

No attempt had as yet been made to reap by machinery in England. Indeed up to this time England was not prepared for reaping machines. Labor had been abundant and cheap, agricultural machinery of all kinds imperfectly constructed and high priced. Now, however, matters were reversed.—Fields of industry had been opened up, and happy homes provided in the "new world" for many thousand of the redundant population of Great Britain and Ireland. Labour had become less abundant, and in many places the reaping hook had been supplanted by the sythe or the American cradle. Under these circumstances the appearance of reaping machines was opportune, and secured for them every consideration. They were subjected to a thorough test—were highly approved, and to the reaper of Mr. McCormick was awarded the gold medal of the great exhibition.

No doubt this was a good stroke of business for Mr. McCormick. It served, however, another purpose. It brought to light the fact that a reaping machine, similar in its main features, had been exhibited, had received a prize of fifty pounds from the Highland Society of Scotland, and more strange than all, had actually been in successful operation during *twenty six years* previous to 1851. Soon there were champions in the field not only to claim the invention for Scotland, but to claim that the old rickety machine of the Reverend Patrick Bell would do more work and do it better in a given time than the American. Several trials in consequence took place in the presence of immense numbers of interested spectators.—McCormick wisely resting upon his laurels, avoided competition. The particulars need not be stated here, suffice it to say that on each occasion the old Scotch reaper distanced every competitor, including the other American, (Hussey's).—Mr. Bell at last began to see the value of his invention, secured a patent, and entrusted the manufacture of it to an eminent English machinist. That was the exhibition of 1851 instrumental in introducing into England a valuable implement, and in securing to my *bashful* countryman the credit which had been assumed, and was on the point of being conceded to an American. I would not, however, detract one iota from the credit due to McCormick for his wonderful perseverance in bringing into notice this most important labor-saving implement. His efforts have been amply rewarded at home and abroad. It is even probable that he has already accumulated more money from the manufacture and sale of reaping machines than was ever realized from the sale of any piece of mechanism of equal value. I need not tell our American friends present here to-day, that on the expiring of his patent a short time ago, he was refused a renewal of it by the U. S. Patent Office Commissioner, chiefly on the ground that he had already received from the public adequate remuneration for the invention claimed. Mr. McCormick submitted in evidence to the department when applying for a renewal of his patent that he had *only* realized

the sum of \$2,409,251 22-100ths of manufacturing profits.

The distinguishing feature of the exhibition of 1851 was NOVELTY. The exhibition of 1862 is remarkable as indicating PROGRESS, and nowhere is that progress more remarkable than in the mechanical department of the agricultural division. Here are to be found portable steam engines, thrashing machines, steam ploughs, steam cultivators, steam labor saving machines in endless variety. The inventive genius of man, however, has not stopped short with these, for here, too, though it may seem to be descending from the sublime to the ridiculous, may be found a machine by which the process of milking can, it appears, be performed with "*the greatest possible pleasure and comfort to the cow*," speaking of which, my Lord Derby, at a recent agricultural dinner said, "It is difficult to understand how the inventor had ascertained the experience of the cow, under the operation."

What may be said of these great international exhibitions, may, in a limited sense, be predicted of every county agricultural exhibition, in carrying out which a well directed effort has been made for the advancement of agricultural interests. There may be much sameness year after year in such exhibitions as we have witnessed to-day, yet we are not on that account to ignore their usefulness. If, only, each year exhibits progress in the various departments, we may rest satisfied that the society is exerting an influence for good. Apart from other considerations, I believe it is a good thing for farmers to meet together once in a while without distinction of party, of sect or nationality; for true is it that "As iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." Here the man of narrow prejudiced mind may, if he will, have his prejudices removed most satisfactorily; here the most knowing among us, if we really wish to learn, *may learn something* that we did not know before; here all of us who enter the list of competitors may, if we will, "see ourselves as others see us." Here, too, (and oh, what a blessing to society) "the wretch concentrated all in self!" the vain-glorious one, puffed up with self-esteem, will, if he competes, most certainly get "taken down," and hence he may go home, "a sadder, but a wiser man."

A few of the agencies which have tended to the improvement of agriculture, have thus been noticed. It has been stated that one hundred years ago agriculture had reached a low ebb indeed. Another sad fact will be acknowledged in conclusion, that from the year 1240 to 1320, not a single Baron was to be found in all Scotland who could sign his own name.—The irresistible inference is, that for all these improvements we are indebted to the ceaseless activity of EDUCATED MINDS; and the conclusion to which we are led is that if *we* would be esteemed benefactors of our race, we will do what we can, as communities and associations, and individuals, to elevate the standard of education among us.

It is a grand mistake to suppose that a good