

CHAPTER II.

COMMENCING THE NEW YORK CAREER.

1880-1881.

AGE, 41-42.

IT was towards the middle of August, 1880, that Henry George set foot in New York almost as poor in the money sense as any immigrant who ever landed in the great city. He had but three personal friends there—the two Swintons (William and John) and Charles Nordhoff of the "New York Herald." John Russell Young, who had spoken hopefully of getting him a place on the "Herald," was away. On returning, he, with Nordhoff, recommended George for a vacant writing position on the paper. No action was taken in the matter for some time, and word eventually came that there was no chance for the San Francisco man. The book, first fixed at two dollars and afterwards at one dollar (when the author cut his copyright to ten per cent.), was selling; but as yet it yielded little. William H. Appleton, at the head of the publishing firm, was very friendly, and so also was Professor E. L. Youmans of the "Popular Science Monthly." The latter invited a political article and paid for it; though it was not used, owing to a change in editorial policy. But there was little to do at writing just now, and the eyes of the California man turned to politics.

The Hancock-Garfield Presidential fight had commenced,

and from a visit with William Swinton and William C. De Witt of Brooklyn to Hancock at Governor's Island, headquarters of the Department of the Atlantic, which the General commanded, Mr. George was favourably impressed with the candidate's simplicity and manly bearing. He believed that as two generals of the Civil War were contesting, the old "bloody-shirt" issues could not be used by either side, and therefore that there would be a chance for new ideas and radical sentiments. Suddenly the Republicans raised the tariff issue, declaring for protection and denouncing the Democrats for free traders. The Democratic managers responded with a straddle. Just then Henry George entered the campaign.

"I was not then very well known in New York, but just before the election, when the tariff issue was sprung, the Democratic Committee sent for me and told me they had heard that I was the best man in all the country to talk to the working men on the question of the tariff. I told them I didn't know about that, but that I could talk to working men and that I should like to talk to them about the tariff. They asked me if I would go out and make some speeches. I said, 'Certainly I will'; and they made a great list of engagements for me that ran close up to the day of election, so that I went out. Well, it seems that what they were after was somebody to tell the working men that the Democratic party was as good as the Republican party for the tariff. I went to a crowded meeting. The gentleman who spoke before me made that kind of a speech and then I was put on the platform. I told them that I had heard of a high-tariff Democrat, though I could not conceive how there could be such a thing; and I knew there were men who called themselves revenue-tariff Democrats; but there was also another kind of Democrat, and that was a no-tariff Democrat; and that what was wanted was to sweep away the custom houses and custom house officers and have free trade. Well,

the audience applauded, but you ought to have seen the men on the platform there; and I went off without a man to shake my hand. I got that night as I was going to my next engagement, a telegraphic despatch asking me to go by midnight train to New York. The chairman of the committee met me and begged me not to make any more speeches.”¹

But there was one place in New York State where Henry George could talk out plainly for free trade, and that was in Brooklyn. Thomas Kinsella, editor of the “Brooklyn Eagle,” William C. De Witt and a number of other influential Democrats were busy fighting the Democratic machine in the city, holding lively meetings in Jefferson Hall. There Mr. George was invited to speak, and he fearlessly demanded the abolition of custom houses. Andrew McLean, then managing editor of the “Eagle,” but now editor of the “Brooklyn Citizen,” says of that meeting:

“I had read ‘Progress and Poverty’ with deep pleasure and had reviewed it in the ‘Eagle.’ Time and again I discussed it with the more thoughtful men in the office. We greeted it as giving clear expression to those vague and misty thoughts that had been floating in our minds. I had not met Mr. George and did not know what he looked like. One night during the Hancock campaign I dropped into Jefferson Hall while a mass meeting was being held, without knowing precisely who were to speak. I was tired out with newspaper and election work and was glad to find a seat out of the way, and must admit that I drowsed during the remarks of some of our more or less familiar Brooklyn men. Presently a new voice commenced, and the abrupt, direct, clear-cut sentences, together with the radical meaning they bore, startled me. I stood up and looked at the new

¹ Speech in Birmingham, England, Jan. 23, 1884.

speaker. He was a short, sturdy man, with scant hair and full reddish beard. I had never before seen him. But I could not mistake his style of speech. I said to myself: 'Thou art the man! There most certainly is the author of that book "Progress and Poverty."' I did no more drowsing, and after the speech was over I went and introduced myself to Mr. George."

This speech of Henry George was a rarity in the campaign. Democratic speakers generally dodged the tariff question, and General Hancock himself pronounced it a "local issue." Mr. George believed that Hancock's defeat, which was by a very narrow vote, was due to this evasion.

After election Mr. George was still at sea about his plans. His wife, in California, wishing to lighten his burden had taken boarders, and his oldest boy was working in a printing office there. George wrote to Taylor (October 12): "I shall not go back to California, unless for something. I don't know precisely what I shall do, but something will open. . . . Don't think me a Micawber. I shall go to work if I have to go to the case."

He did not have to go to the printer's case; yet for a time he had to break a resolution not to seek or to accept employment that would require the publication of any of his work unsigned. Shortly before his death he said of this 1880 period:

"Mr. Appleton informed me that among the men he esteemed of great reputation who had expressed admiration of 'Progress and Poverty' was Abram S. Hewitt, a wealthy man and a Member of Congress; and when Mr. Hewitt came from Europe I got a communication from him asking to see me. I responded. He said some good things of the ability shown in 'Progress and Poverty' and that he would like to get me to do some work that he had not time to do himself, on an investigation commission's report that he intended to make to Con-

gress. I needed work and could not refuse to put what ability I had at his service, with the understanding that I was to do faithfully what he required of me and to keep the matter secret, allowing him to make whatever use of it he might see fit over his own signature in his report."¹

To Taylor, George wrote confidentially at the time (November 20, 1880):

"I have taken a job from Hewitt to prepare a Congressional report—the labour investigation. Have agreed to give him three hours a day for \$50 per week, till the thing is done, or either of us is dissatisfied. So, raising a little money in advance, I have taken a room. . . . My job begins to-morrow. Before it gets through, unless it should terminate suddenly, I shall have got my feet down. I shall get, first thing, a suit of clothes, and make some acquaintances."

As will be seen, other writing interrupted the Hewitt work, which ended, as noted in a letter to Taylor (March 6, 1881):

"I took my matter down to Hewitt and read it to him. He was *much* pleased with it and laid out what he wanted done in the further steps; but when I asked him for another \$100 he changed his tune, thought it was costing too much, and that he would stop. I told him I was very glad, that I felt I was working too cheap, but that having undertaken it I had not wished to say anything. So I stopped, though it was inconvenient to do so right then, as I had laid my plans on getting another \$100 to-day. I got the first \$100 of

¹ Roused by some public remarks made by Mr. Hewitt during the 1897 New York Mayoralty campaign, Mr. George dictated this statement to a stenographer, but subsequently concluded that its publication then was not appropriate. His death soon followed and it never appeared.

course. It really ought to have been more under our agreement, but I had that uncomfortable feeling that prevents you from making out your bills in first-class style, and though I had intended the \$100 to be only on account, said nothing about any more."

The best information as to the way "Progress and Poverty" was going and other matters of interest is found in correspondence with Taylor.

November 20, 1880.

"I did feel depressed when I wrote you before. But it was not so much on account of circumstances. I am in my way of thinking a good deal of a Stoic. Adverse fortune does not much depress me. What always worries me is the thought that *I* might have done better—that it is myself who is to blame—and it seemed to me then as if I had been fooling away my time very largely. The fact of course is that I have been labouring under many disadvantages. However, there is no use in talking about that.

"I found when I got here that the book had had nothing like a fair start in the East, and the political campaign seemed to check its sale. I think now that it is going to start off. The first copies of the paper [75 cent] edition were received in the store this afternoon, and one will go to you by the mail which follows this. The preface bothered me very much. I wrote two or three—possibly enough for ten—and finally throwing it all aside, came down to a simple summary of the book.¹

"I suppose you saw the 'Atlantic Monthly's' double-barrelled notice. . . .

"I got to-day a letter from Wm. D. LeSueur of Ontario, who has an article in the July 'Science Monthly.' I gave him a copy of the book when I met him here, and I attach a good deal of importance to his opinion, for he is a man of weight. . . . He started in, of

¹ Preface appearing in the fourth and all subsequent editions of "Progress and Poverty."

course, all against it, for, in addition to previous predilections, Goldwin Smith, for whom he has a good deal of respect, sat down on it. But he writes me that he has *never* read a book with so much interest; that during the last few days while he was reading the last part he could think of nothing else; that he is a thorough convert, with the exception that he thinks the men to whom the State has sold lands ought to get some recompense, though he admits that there would be infinitely less injustice in giving them nothing than in continuing the present system; and that now his most ardent desire is to be a co-worker for the destruction of private property in land. . . . In short he wants to be counted in, and proposes to begin the campaign in Canada. Now here is a man who in my opinion is worth half the college professors in the United States.

"I showed the letter to Youmans, who has a very great opinion of LeSueur, and he at the same time was reading a letter from another man, Professor Ellis, I believe, of whom he has also a great opinion, and to whom he had given a copy of 'P. and P.' Ellis also said it was a *most* remarkable book—the most profound and original book on such subjects yet produced in America; that it ought to be immediately translated into German (he had just returned from three years there) and that for his part he proposed to write a review for — (some unpronounceable name). Youmans proposed to have these letters copied, that he might send them to Kegan Paul [publisher] of London, to whom he wrote a few days ago in reference to an English edition.

"Did I tell you that Michael Davitt pledged the Land League to push it in Great Britain? I shall send him copies by Tuesday's steamer. . . .

"I lecture in Hudson (N. Y.) on the 6th, beginning a 'star course.' I am to be followed by David A. Wells, Park Godwin and Eaton (Civil-Service Reformer).

December 18, 1880.

"I got to-day copies of the German translation, as far as out—8 numbers to beginning of Book XI. It is very neatly and tastefully gotten up. I also got a long

letter from the publisher. He says it will be a success, and that a number of long reviews are being prepared. The whole will be out this month. . . .

"I dined with Albert S. Bolles, author of 'Financial History,' etc., on Tuesday. Last night I dined with Dana of the 'Sun,' the company consisting of his family, Hazeltine, the reviewer, John Swinton and myself. He lives in magnificent style. I have plenty of chance to go into company, but have hitherto kept out of it; for until last week I had only my old clothes, and last night felt rather out of place, when seated on the right of the hostess, yet the only man in the room in a business suit. However!

"My wife thinks she can get along cheaper at boarding than keeping house, and so I have told her to sell out. . . . So life goes. My pleasant little home—that I was so comfortable in—is gone, and I am afloat at 42, poorer than at 21. I do not complain; but there is some bitterness in it."

January 4, 1881.

". . . . About the book. *At last*, it begins to look as though it had really taken hold. When I came East I found that it had hardly got started here. And during the campaign and until the last two weeks in December it went very slow. But then a movement began, and on the last day of the year every copy of the previous editions and every copy of the 1,000 of the cheap edition were gone, and orders and inquiries came piling in from every quarter. Appleton & Co. begin to realise for the first time that I have been telling them the truth, and that they have got hold of a book capable of an enormous sale; and now they are beginning to open out. . . .

"Comparatively speaking, the success of the book is already tremendous—for, so far as I can learn, no book on political economy has ever yet been published in the United States (or to my astonishment, I learn in England either) that has sold 1,000 copies in the first year (unless forced into the schools), and in fact the entire sales of most of them are to be counted in hundreds,

not thousands. My book is getting to be regarded here as *the phenomenal* one, and such publishers as Holt are already regretting that they did not take it when they had a chance.

"And to-day I get the first ringing note from the radicals of England in a copy of the Leeds 'Independent,' which declares it a book which every Englishman ought to read, and proposes to receive subscriptions for it.¹ The future of the book is, I think, secure.

". . . I want to go and see John Russell Young. His wife is dying. Poor fellow! his cup seems filled to the brim.

"P. S. Mrs. Young is dead. I add this in Young's room, where I am staying to receive his brother-in-law from Philadelphia. . . . General Grant has left, after a long stay. That is one good thing about the old fellow; he is true to his friends."

January 21, 1881.

"The book is a success. The sale seems now to have commenced in good earnest, and orders are coming from all parts of the country—in ones, two and tens and twenties. Better still, Kegan Paul, who has hardly more than got his 500 [from Appleton] writes that he will probably want more and arranges a cypher so that he can cable. The German notices are *way* up. It has at last got a show in Europe. . . .

"You will see by the 'Popular Science' this month that Youmans has at last read Book X. of 'Progress and Poverty' ['The Law of Human Progress']. He himself is the best example of the need of that book. He would not take the trouble to vote at election time, said that he should have to slowly evolve, and has told me several times that there was no use in trying to fight evils of which he himself is as conscious as any one, as to get rid of them is a matter of thousands of years!"

¹ The editor of the Leeds "Independent" was Dr. F. R. Lees, the distinguished temperance advocate. He had read while on a visit to United States a copy of the "Author's Edition" of "Progress and Poverty."

January 23, 1881.

"Slowly but steadily everything seems opening to me. If I live I am going to fill a large place and do a large work—that now is clear.

"Do you see how the 'Sun' is opening up the taxation question and advertising me? Chip in, if you have leisure, with some short communications. There is some satisfaction in writing for a paper that prints over 120,000. I suppose you have seen the 'Popular Science' for this month. Youmans says I don't make converts; I find them in all directions. Every day I get letters."

To the picture of conditions at this time, which these letters from George to Taylor give, must be added a description from memory which John Russell Young wrote the day following his friend's death.

"These early New York days were of extreme and honourable poverty. I saw Henry George a great deal—was almost a daily companion. 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.

"We took walks on the Battery, whither we went under the flush of strenuous midnight work, the great city at peace and no companions this side of the stars; strolls in the Park, in Westchester and the suburbs of Brooklyn—the brave, intrepid soul wrapped up in his book and smiling upon fate. . . .

"George was resolute in his creed. He gave it to you as the truth to be accepted, in a sense of worship, a dogma of political infallibility. 'Does this not mean war? Can you, unless when dealing with craven conditions among men, hope to take land from its owners without war?' 'I do not see,' said George, 'that a mus-

ket need be fired. But if necessary, war be it, then. There was never a holier cause. No, never a holier cause.'

"Here was the gentlest and kindest of men, who would shrink from a gun fired in anger, ready for universal war rather than that his gospel should not be accepted. It was the courage which as has been written makes one a majority."

Mr. George had for a while stopped work on the Hewitt report to write an article on the Irish Land Question for "Appleton's Journal." The subject growing on him, he kept on with his writing until he had a little book of seventeen chapters. In this brief work he gave the first striking evidence of a high order of practical ability, showing that, besides the genius to formulate a philosophy, he had the wisdom to avail himself of passing events to apply it.

On April 20, 1879, the month after the completion of "Progress and Poverty," Michael Davitt, fresh from seven years of penal servitude in an English prison for devotion to the principle of Irish independence, had organised a mass meeting in Irishtown, County Mayo, Ireland, for John Ferguson and Thomas Brennan to address, in denunciation of the landlord tyranny and rack-renting that were driving the western peasantry into starvation. With the cry of "The land for the people," he struck a spark that kindled a spreading fire. The failure of physical resistance to the English power, on the one hand, and of Parliamentary action by Parnell and his legislative colleagues, on the other, drove all the Irish faction into Davitt's movement, to make common war on the landlords. This landlord class, though comparatively small and living for the most part in England, not only made a heavy rent charge upon the toil of the labouring masses, but wielded pretty much all political power, filling all local offices,

such as sheriffs', grand jurors', and justices of the peace, besides through their class interests controlling legislation in the Imperial British Parliament. In the fall of 1879 the Irish National Land League was formally organised in Dublin, with Parnell as president and Davitt as one of the honorary secretaries. It was to supersede the Home Rule League, of which Parnell had been the head, and was to be the official organisation of so much of the Irish Parliamentary party as acknowledged his leadership. Its immediate purpose was to "bring about a reduction of rack-rents." It was also, at least, so far as Parnell and his particular adherents were concerned, to facilitate the creation of a peasant proprietary, in enabling tenants to become owners of their holdings by paying a "fair" rent for a limited number of years. There was division over this latter purpose, however. Davitt, the fire and soul of the extending organisation, continued to proclaim the principle of "the land for the people," including in its benefits, though somewhat vaguely, not only all the tenant farmers, but the much greater class of agricultural labourers as well. And Patrick Ford, of the "Irish World," a weekly newspaper published in New York and devoted to Irish and Irish-American affairs, the great organising factor in the United States, took his stand on the old Irish doctrine that the land of Ireland "belongs to the whole Irish people . . . without exception of persons," and he demanded that it "be restored to its owners with all possible speed."

While these differing principles and purposes were put forward by the respective factions, all united to defend those Irish agricultural tenants who were threatened with eviction for refusing to pay "unjust" rents. This was striking the ruling class on the "sensitive pocket nerve," and both sides prepared for war. The Irish Land League

needed money. Parnell, with Dillon, came to the United States, and with the truly powerful backing of the "Irish World," spoke to great meetings in sixty-two cities, addressed the House of Representatives at Washington, collected a war chest of \$200,000, and before leaving in March, 1880, formally organised the auxiliary American Land League.

Knowing that Parnell was a land-owner, with views and feelings of the land-owning class, and that he had been educated in a conservative English university, George did not expect much in the way of radical action from him, though he believed radical public opinion would sweep him along. But to Davitt, born a Mayo peasant, and by instinct a "man of the people," George looked with high hope, and when Davitt came to America on Land League business, towards the fall of 1880, George met him, with the result, as we have seen in the letter to Taylor: "Davitt pledges the Land League to push it ["Progress and Poverty"] in Great Britain."

Mr. George perceived that the Irish rent-war was fast making that country the theatre in the world-wide drama of the land question. He therefore addressed himself to it in his pamphlet, under the title of "The Irish Land Question: What It Involves, and How Alone It can be Settled." He aimed to show that the only solution lay in observing the principle of common ownership in land, by taking, through the medium of taxation, the rental value for all the people. Thus the advantage that the rack-renting landlord class had hitherto possessed would be transferred to the people as a whole, and no one would get any advantage as a mere landholder. But he did not have Ireland alone in his mind. Said he:¹

¹ "The Land Question," Chap. XVII (Memorial Edition, pp. 106, 107).

“What I urge the men of Ireland to do is to proclaim without limitation or evasion, that the land, of natural right, is the common property of the whole people, and to propose practical measures which will recognise this right in Great Britain as well as in Ireland. What I urge the Land Leagues of the United States to do is to announce this great principle as of universal application; to give their movement a reference to America as well as to Ireland; to broaden and deepen and strengthen it by making it a movement for the regeneration of the world—a movement which shall concentrate and give shape to aspirations that are stirring among all nations.”

The pamphlet was finished at the end of February and was at once published by Appleton in New York, and a month later by William Reeves in London, John Haywood & Sons in Manchester and Cameron & Ferguson in Glasgow.

Mr. George had meanwhile brought his family East, and was with them boarding at Fort Washington in the upper part of New York. At times he was very hard pressed for money and once drew on Taylor in far-off San Francisco for the sum of twenty dollars. We quote again from the Taylor correspondence.

“‘The Irish Land Question’ has been noticed magnificently: 2½ columns in ‘Times,’ 2½ in ‘Sun,’ 1 in ‘Express,’ 2¼ in ‘Star,’ 2½ in ‘Charleston News,’ etc. And the astonishing thing is the goodness of the comments. Nothing like the back action of the early notices of ‘Progress and Poverty.’ I am getting famous, if I am not making money. I have two magazine articles and a cyclopedia article to write¹ and if that ‘Herald’ thing does not turn, can, I think, go on the

¹ On “Chinese Immigration” for Lalor’s “Cyclopedia of Political Science, Political Economy,” etc.

'Brooklyn Eagle.' I am going to give the 'Moses' lecture before long.

"About the railroad people: McClatchy of Sacramento told my wife that Leland Stanford (to whom he sent 'Progress and Poverty') read it while sick, and told him that he had become 'a disciple of Henry George.' If that means anything, it will tell."

May 12, 1881.

"Inclosed find check for \$20. . . . You do not know, and I cannot readily tell you how much this little accommodation has been to me. It is not so much the want of money as the mental effect it produces—the morbid condition. The man who does not understand that, does not know how it is possible for people to commit suicide. This thing has weighted me very much. Could I have felt free and been relieved of the terrible anxiety, I could have in the same time accomplished many times as much. But yet it has seemed as though a Providence helped me through.

"When I drew on you for this \$20 it seemed my darkest hour. I was weak and weary in mind and body. . . .

"Article of mine in 'Appleton's' for this month. Got pay for that—\$50. 'Scribner's' will have an article pitching into me, which I hear privately is by Professor Sumner. None of those people have dared attack openly yet."

May 25, 1881.

"Why do you allow the papers there to abuse me without sending me a copy? To be abused and not to know of it is almost as bad as not to be abused at all. . . .

"Yes: look at the Republican party, and also look at the Democratic party! It is pot and kettle. I am done.

" . . . I shall have article in 'Appleton's' for June and in 'North American' for July—'pot boilers' both."¹

¹ "The Taxation of Land Values," "Appleton's Journal," June, 1881; "Common Sense in Taxation," "North American Review," July, 1881.

Meanwhile Mr. George had begun to lecture. Early in May (1881) he spoke in Chickering Hall, New York, and shortly afterwards in Historical Hall, Brooklyn; in both places, of course, on the land question. The weather on both occasions was warm, but nevertheless he made \$130 on the first and nearly \$200 on the second. A lot of young converts managed the New York lecture. Rev. R. Heber Newton, of All Soul's Episcopal Church, introduced Mr. George, having a few days before found that this was the friend of his boyhood. Andrew McLean, of the "Eagle," arranged for the Brooklyn lecture. Through him Thomas G. Shearman, who had won a reputation at the New York bar, as a skilful corporation lawyer and as the successful defender and devoted friend of Henry Ward Beecher, was interested in this lecture and met Mr. George for the first time. It was the beginning of a life-long friendship. Mr. Shearman had but just read "Progress and Poverty" and had been deeply impressed with it; but he doubted whether rent alone would suffice to pay all taxes, while he objected to the use of the word "confiscation." He was an aggressive free trader and had spent much time and money in agitating against the protective tariff idea. But he had not yet fully grasped the fact that *all* tariffs and all indirect taxes were unjust, because they tax poverty far more than wealth; nor did "Progress and Poverty" call his attention to this. He now studied the subject on statistical lines; and in a few months starting from an opposite point of view and on an entirely independent line of reasoning he arrived at substantially the same conclusions with Henry George. Soon after their meeting, by his invitation, Mr. George addressed the Brooklyn Revenue Reform Club, of which Henry Ward Beecher was president; and before long the distinguished lawyer was in his own way working

on the same radical lines as Mr. George, with an energy that caused the latter to write to him: "You suggest to me what was said of Brougham, 'a steam-engine in breeches.'"

In this connection it may be mentioned that Mr. George joined the New York Free Trade Club through one of its active young men, Poultney Bigelow, son of John Bigelow, ex-United States Minister to France. Young Bigelow was a convert to "Progress and Poverty" and of his abilities and prospects for influence in the community Mr. George thought highly. Soon after joining the club the author attended a Free Trade Club dinner. He was surprised and disgusted at the lack of radical spirit manifested in the speeches, it being evident that with the generality of members "free trade" meant only "tariff reform." He wrote to Bigelow, who could not get there, that being called upon to speak, he gave them "four minutes' worth of horse sense."

It was with important results that Henry George now began to lecture before the Land League organisations, writing Taylor (June 13), "I talk here [Saint Albans, Vermont] to-morrow night, and then go to Montreal (two lectures), Ottawa and Toronto, and four or five places in New York on the way back. Rutland and this place are \$25 each; Montreal and Ottawa, speculation; Toronto, \$50, and the others \$25 each. Good enough though to see the country and get my hand in." But "getting his hand in" involved, as most other things did with him, concentrated effort. Here, for instance, are two of the casual diary notes:

"Montreal, June 16.—Lecture 'Irish Land Question' a total failure. Don't know whether to attribute it to bad physical condition, or that I cannot get up enthusiasm in going over same ground twice. This certain,

that I should have written it beforehand. Will try to do better to-morrow. Feel very bad, but must try to pluck victory from defeat."

"Montreal, June 17.—Did it. Best ever have done. Astonished and pleased them all."

The lecture programme in the North was cut short and diverted West—Mr. George making a trip to San Francisco with his wife and younger daughter to attend to some private business of a friend.¹ On August 11 he lectured there on the land question in Metropolitan Temple, but now instead of the "beggary array of empty benches" which had greeted him while he was writing "Progress and Poverty," a large audience was attracted by the world-renown his book was winning. The early friends and believers were there and were filled with cheer and enthusiasm over this, to them, remarkable manifestation of change in the public mind. But even this was not without its shadow for the lecturer. On the afternoon preceding the discourse he sent a note to Taylor: "One of my creditors has been after me, and I fear some of them may make an attempt to garnishee proceeds to-night. I should like to consult you, but cannot go down." However, this

¹ Mr. George had found in the spring that he was not without honour in California, for at the time that John F. Miller, Republican, was elected by the California legislature to the United States Senate, Henry George received two complimentary votes, those of George C. Gorham of San Francisco and Warren S. Chase of Santa Barbara and Ventura, the latter saying, in making the nomination: "I shall name neither a lawyer nor a soldier, but a political economist who has distinguished himself and acquired a national reputation; who is throughout the world recognised as the peer of such intellects as Ricardo, John Stuart Mill and Malthus." Though Mr. George wrote to James V. Coffey, who apprised him of the occurrence, "I presume that is about as near as I shall ever come to being elected to anything," yet he appreciated the compliment.

matter was arranged and before Mr. George left San Francisco he had paid off all but a small portion of the old debts there. On the eve of his departure for the East his intimate friends gave him an informal little dinner at Campi's restaurant on Clay Street, in the centre of his old activities, and sent him off with a fervent God speed.

On his return to New York the Appleton people had surprising news for him. One thousand copies of the best edition of "Progress and Poverty" had been ordered by Francis G. Shaw, a man of means and advanced years, living quietly on Staten Island, New York Bay. One of his daughters had married George William Curtis, the distinguished author, editor and orator, and another into the family of James Russell Lowell, the poet and United States Minister to England. Mr. Shaw was best known in some circles for the substantial nature of his benevolent works. George wrote to Taylor about him (September 7) :

"The book they tell me has been selling splendidly. One item is that Francis G. Shaw ordered one thousand copies to place in the libraries throughout the country. I saw him to-day. He is the father of the Colonel Shaw who was killed leading coloured troops in the war and was 'buried with his niggers.'¹ He says he had become hopeless on social questions till sixty days ago he got my book. 'The light broke upon him,' and he wants to spread it.

"You, better than any one else, can understand how this gratifies me. He did not want to be known; but I told him it was the highest compliment and best advertisement of the book, and the knowledge of it would spread as many copies as the donation.

"I see too, by the English papers that Alfred Russell Wallace has been indorsing 'Progress and Poverty'

¹The Colonel Shaw to whom the splendid bronze memorial has been raised in Boston, Mass.

which he says 'is undoubtedly the most remarkable and important work of the present century.'

"So the seed has begun to sprout."

Following hard upon the Shaw matter came what Mr. George considered of even greater importance. To Taylor (September 12) he said:

"I have concluded an arrangement with the 'Irish World,' by which I shall go to Ireland and England in about two weeks. I will take my wife and two daughters with me, leaving the boys here in New York. The engagement is for three months, but of course, when I get over there I may stay longer. My terms with the 'World' are very good, considering how much I want to make the trip. I am to get passage both ways for myself and family and \$60 per week. Thus the chance I have long waited for opens. It will be a big thing for me. I think the biggest I have had yet."

A crisis had now come in Irish affairs. The Conservative Government going out, had left the legacy of the agrarian trouble in Ireland for the incoming Liberal Government, headed by Gladstone, to cope with. Lord Cowper was the new Irish Viceroy, and William E. Forster, who had done so much for popular education in England by the extension of the board schools, became the Chief Secretary. The Irish landlords went clamouring to them about the difficulty of getting rents from old tenants and the intimidation of, and in some instances violence to, new tenants, through the workings of the Land League. Forster and Cowper had both sought to secure some legal relief for tenants; but both urged the passage of coercive measures to repress the violence of injured tenants. The writ of habeas corpus was suspended; and hundreds of men, known or "suspected" to be connected with the popu-

lar movement, were imprisoned without trial. Davitt had some time before been arrested and sent back to Portland prison on the ground of violation of the conditions of his ticket-of-leave. And now the arrest of Parnell was threatened.

The proposal for correspondence with the "Irish World," had come to Mr. George, but he had been unable to accept until Mr. Shaw, seeing in this an opportunity to help the new cause in which he had enlisted, put at his disposal a little money that enabled him to meet some small obligations and make the start. But he was delayed until the middle of October and meanwhile he wrote to Mr. Shaw (October 9):

"'Truth' to-day commences the republication of 'Progress and Poverty.' I am very glad of this. From all I hear its circulation is between 75,000 and 100,000. This gives an enormous audience, and largely of a kind that cannot be reached in any other way. . . .

"One of the firm of Kegan Paul & Co., the London publishers of 'Progress and Poverty,' was in Appleton's yesterday. He says the book at first was dead as a log; but has now picked up and is selling rapidly. He anticipates a very large sale."

"Truth" was a New York, one cent, poor man's daily paper. Its chief editorial writer was Louis F. Post, a young man bred to the bar and possessing an extremely fair and open mind. He had skimmed "Progress and Poverty," formed hasty and loose opinions and written flippantly about it; but returning to a closer examination, he had gradually changed his views, until the book whispered to him, "Leave thy nets and follow me," and he obeyed. Thenceforward Henry George had no more devoted friend or thorough and stanch disciple. The author was asked to permit "Truth" to republish the book

serially. Though compensation was not offered, he consented, glad in this way to "spread the light" among working men.¹

But a matter of domestic consideration engaged Mr. George's mind before setting off. His two sons were to stay behind; the problem was how to employ them during the separation. The younger one, Dick, it was settled was to return to school, and with the elder, Harry, the question was whether he should be put in a newspaper office or be sent to Harvard College, where special considerations at the time had let down the bars to poor men's sons. In talking the matter over with the boy the father weighed it in this way: "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." So the decision was for newspaper work. An opening was made on the "Brooklyn Eagle" by Andrew McLean, and the boy was put to the first small reporting. To assist him in learning to write, the father gave his son four rules: First, to make short sentences; second, to avoid adjectives; third, to use small words; and fourth—a general rule—not to attempt "fine" writing; to say as simply and as briefly as possible all that should be said, and then to stop.

Before sailing Mr. George went to Philadelphia to bid good-bye to his parents, who were now advanced in years. He was accompanied by his boys part of the way and was in a meditative mood, saying, as if half to himself: "When I had finished 'Progress and Poverty' I was certain that

¹ Afterwards the "Chicago Express" followed "Truth's" example and printed the book serially.

I had written a great book and that the time would come when the truth in it would set the world afire. But I could not feel confident of seeing in my own lifetime more than perhaps a hundred persons who would grasp it and believe in it. Yet now, only two years after its publication, it is being talked of all over the world; and men are rising up everywhere to hail it!"

All the preparations being at length made, Henry George, with his wife and his two daughters, on Saturday, October 15, 1881, sailed on the steamship *Spain* of the National line, for Liverpool.