

1880—1881

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There are tides and currents in man's awareness of mankind's affairs, and in today's retrospect we can see that 1879, the year of *Progress and Poverty*, marks as well as a date can the beginning of a mighty flow. 'That was when the civic conscience awoke in' wrote Jacob Riis twenty years later, in remembrance of the war on the New York slums.

To see the matter in a national perspective, we may glance backward and forward, half a century each way. Of the hundred years beginning with the age of Jackson and coming down to present times, the '80s were a flood time of resentment and criticism of the industrial order. The first New York printings of Henry George's great book came early among the freshets of that protest; and, during the ten years which followed, the new editions and translations of *Progress and Poverty*, the writing and publication of Henry George's next three books, and all but one of his famous campaigns for office and reform contributed more than did the work of any other individual to the awakening of conscience in the United States of the modern period. The decade 1880 to 1890 included also: the early critiques of business monopoly by Henry Demarest Lloyd; Edward Bellamy's famous utopian novel, and a many-faceted revival of socialism in the country; America's first large advance of social-gospel Christianity, kin to a movement in England; the labor insurgency of 1886 which brought on the near-

est thing to a general strike in our history; the rapid growth and rapid decline of the Knights of Labor, and the emergence of the American Federation of Labor; agrarian protest in South and West more organized and effective than in any earlier day; immigration on a scale and of a type unprecedented in history; and Congress's first round of monopoly regulation, the famous railroad and antitrust legislation of 1887 and 1890. Assimilating strains and anxieties, Americans were seized by incredible

fears that the country had come to the brink of disaster; and yet most national leaders asserted that economic individualism contained all the wisdom needed to guide us toward the good life Andrew Carnegie extolled. It was a disturbing time for reflective minds.

Every one of the events just listed represents a development in an area of life or thought with which Henry George had long been familiar; and we shall have to return to them all, because his activities of the '80s either influenced or were influenced by every one. But George had not written *Progress and Poverty* for Americans alone, and, as quickly as the book was recognized at home, in a few cases more quickly, it was recognized overseas as well. Early in the '80s it reached British, Continental, and antipodean horizons. In its own day perhaps more readily than now, readers and reviewers understood that *Progress and Poverty* belonged in a context of thought and theory not confined by national boundaries, though the ideas were characteristically American, and belonged in a time sequence longer than that of the usual problem book of a depression era, though *Progress and Poverty* was that as well.

To estimate the career of the book at all proportionately, 1864 is not too early to begin, on the American side, with the little-remembered great book of a New England scholar. In the year of Henry George's very earliest printed writing, George Perkins Marsh brought out *Man and Nature*, a powerful work of cumulated scientific, historical, and moral insight into mankind's dependence on the resources of the earth. About the time George was laboring on his own manuscript, the Marsh volume was beginning, Gifford Pinchot tells us, to do its effective work of supplying inspiration and resource to the makers of the conservation movement in America.

And simultaneously, just two years ahead of *Progress and Poverty*, Lewis Henry Morgan of upstate New York summed up three decades of investigation and thought about Indian anthropology, and related it to the history of all mankind. *His Ancient Society, or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress* attaches rather to the Whiggish than to the Jeffersonian branch of American thought; and it is worth noticing that by a not too incongruous marriage of ideas it was taken into the family of Marxism by Friedrich Engels in his book on the *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, which appeared in 1884. The Marsh and Morgan volumes can be considered efforts of social thought as profound as George's, but they are

books which, in contrast to *Progress and Poverty*, emphasize the organizational, rather than the emancipating, needs of society. To put the matter in a second genealogical figure of speech: these books represent the birth, into the large family of American social thought, of new ideas from the Hamiltonian side, cousins of the theories from the Jeffersonian side which George had sired on the West coast.

The fact that neither Marsh nor Morgan ever approached a popularity comparable to George's does not mean that ideals of organization or conservation were remote from public questions in their day. Related to *Man and Nature* in purpose, the famous report on the *Public Domain* by Thomas Donaldson was published as a congressional document in 1879; and almost simultaneously John Wesley Powell's like-minded *Report on the Lands of the Arid Region* made its appearance, also in Washington. More closely kin than followers of Henry George have often recognized, there was intellectual and political coincidence, both, between his land-and-labor movement and the save-our-forests movement at the national capital.

While Congress was investigating and the United States Geological Survey beginning its work, moreover, the universities were staking out wide new interests in the condition of the land and the economy. Harvard and Cornell were unusual in having professors interested in forestry. But the land-grant colleges with their agricultural and mining studies were building up, and government experimental farms were being started. And whereas the University of California had been typical, lacking a professor of economics when Henry George lectured, the decade of the '80s dates the appearance of a specialized and organized profession of economics in American higher learning. That profession, in fact, probably did more than the other new professions in the social sciences — those in history, sociology, and political science — to begin in earnest during the '80s the modern-age practice of colleges: the cultivation of professorial experts in the affairs of the Republic, as well as of experts in the humanities and in the natural sciences.

From many and diverse directions poured the writings which made the decade as great in the history of the social mind as in the history of the social conscience. Parkman brought out *Montcalm and Wolfe*, a climax in his study of rival empires; George Bancroft concluded his half a century task of writing an idealistic history of the United States; and Hubert Howe

Bancroft completed the seventh and final volume of his *History of California*, economic life included — these last two histories known and appreciated by George. While veterans rounded off their studies, men in their forties asserted themselves. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., still a professor and about to become a judge, ventured in his lectures on the *Common Law* the new pragmatic doctrine; Henry Adams launched his incomparable nine volumes on the *History of the United States during the Administrations of Jefferson and Madison*; and a visitor from Oxford, James Bryce, composed his famous treatise on the *American Commonwealth* — for the California chapter of which he acknowledged a large debt to Henry George. In this same decade able young men stepped forward, also. Woodrow Wilson did his parliament-minded doctoral dissertation on *Congressional Government*; and John Bates Clark pushed steadily ahead with his articles, and brought out the book, *The Philosophy of Wealth*, which marked his young leadership among academic economists. In a fullness not yet sufficiently studied or understood, the '80s mark a formative and creative decade in social scholarship in America; and a doubt may be ventured that Darwinian evolution is as surely the key to unlock its secrets as sometimes appears.

Concerning Britain and Europe, no more is required in anticipation than simply to recollect that transformations had been reached not different from those in the United States. For the destruction of slavery in the United States, substitute the crumbling of the hierarchical order in Britain, just as it was defended so brilliantly by Bagehot in 1867; in lieu of agrarian protest here, substitute Ireland and the Irish land problem, and falling prices for farm products, there; and in place of our labor insurgency of 1886, substitute the more successful dock strike in the mother country. The greater British John Bates Clark was Alfred Marshall his contemporary; and during the '70s their Stubbs, their Gardiner, their Green, their Lecky, and their Acton set models for our own vigorous new historical scholarship.

At the line where social thought challenged social condition, Britain of course knew Karl Marx a little, as his long-time London host. More frequently than in America, critics and menders of society were ready to study his ideas and adapt them to national need. But the Christian Socialists and the Fabians rejected Marx; and a real analogy exists between such people as Sidney Webb and Bernard Shaw and their contemporaries in this

country, such collectivist-minded wielders of the pen as Henry Demarest Lloyd, Edward Bellamy, William Dean Howells, and Hamlin Garland. How British architects of the positive state owed more, or at any rate acknowledged greater debt, to George than did their American brothers in spirit is a considerable part of the coming story.

Of course the international coincidences of the awakening of social conscience were no coincidences at all. They were variants, rather, of the social and intellectual transformations that followed on the industrialism, the empire building, and the democratic assertions in some degree common to all the nations of Western civilization. Yet no individual case of similarity is more arresting than the parallel between Henry George and his future most distinguished convert. Exactly in 1879, halfway round the world from George, Leo Tolstoy put down in his *Confession* that he had found a way out of spiritual inadequacy — that he had discovered something better than the common beliefs in natural progress and human perfectibility which had beset his thought so far. Except for Tolstoy's turning to Christian love and non-violence, and the international social Christianity his change represents, the Henry George story after 1879 would have been a far less broad and interesting one, and the two decades which remained to him would have been much less effective than they were.

Of some of the great books, great men, and changing ideas of his mature career, Henry George became aware about as soon as anyone could. Of others — Tolstoy among them for some years — he knew as little as a man from Mars. Yet, Platonist who knew little Plato, from before 1879 the author of *Progress and Poverty* believed the ideas he apprehended to be universal truths of unlimited validity and dawning light; and this idealism had present meaning for him. It is wiser to read as practical belief on his part, rather than as airy peroration, those late words in his book: 'The truth that I have tried to make clear will not find easy acceptance. If that could be it would have been accepted long ago. If that could be, it would never have been obscured. But it will find friends — those who will toil for it; suffer for it; if need be, die for it. This is the power of Truth.'

As if to confirm the sincerity of this we have a letter of 1879 to George W. Julian, the elder statesman of anti-slavery and land reform whom George admired most. The letter follows their becoming acquainted while Julian visited California, and it follows also Julian's article in the *Atlantic* which

demanded classification of the lands of the federal domain. Responding to his compliments on receiving a gift copy of *Progress and Poverty*, George wrote a letter which the Indiana statesman chose to preserve: 'I thank you for the good words you tell me you will speak for the book ... You can in this way do it great service.' It is, 'as you say, profoundly religious ... I of course do not know your inner life, but I know that to every man who tries to do his duty there come trials and bitterness in which he needs all the faith he can hold to.'

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Immediately on completing his manuscript, George had sent a copy to Appleton and Company. Appleton was the immensely successful publisher of the American editions of Herbert Spencer's writings, and the publisher also of the International Science Series, and Popular Science Monthly, which promoted the doctrines of Spencer and Darwin in America as no other journal did. The firm's acknowledgment of manuscript must have reached Henry George a few days after the first issue of his little newspaper, the *State*, came out; and their declination must have reached him about eight days later. The book 'has the merit of being written with great clearness and force,' the letter said, 'but it is very ag-gressive. There is very little to encourage the publication of any such work at this time and we feel we must decline it.'

Thus began the author's two-and-a-half-year struggle for recognition. The first step was taken for him by one of his brothers. Advised by William Swinton, Thomas George peddled the manuscript in New York — at Harper's and Scribner's, and until he had no choice but to telegraph San Francisco that 'it seems impossible to get a publisher without plates.'

We know already the second step. William Hinton, George's old partner, now back in the printing business, offered the credit and facilities of his shop, so that George could go ahead with a small author's edition. Beginning in mid-May, both Henry Georges, senior and junior, set type; so did printer friends; and even Dr. Edward Taylor, who also read proof, joined them at the case. Hinton's generosity amounted to risking \$1000 to \$1500, whatever the cost of the plates, which the New York firms were unwilling to venture. This arrangement was rendered more hopeful — more in the nature of an advance than a charity — when a friend of Henry George who

was in New York as agent and trustee of the San Francisco Free Library interceded with William H. Appleton, the head of the firm, and found him, though still making no promises, somewhat disposed to change his mind.

Though altogether the summer of 1879 must have been an anxious one for George — he had now dropped his newspaper, and his state job was bringing in little — there must also have been compensation and excitement in the work of every day. Besides enriching *Progress and Poverty* by adding the conclusion on immortality, the author loosened up the tight mid-section of the book. He subdivided ‘The Remedy’ into the ‘Justice of the Remedy,’ the ‘Application of the Remedy,’ and so on as we have seen. He entered new mottoes and revised details as the typesetting progressed; and he had the solace of friends around him and the encouragement of their faith. Typographically, and as a total piece of manufacture, the result of the summer’s work was very impressive: 500 beautifully printed copies solidly bound in dark cloth covers. ‘It will not be recognized at first,’ George wrote his father as he sent an early gift, ‘maybe not for some time — but it will ultimately be considered a great book, will be published in both hemispheres, and will be translated into different languages.’

Appreciation of the book grew in Mr. Appleton also. Reading the manuscript had kept him awake at night, he confessed to a friend of Henry George, but because *Progress and Poverty* tore to pieces ‘all the recognized authorities on political economy,’ he had not at first dared to publish. But now, with the plates all made, his fears diminished. ‘It appears to me it will create some sort of a sensation anyway, and I don’t think we shall lose anything by publishing it.’ Accordingly within a couple of weeks of the time when copies of the San Francisco edition crossed the continent, the proposition went back to George, that if he would supply the plates, Appleton’s would bring out a New York edition in January. No other publisher so much as nibbled at the bait.

During the fall of waiting — and George had an anxious time about the delayed safe arrival of the plates — a few responses to gift copies came in. With the exceptions of George W. Julian and Sir George Grey, the land reformer who was the first statesman of New Zealand, the general statement would hold that the bigger the public reputation of the recipient, the smaller the comment rendered on the free copies sent out. Sir George made an interesting advance on future sympathy and correspondence. The new book

he regarded as one that surely 'would be of great use' to him. 'It has cheered me much to find that there is so able a man working in California, upon subjects on which I believe the whole future of mankind now mainly hangs.' But while this came from the fighting outer edge, the responses from the center of the British system, those from Gladstone and the Liberal Duke of Argyll, in whom George thought he had discovered sympathetic ideas, amounted to courteous dismissals. Joseph Chamberlain wrote much more cautiously than his future attitude would suggest.

Probably the most encouraging word out of the British Isles came from the distinguished Professor T. E. Cliffe Leslie, of Queens College, Belfast, a strong scholar who had made himself an early critic of the wages fund, and who wrote on land systems and on interest and profit. His first letter assured George that the Manchester School was already more shaken than the journals would indicate; and that though he differed from *Progress and Poverty* on some points, he shared the author's criticism of economic orthodoxy. A year later, when this scholar had an article in the *Fortnightly Review* on 'Political Economy in the United States,' he chose the word 'imagination' for Henry George's work, and he nominated *Progress and Poverty* and the writings of the nationalistic school as the best economics the United States had produced, each in special ways superior to the textbooks of America's professors. At the time of writing the article he invited George to correct his facts before publication, and urged him to write on political economy in America, say in the *North American Review*.

From nearer home George received the encouraging private comments he might have expected from John Swinton of the New York Sun and Charles Nordhoff of the New York *Herald*. The friend who only five months earlier had differed so sharply about the new constitution of California, wrote on 30 October with complete enthusiasm of the delight he discovered in a work of economics dedicated to 'Truth, Nature, and Man,' and strong with the juice of earth. A great relief, observed Swinton, after a bout with the writings of William Graham Sumner.

Nordhoff's tribute, received in December when time was running short on the position of gas-meter inspector, led George to write back about his present troubles and his brighter hopes. 'You speak of the intellectual poverty of this coast. You can hardly understand how deep it is, for of course you came into contact with the highest people, and they must have

seemed to you relatively far more numerous than they really are. This is bad enough; but what is worse is the moral atmosphere — at least in the circles in which I have moved and lived.’ By this George meant California’s materialism, and he confessed that if *Progress and Poverty* should succeed and opportunity come to him, he would choose to do two more books: the first ‘a brief political economy,’ and the second ‘a dissection of this materialistic philosophy which, with its false assumption of science, passes current with so many.’ The chapters he had done on civilization, he said, amounted to no better than the skeleton of an argument, and he had much more to say.

A month later, in a kind of postscript to these reflections, George told Nordhoff of the anxieties he suffered at the time of the New York publication of *Progress and Poverty*. ‘Perhaps it is the deep faith which in Christian faith is expressed in the incarnation; but it is certain that successful efforts for the amelioration of the condition of the lowest class can come from the class above, not below ... And I am anything but sanguine — sometimes this amounts to utter hopelessness of carrying out any real reform.’ Would people read the book? Most especially would it influence those who had the power to affect the common lot? George must have been thinking of the great newspapers, as he shared his worries with this friend. How would metropolitan journalism respond to what he had written?

First indications were anything but cheerful. Though he expected much of the eastern reviewing to wait on the Appleton edition, the New York *Tribune* and *Herald*, papers with editors who had once been his friends, did comment. Greeley’s old paper, now managed by Whitelaw Reid, took a moderate tone in describing the tax remedy, but then pretty much washed its hands of the book by saying that the general thesis — the wrongness of private property in land — must be dismissed because it was quite as speculative as squaring the circle. The *Herald* at mid-December, shortly after the *Tribune*, was wise enough to say that *Progress and Poverty* belongs between the conservative and radical poles of social thought. But its mild opinion could hardly have reassured an author that his effort of analysis was going to command attention and debate.

To be sure Horace White, who as editor of the *Chicago Tribune* had applauded *Our Land and Land Policy*, now called *Progress and Poverty*

‘very impressive.’ In a private letter he agreed that the state might eventually be compelled to confiscate economic rent; but at the same time he rejected George’s analysis of depressions and said that to him it was ‘not quite clear’ that Malthus had been overthrown. While he half promised to say something favorable in print, he was for the time being out of journalism. George would have been less than encouraged, when he received White’s letter, had he been able to foresee White’s later review and the kind of treatment he was going to get from the New York *Evening Post* and the *Nation* after White had become one of the editors of those distinguished journals.

The California reviews of *Progress and Poverty* have the quality of the predetermined. Friendly newspapers spoke first, the Democratic San Francisco *Examiner* and the land-reformist Sacramento *Bee*, the two papers which had gone almost all-out for *Our Land and Land Policy* eight years earlier. Quite properly the writer in the *Examiner* called his piece an ‘announcement’ rather than a review: he made the regional uniqueness of the book his principal theme. *Progress and Poverty* surpassed all earlier California writing, the paper said; it was ‘a product of deep, painstaking, and honest’ thought, and would surely command wide reading and response. The Sacramento *Bee* quoted and took the same line, though its net judgment came closer to being an endorsement. ‘The most wonderful production in its line — political economy — that has been presented to the public since the days of Malthus,’ the review said. ‘In diction it is equal to Macaulay’s purest and best.’

By stroke of either luck or arrangement, Dr. Edward Taylor, the author’s consultant and great friend, did the review for the *Californian*, the new monthly with an old name which now succeeded to the *Overland*. In some ways Dr. Taylor’s review was as it should have been the most perceptive comment of the lot — the passage on the California-mindedness of *Progress and Poverty* has been quoted in the preceding chapter. But a review that would match wits with the book’s central themes and purposes Dr. Taylor was hardly the man to undertake. Other favorable reviewers might have done substantial analyses, but did not; and in this respect Henry George’s friends let him down. In California his book was deeply discussed only a few times, never from a favorable point of view.

The friendly California papers commented on the San Francisco edition; but the adverse reviews all followed Appleton's publication, and one may reasonably interpret the delay to mean that the author's old enemies would have disregarded *Progress and Poverty* pretty unanimously had not New York recognition forced their attention. Yet in all reasonableness some sympathy is due the reviewers for the conservative newspapers on the coast. They could hardly be expected to salute a future classic as delivered from the pen of a gadfly editor; and the argument went over their heads. Thirty odd years later Dr. Arthur N. Young recovered in interviews some of the San Francisco climate of feeling about George as a new author. His brothers in the Bohemian Club pooh-poohed the book; many printers who knew about the venture at Hinton's scoffed at it; and a friend of George, the bookstore keeper who was

chief distributor of *Progress and Poverty* in the city, gave away more than he sold of his stock of 200 copies. In this context the *Alta California* took no more trouble than to print the curtest of dismissals, in the spirit of the red scare. *Progress and Poverty* was simply 'land communism,' it said.

Other newspapers, not nearly as friendly as the *Examiner*, disposed of the need for judgment in the way that paper did, by praising Henry George as a Californian of achievement and by omitting real comment. Yet from the side of Republican journalism, in the columns of the Central Pacific's *Record-Union* of 21 March 1880, there did appear the one serious early review done in California, a performance reminiscent of the *Record's* full treatment of land monopoly and of the proposed reforms of land monopoly in 1873. The Sacramento paper argued at length, as many later reviews would, that George was wrong about Malthus. But it gave him an opportunity, which he relished, to reply — he took eight and a half columns for rebuttal. This proved the nearest he came, before leaving California, to taking up his cause in new strength, in debate with those who held influence and affected policy.

Yet the troubled author must have had a moment of glee in February when a Dr. Montague Levenson, who announced himself an old student of John Stuart Mill and a writer of economics, and who was being obstreperous in the discussions of the Pacific Social Science Association, caused a ripple through the press by a splash in the weekly *Argonaut*. Levenson himself saluted *Progress and Poverty* as 'the book of the half-

century'; and then proved his sincerity by withholding a primer of economics he was writing until he could assimilate the ideas he now accepted. His piece in the *Argonaut* led to an open letter from one who signed himself 'Ex Rebel.' What are you Republicans and ex-abolitionists going to say now, demanded the Southerner, with an irony made possible by the moral of *Progress and Poverty*. 'You scoffed at vested rights, you preached human equality ... Now the spirit you have fostered turns on you in turn. And I am curious to see whether men of your class are going to join in the march, or are going to make a stand against it.'

At about the same time George received another California tribute which in the end came to mean more. The person was C. D. F. Gutschow, a German San Franciscan previously unknown to him, who picked up a copy of the author's edition and was captivated. In December, before the reviews had accumulated, he began to translate into his native language. Years were to pass before George would have reason to learn how good a friend had discovered him, in Gutschow. Of their relationship now we know only that the author gave permission for the translation on single condition of a faithful rendering, and that the translator worked at a pace to complete the job in eight or nine months. It was published in Berlin in 1881 and sold in Europe and America, the first foreign-language version of *Progress and Poverty* and, of ultimately three German translations, it was the only one that ran to more than one edition. The translator knew what he was about. His preface estimated the book more accurately than any California review: a system of economics and sociology, Herr Gutschow announced, which defies the ancient defeatism of economics, a work at once radical and also conservative and religious, individualistic and democratic, yet fearless to expose the evils of democracy, a book neither optimistic nor pessimistic, exactly, a creation of the spirit which defies classification.

But this anticipates and reaches afield. The sum of Henry George's situation, in late winter and as 1880 advanced to spring and summer, was pretty discouraging in San Francisco. In January the new Republican state administration put him out of office. (This seemed right to him even though, since 1878 at odds with his own state party, he had voted for Governor Perkins.) He was in debt again, to Hinton in some amount not paid off by the sale of the San Francisco edition, and perhaps to others. And locally the publication of his book had netted him just one solid review, the adverse

one in the *Record-Union*, one friendly essay, and perhaps ten other — whether favorable or unfavorable, always superficial — notices. The score was no better than that. No wonder the memory stuck when a wealthy landowner, General Beale of Tejon Ranch, sought him out to congratulate him on *Progress and Poverty* as an intellectual performance, and yet assured him that the book would not be read by those it was intended to affect. And equally no wonder he felt dispirited and half ill, and that he wrote Dr. Taylor, who had gone to Washington, please in his behalf to call on ‘Redpath or some other of the Lecture Bureau people.’

He felt that he must go east somehow.

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Though George remained in California until midsummer 1880, his real center of gravity, his thought-life of hope and planning, shifted across the continent in January. Indeed the temptation is to say that before year’s end, 1879, it had made a quick crossing of the Atlantic, two years ahead of his first visit in Europe. He accepted an invitation, at any rate, to contribute an article about ‘The Irish Land Question’ to the Christmas issue of the *Sacramento Bee*. The article has so much in common with the little book of the same title, 1881, and in turn that book connected him so directly with overseas affairs, that it is easy to think he wrote for the *Bee* less to inform the people of Sacramento and to earn a fee, than to call the attention of Irish radicals to his own ideas. More roundly than ever in the *Monitor* or the *Post* he applied his perception to the homeland of many Californians; and comparatively from the two places he read again the lessons of land monopolization. He said that in California rents rose sometimes to one-third or even one-half of the land’s product; he offered Buckle’s opinion that in Ireland they came to one-fourth or so; and comparing the politics of protest he described Parnell as an ‘educated Dennis Kearney.’ He left his readers with one impression: inadequacy of land-reform leadership in both Ireland and California — and the world around. Very shortly he sent twenty-five copies of the Appleton *Progress and Poverty* to John Russell Young to pass on ‘to the radicals or the leaders of the Irish movement’ in New York.

Publication in New York, which came off according to schedule in January 1880, shifted the question of George’s future from whether *Progress and Poverty* would be published to whether or not publication

would succeed before the wider world. And also, though the writer's anxieties were many, it brought the comfort of new allies. Appleton publicized Henry George by way of promoting the book. The March issue of *Popular Science Monthly* carried, besides a friendly — though unsigned and undistinguished — review of *Progress and Poverty*, George's 1877 University of California lecture on 'The Science of Political Economy.' Four months later the same magazine brought out his article on Kearney. And the March number was hardly distributed before Professor E. L. Youmans, the famous editor, proposed certain more complicated strategy.

The newspapers that should be reviewing *Progress and Poverty*, he wrote, were 'afraid of it, and would do it no justice.' So at Mr. Appleton's request he had engaged a writer to do an essay on the book, and the result so pleased him that he was going to make it the lead article for April. George of course acceded, though his twenty-five dollar half-payment of the writer's fee hurt at the moment; and the result was a handsome survey article in the most appropriate journal in the country. Four appearances within six months in *Popular Science Monthly* — two articles of his own, two about his book — may be accounted generous publicity for a previously unknown writer.

And in fact the first resistance against *Progress and Poverty* did begin to yield. In February Appleton reported that reviews 'very good generally' were coming in, but sales were few; and in March, that the first edition of 1000 copies was nearly exhausted and 500 more would be printed. By the end of that month, A. J. Steers, a youthful employee of the firm, succeeded in persuading Mr. Appleton that a cheap edition — to be issued at \$1, half the regular price — would be appropriate and successful. Naturally this delighted Henry George, the more because young Steers wrote that his mind had been fired by the principles of the book.

Meanwhile on 14 March *Progress and Poverty* had had its best newspaper criticism so far, ten and a half columns by M. W. Hazeltine in the New York *Sun*. Receiving that newspaper's recommendation that the country take *Progress and Poverty* as a very serious book prompted George to share with a friend a flash of hope, on the anniversary of sending the manuscript to New York. 'After the toil and pains of the writing came the anxiety, the rebuff, the weary waiting; and I have longed that by this day at least there might be some sign that the seed I had tried to plant there had not

fallen by the wayside. This review is that sign; it secures for my book that attention which is all I ask.' Just a bit earlier the New York Critic had noticed his Berkeley lecture as printed in the *Popular Science Monthly*, a pleasant pat on the back from an exacting journal.

Later spring and early summer brought mixed voices but a growing response. Patrick Ford's *Irish World*, the leading Irish newspaper in America and one with a rather radical slant, naturally liked *Progress and Poverty* but grumbled with a socialistic sound at the way George condoned interest taking. To George's great satisfaction the same paper revised and printed in April his Christmas article on 'The Irish Land Question.' This suited him better, he said, than going ahead as he had planned with a similar article in the *North American Review*. On the other side, the *New York Times* — which was then a Republican paper and had not yet built up the special authority it voices today — spoke in utter condemnation. This reviewer's method was simply to blast at the heterodox first quarter of *Progress and Poverty*, the book's rejection of accepted economic ideas, and to pay little attention to the rest. George had had that kind of review in California, and would have it again, many times, in Britain.

The difference between the *New York Times* and the *Irish World* indicates the completely unsettled standing of *Progress and Poverty* half a year after New York publication. So far there had not been, any more than in California, any serious intellectual discussion of the book. But there was real encouragement in the way in which important national newspapers had indicated interest. This much was better than the West coast; and, though the New York response to his book had not quickly given him any such salute as he craved, at least he was still free to hope for that salute — the doors were open and not closed.

This was the eastern situation when George made up his mind to leave San Francisco, and leave his family awhile, and venture alone the move to New York City. John Russell Young made good on the advice he had given. He lent George money, and gave specific suggestions about how to cross the continent. Unless he could afford the best accommodations, this globe-trotter suggested, he had better take the immigrant cars. He would have to sit up anyway, and he would do well to have the experience from which he could write up immigrant travel. This was tactful advice, for apparently George had had no more than \$250 advanced from his publishers, and no

other income since December. For whatever solace of pride, he traveled as California member of a commission recently set up by President Hayes (Governor Perkins had nominated him), for a fair to be held in New York to celebrate the centennial of the peace treaty with Great Britain.

From Winnemucca George wrote back to San Francisco: 'I am enjoying the trip and am full of hope. The spell is broken and I have taken a new start.' Yet this mood had to yield to stoicism when he reached New York, in August. He found that sales were going poorly. Young was out of town, and the employment Young had thought he might have on the *Herald* never materialized. Nor were the recent criticisms, which amounted to a kind of rounding off of first journalistic reaction to *Progress and Poverty*, anything too favorable.

Probably the New York *Nation's* two-issue review, which has been attributed to Horace White and which George likely understood to have been written by the recent writer of encouraging letters, hit him first when he reached the city. The honor of the review lay in the way it took *Progress and Poverty* seriously, and allotted it precious space. But the reviewer rejected the book three ways: in a shaded and scholarly criticism of George's anti-Malthusianism and his total dismissal of wages-fund doctrine; in direct attacks on his interest theory and depression theory (White also made himself one of the few to assert that rents in England were probably declining); and in a silent refusal to consider more of the book than what we have called its economic syllogism. The review did admit a certain expediency — not related to George's logic of principle — in the case for land nationalization with owners compensated; it nowhere suggested that *Progress and Poverty* so much as contained what this biography names the moral sequence of its thought.

Quite likely Henry George's being alone in New York was the occasion of starting the scrapbook collection, later kept by other hands, in which are gathered together hundreds of reviews of his books and notices of his public addresses. The collection helps us to perceive a regional pattern which was quick to develop in the reviewing of *Progress and Poverty*. Most of the early reviews came from the industrial northeast, and occasional ones came from the South, while journals in the Middle West were pretty silent. From the heart of the old Confederacy, for instance, the *Charleston News and Courier*, printing a very long summary of the book, commented that

though few Southerners would be likely to accept Henry George's remedy, his book demanded consideration, and that readers would be persuaded to tolerate no longer the squandering of the public lands. Why, questioned the *Brooklyn Eagle* (perhaps with this very review in mind) did the agrarian South sometimes take to Henry George? Because, it answered, *Progress and Poverty* shows that serfdom is quite as unjust as chattel slavery. Never frequently, but beginning now (and more often later, we shall see, after George had made himself powerful spokesman for free trade), the question that 'Ex Rebel' had asked in San Francisco was repeated in the South: How far will Henry George's applications of Yankee notions be accepted, in attack broader than the anti-slavery crusade?

At the same time, the newspapers and magazines of New England were beginning to enter the discussion. In the Boston *Christian Register*, the leading Unitarian journal, the Reverend George A. Thayer recorded the religious spirit of *Progress and Poverty* as completely as almost all the other reviewers were omitting it. 'It is so full of the milk of human kindness, so sympathetic with the world's misery and so religious in temper while withal so bright and unhackneyed in its comparisons and illustrations, that it is one of the most wholesome and stimulating books ... that has been provided for many a day.' Suggestive of the line he would trace in the not distant future, Edward Atkinson, layman and liberal businessman of Boston, fired back at this review, asserting that in America industry helps everyone. But the reverend critic had the final word, answering correctly that George did not blame industrial technology for poverty.

Authentic secular voices of New England were heard when the *Springfield Republican* in June and the *Atlantic Monthly* in the fall printed reviews. The famous inland paper, which had been strong against the extension of slavery and yet moderate toward the South during Reconstruction, compared George's book with Blanqui's critical *History of Political Economy* in Europe, and agreed that *Progress and Poverty* had struck at 'the current conceptions of political economy with much vigor and some success.' The reviewer doubted that the end of private property in land would come in his day. The *Atlantic Monthly* — among the major magazines early to comment — assigned the task to two reviewers, side by side, with an eight-page result. First William B. Weeden, manufacturer and writer, and future economic historian of New England, quarreled with

George's technical procedures, with his distrust of current notions of progress, and particularly with his labor-employs-capital idea. He allowed some virtues to the book's thought and expression but he believed that 'to revert to a common property in land would be a backward course,' and that to go backward means decay. Not so Mr. Weeden's associate in reviewing, Mr. Willard Brown, who barely quibbled with *Progress and Poverty's* analysis. Though admitting that the reform would 'rob the landholders,' he was willing to 'confess we see no other means by which the laborers can ultimately better their condition, and Mr. George's plan is one of the least objectionable means of that character.'

Private comment rather than public gives a hint that the year 1880 contained just a beginning of George's career of winning, more than readers and friends, real converts to his ideas — and that sometimes the opposite happened. We learn from certain letters that George was in contact, again, with David Ames Wells, and that the economist who had once been a kind of mentor sent some criticism of *Progress and Poverty*, and discussed the 'moral inertia' which prevents reform ideas from doing their logical work. Though George's trying to see Wells in New York indicates a continuing friendly relationship, it becomes clear that the new book drew lines of separation, rather than affinity, between them. On the other hand, as the cases of A. J. Steers of Appleton's and the translator, Herr Gutschow, indicate, occasional individuals were already beginning to announce that *Progress and Poverty* had changed their lives. George says that there were others. 'Youmans says I don't make converts,' he wrote Dr. Taylor, but 'I find them in all directions. Every day I get letters.'

Confidence was growing, at least by fits and starts.

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On first arrival in New York George had the excitement and pleasure of meeting people who wanted to see him, and to whom he was important. Professor Youmans and Patrick Ford, the two editors most concerned, both treated him warmly, and he liked them both. He learned at once that though he might be disappointed in sales so far, Appleton's was willing to go ahead with the cheap edition; and very soon the word came that part of the German edition — the translation was to appear first in installments, according to German habit — would be out in September. At Youmans'

suggestion, George ran up to Boston to see William Swinton, his old friend from Oakland days and after.

But in the nature of the case it was a grim situation he had to ride out. Back in San Francisco Annie was having a hard time. Within less than a month she moved from the First Street house to something that cost less, and before long she had changed to boarding as less expensive than housekeeping. George agreed to both moves, yet the decision hurt to sell his books and abandon 'my pleasant little house — that I was so comfortable in.' It hurt also that his wife had to borrow from his friends in San Francisco: 'It is at such a time as this a man feels the burden of a family. It is like swimming with heavy clothes on.'

He could not protect the boys from the strain, and given the situation it is characteristic of him that he did not try — rather used the situation for education in the school of life. To fifteen-year-old Richard, who was doing undistinguished work at school, he made the same recommendation his father had made to him after the trip to India; learn to set type, he suggested. And he told the boys — Henry was at work — that they would have to support their mother and sisters should anything befall him. In the same season he confessed to Dr. Taylor that he felt crowded near the limit of spiritual strength. 'I did feel depressed when I wrote you,' he said at Thanksgiving time, 'but it was not so much on account of circumstances. I am in the way of being a good deal of a Stoic. Adverse fortune does not depress me — what always worries me is the thought I might have done better, that it is myself that is to blame, and it seemed to me then as if I had been fooling my time away very largely.' And the next spring, when he paid back a twenty-dollar loan from the same friend, he admitted that at the time of borrowing — 'my darkest hour' — he had been morbid, quite able to understand why men kill themselves.

In New York George lived in as inexpensive a way as possible. We have the testimony of a new acquaintance, Poultney Bigelow, a young lawyer, who was the son of a prominent family and who, recently graduated from Yale, had studied economics under William Graham Sumner. Lending George books, and absorbing an influence which would affect his future writing, Bigelow gained an indelible memory. Living in the slums, he says, Henry George had to pick his way along sidewalks crowded with ashcans and refuse; neglected streets with abominable pavements; children with no

place to play save the gutters.’ The irresistible thing was the man’s conviction that he could change all that. ‘He was a saintly man; he walked with angels.’

But George’s most reassuring friendship at this time was with John Russell Young — the one intimate, according to Anna George de Mille, who never fully adopted her father’s ideas. In the latter months of 1880 Young lost both child and wife; and the two lonely men took midnight walks on the Battery, and sometimes went to the park or to Westchester for companionship and talk. Young admired as Bigelow did Henry George’s incredible courage: ‘It was a daring experiment — this unknown gentleman with no aid but his own high spirit, nothing in his carpet-bag but one book of gospel, coming at 42 to make his way into the heart of mighty Babylon. The more I studied George under heavy conditions the more I admired him. His ability and his courage; his honesty, independence, and intellectual power were those of a leader of men ... It was the courage which, as has been written, makes one a majority.’

The first invitations George received to appear in public in New York were requests appropriate to his record as a Tilden orator and campaigner in 1876. Youmans asked for a political article to come out just before election, in the *Popular Science Monthly*; and a Democratic committee asked him to address a whole series of working men’s meetings. George was particularly ready to renew his speaking career, and he chose to talk about the tariff. But as luck fell his first appearance followed a speaker who sounded to him more like a Republican than a Democrat, and he could not resist the opportunity to counter with full free-trade doctrine. The son of a customhouse clerk demanded that all customhouses be abolished. The audience applauded; but the speaker received an immediate wire from party headquarters to make no more speeches. For him the one good outcome of the event was that he captured the admiration of Andrew McLean, the managing editor of the *Brooklyn Eagle*. This led to another speech, and in the long run to an affinity and a cluster of Brooklyn admirers. But George’s grand reaction to the campaign and the campaigning took him back to his mood of 1871 and 1872, in a fresh disillusionment about political parties. ‘Yes; look at the Republican Party, and look at the Democratic Party. It is pot and kettle. I am done.’

He fared no better as an election-time journalist than as campaign speaker. Youmans turned down the article he had asked for, and George regarded the event as a not very big ‘stumble’ but a disturbing one.

Real relief for a man at sixes and sevens seemed to come just after the election, when Appleton arranged for him a chance to do some economic writing. Congressman Abram S. Hewitt, who had just returned home from Europe, needed help, which today would be called research assistance and ghost-writing, for a Congressional investigation of labor conditions. Though George had promised himself no hack writing, this opportunity he could not refuse, and it was as attractive as such a thing could be. Hewitt had much in his favor as employer: as son-in-law and partner of Peter Cooper in iron and steel, he was a wealthy man; as first lieutenant to Governor Tilden, he belonged at the center of the reformist wing of the New York Democracy; as a public benefactor, he had become the kind of capitalist for which George had expressed admiration in the *Post*. Best of all, George learned from Appleton that Hewitt admired *Progress and Poverty*; and such a feeling seems to be corroborated by the ideas about labor and poverty which Hewitt voiced in his speeches.

The agreement between employer and employee pledged George to anonymity and secrecy, and gave Hewitt freedom to use as his own whatever data George’s investigations might produce. George asked, and understood that he was promised, \$50 a week for three hours a day — he thought that he should be paid a journalist’s wages — ‘till the thing is done or either of us is dissatisfied.’ For a fortnight at least George worked in the Hewitt house on Gramercy Park; and this prosperity led him to rent a comfortable bedroom and to buy some new clothes. His research involved going through a pile of Congressional documents. Very soon he had a first draft, and he was sure that Hewitt was ‘*much* pleased’ with the work. But when he requested a payment of \$100 — he had already had one hundred, and apparently was asking for an advance — Hewitt balked. Hard feeling ended the connection.

This little event demands attention, though it can be told from George’s side only, as more than just a disappointing episode in his period of difficult adjustment in the East. Memory was to carry over six years and to intrude a personal element when George and Hewitt became opposing candidates for the mayoralty of New York. And the event would become the

story behind the story of 1897, when George accused Hewitt of saying falsely that he had once hired George as secretary and had discharged him for bringing into his writing everywhere the idea of the single tax. As of the break between George and Hewitt is good also for a might- have-been, a bit of irony, in Henry George's personal history. Had George's campaign speeches before working men come off to the satisfaction of Democratic party officials, and had he and Hewitt become friends, the author of *Progress and Poverty* might conceivably have risen to some such place in the New York party as the ex-editor of the *Sacramento Reporter* had reached, in the California party. The possibilities of George's being party brains man might have been great.

Actual events were different. Year's end 1880 marked a low point in George's personal condition; and presently when the situation did improve the change occurred to George as author not as Democrat. First he was invited in a very engaging way to do an article for the *Christmas Bee* again. McClatchy's specifications called for an essay as good as anything Henry George had ever done. Though he chose an awkward title, 'Political Economy the Framework of Political Science, Brains not Muscle Rule the World,' George wrote a philosophical piece. The idea was anti-materialism again. He condemned all such economic determinism as he himself had verged on, before *Progress and Poverty*. He asserted that politics is a bigger and more inclusive part of life than economics, but that economics sets the problems of politics. Immigration, canals, railroads, taxes, and so on, he specified from the current scene. The essay illustrates an economic interpretation of political issues, and a non-materialistic understanding of economics. As he liked to do, he placed on the working men the responsibility for bringing into being the Golden Age — a thought especially appropriate to this period of Henry George's life.

At about the same time George realized a little money by publiclecturing, a hope long deferred. He was proud to be invited to perform in a 'star course' at Hudson, New York, as the starter of a series which included Parke Godwin and David A. Wells. Best of all, *Progress and Poverty*, which despite widening horizons of publication had sold very poorly through election time, now began to move. About Christmas, in the author's own words, 'a movement began, and on the last day of the year

every copy of the previous editions and every copy of the 1000 cheap edition were gone, and orders and inquiries came piling in from every quarter. Appleton and Company began to realize for the first time that I had been telling them the truth, and that they have got hold of a book capable of enormous sale and now they are beginning to open out.' There was relief and assurance in noticing that the papers which had reviewed him favorably, the *Sun* and *Herald*, were now given first-class advertisements; and satisfaction in saying that no other American work in political economy had ever sold more than 1000 copies during the first year.

Accident or incident or improvement, the early winter brought George an invitation to an elegant dinner of New York *Sun* people. Dana was host, and John Swinton and Hazeltine, the reviewer of *Progress and Poverty*, were there. George was pleased by the event and only a little embarrassed at being the only one not in dinner dress. Then there was another dinner with Albert J. Bolles, liberal journalist of Norwich and writer about capital and labor, who stood on the then advanced position that trade unions are necessary and that capital should share business direction with labor. Simultaneously with these courtesies came word of agreeable developments abroad. A Canadian economist warmly invited George to 'campaign' in Canada; and, the news the author wanted, Kegan Paul, head of the important London firm which published the *Nineteenth Century*, ordered an edition of *Progress and Poverty* for British sale to begin early in 1881.

To be sure these threads of hope spun much more rapidly than they wove. John Russell Young, who had to go abroad, took a dozen copies of *Progress and Poverty* and placed them in 'a smoky little bookstore' in Haymarket, where he knew the proprietor and knew that the great men of England would see the display. The unwell Disraeli and others did see the book, we are told, but none bought; and before leaving, George's friend withdrew the copies and gave them to the men he hoped would read them — some of these men were the same as those to whom the author had sent copies of the San Francisco edition. From this distribution, which included Tyndall and Huxley and Spencer, Young claims the credit for inciting the Duke of Argyll's savage article, 'The Prophet of San Francisco,' which later helped George's cause immensely.

In New York the acceleration of recognition brought with it an exciting diversity as well. Sometimes George was confronted with demands and

challenges, occasionally he was offered discipleship or assistance generous in the extreme. For an example which counted, late in March he received a letter from a stranger, Thomas G. Shearman, a Nassau Street lawyer, a member of a famous firm. A resident of Brooklyn and a member of Plymouth congregation, Mr. Shearman had been Henry Ward Beecher's counselor when scandal brought the famous minister to account. In Shearman's first communication he said a good deal: he was distributing *Progress and Poverty* among his friends; he agreed heartily with George about Malthus; and though he admitted he could not reach an absolute conclusion about the land question, he was thoroughly favorable to land-value taxation. (The 'single tax, limited,' Shearman's side, *versus* 'single tax, unlimited,' George's side, the issue of the end of the decade, lay aborning in this letter.) Shearman's one direct challenge of 1881 called George utterly mistaken to have said that professional men lack interest in reform; they are as interested as anyone, he declared.

The lawyer's initiative led to a couple of lectures by George in Brooklyn at mid-April, one of them before the Revenue Reform Club of which Beecher was president. During the same month, on the near side of the East River, Henry George's upper-crust lawyer friend, Poultney Bigelow, got him into the New York Free Trade Club — along with Theodore Roosevelt. And in May George gave his earliest well-paid lectures. The first occurred in Chickering Hall — a place to become famous in his New York career — and the second in Historical Hall, Brooklyn. Altogether George made about \$225; and the rise in his position was enormous.

Meanwhile he had recovered from the writing 'stumble' with Youmans, and if not in the *Popular Science Monthly* at least in *Appleton's Journal* he had an article in June, and one, 'The Common Sense of Taxation,' in the *North American Review* for July.

This marks the beginning of his long and happy connection with the country's oldest and most authentic national magazine. With all this going on he achieved sufficient momentum to be gay when William Graham Sumner wrote a demolition review of *Progress and Poverty* and *The Irish Land Question in Scribner's*. 'The thing begins to draw fire,' he gleefully wrote Taylor.

With a little money at last he completely and definitely disconnected from San Francisco. Annie and the children came on; and the family found a pleasant house, once the porter's lodge of an estate on Kingsbridge Road, in the Fort Washington area above One-Hundred Fifty-fifth Street. At midsummer he himself crossed the continent, just a year after leaving, to settle some business, probably unpleasant business with creditors. But he saw friends, and made a speech before a large audience in Metropolitan Temple, and was given a dinner at one of San Francisco's Italian restaurants on the eve of departing for New York.

Doubtless all this good will connected in his mind with a compliment he had just received in Sacramento. Warren Chase and James C. Gorman nominated him in the State Senate for United States senator from California. The vote had read 27 for the winner, 10 for another candidate, and 2 for George. 'I presume that that is about as near as I shall ever come to being elected to anything,' the low candidate wrote, not without satisfaction, to his old friend and fellow Democrat, James Coffey.

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The story of Henry George's reception and adjustment in New York City, so far, has bypassed one main area of his interest. Of course this is Europe — the reaction to *Progress and Poverty* there, and the possibilities George envisaged for making converts in the Old World. His interest by no means stopped with Ireland. In San Francisco he selected 'The Next Great Struggle' as the subject of his lecture: he predicted a great battle for political and economic reform about to occur in the British Isles and across Europe generally.

Actually the first year and a half of *Progress and Poverty's* life failed to raise any great amount of response overseas. But what reaction did come is the more worth noticing because it displays a quality of attitude on the European side which would prove consistently different from the American. Over there first-rate minds more quickly took *Progress and Poverty* seriously and judiciously; and high-level journals, once they noticed George, more frequently estimated him to be important, however much they rejected his ideas. From George's own point of view, one of the best reviews he ever had came from Paris, a criticism of the San Francisco

edition in *La Revue scientifique* as early as January an event which the *Sacramento Bee* reported with enthusiasm.

The writer was Emile de Laveleye, the distinguished Belgian scholar and socialist of the chair, whose studies included history and law and philology as well as economics, and from whose writing on the history of property George had drawn for passages in *Progress and Poverty*. Laveleye gave no full endorsement; his important specific reservations — offered in context of saying how different American affairs were from European — were that rent is a passive rather than active cause of poverty; that George had overlooked national debts and armaments as main causes of labor's hardships; and that George failed to express the exploitative power of capital, as for instance French investment in Africa. Even so, the tenor of the review was friendly, and it specifically underwrote the main thesis of George's economic syllogism. In Laveleye's own word: 'All economists admit that rent increases in proportion to the progress of civilization, so that on the other hand wages and interest tend to the minimum.' The new book had instructed him and caused him to reflect, the professor graciously acknowledged. He advised George to fight for an American policy of granting public lands in no more than temporary tenure with reversion to the domain written into the deed, as sounder than permanent- freehold policy.

In Britain one of the very few important 1880 reviews of *Progress and Poverty* appeared in the *Economist*, three months in the wake of the Appleton edition. (The *Statist* reviewed also, an unsparing condemnation.) As would be expected, though the *Economist* had a middle-class reformist attitude toward land policy, it disliked *Progress and Poverty*. The review objected that George had said things that were much too extreme about Ireland and India, and it ridiculed his diagnosis of, and prescription for, depressions. Yet the critic reported in interested detail George's argument that wages are determined by the margin of production; and he called 'powerful, graphic, and instructive' the chapter on the evil done by the inequalities of society, a large concession from a British reviewer.

On the German side, comment on *Fortschritt und Armuth* began in 1881, following on the Gutschow translation. Staude, the publisher, did what he could to force attention: he distributed free copies to members of the Reichstag, the Economic Council, and to many newspapers. Sales were

small, and the total number of reviews apparently not great. But the kind of response characteristic of German learning *Progress and Poverty* did receive. In 1881, long, scholarly, and balanced criticisms appeared in two of the most learned journals. One of them was by Adolph Wagner, the famous University of Berlin proponent of the welfare state: he was ironic and adverse, and yet appreciative of George's effort. During the next year Gustav Schmoller, the leader of Germany's historical economists, criticized *Progress and Poverty* in his own 'Schmoller's *Jahrbuch*.' While he thought George pretty uninformed about Europe, and guilty of gross exaggerations (as Professor Wagner had said), he would not deny that land might have to be nationalized some day. He had picked up the book depressed at having to go through one more reweaving of the threads of British economics, he said. But when he had finished, Schmoller, who spoke always for broad social studies, acknowledged in George a writer of large heart and sharp vision who had penetrated the American situation and the American character, and who drawing from life had woven new woof across the old warp of classical economics. 'The author is an uncommonly gifted thinker,' he said, and *Progress and Poverty* 'einenichtzuverachtende Leistung' — 'a not half-bad work.'

Again we have run ahead of Henry George's own story, and yet only far enough to understand that in looking overseas George was not merely searching out a terrain of conflict but was also taking a direction in which he had achieved some appreciation and could expect a fighter's chance to speak and be heard.

We have no way to trace in close detail how George became involved in the Irish struggle of 1881. In a sense this involvement had been written into his future by his past: by his marriage, by his participation in Democratic politics, and most compulsively by the Irish associations in California — with James McClatchy and John Barry and the rest — which had brought him to understand the land troubles of the new state and old Ireland as parts of one universal exploitation. For about a year, from the Christmas Bee essay of 1879, we know nothing (except that he met Patrick Ford on arrival in the city) about whether George was aggressive or indifferent in keeping his Irish contacts.

But just after election the current did flow. One of the events of the end of 1880 that helped lift George from the pit of his troubles was the arrival in

New York of Michael Davitt, the fiery Fenian leader of the Irish Land League. This new organization was driving Anglo-Irish affairs into such tension as never before; and on his visit Davitt made what the historian of the movement designates as a most memorable address. Working out from the slogan, 'The land for the people,' Davitt told a Cooper Union audience that, 'We have declared on a hundred platforms that it is our intention to shoot Irish landlordism, and not the landlords.' Davitt was a man of tremendous pressure and power but little theory, and he led that kind of movement. The Irish situation in 1880, like the California one earlier, could reasonably be read as calling for fresh understanding and theory, and for a new leader to specify valid aims and possible goals.

George turned Davitt's way as needle to near-by lodestone. He called on the visitor and was pleased to win a promise that Davitt would push *Progress and Poverty* in Ireland. But evidently George decided at once that the big book might be too heavy a dose. In order to do 'what will hereafter tell,' as he explained to McClatchy, he wrote within three months 'a little book, or rather pamphlet' developed from the year-old article in the *Bee*, and with the same title. Though it was really a very long pamphlet — divided into seventeen chapters, and eighty-five pages at first appearance, and over one hundred pages in more modern dress — Appleton published at once. We may assume that there was not even a demur this time. Disciples of Henry George sometimes still offer *The Land Problem*, as the booklet was before long renamed, as the easiest approach for first readers of his ideas.

No richer in factual data about Ireland than *Progress and Poverty* was, the new book was more able to have immediate effect because George concentrated the argument completely *ad hoc*. In his chapter iv, 'Proposed Remedies,' he pointed out that such debated reforms as legalizing and extending tenant rights, or having the government buy out the landlords and then sell to peasant owners, could produce only narrow and limited results, and would subject the economy to strains too heavy to bear. Irish affairs gave George the opportunity to argue within the premises of action that economic rent should be taken by the state and returned to the community in the form of benefits and services. Thus the headlong issue of confiscating property outright would be avoided. George drew on the old arsenals of argument, including Herbert Spencer's passage in favor of land

nationalization; and he urged the Irish not to be too narrowly Irish-minded in their struggle. Make common cause with the landless of England, he proposed: the laws and traditions of tenancy are essentially the same everywhere, he said, and in detail a little more severe, actually, in England and the United States than in Ireland.

The New York newspapers seized on his treatment of the hot issue, and mentioned the little book 'magnificently,' he wrote Taylor during the first week. A column and a half in the *Times*, two and a half in the *Sun*, one in the *Express*, one and a quarter in the *Star*, and two and a half in the *Charleston News and Courier* pleased him immensely. 'And the astonishing thing is the goodness of the comments. Nothing like the back action of the early notices of *P&P*. I am getting famous if I ain't making money.' The reaction extended up the scale. Scribner's now had Sumner criticize *Progress and Poverty* and *The Irish Land Problem* together, the gratifying counterblast already mentioned; and, approaching George the other way, the *New York Critic* gave him flattering notice.

The next stage of George's identification with the Irish problem came on the crest of this wave of reviews. During the winter he had done a piece or two for the *Irish World*; and this developed his connection with the explosive and sensational editor, Patrick Ford, who had made himself the principal organizer of some 2500 American branches of the Irish Land League, and had raised hundreds of thousands of dollars. To George, writing in January to another Irishman, Ford had become a hero: 'not a politician but a single-hearted devotee to principle.' And it must have been Ford who secured for George the invitation that presently took him on his first speaking tours in the East. During March he went to Boston to address a Land League branch; and in May to Montreal, with stops at Rutland and St. Alban's on the way north, and at Ottawa and Toronto and towns in upstate New York, returning. Making \$25 or \$50 a night he was sometimes satisfied and sometimes dissatisfied with his performances. He knew that lecturing was not the best thing for him, he confessed to Taylor who had opposed much speaking in California, but it was 'infinitely better than hacking — and worrying.' Actually he loved the travel and excitement, and it is hard to believe that anything could have held him back.

This rounds out the story to the summer of 1881, a little beyond the time of George's other big audiences, not Land League meetings at all, in

New York and Brooklyn and San Francisco. With the record of speech making, and with his reputation as author and member of the Irish movement, his fame was waxing. Very quickly George became a public personage, a man with many friends and connections. Not unlikely he was the one who made the motion to renew friendship with his childhood playmate, Heber Newton, who was now a prominent rector in New York. In turn Mr. Newton took the platform and introduced Henry George to the Chickering Hall meeting, the first of many such services he rendered.

In July a man who was presently to be about as influential in George's life as Dr. Taylor, and who ranks among the first four or five associates of his lifetime, sought him out. The elderly Francis G. Shaw of Staten Island was a member of a well-to-do and well-connected Boston family. His turning to the author of *Progress and Poverty* was the more moving because he was the father of a famous son, the gallant Colonel Robert Gould Shaw who died leading the first Negro troops to go into action against the Confederacy. Confessing to George that until he read the book he had despaired of true moral progress these latter days, Mr. Shaw proposed to buy space to 'cause' certain newspapers to print extracts from the book.

Naturally George responded with emotion. He was deeply touched at being taken for what he wished to be, a transmitter of the old anti-slavery spirit to new needs and new times. But he suggested that instead of purchasing newspaper space Mr. Shaw subsidize distributing 1000 copies of *Progress and Poverty* to the public libraries. The author persuaded his patron, also, that if the gift to the libraries must be anonymous there ought to be cards acknowledging that the books came from someone other than author or publisher. 'It is the moral refinement,' George urged, 'an answer to those who have stigmatized the book as incendiary and communistic.' Making the necessary arrangements led to one of the most affectionate and delightful friendships of George's lifetime — presently to high-minded talk about the Hindu Gita and other literature of India, and later to good correspondence and further subsidy as we shall see.

Almost simultaneously, but not early enough to have affected George's opposition to Mr. Shaw's purchasing newspaper space, another way opened to get *Progress and Poverty* into newsprint. By a decision made by members of the staff, the mass-circulation newspaper *Truth* asked the author's permission to serialize the book. Louis Freeland Post, the editor

who conducted the negotiations, tells the story; and he etches a sharp portrait of George on the day they met. He noticed that the economist was wearing a long-tailed coat which enhanced his shortness of leg and breadth of torso, and that black cloth made prominent his brick-red beard and circle of hair. There might be a little strangeness in Henry George's manner, Mr. Post decided, but the man had confidence, and a personality not to be resisted. An important conversion was being made at the interview, but George did not know this until later.

Back of the invitation to serialize *Progress and Poverty* lay personal enthusiasms which the book and the author had stirred. A writer of short stories for *Truth*, who had heard and met George, urged the step; and he was seconded by a composing-room foreman, a New Zealander of Irish and Maori blood, who had perhaps known George in San Francisco. These two persuaded Post to read *The Irish Land Question* and more, and Post was fired as Mr. Shaw was by the recrudescence of the abolitionist spirit he thought now dead. The editor maneuvered *Truth's* proprietor into a wish to publish *Progress and Poverty* in several installments. That was the proposal — permission asked but no money paid or promised — when the author came in. Of course George acceded: it meant that during months when he would be out of the country a newspaper sympathetic with labor would spread his doctrine. *Truth*, with a circulation of from 75,000 to 100,000, would carry *Progress and Poverty* beyond the normal reach of public libraries, to a clientele his hopes embraced.

Meanwhile had come just the recognition of talent and opportunity George was most ready to seize. In September the *Irish World* invited him to go at once as correspondent to Ireland. The proposition was fair not bountiful: passage both ways for himself and Mrs. George and the two girls, and \$60 a week salary for a period of three months. He was to write a weekly letter for publication in the *World*. George would not have been wrong if he included in his calculations the fact that this paper exercised as much or more power than any other Irish newspaper in the world, for besides its readership in New York it carried as much weight as any in the old country. To his best friend George wrote: 'The chance I have long waited for opens. It will be a big thing for me. I think the biggest thing I have had yet.' And to the Irish editor of the *Bee*: 'When next we dine with you in Sacramento which I hope we will do again we will be able to tell you

all about the kings and queens and dukes and that sort of thing we see on the other side.'

The surrounding circumstances could hardly have been more favorable. Word was just arriving that, after months of being 'dead as a log,' the sale of the Kegan Paul edition of *Progress and Poverty* was picking up. And Henry George had heard too that Alfred Russel Wallace, the great geologist and evolutionist nearly equal to Darwin, who had almost completed his own book on *Land Nationalisation* before he heard of Henry George, had endorsed *Progress and Poverty* as 'undoubtedly the most remarkable and important book of the present century.' This was the first of the handsome salutes from high place which encouraged Henry George's later life.

Family arrangements had to be made. School was the decision for Richard this time. For Henry there was a chance to go to Harvard, but his father favored a job on the *Brooklyn Eagle*. We think back to the Episcopal Academy of Philadelphia, as we read the advice he gave: 'Going to college, you will make life friendships, but you will come out filled with much that will have to be unlearned. Going to newspaper work, you will come in touch with the practical world, will be getting a profession and learning to make yourself useful.'

To make his farewells, Henry George went down to Philadelphia to see his parents. Traveling with the boys he confessed surprise that *Progress and Poverty* had succeeded so fast: 'Men are rising up everywhere to hail it!' he meditated. He visited Staten Island also. Without fresh help from Mr. Shaw, money to pay some outstanding debts, he might not have been able to go at all.

On 15 October, a Saturday, the correspondent and his ladies were ready. They sailed that day on the steamship *Spain*, bound for Liverpool.