

warned Mr. Wiggins quickly. "Don't go a-singin' any of that camp-meetin' talk. Yuh gotta look at this thing right. Here's a good job with real money an' if you don't git it, somebody else will. The world owes every feller the eats an' sleeps an' them as don't grab 'em off has only got themselves to blame. I aint stickin' 'round myself any longer'n necessary to land my farm up there where you come from; but yuh'll just let me peel off a fifty fer y'r first week's pay an' not bite off y'r nose to spite y'r face."

Wiggins suited the action to the word, but Gibbs promptly shoved the bill back across the table and shook his head.

"Thanks, Nap. But first let's go and see—the 'Doctor.'"

The Smythe Medical Company had offices on the seventh floor of a nearby skyscraper and Gibbs was soon taking stock of the Company's luxuriously furnished reception room while Wiggins was "fixing it" with the Doctor himself in the latter's private office. Glittering diplomas with gold and red seals hung here and there on the walls in handsome frames of Circassian walnut. Strange and highly colored charts ruthlessly flayed the human body and exposed the inner mysteries of anatomy. There was a glass case, full of queer and murderous looking surgical instruments which might well be calculated to impress the uninitiated. There was a shield, covered with purple velvet, to which was pinned a number of medals. A subtle, indefinable odor of disinfectants pervaded the place with a suggestion of hospitals.

Once an inner door opened and Gibbs caught a glimpse of a big room full of

desks at which sat girls with piles of correspondence, and printed matter in front of them—scores of girls, it seemed. There was a rattle of typewriters, a rustling of many papers and a subdued murmur—then the door closed again. The Smythe Medical Company was certainly doing a land-office business, whatever might be said as to the efficacy of their remedies.

Presently Wiggins reappeared at the door of the private office and in response to his beckoning finger Gibbs followed him into the presence of Doctor Lorenzo Smythe. He found himself staring at a big-bodied man who sat hunched over a mahogany desk, a man with flabby pasty cheeks and eyes that had the appearance of being abnormally small behind the exceptional thickness of his glasses. Gibbs was conscious of an intuitive dislike as he advanced across the thick Turkish rug.

Smythe swept the clean-cut athletic figure of the big Manitoban with an indifferent glance.

"How do?" he bobbed perfunctorily and waved one pudgy hand toward a chair.

Before the interview was half over Gibbs had made up his mind to refuse whatever offer was made to him. His dislike for the man was so strong and was growing so rapidly as he sat there that the young farmer found himself wanting to get up and do him a bodily injury in pure disgust of his conceit, his hypocrisy, his whole shallow make-up. The feeling caused Gibbs to check himself sharply; it made him angry with himself. One thing was certain—he could never work

for this man, even if he were engaged in selling Bibles to Sunday school workers.

"I'll pay you forty a week to start," Smythe suddenly concluded. "Mr. Wiggins here recommends you highly an' I'm willin' to take the chance." He gathered together a sheaf of signed letters as he spoke and pushed a desk button.

Gibbs was just opening his mouth for a flat refusal when he got his first glimpse of the girl. Notebook in hand, she came in through a door on the left—a trim little figure in a black dress with white lace collar and cuffs. Her features were distinctly highbred; her eyes dark and expressive. It wasn't that she was such a pretty girl; but there was about her an indefinable attractiveness, a wholesomeness that appealed. She silently took the letters which Smythe extended and went out again.

Gibbs cleared his throat.

"I accept your offer, Doctor, and am ready to begin work any time," was what he said.

II

The week that followed was one of great events. On Monday Gibbs was formally introduced to Miss Collins and helped her rearrange the advertising files which were in her care. Tuesday was the day he discovered that Nap Wiggins had a very high opinion of a certain cousin of Miss Collins. On Wednesday both he and Wiggins paid an evening call at Miss Collins' little flat and met Miss Collins' mother—and the cousin. On Thursday Gibbs went alone to the aforesaid little flat to restore a tiny handkerchief which Miss Collins had dropped as

she was leaving the office. Friday—Friday was a day of culmination; or rather it was Friday night the thing happened.

It had been planned that the advertising department would leave the city on Saturday on their first joint trip into the country. Wiggins had been busy all week, gathering together his material, arranging his itinerary and initiating his assistant into the devious mysteries of testimonial hunting. It appeared that there was a rake-off for Messrs. Wiggins and Gibbs, over and above salary, on every ignorant humpkin whom they got to sign the testimonial for a cash consideration: five dollars extra if they secured his photo.

As the week progressed, however, Gibbs noted that Mr. Wiggins' enthusiasm was undergoing a change. The change was very gradual and on the surface Wiggins maintained the same buoyant garrulity that was characteristic of him. But to Gibbs, who was thrown much in his company, it was apparent that the other was not altogether himself. At first he attributed it to the fact that this was the longest consecutive period which Nap had spent inside the office and that he was merely chafing at the indoor work. As the days went by, however, Gibbs noted an increasing pre-occupation in the ex-showman's manner and an increasing tendency to keep to himself. Gibbs said nothing, but watched covertly; he liked Nap and secretly hoped he had not been getting into any kind of trouble.

Thursday afternoon Wiggins had dropped a slip of paper, on which was written a telephone number. On restoring this, Gibbs had been favored with a keen look

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Britain's Greatest Victory

1838-1847

By J. A. Stevenson

ARTICLE IV.

Defeating the Landed Aristocracy

When the session of 1843 opened there was an unfortunate incident between Peel and Cobden in Parliament, which was due to a misinterpretation of one of Cobden's statements, but undoubtedly had some effect in drawing Peel away for the time being from the free trade cause. Cobden asked the House to hold the Premier individually responsible for the position of the country and Peel proceeded to interpret the words as meaning personally responsible. The Premier seized the opportunity to make a biting attack on Cobden, which the House as a whole applauded and the latter's enemies spoke of him as politically ruined. By the country rallied to Cobden's side and meetings were held in many places to protest against the treatment which the free trade leader had received. The year 1843 saw a great agitation in each of the three kingdoms. Daniel O'Connell was rousing Ireland with his outcry for repeal; Scotland was engaged in the famous religious schism which led to the Disruption, and in England the Corn Law League was daily gaining ground. By this time the League had converted to free trade by far the larger number of manufacturers, merchants, shop-keepers and the better class artisans. They now turned to other elements and set to work to prove the injuries which the Corn Laws inflicted upon the tenant farmers and laborers, in fact on every class except the landlords. The time was ripe: the farmers were securing low prices and the rabid protectionists in the country were disgusted at the free trade concessions in the budget.

Cobden a National Figure

The speakers of the League met with bitter opposition in many places and fierce debates with protectionist champions were frequent. At Dorchester there was an attempt to storm the platform, but the Free Traders were prepared and, aided by the friendly laborers, repulsed the attack of the monopolists, who were mostly corn factors, estate agents and other satellites of the landlords. Cobden always asked his opponents to show in which way farmers and farm laborers had profited by the Corn Laws since 1815. At Aylesbury, which was a great protectionist stronghold, Lord Nugent, who presided at a meeting, declared

that the opponents of free trade were as few as its supporters would have been twenty years before. At Colchester there was a great contest between Cobden and Mr. C. P. Villiers vs. Sir John Tyrrell and Mr. Ferrand, two redoubtable Protectionists. The battle raged for six hours and the Free Traders achieved a striking victory. At this time Cobden practically lived on public platforms and his position in the country became second to none in politics. The subject of the condition of the people was even discussed in Parliament and Cobden lost no opportunities of making his points in favor of free trade. When a county member moved what amounted to a vote of censure on the League, Cobden retorted with an account of the state of the laborers of the member's own estates and proved that in his county of Dorset one out of every seven of the population was a pauper. Later in the session he made a vigorous attack on the sugar duties and the policy of preference to the produce of British Colonies when the latter contributed nothing to the revenues and burdened the Mother Country with civil and military expenses. The whole colonial trade amounted only to \$10,000,000 a year and \$5,000,000 was spent by the Mother Country to secure it. At this time Gladstone was prepared to expound eloquently the principles of free trade, but was ready to give clever reasons for not applying them. However, Cobden declared that unless there was a general revival free trade was bound to come from the necessities of the Exchequer. At the end of the session Bright and Cobden continued their campaign. They were ubiquitous; one day at Manchester, another at Lincoln, another at Salisbury, then in Haddingtonshire. They had a splendid campaign in Scotland and the North of England, ending up with two fine meetings in Hull.

Millions of Tracts Circulated

It is interesting to recount the statistics of the Anti-Corn Law agitation as shown by the report of 1843. Five hundred persons had been employed in distributing tracts from house to house and 5,000,000 had been delivered to parliamentary electors, while the total distributed to non-electors and others had been upwards of 9,000,000. One hundred and forty

towns had been visited and there had been a vast number of meetings in purely agricultural districts. £50,000 had been expended in the current year and during the next year nearly £90,000 had actually been raised. The circulation of the free trade newspaper, whose name had now been changed to "The League," was 30,000. Cobden believed in the efficiency of a vast propaganda. He always felt that if the truth was brought to peoples' doors they must embrace it. In October, 1843, his cause won a notable victory, when in the city of London, the centre of the financial world, a Free Trader was returned after a vigorous contest with the Protectionists, who were backed up by all the government influence. In 1844 the Corn Laws fell into the background through a temporary revival of trade. In reply to the assertion that the rate of wages was regulated by the price of corn, and that a lower price of corn meant a fall in wages, Cobden skillfully turned the attack against the protectionist land owners, by describing the moral, social and economic state of the rural laborers and stating that it was the fear of reduction of this condition which caused the Chartist agitation in the towns. He declared that a starving population could never form a valuable class of domestic consumers of corn.

Dispute Over Factory Acts

At this period Cobden and other leaders began to fear that the completion of their labors would take a longer time than they anticipated. They decided to abandon the pocket boroughs controlled by the aristocracy, which were hopeless from their point of view, and to concentrate on the manufacturing cities and the larger constituencies where a change of public opinion could be hoped for. Meantime Parliament occupied a considerable portion of its time with social legislation, such as the Factory Acts. The development of manufactures and the increase and distribution of the population forced upon the nation a crowd of new difficulties and circumstances with which it was ill prepared to deal. To illustrate the change in 1818 it was estimated that 57,000 people were employed in cotton factories and by 1840 the number had risen to 469,000. Throughout this famous Parliament of 1841 to 1847 there

was undoubtedly a great effort, both on the part of the Premier and his more enlightened colleagues and of independent reformers and philanthropists of all kinds, to regulate and ameliorate a state of society which had threatened to become unmanageable. Cobden and his friends were strong individualists and the charge has been brought against them that they selfishly resisted the Factory Acts which regulated the hours and conditions of labor and industry. These acts were zealously favored by the country landlords as a weapon to annoy the manufacturers.

Believed in Cheap Food

It is false to charge Cobden with indifference to the condition of the working classes. What he maintained was that all restrictions and regulations of industry ought to be secured by the demands and independent action of the workmen themselves and not by the assistance of the law. He believed that the cheapening of food would do more to ameliorate the conditions of the artisan classes and put them in a better position to take independent action for their own protection than a score of legislative enactments. In 1844 the League started new tactics and began to give systematic attention to electoral registration. The Free Traders had a powerful position in 150 borough and city seats, but even in their stronghold of Lancashire they were weak in the county divisions. There was in the Reform Act a clause known as the 40 shilling freehold clause, which entitled a man who held land valued at 40 shillings to qualify for a vote. Cobden appealed to the large class of shop-keepers and mechanics who had saved a little money to invest it in such a freehold and there was a widespread response from the class appealed to. The plan was enthusiastically taken up and by 1845 between four and five thousand new electors had been brought upon the list in Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire, where it is calculated that over \$1,000,000 was invested by individuals for this purpose. Very many persons in other parts of the country, who believed in Cobden's policies, took his advice and qualified for an extra vote and the plan contributed much to the further diminution of the power of the landed aristocracy.