

THE RISE AND DECLINE OF THE FREE TRADE MOVEMENT

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The rise and decline of the free trade movement by W. Cunningham

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W. CUNNINGHAM

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THE RISE AND DECLINE
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TO THE
MEMBERS OF THE
COMPATRIOTS CLUB.

The same inventions which make vast political unions possible, tend to make states which are on the old scale of magnitude, unsafe, insignificant, second rate.

SHELBY, *Expansion of England*, 88.

PREFACE.

THIS volume consists of the substance of a course which I gave in the Michaelmas Term of 1903; it was planned with the view of presenting to members of the University a dispassionate survey of the main issues involved in the present fiscal controversy. The lectures have been written out from notes which were taken at the time by my daughter, who has also helped me in supplying additional illustrations.

Complaint was made by some of my audience that they could not tell which side I took. I fear I do not know for certain what my views might have been in 1783, or 1823 or 1846; I have never speculated about pre-natal political affinities. As to the impending issue, the case is different. It hardly seems possible that any one, who has been influenced by the political ideas of Sir John Seeley and is true to the economic teaching of Adam Smith, should hesitate. I hope to march with the men who have wisdom to reconsider a decision, honesty to acknowledge a blunder, and courage to try to retrieve it.

The demand for a second edition has given me the opportunity of making a few trifling emendations. I have also added to the volume two lectures which have been already published in pamphlet form. *The Real Richard Cobden* was written out from my notes,