

troversy. Yet here are hardest facts for fiscal study, with, besides, such clear light shed on the common life of Corn Law days as vivifies what else were but dry and dead statistical information. This book gives a complete history of the triumph of free-trade principles over the old Corn Laws. There can, we think, be no question that to Richard Cobden, more than to any other man, England owes her present commercial supremacy. Indeed, one of his admirers declares that he was "the greatest benefactor of mankind since the inventor of printing."

It is an interesting study to trace the development of the poor Sussex farmer-boy into the greatest economical leader of the age.

Born in the summertime of 1804, Richard Cobden was of ancestry traceable back to the seventeenth century. All his schooling he received at a Yorkshire Dotheboys Hall, of which he could never after endure to speak.

He began business as a warehouse clerk in London, and soon after as a traveller for the house.

At fifteen he entered an uncle's London warehouse, embarking thus upon a remarkably successful business career. But he was meant for more than making money. "Sometimes," he says, "I ask what is all this yearning for? . . . Surely not for money; I do not think the possession of millions would greatly alter my habits of expense." Nor was this forecast unconfirmed. Foregoing, afterwards, every private consideration, he abides still one of the very best examples of Britain's public-spirited men.

In his earliest undertakings there is never forgetfulness of the larger life. "When immersed in the first pressing anxieties of his new business in Manchester, he wrote to his brother in London, 'Might we not in the winter

instruct ourselves a little in mathematics? . . . I have a great disposition, too, to know a little of Latin.'"

He had literary ambition, studied French, and wrote a play, which was rejected, "luckily for me," he says, "or I should have been a vagabond all the rest of my life." He made himself acquainted with the greatness of Cervantes, the geniality of Le Sage, the sweetness of Spenser, the splendid majesty of Burke, no less than with the general course of European history in the past, and the wide forces that were then actually at work in the present.

With two other young men he began business on a capital of £1,000, and in two years were trusted by a Manchester house to the extent of £40,000. The confidence was not misplaced, the business prospered, and soon Cobden travelled in its interest and in the pursuit of health, in Europe, America, Egypt, and the Levant.

The murderous misrule that has ever characterized Turkish government stirred him to the heart's core. From the island of Scio he writes, "Of nearly a hundred thousand persons on the island in the month of May, not more than seven hundred were left alive at the end of two months."

And this wild work still goes on; goes on, too, simply because of the jealous greed of powers called Christian!

"The Crescent is still exalted,
The cruel Turk holdeth sway,
The Christ they so long rejected,
Calls us to duty to-day.
Bids us be tender, my brothers,
Quit us like Christian men!
Why stand we waiting for others,
Why yield as we yielded then?"

Athens touched him with her charms, forgetting the petty present