

CORN.

The last government report relative to the amount of corn in the hands of farmers has excited a good deal of criticism. The official figures indicate that 463 million bushels less of corn have been consumed during the past twelve months than were consumed during the previous twelve months.

One must be impressed after reading the report of Mr. John Hyde, statistician of the department of agriculture, with the fact that the government estimate of the farm reserve on March 1, 1898, was altogether too low, or that the present reported reserve is altogether too high.

The corn crop of 1898, in the opinion of THE CONSERVATIVE, was much smaller than the amount estimated by the government. There never will be any satisfaction in the agricultural statistics of the United States until they are based upon an annual farm census. In England the agricultural data are secured by officers of the government from landlords and tenants who, under oath, declare the acreage of each crop and also after maturity the number of tons or bushels grown.

Our present system of gathering statistics is entirely wasteful and inutile. The agricultural department receives its reports from two agents in each county of each state and territory of the United States, who receive no compensation for making up their statements. All of the detailed data is gathered by unpaid agents who receive as compensation nothing except a few seeds and the printed documents of the department of agriculture. THE CONSERVATIVE has found nothing of value in this world which can be secured without consideration—pay—either in kind or in cash.

The division of statistics, of which Mr. John Hyde, a most competent and estimable man, is the head, carries a clerical force at Washington at a cost of about \$100,000 per annum. All these clerks are paid for formulating and tabulating figures and data which have been gathered in an eleemosynary way for the government, and the result of the dissemination of this misinformation has in the last twenty-five years cost the farmers of the United States many millions of dollars. The present system of gathering, publishing and distributing information relative to the condition of crops, the amount of grain in farmers' hands, on the markets and in transit, is of advantage only to the European buyers, who of course seek as consumers to compel the lowest possible prices on all of our cereals and other farm products. It would be far better for the producers, the farmers of the United States, that no agricultural statistics be published at all than to have those inaccurate ones published which are gathered up after an alms-asking fashion and are finally disseminated at

great cost in clerical, printing and other expenses, and also frequently at great loss to those who have farm products to sell.

It is time that the farmers took this matter into consideration and debated it at their institutes. In some future issue of THE CONSERVATIVE we may have occasion to say more about the fallacy of the present system of collecting farm facts and distributing them throughout the country.

SENATOR M. L. HAYWARD.

While differing upon many questions from Senator Hayward, THE CONSERVATIVE rejoices in his election because he stands squarely for the gold standard and is always in favor of a sound currency. As the candidate for governor nominated by the regular convention of the republican party he received the support of all the gold democrats of this commonwealth and the first editorials advocating his selection as senator were penned by democrats who sink partyism and rise to the plane of patriotism whenever the honor and integrity of contracts, personal or national, are in jeopardy.

But the safe time for congratulating Senator Hayward or any other man called to responsible public position is at the close rather than at the beginning of his official duties. THE CONSERVATIVE, therefore, with sincere wishes for the usefulness and honorable fame which may develop for the new senator, awaits—with perfect faith in his ability—an opportunity to felicitate him upon good works accomplished.

If all the growlers and fault-finders in Nebraska could be compelled to travel throughout the United States and Europe and forced to compare the climate of Nebraska and the fertility of Nebraska soil with the climate and fertility of other countries, they would return contented with their present homes. By comparison with either the lands of the Pacific or the Atlantic coast the mid-continental agricultural area is exalted, and advanced in value, to the mind of every thoughtful and practical observer. Lands in Nebraska are a splendid heritage. Fifty years from today those born landless are destined, as a rule, to live and die landless. Get land for your descendants!

TWO PLAYS.

It is hard to see how young Mr. Rostand's play of "Cyrano," which aroused so much enthusiasm in the year just passed, can appeal any more strongly to a Frenchman than the play called "Shore Acres," to an American, especially to one of New England descent. Each is sufficiently actuated by the broadest motives of humanity to have made it an interesting story, in whatsoever dress presented; but each goes directly to the heart of its own

special audience, by means not only of its overt incidents, but perhaps to a still larger degree by means of a multitude of fine allusions, half-hinted references to matters which the wise playwright leaves with confidence to the instinctive feeling of his hearers, and which put them immediately in sympathy with him as nothing else could do. While there is thus a certain similarity in method between the two, it is the application of this method which makes the one distinctively a French and the other an American play. It is possible for an American to see what it is that the other so warmly admires in "Cyrano," but it is his head and not his heart that understands it. The swordsman who overcomes a hundred enemies with his single hand lies outside our credulity; we know him to be utterly unhistoric, for even the half-deified d'Artagnan has left on record a saying that "a man who has two enemies on his hands has always one too many." The French, however, seem to swallow him and relish him; we take Uncle Nat's self-renunciation and courage in another's defense, because we are perfectly aware that the breed of which he is a type is perfectly capable of those qualities; whereas Cyrano's brilliancy in his various lines fringes the marvelous. He is well on the way already toward Rinaldo, who "gave more deaths than blows" in battle, and to the numerous heroes whose bodies were invulnerable to weapons; none of whom nor of their descendants would be fitting occupants of the American stage, any more than the inherent French smut—as in the inn-keeper's jest to his wife about the paper bags—of "Cyrano" would accord with the clean seriousness of "Shore Acres."

There is such a thing as race, and it is an obstinate thing. The American of today is not wholly the same as the contemporaneous Englishman, and he differs widely from the more remotely related peoples. Neither have we any reason to think the American stock so inferior in quality that it need borrow very largely from the others. It will be a good time, if it ever comes, when the American stage can be kept filled all the year round with such plays as "Shore Acres."

Any man of good judgment who can command and bring into Nebraska a million of dollars for investment in 1899 will have two millions of dollars in 1909, if he buys only raw prairie, at present prices.

A "conscientious objection" to vaccination recently rendered in a London police court: "If God Almighty thought that vaccination was necessary or even desirable, He would perform the operation on every child before it was born."