

"McCormick's Reaper-Works" Newspaper Article, October 9, 1874

MCCORMICK'S REAPER-WORKS.

The prominent figures which decorate the front of one of the most extensive works of the kind in this country are "1846" that being the year that C. H. & L. J. McCormick's reaper-works were established. Thirty-three years ago, when Chicago was little less than lagoon, it being covered with water during certain seasons of the year, this extensive establishment began its infant career. What change time has wrought, not only in changing this then swampy bayou into a magnificent city, but in transforming a then comparatively unknown branch of business into one of the most prominent in the country. Perhaps there is no other agricultural implement manufactured in this or any other country that is more widely or favorably known than the McCormick reaper. And we might add. the name of McCormick, the inventor of this superior machine, is as wide-spread as civilization, as the most prominent manufacturer of farming implements in the world. And in the way of the many and valuable improvements and inventions that have been brought out by Mr. McCormick and his associates in business, few, if any other manufacturing establishments in this country, can point to as favorable a record.

It will undoubtedly be remembered by some of our oldest citizens that Mr. McCormick invented the first reaper ever manufactured in this country. It was a somewhat heavy and clumsy piece of machinery, it is true, but nevertheless it was considered one of the greatest inventions of the age, when the cradle had scarcely been succeeded by that of the sickle. The first, if we are correct in the date, were built in 1845, and out of these imperfect machines has been developed a trade in reapers second to no other manufacturing interest in the world. Improvements, of course, have been made, and yet McCormick's first production is the substructure on which the reaper manufacturing interests of this country rest. Therefore, the fine reapers and mowers that we see throughout the country to-day are merely off-shoots from McCormick's first pondering, clumsy implement. But, while this branch of important industry has been progressing, the ever-inventive power of this firm has been actively at work, and improvements and new inventions have been made from time to time and adopted by all prominent manufacturers throughout the country. The reapers, mowers, and threshers of to-day have seemingly reached as near perfection possible. It is true, like the old jackknife, that changes and additions have been made, and that little of the old is left except the "mainspring." And as result of these improvements, we see to-day one of the finest combined self-raking reapers placed before the farming public by Messrs. McCormick. The name of this agricultural favorite is the "Advance," a name that is indicative of the merits of this perfectly-constructed machine. And as one sees it operate in either light or heavy grain, be the condition of the ground what it may, one cannot help thinking that it is indeed the "Advance," and has in it combined all the Superior points of a first-class reaper. It is all that can be demanded by the farming community. It has proved itself meritorous [sic] in all instances where it has had fair trial.

But to return to the McCormick reaper works we will indulge in few remarks upon the magnitude of that establishment. Here we see manufacturing and finishing shops, with flooring that will cover six

acres of ground, while the buildings and courts occupy an [illegible] equally large, while the entire ground occupied by the establishment is a little over twenty-two acres. Thus we present to the readers of The Tribune a hasty and somewhat imperfect description of the largest manufacturing institution in Chicago. The McCormick reaper works are not only identified with the great growth and prosperity of the city, but have added as much. — and perhaps more, — towards such growth and prosperity as any other manufacturing interest. As a popular agricultural machine, it has drawn trade in this direction to a large extent, and a very considerable portion of the income of this firm has been devoted towards improving and building up the city.