

find, at the end of that time, that he had only got as far as £259,000, or somewhat over a quarter of the pile, and that he must keep awake eleven days and three hours altogether, to complete the work. To count the six millions accumulated by Mr. Brassey a man would have to spend about five months counting sovereigns, at the rate of one per second, and devote twelve hours each day to the task—an employment which would probably give him a “scunner” at gold for the remainder of his life. After all, money is a great power, in its way. Some one has forcibly remarked that “though poverty is no disgrace it is confoundedly inconvenient at times.” It is easy to scoff at the millionaires, or to commiserate their unhappy lot: but, at the bottom of our hearts, we cannot help respecting them, and if we only got a chance, we would not mind incurring the odium which all men must encounter who get rich, and we would try to bear it patiently. After all, it is difficult to see how men could spend their time more harmlessly than in the accumulation of wealth. However selfish they may be, they cannot do so without benefiting others, for capital is one of the great moving powers of the world; and in due time, the largest accumulations are sure to be distributed.

The world would be a very different place, if all men who become rich acquired their wealth in such an honourable way as Thomas Brassey, and accomplished so much good in the process. Sir Arthur Helps attributes his immense accumulation of wealth to two causes. One was the small extent of his personal expenses. “He was a man who hated all show, luxury and ostentation. He kept but a moderate establishment, which the increase of his means never induced him to extend.” This, however, was comparatively an unimportant matter; the immense extent of his business was the chief source of his wealth. “That extent,” says his biographer, “was gained not only by his intellectual qualities, but by his moral qualifications. Other men were very desirous of dealing with a man who was not only of known skill in his work, but who was of good repute for uprightness, for promptitude, and for going through thoroughly with anything which he had once begun. He never haggled or disputed, or sought by delay to weary people into his terms. His transactions were frank, distinct and rapid; and there was no man who could less abide any loss of time, in the completion of any of his enterprises. The success of such a person is almost inevitable. As one of his enthusiastic admirers,