

CHAPTER VIII.

CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR OF NEW YORK.

1886.

AGE, 47.

BUSY during the summer of 1886 in pressing the circulation of his new book, "Protection or Free Trade?" and in preparing the series of articles on "Labour in Pennsylvania" for the "North American Review"; proposing towards the end of the year to start the long thought of weekly, and contemplating before that another short lecturing trip through Great Britain, as friends there suggested, Mr. George saw his time well laid out. But one day, while in his office talking with Tom L. Johnson and Gaybert Barnes, young Richard George entered with a newspaper that announced that the labour unions of the city proposed to enter politics in the fall in the hope of bringing about better political and social conditions and intended to invite Henry George to be their candidate for mayor. The little group thought the story entertaining, but none regarded it seriously. Nor did Mr. George think much of the matter even when waited upon by a committee from a conference of trade and labour unions, which, representing nearly all the labour organisations in New York, was being held with the view to political action. Mr. George was qualified to run for the office, having moved to Pleasant Avenue, New

York, but he told the committee that he had planned important work that he would not like to interrupt. Nevertheless, the committee after a few days returned and was more urgent. Mr. George told them that he was in sympathy with the trade unions and that he believed that the remedy for the evils of which they complained lay through the ballot, but that trade union candidates the year before had not only met with ignominious defeat, but had not received anything like the united support of the trade union members themselves. He was willing to stand for principle, he said, but did not wish to be made ridiculous by a miserably small vote. Therefore, he did not care to consider the matter. Yet again the committee returned, this time to assure him that, whereas, the unions the year before had not been harmonious, they were entirely so now; and that though there was a long list of offices to fill in the fall election, the unions would concentrate their entire efforts on the single candidate for Mayor.

Mr. George had meanwhile been talking quietly to some of his friends, most of whom seemed extremely flattered over the recognition he was getting. They were anxious to use the occasion to preach the land question and the many things that it involved. Charles Frederick Adams argued that the great majority of working men held various and confusing views and that if George stood he would supply a clear, concise, coherent body of principles, which, while educating and rallying the working men themselves, would appeal even more strongly to the book-reading, thoughtful elements of the community. Tom L. Johnson said that he was not acquainted with conditions in New York, but that if George decided to fight, he would heartily support. In the emergency Mr. George consulted Dr. McGlynn, who possessed a large knowledge of

political affairs and manifested a lively interest in this particular matter. The Doctor counselled him to run.

Matters were in this state when the labour committee for the third time waited upon Mr. George and urged him to consider the matter and to write a formal letter to James P. Archibald, Secretary of the Labour Conference, either accepting or declining the proposition. Mr. George consented, for he believed now that a large proportion of the men in the unions were earnestly looking to him for leadership in a fight against their hard living conditions. Then he conceived what Dr. McGlynn called his "master stroke." At the end of August he wrote the letter to Archibald. In it he set forth fully and clearly his own views and stated that his sense of duty would not permit him to refuse any part assigned to him by the common consent of earnest men really bent upon carrying into politics the principles he held dear. Yet failure would hurt the very cause they wished to help. "For this reason," he wrote, "it seems to me that the only condition on which it would be wise in a Labour Convention to nominate me, or on which I should be justified in accepting such a nomination, would be that at least thirty thousand citizens should, over their signatures, express the wish that I should become a candidate, and pledge themselves in such case to go to the polls and vote for me. This would be a guarantee that there should be no ignominious failure, and a mandate that I could not refuse. On this condition I would accept the nomination if tendered to me."

Unusual and difficult of fulfilment as this condition was, it was nevertheless hailed by the labour bodies not only in New York but elsewhere with many marks of satisfaction and enthusiasm. This was particularly shown at the annual Labour Day parade early in Sep-

tember, which Mr. George was invited to review in Union Square with the then mayor of the city, William R. Grace.

The working men were without political machinery and the election laws at the time made party machinery greatly advantageous. The laws were such as to make bribery, intimidation, and miscounting so common a practice as to give singular force to the cynical observation of a Democratic subordinate manager, who said: "How can George win? He has no inspectors of election!" Nevertheless, the way signatures to George pledges were rolling in daunted and even frightened the Democratic leaders; for a large part of George strength was developing in what had been Democratic strongholds.

New York City was, and under one name or another had been for the most part since the organisation of the Tammany charitable and political society a hundred years before, strongly Democratic. That society had started out with Jeffersonian principles and an opposition to aristocracy and Hamilton's federalism, but long years of political power had corrupted its principles and made it the instrument of the unscrupulous, until the Tweed exposures in the seventies made its name synonymous with political debauchery.¹ Tammany went into eclipse and a regenerated party under the name of County Democracy arose triumphant. But power corrupted that, too, and it fell into the hands of professional politicians, though it retained in its membership list many of the respectable names with which it had started out. In the last preceding city election the County Democracy party had

¹ In exposing the naturalisation frauds, Dr. Montague R. Levenson struck the first blow at Tammany, though it was not until later, when evidences of the theft of public money were obtained, that the Tweed ring fell.

elected William R. Grace to the mayoralty. Now both factions saw a common danger in the rise of George. They, therefore, sent a joint emissary to wait upon the proposed labour candidate. About this interview Mr. George a few days before his death said:¹

“Before my nomination had formally taken place I received a request from Mr. William M. Ivins, then Chamberlain of the city, and a close political friend and representative of Mr. Grace, to privately meet him. I did so at Seighortner’s, on Lafayette Place. We sat down in a private room, unattended, and smoked some cigars together. Mr. Ivins insisted that I could not possibly be elected Mayor of New York, no matter how many people might vote for me; that the men who voted knew nothing of the real forces that dominated New York. He said that I could not possibly be counted in. He offered on behalf of Tammany Hall and the County Democracy that if I would refuse the nomination for mayor they would run me for Congress, select a city district in which the nomination of the two was equivalent to election; that I should be at no expense whatever, but might go to Europe or anywhere I willed, and when I came back should receive a certificate of election to the House of Representatives. I said to him finally: ‘You tell me I cannot possibly get the office. Why, if I cannot possibly get the office, do you want me to withdraw?’ His reply was: ‘You cannot be elected, but your running will raise hell!’ I said: ‘You have relieved me of embarrassment. I do not want the responsibility and the work of the office of the Mayor of New York, but I do want to raise hell! I am decided and will run.’”

It was not the office he was after; he wanted to plant the seed. He wrote to Taylor (September 10): “It is by no means impossible that I shall be elected. But the

¹ Published reply to statement made in the newspapers by Abram S. Hewitt, October, 1897.

one thing sure is that if I do go into the fight the campaign will bring the land question into practical politics and do more to popularise its discussion than years of writing would do. This is the only temptation to me."

Election really looked more than possible—even probable. With four other candidates in the field—Republican, Prohibitionist, and one for each of the Democratic factions—it was estimated that George would require for election little more than twice the thirty thousand votes guaranteed in the pledges now being rapidly signed; whereas, the labour organisations themselves were supposed to have a membership of sixty-five thousand. The nominating convention of the Trade and Labour Conference took place in Clarendon Hall on September 23. It adopted a platform written by Henry George, which the "New York World" characterised as "an epitome of Mr. George's popular essay entitled 'Progress and Poverty.'" One hundred and seventy-five labour organisations were represented by 409 delegates, from whom George received on the first ballot 360 votes, while 31 votes were cast for a popular furniture dealer named J. J. Coogan; and 18, purely by way of compliment, for William S. Thorn, Superintendent of the Second Avenue Railroad, who had treated his men extremely well. The proceedings were remarkable for enthusiasm and harmony among the usually hostile and warring factions of the labour bodies. Seldom before had labour representatives manifested such confidence of success in a political contest.

And interest in the nomination extended beyond the labour unions. It sprang up among "that great body of citizens," said Mr. George, "who, though not working men in the narrow sense of the term, feel the bitterness of the struggle for existence as much as does the manual labourer, and are as deeply conscious of the corruptions

of our politics and the wrong of our social system." These had not to any number signed the pledge to vote for George, but they gave voice to their support by a meeting in Chickering Hall on October 2, at which Rev. John W. Kramer presided, and Rev. Dr. R. Heber Newton, Professor Thomas Davidson, Daniel DeLeon, Ph.D. of Columbia College; Charles F. Wingate, Professor David B. Scott of the College of the City of New York, and the Rev. Dr. Edward McGlynn spoke. The meeting packed the hall and with a roar of approval passed resolutions indorsing George's nomination by the Trade and Labour Conference.

Dr. McGlynn spoke, said one who heard him, "as if he expected that night to be his last." And it was a mighty moment in his life. He had been forbidden by his ecclesiastical superior to speak. Some days before Archbishop Corrigan had written Dr. McGlynn expressing anxiety about the latter's "relations with Henry George" and hoping that he would "leave aside" anything that would seem "to coincide with socialism." In order to show what manner of man Henry George was and the true nature of his teachings, Dr. McGlynn suggested that Mr. George call on the Archbishop, which he did, bearing a letter of introduction from Dr. McGlynn. The Archbishop received Mr. George courteously, but was not prepared to hear him explain the land doctrine, as he said, after giving a history of the case, that Dr. McGlynn had violated an understanding made in 1882 that he was to make no more public utterances. "The Archbishop told me," said Mr. George afterwards,¹ "that he had called his council to meet at twelve that day for the purpose of taking into consideration the case of Dr. McGlynn, and

¹ "The Standard," January 8, 1887.

as I understood at the time, of suspending him." "On leaving the Archbishop," continued Mr. George, "I called on Dr. McGlynn and informed him of the result of my interview. He said that his understanding of the promise he had felt himself obliged to make in 1882 was that he should deliver no more speeches on the Irish question, which promise he had kept; that he had since made speeches on behalf of Mr. Cleveland [during the presidential canvass] to which there had been no remonstrances whatever, and that he had not up to that time received any inhibition from speaking at the Chickering Hall meeting; yet even should one come, he could not, now that he had been announced to speak, refrain from doing so consistently with his own self-respect and without publicly renouncing the rights of an American citizen."

Then it was that Dr. McGlynn received a letter from the Archbishop forbidding him to take part in the Chickering Hall meeting or "to take any part in future in any political meeting whatever without permission of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide." Other priests who were expected to attend the meeting and speak had been warned and stayed away. But the pastor of St. Stephen's attended and spoke as never before in his life. Nor did any—not even Mr. George—know for many days after the campaign was over that on the morning following the meeting Archbishop Corrigan had suspended Dr. McGlynn for two weeks.

The formal nomination of Henry George having been made by the labour conference and indorsed by business and professional men in public meeting, a formal acceptance was arranged to take place in the historic Cooper Union Hall on October 5. The multitude was so great that Mr. George had some difficulty in squeezing in, and an immense overflow meeting took place outside. Several

large bundles containing the signatures of more than thirty-four thousand voters who had pledged themselves to support George at the polls were, amid much excitement, passed in over men's heads and placed upon the edge of the platform in general view. Rev. Mr. Kramer first presented the resolutions of the Chickering Hall meeting to John McMackin, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Labour Party, and then Mr. McMackin tendered the nomination with its indorsement to Mr. George, who on rising was received with a long ovation of cheering. When quiet was restored he said:

“The step I am about to take has not been entered upon lightly. When my nomination for Mayor of New York was first talked of I regarded it as a nomination which was not to be thought about. I did not desire to be Mayor of New York. I have had in my time political ambition, but years ago I gave it up. I saw what practical politics meant; I saw that under the conditions as they were a man who would make a political career must cringe and fawn and intrigue and flatter, and I resolved that I should not so degrade my manhood. Another career opened to me; the path that I had chosen—that my eyes were fixed upon—was rather that of a pioneer—that of the men who go in advance of politics, the men who break the road that after they have gone will be trod by millions. It seemed to me that there lay duty and that there lay my career, and since this nomination has been talked about my friends here and through the country and beyond the seas have sent me letter after letter, asking me not to lower, as they are pleased to term it, the position I occupied by running for a municipal office. But I believe, and have long believed, that working men ought to go into politics. I believe, and I have long believed, that through politics was the way, and the only way, by which anything real and permanent could be secured for labour. In that path, however, I did not expect to tread. That, I thought, would de-

volve upon others, but when the secretary of this nominating convention came to me and said, 'You are the only man upon whom we can unite, and I want you to write me a letter either accepting or refusing to accept and giving your reasons,' that put a different face on the matter. When it came that way I could not refuse, but I made my conditions. I asked for a guarantee of good faith; I asked for some tangible evidence that my fellow-citizens of New York really wanted me to act. That evidence you have given me: All I asked, and more."

The office of Mayor of New York, he said, important though it was, was fettered by commissions, the occupants of only two of which he could remove. But still he had the power of visitation and inquisition—of finding out how things were going—and the further power of appealing to the people; and those powers he proposed, if elected, to use to their utmost and to destroy political corruption. But the mayoralty movement meant even more. Chattel slavery was dead; there now devolved upon them the task of removing industrial slavery.

"We have hordes of citizens living in want and in vice born of want, existing under conditions that would appall heathen. Is this by the will of our Divine Creator? No. It is the fault of men; and as men and citizens, on us devolves the duty of removing this wrong; and in that platform which the convention has adopted and on which I stand the first step is taken. Why should there be such abject poverty in this city? There is one great fact that stares in the face any one who chooses to look at it. That fact is that the vast majority of men and women and children in New York have no legal right to live here at all. Most of us—ninety-nine per cent. at least—must pay the other one per cent. by the week or month or quarter for the privilege of staying here and working like slaves. . . .

"Now, is there any reason for such over-crowding?

There is plenty of room on this island. There are miles and miles and miles of land all around this nucleus. Why cannot we take that and build houses upon it for our accommodation? Simply because it is held by dogs in the manger who will not use it themselves nor allow anybody else to use it, unless he pays an enormous price for it—because what the Creator intended for the habitation of the people whom He called into being is held at an enormous rent or an enormous price. . . .

“But what do we propose to do about it? We propose, in the first place, as our platform indicates, to make the buildings cheaper, by taking the tax off buildings. We propose to put that tax on land exclusive of improvements, so that a man who is holding land vacant will have to pay as much for it as if he was using it, just upon the same principle that a man who should go to a hotel and hire a room and take the key and go away would have to pay as much for it as if he had occupied the room and slept in it. In that way we propose to drive out the dog in the manger who is holding from you what he will not use himself. We propose in that way to remove this barrier and open the land to the use of labour in putting up buildings for the accommodation of the people of the city. . . .

“I am your candidate for Mayor of New York. It is something that a little while ago I never dreamt of. Years ago I came to this city from the West, unknown, knowing nobody, and I saw and recognised for the first time the shocking contrast between monstrous wealth and debasing want. And here I made a vow, from which I have never faltered, to seek out and remedy, if I could, the cause that condemned little children to lead such lives as you know them to lead in the squalid districts. It is because of that that I stand before you to-night, presenting myself for the chief office of your city—espousing the cause, not only of your rights but of those who are weaker than you. Think of it! Little ones dying by thousands in this city; a veritable slaughter of the innocents before their time has come. Is it not our duty as citizens to address ourselves to the ad-

justment of social wrongs that force out of the world those who are called into it almost before they are here—that social wrong that forces girls upon the streets and our boys into the grog shops and then into penitentiaries? We are beginning a movement for the abolition of industrial slavery, and what we do on this side of the water will send its impulse across the land and over the sea, and give courage to all men to think and act. Let us, therefore, stand together. Let us do everything that is possible for men to do from now until the second of next month, that success may crown our efforts, and that to us in this city may belong the honour of having led the van in this great movement.”

The press gave large reports of the meeting. All of them confessed that George, because of his high character and personal abilities, and because of the unprecedented signs of harmony among the labour unions in support of him, would be an important factor in the municipal contest. Most of the papers did not seem to know exactly what attitude to assume as yet. Only two of them showed downright ill will, “The Daily Illustrated Graphic” calling George another Jack Cade and the “Evening Post” saying that while not apprehending his election, he might “get a vote large enough to demoralise the officers of the law and diminish the protection we now enjoy against mob violence.”

By voluntary contributions and assessments, the labour unions raised some money for the uses of the election committee, though the amount was inadequate to meet even the necessary and legitimate needs imposed by the election laws, which, among other things, required each party to print and distribute its own tickets. The campaign on the working men’s side began and ended with few brass bands and little red fire. The working men’s headquarters on Eighth Street were anything but garish; nor

was there any show or pretence about Mr. George's headquarters in the Colonnade Hotel, around the corner on Broadway. Most of the work was done by volunteers, and hall rent for some of the larger meetings, at least, was, contrary to all political usage, collected from the audience by "passing the hat." Other money came from some of Mr. George's close friends, chiefly from Tom L. Johnson; and some, in small sums, came through the mails from unknown sympathisers in the city and outside.

A notable contribution was a cheque for \$100 from a stranger, August Lewis of August Lewis & Co., straw goods importers and manufacturers on Greene Street, New York. The cheque was accompanied by a short note of good will, and Mr. Lewis soon afterwards followed this by a personal visit. He was born in Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany, of Jewish parents and received an ordinary grammar school education. Coming to this country in 1869, whither some members of his family had preceded him, he joined one of them in business. As a member of the Society for Political Education he had in 1882 received one of the complimentary copies of "Progress and Poverty" presented to that organisation by Francis G. Shaw; but not until Mr. George was a candidate and began to be vigorously discussed in the newspapers did Mr. Lewis read the book. It immediately did for him what it had done for Mr. Shaw—brought him hope where before had been despair of the social problem. And feeling so, though it ran counter to his political habits and social affiliations, Mr. Lewis gave Henry George his moral and material support. He quickly took his place as one of Mr. George's closest friends, and in the end he shared with Tom L. Johnson the honour of the dedication of the philosopher's last book.

Mr. George's refusal to withdraw from the mayoralty

contest, and his rapidly gathering strength left little hope of victory for the Democracy, save in the course some of the party papers urged—the union of the two factions. But it was evident when the Tammany convention met on October 11, that a considerable number of the delegates were for George and would have favoured his indorsement. But the little group controlling the machine had no thought of such a thing. Yet they did not see hope in a candidate from their own factional ranks. They therefore selected a man identified with the other faction—Abram S. Hewitt. Hewitt's name was presented to the convention and the perfunctory form of nomination was gone through with by the delegates, though few of them had had a hint of what was coming and astonishment for a time was supreme.

Abram S. Hewitt was of the large iron manufacturing firm of Cooper, Hewitt & Co. He was son-in-law of the then late philanthropist, Peter Cooper, and brother-in-law of Edward Cooper, sometime Mayor of New York. For years he had been Congressman from New York. He was the same Abram S. Hewitt who in 1880 had spoken in praise of "Progress and Poverty" to William H. Appleton, the publisher, and who, through Mr. Appleton, had invited an acquaintance with Mr. George, whom he engaged privately to work on a Congressional report, which work was discontinued on Hewitt's refusal longer to pay what George regarded as reasonable compensation. Their agreement had been for privacy on both sides, as the Congressman intended to use the report as his own; but Hewitt now, during the mayoralty campaign, broke the seal of confidence, and gave to one of the newspapers a story that George had once been his secretary, but had to be discharged because he would run the land tax into everything. No response was made to this at the time,

but eleven years later, during the second mayoralty canvass, when Mr. Hewitt was reported to have made some personal statements about him that called for reply, Mr. George dictated to a stenographer a statement of the 1880 episode, although afterwards he concluded that the occasion was inappropriate to publish it.

Mr. Hewitt in his letter of acceptance took the ground that he had been called upon to save society.

“An attempt is being made to organise one class of our citizens against all other classes, and to place the government of the city in the hands of men willing to represent the special interests of this class, to the exclusion of the just rights of the other classes. The injurious effects arising from the conclusion that any considerable portion of our people desire to substitute the ideas of anarchists, nihilists, communists, socialists, and mere theorists for the democratic principle of individual liberty, which involves the right to private property, would react with the greatest severity upon those who depend upon their daily labour for their daily bread, and who are looking forward to a better condition for themselves and their children by the accumulation of capital through abstinence and economy. The horrors of the French Revolution and the atrocities of the Commune offer conclusive proof of the dreadful consequences of doctrines which can only be enforced by revolution and bloodshed, even when reduced to practice by men of good intentions and blameless private life.”

Mr. Hewitt seemed to believe that since he was undertaking to defend social order and institutions against “anarchists, nihilists, communists, socialists and mere theorists,” the Republicans should make common cause with him and support him. But the Republicans cleaved to themselves and nominated for mayor an able young

man of large personal fortune and aristocratic connections and ideas—Theodore Roosevelt.

Practically all the politicians and all the daily press except the "Volks Zeitung" and a little paper called "The Leader," which had started for the campaign and of which Louis F. Post was made the editor,¹ were now in full cry against George; and the lies, intentional and accidental, that one paper started the others took up and circulated. For instance, George was reported by the "Sun" to have said in a speech that with all its horrors the great epoch of the French Revolution was about to repeat itself, and the "Evening Post," with a seeming *malice prepense*, repeatedly in editorials (and "Harpers Weekly," with letterpress and a cartoon) quoted this in the face of its obvious inconsistency with George's known principles and direct denials. Mrs. Lowell, Francis G.

¹ Mr. Post says: "'The Leader' was the only newspaper support that the George party had after the campaign opened, except the 'Volks Zeitung,' the socialist paper, printed in German. At first the 'Volks Zeitung' opened its editorial columns to articles in support of George in English, and I did the work. But early in the campaign 'The Leader' was started. It jumped at once to a circulation of 35,000 daily, and was self-supporting from the beginning. But to make it self-supporting all the editorial and reportorial work had to be contributed without pay. And this was done. Though the other newspapers unanimously opposed George, their sub-editors and reporters almost unanimously supported him. As they could do nothing for him in their own papers, they volunteered in large numbers for work upon 'The Leader.' After doing a full day's work on their respective papers, they would turn in and do another day's work, in the same twenty-four hours, for us. And this they continued to the last. Where all were so devoted it would be invidious to mention names, even if I could remember them. But the managing editor's and the city editor's chairs were filled in this way; and as fine a body of reporters as ever came together on any paper joined with the rest of us in working for 'The Leader' without pay throughout the campaign. Editorial writers on other papers also contributed to this unpaid work by sending in editorials and special articles."

Shaw's daughter, wrote in some alarm to Mr. George about the reported utterances, and he replied: "I not only never *meant* to encourage lawlessness or disorder, but never *did*, by direction or indirection. On the contrary, I have told my people in the most emphatic way that I would preserve order and enforce the law."

But George did not have much time for explanations of this kind. His campaign was not defensive, but offensive; not one of excuses, but of aggression. He addressed an open letter to the Democratic candidate pointing out that Hewitt himself represented the dangerous and unscrupulous classes, as personified by Richard Croker and the many other professional politicians about him; whereas he (George) represented the great working mass of the community—the workers with head as well as with hand; and that as an English statesman had happily phrased it, the working men's movement was one of "the masses against the classes." Finally he proposed that Hewitt and he discuss the various questions of the campaign in joint debate.

Hewitt's reply was quite as spirited. He ascribed George's candidacy to his "peculiar views as to the nature of property"; and asserted again that he was supported by "all the anarchists, nihilists, communists and socialists in the community," with whom he (Hewitt) did "not wish to confound the men supporting him whom" George had "stigmatised as politicians." He also regretted that he could not "accommodate in debate a gentleman for whose 'remarkable acuteness, fertility and literary power' [he had the] highest respect."

Two other open letters passed between the candidates, one from George, in which he offered Hewitt half his time at a meeting to take place that week at Chickering Hall; and one from Hewitt declining the proffer and de-

claring it George's purpose "to array working men against millionaires."¹

This was the kernel of opposition from press and platform to George. He was denounced as a "marauder," an "assailant of other people's rights," a "leveller," a "robber of the poor," a "revolutionist," an "apostle of anarchy and destruction," a "man who attacks the sacred foundations of property," and a "recreant to liberty"—so that that came to pass which Mr. George predicted in his speech of acceptance, when he said: "This, in my opinion, will be one of the fiercest contests that ever took place in this or any other American city. Every influence that can be arrayed against me will be used. There will be falsehoods and slanders, everything that money and energy and political knowledge can command."

One instance of this was given when a story was published that Dr. McGlynn had withdrawn his support from George. At the risk of further displeasure to his ecclesiastical superiors, the Doctor gave out a statement to the newspapers in which he said that his "admiration and affection for Henry George's genius and character" were, "if possible, increasing every day." Though it was not yet known, Dr. McGlynn had been "disciplined" for disobeying his Archbishop's order, which was literally, not to speak at the Chickering Hall meeting, but which was really, as subsequent events proved, not to help George. But now towards the close of the contest, when the last supreme efforts were being made, and when McGlynn's great influence was strongly felt, the higher resident dignitaries in the Church did not hesitate

¹ For the full text of this correspondence and a sketch of the contest, see a small compilation by Louis F. Post and Fred C. Leubuscher, entitled "The George-Hewitt Campaign," formerly published by John W. Lovell Company, New York.

themselves to enter the conflict. For, in answer to a letter from one of Mr. Hewitt's chief managers, Rt. Rev. Monsignor Preston, Vicar-General of the Diocese, made a formal, written reply condemning George's principles as "unsound, unsafe and contrary to the teachings of the Church," and averring that if "logically carried out," they "would prove the ruin of the working men he professes to befriend"; adding that "although we never interfere directly in elections, we would not wish now to be misunderstood at a time when the best interests of society may be in danger." This letter was promptly given to the press and distributed at the Church doors the Sunday preceding election day, and it strengthened the denunciation launched in sermons from several Catholic altars against Henry George and what he was declared to represent.

A single furtive attempt was made on George's personal character. A story was published in some San Francisco papers, and telegraphed to some New York papers, that he was once connected with a piratical expedition. This referred to the Brontes Mexican Revolution enterprise, with the details of which the reader has already been made acquainted.¹ The tale of piracy was seen to be ridiculous and was quickly dropped. As by common accord, George's enemies spoke of him as of pure private life and unquestionable abilities—an honest and dangerous fanatic.

Yet the cries of threatened machine politicians and corruptionists and an opposing press frightened into cooperation the timid rich and a large commercial class, who always fear changes, even though they be the sweeping away of long-standing abuses; so that Henry George

¹ Pages 165-67.

had a tremendous combination of forces, good and bad, respectable and disreputable, arrayed against him. But if such powers opposed, he had the intense, burning enthusiasm of the great working masses behind him—"a power," to use his own words, "stronger than money, more potent than trained politicians"; something to meet and "throw them aside like chaff before a gale."

Louis Prang, the Boston art publisher, who feared for George's dignity as an author and teacher of a great idea if he should enter upon a speaking campaign, urged him to follow General Grant's custom and make no speeches. But George replied: "I appreciate all you say. Nevertheless, I have been called into this fight, and I propose to go through with it. While it was perfectly proper for Grant to make no campaign speeches, that is the very thing I must do; and I look forward to a month of speaking every night."

And never before in New York, and perhaps nowhere else in the country, had there been such a speaking campaign. In halls and from "cart-tails," at the noon dinner hour or at midnight, before exclusive audiences and before street throngs, in the commercial centres and through the tenement regions, Henry George spoke. Rather than a seeker for office, he was a man with a mission, preaching the way to cast out involuntary poverty from civilisation. Rather than a politician ready to pare away and compromise, he pressed straight for equality and freedom, and in a breath-taking way struck at the ignorant prejudices of his own followers as sharply as at those of his fiercest antagonists. While it was, for instance, the rule to temporise on the tariff and liquor questions, George called for the abolition of custom houses and of excise and licenses. He made speeches, frequently as many as twelve or fourteen a day, of a variety, strength,

clearness, fire and human sympathy that amazed and thrilled the multitudes that flocked to hear him, and that inspired with increasing energy the scores and hundreds of all walks of life who sprang up to talk for him and his cause. Among these were Patrick Ford, who, though he did not actually speak, sat upon the Cooper Union platform and gave the strong editorial backing of the "Irish World"; General Master Workman Powderly of the Knights of Labour; Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labour; and Rev. J. O. S. Huntington, son of the Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Central New York, and head of the Episcopal Order of the Holy Cross. There had been many municipal elections in New York before, but none like this. They had been purely political; this involved social questions as well. The sure sign of internal interest was the registration of voters, preparatory to the formal balloting. This year, with no accompanying State or national contests to augment it, the registration was extremely heavy.

Outside, the press of the country noted, discussed and divided, as though they were active participants; while beyond the broad seas, men at the antipodes watched and waited, and the British public, in placid ignorance of most things American, was by cable reports in its newspapers daily informed of each important event in this New York mayoralty struggle, as though it involved the advancement or downfall of a sovereign State. The truth—the vital spark—the expression of hope of a less bitter struggle for subsistence for all men, even the meanest and lowest, that had raised the California writer from obscurity, that had given his book on political economy a world-wide circulation, that had gathered throngs to hear him speak from one end of Great Britain to the other, was now infused into a city election and centred

the gaze of millions—made the world its audience. Letters of God-speed poured in upon the candidate from a thousand sources—from organisations whose hearts beat responsive to his trumpet call; from isolated individuals he never saw and never could expect to see. “The great question”—he dashed off in a note of cheer to Mr. Gutschow, German translator of “Progress and Poverty,” who had sent money out of his small purse for the campaign—“The great question is at last in politics and the struggle has begun.”

The campaign closed with the Republicans deprecating both Hewitt and George, and the Democrats crying that a vote for Roosevelt was a vote for George, while the policy of those who feared the rise of the labour power was “anything to beat George.” The last and most signal proof to them that their fears were well founded was a parade of labour unions on the Saturday night three days before election. Through a cold, drenching rain, without brass bands, uniforms or any of the usual political trappings, bearing aloft their trade-union banners, and with here and there a few torches, but mostly in darkness, the long, dense line of men, headed by William McCabe, a journeyman printer, were two hours in marching past the reviewing platform in Union Square, and made one continuous, fervid shout of salutation to the man, their candidate, standing there.

So the campaign closed, and election day came. Then was seen the great disadvantage of the working men’s party. It had no representatives in the polling places to count the votes. Moreover, under the election law it had to print its own ballots and distribute them to voters, and some of the election districts were actually without distributors and ballots. The law worked for the benefit of the party “machines.” Yet men without pay and without

food stood from dawn till nightfall working for George. Late in the evening the returns showed that Abram S. Hewitt had been elected Mayor, with George second, and Roosevelt third; the official canvass subsequently showing for Hewitt, 90,552; for George, 68,110; and for Roosevelt, 60,435. Mr. George believed at the time, and many circumstances afterwards confirmed his belief, that he had really been elected, but had been "counted out."

But he had got all that he really wanted—a big vote. At twelve o'clock election night, when the event was no further in doubt, he made a speech at the working men's headquarters on Eighth Street, crowded with the more active among his supporters. Disappointment was written on most faces there. They had fought with the confidence of winning. Defeat was bitter. But George's voice rang out bell-like and clear:

"I congratulate you to-night upon the victory we have won. The future is ours. This is the Bunker Hill. We have been driven back as the continental troops were from Bunker Hill. If they won no technical victory, they did win a victory that echoed round the world and still rings. They won a victory that made this Republic a reality; and thank God, men of New York, we in this fight have won a victory that makes the true Republic of the future certain. We have lit a fire that will never go out. We have begun a movement that, defeated, and defeated, and defeated, must still go on. All the great currents of our time, all the aspirations of the heart of man, all the new forces of our civilisation are with us and for us. They never fail who die in a good cause. This has been but a skirmish that prepares our forces for the battles that are to follow."

These words of courage thrilled all who heard and called out round after round of cheers.