

CHAPTER X.

BEGINS WRITING AND TALKING.

1865-1866.

AGE, 26-27.

HENRY GEORGE'S career as a writer should be dated from the commencement of 1865, when he was an irregular, substitute printer at Eastman's and on the daily newspapers, just after his severe job-office experience. He now deliberately set himself to self-improvement. These few diary notes for the end of March and beginning of April are found in a small blank book that in 1878, while working on "Progress and Poverty," he also used as a diary.

"Saturday, March 25, 1865. As I knew we would have no letter this morning, I did not hurry down to the office. After getting breakfast, took the wringing machine which I had been using as a sample back to Faulkner's; then went to Eastman's and saw to bill; loafed around until about 2 P.M. Concluded that the best thing I could do would be to go home and write a little. Came home and wrote for the sake of practice an essay on the 'Use of Time,' which occupied me until Annie prepared dinner. Went to Eastman's by six, got money. Went to Union meeting.

"Sunday, March 26. Did not get out until 11 o'clock. Took Harry down town and then to Wilbur's. Proposed to have Dick [the new baby] baptised in afternoon; got Mrs. Casey to come to the house for that

purpose, but concluded to wait. Went to see Dull, who took me to his shop and showed me the model of his wagon brake.

"Monday, March 27. Got down to office about one o'clock; but no proofs yet. Strolled around a little. Went home and wrote communication for Aleck Kennedy's new paper, 'Journal of the Trades and Workingmen.' Took it down to him. In the evening called on Rev. Mr. Simonds.

"Tuesday, 28. Got down late. No work. In afternoon wrote article about laws relating to sailors. In evening went down to Dull's shop while he was engaged on model.

"Wednesday, 29. Went to work about 10.30. In evening corrected proof for 'Journal of the Trades and Workingmen.'

"Thursday, 30. At work.

"Tuesday, April 4. Despatch received stating that Richmond and Petersburg are both in our possession.

"Wednesday, 5. Took model of wagon brake to several carriage shops; also to 'Alta' office. In evening signed agreement with Dull.

"Saturday, 8. Not working; bill for week, \$23. Paid Frank Mahon the \$5 I have been owing for some time. Met Harrison who has just come down from up the country. He has a good thing up there. Talked with Dull and drew up advertisement. In evening, nothing."

Thus while he was doing hap-hazard type-setting, and trying to interest carriage builders in a new wagon brake, he was also beginning to write. The first and most important of these pieces of writing mentioned in the diary notes—on "the use of time"—was sent by Mr. George to his mother, as an indication of his intention to improve himself. Commencing with boyhood, Henry George, as has been seen, had the power of simple and clear statement, and if this essay served no other purpose than to show the

development of that natural power, it would be of value. But as a matter of fact, it has a far greater value; for while repeating his purpose to practise writing—"to acquire facility and elegance in the expression" of his thought—it gives an introspective glimpse into the naturally secretive mind, revealing an intense desire, if not for the "flesh pots of Egypt," at least for such creature and intellectual comforts as would enable him and those close to him "to bask themselves in the warm sunshine of the brief day." This paper is presented in full:

Essay, Saturday Afternoon, March 25, 1865.

"ON THE PROFITABLE EMPLOYMENT OF TIME."

"Most of us have some principal object of desire at any given time of our lives; something which we wish more than anything else, either because its want is more felt, or that it includes other desirable things, and we are conscious that in gaining it we obtain the means of gratifying other of our wishes.

"With most of us, this power, in one shape or the other—is money, or that which is its equivalent or will bring it.

"For this end we subject ourselves to many sacrifices; for its gain we are willing to confine ourselves and employ our minds and bodies in duties which, for their own sakes are irksome; and if we do not throw the whole force of our natures into the effort to gain this, it is that we do not possess the requisite patience, self-command, and penetration where we may direct our efforts.

"I am constantly longing for wealth; the wide difference between my wishes and the means of gratifying them at my command keeps me in perpetual disquiet. It would bring me comfort and luxury which I cannot now obtain; it would give me more congenial employment and associates; it would enable me to cultivate

my mind and exert to a fuller extent my powers; it would give me the ability to minister to the comfort and enjoyment of those whom I love most, and therefore, it is my principal object in life to obtain wealth, or at least, more of it than I have at present.

“Whether this is right or wrong, I do not now consider; but that it is so I am conscious. When I look behind at my past life I see that I have made little or no progress, and am disquieted; when I consider my present, it is difficult to see that I am moving towards it at all; and all my comfort in this respect is in the hope of what the future may bring forth.

“And yet my hopes are very vague and indistinct, and my efforts in any direction, save the beaten track in which I have been used to earn my bread, are, when perceptible, jerky, irregular and without intelligent, continuous direction.

“When I succeed in obtaining employment, I am industrious and work faithfully, though it does not satisfy my wishes. When I have nothing to do, I am anxious to be in some way labouring towards the end I wish, and yet from hour to hour I cannot tell at what to employ myself.

“To secure any given result it is only necessary to rightly supply sufficient force. Some men possess a greater amount of natural power than others and produce quicker and more striking results; yet it is apparent that the abilities of the majority, if properly and continuously applied, are sufficient to accomplish much more than they generally do.

“The hours which I have idled away, though made miserable by the consciousness of accomplishing nothing, had been sufficient to make me master of almost any common branch of study. If, for instance, I had applied myself to the practice of bookkeeping and arithmetic I might now have been an expert in those things; or I might have had the dictionary at my fingers' ends; been a practised, and perhaps an able writer; a much better printer; or been able to read and write French, Spanish or any other modern or ancient language to which I might have directed my attention; and the

mastery of any of these things now would give me an additional, appreciable power, and means by which to work to my end, not to speak of that which would have been gained by exercise and good mental habits.

"These truths are not sudden discoveries; but have been as apparent for years as at this present time; but always wishing for some chance to make a sudden leap forward, I have never been able to direct my mind and concentrate my attention upon those slow processes by which everything mental (and in most cases, material) is acquired.

"Constantly the mind works, and if but a tithe of its attention was directed to some end, how many matters might it have taken up in succession, increasing its own stores and power while mastering them?

"To sum up for the present, though this essay has hardly taken the direction and shape which at the outset I intended, it is evident to me that I have not employed the time and means at my command faithfully and advantageously as I might have done, and consequently, that I have myself to blame for at least a part of my non-success. And this being true of the past, in the future like results will flow from like causes. I will, therefore, try (though, as I know from experience, it is much easier to form good resolutions than to faithfully carry them out) to employ my mind in acquiring useful information or practice, when I have nothing leading more directly to my end claiming my attention. When practicable, or when I cannot decide upon anything else, I will endeavour to acquire facility and elegance in the expression of my thought by writing essays or other matters which I will preserve for future comparison. And in this practice it will be well to aim at mechanical neatness and grace, as well as at proper and polished language."

Of the two other pieces of writing spoken of in the diary notes, the "article about laws relating to sailors," has left no trace, but a copy of the one for the "Journal of the Trades and Workingmen," has been preserved. It

was a long letter to the editor, signed "H. G." urging working men to think about political and social questions, and find if it be possible to "check the tendency of society to resolve itself into classes who have too much or too little." In closing, its author said:

"And so, Mr. Editor, I hail with joy your establishment of a paper which shall speak for the working classes, and through which their most enlightened views may be diffused, which may lead them to think upon problems for which it is to their best interests to find a solution. At a time when most of our public prints pander to wealth and power and would crush the poor man beneath the wheel of the capitalist's carriage; when one begins to talk of the 'work people' and 'farm servants' of this coast, and another to deplore the high rate of wages, and each and all to have quick reprobation for any effort of mechanics or labourers to obtain their dues, but nothing to say against combinations to deprive them of their rights, I, for one, feel that your enterprise is one which we all should feel the necessity of, and to which we should lend our cordial support. In the columns of your paper I hope to see fearless opinions of men and measures ably maintained, and the intelligence of our class brought to the solution of questions of political and social economy which deeply affect us; that we may bring our united efforts to the advancement of those great principles upon which our republican institutions rest, and upon which we must depend to secure for us and our children our proper place and rights, and for our country her proud and foremost rank among the nations."

It was about this time that in addition to the writings mentioned in the diary, Henry George wrote a fanciful sketch entitled "A Plea for the Supernatural," which was published in the "Californian" and soon afterwards republished by the Boston Saturday "Evening Gazette."

The "Californian" was a San Francisco weekly literary paper founded in 1864, and which, under the editorship of Charles Henry Webb and the contributing pens of Mark Twain, Bret Harte and a lot of other bright writers, had a brilliant, if short, career—being spoken of as having "lived to be three years old and never died." A. A. Stickney, a printer friend, who, while they were in Sacramento working on the "Union" together, induced George to join the Odd Fellows' Order, had bought into the "Californian," and it may have been through his influence that the young printer's sketch was published. But however published is not important, nor is the sketch itself, further than to furnish cumulative evidence of the feverish energy the young man was evincing in pursuit of his purpose to practise writing—a spirit forming one of his most marked characteristics when acting upon an important resolve. He had proved to himself that he could write, and the use to which he put his power came suddenly, unexpectedly and in a way to affect his whole after life.

The Civil War was now about over. On April 9, 1865, Lee's army surrendered. The South, worn out by the terrific struggle and by starvation, lay prostrate, and the whole North and West indulged in demonstrative rejoicings over the prospect of peace and harmony throughout a reunited country—when, on the night of April 14, flashed the appalling news that President Lincoln had been shot. Never before was seen such excitement in excitable San Francisco. This deed seemed like the last desperate act of the slave-power, and all manner of rumours of a vast Southern conspiracy of assassination were afloat. The next day general business was suspended. It was now known definitely that the President, while sitting in a proscenium box at Ford's Theatre, Washington, witnessing the comedy, "Our American Cousin," was shot in the back

of the head by John Wilkes Booth, an actor, who had stealthily approached from behind, and brandishing a knife, had leaped from the box to the stage, crying out in the hearing of the dumb-stricken audience, "*Sic semper tyrannis*: the South is avenged!"

When news came that Lincoln had died of his wound excitement in San Francisco ran mad. To many the first impulse was to destroy the newspapers which had fostered secession; and the "Democratic Press" edited by Beriah Brown, the "Occidental" edited by Zachariah Montgomery, the "Monitor," a Catholic weekly, edited by Thomas A. Brady, and the "News Letter" edited by Frederick Marriot had their plants demolished and cast into the street. Mr. George had been terribly wrought up over the news of the assassination, and talking about the "copperhead" newspapers with Ike Trump and others, had determined to lead an assault upon the "News Letter"; but when he reached the spot he found Trump gallantly leading a party that were hurling type, furniture and machinery into the street with such a spirited and liberal hand that little remained to be done to complete the job.

After this physical venting of feeling, higher sentiments took possession of the young printer, for next day he sat down in his little Perry Street home and wrote out new thoughts that were surging through him. He put them in the form of a newspaper communication, which he addressed to the editor of the "Alta California," the paper on which he had been setting type when opportunity afforded. When the communication was finished he took it to the office and slipped it into the editor's box. Next day it appeared with an editorial note preceding it, for the editor had learned who the writer was. Communication and note appeared as follows:

[The following stirring article on the great patricide of the age was written by a printer in the office of the "Alta California"]:

SIC SEMPER TYRANNIS!

"A man rushed to the front of the President's box, waving a long dagger in his right hand, exclaiming, '*Sic semper tyrannis!*'"

"Alta" despatches, April 15.

"What a scene these few words bring—vivid as the lightning flash that bore them! The glitter and glare, curving circle and crowded pit, flash of jewels and glinting of silks—and the blanched sea of up-turned faces, the fixed and staring eyes, the awful hush—silence of death!

"And there, before all—before all mankind forevermore—stands, for an instant, the assassin, poised for the leap, the gleaming steel in his right hand, and his cry of triumph, of defiance, ringing throughout the house, '*Sic semper tyrannis!*'

"Is it a wonder they are spellbound! They came to laugh at a comedy—and a tragedy is before them which will make a nation weep—and whose mighty import centuries may not guess! Their frightened eyes look on a scene in the grand drama whose first act was the creation and whose last will be the procession of the white-robed and the shouts of the redeemed. Well may they gaze, awe-stricken, speechless, for the spirits of the mighty dead, and generation after generation that shall be, look with them, and the past that has gone, and the future that is to come, join their voices in the shout, '*Sic semper tyrannis!*'

"Poised there for an instant, that black, daring heart—that spirit incarnate of tyranny and wrong—feels the import of the act, and with voice of inspiration, shouts its own doom—'*Sic semper tyrannis!*'

"Amen! and thus it will be. They have struck down the just because of his justice, and the fate they have fixed upon him shall be theirs!

"What fitting time! Good Friday! At this very moment, before bare and black-draped altars, sounds the solemn wail of the Tenebræ, and mournful music bears the sorrow which shall burst into the joy of the resurrection—for, on a day of which this is the anniversary, One died that there might be life, and Death and Hell heard their doom. And now (as close as human type may approach the divine) again has Evil triumphed, and the blood of its victim sealed its fate.

"While the world lasts will this scene be remembered. As a martyr of Freedom—as the representative of the justice of a great nation, the name of the victim will live forever; and the Proclamation of Emancipation, signed with the name and sealed with the blood of *Abraham Lincoln* will remain a landmark in the progress of the race.

"In the hearts of a people whose number shall be as the sands of the sea, his memory will be cherished with that of Washington. And to the ends of the earth—from the frozen sea of the North to the ice fields of the South, in every land on which the sun in his circuit shall look down, whenever the standard shall be raised against a hoary wrong, his name shall be a watch-word and an inspiration.

"And when, on plains and uplands where now the elephant and spring-bok roam, farms shall be tilled and homes arise; and on great lakes and rivers, now the haunts of the hippopotamus—a thousand paddles shall beat, the mothers of nations yet unborn shall teach their children to call him blessed!

"*Sic semper tyrannis!* Blazoned on the shield of a noble State by the giants of the young republic, their degenerate sons shall learn its meaning! The murderer's shout as Lincoln fell, it will be taken up by a million voices. *Thus shall* perish all who wickedly raise their hands to shed the blood of the defenders of the oppressed, and who strive, by wickedness and cruelty, to preserve and perpetuate wrong. Their names shall become a hissing and a reproach among men as long as the past shall be remembered; and the great sin in whose sup-

port they spared no crime is numbered henceforth with the things that were. *Sic semper tyrannis!* Amen.
 "H. G."

"San Francisco, April 16, 1865."¹

A few days later the editor of the "Alta" engaged the printer as a special reporter to write in conjunction with others a description of the Lincoln mourning decorations throughout the city, and this was the first newspaper writing for which Henry George received pay. But he had more than a reporter's thoughts in him; and again he sat down in the parlour of his little Perry Street home and wrote a communication to the editor and signed it with his initials. It was on the character of Lincoln. This, like the former one, he put in the editor's box. Next morning he looked to see if it had been printed, and lo! like Ben Adhem's name, "it led all the rest." It did not bear his signature, nor was it printed as a letter to the editor, for it had been made the chief editorial of the paper. A few short extracts will suffice:

"No common man, yet the qualities which made him great and loved were eminently common. . . .

"He was not of those whom God lifts to the mountain tops, and who tell of His truth to ears that will not hear, and show His light to eyes that cannot see—whom their own generation stone, and future ones worship; but he was of the leaders who march close before the advancing ranks of the people, who direct their steps and speak with their voice.

" . . . No other system would have produced

¹ This article is copied from a printed proof pasted in a scrapbook kept by Mr. George and containing his early published writings. But since the file of the regular issue of the "Alta California" fails to reveal it, the conclusion is drawn that the communication must have appeared in a special edition of that newspaper.

him; through no crowd of courtiers could such a man have forced his way; his feet would have slipped on the carpets of palace stairs, and Grand Chamberlains ordered him back! And, as in our time of need, the man that was needed came forth, let us know that it will always be so, and that under our institutions, when the rights of the people are endangered, from their ranks will spring the men for the times."¹

This experience led to the "Alta's" agreement to take from Mr. George some news letters relative to a Mexican liberating expedition in which he was about to embark. While the United States were engaged in their civil war Napoleon III. had sent an army into Mexico to establish an imperial government and place Austrian Arch-duke Maximilian on the throne. The resistance of the Mexican patriots under Juarez excited strong sympathy through all that part of the United States adjacent to Mexico; and ardently desirous of striking a blow for that republic, especially as circumstances had prevented him from engaging in the war in the United States against slavery, Henry George joined an expedition that was being organised to help the Juarez party. He talked it over with his wife, with whom now, after three and a half years of wedded life and extreme trials of poverty, he was sealed in the closest possible relations of confidence and affection. Though the prospect of parting and the danger he would run were sore to bear, and though the peril of being left destitute with two babies was imminent, she would not withhold him, but on the contrary did what she always afterwards did—encouraged him to follow the promptings of what he conceived to be his duty.

He, therefore, arranged with the "Alta California" peo-

¹ "Alta California," April 23, 1865.

ple to send his wife whatever money should come from the news letters that he should write, which he thought would be sufficient to maintain her; and then with his wife, took the new baby to St. Patrick's Catholic church, in deference to her, and had him baptised Richard Fox, the first name after his father and the second in honour of his wife's family. Then the couple went back to their home, and kneeling down beside their babies prayed together; after which, kissing his darling ones good-bye, the young man set off for the meeting place. He has described this:¹

"I was to be first lieutenant in a company commanded by an Indian fighter named Burn; with an acquaintance of mine, Barry, as major; and Hungerford, afterwards father-in-law of Mackay, the millionaire, as colonel. We swore in a good many men, and went down to Platt's Hall to prepare to make a start in a vessel which should be secretly provided. We gathered there in the early evening, but hour after hour passed without receiving the order to start. Finally, at daylight next day we were told where the vessel was, but it was well on in the morning before we made for her.

"When we got down we found an old bark, the *Brontes*, to be the one selected for us. She was short of provisions and equipment for such a company. She had aboard 10,000 American condemned rifles, half a dozen saddles and a few casks of water. We had hardly got aboard before a revenue cutter dropped anchor in front of her and blocked the way. This ended our expedition. The Federal authorities had shut their eyes as long as they could to what was going on, but now could do so no longer.

"Among those who were going with us, and who would have been little less than a crowd of pirates if we had got down, were some who got up a scheme to seize a French transport, and I believe, to capture one of the

¹ Meeker notes, October, 1897.

mail steamers which then left for Panama twice a month with shipments of gold from California to New York. This got wind and some half dozen or so were arrested and put on trial for intended piracy.

"This was the *Brontes* expedition, which led to the charge in some San Francisco papers when I ran for Mayor in New York years afterwards, that I had been engaged in a piratical expedition. This is the nearest I ever came to engaging in war, and I will never forget the willingness with which my wife, with her two little children, agreed to my leaving her to go on an expedition that I now know could have had no possible good end."

A little later Henry George helped in the establishment of the Monroe League, which was to send an expedition to the Mexican patriots, a newspaper man named Linthicum to head it. They swore men in on a bare sword and the republican flag of Mexico, and Mrs. George was sworn as the only woman member. Nothing came of the League, though its failure is not explained.¹ By this time Mr. George saw a good opening in Sacramento to set type on a

¹Nearly two years subsequently (July 3, 1867) when managing editor on the San Francisco "Times," Mr. George wrote in an editorial relative to the downfall of the Mexican tyranny and the execution of Maximilian: "We should not allow either his position or his private character to blind our eyes to his public crimes. The men who have inflicted the greatest evils upon their kind, have not been always the worst men in their personal relations. Charles I. was a good husband and kind father, but he was not less the enemy of liberty, and his death was not less a salutary example. . . . That the execution of Maximilian will excite a deep sensation in Europe cannot be doubted, but its effects will not be entirely without benefit. It is a protest against the right of kings to cause suffering and shed blood for their own selfish ends. It is a vindication of justice upon an offender of a class whose rank has hitherto sheltered them from the punishment due to their crimes. It will teach princes and princelings to be more cautious how they endeavour to subvert the liberties of a free people."

contract for State official work, and so he went there, taking his family with him and settling down at house-keeping. Touching his personal matters he wrote to his Sister Caroline (December 3):

“I am, for the present, only ambitious of working, and will look neither to the right nor left, until I have ‘put money in my purse’—something it has never yet contained. I have abandoned, I hope, the hand to mouth style of living, and will endeavour, if not absolutely forced to do so, to draw no drafts on the future. By next year we hope to have enough money saved to return home, and will do so, unless it should seem very inadvisable. I will come, anyhow, as soon as I can, for I have made up my mind it is my duty to do so. I am going to work on the State work as soon as it commences (this week I think) and expect to have steady work for the best part of a year and perhaps more. Since we came up here I have done pretty well—have made a living, paid expenses of coming up, got what was necessary, and owe nothing at all here, and feel more comfortable and hopeful than ever since we have been married.”

For nearly a year Henry George, following his trade of type-setting, continued at State work. He lived quietly, and since his wife and he had modest habits, very comfortably. He had joined the Odd Fellows’ Order during his former residence in Sacramento, through the advice of his printer friend, A. A. Stickney; and now in 1866 he joined the National Guard, though he soon dropped out of it; and a literary organisation, in which for a while he engaged in discussions on public questions. One of these discussions was of great importance in his life, since it marks another stepping-stone in his thought—his conversion from a belief in the protective principle to the opposite principle of the entire freedom of trade. In “Protection

or Free Trade?" Mr. George has spoken of his strong protection views at this time.¹

"I was for a number of years after I had come of age a protectionist, or rather, I supposed I was, for, without real examination, I had accepted the belief, as in the first place we all accept our beliefs, on the authority of others. So far, however, as I thought at all on the subject, I was logical, and I well remember how when the *Florida* and *Alabama* were sinking American ships at sea, I thought their depredations, after all, a good thing for the State in which I lived—California—since the increased risk and cost of ocean carriage in American ships (then the only way of bringing goods from the Eastern States to California) would give to her infant industries something of that needed protection against the lower wages and better established industries of the Eastern States which the Federal Constitution prevented her from securing by a State tariff."

The way in which this belief was changed is more fully explained in another place:²

"One night in Sacramento I went with a friend to a debating society and there heard a young fellow of great ability, William H. Mills, the present Land Agent of the Central Pacific Railroad, deliver a speech in favour of protection. I was a protectionist when he began, but when he got through I was a free trader. When they asked me what I thought of it I told them that if what he said was true, it seemed to me that the country that was hardest to get at must be the best country to live in; and that, instead of merely putting duties on things brought from abroad, we ought to put them on things brought from anywhere, and that fires and wars and impediments to trade and navigation were the very best things to levy on commerce."

¹ Chapter IV (Memorial edition, p. 29).

² Meeker notes, October, 1897.

Mr. Mills says that he remembers "with reasonable distinctness the incident referred to by Henry George":

"The debating society was known as the 'Sacramento Lyceum.' The subject for the evening was a general consideration of a national tariff, whether for revenue or for protection. I was the leading speaker for the evening and took a position in favour of a protective policy as that best calculated to produce the broadest industrial skill of our people, develop the natural resources of the country, give the largest diversity of employment, confer the highest intelligence, employ a greater proportion of our people in skilled labour which always receives the highest reward and generally confer industrial and commercial independence upon the nation.

"As one of the speakers of the evening, Henry George controverted the doctrine that nationalism was the goal of civilisation, pleading for a broad cosmopolitanism. He contended that national policies should interpose no barrier to harmonious relations between nations of the earth; that if the doctrine enunciated to sustain a policy of high protection were true, absolute national isolation would be the condition best calculated to promote national development; that as relative evolutionary forces, the policy of protection created antagonism between the nations, isolated them, augmented their selfishness, intensified the military spirit, and made standing armies and vast navies necessary to the peace of the world; while free trade, as an evolutionary force, made nations dependent, promoted peace among them and urged humanity on toward a higher plane of universal fraternity.

"In conversation with Mr. George since then, he said to me that while he went to the Lyceum meeting a protectionist, he left a free trader, because protection was defensible only upon the theory that the separation of mankind into nations implied their industrial and commercial antagonism."

But while this period marked what he considered a great step in right thinking, Henry George did not neglect writ-

ing. It was now that he wrote for Edmund Wallazz's paper, the "Philadelphia Saturday Night," the account of the *Shubrick* burial¹ under the title of "Dust to Dust." The sketch was republished by the "Californian." For the latter publication he also wrote a fanciful sketch entitled "The Prayer of Kohonah—a tradition of the north-west coast." Both of these, like the Lincoln article, gave proofs of a vivid imagination and a high order of descriptive power, and it is certain from casual notes in his pocket diaries during the next two or three years that he was thinking of writing a novel; so that perhaps it wanted but the accident to have turned his abilities and energy into the realm of fiction instead of to a search for the eternal verities underlying social order.

But public affairs attracted and absorbed more and more of his attention, and he gave vent to his sentiments in the "Daily Union" through the medium of letters to the editor, which he signed with the *nom de plume* of "Proletarian"; and in September, 1866, when printing became slack, he wrote for San Francisco newspapers a number of letters relative to the State fair then being held in Sacramento. Then his newspaper ambition took a leap forward. A daily paper to be named the "Times" was to be started in San Francisco, and he made application for a writing position upon it. A letter to his father (August 8) told about it:

"When you next write direct to San Francisco, for I expect to go down there in about two weeks. The paper that I wrote you of is to start there in about that time. I do not know whether I will get the situation I asked for as reporter or assistant editor, but I can have a position in the composing room, at any rate, with a chance to go in the editorial department in a little while. I

¹Pages 63-67.

can have steady work here if I stay, but have concluded to go down, as I will have a better chance down there. The foreman has given me a case, which is in itself desirable, as it will be a good paper to work on, and will be a steady thing. But even if I do not get a better position than that at the start, I am promised one shortly afterward. And if things go as I wish them to, I may by the first of the year make \$50 or \$60 a week. I don't say that I will, or even that I expect to, but I see where there is a chance. However, I won't say anything about it until I see more clearly.

"This I hope, is our last move until we step on board the steamer. Our desire to return home increases daily, and all my plans tend to that object. I do not think, though, that we can come till spring, but I hope that this delay will be of benefit, in better enabling me to come home and to do better when I do come. I want, if possible, to secure some little practice and reputation as a writer here before going, which will not only give me introduction and employment there, but help me in going and enable me to make something by corresponding with papers here. If I do not overrate my abilities I may yet make position and money."

He was not destined to go to Philadelphia in the following spring, for fortune threw upon him larger responsibilities than he had dreamed of.