ones on the same principle can be constructed.

TREATMENT OF THE HAIR.

We may be venturing on a delicate subject perhaps, but the following brief extract from an old London Magazine, expresses our views too nearly to pass uncopied:

If the ladies will trust to our science on the subject of hair, in the first place we can assure them, most confidently, that so far is it from being that oils and pomatums increase the lustre of the hair, their effect is to diminish that polish which it naturally possesses; while, whatever gloss they may give to hair which is naturally dull, is false, and, like all other falsities, disgusting. Absolute cleanliness, by means of water alone, to commence, followed by brushing in the direction of the hair itself, in a dry state, is the true method of giving to the hair all the polish of which it is susceptible: and it is the effect of oils of all kinds to disturb or injure this; to say nothing of the disgust and necessary dirtiness of greasy hair. It is the effect of oils also to prevent it from curling; and this object is most effectually obtained, if without artificial means, by curling it when wet, and suffering it to dry in that state. And as it happens that almost all hair has a tendency to curl in one direction rather than in another, it is useful to study that tendency, so as to conform to it in the artificial flexure given. As to artificial applications, the whole of the so-called curling fluids are mere impositions; while one, which is really effectual, and at the same time inoffensive, is a weak solution of isinglass, by which a very firm and permanent form can be given to the hair.

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The fact is, that the whole is an imposture; oils, pomatums, and all; bear's grease, Macassar, and Rowland, huile, a la tuberosse, huile antique; huiles and pomades, divine or whatever else. Excepting so far as pomatum may be used for stiffening or compacting the hair into dirty or greasy masses, or oils for converting the easy and loose flow of nature's ornamental locks into nasty rat's tails, the whole is but a method of extracting money from vanity and fashion. It is but a rivalry of the stinking Hottentots, a relic of savage barbarism. As to the chemistry itself, if the ladies *will* make themselves greasy and disgusting, olive oil, alone, is the only oil that is necessary, hog's lard is the only pomatum; and if it is not sufficiently stiff, let it be stiffened to the taste by wax. It is an apothecary's plaster, or an apothecary's ointment, according to its consistence; it is