

Economy of time and expense in cutting; clean cut and more regular swathe; less liability to choke; better adapted to deposit the grain, with less labour; leaving off the grain either on the right or left hand side of the machine; and greater efficiency when operating upon a crop partially lodged.

The transactions of this Society, for the same year, contains a communication from Mr. Slight, Curator for the Museum, calling attention to the fact that the identical Bell's machine to which the £50 prize had been awarded 26 years previously, "had for the last 14 years been steadily employed on the farm of Inch-Michael in the Carse of Gowrie, occupied by Mr. Geo. Bell, the brother of the inventor, who, during all that period, and on the average of years, succeeded in reaping four-fifths of his crop with it." Mr. Slight further states, "that at least four specimens of it had been carried to America, and that from the identity in principle betwixt them and those now brought from thence, with other corroborating circumstances, there is little doubt that the so-called American inventions are after all but imitations of this Scottish machine." (j)

The great abundance of labourers in Great Britain, and consequent low rate of remuneration, with the reasons previously given; and the want of drainage and consequent mode of laying the land up in high ridges, appear to have been the principal causes in preventing the earlier and more general adoption of these machines. In America, on the contrary, owing to the scarcity and very high rate of labour, they came rapidly into use. In both countries great improvements have been made, and a multiplicity of patents issued, during the last 14 years; but the credit of the invention and construction of the first practicable reaping machine undoubtedly belongs to Great Britain.

NATIONAL DEBTS AND NATIONAL PROSPERITY.

The *Toronto Globe* estimates that the interest on the National Debt of the United States, by the time the war expenses will be all paid, will necessitate an annual tax of about \$16 per head for every man, woman and child in the Union, of every race and colour; and adds: "By the side of their large national and other public debts how small does our Provincial debt appear. We pay yearly about \$1.50 per head for interest. * * * Yet we think we are heavily taxed."

(j) See *Ency. Brit.* 8th Ed. Vol. II, p. 276.

The difference in the circumstances of ourselves and the Americans is this: their creditors are principally their own citizens—ours are non-resident capitalists. With them, though the tax paid by the individual is large, the money does not leave the country, but goes immediately into circulation again amongst themselves. The taxes we pay for interest leave the country, and none of our citizens benefit by the process.

Increase our national debt as much as you please for useful works, so long as resident citizens are the creditors, and the tax-payers will not seriously feel the burden; but borrow heavily from abroad and the country is impoverished.

The national debt of Great Britain, on the 31st of March last, was no less than £808,288,000 sterling, and yet she increases yearly in prosperity. This would not be the case if the large annual amount of interest—some £28,250,000 sterling—was payable to foreign countries instead of to resident British subjects. The people can bear to be taxed in exact proportion to the amount of home capital the country possesses, and no more. This fact seems to be too generally overlooked.

To enable the people of Canada to sustain a larger annual tax than is at present borne, we must cease to borrow foreign capital except for the most productive public works; and by producing more of agricultural and manufactured products, realize what MILL the political economist contends for as necessary to a nation's prosperity, that "the aggregate value of what we sell must equal the aggregate value of what we buy." The soundness of this principle is evident, for if we buy goods of more value than those we export, the balance must be paid out of the country in cash, and we have just so much less capital left wherewith to develop and increase our home resources.

FLAX MANUFACTURES AND WINTER EMPLOYMENT FOR THE POOR.

(Communicated.)

Hand-spinning and hand-loom weaving in many parts of the North of Ireland, have been almost entirely superseded by factory spinning and power-loom weaving; and in consequence of that a want of employment exists in their old business for weavers, many of whom are of a class which would prefer to live under the British laws in Canada, and would not be so likely as those from the south and west of Ireland to pass on into the United States, if only the reasonable advantage of obtaining homesteads here, on easy terms, was afforded them.