

if I may so express it, was to win a high reputation for skill, integrity and success in the difficult vocation of a contractor for public works: to give large employment to his fellow-countrymen, and by means of British labour and British skill to knit together foreign countries, and to promote civilization, according to his view of it, throughout the world." Such was the high aim of this great leader of industry, according to his biographer; and his whole life furnished ample proof of the truth of the statement. Count Cavour, the great Italian statesman, a man possessed of rare insight into character, and a consummate master in the management of affairs, had much intercourse with Mr. Brassey, in connection with the introduction of railways into Italy; and on one occasion, at a grand dinner given in his honour, he said, "Mr. Brassey is one of the most remarkable men I know, clear-headed, cautious, yet most enterprising, and fulfilling his engagements faithfully. We never have a difficulty with him. He would make a splendid Minister of Public Works; and he added, laughing, if report be true, he understands the Finance Department equally well." This was high praise from such a quarter. But other testimonies regarding his worth were not wanting. The late Emperor of the French, whose shrewdness in estimating character was so remarkable, presented the English Captain of Industry with the Cross of the Legion of Honour, as a mark of his high appreciation of his services in connection with French railways; and the Emperor of Austria, for a similar reason, sent him the Cross of the Iron Crown.

The laughing remark of Count Cavour, about his financial abilities, had reference, no doubt, to the immense fortune which Mr. Brassey accumulated in the course of his lifetime. It is very striking to find that a man who cared very little for money in itself, who was most liberal in all his dealings, and never made it an object of his life to become a millionaire, should, almost in spite of himself, accumulate six millions sterling. Few people have a definite idea of what a million of money means. Suppose a man were set down before a pile containing one million of sovereigns, and were told that the whole should be his provided he counted the sum before he slept, what frantic efforts he would make to keep awake and win the prize! But it would be all in vain. Supposing him to go right on, counting at the rate of a sovereign each second, for three days and three nights, he would