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Henry George and the Crisis of Inequality

Progress and Poverty in the Gilded Age

Edward T. O'Donnell



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prisons, and men toiling from sunrise to dark, and women brutalized by want, and children robbed of their childhood shall be things of the past.⁷⁶

In these words and in his earlier reform proposals, we see George developing an increasingly radical, utopian vision of the capitalist future that departed in significant ways from the antebellum republican past.⁷⁷

The outlines of the system of political economy George would develop into *Progress and Poverty* and later pursue as an activist in New York City were clear by the mid-1870s. Raised in a culture of antebellum republicanism and free labor mantras, he held fast to the belief that minimalist government and free-market capitalism offered society the best conditions for material abundance, equal opportunity, and true republican government. But as George observed a republican society in crisis, he began to argue that a modern market economy—in ways unanticipated by the Founding Fathers—could no longer guarantee that the virtuous traditions of American society would flourish indefinitely. More and more, he sought to remove the blinders of complacency from his readers' eyes to reveal and pinpoint the threats posed by monopoly in land and industry to the foundations of republican society. This new situation, he argued, warranted a radical rethinking regarding contemporary orthodoxies on the sanctity of private property and the negative state.⁷⁸

“Poverty Enslaves Men We Boast Are Political Sovereigns”

*PROGRESS AND POVERTY AND
HENRY GEORGE'S REPUBLICANISM*

What is the good of having a republic unless the mass of the people are better off than in a monarchy? Does not a real republic mean that all men have an equal chance and not millions born to suffering and poverty?

—*Boston Pilot*, November 2, 1878

There will soon come an armed contest between capital and labor. They will oppose each other, not with words and arguments, but with shot and shell, gun-powder and cannon. The better classes are tired of the insane howling of the lower strata and they mean to stop them.

—General William T. Sherman, 1883

“WE HAVE AMONG US A PERNICIOUS COMMUNISTIC SPIRIT”

As Henry George evolved as a radical reformer in the early 1870s, his personal life took a turn for the better. With Annie's health finally restored and his career track firmly established for the moment, George sent for his family. Together after nearly two years of separation, they reestablished their happy home life in a house in San Francisco's Mission District, not far from the *Daily Post*. Successful at last—not just financially, but in the realm of influencing public opinion as well—George was able

to fulfill a goal he established for himself nearly ten years before in that desperate winter of 1865: "to minister to the comfort and enjoyment of those whom I love most."¹

By late 1874, even greater success appeared imminent. George and his co-owner, enthused by the *Daily Post's* continued success, decided upon a bold plan to buy their own printing presses and expand their paper's size and circulation. They brought in a wealthy third partner and took out a loan for \$18,000; by January 1875, the new system was up and running. They added a weekly edition of the *Daily Post* not too long after, which became the largest selling newspaper in California. By August of that year, they started the *San Francisco Morning Ledger* (the *Daily Post* was an evening paper), including a large Sunday edition with pictures (a first). By the fall, the risk seemed to be paying off.²

And then everything collapsed. Even as George's newspaper enterprise expanded, the U.S. economy was falling apart. The Panic of 1873 began on September 18, 1873, when the nation's largest bank, Jay Cooke and Company, went under. The bank failure triggered an earthquake through the nation's entire financial system, one so severe that the New York Stock Exchange closed for the first time in its history. The United States had experienced panics and economic downturns in the past, but none compared to what unfolded in the 1870s, and it brought an intensity of suffering unmatched in previous economic depressions. Over the next five years and five months—the longest period of sustained economic contraction in American history—some 54,000 businesses and 5,000 banks failed and half the nation's railroads fell into receivership. Unemployment skyrocketed to unprecedented levels, perhaps as high as 30 percent, leaving hundreds of thousands of workers vulnerable to eviction and starvation. Farmers fared no better—plummeting commodities prices pushed vast numbers into insolvency and default.³

To his distress and dismay, George's *San Francisco Daily Post* was among the many thousands of businesses claimed by the economic crisis. On November 27, 1875, a few days after the Bank of California folded, an "utterly worked down" George closed his newspaper's doors for good, leaving him empty-handed after investing so much time and energy. "Sometimes I wonder at myself," he confided in a letter to John Swinton, "for giving up so easily what I had won so hardly."⁴

Economic historians often consider the wreckage wrought by the Panic of 1873 just the beginning of a larger Great Depression (also known as the Long Depression) that lasted from 1873 to 1898. These years, which included two brutal depressions (1873-1879 and 1893-1898) and a severe recession (1884-1885), constituted the longest period of sustained deflation (1865-1898) in American history.⁵ They also marked a sudden and dramatic shift in the national economy from one centered on small proprietary capitalist enterprises (small shops and farms) to one dominated by corporations. Industrialists who withstood the wave of business failures did so by intensifying managerial control over their workplaces, investing heavily in mechanization, and slashing costs—especially wages. Corporations grew larger in size and power and, in contrast to the antebellum era when they were viewed as "creatures of the state," increasingly independent of political and legal control.⁶

In the face of massive unemployment, desperate workers had no choice but to accept these changes. Across the nation, labor unions crumbled and disappeared (national membership dropped from 300,000 in 1873 to under 50,000 in 1877). But working-class Americans did not accept these hard times quietly. Indeed, they responded to the depression and unrest of the 1870s by forming movements such as the Grangers and the Knights of Labor and political organizations like the Greenback Party and Workingmen's Party. These advocates articulated an increasingly sharp critique of laissez-faire capitalism that built upon the republican protest tradition of the antebellum period.⁷

Yet these efforts did little to alleviate the very real suffering of workers and farmers. As a consequence, the number of strikes and labor conflicts increased dramatically during this period, as did the degree of bitterness and violence that accompanied them. Two events in 1877 stand out in particular. On June 21, 1877, a decade-long struggle by miners in Pennsylvania against powerful mining and railroad interests ended with the hanging of ten men alleged to be part of a terrorist conspiracy called the "Molly Maguires." The trials, convictions (most on thin and questionable evidence), and executions of the Mollies (twenty in total) garnered national media attention that depicted the miners as violent, communist foreigners who earned a richly deserved fate at the gallows.⁸

Any calm and reassurance brought by the executions to jittery elites evaporated only a few weeks later, when railroad workers across the country, from Maryland to the Midwestern states, staged the biggest strike in the world in the nineteenth century. The "Great Uprising" was astonishing not simply for its sheer size, but also its violence. Workers in many locales destroyed railroad property, while federal troops and state militias from Maryland to Illinois killed at least a hundred people.⁹

The impact of the Great Uprising of 1877 on Gilded Age society and politics is almost impossible to exaggerate. More than simply terrifying many Americans, it challenged the very foundations of their understanding of republican society. Beneath the periodic struggles over the meanings of terms like "liberty" and "independence," a wide swath of the American public more or less shared a republican vision of a good society based on a citizenry that enjoyed both political freedom and equal access to economic opportunity. Central to this republican self-image was the belief that the United States stood alone in the world, immune to the negative historical forces that beset the fractious nations of the Old World, including the diminution of democracy, equality, virtue, and opportunity and the rise of decadence, inequality, and class conflict. The United States, in other words, stood in stark contrast to Europe, land of monarchs, landed aristocracies, fixed classes, established churches, and social conflict.¹⁰

The turmoil of the 1870s, culminating in the bloody Great Uprising, dealt a heavy blow to this self-confident republican optimism. As the suffering and unrest spread and festered during the depression years, Americans were confronted with overwhelming evidence that a vast and growing number of their fellow citizens lived as poorly paid wage earners. Worse, they seemed destined to *remain* in this status for life, unable to achieve true economic independence. The recognition of this large, angry, and permanent working class called into question the free labor faith that the dynamism of the market would forever generate opportunity for all, thus fending off the rise-decline-fall fate that awaited all other societies. In short, the depression of the 1870s in general, and the Great Uprising in particular, ushered in a republican crisis that prompted many Americans to wonder whether their nation was doomed to suffer the fate of the Old World.¹¹



The Great Uprising of 1877. "The Great Strike—The Sixth Maryland Regiment Fighting Its Way Through Baltimore." *Harper's Weekly*, August 11, 1877. Courtesy of the Library of Congress

The different answers various Americans offered to this question reflected the emergence of increasingly sharp class boundaries.¹² While working-class Americans and reformers like Henry George saw mounting evidence that the republican promises of equality, freedom, and upward mobility were dissipating before their very eyes to benefit unscrupulous monopolists and their political allies, middle- and upper-class Americans came to vastly different interpretations of the republican crisis. Their assessment often took two forms. One consisted of a glowing narrative celebrating "progress." Huge national celebrations attended the completions of the Atlantic Cable (1866) and the transcontinental railroad (1869), the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge (1883), and the unveiling of the fully assembled Statue of Liberty (1886). Millions flocked to the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia (1876). "The prosperity which now prevails," blithely said President James A. Garfield in 1881, "is without parallel in our history."¹³

But amidst these optimistic proclamations emerged a second interpretation that denounced protesters and strikers as *the mob*. For years they had been haunted by the fear that rising social unrest among the nation's "dangerous classes" could at any moment explode in bloody revolution, as it had only a few years before in the Paris Commune of 1871. Now their worst fears seemed realized. "The Commune had risen in its dangerous might and threatened a deluge of blood," declared one typical chronicler of the uprising. John Hay, future secretary of state for William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt, was no less hysterical in a private letter to his father-in-law. "Any hour the mob chooses," he wrote, "it can destroy any city in the country—that is the simple truth."¹⁴

This demonization of the lower orders of society reflected a broader effort by elites in this period to redefine key aspects of the republican tradition. Republican liberty and free labor were redefined to essentially mean laissez-faire individualism. Every member of a republican society, their argument went, was at liberty to make his or her own way in the competitive marketplace, free of any constraints beyond a minimal set of laws. Similarly, republicanism's potentially radical ideal of equality for all was whittled down to simply mean equality of opportunity in the market. "Free labor" now meant simply freedom of contract. This recasting of republican ideals served elite interests by linking economic success with republican

fidelity—they, of course, were the truest republican citizens because they had gained success through a faithful adherence to rugged individualism. This emphasis on individualism had the added benefit of justifying the rejection of all claims that the state play a fundamental role in ensuring equality among the people and promoting the common good. As a result, the doctrine of laissez-faire assumed an almost exalted status in the 1870s and 1880s, allowing prosperous and powerful Americans to dismiss the claims of protesting farmers and dissatisfied workers as the misguided rantings of society's losers.¹⁵

Also gaining popularity in this period was laissez-fairism's most extreme offshoot: social Darwinism. British philosopher Herbert Spencer, social Darwinism's most prominent popularizer, posited that competition among human beings led inexorably to the "survival of the fittest" and the elimination of the "unfit." No amount of utopian theory, enlightened social policy, or Christian charity could alter this basic fact of human life. Spencer's counterpart in America, Yale sociologist William Graham Sumner, pushed the point further, arguing that "millionaires . . . may fairly be regarded as the naturally selected agents of society" while a "drunkard in the gutter is just where he ought to be." Many Gilded Age industrialists, seeking to justify both their tremendous wealth and the minimal wages they paid, understandably embraced social Darwinism. It was precisely this trend that Henry George had in mind when a few years later he condemned social Darwinism as a "comfortable theory" for its ability to ease the guilty consciences of the successful.¹⁶

This elevation of laissez-faire individualism to the apex of the hierarchy of republican ideals and the embrace of social Darwinism among society's rich and powerful reflected a decisive departure from earlier forms of American republicanism that stressed a unified polity and concern for the common good. Middle- and upper-class Americans in the Gilded Age redefined the republican polity in such a way that placed poor and restive farmers and workers *outside* the sphere of legitimate republican citizenship. According to this new line of thinking, which might be termed "laissez-faire republicanism," the greatest menace to the American republic was not the widening gap between the rich and the poor, but rather the possibility that the poor would mobilize *collectively* against their betters, either by

ballot or bullet, and take what did not belong to them. As a result, members of the middle- and upper-classes in the 1870s launched campaigns to disenfranchise working-class voters. (At the same time, and for similar reasons, they made no effort to stop the disenfranchisement of African American voters in the South.) They also sharply curtailed charity, deeming it harmful to the morals and manners of the needy.¹⁷

Despite the rising chorus of opinion celebrating minimalist government and laissez-faire individualism, middle- and upper-class Americans nevertheless held a markedly inconsistent vision of the role of the state. Laissez-faire doctrine was clear on this matter: the ideal state was a minimal one that allowed free individuals the greatest possible latitude in their pursuits of happiness. But laissez-faire was more a conveniently flexible principle than a clear and firmly adhered practice. Even as Americans in more privileged classes rejected the calls for reform by mobilized workers and farmers as treacherous appeals to state power that violated the sacred values of laissez-faire, they themselves began to use the state to fortify and enhance their established positions in society.¹⁸

The clearest example of elites' reliance on the state in this period was their shared belief, if not insistence, that working-class protest be answered with state-sponsored violence. This not only violated laissez-faire, it also represented yet another dramatic reordering of traditional republican values. For while republicanism had always valued social order, sanctioning on rare occasions the use of state power to quell civil disturbances (e.g., the Whiskey Rebellion), it had long given primacy to the fear that standing armies spelled the eventual demise of liberty. But in the Gilded Age, elites increasingly demanded that federal and state military power be brought to bear against workers they themselves deemed threats to order, private property, and market freedom. For example, the *Independent*, a religious weekly, called for "bullets and bayonets, canister and grape" to "exterminate" unruly mobs. In the wake of the Great Uprising of 1877, wealthy urbanites around the country embarked on a program of armory construction in large cities to house and equip state militias. Of course, these installations also would offer refuge to upper-class refugees should the dangerous classes explode again. This "militarization of class relations," to use Sven Beckert's apt phrase, occurred at precisely the moment that respectable opinion in

the North was invoking the traditional republican aversion to a standing army to justify the removal of federal troops protecting African Americans in the South.¹⁹

Wealthy and powerful Americans defended this extraordinary appeal to and use of state violence by reiterating, despite mounting evidence to the contrary, a core republican article of faith: America was a classless society. The problem in the 1870s—and the true source of the Great Uprising—was the misguided but growing conviction among many farmers and workers that American society was splitting into classes with opposed interests, they argued. As Allan Pinkerton, head of the Pinkerton Detective Agency, argued in the wake of the Great Uprising, "we have among us a pernicious communistic spirit which is demoralizing workmen, continually creating a deeper and more intense antagonism between labor and capital. . . . It must be crushed out completely, or we shall be compelled to submit to greater excesses and more overwhelming disasters in the near future." Deeming class antagonism unnatural and evil provided the necessary validation for state suppression of dissent. State power would be called upon to maintain America's harmonious, classless, laissez-faire republic.²⁰

"THE GREAT ENIGMA OF OUR TIMES":
PROGRESS AND POVERTY

It was in this context of economic contraction, social turmoil, and ideological reconfiguration that Henry George decided to write what would become his famous work, *Progress and Poverty*. Like many Americans, George was deeply troubled by the widespread suffering and unrest of the mid-1870s. While the epic violence of the Great Uprising of 1877 did not reach California, news of it did stir the passions of local workers, record numbers of whom were out of work. Matters took an ugly turn on July 23, 1877 when, following a rally of workers on the Sand Lots near San Francisco's city hall expressing sympathy for the striking railroad workers, an anti-Chinese faction attacked and sacked Chinatown. Known as the Sand Lots Riots, the disturbances lasted four straight days and were the worst in San Francisco's history.²¹

By the time of the riots, George had rebounded from the loss of the *Daily Post*. Through his connections with the local Democratic Party he secured a patronage job as inspector of gas meters, a position that earned him enough money to support his family while placing only nominal demands on his time. Financially stable, intellectually mature, and mystically driven, George shrugged off the tragedy of the *Daily Post* and embraced the near future as a chance to continue his study of political economy and write a book. Years later, with the benefit of hindsight and his incurable optimism, he later concluded that losing the *Daily Post* amounted to "good fortune in the guise of evil."²²

According to his diary, George commenced writing the book that became *Progress and Poverty* on September 18, 1877, less than two months after the Great Uprising and the Sand Lots Riots. These terrifying upheavals lent great urgency to his work, but his quest had truly begun nearly a decade earlier when he experienced that vision on the streets of New York City in 1869. "When I first realized the squalid misery of a great city," as he would explain, "it appalled and tormented me, and would not let me rest, for thinking of what caused it and how it could be cured."²³ By mid-March 1879, after eighteen months of intense effort inspired by the motto "hard writing makes easy reading," he completed his manuscript.²⁴

George initially gave his book the rather drab title of *Political Economy of the Social Problem*. Fortunately for him, he settled upon a title that succinctly and alliteratively captured the vexing duality of the age during the final revisions: *Progress and Poverty*, with the subtitle, *An Inquiry into the Cause of Industrial Depressions and of Increase of Want with Increase of Wealth*. He divided the immense tome (563 pages in the original edition) into twelve sections—ten "books," placed between an introduction and a conclusion. Seeking to elevate political economy above a theory-laden discipline dedicated to upholding the status quo to the detriment of society as a whole, George wrote both a sophisticated economic treatise that engaged the theories of David Ricardo and Thomas Malthus and a moral entreaty that invoked Jesus Christ and the Founding Fathers. Two main questions, therefore, dominate the work: Why does poverty always accompany material progress? How is humanity morally compelled to respond? While he treated the economic and moral analyses separately

throughout most of the work, he came to draw the two together in the end, firmly asserting that they were inseparable—albeit with the moral argument taking priority.²⁵

In the introduction, George set forth "The Problem" he intended to address and solve: that despite a century of unparalleled material progress, a majority of Americans enjoyed less and less of its benefits. This republican crisis stood in stark contrast to the expectations of the post-Revolutionary War generation. George asked the reader to consider what a figure like Benjamin Franklin would have thought of American society if told of the coming of railroads and factories, of electricity and telegraphs:

He would have beheld these new forces elevating society from its very foundations, lifting the very poorest above the possibility of want, exempting the very lowest from anxiety for the material needs of life; he would have seen . . . these muscles of iron and sinews of steel making the poorest laborer's life a holiday, in which every high quality and noble impulse could have scope to grow.

In other words, Franklin and other contemporaries would have envisioned the dawning of "a golden age."²⁶

This hypothetical vision of Franklin, noted George, represented the hopes and dreams of nineteenth-century Americans as they witnessed a steady stream of revolutionary technology and ideas. It reflected the republican faith in continuous progress. And yet, instead of a golden age, America was trapped in a state where the beguiling glitter of progress was offset by the bleakness of industrial depression, business failure, involuntary unemployment, and mass poverty—a superficiality that Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner sought to convey with the title of their 1873 novel *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today*. These harsh and unwelcome present realities called into question the viability of the republic. The evidence of a republican crisis was both abundant and undeniable.²⁷

What America and other developed societies had in common was material progress. To illustrate this point, George asked the reader to compare conditions in "newer" (less developed) and "older" (developed) societies. In the former, there was little poverty, as well as high wages and rates of

interest paid on investment. But as newer societies experienced increased material progress, the signs of social dissolution followed close behind:

The "tramp" comes with the locomotive, and almshouses and prisons are as surely the marks of "material progress" as are costly dwellings, rich warehouses, and magnificent churches. Upon streets lighted with gas and patrolled by uniformed policemen, beggars wait for the passer-by, and in the shadow of the college, and library, and museum are gathering the more hideous Huns and fiercer Vandals of whom Macaulay prophesied.²⁸

Far from establishing a golden age of widespread comfort and expanded opportunity as many had hoped and predicted, material progress actually produced a society where "amid the greatest accumulations of wealth, men die of starvation, and puny infants suckle dry breasts; while everywhere the greed of gain, the worship of wealth, shows the force of the fear of want." The virtuous republic of independent producers, so central to the hopes of Franklin, Jefferson, and Jackson, now appeared out of reach. "The promised land," confessed George, "flies before us like the mirage."²⁹

Extremes of wealth also violated both Christian morality and republican equality. "It is as though an immense wedge were being forced, not underneath society, but through society," he argued. "Those who are above the point of separation are elevated, but those who are below are crushed down." So long as material progress served only to increase the fortunes of the wealthy few and the misery of the many poor, it was only a spurious progress. It was here that the idea that separated George from nearly all his contemporary political economists was most clearly articulated. Far from being the natural and unavoidable result of the lifestyles of weak and sinful people, he asserted that poverty was actually *generated* by particular public policies and laws. In characterizing poverty as *unnatural*, George decidedly broke from the received wisdom of the age. This break, in turn, justified his quest for a remedy. "This association of poverty with progress," concluded George ominously, "is the great enigma of our times. . . . It is the riddle which the Sphinx of Fate puts to our civilization, and which not to answer is to be destroyed."³⁰

Yet, for all its magnitude and foreboding, the all-important question of why poverty increased amid progress remained unanswered by political economists. In noting this, George revealed one of the central purposes of his book—to attack the discipline of political economy itself and expose the failure of political economists to live up to their true mission of providing guidance to "the great masses." Due to an "anarchy of opinion" within the discipline, "charlatans and demagogues" were allowed to peddle unsound ideas "fraught with danger," such as paper money, revolutionary socialism, the abolition of interest, and the false but thoroughly convenient theory of *laissez-faire*. "I propose to seek the law which associates poverty with progress," George announced, "and increase of want with advancing wealth." He would, essentially, attempt to single-handedly redirect the science of political economy back to its core purpose, thereby offering society the possibility of regeneration. He warned that the saving message contained in the coming pages would be unsettling to most Americans, but the high stakes involved compelled bold action. The fate of the American republic, indeed all of Western society, stood in the balance. So, he finished, "let us not flinch, let us not turn our back."³¹

George intended his book to supersede all others in its field.³² To do just that, he challenged the very foundation of the age's prevailing economic dogmas of *laissez-faire* capitalism in Book I. Classical economists had explained that an "iron law of wages" dictated that wages always fell to the lowest level at which a laborer could subsist. The productivity of an individual worker bore little relation to the reward he or she would receive for their toil. So even though industrial technology allowed a shoe factory operative in 1875 to produce many times more shoes than a single cordwainer in 1825, he received far less financial reward for his labor. This outcome was not really an injustice, declared classical economists, but was rather the result of the laws of the free market that men and women were powerless to change.

This iron law of wages itself rested upon two widely accepted tenets of classical economics. The first, the wage-fund theory, stated that employers paid wages to workers from previously accumulated capital (e.g., a wage fund). Wages thus cannot be raised at a rate that corresponded to an increase in economic productivity. George attacked this theory precisely because

it placed capital ahead of labor in the hierarchy of basic economic factors. Instead, he proposed to reverse this order, positioning labor *ahead* of capital. To illustrate this radical departure from economic orthodoxy, George used the example of a shipyard. As the constructed ship takes form, men receive wages for the work they perform—wages are not paid out from existing capital (in this case, a previous ship built and sold), but rather from the wealth the workers are in the process of creating. “Wages do not come from capital, but are the direct produce of labor. Each productive laborer, as he works, creates his wages,” he asserted. Based on this understanding, workers ought to receive wages as an advance upon this emerging capital and receive *higher* wages that reflected their greater productivity.³³

The second principle underlying the iron law of wages theory, Malthus’ population theory, argued that poverty accompanies economic progress due to an increasing population that draws upon a fixed, finite amount of resources. While some political economists had already challenged the theory, a good many still accepted it as unimpeachable fact. Not so George. In Book II, he soundly rejected Malthusianism as overly deterministic, a characteristic that ran counter to his Christian and republican faiths in the free will of individuals to change their lives and society. Steeped in the tradition of evangelical perfectionism as he was, George also deemed Malthusian theory blasphemous for its contention that God created a world with insufficient resources for his people. The Great Famine in Ireland—frequently cited by Malthusians as proof of the limited resources theory—was caused, according to George, by rigid British adherence to free trade dogmas. It was not “the inevitable results of universal laws, with which, if it were not impious, it were as hopeless to quarrel as with the law of gravitation.” Finally, George rejected Malthusian theory because it provided monopolists, conservatives, and the increasing number of devotees of social Darwinism with a seemingly scientific means for justifying their privileged status. Rather than confront vested interests, “it is eminently soothing and reassuring to the classes who, wielding the power of wealth, largely dominate thought.”³⁴

With the tenets of contemporary economic theory now sufficiently undermined, George offered in Book III his own explanation for the prevalence of poverty amidst increased aggregate wealth. The real problem lay not with a limited fund of wages, nor with population growth, but rather

with *distribution*. In the last century, he noted, America had produced an unprecedented amount of material wealth. Yet the distribution of said wealth had been vastly distorted, leaving the lives of most people unimproved or worse.

To explain his theory of skewed distribution, George briefly defined his terms. Production consisted of three elements: land, labor, and capital. All wealth produced must be distributed among them—to landowners, to laborers, and to capitalists. This distribution occurred through three basic mechanisms: rent (to the landowner), wages (to the laborer), and interest (to the capitalist).³⁵

ELEMENTS OF PRODUCTION	MEANS OF DISTRIBUTING WEALTH PRODUCED
Land (all natural resources)	Rent to the landowner
Labor	Wages to the laborer
Capital	Interest to the capitalist

By creating separate categories for land and rent, George made another major break from traditional economic theory that generally considered land a form of capital. George argued that capital represented manmade wealth of infinite quantity, whereas land and natural resources existed in finite quantity as a gift of the Creator. Consequently, land existed as a passive entity requiring the application of labor to produce wealth. Land, in short, was not capital for one simple reason: man could not create it. If land existed as a separate and distinct entity within the productive process, then logically the portion of the wealth it received—rent—should also be separate from wages and interest.³⁶

The creation of a separate status for land and rent was crucial to the underlying purpose of *Progress and Poverty*, which was to establish where the vast amount of material wealth created by modern industrial society went—and why. George’s model narrowed the list of possibilities to three—land, labor, or capital. Labor clearly gained just a fraction of the wealth. Yet what about capital? Marxists charged that capital took everything. But George, true to his essential faith in capitalism, defended capital and interest, the mechanism by which capital received its share of wealth. He contended that a truly free and prosperous economy properly rewarded honest capitalists

(as opposed to parasites and speculators) for their foresight, planning, risk-taking, and judicious use of natural resources to create more wealth. But most capitalists in Gilded Age America, while faring better than laborers, failed to receive their fair share of the aggregate wealth produced.³⁷

If capital and labor failed to secure the fruits of production (in the form of interest and wages, respectively), where in the distributive process did the wealth go? According to George's model, the only remaining possibility was that the wealth generated by material progress went to the parasitic monopolizers of land in the form of rent, which over time increased at a rate faster than that of wages or interest. As the production of wealth increased, landowners thus took an ever-growing percentage (rent), leaving less and less for labor (wages) and capital (interest). As George summarized in what might be called his labor-capital theory of value:

Three things unite to production—labor, capital, and land. Three parties divide the produce—the laborer, the capitalist, and the land owner. If, with an increase of production the laborer gets no more and the capitalist no more, it is a necessary inference that the land owner reaps the whole gain. . . . Rent swallows up the whole gain and pauperism accompanies progress.³⁸

Identifying land monopoly and the resulting extortionate rent as the culprits placed George squarely within a republican populist tradition that consistently condemned "parasitic" wealth.³⁹ It also allowed George to reject class conflict and other claims of an inherent antagonism between labor and capital. The real "antagonism of interests," George made clear, "is not between labor and capital, as is popularly believed, but is in reality between labor and capital on the one side and land ownership on the other."⁴⁰

If material progress led to rising rents, which in turn left less and less of created wealth to labor and capital, George still had to explain what *caused* rents to rise and why they rose at rates that exceeded that of wages and interest. In Book IV, "The Effect of Material Progress upon the Distribution of Wealth," George cited population growth, improved industrial production, and rampant speculation as the central causes of the steep rise in land values and rents.⁴¹

To best illustrate the effect of these factors on production and land values, George looked to the city. A growing urban population greatly increased the utility of each parcel of land, especially when combined with improved technology. As a consequence, far more wealth could be produced on a tenth of an acre of Manhattan in 1879 than on a dozen acres of similarly situated land in 1815. As a result, land values and rents rose rapidly and, according to George's theory of skewed distribution, siphoned off most of the newly created wealth not to the labor that produced it, nor to the capital which facilitated it, but to land, or more precisely to the owners of land, who did nothing to earn it. "The increased production of wealth goes ultimately to the owners of land in increased rent. There is in all this improvement nothing which tends to increase the general return to labor or to capital." This problem only worsened over time as landowners, consumed by greed, hiked rents and speculated in land in anticipation of still greater rises in value and subsequent profits. As speculators took more and more land out of productive use, new societies aged prematurely, suffering "long before their time, the social diseases of older countries." Modern industrial cities like New York, noted George (doubtlessly recalling his visit in 1869), thus emerged as centers of extraordinary wealth but also extreme poverty, stifled opportunity, and bristling tensions between capital and labor.⁴²

George's careful progression through the fields of classical economics and contemporary political economy now led him, as the title of Book V indicates, to declare "The Problem Solved." After more than 250 pages of strict analysis, George succinctly identified the problem of modern industrial society in just two simple words: land monopoly. Land to George meant more than simply real estate; he broadly defined it as "all natural materials, forces and opportunities." Material progress ought to promise the betterment of all levels of society in the form of greater comforts, less drudgery, and higher learning. "But labor," argued George, "cannot reap the benefits which advancing civilization thus brings, because they are intercepted" by the monopolizers of land.⁴³

This point clearly marked the boundaries of George's radicalism. The injustice against which he worked was not industrial capitalism itself, but rather what he viewed as its illegitimate cooptation. Like many of his

fellow reformers in this period, he considered the power monopolists wielded illegitimate because it derived from their ability to control essential tools used in competition such as access to resources, credit, and political power rather than through fair competition in the free market.⁴⁴ Land monopoly thoroughly corrupted the free market and the distribution of wealth because "the monopolizers of land can, in rent, levy tribute upon the earnings of labor." This conclusion represented the "simple truth" toward which George's inquiry had been steadily advancing: because labor required land and resources in order to produce wealth, those who already controlled them "command all the fruits of labor save enough to enable labor to exist."⁴⁵

It is not in the relations of capital and labor; it is not in the pressure of population against subsistence, that an explanation of the unequal development of our civilization is to be found. The great cause of inequality in the distribution of wealth is inequality in the ownership of land. The ownership of land is the great fundamental fact which ultimately determines the social, the political, and consequently the intellectual and moral condition of a people. And it must be so. For land is the habitation of man, the storehouse upon which he must draw for all his needs, the material to which his labor must be applied for supply of all his desires.⁴⁶

With land monopoly firmly established as the central problem afflicting modern industrial societies, George proposed a corrective. He began Book VI, "The Remedy," by dismissing a series of popular solutions then being widely promoted by reformers. Those who championed a smaller, more efficient government understood an important Jeffersonian-Jacksonian principle, but they failed to see how society had drastically changed since the 1830s. Social Darwinists who blamed poverty on the personal weaknesses of the poor conveniently but immorally absolved themselves of any responsibility. Trade unionists stood only to gain temporary relief in limited sectors of the workforce. Advocates of the cooperative movement and other variants thereof (such as producer cooperatives, consumer leagues, and profit-sharing strategies) misunderstood the core issues. The

problem, George insisted, "is not because of competition, but because competition is one-sided."⁴⁷

In regard to socialism, George offered an assessment that came to underlie his enormous public appeal in the coming years. He was understandably attracted to the idea of a future society that was fundamentally egalitarian and democratic, and he was keenly aware of the growing popularity of socialist and quasi-socialist ideas, especially among working-class Americans. Yet George was also cognizant of the deep-seated antipathy many Americans held for socialism, an ideology which had long been demonized in American political culture as inextricably linked to violence, revolution, and atheism, or as one minister put it in a book also published in 1879, with "wages without work, arson, assassination, anarchy."⁴⁸ George nonetheless found a way to express sympathy for socialism's broad goals while simultaneously distancing himself from its negative associations. Though socialism's promised end was "grand and noble," it could never be suddenly imposed. "Such a state of society," he observed, "cannot be manufactured—it must grow." This growth would begin by breaking the grip of land monopoly, thereby freeing millions of individuals to achieve prosperity and upward mobility as well as steering society back in the direction of republican progress. His answer, in other words, would make possible—gradually—the type of society socialists dreamed of, but without the chaos, bloodshed, and injustice popularly associated with socialist revolution. He offered, in short, a solution Daniel Rodgers has characterized as typical of late nineteenth-century progressive reformers on both sides of the Atlantic: "a middle course between the rocks of cutthroat economic individualism and the shoals of an all-coercive statism."⁴⁹

To achieve this end, George declared his true remedy: "We must make land common property."⁵⁰ A proper understanding of history, George contended, revealed private property as unnatural, for all primitive societies held their land in common.

Historically, as ethically, private property in land is robbery. It nowhere springs from contract; it can nowhere be traced to perceptions of justice or expediency; it has everywhere had its birth in war

and conquest, and in the selfish use which the cunning have made of superstition and law.⁵¹

History demonstrated that societies based on private property tended toward slavery of one kind or another. For example, noted George, emancipation in the South accomplished little for the former slaves who now labored under the tyranny of their former masters, who still owned all the land. He explained that to prevent this trend from spreading to all of America, the solution was both simple and radical: "To extirpate poverty, to make wages what justice commands they should be, the full earnings of the laborer, we must therefore substitute for the individual ownership of land a common ownership. Nothing else will go to the cause of the evil—in nothing else is there the slightest hope."⁵² Common ownership would thus free the essential ingredient in production—land—for use by society's true producers, labor and capital, leaving nothing to the landlord, speculator, or monopolizer.

But how did George propose to establish this "common ownership"? Certainly he did not envision a socialist confiscation of all private property by the state, an idea that flew in the face of longstanding liberal dogmas that deemed limited government and private property as essential to the preservation of individual liberties in a republic. While Americans did not always agree on the meanings of liberty, equality, and democracy, most were conditioned to condemn any infringement of private property rights as antithetical to republican ideals.⁵³

George's solution to this dilemma, presented in Book VIII, "Application of the Remedy," was a plan that stopped short of socialist confiscation. He instead offered a plan where people technically could continue to "own" their land, but would be prevented from deriving any profit from mere ownership (e.g., rent). The state would abolish all taxes except one, a land-value tax that appropriated all rent—in other words, any income derived from non-productive use of land ("the unearned increment"). People would remain free to use their land as they desired, but would be prevented from profiting unjustly.

Let them buy and sell, and bequeath and divide it. We may safely leave them the shell, if we take the kernel. *It is not necessary to confis-*

*cate land, it is only necessary to confiscate rent. . . . We already take some rent in taxation. We have only to make some changes in our mode of taxation to take it all.*⁵⁴

This was George's most radical break with traditional liberal ideals, a renunciation of a centuries-old definition of private property that lay at the core of republicanism and American political culture.⁵⁵

George never fully explained in practical terms in *Progress and Poverty*, nor in any of his subsequent writings and speeches, how what became known in later years as "the single tax" would be implemented.⁵⁶ Nonetheless, the basic outline of his idea was clear. All property would be annually reevaluated by the government, which would assess a property's tax based on an estimate of its rental value on the market. For example, a man "owning" farmland with an annual rental value established at \$500 could work the land and keep any profits derived from his harvest. But at the year's end, he faced a choice: pay the government \$500 to retain another year's use of the property, or relinquish control of the land to the government. The government in turn would offer it "to the highest bidders in lots to suit." It was certainly not a call for the outright elimination of private landed property by wholesale government confiscation. But the single tax did propose to end private property rights as nineteenth-century Americans knew them. Whereas traditional notions of private property stressed the inviolability of an owner's right to retain, control, and use his land as he saw fit, one of the central purposes of the single tax was to make the holding, controlling, and use of land unstable and fluid, thus preventing monopolization and accumulation.⁵⁷

George explained this dynamic in Book IX, "Effects of the Remedy." With this system in place, the price of land, he wrote, would fall and "land speculation would receive its death blow," as landowners could not afford to pay hefty fees for the privilege of merely holding parcels of undeveloped land from which they could never derive a profit; "land monopolization would no longer pay." George predicted here that most speculators would willingly relinquish their titles to the government, thereby freeing up millions of acres of land for use by honest laborers.⁵⁸

But the single tax promised to do more than merely make vast tracts of land available and affordable to the average American. Abolishing all

taxes except the one on land values would liberate the overall productive economy—"like removing an immense weight from a powerful spring"—by rewarding industrious laborers (with higher wages) and honest capitalists (through higher interest) instead of idlers and speculators. With the economic playing field finally leveled and all serious impediments to production removed, poverty would disappear; the single tax would unleash an ever-expanding, prosperous economy of full employment, free of disastrous periodic depressions. In short, George's "simple yet sovereign remedy" would:

raise wages, increase the earnings of capital, extirpate pauperism, abolish poverty, give remunerative employment to whoever wishes it, afford free scope to human powers, lessen crime, elevate morals, and taste, and intelligence, purify government and carry civilization to yet nobler heights.⁵⁹

As for the social benefits to such a system, George's single tax also promised, in an appeal to the liberal ideals of antebellum republicanism, to reduce the size and complexity of government. In making this claim, however, George did not promise a dramatic shrinkage of all government—only its repressive functions. For example, the single tax would dramatically simplify the collection of taxes, reducing the need for police, jails, or civil courts because there would be less crime and fewer lawsuits over property. As a trade-off, however, the government under the single tax would assume a wide range of "cooperative" functions intended to restore and maintain republican rights and equality.⁶⁰

This was George's second radical break, after his call for an end to absolute rights in private property, with earlier republican dogmas. His plan required the state to take on unprecedented new powers to accomplish both the administration of the single tax and the use of the revenue it generated for the common good. Republican ideology before the 1870s had long held that the greatest threat to republican liberty was a powerful government, as it would inevitably fall under the control of greedy special interests bent on elevating themselves into positions of aristocratic power and privilege. Threats to republican liberty and equality, went the argument, emanated

fundamentally from political corruption rather than from any flaw in the capitalist economy. Laissez-faire and a minimal state, therefore, were the best guarantors of republicanism.⁶¹ But not anymore, argued George here. Modern economic realities required *the state* to take on key responsibilities to protect and promote republican liberty and equality.

All revenue collected under the single tax would "be equally distributed in public benefits." Though much of created wealth was attributable to the wisdom of capitalists and the skills of workers, a significant portion was *socially created* by the community itself through the increased demand for goods and production of knowledge. It would be only right that the community would be allocated some wealth in return. These "public benefits," George wrote, would take the form of "public baths, museums, libraries, gardens, lecture rooms, music and dance halls, theaters, universities, technical schools, shooting galleries, play grounds, gymnasiums," as well as include the public ownership of natural monopolies like the telegraph lines, railroads, and utilities. Therein lay what George considered the genius of his radical solution—a modern industrial society could "realize the dream of socialism," while maintaining the essence, dynamism, and freedom of a market economy. The single tax would preserve entrepreneurship and individualism by purging them of their destructive tendencies. At the same time, it validated the prevailing belief denying the existence of class conflict and ruled out the need for the repressive, centralized government that most Americans associated with socialism. George then declared that the "government would change its character and would become the administration of a great co-operative society. It would become merely the agency by which the common property was administered for the common benefit."⁶² This was the clearest evocation of his ideas that helped shape and popularize the era's emerging progressivism.

The basis of this new cooperative society would not be a changed government, but rather a changed community. The single tax promised not simply profound economic and social change, but significant moral transformation as well. Not only would crime disappear, but so too would the "greedy and grasping and unjust" impulses that a society dominated by monopoly interests fostered. By making poverty as unlikely a condition for the average person as great wealth had been under the former system,

the single tax "would transmute the forces which now tend to disintegrate society into forces which would tend to unify and purify it." In other words, a spirit of cooperation—"a force which overcomes and drives out selfishness; a force which is the electricity of the moral universe"—would be unleashed, thereby eliminating the "wrong that produces inequality" "We are made for co-operation," George concluded. His invocation of cooperation here is significant because it aligned neatly with the growing popularity of the idea of cooperation and cooperative schemes among workers (most notably, the Knights of Labor) and farmers in the 1870s and 1880s and with the broader values of progressivism and social democracy gaining currency in the late nineteenth century.⁶³

In the final book, "The Law of Human Progress," George endeavored to reveal "the great law" that accounted for the rise and eventual decay of all societies. Popular opinion, he observed, believed social progress was natural, inevitable, and seemingly unending. History, however, provided ample evidence of a "universal rule" of human progress: all societies rise, flourish, stagnate, decline, and fall. No society, not even America, stood immune to this inevitability. George warned, "The earth is the tomb of the dead empires, no less than of dead men." In making this point, he placed his analysis squarely within a tradition of republican thought that had long emphasized the danger of declension.⁶⁴

In order to explain why civilizations fell, he first detailed what made them rise. He introduced the concept of "association," which he called "the first essential of progress." When people live apart, they must devote the majority of their waking hours struggling to survive. In contrast, "men tend to progress just as they come closer together, and by co-operation with each other increase the mental power that may be devoted to improvement." Paradoxically, this very process of progress through association tended to foster "inequality of condition and power" in the long run. As an advancing society becomes more specialized in function and organization, a small number of individuals amass extraordinary power and wealth by monopolizing land or some other essential, such as credit or fuel. Association, while the initial catalyst for social progress, leads society inexorably toward conditions in which the "tendency to progression is lessened, checked, and finally reversed."⁶⁵

When progress halts, "petrification" sets in. A society once marked by fluidity and equality then witnesses the rise of established castes, with more and more people born into lives as powerless, wage-earning laborers with no possibility of social or economic advancement. These unfortunates need to spend all their creativity and energy simply to survive. On the other hand, among the elite few, "mental power is expended in keeping up and intensifying the system of inequality, in ostentation, luxury, and warfare."⁶⁶

In this book, George warned that the United States already was in the beginning stages of petrification, but most Americans failed to see it. General increases in material wealth and continued technological advances were mistaken as proof that nothing was seriously wrong. Yet, despite outward appearances, the vital but less visible measure of progress—equality—receded. "The same cause which turned Roman progress into retrogression is operating now. . . . What has destroyed every previous civilization has been the tendency to the unequal distribution of wealth and power." Look about the nation, he urged. One would see falling wages and interest in the face of ever-rising rent, causing the rich to get richer, the poor to get poorer, "and the middle class to be swept away." Nowhere was this more evident than in big cities like New York, Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco where one found extraordinary extremes of wealth and poverty overseen by a government composed of "a ruling class as in the most aristocratic countries of the world." There one found industrial relations that tended "to assume a form in which one is master and many serve" and a legal system obedient to the moneyed class instead of dictates of justice. Moreover, there was everywhere a weakening of the once universal "confident belief in republicanism as the source of national blessings."⁶⁷

This change occurred not by sudden revolution, but by inches. "To turn republican government into a despotism the basest and most brutal," George pointed out, "it is not necessary formally to change its constitution or abandon popular elections." Indeed, republican government, when coupled with growing misery and inequality, accelerated the descent into barbarism. "To give the suffrage to tramps, to paupers . . . to men who must beg, or steal, or starve, is to invoke destruction." These were the sort who will flock to "the most blatant demagogue" or sell their once-sacred vote to the highest bidder.⁶⁸

Only one result could come of this trend: apocalyptic destruction. "In the festering mass will be generated volcanic forces." Demagogues will arise to lead populist movements based not on democracy, equality, and Christianity, but rather upon violence, inequality, and despotism. While many of his contemporaries would deny it, the elements for such a fearful transformation of American society were all in place. "Whence shall come the new barbarians?" asked George, in terms that place him at the forefront of the era's popular apocalyptic style of reform literature. "Go through the squalid quarters of great cities, and you may see, even now, their gathering hordes."⁶⁹

Despite George's grim description of explosive urban populations, he stood apart from other Gilded Age doomsayers like Josiah Strong. A few years later, Strong would write of the city, "Here is heaped the social dynamite; here roughs, gamblers, thieves, robbers, lawless and desperate men of all sorts, congregate; men who are ready on any pretext to raise riots for the purpose of destruction and plunder." For him, it was the racial, ethnic, and religious makeup of the urban masses that rendered them "social dynamite." But for George, in a line of reasoning that anticipated the environmental interpretation of poverty that would influence the later settlement house movement and the work of Jacob Riis, it was economic injustice and desperation that turned decent Americans into "the new barbarians."⁷⁰

When George wrote of the "gathering hordes," it was not as a doomsayer like Strong, but rather as a would-be prophet offering salvation. He argued in *Progress and Poverty* that while decay and destruction had been the grim fate of all past great societies, it was by no means inevitable that America had to suffer the same. To avoid decline and destruction, American society had to recognize the primacy of equality in the hierarchy of republican values: "Modern civilization owes its superiority to the growth of equality with the growth of association. . . . Progress goes on just as society tends toward closer association and greater equality."⁷¹ In stressing the economic dimension of equality, George challenged a central tenet of the free labor republican political culture of his time—that America would avoid any kind of class conflict simply because all citizens, if not equal in material terms, found equality in the political sphere via the ballot. "Equality of political rights," he ominously warned, "will not compensate for the denial

of the equal right to the bounty of nature. . . . Poverty enslaves men who we boast are political sovereigns." In a modern industrial society, democratic freedoms alone were not sufficient to maintain democratic freedoms.

It is not enough that men should vote; it is not enough that they should be theoretically equal before the law. They must have liberty to avail themselves of the opportunities and means of life; they must stand on equal terms with reference to the bounty of nature.⁷²

In making this claim, George became an early proponent of an emerging progressive conviction that republican citizenship included certain material and economic rights in addition to political ones.

For a truly republican society to endure in the age of industrial capitalism, George contended, it needed the courage to break with the past and reshape itself. It needed to change its laws, amend its constitutions, and rethink its traditions, particularly the sanctity of private property and the role of the state. "Social adjustments promote justice."⁷³ Americans had to overcome their innate conservatism in order to preserve the republic of progress and equality. To do nothing meant certain doom. He warned that "a civilization like ours must either advance or go back; it cannot stand still."⁷⁴ The increasing trend toward land monopoly denied more and more people equal access to this bounty of nature, gradually turning the mass of equal citizens of a democracy into the slaves of the wealthy few:

In allowing one man to own the land on which and from which other men must live, we have made them his bondsmen in a degree which increases as material progress goes on. This is the subtle alchemy that in ways they do not realize is extracting from the masses in every civilized country the fruits of their weary toil; that is instituting a harder and more hopeless slavery in place of that which has been destroyed; that is bringing political despotism out of freedom, and must soon transmute democratic institutions into anarchy.

The single tax, on the other hand, would arrest this trend and provide the context in which equality could flourish and progress continue indefinitely.⁷⁵

George opened *Progress and Poverty* by imagining what Benjamin Franklin would have predicted about American society had he been made aware of the extraordinary material progress to come in the nineteenth century. He asserted that Franklin would have deduced that a society based on democracy and liberty possessing such abundance must surely produce a golden age. Then, for the next five hundred pages, George explained just why this hypothetical forecast failed to come pass, with the republic mired instead in poverty, inequality, and strife. Now, at the very end of the work, George again evoked the image of a golden age, as an obtainable objective rather than as a missed opportunity. If America and the civilized world heeded his call to social, economic, and political regeneration, "the culmination of Christianity—the City of God on earth"—would be achieved.⁷⁶

"NOTHING IN THE ECONOMIC WORLD
IS BEYOND THE CONTROL OF MEN"

Henry George's foray into the study of political economy took place in a tumultuous context that caused many Americans to question the long-assumed unique and exceptional character of republican society. Unsurprisingly, he was hardly the only one to search for answers to what commentators increasingly termed the "labor question," or the "social question." Indeed, the late 1870s and 1880s witnessed a profusion of works that marked a decisive turning point in American political thought, public policy, and law. It was in this period that classical liberalism and its ideals of *laissez-faire*, minimal government, rugged individualism, and absolute private property rights faced a serious challenge by an emerging set of different ideals, values, and aspirations. This new ideological paradigm came to be known variously as social democracy, new liberalism, and progressivism.⁷⁷

Drawing upon the writings and theories of European reformers, as well as on American sources as diverse as the Grangers, Socialist Labor Party, and Knights of Labor, progressivism represented a major break with classical liberalism in two key ways. First, it stressed the primacy of the common good, an ideal that once had grounded eighteenth-century republican ideology but had been marginalized by the growing emphasis in the mid-nineteenth century on individualism. Under the conditions of industrial

capitalism, advocates argued that republican liberty for all could no longer be secured merely by establishing a minimal body of laws to prevent individuals from impinging upon the rights of others—especially property rights. Republican liberty in the modern age now required that every individual enjoy a basic set of social conditions that ensured equal opportunities for success and upward mobility.⁷⁸

Second, progressivism called upon the state to provide access to these social conditions. In contrast to classical liberalism's deep-seated fear of the state as an inherent threat to liberty, progressivism turned to the state as a positive and essential *guarantor* of liberty. Unless the state intervened in the market to rein in the power of corporations and ensure broad access to a living wage, education, public health, decent housing, and workplace safety, an untamed industrial economy would transform the American republic into a more European-style society of aristocrats and proletarians riven by class conflict, inequality, and, ultimately, anarchic revolution.⁷⁹

As proponents of progressivism saw it, the challenge posed by the Gilded Age was to develop an effective ideological justification for state action to resolve the alarming problems that accompanied a rapidly unfolding industrial capitalist order. "What was needed was a new philosophy of the state," observes Sidney Fine in his classic study of decline of *laissez-faire* and the rise of the modern welfare state. "A new liberalism embodying something of the spirit of Jeffersonianism but ready to use government as an agency to promote the general welfare." Central to their understanding of the general welfare was the amelioration of class conflict.⁸⁰

Early signs of this new philosophy of progressivism can be seen in the proclamations of organizations like the Knights of Labor and in the writings of radicals such as Albert Parsons. Significantly, this same impulse also appeared among a cohort of young, idealistic, and—for a time—radical political economists. Young men such as John Bates Clark, Henry Carter Adams, Edward Bemis, and Richard T. Ely all studied political economy in Germany, where the leading scholars of economics had come to reject the central tenets of English classical political economy. They most notably contested the idea that there were universal economic laws (e.g., the iron law of wages) that human beings were powerless to oppose—laws, in other words, that formed the foundation of *laissez-faire* doctrine. Instead, these

German-educated economists embraced historicism, arguing that because every economic order is created in the unique historical circumstances of its time and place, fixed economic laws that dictated appropriate government policies do not exist. Thus freed from laissez-faire orthodoxy, these thinkers (albeit with considerable ideological differences) advocated statist policies (including, for some, socialism) to promote and regulate national economic development.⁸¹

This immersion into German economic theory left a profound mark on these young American scholars. The most vivid example comes from Henry Clark Adams, who at the age of twenty-seven sailed for Germany in the summer of 1878. Two months into his studies in Berlin in December 1878—at the moment when Henry George was nearing completion of *Progress and Poverty*—he wrote an enthusiastic essay on socialism. “I hope it does not sound too socialistic,” he wrote in his diary. “I am a socialist—to tell the truth.” Disillusioned with the conservative political economy dominant in the United States, he found inspiration in the idea that a new political economy, one in step with the realities of the industrial age, could be employed to secure a just, republican society. Adams writes,

I only know that English economy has served . . . and is serving as an opiate to the consciences of men who are trampling their fellow man in the dust. . . . If it was right for Christ to take the cloak away which covered the sins of men, it is right for me to do the same for that which makes men think their own acts of injustice are not their acts but the outworking of laws beyond human control. Nothing in the economic world is beyond the control of men and men must waken up to the controlling of these laws.

This revelation of Adams and other like-minded political economists marked a pivotal moment in the history of economic thought. It signaled the commencement of a decades-long transatlantic revolution aimed at empowering the state to rein in the excesses of laissez-faire capitalism.⁸²

More radical statements, essays, and speeches critical of laissez-faire orthodoxy and admiring (if not fully embracing) of socialism followed in the coming years from Adams, Clark, and their fellow upstarts. It should

come as no surprise that many of them read and discussed *Progress and Poverty*; indeed, Clark and Seligman were both significantly influenced by it.⁸³ But the young radicals soon faced the united opposition of their entrenched superiors in the academy, who wielded the power to grant or deny tenure. (Adams, for example, was ousted from his post at Cornell University in 1887.) By the late 1880s, particularly in the charged atmosphere following the Haymarket bombing in 1886, many of these young men tempered their radicalism, shunning any expressions of sympathy for socialism. And yet they succeeded in directing American political economy toward a progressivism that acknowledged the need for limited state intervention in the economy in the name of the common good, republican liberty, and class harmony.⁸⁴

If Adams, Clark, and their fellow upstarts helped legitimize and popularize progressivism in the academy and in elite circles, Henry George played an important role in doing so among society at large. The two central pronouncements in George’s book—that public policy in the age of industry must protect and promote republican equality (“We are made for cooperation”) and that the state, as opposed to the market alone, must play the key role in securing this end—aligned precisely with the two underlying ideas of progressivism.⁸⁵ So when *Progress and Poverty* became an unprecedented bestseller in the 1880s (discussed in detail in chapter 5), it became the era’s first major work read by a wide audience that waged a republican assault on laissez-faire. George was not only one of the first significant proponents of progressivism; he also played an important role in popularizing its core ideas.

“IT WILL ULTIMATELY BE CONSIDERED A GREAT BOOK”

On March 22, 1879, George mailed his manuscript to D. Appleton & Co. in New York City, a leading publisher of works of political economy. As he awaited a reply, fearful that his state job would soon expire, George did what came naturally to him—he established the *State*, a newspaper that began publication that April. No sooner had he begun this budding enterprise when he received the first of many early publishing disappointments. While D. Appleton admitted the treatise was “written with great clearness and force,” it found its argument too “aggressive” for contemporary tastes

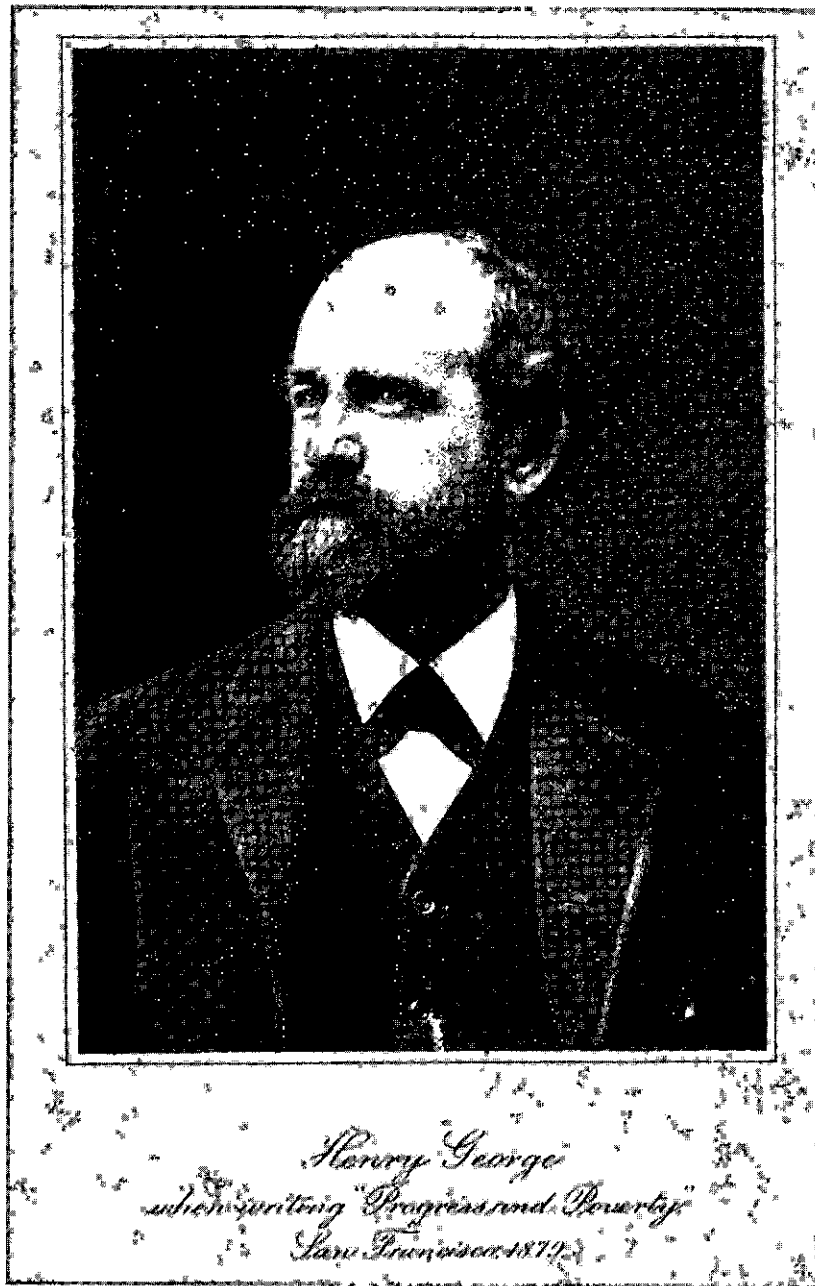
and declined to publish it. George's brother Thomas soon reported from New York that Harper's and Scribner's had also rejected the work.⁸⁶

Undaunted, George did what few authors in any era could do: he drew upon his skills as a printer and set the plates for the book himself. By the summer's end, with financial help from friends, George turned out an "Author's Edition" of five hundred copies of *Progress and Poverty* and mailed a number of them to several New York publishers. Hoping to gain the attention of some of the world's most notable social thinkers and reformers, George also mailed complimentary copies to Herbert Spencer and William Gladstone in England, and to two notable social reformers in Scotland and New Zealand. He also sent a copy to his father, accompanied by a letter written in the tone of both a son seeking paternal approval and of a reformer who saw himself in the mold of a biblical prophet:

It represents a great deal of work and a good deal of sacrifice, but now it is done. It will not be recognized at first—may be not for some time—but it will ultimately be considered a great book, will be published in both hemispheres, and be translated into different languages. This I know, though neither of us may ever see it here.⁸⁷

In light of *Progress and Poverty's* eventual stunning success—by 1886, the work appeared in thirteen languages and was already the bestselling book on political economy in the nineteenth century—these predictions appear warranted. But when one considers that they were the words of a man with only a marginal formal education and a lifetime to that point of repeated failures, they are a revealing testament to his extraordinary sense of missionary purpose.

As George expected, encouraging news soon arrived. Appleton, upon receiving a revised copy of *Progress and Poverty* and with word that the plates had been set, agreed to publish the work, admitting that its radical tone would "create some sort of a sensation." George would receive a 15 percent royalty cut from every copy sold at the price of two dollars. Within a few months of George sending the plates eastward, and two and a quarter years since he commenced writing, Appleton published its edition in January 1880.⁸⁸



Henry George, age 40, about the time he finished writing *Progress and Poverty* (1879).
Courtesy of the New York Public Library

Unfortunately for George, the popularity he so desperately sought for the ideas expressed in *Progress and Poverty* was not generated immediately upon publication. Indeed, it took several years to fully develop. The initial reviews were mixed, with a few applauding the work but far more criticizing or dismissing it. Then, in March 1880, *Progress and Poverty* received its first serious review; although critical in many places, it gave George encouragement. "I have longed," he wrote, "that by this day at least there might be some sign that the seed I had tried to plant there had not fallen by the wayside. This review is that sign." More signs soon appeared: Appleton wrote to say that he had sold the original one thousand copies and intended to print five hundred more.⁸⁹

Despite this good bit of news, George found himself in mid-1880, more than a year after finishing the manuscript, anxious and impatient. While his book had sold reasonably well and attracted the attention of the nation's most prominent newspapers (albeit with mixed results), no firm opinion had yet emerged regarding its thesis; no great reputation had been established. George still lacked the great stage he so earnestly desired from which to trumpet his radical plan of social reform.

He decided upon a bold plan of action. If the world would not come to his door, he would set out in pursuit of it. Accordingly, he fixed his sights on New York, the city that more than any other shaped American public opinion and the portal through which American ideas flowed outward to Europe. Borrowing the necessary funds from friends, he set out in the first week of August 1880.

PART II

The Emergence of "New Political Forces," 1880-1885

“New York Is an Immense City”

THE EMPIRE CITY IN THE EARLY 1880s

There are worlds and worlds—even within the bounds of the same horizon. The man who comes into New York with plenty of money, who puts up at the Windsor or Brunswick, and is received by hospitable hosts in Fifth Avenue mansions, sees one New York. The man who comes with a dollar and a half, and goes to a twenty-five cent lodging-house, sees another. There are also fifteen-cent lodging-houses, and people too poor to go even to them.

—Henry George

CROWDED CITY, IMMIGRANT CITY: THE DEMOGRAPHIC PICTURE

It had been eleven years since Henry George's last his visit to New York City, when the extremes of poverty and plenty so disturbed him. Now, as he detrained in Manhattan in August 1880, what did he see? What had changed since then? What had remained the same?

To begin with, New York was bigger, both in terms of land mass (through annexations) and population (from 942,000 in 1870 to over 1.2 million in 1880). Across the East River, the nation's third most populous city, Brooklyn, claimed nearly 600,000 residents (table 3.1). Physically, New York remained a city of red brick and brownstone; although its famed skyscrapers had yet to appear, the buildings had grown taller with the advent of cast iron and steel. “New York is an immense city,” George wrote to his son Richard shortly after arriving. “Such long streets, such high houses, such crowds as you never saw. It makes San Francisco seem

TABLE 3.1 Growth of Population in New York and Brooklyn, 1860-1890

	1860	1870	1880	1890
<i>New York</i>	813,669	942,292	1,206,299	1,515,301
<i>Brooklyn</i>	266,661	396,099	566,663	806,343

Source: Ira Rosenwaik, *Population History of New York City* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1972), 63. Adapted from table 19.

quite small.¹ Indeed, New York in 1880 made any city, save London, pale by comparison when it came to size.

George surely would have noticed several new features, ones that would in time come to define modern New York. Central Park, the nation's first large urban park, had been completed in 1873, and St. Patrick's Cathedral, symbolizing the rising presence of Irish Catholics in America, was consecrated on May 25, 1879. The new Metropolitan Museum of Art opened in March 1880. And soaring above everything else, the tallest structures in North America, were the twin towers of the Brooklyn Bridge, a monumental feat of engineering that soon would be finished in 1883. Plans for the erection of another legendary structure, the Statue of Liberty (completed six years later), were well under way.

Apart from the city's new physical features, George encountered a metropolis being reshaped economically, socially, and geographically by advances in technology. New modes of rapid transit were dramatically altering the way people lived and worked, encouraging population expansion out into nearby suburbs. Every day, tens of thousands crossed the surrounding waterways via ferry to Manhattan from New Jersey and Brooklyn. Others were dropped within the city limits from outlying neighborhoods by steam locomotives, the latest being the Elevated Railroad, which carried nearly 61 million passengers in its first full year of service (1880). Once there, commuters joined Manhattan residents aboard streetcars; in 1880 alone, these horse-drawn buses on rails transported 149 million riders. These innovations in transportation also dramatically increased residential segregation based on race, ethnicity, and class; likewise, the city became segmented by function, with some areas devoted exclusively to business and manufacturing and others to residences.²

On the heels of these new forms of physical communication came rapid improvements in the communication of information. The recent widespread introduction of the telegraph and telephone speeded up communication within the burgeoning city like never before. New York also possessed more newspapers than any other American city at the time—more than twenty-five daily papers and dozens of weekly papers in English circulated the city, along with a wealth of foreign-language periodicals. This abundance of media sources, however, did not translate into a corresponding variety of ideological and political perspectives. Beyond affiliating with political parties and figures, few papers took bold or independent positions on current issues out of fear of alienating their customers. No paper in 1880 could be considered working-class in orientation, including those that did depend heavily on working-class patronage.³

In addition to new technological achievements, mass immigration had continued to transform New York since George last saw it. Waves of so-called "old" immigrant groups (principally from Ireland and Germany), which had begun in the 1830s, had wholly altered the face of the city by 1880. A full one-third of New Yorkers in 1880 were born abroad in Ireland or Germany; among the native-born population, an impressive 80 percent claimed at least one parent of foreign birth (74 percent had two foreign-born parents). All told, New York presented an astonishing picture of a city dominated by immigrants and their children.⁴

As in George's San Francisco, the transformation of New York into a burgeoning city of immigrants did not occur quietly. Working-class native-born New Yorkers blamed immigrants for driving down wages and taking jobs. Middle- and upper-class residents negatively commented on their alien habits, languages, and cultures; they were also made into scapegoats for disease, crime, and intemperance. Ethnic and religious tensions occasionally led to explosive riots. Clashes between Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants in 1870 and 1871 left more than seventy people dead on the city's streets. More commonly, immigrants faced an incessant barrage of ethnic slurs in public speeches, plays, newspapers, and popular magazines. For example, Thomas Nast regularly depicted Irish immigrants as ape-like cretins led by a band of conniving Catholic priests in *Harper's Weekly*.⁵

Such a limited portrait, however, can give the false impression of the city's German and Irish populations as helpless, homogeneous immigrant communities. In reality, there existed within both ethnic groups a significant degree of social, economic, class, cultural, and religious diversity. For instance, while a substantial proportion of Irish and Irish American workers still languished in low-paid, unskilled, backbreaking occupations, ever greater numbers were beginning to enter the ranks of semiskilled and skilled trades. Some "lace-curtain" Irish, as their working-class counterparts disparagingly called them, rose even higher as wealthy dry goods merchants, contractors, and restaurateurs. Still others were breaking into the medical and legal professions.⁶ A similar examination of German New Yorkers reveals an ethnic group united by language, but also riven by class, religion, and social distinctions.⁷

As rising numbers of German and Irish Americans climbed the social and occupational ladders in the 1870s, they likewise edged into positions of political power. Far from being a powerless minority, the Irish in 1880 celebrated the election of the first Irish Catholic mayor in the city's history, shipping magnate William R. Grace. In that same year, men of Irish and German descent made up at least 70 percent of the Board of Aldermen. Indeed, it is clear that the virulent nativism of the 1870s did not indicate the poor position of Irish and German New Yorkers, but rather how much their growing self-empowerment frightened native-born Protestants.⁸

In contrast, New York's African American community could point to little in the way of economic and political power. Relative to the native-born white and immigrant populations, African Americans comprised a tiny fraction of the city's population in 1880—just 19,663 persons, or about 1.6 percent. Crowded into the worst tenement housing in the city's lower wards, they struggled in a poverty dictated by racist hiring practices, which confined most black men and women to low-paying menial occupations. The explosion of European immigration shrank their job opportunities; these newcomers, particularly the Irish, pushed African Americans out of many occupations they had come to dominate, such as carting, barbering, and domestic service. African Americans also suffered violence and abuse at the hands of white New Yorkers, ranging from the notorious Draft Riots in 1863 that saw eighteen blacks lynched,

to routine clubbings by policemen that went unpunished by an indifferent legal system.⁹

Henry George's New York in 1880 was overwhelmingly an "immigrant city," dominated by Irish and Germans, but it was on the cusp of still greater growth and diversity with migration from Southern and Eastern Europe on the rise. On one hand, this made New York City a unique and cosmopolitan metropolis. On the other, it meant the city was also a place of terrific confusion, with language, neighborhood, class, religion, and race often sharply dividing its citizens.

"EVERYTHING IN MANHATTAN IS IN EXTREMES": HEALTH, HOUSING, AND LIVING CONDITIONS

In 1880, Gotham was the very embodiment of the "great enigma" George warned about in *Progress and Poverty*—a place experiencing the growth of poverty amidst extraordinary wealth.¹⁰ Evidence of the latter in the Empire City abounded. By 1892, according to the *New York Tribune*, the city would become home to 1,265 millionaires (some 30 percent of the U.S. total). But it was most apparent in the grand homes and institutions built by the city's super rich, especially those who had acquired their fortunes only recently. These *nouveaux riches*—brash arrivistes like the Vanderbilts, Villards, Morgans, and Goulds—sought to mark concretely their arrival in the city's highest circles of wealth and prestige by building themselves magnificent marble mansions on Fifth Avenue. By the 1890s, the upper reaches of that famous thoroughfare were so completely lined by mansions that the American writer Edgar Saltus could write without exaggeration, "There is many a palace in Europe that would hide its diminished roof beside the sheer luxury of Fifth Avenue homes."¹¹

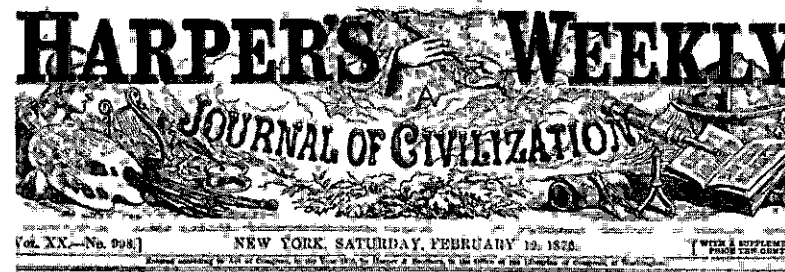
New York's elite showed off their wealth in ways well beyond gaudy architecture. They hosted an endless succession of opulent balls, dinners, and soirees. Although not the first of its kind, the event that set the definitive standard for elite displays of conspicuous consumption was the Vanderbilt Ball of 1883. To celebrate the completion of the city's most opulent mansion to date, a marble palace standing at Fifth Avenue and East 52nd Street, Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt threw a grand gala costume ball—as a

"housewarming" party. Covered extensively by the press, the festivities brought out a who's who list of New York society. Tellingly—and at odds with longstanding notions of republican simplicity and disdain for luxury—most came dressed as European royalty. The event proved such a hit that elite New Yorkers spent the next decade and a half trying to outdo each other in these astonishing exhibitions of wealth. These events in turn captivated the general public while making it clear to them who possessed true social, political, and economic power.¹²

Yet, for all the glitter of its elites, by the 1880s New York City was equally famous for its displays of conspicuous penury. Only the year before George arrived in the city, the aging poet Walt Whitman looked with growing distress at his beloved city. He added his prescient voice to the rising chorus of Americans who could not help but see in rising poverty a republican crisis in the making. "If the United States, like the countries of the Old World, are also to grow vast crops of poor, desperate, dissatisfied, nomadic, miserably-waged populations, such as we see looming upon us of late years—steadily, even if slowly, eating into them like a cancer of lungs or stomach, then our republican experiment, notwithstanding all its surface-successes, is at heart an unhealthy failure," he wrote in a tone and language strikingly similar to George's.¹³

One did not need to look very hard to find these "vast crops" of poor people. Always a city of contrasts, New York nevertheless probably deserved this appellation most during the Gilded Age. For all its splendor and wealth, for all its capacity to produce and expand, for all its art and high culture, New York was a city where hundreds of thousands of people lived in some of the very worst conditions in the nation. The same year George moved to the city, Richard T. Ely, one of the young radical economists discussed in chapter 2, returned to the United States after finishing his studies in Germany. Upon his arrival in New York, he was stunned by the poverty and suffering existing amidst such ostentatious wealth. "I took upon myself a vow to write in behalf of the laboring classes," he remarked.¹⁴

The poor of Gotham, many of them immigrants, often lacked occupational skills applicable to their new urban setting, relegating them to erratic and poorly paid employment. Estimates vary, but the average annual wage of the common laborer in New York ranged between \$375 and \$500 in the



The extreme gap between the rich and the poor. "The Hearth-stone of the Poor." *Harper's Weekly*, February 12, 1876. Courtesy of the Library of Congress

early 1880s, a level far below the estimated necessary subsistence income of approximately \$700.¹⁵ To cover this deficit, male workers relied on their families to produce additional income for the household to survive. More and more women joined the paid workforce. The number of women working in manufacturing rose 21 percent in the 1880s, with significant increases in industries such as silk goods (24 percent), tobacco products (21 percent), boxes (44 percent), and millinery and lace goods (41 percent). In every case they were paid a fraction of the wages enjoyed by their male counterparts. Tens of thousands of women also took work in middle-class homes as domestic servants; others who elected to remain at home took in laundry, sewing, finishing work, and boarders as a means of supplementing the household income. Children were set to work, often at a very young age. Some found jobs as factory hands, others as delivery boys, and still others as rag pickers and scavengers. "It is only by the strictest economy," offered a contemporary observer, "that they [the poor] manage to get along at all."¹⁶

The poverty of the city's workers was exacerbated by squalid tenement housing. When the city legally established the standard building lot at twenty-five feet (fronting the street) by one hundred feet in 1811, it did so with the understanding that *single-family* homes would be built on them. By 1880, the typical four to six-story tenement building occupied these same lots, often housing more than twenty families. Each floor contained four apartments, usually consisting of three rooms. Only one—either facing the street or the backyard—tended to have any windows to receive any light or fresh air. While reformers successfully pushed the city to adopt a law mandating air shafts between buildings (thereby allowing for small windows in interior rooms) in 1879, the law affected only buildings constructed after it took effect; the city's more than 21,000 existing tenements were left untouched. The vast majority of tenements had no running water, gas lighting, or central heating system.¹⁷ They also suffered from inadequate to nonexistent sewage removal, leading to frequent overflows (particularly during heavy rainfall) that produced oppressive and unhealthy "sewer gasses" and high rates of disease.¹⁸

Despite the dreadful condition of these filthy buildings, the city's surging population kept the demand for housing high. Optimists had repeatedly predicted since the 1860s that the widespread construction of tene-

ments would solve New York's chronic housing shortage. Yet in 1880, as if to confirm George's contentions about the distortions of land monopoly, demand still outpaced supply and rents continued to rise despite the erection of over seven thousand tenements in the previous decade. One 1883 survey of bricklayers, the city's best-paid wage workers, determined that they paid 28 percent of their annual income to their landlords. Those who lived in far worse housing paid an even higher percentage.¹⁹

Beyond the terrible conditions and expense, tenement dwellers also endured an environment of epidemics, suffering, and death. Just four weeks before George arrived in Manhattan, the *New York Times* ran a series of stories on the soaring death rate in the city during a recent heat wave, reporting that 1,297 people died in a single week, two-thirds of them children under the age of five. "Undertakers' wagons are busy on the East Side," noted the newspaper, and "the coffin-maker's hammer has no rest."²⁰ The city's Metropolitan Board of Health had few powers and little will to use them; meanwhile, the politics of patronage undermined efforts to rid streets of filth as contracts were awarded on the basis of political connections rather than commitment to public health. "Streets and avenues in the thinly populated half of the city," one contemporary commented, "are often swept twice a week, while in the crowded and narrow streets sweeping is done but once a week, if that much."²¹ In a city that relied upon on sixty thousand horses producing 2.5 million pounds of manure and sixty thousand gallons of urine every day, insufficient street cleaning posed a horrific public health problem.²²

The problem of tenement life was magnified by the extraordinary population density of the city's slum districts. To George, this overcrowding offered a perfect real-life example of the pernicious effects of land monopoly. "There is plenty of vacant land on Manhattan Island," he would write a few years later. "But on Manhattan Island, human beings are packed closer than anywhere else in the world." Of the 1.2 million persons registered in the Census of 1880, an overwhelming proportion were crammed in the neighborhoods below 14th Street. In working-class immigrant areas such as the Tenth Ward of the Lower East Side, the population density reached 276,672 inhabitants to the square mile, a level then unheard of in human history.²³



The filthy streets of the Lower East Side. "New York City: How the Metropolis Invites Disease and Epidemics." *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*, April 23, 1881. Courtesy of the New York Public Library

Statistics compiled by the city's Board of Health and the Census Bureau vividly illustrate the deadly impact of unhealthy tenement life. Table 3.2 shows that for all the effort by reformers and reform-minded government agencies, the city's overall death rate declined only slightly between the years 1875 and 1890. More precisely, it shows an astonishing death rate among infants and children, one of the surest indications of poor health standards.

Moreover, Table 3.3 showcases the stark disparity in health conditions between middle- and upper-class residents and those cramped in the tenement districts. The tenement problem was neatly summarized in a report by the Society for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor, which noted, "Crazy old buildings, crowded rear tenements in filthy yards, dark, damp basements, leaking garrets, shops, outhouses, and stables converted into dwellings, though scarcely fit to shelter brutes, are the habitations of thousands of our fellow-beings in this wealthy, Christian city."²⁴ In 1880, two-thirds of the city's residents called such places home (table 3.4).²⁵

TABLE 3.2 Death Rates Per 1,000 of Population

	Aggregate	Infants (under the age of 1)	Children (under the age of 5)
1875	28.80	n/a	n/a
1880	26.48	279.80	104.35
1885	26.39	273.60	100.41
1890	26.47	277.48	99.01

Note: The figures exclude stillbirths.

Source: Adapted from tables 3 and 8 in U.S. Census Office, *Vital Statistics of New York City and Brooklyn for the Six Year Period Ending May 30, 1890*, ed. John S. Billings (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1894), 3, 9.

TABLE 3.3 Death Rates Per 1,000 by Selected Grouping and Age, 1890

Wards	Aggregate	Infants (under the age of 1)	Children (under the age of 5)
Entire city	26.47	277.48	99.01
Middle-class	18.67	351.57	129.44
Working-class	41.92	447.70	225.68

Note: City figures for 1890 exclude stillbirths, while those for the ward groupings of that year include them. Working-class wards surveyed: 1, 2, 4, 5B, 8B, 14, and 15B. Middle- and upper-class wards surveyed: 18D; 16D; 21D and F; 19A, D, K, and N; 21 C, F, I, K, and M; and 12 A, E, H, K, and I. Letters correspond to sanitary districts within each ward.

Source: Adapted from table 67 in U.S. Census Office, *Vital Statistics of New York and Brooklyn* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1890), 66.

TABLE 3.4 Tenement Population in New York City, 1865-1900

	Number of tenements	Tenement population	Total population in tenements	Percent living
1865	15,511	486,000	726,386	67
1879	21,163	720,000	1,150,000 (est.)	65.6
1893	39,138	n/a	1,700,000 (est.)	n/a
1900	42,700	1,585,000	2,507,414	63

Sources: Statistics for 1865, 1893, and 1900 are from Roy Lubove, *The Progressives and the Slums: Tenement House Reform in New York City, 1890-1917* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1962), 257-66. Statistics for 1879 are from the testimony of Colonel Emmons Clark, RCSRLC, 2:2, 646-72. The population statistics for 1879 are based on the July 1878 population estimate from New York City Board of Health, *Annual Report for 1879*, 38th report, cited in the testimony of C. Wingate, RCSRLC, 2:1043-45.

The only thing worse than living in a tenement was getting evicted from one. And evictions occurred at a frightful rate in Gilded Age New York, exceeding 16,000 per year in the early 1880s and more than 23,000 by 1892. "Tenant's rights" simply did not exist at this time. Landlords could easily procure an eviction order from a judge for rent overdue by as few as three days or for an expired lease, and would cast a family and their belongings out onto the merciless streets regardless of the season. In addition to seasonal unemployment, wage reductions, illness, and the devastating sudden death of the main breadwinner, evictions added immeasurably to the anxious uncertainty that marked the life of the city's workers.²⁶

All of these problems, frustrations, and apprehensions of the city's tenement dwellers found expression in a *New York Times* editorial in May 1880, printed a few months before George set out for New York. It notes that, after more than a decade of population spreading uptown and new apartment construction, decent and affordable housing still eluded a majority of the poor and middle class:

There are not here, as there are in most cities, decent, respectable neighborhoods which lay claim neither to elegance or fashion. Everything in Manhattan is in extremes. . . .

No other town of any size in civilization which we can recall is so ill-provided in this respect [of good housing]. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say three-quarters of the built-up portion of the Metropolis is either unfit for respectable residents or unattainable for persons of ordinary means.²⁷

Henry George could have scarcely put it better himself. The well-deserved reputation of New York as the city of extremes was best and most obviously exemplified in its housing. Too many people with too few resources lived in ill-designed and overcrowded housing. Coupled with poor diets, filthy streets, and inadequate sewage, it made for a potent recipe of misery and death. Perhaps more than any other aspect of Henry George's message of social reform, the idea that nonproducing landlords siphoned off unearned profits at the expense of honest laborers possessed a compelling salience among the city's hard-pressed working class.

"ALL THE BRAINS, AND ALL THE CASH OF THE NATION": THE GREAT COMMERCIAL METROPOLIS

If Henry George's New York provided vivid examples of Gilded Age poverty, it also showcased the age's remarkable industrial progress. The United States between 1860 and 1900 lurched fully into the Industrial Revolution, leaving behind only the fond memory of an economy dominated by farmers and artisanal craftsmen. New immigrants, new technologies, new markets, new modes of organizing production, and new relations between employers and workers facilitated this transformation; by 1900, America possessed the most advanced industrial economy in the world, the very embodiment of the progress of which George wrote. Whereas in 1870 agricultural output dominated the American economy, industrial output exceeded it by \$13 billion to \$4.7 billion by 1900—a staggering feat in only thirty years. Exemplifying this trend was the steel industry: in 1860, the United States produced less steel than both France and England (approximately 13,000 short tons), but by 1900 the nation was first in the world (10,382,000 short tons).²⁸

New York, already America's great commercial metropolis in 1860, experienced proportional changes in its economy, leading the novelist Henry Adams to comment that the city had "exploded its wrapper." Several crucial factors accounted for this. Rapid population growth created both a large supply of cheap labor and a greater demand for goods and services. Technological advances (especially in areas like mechanization), increased power sources, and labor-saving devices made each individual worker and shop considerably more efficient and productive. The establishment of nationwide markets—a development made possible with the advent of the telegraph, mass media, and the locomotive—spurred demand for the products of New York's various industries. Finally, New York became the primary business address of the era's most innovative and influential industrial capitalists. Together, these and other factors combined to sustain the city's reputation as *the* national center for commercial innovation, opportunity, and success, a fact revealed more explicitly by analyzing several key facets of the city's economic growth in this period.²⁹

New York in 1880 maintained its dominance of the U.S. import and export trade despite increased competition from Baltimore, Philadelphia,

Newark, and New Orleans. Although its share of trade handled dropped from 70 percent of the U.S. total in 1850 to 56.7 percent in 1880, the value of trade handled (68 percent of total value in 1890) continued to keep New York far ahead of all potential rivals (table 3.5). In addition, New York City's traditional industries—like printing and publishing, clothing, furniture, and tobacco—grew at unprecedented rates between 1860 and 1890 (table 3.6).³⁰

The explosive growth of New York City's internal economy likewise played a significant role. With the advent of the streetcar in the 1850s and

TABLE 3.5 Growth of New York City Manufactures, 1860-1890

	Number of establishments	Number of employees	Average capital per establishment	Gross value produced
1860	4,375	90,204	13,991	159,107,369
1870	7,624	129,577	17,042	332,951,520
1880	11,273	223,073	15,932	468,443,248
1890	25,403	340,482	16,774	777,222,721

Source: U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, *Census of Manufactures* (1860), 384; *Census of Manufactures* (1870), 550; *Census of Manufactures* (1890), xiv.

TABLE 3.6 Growth of Selected Industries in New York City, 1870-1890

INDUSTRY	1870		1890	
	NUMBER OF FIRMS	VALUE PRODUCED	NUMBER OF FIRMS	VALUE PRODUCED
Clothing	952	38,811,826	4,484	126,012,142 ^a
Furniture	342	(unclear)	598	15,475,981 ^b
Print and publishing	191	15,711,246	1,368	60,491,066 ^c
Tobacco	656	10,103,751	1,295	35,560,025 ^d

^a Excludes firms providing clothing materials (i.e., buttons).

^b Includes mattresses and spring beds.

^c Excludes firms providing printing materials. Bookbinding and blank bookmaking included.

^d All kinds.

Sources: U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, *Census of Manufactures* (1870), 702-3; *Census of Manufactures* (1890), 390-409.

the elevated railroads in the 1870s, Manhattan's sparsely inhabited northern areas underwent rapid development, putting tens of thousands of tradesmen to work constructing apartments and laying thousands of miles of streets, sewers, and gas lines. For example, in 1870 a little more than 1,200 masons labored to produce \$671,000 in finished work; twenty years later, 2,200 masons produced over \$4.2 million. And while real estate had long been the source of immense fortunes before 1860 (John Jacob Astor being the prime example), it became an extraordinarily valuable commodity and a central component in the city's economic expansion (and a vivid illustration of George's assertions about land values and "association").³¹

The contribution of the city's physical growth to its economy was matched by a corresponding increase in the demand for local goods and services. Every one of the thousands of newcomers taking residence in or passing through the city every year required not just housing, but also food, clothing, dry goods, transportation, and entertainment. This created countless entrepreneurial opportunities and tens of thousands of new jobs. Bread bakeries, for example, which produced primarily for local consumption, more than doubled in number from 455 in 1870 to 1,004 in 1890, with a parallel rise in bakery employees from 2,344 to 5,804.³²

To cope with the problems and complexities of the growing metropolis, the range and scope of the city government expanded. The city's budget nearly quadrupled between 1860 and 1890, rising from \$9,786,000 to an astounding \$34,986,000. The city also hired thousands of workers, some in established civic fields like public school education, street cleaning, and police and fire protection, and others (such as engineers, inspectors, and accountants) in new divisions and departments designed to tame and rationalize the turbulent urban environment. In either case, New York's municipal government played an instrumental role in the city's growing internal economy, by promoting real estate development, extending urban services, and adding to the public payroll.³³

New York's expanding economy in the Gilded Age also witnessed the transformation of several traditional commercial enterprises and the establishment of entirely new ones. While the Empire City had always been a center for banking and investment in the antebellum era, it soared to unprecedented prominence in these fields after 1860.³⁴ The passage of the National

Bank Act in 1863 and successive legislation promoted the concentration of financial power in New York's large banking houses. Investment banking, led by Drexel, Morgan, & Co., broadened its services to handle investments in burgeoning industries like railroads, mining, and petroleum. The New York Stock Exchange solidified its position as the primary national marketplace for the purchase and sale of stocks and other securities. The insurance industry, led by the nation's four largest companies, was located in Manhattan as well. By 1880, New York was the home to the iconic address (Wall Street), institution (the Stock Exchange), and personality (J. P. Morgan) of finance capitalism. "New York," observed Frank *Leslie's Weekly*, "attracts all the brains, and all the cash of the nation."³⁵

Hand in hand with the rising role played by finance between 1860 and 1900 was the decision of many of the nation's major corporations to establish their headquarters in the city. Because of its commercial reputation, access to information and talent, and proximity to credit and marketing resources, New York emerged in this period as the home address of corporate America. By 1900, sixty-nine of the nation's largest 185 corporations based themselves in New York, while many others maintained offices and branch operations there.³⁶

Apart from the great wealth brought by these corporations, their ascent signaled a major occupational revolution. A veritable army of workers entered the fields of middle management, sales, marketing, and other white-collar and clerical positions. Corporate growth also increased demand for lawyers, accountants, and other professional experts. Of this rise of "service industries," with their vast expansion of professional, managerial, and clerical occupations and opportunities, George would observe a few years later, "It is everywhere obvious that the independent mechanic is becoming an operative, the little storekeeper a salesman in a big store, the small merchant a clerk or bookkeeper, and that men, under the old system independent, are being massed in the employ of great firms and corporations."³⁷

Taken together, these trends and statistics indicate that Henry George had moved to a city that was the virtual embodiment of the Industrial Revolution. As a social critic obsessed with the duality of progress and poverty in an advancing capitalist order, George would find both in abundance in his new home.

"THE WORST GOVERNED CITY IN THE WORLD": POLITICS AND SOCIETY

Any assessment of New York City during the Gilded Age must consider its politics, in particular the faction of the Democratic Party known as Tammany Hall. Initially founded as a fraternal and charitable society in the 1780s, Tammany steadily evolved in the nineteenth century into a powerful political organization that relied on the poor immigrant vote (especially the Irish), a certain amount of political trickery (e.g., ballot box stuffing), and corruption. By the late 1860s, under the leadership of "Boss" William Tweed, the Tammany machine dominated the city.³⁸ But in August 1871, a *New York Times* expose revealed Tweed's role in the most costly (possibly to the amount of \$20,000,000) and most comprehensive corruption scheme in American municipal history.³⁹

The Tweed scandal and its aftermath defined the city's politics in the decade before George arrived. To property owners, businessmen, and old money elites, the most frightening aspect of Tweed was not his corruption; in many ways, his pro-development policies were a boon for business. Rather, they feared his successful mobilization of the "dangerous classes" against their social betters. As one such commentator wrote in 1874, Tammany was comprised of "adventurers, idlers, and criminals, uneducated and without either moral or patriotic conviction[,] . . . men who are champions and exponents of the very class against which society is organized to protect itself."⁴⁰ To thwart this unwelcome trend, the city's commercial, cultural, and social elite banded together to effectively undercut working-class political empowerment.⁴¹

A Committee of Seventy comprised of Republicans and reform-minded Democrats drawn from elite organizations like the Union League Club and the Chamber of Commerce succeeded in electing or placing men from their own ranks in several key municipal positions—mayor, comptroller, and the heads of public works and the Central Park Commission, among others. This new leadership broke with Tweed's style of activist government that offered something to everyone, from the poor to prosperous developers. They ushered in a vigorous policy of fiscal retrenchment primarily through reduced taxes, lowered debt, and slashed poverty relief.⁴²

With the city's fiscal situation placed under elite control and set in a new direction, the Committee of Seventy moved to make their reassertion of power permanent by trying to disenfranchise massive numbers—between 29 percent and 69 percent by some estimates—of New York voters by imposing a minimum property requirement for voting. The initiative ultimately died in the 1878 New York State legislature, in part due to mobilized working-class opposition. But this effort to restrict the suffrage to the "better sort" of citizens revealed the depth of fear felt by middle- and upper-class New Yorkers regarding the growing power and influence of immigrant and working-class voters.⁴³

Tammany survived the Tweed scandal and the Committee of Seventy's efforts to kill it, but it did so only by drawing in respectable merchant reformers like William Havemeyer and Abram Hewitt. The organization needed such men not just for their respectability, but also for their access to ample financial resources. Thus, while Tammany continued to solicit the working-class immigrant vote, it did so while assiduously avoiding any class-conscious appeal. Tweed's replacement as head of Tammany, city comptroller "Honest" John Kelly, acceded to the prevailing liberal dogmas of low taxes and reduced public spending on poor relief and public works, policies that hurt the working class the most—especially during the depression years of the 1870s.⁴⁴

But how then did Tammany rebuild and retain its political base among the city's working class? Instead of promising to defend them as workers from exploitive capitalists (and thereby alienating the organization's merchant benefactors), Tammany leaders promised to protect them as immigrants and Catholics from aggressive nativists. As a result, the traditionally nominal influence of labor and working-class politics within Tammany diminished further in the 1870s.⁴⁵

Other aspects of Tammany served to stymie meaningful working-class influence within the organization. Because the very nature of late nineteenth-century machine politics was local and decentralized, those who identified with Tammany did so largely for local and practical reasons rather than out of any affinity for the abstract ideological positions outlined in its party platform. What drew them to Tammany was both its capacity to provide access to patronage in the form of cash, jobs, and contracts, as well

as the occasional timely intervention by a Tammany official on behalf of a beleaguered pushcart peddler, saloonkeeper, or destitute widow. Of vital importance was the fact that Tammany largesse was of the no-questions-asked variety, in sharp contrast to the tightfisted and morally judgmental Protestant charity organizations. This policy, coupled with huge monetary resources, enabled Tammany officials to literally purchase the loyalty of their constituents, giving them an advantage over both reformers trying to woo voters with appeals to honesty and good government and labor activists seeking support with appeals to working-class interests.⁴⁶

The Tammany machine used other tactics besides money and favors to minimize class-oriented politics. New York City did not adopt the secret (or Australian) ballot until 1897, allowing Tammany to employ legions of poll watchers and "shoulder hitters" to ensure that workers voted "correctly." If a voter did not fall into line, his transgression was met with violence on the spot or with later retaliation by party officials, who fired the offender (or his family members) from public jobs or withheld charity. As a result, few workers possessed the will and independence to stand up to such overt intimidation and vote for a labor or socialist party candidate.⁴⁷

Through closed-door caucuses and conventions controlled by party officials, Tammany (and the city's other political organizations) made it all but impossible for labor activists to get nominated.⁴⁸ As a result of these factors, New York's workers, in contrast to their counterparts in cities like Chicago where labor enjoyed substantial political influence, found themselves without a significant voice in municipal politics. Lacking any substantive working-class pressure, either from within the party or from without (by an independent labor party), Tammany candidates could give empty rhetorical support to the concerns of workingmen while pursuing a mainstream agenda that never threatened commercial interests. Statistics bear this out: between 1872 and 1886, every mayor was a wealthy businessman connected to the city's highest sources of commercial and social powers, and most of them enjoyed the nomination of Tammany Hall.⁴⁹

For all their cumulative votes, the city's workers enjoyed very little political power as a class of wage earners and lacked representatives willing to fight for their interests. Occasional third-party efforts by socialists or trade unionists failed miserably. Workers were expected to vote for Tammany

Robert F. Kennedy Library, Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C.

and other Democratic factions, not to demand a class-based political program or positions of leadership.

"THE METROPOLIS OF LABOR"

Henry George arrived at an uncharacteristically quiescent period in the ongoing struggle between workers and employers in New York. In the months leading up to his arrival in August 1880, the city had experienced only a handful of strikes, only two of which (by piano makers and streetcar drivers) lasted any appreciable period of time. To a large degree, this temporary peace reflected the devastating impact the depression of the 1870s had on the city's labor movement. The decade had begun auspiciously for organized labor, so much so that in July 1870 the *New York Herald*, surveying the condition of the city's labor movement, concluded that "New York City is the metropolis of labor as of everything else, and takes the lead of all other American cities in this respect."⁵⁰ Two years later, following the lead of workers in the building trades, 95,000 workers (one-third of the city's workforce and two-thirds of its manufacturing workers) staged an eight-week strike for the eight-hour day. Although the strike failed (only about ten thousand workers gained the shorter day), the Long Strike of 1872 boosted labor solidarity and union membership.⁵¹

But all hopes of greater activism were dashed the following year with the Panic of 1873 and the ensuing economic collapse. In New York, a city intimately tied to financial markets, industrial production, and the import and export of the nation's goods, the depression hit particularly hard and fast. Massive job losses soon led to widespread hunger and thousands of evictions. Between January and March 1874, over ninety thousand homeless people crammed into the city's police station lodging houses in one of the cruelest winters ever experienced in New York. Amidst such suffering, the local labor movement was devastated, much like its national counterpart. A majority of New York City's local unions completely vanished, and trade union membership plummeted from 45,000 in 1873 to less than 5,000 in 1878.⁵²

The climb back for labor from this state of disarray was steep and difficult. In addition to the staggering loss of membership and unions, the

organizing of New York City's workers was hampered by a series of formidable obstacles. For one, the downward spiral of wages (to about half the average paid in 1873) caused by the depression pitted workers against each other in intense competition for what few jobs were available. With unions decimated and labor cheap, plentiful, and desperate, employers enjoyed unprecedented power, often replacing men and women with workers willing to accept much lower wages, dismissing others for union activity, and demanding more production out of those retained. This problem intensified as employers, faced with falling prices due to severe deflation, turned to mechanization to cut costs and stay competitive.⁵³ While this march of mechanization occurred unevenly throughout the local economy (bricklayers, for instance, were barely affected by such trends, while cigar-makers were devastated), it weakened the labor movement by allowing employers to replace skilled workers—who tended to be unionized and well paid—with less troublesome, cheaper, unskilled labor. As one master tailor observed, the introduction of new cutting machines allowed seven men to produce what one thousand cutters once did in the 1860s, lowering production costs by 70 percent and driving skilled tailors "next to pauperism."⁵⁴

An increased tendency toward business consolidation and expansion also hindered labor organization. Prior to the Civil War, few businesses in New York City employed more than fifty workers, but large-scale manufacturing firms became more common by the 1870s. A successful lockout by Singer (sewing machines) and Steinway (pianos) in the Long Strike of 1872 convincingly demonstrated that the owners of larger companies enjoyed new, far-reaching powers of coercion in labor relations—principally deep pockets and a sympathetic legal system. Owners of small firms likewise gained leverage in dealing with organized labor by banding together to form their own "boss" associations in decentralized trades like baking, brewing, garment making, plumbing, stonecutting, and construction. These organizations, themselves essentially employers' unions, allowed petty entrepreneurs to draw upon the strength of a much larger sphere of fellow capitalists to set uniform wages, hours, and conditions and to oppose the efforts of trade unions to change them.⁵⁵

The resurgence of immigration in the late 1870s and its new sources (e.g., Southern and Eastern Europe) provided another hindrance to labor's

efforts to organize. These new immigrants competed with native workers for jobs and wages, further adding to the employers' advantages and to laborers' woes. "It's that _____ Castle Garden that's killing us," cried the vice president of the Jersey City Freighthandlers Union, referring to the immigrant depot at the foot of Manhattan Island. Moreover, these new immigrants spoke different languages and often brought with them cultural attitudes toward work, family, religion, and community that were often not receptive to the appeals to class-consciousness and trade solidarity then gaining currency within the American labor movement.⁵⁶

The evolution of New York's economy placed additional barriers before labor's cause. Significantly, while some industries moved toward larger factory production, others—like cigarmaking, clothing, and other light manufacturing industries—began to decentralize production by contracting work out to individuals and families to be done in their tenement apartments. This practice allowed an entrepreneur to slash production costs because little or no factory space was needed and a large segment of this sweated workforce was comprised of women and children, who occupied the very lowest rungs on the wage ladder. The business owner also benefited from an atomized labor force that was next to impossible to organize into a union. Employers in the cigarmaking trade, for example, augmented this power advantage further by renting apartments to their workers, thereby allowing them to thwart any worker organization and strikes simply by threatening eviction.⁵⁷

Changes in the industrial marketplace also worked to undercut solidarity. More than ever before, New York's vast array of commercial enterprises created products for sale elsewhere. On the micro level, this meant that a Greenwich Village bakery could begin to sell its bread to grocery stores throughout the city. On the macro level, it translated into the sale of everything from beer, cigars, and clothing to printed materials, jewelry, and gloves all across the country. In both cases, expanded markets translated into more than simply greater profits for the entrepreneur; it also erased the last vestiges of pre-industrial ties between producers and their immediate community. While workers in smaller cities and towns could still rely on substantial community-wide and cross-class sympathy in their struggles with oppressive factory owners, the same could not be said for workers in

large cities like New York. Strikes (and later boycotts, as we will see in chapters 5 and 6) engendered only the hostility of middle- and upper-class New Yorkers, who both ignored workers' pleas to avoid boycotted products and condemned them as threats to social order.⁵⁸

These hostile responses to labor activism in New York reflected the larger ideological shift in the Gilded Age (previously discussed in chapter 2) among middle- and upper-class Americans to turn from traditional republican values of mutuality, obligation, and the common good to a laissez-faire republicanism celebrating individualism, freedom of contract, and private property rights. New York in this era played a key role in promoting this ideological shift and an attendant formation of bourgeois class identity and class solidarity on a national scale. In the decade before George arrived in Manhattan, elite New Yorkers set aside the differences that had once divided them—in particular differences in pedigree and the age, scale, and source of their fortunes—and began increasingly to think and act as a class.⁵⁹

In commercial life, New York elites formed business associations and strengthened the influence of the Chamber of Commerce. In politics, as we have seen, they became more assertive in pursuing their class interests, uniting behind a program of lower taxes, fiscal retrenchment, and disenfranchisement. In social life, they developed an elaborate calendar of dinners, balls, and cotillions that afforded them the opportunity to mimic European royalty and to flaunt their wealth. They likewise established an intricate web of clubs, churches, museums, and charities. In the latter initiative, they increasingly took a hard line toward the needy, emphasizing the dangers of fostering dependence among the poor through overly generous charity. "Better that a few [of the poor] should test the minimum rate at which existence can be preserved," wrote the city's commissioner of charities and corrections in 1876, "than that the many should find the poor-house so comfortable a home that they would brave the shame of pauperism to gain admission to it." In struggles with their employees, they shed any remaining pretensions to antebellum paternalism and embraced the language of laissez-fairism to denounce strikes and celebrate freedom of contract and the unchangeable "laws" of the market. And, reflecting a growing hostility towards and fear of the "dangerous classes," they demanded larger police and

Robert J. Kline Library, Kline Institute for Community College

militia forces and pushed for the construction of new armories. Indeed, just a few months after George came to the city, elite New Yorkers gathered for a gala in honor of the new Seventh New York Regiment armory on Manhattan's Upper East Side. This massive edifice had been built at the behest of, and with substantial funding from, a collection of New York's wealthiest, who grew increasingly worried by rising class tension and violence in the 1870s. In a similar expression of cohering class solidarity, many of these same men gathered at Delmonico's (the city's finest restaurant) two years later to honor the British philosopher Herbert Spencer, the single most important promoter of social Darwinism on both sides of the Atlantic.⁶⁰

For the city's workers, the most common manifestation of the growing alienation between themselves and middle- and upper-class New Yorkers took place in the fraught public debate over the right of workers to organize and strike. Since labor possessed few resources with which to combat the vociferous bourgeois hostility, it was a decidedly one-sided discourse. None of the city's twenty daily newspapers expressed much more than tepid rhetorical support for "the honest working man." Indeed, most periodicals dismissed labor's demands not simply as impractical, but also as communistic schemes antithetical to the nation's revered principles of order, freedom, and independence. "Whenever a man undertakes to advocate the cause of the working people," teamster Thomas McGuire complained, "the papers come out and denounce what he says as the 'ravings of a demagogue.'"⁶¹

Worse than the literary pounding labor received in the daily press, however, were the very real drubbings they received at the hands of the police. In other industrializing cities like Chicago, class sympathy and labor's political influence led municipal police to exhibit restraint when confronting strikers and picket lines in the 1870s. Not so in New York. The supreme example of this recurring violence happened on January 13, 1874, in the wake of the economic collapse triggered by the Panic of 1873. Thousands of unemployed workers gathered in Tompkins Square to demand relief and public works from city officials. For their efforts, they were assaulted by hundreds of club-swinging police without warning or provocation. "Police clubs rose and fell," related one account. "Women and children ran screaming in all directions. Many of them were trampled underfoot in the stampede for the gates. In the street bystanders were ridden down and mercilessly clubbed by



The police riot at Tompkins Square Park, January 13, 1874. "The Red Flag in New York—Riotous Communist Workingmen Driven from Tompkins Square by the Mounted Police, Tuesday, January 13." *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*, January 31, 1874. Courtesy of the American Social History Project, the Graduate Center of the City University of New York

mounted officers." Samuel Gompers remembered it in more blunt terms: "It was an orgy of brutality." Hundreds suffered battered heads and broken limbs; many protesters were arrested.⁶²

The general reaction of the business community, politicians, and the mainstream press was one of unified praise for the police. The editors of the *New York World*, for example, commended law enforcement for pummeling the "rabble of blackguards, mostly foreigners" who sought to "rule the city by riot and terror." These sentiments and the violence that inspired them indicated to the city's workers the willingness of their middle- and upper-class counterparts to take extreme measures, even ones that flaunted long-standing political rights and social traditions, to secure their class interests. From 1874 until the 1890s, tensions and violence between police and labor in New York escalated steadily. Little wonder then that virtually every New York working-class leader to emerge in the 1880s—P. J. McGuire, John Swinton, Samuel Gompers, Justus Schwab, Robert Blissert, to name but a

few—harkened back to January 13, 1874 as the moment they began to question the republican notion of America as essentially a classless society and instead see themselves as members of a distinct and besieged class.⁶³

This rising hostility toward organized labor, combined with the enormous political power enjoyed by the city's commercial class, explains the curious fact that three years later, during the Great Strike of 1877, New York witnessed hardly any significant labor protest and no violence. With memories of Tompkins Square (not to mention the Paris Commune) still fresh, city officials flooded the streets with heavily armed policemen and state militiamen. This show of force successfully overawed any effort to stage a sympathy strike or violent protest.⁶⁴

If these many external pressures, obstacles, and outright attacks were not enough to hobble efforts by working-class New Yorkers to build an effective labor movement, there was the problem within labor itself. Even as wealthy New Yorkers enjoyed greater unity as a class, workers in this period were plagued by numerous internal divisions. Some disputes were over practical matters, such as which union had jurisdiction over which workers. But the most serious and enduring conflicts were ideological, with socialists, anarchists, trade unionists, industrial unionists, and others all promoting different modes of resistance and divergent visions of the future.⁶⁵

Slowly emerging at this time, however, was a relatively new organization dedicated to the radical idea of uniting all workers, regardless of skill, race, ethnicity, or gender. Founded in 1869 in Philadelphia by a small group of tailors, the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor was originally committed to secrecy (fearing employer reprisals) and a traditional understanding of labor organization, restricting its membership almost exclusively to white men in the skilled professions. But that outlook gradually changed as the Order welcomed into its membership mill workers from Pittsburgh and miners from the Pennsylvania coalfields.⁶⁶

This dedication to secrecy and the depression of the 1870s sharply limited the growth of the Knights' membership. Nonetheless, the Order had expanded to include fourteen district assemblies and several thousand workers by 1877, enough to justify convening a grand assembly of delegates in Reading, Pennsylvania, on January 1, 1878. Out of this gathering came the organization's first constitution; its preamble neatly summarized the

Order's philosophy and goals, among them securing for workers "a proper share of the wealth that they create," equal pay for men and women, the establishment of bureaus of labor statistics, the eight-hour workday, and the abolition of contract, prison, and child labor. The preamble also made clear the Order's radical philosophy of inclusion that came to be known as industrial unionism, declaring its commitment "to bring within the folds of organization every department of productive industry." In time this guiding principle was captured in the slogan, "An injury to one is the concern of all."⁶⁷

The Knights would eventually grow into a powerful national movement with a strong presence in New York City. But when George arrived in New York in August 1880, no Knights assemblies existed in the city. As Terence Powderly wrote to a local activist just a few months earlier, "there is at present no organization in New York City."⁶⁸

New York City's workers in 1880 faced an uncertain future. On the one hand, the growth of industrial capitalism, increased use of machinery, devaluation of skills, persistent violence by police, debilitating schisms among workers, and declining wages all seemed destined to steadily worsen. In addition, labor remained politically impotent. On the other hand, there were reasons for workers to be hopeful. The economy, after nearly six years of contraction, deflation, and staggering unemployment, rebounded after 1879. Though many labor organizations perished with the depression, those that survived began to rebuild themselves while new ones started from scratch.

Henry George's New York was as intriguing as it was inscrutable. It was a city of immense contradictions. Nowhere else could one find more lavish mansions and more ghastly tenements, more wealthy elites thriving and more workers unable to sustain their families, and a more populist political system and more people denied meaningful political power. It was also a city of dramatic, unceasing change, as evidenced by its phenomenal population growth and the diversification of its economy. Finally, it was a city of uncertainty, with its direction, leadership, economic focus, ethnicity, and even its very boundaries as yet undetermined.

As he settled into his new surroundings, George reflected this ambivalent outlook on the future. He had moved to New York with one goal in

mind: to gain an audience for his book. This eventually proved an unqualified success, but only after a period of personal struggle and agonizing soul-searching reminiscent of the periods of misfortune that marked his earlier endeavors. As always, a lack of money posed the most serious problem; by October, he was writing to a San Francisco friend that he was depressed. But at the end of that month, a short-term solution soon presented itself, one laden with an irony that would not become apparent for another six years. Congressman Abram Hewitt, the man he would run against for mayor of the city in 1886, hired George to ghostwrite a report on the status of labor for a House of Representatives committee. Although George derided it as "hack" work, the \$50 per week salary lifted his spirits and led him to renounce any idea of returning to California. "I had made up my mind that the thing to do is to go at it here," he wrote to one friend, while confiding to another that "the only difficulty is to get your feet down in a new place; but I guess I have got over the worst of it."⁶⁹

By late December, George's situation continued to improve. He was making a little money, and lecture engagements and writing opportunities for newspapers and magazines began to trickle in. Yet nothing of permanence or pecuniary promise seemed imminent and he feared for his family three thousand miles away in California. He had been able to send them very little money and knew that Annie was probably borrowing money from friends just to pay the bills for rent and food. For all his ambition and faith in a society that promised success to those who worked hard and persevered, he had so little to show for his efforts. He was managing to stay afloat, but as he wrote to a friend in San Francisco, he was "at 42 poorer than at 21." He was not complaining, he continued, "but there is some bitterness in it. It is at such times as this that a man feels the weight of a family. It is like swimming with heavy clothes on." Still, with the new year only days away and book sales holding steady, George refused to linger on the negative for more than a moment. "I am satisfied," he concluded, "that to come east is the thing for me."⁷⁰

4

"Radically and Essentially the Same"

IRISH AMERICAN NATIONALISM
AND AMERICAN LABOR, 1879-1883

Men of GREEN ERIN! Awaken!
Lift up your souls and your eyes!
Never is Nature forsaken,
While it hath MANHOOD to rise!
Rise from your knees to your stature!
Knees must not bow but to GOD!
Claim ye your BIRTHRIGHT in NATURE—
Claim ye your own native sod!
LAND!—that is yours, when you will it—
Yours without striking a blow!
Ay! from each roof-tree and steeple!
If ye but WILL IT again:
Land for the Landless People!
Land for the CHILDREN OF MEN!

—A. J. H. Duganne, "Land for the People," 1879

"AT LAST IT BEGINS TO LOOK AS THOUGH
IT HAS REALLY TAKEN"

With the dawning of 1881, George's optimism proved well founded. In early January, D. Appleton's sent word that it had sold every copy of *Progress and Poverty* and were preparing another printing. "At last it begins to look as though it has really taken," he wrote to a friend with a mixture of relief and cheerfulness. "My book is getting to be regarded here as the *phenomenal* one." Indeed, it had achieved a unique status: no work on political economy had ever sold one thousand copies in America or Great Britain in its first

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"Labor Built This Republic, Labor Shall Rule It"

Our father, who is supposed to be in Heaven, dispenser of charity, justice and eternal love, thy name be hallowed. Thy kingdom come alike unto every one, rich or poor. Cause thy will to be respected in Heaven and our rights on earth. We demand to-day our daily bread for which we labor. Forgive us our trespasses if possible, as we shall try to forgive those who starve and oppress us. Withhold from us the temptation to become masters of our fellow men, and deliver us from the evil of ignorance, superstition and the bondage of eternal slavery. Then ours should be the land and the fruits as well as the labor forever and ever, Amen.

—A. Porter, "The Workingmen's Prayer" (published in *Truth*, 1882)

"A SWORD IN DEFENSE OF LABOR"

In the fall of 1882, with the Irish Land League no more, Henry George set sail for New York City. His year in Ireland had been a spectacular success in terms of promoting his book and enhancing reputation in both Great Britain and America. If he did not realize it then, he would soon discover that his most enthusiastic following in the United States was among poor, urban workers. As soon as word spread that he was returning to the city, the CLU resolved to tender him a grand public reception upon his arrival.¹

Patrick Ford, Robert Blissert, P. J. McGuire, Matthew Maguire and many other leading progressive Irish nationalists and labor leaders were in attendance at the fête, which took place at Cooper Union on October 20, 1882.² Throughout every speech delivered that evening, there ran a single, unifying theme: unless workers, inspired by the philosophy of

Henry George and the example of Irish Land League, came to understand the prime source of their oppression (land monopoly) and its remedy (radical land reform), industrial society worldwide would continue to hurtle toward disaster. "No man has unsheathed a sword in defense of Labor so grand and so beautiful as that which Henry George unsheathed in that book of his," said Blissert. That work, declared McGuire, had established a "new political economy" that elevated man's labor above the status "of a mere commodity" and would lead to the "establishment of . . . an industrial government . . . [where] finance and all the tools of labor will belong to the people and not to a few." In other words, proclaimed another speaker, "this great, simple, rightful doctrine of the nationalization of land will prove the emancipation of Labor in America."³

The next evening George attended a very different kind of reception, this time at New York's posh Delmonico's restaurant. Organized by Louis F. Post, editor of *Truth* and one of George's devotees, it drew together several men from the ranks of New York City's emerging mugwump reformers, including Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Charles Francis Adams, and Congressman Perry Belmont.⁴ The contrast between the two events could not have been more striking. George recognized few of the guests assembled to "honor" him, and many of them had never heard of him. The elegant setting and the cultured speeches made clear that far from being an expression of widespread popular sentiment like the CLU event the night before, this evening represented Post's attempt to cultivate interest in George among the city's eminent, reform-minded swallowtail set.

The holding of two separate receptions reflected a conscious decision of the CLU leadership. They had declined Post's suggestion for a single reception and instead planned their own distinctly labor-centered event where they could lay claim to George and his message, just as they had done with Davitt the previous summer. Blissert and his fellow Land League and labor activists considered George *their* spokesman and inspiration, not an ally of "bread and water" Beecher. Recent experience with the Land League and Davitt had taught them to be wary of letting politicians, professionals, and establishment reformers into a movement.

On a broader level, this effort to create a distinctly working-class event and to claim the increasingly well-known Henry George as a working-class

hero pointed to an emerging belief among many laborers that the nation had entered a dangerous and potentially fatal period in its history. They rejected, however, the conclusion of middle- and upper-class Americans that the nation's ills stemmed from the misguided embrace of radical, un-American ideologies like socialism by the "dangerous classes." Instead, workers offered a different diagnosis and prescription, one shaped by a rising working-class republicanism, that identified a republican crisis caused by a headlong and unrestrained industrialization that enriched and empowered a small elite while impoverishing the masses. This working-class republicanism drew on earlier labor protest traditions that invoked republican ideals, but it went further by stressing inclusiveness across traditional worker divides of skill, ethnicity, race, and gender, in addition to the democratization of industry. Working-class republicanism in the Gilded Age also asserted that republican citizenship must guarantee not only political rights but economic rights as well, and it called upon the state to guarantee them. This language of protest offered a vision of an alternative, cooperative society.⁵

Popularizing this working-class republicanism became a primary goal of the CLU from its earliest days. A significant moment in this effort came in August 1883 when a U.S. Senate committee arrived in New York City to hold public hearings in their tour of the nation investigating the state of relations between labor and capital.⁶ Investigations such as this (there were two others launched in 1878 and 1894), notes Mary O. Furner, "subjected the new industrial capitalism to a political and ideological fitness test" regarding its compatibility with republican values and institutions.⁷ Keenly aware of this opportunity, the CLU seized the moment and, reflecting its concern that only *authentic* workers provide testimony rather than so-called "workingmen" sent by bosses or local politicians, requested and received permission to present a slate of its own witnesses.⁸

The CLU-organized testimony, as well as the independent corroborations of other individual CLU members, provided a unique opportunity to set before members of the Senate and the wider public (the testimony received substantial press attention) the key elements of working-class republicanism. At its core lay the conviction that a principle central to all earlier forms of republicanism—that economic opportunity and upward mobility were open to all honest, hardworking men of solid character and

good habits—had been nullified by laissez-faire industrialization and capitalist-friendly government policy. Finding themselves no longer able to rise, asserted CLU witnesses, American workers were trapped as members of an underclass of poorly paid wage earners, without the freedom and independence of true republican citizens.⁹ In his testimony, for example, brassworker Joseph Finnerty pointed out that men in his trade earned about \$15 per week, whereas they would have averaged between \$18 and \$21 per week just fourteen years ago.¹⁰ Teamster Thomas McGuire and others likewise noted that many workers found it impossible to find regular, full-time employment.¹¹ Another source of concern centered on the increased mechanization of production, which subdivided tasks and undermined skills, leading to, in machinist John Morrison's words, a "very demoralizing effect" on workers and the belief that they had now become "part of the machinery."¹² Workers also found themselves increasingly isolated from their employers, the latter having been replaced by managers who showed little concern for their well-being.¹³ Life in overcrowded and unhealthy tenement districts had become the norm for wage earners; as a result, temperance and frugality became meaningless aspirations.¹⁴ Workers also feared being fired and blacklisted for union activity, which undermined their ability to defend their rights, a problem neatly summarized by tailor Robert Blissert: "The members of any trade without a union are slaves."¹⁵

This working-class republicanism articulated by the CLU witnesses also focused on a particularly distressing aspect of labor's plight—its seemingly *permanent* condition, a fact that called into question America's free labor tradition that had previously always characterized wage work as a temporary stage in an upward journey to eventual self-employment and independence.¹⁶ They spoke of thwarted opportunity and "the crystallization of society more and more into distinct classes, classes just as distinct as any that exist to-day in Europe, and a man born in one of them can never hope to reach the other," as P. J. McGuire put it. This "crystallization," they argued, stemmed from the growing power of monopolies and corporations to crush competitors, potential entrepreneurs, and labor organizations. Finnerty claimed that a man needed just \$300 to \$400 to set up his own business as a brass worker as late as 1870. But by the early 1880s, the emergence of large companies pushed the average start-up cost to \$5,000—a sum far beyond

the means of the average brass worker. Thomas McGuire cited similar statistics, recounting his own frustration in trying to compete with large corporations as an independent expressman. Not a single worker questioned the inherent virtue of a capitalist economy. Rather, they charged that it had been corrupted by unscrupulous monopolists.¹⁷

As it decried the declining status of workers—the true citizens of the republic—Gilded Age working-class republicanism also denounced the rise of a newly empowered elite that enjoyed extraordinary wealth, status, and power. "The poor unfortunate laborer is just like the kernel of wheat between the upper and lower millstone," observed Thomas McGuire. "In any case he is certain to be ground. He *produces* all the wealth while the men who produce nothing *have* all the wealth."¹⁸ Morrison succinctly quipped: "Jay Gould never earned a great deal, but he owns a terrible lot."¹⁹ This working-class republican critique employed the same anti-aristocratic terminology popular in antebellum republicanism, only in the Gilded Age it seemed less a package of useful metaphors to describe unrepudican behavior and more a set of terms to identify the very real efforts of elites to establish themselves as a permanent American aristocracy. Gilded Age elites rejected the ideal of republican simplicity that had long restrained their predecessors (hence Vanderbilt's mansion and grand opening ball in 1883, and the copycat galas that followed). Not surprisingly, a central theme of working-class republican rhetoric and political cartoon imagery excoriated the wealthy for this behavior. "The dangerous classes are not to be found in the tenement houses and filthy districts, but in mansions and villas," asserted the CLU's Conrad Carl in a biting rhetorical reversal of a phrase popular among elites in the Gilded Age.²⁰

Additionally, working-class republicanism of this period attacked laissez-faire as an extreme ideology employed by the wealthy to justify unrepudican actions that violated the rights, liberties, and dignity of workers. The ubiquity of this sentiment is seen in how frequently labor speakers, writers, and editors denounced the claim that labor was "a mere commodity," rejecting it as antithetical to traditional republicanism's emphasis on the common good. The CLU's Ed King, for example, attributed all labor disputes to a single cause: "It is because capital insists on regarding a

business concern, plant, stock, *and hands* as so much raw material, to be bought and sold, that conflicts do, and always must, prevail between workmen and employers." This laissez-faire notion, he declared, "is rejected altogether by the working classes."²¹

The working-class republicanism articulated by CLU witnesses also criticized the state of American politics as corrupt and undemocratic, with cadres of wealthy special interests working in concert to fleece the poor and deny them their rightful voice in the polity. "The entire political system from top to bottom is a system of bribery and corruption," pronounced Thomas McGuire.²² Labor intended, therefore, to reclaim its political influence and rid the nation of "class legislation" to establish a government, in the words of Morrison, "of the people, for the people, and by the people"—different entirely from the present form of government.²³

That several of the CLU witnesses referenced "class legislation" points to a distinct working-class republican interpretation of class. Most workers, like their fellow middle- and upper-class citizens, believed that a true republican society was free of classes and, consequently, class conflict. As a result, they expressed great concern over the profusion of class rhetoric in the 1870s and 1880s, but they differed sharply in their interpretation of the causes. Whereas the elites and bourgeoisie blamed the surge of class rhetoric on jealous losers deluded by "foreign" ideologies like socialism, proponents of working-class republicanism attributed its rise to the unrepudican behavior of rich people, monopolists, and other elites. This interpretation explains why populist agitation in this period by workers and farmers often avoided employing class terminology when describing themselves, preferring instead to lump all producers—a category defined very broadly—into "the people" or "the masses." Edward King clarified this idea: "Working people do not represent a class interest at all. They claim to be *the people*."²⁴ Workers placed monopolists, lawyers, bankers, and other nonproducers outside this circle of republican virtue, deeming them the true sources of class conflict. The latter had banded together as a class to act in their own self-interest, regardless of the cost to the common good. As P. J. McGuire told the senators, "One hundred men with millions of dollars at their command . . . [who] are not engaged in any productive industry . . . have the power to change the value of every pound of

merchandise, and every dwelling house and every hour's labor." Class conflict would disappear only when these elite interests ceased to conspire as a class against "the people."²⁵

In many ways, this working-class republicanism of the Gilded Age resembled earlier antebellum manifestations of artisan republicanism. Yet there were significant differences, especially in its greater emphasis on communal ideals over individualism and its vision of a more powerful state. Some of its proponents, including CLU witnesses, for example, called for the abolition of the wage system and the adoption of cooperative production.²⁶ Working-class republicanism also embraced solutions that called for a greater role of the state in protecting republican independence, opportunity, and equality. "If it has not the power," said P. J. McGuire of Congress regarding the need for laws protecting unions, "it should assume the power; and if necessary, amend the Constitution."²⁷

Moreover, CLU witnesses voiced another, starker, aspect of working-class republicanism: a foreboding sense of impending doom. Sounding very much like Henry George in *Progress and Poverty* and reflecting the popularity of apocalyptic rhetoric that suggested the very fate of the republic hung in the balance, CLU witnesses laced their testimony with bleak references to imminent social revolution. As Robert Blissert warned:

Unless some wise legislation is enacted here to protect the many from the aggressions of the few this will become the worse conditioned country that ever existed. . . . This country will see a revolution, the bloodiest revolution which the annals of history have ever recorded, because the growing intelligence and the growing discontent of the masses of people . . . will culminate either in a revolution or in the sudden overthrow of the monopolies.²⁸

"WHATEVER ENLARGES LABOR'S SENSE OF ITS POWER
HASTENS THE DAY OF ITS EMANCIPATION"

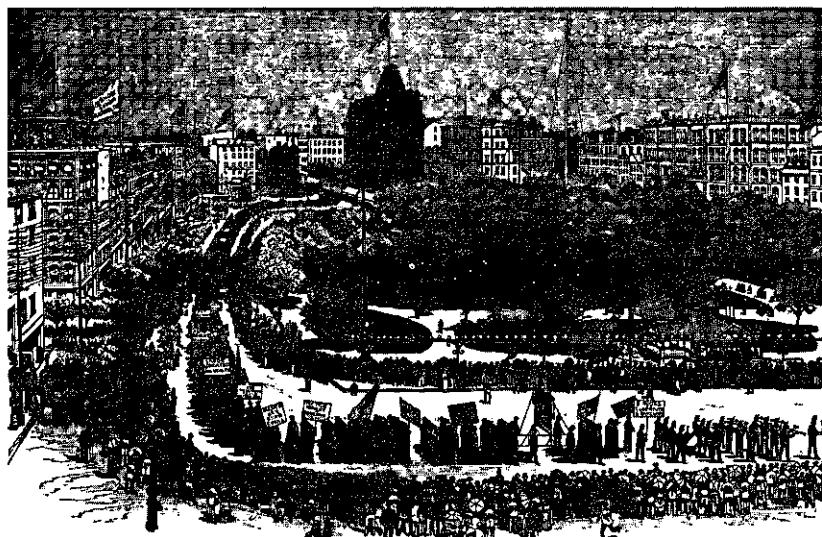
The CLU went beyond speeches and public testimony to promote working-class republicanism. Some of its most significant initiatives in this regard were symbolic, intended to build an oppositional working-class movement.

None captured so fully the effort to awaken workers to the crisis of the republic than the invention of Labor Day.

In the spring of 1882, at the regular weekly meeting of the CLU, Matthew McGuire proposed a resolution advocating that a day in early September "be set aside as a festive day [for] a parade through the streets of the city." They eventually chose Tuesday, September 5, in part because it coincided with convening of a national convention of the Knights of Labor in New York. When the day finally arrived, no one knew how many workers would turn out, given workers' fears of getting fired and blacklisted for labor union activity.²⁹ Only four hundred men and a brass band had assembled by the time the parade touched off at 10:00 a.m. But as the parade headed north up Broadway, it swelled in size; union after union fell in line from side streets, bringing the total somewhere between five and ten thousand marchers. Many workers held aloft signs with messages that pronounced the broad themes of working-class republicanism: "Labor Built this Republic, Labor Shall Rule It," "Labor Creates All Wealth," "All Men Are Created Equal," "To the Workers Should Belong all Wealth," "Our Power is at the Polls," "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," "Strike With the Ballot," "Land: The Common Property of the Whole People," "Eight Hours for Work—Eight Hours for Rest—Eight Hours for What We Will," and more. These assertions, indeed the event in its entirety, amounted to a public challenge to the popular progress mantras that suffused so much of mainstream Gilded Age discourse.³⁰

Midway through the parade, the throng passed a reviewing stand at Union Square, where Terence Powderly, Patrick Ford, John Swinton, and other labor dignitaries acknowledged each group as it passed. Henry George would not return from Ireland for another month, so he was not present for this particular celebration. After moving up Fifth Avenue, past the opulent homes of Vanderbilt, Morgan, Gould, and other recently minted tycoons, the grand procession terminated at 42nd Street and Sixth Ave. From there, participants and their families (some twenty-five thousand people) headed to Wendel's Elm Park for a day of music, games, and speeches. There were copious amounts of food and beer, of course.³¹

After such an impressive start, annual Labor Day celebrations in New York grew in size and popularity each year. They also grew more diverse as



The first Labor Day parade. "Grand Procession of Workingmen, September 5." *Frank Leslie's Weekly*, September 16, 1882. Author's collection

contingents of women, Jews, and African Americans joined the parades.³² And each year workers passed a reviewing stand at Union Square, on which sat some of labor's most prominent leaders, such as Henry George, Patrick Ford, John Swinton, and Robert Blissert.³³ By 1886, the CLU's tradition had become a national event, indicating the depth and breadth of working-class discontent across Gilded Age America. That year, nearly twenty thousand marched in Manhattan and another ten thousand in Brooklyn, while twenty-five thousand turned out in Chicago, fifteen thousand in Boston, five thousand in Buffalo, and four thousand in Washington, D.C. Politicians soon took notice. In 1887, five states, including New York, passed laws making Labor Day a state holiday. In 1894, President Grover Cleveland signed into law a measure establishing Labor Day as a holiday for all federal workers.³⁴

In the CLU's day-to-day program of heightening workers' awareness of the need to redeem the republic from grasping monopolists and other non-producers, the annual Labor Day celebrations came to represent the high-point of the year. It promoted labor solidarity by featuring a public show of

strength, speechmaking, and craft exhibitions, capped by an afternoon of recreation sponsored not by political machine operatives, as was the custom of the day, but by unions. Moreover, by holding the event on a weekday, the CLU was harkening back to the antebellum artisanal tradition of taking time off according to one's interests.³⁵ As a ritual in the blossoming oppositional working-class republican culture, the celebration also drew together workers in ways similar to, but distinct from, traditional expressions of ethnic loyalty like the Land League and St. Patrick's Day parades or civic holidays such as Fourth of July picnics. On such occasions, participants came together as *workers* who, as the *New York Herald* observed in 1882, "sat together, joked together and caroused together. . . American and English, Irish and Germans, they all hobnobbed and seemed on a friendly footing as though the common cause had established a closer sense of brotherhood."³⁶ Commenting on this effect of Labor Day, Swinton observed, "Whatever enlarges labor's sense of its power hastens the day of its emancipation."³⁷

The invention of Labor Day, along with the celebration honoring Henry George upon his return from Ireland and the carefully orchestrated testimonies before the traveling Senate committee, was not the only important initiative undertaken by the CLU in its first eighteen months of existence. Another was the formation of an independent labor party. This effort faced two formidable obstacles. First, while some workers (many of them guided by Ferdinand LaSalle) advocated for the formation of independent labor parties, others (reflecting the views of Karl Marx) argued that such parties could succeed only *after* the formation of strong trade unions to back them up. This was the so-called "balance of power" strategy: labor would maximize its influence at the polls by delivering its votes to candidates who pursued a pro-labor agenda, regardless of party affiliation. These conflicting philosophies over political action divided labor organizations, including the Knights of Labor, all across the nation.³⁸

Supporters of an independent labor party also had to contend with the power of the Democratic Party, particularly New York's Tammany Hall. As previously detailed in chapter 3, Tammany garnered the lions' share of the working-class vote by distributing patronage jobs, no-questions-asked charity, and occasional rhetorical blandishments celebrating the "sons of toil." These efforts, in the words of Samuel Gompers, had turned workers

into "voting cattle" for the major parties. These demoralized men, according to Blissert, were willing to sell their vote "for a dollar or a glass of beer."³⁹ Mainstream political parties also benefitted from public antipathy toward independent labor politics as promoting un-American feelings of class conflict. They also enjoyed the advantages of a fragmented and multi-tiered political system that hindered political insurgencies.⁴⁰

Despite these obstacles, a slight majority within the CLU (including key leaders like Blissert, King, and P. J. McGuire) favored independent political action. Taking to heart an early CLU proclamation that "the power of using the people's property, the machinery of State and municipality, should be wrested from the grasp of our enemies and returned to their rightful owners, the working men and working women,"⁴¹ they established a committee in June 1882 to consider forming a labor party.⁴² Their case for independent political action gained momentum in July 1882 during a freighthandlers' strike when the New York Attorney General granted the Hudson Railroad a ten-day reprieve from state intervention.⁴³ At a mass rally in support of the strikers at Union Square on July 19, 1882, CLU Secretary Matthew Maguire read a series resolutions, including the final one that stated:

Resolved: That as the railroads control the Legislature, Congress, the Judiciary, the Democratic and Republican Parties, and all branches of the public service, we declare the most urgent duty of the hour to organize in our respective trade and labor associations, and to form a political party opposed to monopoly in all its forms, and to establish a purer form of government, based upon the rights of labor and the emancipation from all grades of corporate and political tyranny.⁴⁴

Three weeks later, as it became clear that the freighthandlers had lost their strike, the CLU's member unions approved the formation of a United Labor Party. The ULP took as its platform the CLU's Declaration of Principles, with a modified list of demands at the end. The vote—twenty-seven unions in favor, one against, with twenty abstentions and absences—reflected the opposition of many regarding independent politics.⁴⁵

By mid-October, the ULP had nominated candidates for alderman, mayor, state assembly, and Congress.⁴⁶ It also launched a campaign in a style

that anticipated Henry George's 1886 mayoral campaign. Mass open-air rallies, torchlight parades, and curbside speeches from truck beds took place nearly every night from September until Election Day evening. At these campaign events, in order to emphasize the break with the mainstream parties and the clubhouse politics associated with them, the CLU banned all giveaways, especially alcohol. Fearing subversion by the established parties, the ULP also banned the presence of any candidates not officially endorsed by the CLU.⁴⁷ And in a ceremony laden with ritualistic significance, it required every ULP candidate to make an "ironclad pledge" that bound them to certain rules and standards in order to gain labor's endorsement.

I hereby declare my conviction that the shameful treachery characterizing the past history of labor in politics, and the complete collapse of public confidence in the purity of public life and the integrity of political aspirations, demand that all candidates chosen by this organization should publicly pledge themselves to honest aims and loyal service: and, therefore, I, [candidate's name], do here and now solemnly pledge my honor as a man and my reputation as a citizen that I seek no means or private gain, but only the public good, by faithfully serving the working classes.

The pledge then identified and prohibited every conceivable form of political dishonesty. In particular, it warned against "betraying the people in their hour of need by poisoning their minds against hope and trust in deliverance from slavery through honest political action."⁴⁸

Few expected the ULP to sweep a host of labor candidates into office, but many hoped the campaign would serve an educative, conscience-raising function, opening workers' eyes to their rights and making them wary and more critical of the mainstream parties.⁴⁹ But labor's inexperience and meager resources led to disappointing results. The ULP's state assembly candidates averaged only 10 percent of the vote and aldermanic candidates just 5 percent. "We have not arrived at the time when workingmen can take political action," one prominent unionist noted, "because they are in favor of the old parties and not true to each other."⁵⁰ But despite this political failure and the damage it inflicted on the CLU (many unions left the

coalition in protest),⁵¹ advocates of independent political action revived the ULP once again in 1883 for the next election cycle. Their efforts were met with another crushing defeat with attendant reports of bribe-taking, double-dealing, and disorganization.⁵²

Two consecutive electoral disasters for the CLU left the advocates of independent political action on the defensive, but no less committed. They believed, as William Forbath writes, that "the redemption of the working class was inextricably caught up with the redemption of the republican tradition."⁵³ But before labor could successfully return to independent politics, workers needed to develop a new sense of the possible. Such a vision did develop over the next few years as the CLU temporarily set political action aside and embarked on an unprecedented program of working-class activism.⁵⁴

"THE ONLY MEANS TO SECURE THE LIBERTY OF THE
WORKINGMEN IS THROUGH THE TRADES UNIONS"

With independent politics proving both unsuccessful and divisive, the CLU increasingly focused its efforts on creating a wide-ranging program designed to give workers greater institutional strength and promote an oppositional working-class republican culture of empowerment. Central to this initiative was worker education. Time and again, labor leaders expressed dismay at the woeful ignorance of workers regarding their rights and the need to see beyond their own narrow interests or those of their trade. As CLU activist Edward King said, since "correct ideas precede successful action," there must be "a systematic forming of logical opinions before you can accomplish any practical result."⁵⁵

To this end, the CLU held weekly Sunday meetings where workers heard many of the foremost radicals and intellectuals in the movement speak about workers' rights, socialism, and land reform. It also sponsored free weekly lectures on labor topics by notables like George, Blissert, and King,⁵⁶ and opened a Free Labor Reading Room that offered works by George and Marx, as well as countless labor papers from cities around the country.⁵⁷

But its everyday public activism normally took the form mass meetings, parades, and festivals. At CLU rallies, workers denounced everything from

antilabor legislation to needless worker fatalities; alternatively, they rallied to support striking workers or causes like the eight-hour workday. Special occasions like the return of Henry George or the death of Karl Marx were also marked by large rallies. On Sundays, the CLU occasionally organized afternoon steamboat excursions that gave workers and their families a day of common recreation, which were followed by regular CLU meetings on the return voyage. It also sponsored free concerts (with music interspersed by short speeches on labor themes) provided by the Carl Sahn Club, a musician's union affiliated with the CLU.⁵⁸

One medium of labor education that ranked high on the list of CLU priorities was the establishment of a labor paper to compete with the mainstream "organs of capital." The problem, as George explained in the summer of 1883, stemmed from the fact that "the newspaper has become an immense machine, requiring large capital, and for the most part it is written by literary operatives, who must write to suit the capitalist who controls it."⁵⁹ In the absence of an official labor paper workers relied on Louis F. Post's mugwumpy daily paper, the *Truth*, and on ethnic weeklies like the *Volkszeitung* and the *Irish World*, which consistently took the side of labor and published summaries of the CLU's meetings and activities.⁶⁰

Then, in October 1883, John Swinton—Scottish immigrant, longtime labor activist, and friend of Henry George—quit his job as an editor at the *New York Sun* to establish *John Swinton's Paper*. "My objects in starting it," he later said, "were to raise the social question, and to induce the working people to bring their interests into politics."⁶¹ Devoted exclusively to labor issues, Swinton's paper not only provided the CLU with space for a weekly bulletin board (fittingly under the headline, "News Not in Other Papers") for their meetings, news of strikes, lists of boycotted businesses, and announcements of worker rallies, it also introduced a large body of workers to the grim realities of the nation's republican crisis and the basis of a solution grounded in a working-class republicanism. Swinton's paper also played a key role in popularizing the ideas of Henry George among workers by publishing his speeches and selected passages from *Progress and Poverty*. It issued a consistent call for labor to take independent political action as, in his words, "new political forces." The mantra "Do Something" appeared repeatedly in headlines and editorials, constantly imploring readers to

forsake factional and ideological bickering in favor of united action. Not surprisingly, the CLU celebrated *Swinton's* as a "constant menace to grasping capitalists," particularly "as it is the only vehicle in the English language whereby the wrongs of the wage-earners can be made public and ventilated, without fear or favor."⁶²

The CLU further committed its resources to the practical goal of organizing labor. It strengthened existing unions, worked to merge rival unions of the same trade, and organized unions where none existed. By mid-1884, thirteen previously unorganized trades possessed effective organizations. It established a committee on grievances to resolve conflicts within or between labor organizations in matters of jurisdiction, policies, and membership. This committee even managed to broker peace (albeit temporarily) in the infamous struggle between the International and Progressive Cigarmakers' Unions.⁶³

Dominated as it was by unions of skilled male workers, the CLU made no effort to organize women workers in its first few years of its existence. Most male workers in this period viewed women wage earners as competitors, as threats to their well-being. By some estimates, some one hundred thousand women labored in New York City for wages that averaged \$4.50 per week. Much of this work was concentrated in the needle trades and domestic service. But as the CLU matured as an organization in 1884 and 1885, it began to take steps, like the Knights of Labor nationally, to support striking women workers and organize women workers into unions. The first delegation of women workers marched in the 1885 Labor Day parade; by May 1886, the CLU announced the formation of the New York Ladies' Central Labor Association to operate as a kind of women's auxiliary to the CLU. Ultimately, only a few women's unions were organized, but they were weak and short-lived, reflecting the precarious position of women workers in this period and the decidedly masculine character of working-class republicanism.⁶⁴

Because most conflicts confronting workers arose between labor and capital, the CLU established a committee on arbitration to investigate grievances and speak directly with the accused employer. Frequently, the committee won reversals of wage reductions, increased hours, worker firings, and use of nonunion help. When they failed in their object, or when

the employer refused to meet with them entirely, the CLU then threatened stronger measures such as a strike or a boycott. An examination of a single month, August 1885, illustrates the scope of its activity. Early in the month, the committee lodged a complaint against several hotel owners for hiring nonunion painters at wages far below union scale. Some days later, it filed an official complaint against Duden Brothers (lace makers) with the U.S. District Attorney's Office for illegally importing contract labor at below union-scale wages. Next, it threatened action against a theater owner for contracting a boss painter employing cheap, nonunion labor. Then it settled a strike of tin and slate roofers by pressuring the employer to hire only union men. On August 17, the committee called upon the owner of Sulzer's Harlem River Park to pay out funds owed to two unions. Two weeks later, its threat of a strike and boycott convinced a boss baker to rehire a union foreman.⁶⁵

When peaceful arbitration failed, the CLU sanctioned a strike. Often a powerful weapon, a strike could just as easily backfire, demolishing a union lacking adequate money or organization. No incident better illustrated this problem than the Brotherhood of Telegraphers' 1883 strike against Western Union and its ruthless owner, Jay Gould. With a war chest of just \$1,000, the telegraphers lost the strike after just four weeks. Western Union rehired only those telegraphers willing to sign an "iron clad oath" renouncing membership in the Brotherhood. This severely weakened the union. The main problem, noted John McClelland, was that striking workers have had "nothing to combat capital with except their empty stomachs, while the capitalists have had unlimited financial resources and have been able to starve the workingmen into submission."⁶⁶

Recognizing this essential reality, the CLU evaluated each situation before deciding whether or not to endorse a strike. This policy of caution produced an impressive record, with the CLU member unions winning or reaching a compromise in three-fourths of their strikes at a time when strikes by individual unions failed at least half the time (table 5.1).⁶⁷

Because money frequently determined the outcome of a strike, the CLU also served as a source and conduit for funds. Indeed, as one of its first official acts the CLU in 1882 raised \$7,000 for the striking freight handlers of New York and New Jersey.⁶⁸ By mid-1884, the CLU noted that in the past two years it had spent an astonishing sum of more than \$60,000 to aid

TABLE 5.1 Strikes by CLU-Member Unions in New York City, 1882-1884

	Total number of strikes	Strikes won	Strikes lost	Strikes ending in compromises	Ongoing strikes
1882	12	7	4	1	0
1883	8	4	2	2	0
1884*	5	2	1	0	2
Totals	25	13	7	3	2

*as of June 1, 1884

Source: "Semi-Annual Report of CLU Secretary Charles Miller," *JSP*, July 13, 1884, 4.

labor causes. "There is more in perfect organization and discipline than in anything else," observed John Swinton, "—except, perhaps, a large treasury."⁶⁹

While strikes provided the most vivid example of the strife existing between labor and capital in the Gilded Age, the implementation of the boycott inaugurated a new method of struggle and protest. As noted in chapter four, Irish American workers in the early 1880s had begun to adapt what was originally an agrarian tactic in Ireland to fit their urban and industrial context in the United States, replacing social ostracism with economic sanction. A boycott imposed on an abusive employer urged workers, their friends, and the wider community to refuse to purchase his product.⁷⁰

More than any other tactic employed by labor, the boycott represented an effort to strengthen the republican idea of the common good and shared interests, captured best in the motto of the Knights of Labor: "An Injury to One is the Concern of All." It was a palpable response to the challenges posed by rising middle- and upper-class class hostility toward labor agitation, as well as to the increasingly diffuse nature of social and economic relations. With the growth of large corporations and regional and national markets, it became increasingly difficult for a worker to see the connections between his or her life as a producer and as consumer. The boycott represented an effort to reverse this trend, injecting into everyday consumer choices an element of class consciousness and community solidarity—from the daily beer consumed after work to seasonal purchases like shoes.⁷¹

BOYCOTT, BOYCOTT

We herewith appeal to the Smoking Public, especially to the tobacco men, NOT TO SMOKE THE

CIGARS OF G. HAUSEN,

The Washington Street, Hoboken, factory, N. J., in the said House, Fifth Collection District, N. J.; as the said House is employing labor in his factory, and we desire to more especially call the attention of the ORGANIZED WORKMEN to the fact that their hearty cooperation is an absolutely necessary to secure the victory of a just cause.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

of Cigar-makers, No. 4, Hoboken, N. J.

Boycott, Boycott

GARRY BROTHERS

DRY GOODS STORE,

303, 305 and 307 Grand Street,
Corner of Allen Street, New York.

TO TRADE UNIONS AND ORGANIZED LABOR!

Grating:
In behalf of UNITED LABOR, you are requested to withhold your patronage from the above firm to submission, and BOYCOTT IT, for the following reasons:
For refusing to employ Union Labor.
For harboring scabs and renegades to their Union.
For holding a black list of the members of the Dry Goods Salesmen's Union in their office, and thereby persecuting them by engaging them on Saturday, and telling them they are not wanted when they appear for work on Monday.

DRY GOODS SALESMEN'S ASSOCIATION
Dry Goods Salesmen of N. Y.

Indorsed by the
CENTRAL LABOR UNION and
N. Y. PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION.

Boycott, Boycott

BRENNAN & WHITE'S

SHOES.

All Unionists, Knights of Labor, and other organized workmen, here and elsewhere, are respectfully requested NOT TO BUY ANY SHOES made by Brennan & White, or to patronize any store that sells their goods.

Brennan & White discharged their FEMALE EMPLOYEES for joining the UNION. Brennan & White's motto is "No Duty the Organized Labor of America."

We ask you to influence your friends to

BOYCOTT BRENNAN & WHITE'S SHOES
CENTRAL LABOR UNION.

Central Labor Union Hall,
141 EIGHTH STREET,
Between Broadway and Fourth Avenue.
MEETING ROOM TO LET.
Address, TRUSTEES.
Or apply, between 8 and 8 o'clock, at hall.

Boycotts announced. *John Swinton's Paper*,
January 24, 1886. Author's collection

Because boycotts required far fewer resources than strikes, many labor organizations imposed them at the slightest provocation, often without adequate organization and coordination. To avoid this problem, the CLU required that member unions submit for approval all requests for boycotts. Once a boycott was approved, the CLU's committee on boycotting worked to publicize it; it placed advertisements in prolabor papers, distributed handbills near offending businesses, and encouraged legitimate businesses to post signs reading "This is a union shop," complete with the CLU seal. According to shoe-laster John Flynn, the CLU sent out "individual committees" to "go right into the neighborhood where we live; we tell our mothers and sisters; we even do it ourselves; I have sent my sister to one, my brother to one and my father to others." Flynn's mention of "mothers and sisters" highlights the crucial, if less visible, role played by women in Gilded Age labor activism; women may have constituted only a fraction of organized workers in this period, but they provided crucial behind-the-scenes support. In the case of boycotts, women's control of domestic spending choices meant that their participation was essential for success.⁷²

The number of boycotts overseen by the CLU grew rapidly in the 1880s, reflecting the organization's growing strength. *Bradstreet's* reported 237 known boycotts in the United States for the years 1884 and 1885. The New York State Bureau of Labor Statistics' *Annual Report* for 1885 devoted significant attention to the increasingly popular tactic, but gives no comprehensive statistics. In succeeding years, the Bureau reported 165 boycotts in New York State for 1886 and 242 for 1887.⁷³

"THEY ARE THE SERVANTS OF THE PEOPLE,
NOT OF ANY 'CLASS'"

As the CLU promoted an oppositional culture of working-class republicanism through education, union building, and strikes and boycotts, it consistently encountered not merely hostile and abusive employers, but also key institutions of the state that backed them. In response, the CLU launched initiatives to reassert labor's place in within the republican polity, focusing on three critical realms of state oppression: the police, the courts, and the New York State Legislature.

Clashes between police and labor activists were common in the years following the Civil War, but they became particularly pronounced in the 1880s as labor, under the direction of the Knights nationally and the CLU locally, challenged the growing power of capital in rallies, demonstrations, parades, strikes, pickets, and boycotts. As a rule, New York City police consistently intervened in labor disputes on behalf of employers, nearly always with violence. The case of Louis Zeiger in February 1884 typified such responses. Zeiger, a cigarmaker and union activist, was picketing outside a cigar factory when the police, at the behest of the factory owner, ordered the protesters to disperse. Zeiger refused, citing the peaceful and legal nature of their demonstration. A patrolman then struck him over the head with his club and dragged him off to jail.⁷⁴

The police also frequently disrupted labor meetings. The most infamous example of this practice (apart from the Tompkins Square assaults in 1874) occurred in February 1885 at a contentious meeting of socialists at Concordia Hall. Without a warning or an order to disperse, hundreds of police attacked the assemblage, striking men and women alike; many were crushed under foot in the resulting panic and stampede. "Broken heads and bloody-bandaged faces were all that remained of the meeting," wrote one indignant witness, "as the police rested on their laurels [for having] 'protected' for the first time on record, a Socialist meeting." The police also employed more subtle forms of harassment, such as denying or delaying the issuance of parade and outdoor rally permits or detailing a massive police turnout to intimidate those attending such events.⁷⁵

These frequent conflicts with the police alarmed Gilded Age workers. They pointedly rejected the assertions of the wealthy and powerful that rising police violence was necessary to suppress the radicalized "dangerous classes" bent on social revolution (see chapter 2). Instead, they interpreted these clashes as further evidence that the republican tradition of equal rights and republican government was under assault. Incident after incident demonstrated that capitalists could summon the ostensibly neutral agents of law and order at a whim to protect their class interests. A local version of the "standing army," so feared by the Founding Fathers little more than a century ago, now acted on its own, beyond true democratic control, to oppress workers—"the people"—on behalf of a small but powerful

aristocracy in the making. It created, noted the CLU, a "dangerous and widespread feeling of disgust and resentment among the public."⁷⁶ To address this problem and to make the police "understand that they are the servants of the whole people, and not of any 'class,'" the CLU repeatedly sent committees to the city's police commissioners to demand disciplinary action against offending officers. None met with any success.⁷⁷

The CLU campaign to challenge state power also focused on the anti-labor legal system. Virtually everything about the courts troubled and enraged labor, from the machine-controlled system for filling judicial posts, to the haughty attitude of judges and their summary form of justice that nearly always favored employers, to the laws limiting jury duty to property owners. Workers hauled before judges were treated with scorn and contempt. For example, two men arrested in 1884 for distributing boycott handbills languished in jail for weeks because the judge set bail at \$500—nearly a year's wages for many workingmen—and then allowed the case to drag on for even longer.⁷⁸

Worse than contempt, workers also faced a pro-business State Supreme Court that frequently declared the few prolabor laws that passed the legislature unconstitutional. In one illuminating case, after years of struggle, cigarmakers in 1883 succeeded in gaining passage of a law banning the production of cigars in tenements, only to have the court nullify it in October 1884. "Who can wonder," wrote Swinton after the decision, "that so many workingmen are coming to the conclusion that the Legislature and the Courts are so subservient to capital as destroy every hope of their securing through them any redress of even the most loathsome wrong?"⁷⁹

As with police harassment, the CLU spearheaded an effort to regain respect and equality before the courts of law. It pursued this end mainly by providing free legal counsel to those arrested for picketing. Its motives were twofold: not only were they trying to secure acquittal, but they were also looking to create "test cases" against both police harassment and the pretexts upon which it was based—the "conspiracy" clauses in the state penal code. New York's penal code, like those in many other states, contained broad clauses that defined criminal conspiracy as any combination of individuals that resulted in injury to a person or their property. Technically

speaking, the law covered any and all combinations, including those formed by employers or merchants, but pro-business courts sanctioned its use almost exclusively against labor organizations striking against an employer and later, by the mid-1880s, for boycotting.⁸⁰ To workers in the Gilded Age, the use of conspiracy laws against labor exposed the extent to which capital controlled state power. The laws represented precisely what workers termed "class legislation,"⁸¹ and thus the CLU worked for its repeal by organizing mass rallies, backing prolabor political candidates, and providing legal counsel to workingmen arrested under such charges.⁸²

The CLU also challenged the hostility of the state toward labor by focusing on the legislature in Albany. This effort took the form of both seeking repeal of class legislation (e.g., the conspiracy laws) and gaining the passage of laws designed to relieve the plight of laboring men and women. (The Knights of Labor commenced a similar effort aimed at Congress.)⁸³ This emphasis on the positive role of the state to secure social justice indicated an important departure among Gilded Age workers from the antebellum dogma of minimalist government. The CLU Committee on Labor Bills drafted labor legislation and lobbied sympathetic politicians to sponsor it. When votes on such bills (or ones threatening to labor) were pending, the committee issued resolutions and organized rallies. For example, in the spring of 1884, the committee drafted an eight-hour workday bill, forwarded it to a prolabor senator, and organized mass meetings of support; when it was defeated,⁸⁴ the CLU issued an angry statement denouncing the politicians as "the slimy tools of brutal slave-drivers and the patrons of criminal greed," vowing "to prepare a political coffin for [them]."⁸⁵

THE KNIGHTS OF LABOR IN NEW YORK

The rise of the CLU in New York was facilitated by a simultaneous and complementary emergence of the Knights of Labor. As noted in chapter 3, the Knights had remained a small, clandestine labor organization of roughly twenty thousand workers concentrated in Pennsylvania as late as 1880. But with the elevation of Terence Powderly to the position of Grand Master Workman, a recovering national economy following the depression of the 1870s, and the growing appeal of working-class republican ideology,

membership soon began steadily to grow and spread. The Knights' ideology gradually evolved to reject the narrow particularism of trade unionism and instead embraced an inclusive vision of worker solidarity, calling for the organization of all workers into unions, regardless of skill. In an even greater departure from traditional trade union philosophy, the Knights also welcomed women and African Americans into their ranks. The Order's reputation and membership grew rapidly over the next few years, reaching 60,811 members in 1884 and more than 700,000 in 1886.⁸⁶

Another key development in the growth of the Knights of Labor, in addition to its inclusive philosophy, was its largely successful effort to avoid official condemnation from the Catholic Church, an institution central to the lives and identity of many workers. Beginning in the 1870s, Church officials in the United States and Canada criticized the Knights for its secret oath and rituals, and reminded Catholics of the Church's long-standing ban on membership in secret societies. Soon after he took over leadership of the Knights, Powderly, a devout Catholic himself, took steps to appease the concerns of Catholic authorities. In 1882, he made the momentous decision to eliminate the oath and policy of secrecy, as well as to deemphasize the rituals, paving the way for massive membership growth.⁸⁷

In spite of these steps, criticism of the Knights by some Catholic clerics continued to grow in the early 1880s, no doubt in response to the organization's growth. Outright condemnations came from several bishops. These and other conservative Church leaders pleaded with Rome for an official papal condemnation of Catholic membership in all trade unions except those under clerical supervision. (Significantly, they also called for the condemnation of Henry George's *Progress and Poverty*, which they had come to see as a primary textbook of modern radicalism in the United States.) These conservatives were opposed by a group of more progressive-minded church officials like Bishop James Gibbons of Baltimore, who cautioned that condemning the Knights would shatter the Church's credibility among workers and drive countless numbers of them from it. Nonetheless, some members of the Church hierarchy continued to condemn Catholic membership in the Knights and interest in Henry George.⁸⁸

In spite of this climate of hostility, the Knights experienced rapid expansion in the New York area, which mirrored the organization's rise nationally.

While Powderly had reported in the spring of 1880 that no Knights assemblies existed in the city, Knights organizers soon established the first of what ultimately numbered more than four hundred local assemblies.⁸⁹ By 1886, New York and the surrounding vicinities possessed five district assemblies comprised of 415 locals with nearly seventy thousand members, almost one-tenth of the Knights national membership of 700,000 (table 5.2).⁹⁰

By far, the most active branch was District Assembly 49. Dominated by a group of LaSallean socialists (nicknamed the "Home Club"), DA 49 emerged as one of the most radical sections within the Knights of Labor. Seeking to push the Knights in a more progressive direction, they rejected the "practical" agenda of trade unionists and instead emphasized the Knights' more radical positions, such as organizing unskilled workers and immigrants, including the Chinese. They declared the differences between labor and capital irreconcilable, calling for the abolition of the competitive wage system. Many supported the general principles of land reform as articulated by Henry George, but found his single tax reform insufficiently radical. Indeed, the year before they founded their assembly, several of DA 49's future leaders wrote George a letter lauding him as a "distinguished economist" who rightly demonstrated that rent is robbery, but chiding him for the limitations of his radicalism. "We know very well that you are an individualist whilst we have placed ourselves upon the side of Collectivism," they charged.⁹¹

In its first four years of existence, DA 49 organized hundreds of local assemblies; by July 1886, it was the largest Knights district assembly in the

TABLE 5.2 The Knights of Labor in New York City, 1886

	Members	Local assemblies	Trade
No. 45	132	13	Telegraphers
No. 49	60,809	366	Mixed
No. 64	1,938	11	Printers
No. 85	1,704	9	Plumbers
No. 91	3,329	16	Shoemakers
Totals	67,912	415	

Source: Knights of Labor, *Record of the Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor of America* (Richmond, VA, 1886), 326-28.

New York area and the second largest in the nation. But despite DA 49's successes in organizing a wide array of workers, especially those ignored by the trade unions, its confrontational tactics and radical ideology eventually caused dissension. Their hostility toward trade unionists (whom they considered elitist) elicited complaints to the national Order that DA 49 leaders sought to destroy their unions. DA 49 was also at the center of the most widely publicized and significant intralabor dispute of the era involving two rival cigarmakers unions.

The dispute started in 1881 when a dissident group of cigarmakers broke away from Local 144 of the Cigar Makers International Union (CMIU).⁹² Calling themselves the Progressive Cigar Makers Union (Local Assembly 2814 of the Knights), they rejected the trade-centered "new unionism" of the CMIU and its leaders Samuel Gompers and Adolph Strasser. Instead, they welcomed formerly unorganized cigarmakers, especially the lower skilled. For the next five years, the Progressives and the Internationals engaged in bitter struggle over issues of membership, jurisdiction, and strikes. The Internationals benefited from support from the CLU, with which they were affiliated.⁹³

Overall, the institutional and ideological growth of the New York labor movement was helped by the presence of dedicated and active Knights of Labor. Not surprisingly, when the CLU formed in 1882, many of its influential leaders—including George K. Lloyd, P. J. McGuire, Matthew Maguire, George Blair, Philip Scannell—were active Knights. So too was Henry George, who joined in 1883. Over time, as the CLU grew, Knights would come to comprise more than half its member unions and individual members and would play a crucial role in promoting and coordinating the CLU's agenda.⁹⁴

"WIDELY ACCEPTED ARTICLES
IN THE WORKINGMEN'S CREED"

One of the busiest and most visible Knights in New York was Henry George. As a self-made intellectual who had ceased to work as a printer long ago, he was hardly a typical Knights' member. But there was much about the Order that George agreed with and admired, including its leader

Terence Powderly. The two met for the first time in August 1883, but Powderly had embraced many of the ideas in *Progress and Poverty* years before; he had even proposed a restructuring of the city's tax code along the lines of the single tax when serving as mayor of Scranton, Pennsylvania.⁹⁵ Powderly had also been a Land Leaguer allied with the radical George-Davitt-Ford faction that advocated the abolition of absolute private property rights regarding land. He would later support several declarations by the national Knights body in favor of land reform, including a 1884 one that read in explicitly Georgist terminology "that all lands now held for speculative purposes be taxed to their full value."⁹⁶ Powderly and George would remain friends and regular correspondents for the rest of the decade.

But beyond ideology and friendship, George was no doubt compelled to join the Knights because he believed it would help promote, given his rising popularity among workers, *Progress and Poverty* and the single tax. In March 1883, just five months after returning from Ireland to a hero's welcome from the Central Labor Union, George learned that an inexpensive "workingmen's edition" of *Progress and Poverty* had sold an astonishing twenty thousand copies with no sign of slowing down. Evidence of working-class enthusiasm for *Progress and Poverty* abounded. In Chicago, the members of District Assembly 24 voted to devote the first twenty minutes of every meeting to a reading of *Progress and Poverty*. In New York City, cigar makers chose one from their number to read *Progress and Poverty* as they worked. CLU activist Edward King said that any public speaker seeking to win over a crowd of workers "could not do better than to start with a quotation from Henry George's 'Progress and Poverty.'"⁹⁷

George's rising popularity among American workers, so vividly illustrated by the CLU reception and soaring sales of *Progress and Poverty*, raises a compelling question: how can we account for the appeal of an enormous book on political economy among landless urban workers, the majority of whom possessed only a rudimentary education? Part of the answer lies in George's intent. Although he longed for the endorsement of eminent intellectuals like political economist Edward Atkinson and Britain's Herbert Spencer, he always expected his work to be read by the common worker. Unlike the so-called mugwumps of the Gilded Age, who favored social reform but feared the masses they advocated for, George had faith

in "the great masses of men" who, as "the repositories of ultimate political power" could drive social change.⁹⁸

A more significant explanation for George's success in attracting a vast working-class following stemmed from the timing of *Progress and Poverty's* publication. As a work of political economy designed to solve the plight of labor and restore the republic, his tome rolled off the printing presses at D. Appleton's at precisely the moment when American wage earners were confronting the harsh realities of industrial capitalism's ascent, realities that convinced them the republic was in crisis. "The general faith in republican institutions is . . . narrowing and weakening," wrote George in *Progress and Poverty*. "Thoughtful men are beginning to see its dangers without seeing how to escape them; are beginning to accept the view of Macaulay and distrust that of Jefferson."⁹⁹ *Progress and Poverty* represented one of era's first comprehensive attempts to recast earlier forms of republicanism to offer a new and more radical solution to the frightening challenges of industrial life. "The ground was ripe," wrote economist Richard T. Ely in 1885, "for the seed sown by Henry George."¹⁰⁰

George also gained working-class readers because he presented his message in a highly readable form. Here too he distinguished himself from the ethical economists that in coming years would publish books and articles aimed exclusively at educated elites like themselves.¹⁰¹ Even as many sections of *Progress and Poverty* stood above the comprehension of people not versed in political economy, in the most critical parts of the book where he set forth his ethical arguments George employed a compelling rhetorical style, full of vivid images ("in the festering mass will be generated volcanic forces") and moral outrage ("amid the greatest accumulations of wealth, men die of starvation").¹⁰² Workers did not need a formal education to grasp the essential meaning of passages like: "when everyone gets what he fairly earns, no one can get more than he fairly earns. How many men are there who fairly earn a million dollars?"¹⁰³

In a similar manner, George also appealed to his working-class readers by lacing his prose with the familiar idioms and turns of phrase of evangelical Christianity and perfectionism—a common practice among populist reformers in this era. These ideas were central to the antebellum social reform movements that drew large working-class support, especially the

temperance and abolition movements. George drew on this tradition both by invoking Christian morality to indict growing social inequality and promising a millennial "City of God" on earth should his reform plan be adopted. Here again he distinguished himself from the ethical economists, many of whom were professed agnostics and all of whom shunned any invocation of Christian ideals or imagery in their writings.¹⁰⁴

Workers also appreciated George's efforts to wrest the discipline of political economy from conservative scholars defending laissez-faire and employing flawed theories (e.g., the iron law of wages) "against every effort of the working class to increase their wages or decrease their hours of labor." They appreciated his condemnation of political economists for performing the same function, as he put it, as "the cursed-be-Ham clergymen [who] used to preach the divine sanction of slavery in the name of Christianity."¹⁰⁵ Properly oriented, wrote George, "Political Economy is radiant with hope."¹⁰⁶ Countless workers in the Gilded Age agreed. By 1884, a prominent political economist observed that "tens of thousands of laborers read *Progress and Poverty* who have never before looked between the covers of an economics book, and its conclusions are widely accepted articles in the workingmen's creed."¹⁰⁷

Working-class readers likewise appreciated George's humble origins, his struggle to make a living as a wage earner in California, as well as his membership in a printer's union and, by 1883, in the Knights of Labor. Such biographical information lent authenticity to his book's arguments. George the reformer came not from the condescending ranks of the "Best Men," like Beecher and Godkin, but from the people's ranks. His sympathetic style came across as genuine. His work on behalf of the Irish Land League reinforced this image.

George's book also attracted a wide working-class following because it drew upon familiar elements of the American republican tradition. He based his critique of the laissez-faire industrial economy not on the writings of Europeans like Smith, Ricardo, Malthus, and Marx and instead used the ideas, language, and idioms of American republicanism, in particular, its producerist tradition: God placed men and women on a bountiful earth and endowed them with the intelligence and skill necessary for progress; work was a sanctified and necessary activity and those who performed it

were the truest republican citizens; and to producers (and honest capitalists) belonged the fruits of their toil. Similarly, George drew upon familiar republican and producerist concepts to explain the dangers facing the republic.¹⁰⁸ Just as the radical artisans of the 1830s had argued that the new market economy threatened republican society, George argued that monopoly of any kind, but especially of land, threatened to transform a society of virtuous producers into one marked by inequality, dependence, and unnatural class conflict. His program, he argued, was designed specifically to safeguard the fundamental elements of republican citizenship—liberty, independence, equal opportunity, equality, and democracy. "Equality of political rights," wrote George, "will not compensate for the denial of the equal right to the bounty of nature. . . . Poverty enslaves men who we boast are political sovereigns." Employing terms and concepts straight out of the lexicon of traditional republican terminology, George spoke to the American working class in a language they readily understood.¹⁰⁹

But of particular importance was George's emphasis on inequality. One of the central tenets of American political culture (and often noted in the writings of European visitors like Tocqueville) in the century following the American Revolution was the celebration of the republic as a land where extremes of wealth did not exist and equality of opportunity abounded.¹¹⁰ In the late 1870s, however, as evidence of widespread and deepening economic inequality mounted, George emerged as the first significant figure to confirm its glaring presence, to explain the lethal threat it posed to democracy and republican institutions, and to offer a solution. Above all, even if they remained skeptical of the efficacy of the single tax, working-class Americans welcomed George's analysis and dire warning that *something* needed to be done to steer the nation away from the path toward European-style inequality and back onto its proper republican course. It was not until the late 1880s and 1890s that significant numbers of reform-minded Americans took up this cause and began publishing articles and studies in popular journals.¹¹¹

This emphasis on inequality points to another aspect of George's appeal to working-class Americans. From Thomas Jefferson's purchase of the Louisiana Territory to Thomas Skidmore's call for equality of property ownership in the 1830s, from George Henry Evans's campaign for free western

homesteads in the 1840s to the Free Soil movement of the 1850s, Americans of all classes and callings shared a belief that republican society depended on widespread access to land as a source of opportunity and independence. George's charge that land monopoly, rather than mere population growth, had created an artificial, dangerous land scarcity and high prices likewise appealed to Gilded Age workers steeped in this tradition. Indeed, it added another dimension to the rising outcry among workers and reformers against the massive land grants given to railroads by state and federal authorities. Like Evans, George made an explicit appeal to urban workers, arguing that his reform, by eliminating the incentive to speculate, would release millions of acres for tillage by Americans currently trapped in overcrowded cities. It would also lower the rents of those who elected to stay and increase their chances to own their homes.¹¹²

And yet, had he relied solely on appealing to America's republican tradition, George could hardly have expected to garner a mass working-class following in the Gilded Age. Just as scholarship in recent decades on the Knights of Labor has challenged earlier depictions of the movement as hopelessly "backward looking,"¹¹³ careful analysis of George's work reveals a duality—strikingly similar to that found in the ideologies of the Knights of Labor, Populists, and other late nineteenth-century insurgencies—that drew upon past traditions as a means of articulating a progressive, forward-looking vision of future industrial society. In essence, every element of George's appeal to tradition also had a radical edge, one that both anticipated and furthered the emergence of working-class republicanism in the Gilded Age and, later, progressivism.¹¹⁴

To begin with, George offered a radical redefinition of republican citizenship and its attendant notions of democracy and equality. This effort put him at the forefront of Gilded Age reformers who insisted that traditional conceptions of liberty, justice, and equality needed updating and redefining to address the challenges of the new industrial age. So even as he wrote and spoke of workers as the pillars of the republic deserving their full, rightful measure of political and social equality, George augmented this traditional notion of republican citizenship by arguing that it carried certain *economic* rights as well, a notion central to working-class republicanism and emerging progressivism. The only difference was that while some workers

(notably the Knights of Labor) proposed measures to republicanize industry by enhancing the voice and rights of workers in the productive process and establishing cooperatives, George proposed his single tax to republicanize resources (e.g., land).¹¹⁵

To accomplish this goal, George's program called for a radical departure from a core tenet of traditional republicanism by insisting on state intervention in the economy. As noted in chapter 2, George, like many of the workers he appealed to, came of age in a political culture wedded to the liberal abhorrence of strong, centralized, interventionist government as antithetical to a proper republican polity. The crisis of the 1870s and 1880s, however, prompted new thinking on this matter, leading George and American workers to propose a radical break from traditional republicanism's anti-statism. Whereas workers and farmers had once celebrated laissez-faire as essential to their liberty, they now insisted state intervention was necessary.¹¹⁶ As a result, when George proposed to radically break with traditional republicanism by both abolishing absolute private property rights and empowering the state, his message was in sync with the working-class republicanism then animating workers' response to industrial capitalism.¹¹⁷

He also offered a radical reinterpretation of Christianity that also found resonance among his working-class readers. George did much more than merely pepper his narrative with familiar references to scripture; he articulated the nascent ideas that would come to form the social gospel movement. Although Gilded Age workers frequently exhibited contempt for the Christian clergy, that did not necessarily mean they rejected Christianity. For many, Christianity was a creed of social justice that identified society's sinners as idlers ("Pharisees") who grew rich by manipulating the law, not as honest toilers living in poverty. "It is not the Almighty, but we who are responsible for the vice and misery that fester amid our civilization," wrote George. God provided plenty; man merely distributed it unjustly. Such a message resonated with workers' increasing interest in what Christianity had to say on matters related to society, as opposed to questions of dogma, piety, or sectarianism.¹¹⁸

Finally, George appealed to a mass working-class audience through his vision of an alternative future society that, while not constituting the overthrow of the contemporary American economy and political system, called

for its radical reshaping along mutualist and cooperative lines. These ideals were at the very heart of working-class republicanism that found wide expression by individual workers, labor editors, and organizations like the Knights of Labor. They spoke of a future cooperative social order that, while not explicitly socialist, embodied many of its promises. The Knights, for example, in their Declaration of Principles, called for "the introduction of a co-operative industrial system" that would "supersede the wage system." In his conclusion to *Progress and Poverty*, George conjured up a similar vision of a transformed society: "We are made for co-operation."

George's broad appeal among American workingmen stemmed from the convergence of his message and the popular ideas that formed the foundation of working-class republicanism. Both shared a disdain for the notion that the economy was controlled by immutable laws that men and women were powerless to change. Both also believed that the conditions of modern industrial society necessitated breaking free of the republican orthodoxies of inviolable private property rights and a minimalist state. Those who read *Progress and Poverty*, listened to passages read in workshops and at Land League meetings, or heard George and his followers speak discovered a usable and increasingly familiar political economic vocabulary that resonated in essential ways with their working-class republicanism. George's message allowed them to comprehend the compelling social problems they faced and the need to resolve them. One C. P. Atkinson described the impact of *Progress and Poverty* among workers as follows:

It came to the weary and heavy laden as the talisman of a lost hope. All their lives long they had been taught that poverty was a 'dispensation of Providence' needful to keep them humble and teach them patience, but if cheerfully borne, it would somehow contribute to their happiness in the dim beyond. 'Progress and Poverty' reversed all this, teaching that poverty is an artificial condition of man's invention. . . . Workingmen and women, learning all this, . . . commenced to wrestle with their chains.¹¹⁹

This appeal among working-class Americans led to extraordinary book sales and many invitations to lecture—in short, the fame and impact George

had so yearned for in his downtrodden California years. From 1883 to 1886, George spoke before countless Knights of Labor assemblies, Irish nationalist societies, and reform groups throughout the Northeast and Midwest. While these events earned him very little money, they did expose an ever-growing number of workers to his ideas.¹²⁰ His growing popularity also led to many invitations to write for magazines, opportunities that held out the prospect of increasing his following and bringing in needed income to alleviate what he termed in a letter to a friend as the persistent "bread and butter question."¹²¹ So when *Frank Leslie's Weekly*, one of the nation's most popular and widely circulated publications, asked George in March 1883 to write a series of articles for the princely sum of \$100 apiece, he leaped at the chance. While he was grateful for the money and exposure, he could not help but see in this deal a clear confirmation of his rising status as a public intellectual; *Leslie's* intended the articles to compete with a rival series then running in *Harper's Weekly* by the nation's foremost advocate of laissez-faire and social Darwinism, Yale sociologist William Graham Sumner.¹²²

The first essay in the series, "Problems of the Time," appeared on April 14, 1883.¹²³ In this and the succeeding essays, George reiterated many of the ideas and themes he previously outlined in *Progress and Poverty*, but in a manner designed to relate them to specific issues then dominating public debate over industry, monopoly, and labor unrest. Line by line, in essay after essay, George laid out before his readers the evidence of a republic in crisis. The free labor promise to workers of upward mobility was being undermined by monopoly capitalism and the spread of a form of industrial slavery. "The man who is dependent upon a master for a living," he observed, "is not a free man." New industrial technology, while holding the potential to improve society, was "degrading men into the position of mere feeders of machines."¹²⁴ A powerful, untouchable American aristocracy was coalescing, threatening to make meaningless the republic's democratic traditions. George warned his audience, "All the tendencies of the present are not merely to the concentration, but to the perpetuation, of great fortunes" as in unrepudiated Europe. That wealth carried with it enormous political power, twisting "our government by the people [into] . . . government by the strong and unscrupulous." The latter, he declared, hid behind the mantras of laissez-faire, that "the gospel of selfishness," and social Darwinism,

"the comfortable theory that it is in the nature of things that some should be poor and some should be rich." Underlying all these dark assertions was the same apocalyptic language found in *Progress and Poverty* that demanded radical reform and action from the people before it was too late. "Our society is evolving destructive forces," he warned, ". . . [and] present tendencies . . . threaten to kindle passions that have so often before flamed in destructive fury."¹²⁵

Sprinkled throughout these essays were George's trademark turns of phrase that transformed complicated and controversial ideas into seemingly commonsensical maxims:

We may not like it but we cannot avoid it. Either government must manage the railroads, or the railroads must manage the government.¹²⁶

Supposing we did legalize chattel slavery again, who would buy men when men can be hired so cheaply?¹²⁷

When a man gets wealth that he does not produce, he necessarily gets it at the expense of those who produce it.¹²⁸

Contempt of human rights is the essential element in building up the great fortunes.¹²⁹

"The poor ye will always have with you." If ever a scripture has been wrested to the devil's service, this is that scripture. How often have these words been distorted from their obvious meaning to soothe the conscience into acquiescence in human misery and degradation.¹³⁰

In addressing these vital issues, George brought to his essays a higher degree of radicalism, both in terms of rhetoric and ideology. He expanded, for example, his list of natural monopolies that required government ownership from the railroad and telegraph system to include the telephone system and electric utilities.¹³¹ George also emphasized more forcefully the central themes of emerging progressivism, in particular that republican citizenship carried with it not merely political rights, but also economic ones: "The

freedom to earn, without fear or favor, a comfortable living ought to go with the freedom to vote."¹³²

Moreover, he offered a more forceful condemnation of industrial monopoly (in comparison to his focus on land monopoly in *Progress and Poverty*). "The big mill crushes out the little mill. The big store undersells the little store till it gets rid of its competition," while "the greater railroad companies are swallowing up the lesser railroad companies; one great telegraph company already controls the telegraph wires of the continent." George cautioned in these essays that the heads of these immense enterprises were fast transforming themselves into an American aristocracy and the great mass of the American people into their feudal vassals.¹³³

Significantly, George repeatedly expressed admiration for the ideals and goals of socialism. But in doing so, he took care to emphasize that his single tax reform did not threaten the capitalist free market, individualism, and profit-seeking. "Capital is a good; the capitalist a helper, if he is not also a monopolist," wrote George. "We can safely let anyone get as rich as he can if he will not despoil others in doing so." Yet George made it clear that he admired socialism and that he could foresee a time in the future when it would be implemented in the United States. He predicted that "the natural progress of social development is unmistakably toward cooperation, or, if the word be preferred, toward socialism." The need for the state to assume a more active role in economic life was "the truth in socialism."¹³⁴ Such bold assertions explain why the eminent political economist Richard T. Ely described George as the most influential socialist in the United States two years later in his book *Recent American Socialism*.¹³⁵ George's essays in *Leslie's* also reflected a degree of tolerance for socialism in public discourse that prevailed until the Haymarket bombing in May 1886.¹³⁶

One key benefit of the *Leslie's* series, besides the income, was the opportunity for George to publish another book (the collected *Leslie's* essays were published together under the title *Social Problems*) espousing his radical critique and reform program at a time when many other reformers, activists, journalists, politicians, and political economists were publishing their own works purporting to explain the "labor question" and other pressing social issues.¹³⁷ While the impact of George's essays is difficult to gauge, it can be said with certainty that, along with a large general public,

a number of influential public figures read them. For example, the well-known minister and social critic Josiah Strong read them while writing his bestselling book, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (1885).¹³⁸ Yale sociologist and social Darwinism proponent William G. Sumner also read them, in part because George pointedly ridiculed him on several occasions.¹³⁹ Francis A. Walker, the nation's foremost political economist, took umbrage at George's criticism of a Census Department report he had compiled and wrote a testy letter to *Leslie's*.¹⁴⁰ And nearly all Walker's esteemed colleagues in the political economy discipline read them as well, including the rising cohort of younger political economists such as Richard T. Ely and John Bates Clark, then flirting with socialism and who eventually developed the foundations of new liberalism. Significantly, although unknown at the time, George's writings had begun to find their way into the hands of readers who, in part inspired by them, would soon emerge as prominent American reformers and radicals, including Ignatius Donnelly, Daniel DeLeon, T. Thomas Fortune, Tom L. Johnson, Lincoln Steffens, Clarence Darrow, John Dewey, and Jacob Riis (a more complete list is discussed in chapter 8).

But as his star continued to rise, George found himself confronted by two misfortunes in July 1883, one rather minor and the other quite significant. In the former case, he learned from the editors of *Leslie's* that they would not extend the series beyond the original agreement of thirteen essays. They found his critique of modern industrial society too radical.¹⁴¹ The professional rebuff disappointed George, but he was already nearing completion of a new book, a free trade manifesto entitled *Protection or Free Trade*. However, the one disaster all writers fear struck: he lost the manuscript as he was moving to a house in Brooklyn. This mishap hit him hard, but George's spirits were sustained by the popularity of the *Leslie's* essays and his plans to publish them in book form. Before long, he summoned the will to begin rewriting, right from the very beginning, the manuscript for *Protection or Free Trade*.¹⁴²

Further evidence of George's rising public recognition appeared in late summer 1883. In August, as he worked on the galley proofs of *Social Problems*, George was called to testify before the same Senate committee investigating the relations between labor and capital before which the CLU

to speaking engagements and extensive press coverage, clearly marking his entry into an emerging transatlantic network of progressive reformers and ideas. "Here I am in London," he wrote his wife, "and at last begin to realize that I am a very important man."¹⁴⁸

But not all the attention was adulatory. Indeed, many British intellectuals and conservatives published highly critical reviews of George's speeches and *Social Problems*. Their criticism annoyed and stung George, in part because he was so convinced of the correctness of his analysis, but also because he remained very self-conscious of his humble origins and self-education in political economy. Nonetheless, when he sailed for New York after a four-month tour, he believed he was making headway in bringing his message to the world.¹⁴⁹

When George arrived in New York Harbor in late April 1884, he once again received a hero's welcome by the CLU with a mass rally at Cooper Union. As he approached the podium to deliver a short speech, reported the frequently antilabor *New York Times*, "men arose in their seats and shouted until they were hoarse. Hats were waved about and thrown in the air, and for fully five minutes the hall was a perfect pandemonium."¹⁵⁰ For the remainder of the year, George kept up his lecturing and writing, including rewriting *Protection or Free Trade*. In September, he again accepted an invitation from the CLU to review the annual Labor Day parade, and he left for Europe again in November for a three-month lecture tour. Returning in February 1885, he resumed lecturing and writing articles.¹⁵¹

As 1885 drew to a close, George looked forward to the coming year with eagerness and optimism. By now, there was no question that he had achieved international recognition as reformer whose ideas were to be taken seriously, even by those who rejected them, due to their popularity among workers and a significant subset of influential middle-class reformers. His latest book, *Protection or Free Trade*, due to be published in January, promised even greater public recognition. The year 1886 seemed full of promise.

PART III

The Great Upheaval, 1886-1887

- Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 36; R. Jeffrey Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism: The Origins of Modern American Political Theory, 1890-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 72, 76n56. For a collection of George's anti-Chinese writings, see *Henry George: Collected Journalistic Writings*, ed. Kenneth C. Wenzel, vol. 1, *The Early Years, 1860-1879* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 2003), 161-81.
55. Barker, *Henry George*, 136; George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 208-10.
 56. Barker, *Henry George*, 138-45.
 57. Annie George to HG, April 2, 1870, HGP; Barker, *Henry George*, 138; George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 211-13.
 58. Barker, *Henry George*, 139-45; George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 211-16. For George's later accounts of the Central Pacific duplicity, see his columns in the *San Francisco Post*, January 14, 1873, and the *San Francisco State*, April 5, 1879.
 59. Henry George, *The Subsidy Question and the Democratic Party* (San Francisco, 1871); Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 255-58.
 60. Henry George, *Our Land and Land Policy* (1871), reprinted in *The Complete Works of Henry George*, ed. Henry George Jr., vol. 8, *Our Land and Land Policy* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page, 1911), 1-131; Foner, *Story of American Freedom*, 9, 20-21, 32, 62-63, 113, 143; Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 292-94; Laurie, *Artisans into Workers*, 67-68, 99-100. As past biographers have noted, scholars have almost no evidence as to what books George was reading in this period or which of them may have influenced the evolution of his ideas. See Barker, *Henry George*, 83.
 61. George, *Our Land and Land Policy*, 83, 97.
 62. Barker, *Henry George*, 146-54, 160; George, *Our Land and Land Policy*, 98-131; George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 219-35.
 63. Barker, *Henry George*, 156-57; Henry George, "Bribery in Elections," *Overland Monthly* 7 (December 1871): 497-504.
 64. Barker, *Henry George*, 157-58, 161; George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 236-37. Annie George's illness is described in her letters during the fall of 1871 through the summer of 1872.
 65. *San Francisco Daily Post*, December 4, 1871.
 66. Barker, *Henry George*, 161-63, 167.
 67. George's experiences at the convention are detailed in the *San Francisco Daily Post*, June 10, 11, and 12, 1872.
 68. Barker, *Henry George*, 170.
 69. Barker, *Henry George*, 165-67; George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 237-40. For notices of *San Francisco Daily Post's* success, see December 30, 1871; January 9, 1872; January 10, 1872; December 11, 1872; and November 29, 1873.
 70. Barker, *Henry George*, 174-75.
 71. *Ibid.*, 197-202, 214.
 72. *Ibid.*, 177-79.
 73. For examples of this coverage, see *San Francisco Daily Post*, December 6, 1781; December 16, 1871; June 3, 1875.
 74. Barker, *Henry George*, 183-84, 194-95. *San Francisco Daily Post*, January 2, 1873.
 75. George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 252. For more on the intertwining of Christianity and reform, see Hugh McLeod, *Piety and Poverty: Working-Class Religion in Berlin, London, and New York, 1870-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meyer, 1996).
 76. *San Francisco Daily Post*, July 4, 1874; Barker, *Henry George*, 207-10.
 77. Throughout this book, I characterize George as a radical. By "radical," I mean one who advocates for dramatic social, economic, and political reforms that depart in fundamental ways from commonly

- accepted norms. In George's case, his radicalism was centered on two such departures: his call for an end to the traditional definition of private property in land and for an empowered state to guarantee republican liberties. For more on the history of American radicalism, see Mari Jo Buhle, Paul Buhle, and Harvey J. Kaye, eds., *The American Radical* (New York: Routledge, 1994); and Michael Kazin, *American Dreamers: How the Left Changed a Nation* (New York: Knopf, 2011).
78. Sidney Fine, *Laissez-Faire and the General-Welfare State: A Study of Conflict in American Thought, 1865-1901* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956), 3-25; Foner, *Story of American Freedom*, 54-55; Huston, *Securing the Fruits* 70, 79-80, 134, 150, 292-94.

2. "POVERTY ENSLAVES MEN WE BOAST ARE POLITICAL SOVEREIGNS": PROGRESS AND POVERTY AND HENRY GEORGE'S REPUBLICANISM

1. Barker, *Henry George*, 66, 72, 169-70; George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 250-61; George Diary, February-March 1875, HGP.
2. Barker, *Henry George*, 223-27.
3. Samuel Bernstein, "American Labor in the Long Depression, 1873-1877," *Science and Society* 20 (Winter 1956): 60-82; Rendigs Fels, *American Business Cycles, 1865-1897* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959), 99-101; Klein, *Genesis of Industrial America*, 124; Samuel Rezneck, "Distress, Relief, and Discontent in the United States During the Depression of 1873-1877," *Journal of Political Economy* 58 (December 1950): 495-97.
4. Barker, *Henry George*, 223-27; George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 247-49. HG to John Swinton, October 6, November 28, and December 27, 1875, HGP; HG to Charles Nordhoff, January 31, 1880, HGP.
5. Klein, *Genesis of Industrial America*, 124; Richard Schneirov, "Thoughts on Periodizing the Gilded Age: Capital Accumulation, Society, and Politics, 1873-1898," *JGAP* 5 (July 2006): 189-224.
6. Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 144-46, 348-49; Klein, *Genesis of Industrial America*, 48; Tomlins, *The State and the Unions*, 10-31; Trachtenberg, *Incorporation of America*, 54-56, 68-69; Voss, *Making of American Exceptionalism*, 53-56.
7. Philip S. Foner, *The Great Labor Uprising of 1877* (New York: Monad Press, 1977), 17; Foner, *History of the Labor Movement*, 1:440.
8. For the best account to date on the Molly Maguires, see Kevin Kenny, *Making Sense of the Molly Maguires* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).
9. Jerry M. Cooper, "The Army as Strikebreaker—The Railroad Strikes of 1877 and 1894," *Labor History* 18, no. 2 (Spring 1977): 181-96; Foner, *Great Labor Uprising*, 47-48, 63-64, 76, 90; David O. Stowell, *Streets, Railroads, and the Great Strike of 1877* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 70-115.
10. Douglas C. Rossinow, *Visions of Progress: The Left-Liberal Tradition in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 16; Daniel Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 35; Samuel P. Hays, *The Response to Industrialism, 1885-1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 107.
11. Burke, *Conundrum of Class*, 134; Alan Dawley, *Struggles for Justice: Social Responsibility and the Liberal State* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), 26; Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 344-48; Christopher Lasch, *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics* (New York: Norton, 1991), 64; Laurie, *Artisans into Workers*, 49-50; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 16-17.

12. Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 79; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 17.
13. President James A. Garfield, *Inaugural Address*, (speech, Washington, D.C., March 4, 1881).
14. Foncr, *Great Labor Uprising*, 82. Eugene E. Leach, "Chaining the Tiger: The Mob Stigma and the Working Class, 1863-1894," *Labor History* 35, no. 2 (1994): 187-215; Troy Rondinone, "History Repeats Itself: The Civil War and the Meaning of Labor Conflict in the Late Nineteenth Century," *American Quarterly* 59, no. 2 (2007) 397-419. John Hay quoted in Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 80-81.
15. Foncr, *Story of American Freedom*, 119-20; Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 295, 341-42; Klein, *Genesis of Industrial America*, 132; Trachtenberg, *Incorporation of America*, 87; Fine, *Laissez-Faire*, 96-125; Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, 78-79.
16. Robert C. Bannister, *Social Darwinism: Science and Myth in Anglo-American Social Thought* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1979), 57-136; Fine, *Laissez-Faire*, 43-46, 82-85, 97-102, 113-14; David Nasaw, "Gilded Age Gospels," in *Ruling America: A History of Wealth and Power in a Democracy*, eds. Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005), 127-33, 144-45. George condemns social Darwinism as a "comfortable theory" in *Social Problems*, 49.
17. Sven Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850-1896* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 215-19; Richardson, *West From Appomattox*, 194-95, 346-47; Nancy Cohen, *The Reconstruction of American Liberalism, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 126-28.
18. Beckert, *Monied Metropolis*, 288; Richard Franklin Bensel, *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859-1877* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 422; Nasaw, "Gilded Age Gospels," 124; William J. Novak, *The People's Welfare: Law and Regulation in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 235-48; Richardson, *West From Appomattox*, 2; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 16.
19. Beckert, *Monied Metropolis*, 232-36; Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 148; Nasaw, "Gilded Age Gospels," 136; Rondinone, "History Repeats Itself," 397-419. See also Larry Isaac, "To Counter 'The Very Devil' and More: The Making of Independent Capitalist Militia in the Gilded Age," *American Journal of Sociology* 108, no. 2 (September 2002): 353-405. The quote from the New York City-based *Independent* cited in Foncr, *Great Labor Uprising*, 192.
20. Burke, *Conundrum of Class*, 133-39; Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 81; Heather Cox Richardson, *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865-1901* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 185-86; Allan Pinkerton quoted in Richardson, *West From Appomattox*, 164.
21. Roger R. Olmsted, "The Chinese Must Go!" *California Historical Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (1971): 285-94. For more on anti-Chinese sentiment, see Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).
22. Barker, *Henry George*, 223-27; George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 247-49; HG to Charles Nordhoff, January 31, 1880, HGP.
23. George Diary, September 1877, HGP; George, *Progress and Poverty*, 557.
24. Barker, *Henry George*, 251-52.
25. *Ibid.*, 268; Cohen, *Reconstruction of American Liberalism*, 143.
26. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 4.
27. *Ibid.*, 5. For more on the republican faith in progress, see Lasch, *True and Only Heaven*, passim; Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism*, 232-40; Charles Postel, *The Populist Vision* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 4-11. For more on the dawning awareness of a republican crisis, see Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 344; Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: The United States,*

- 1877-1919 (New York: Norton, 1987), 24; Richard Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics: Class Conflict and the Origins of Modern Liberalism in Chicago, 1864-97* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 69-70; Sheldon Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People": The Progressive Movement, The Class Problem, and the Origins of Modern Liberalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 17.
28. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 6-7.
29. *Ibid.*, 8.
30. *Ibid.*, 9-10; Sklansky, *Soul's Economy*, 116-17.
31. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 11-13; Burke, *Conundrum of Class*, 140-51; Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 1; Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism*, 58.
32. For very useful short guides to *Progress and Poverty*, see Jacob Oscar, *Henry George* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1974), 32-50; and Edward J. Rose, *Henry George* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1968), 64-82.
33. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 153; Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism*, 59-60; Mary O. Furner, "Republican Tradition and the New Liberalism: Social Investigation, State Building, and Social Learning in the Gilded Age," in *The State and Social Investigation in Britain and the United States*, eds. Michael James Lacey and Mary O. Furner (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 177-79.
34. Barker, *Henry George*, 273; George, *Progress and Poverty*, 98-99, 123-25; Jim Horner, "Henry George on Thomas Robert Malthus: Abundance vs. Scarcity," *American Journal of Economics & Sociology* 56, no. 4 (October 1997): 595-607; John L. Thomas, *Alternative America: Henry George, Edward Bellamy, Henry Demarest Lloyd, and the Adversary Tradition* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983), 110. George's firm rejection of fixed economic "laws" that justified inequality constituted a bold challenge to the prevailing discourse among Gilded Age elites. See Nasaw, "Gilded Age Gospels," 131; and Burke, *Conundrum of Class*, 140-51.
35. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 153-64, 219.
36. Barker, *Henry George*, 274; George, *Progress and Poverty*, 162-64; Sklansky, *Soul's Economy*, 122-28.
37. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 203. For a comparison between George's ideas and Marxist thought, see Hellman, *Henry George Reconsidered*, 94-102.
38. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 222-24; Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism*, 58-59.
39. Kazin, *Populist Persuasion*, 32.
40. Burke, *Conundrum of Class*, 133-39; George, *Progress and Poverty*, 227; Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 77; Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism*, 63; Thomas, *Alternative America*, 112.
41. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 242; Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism*, 63.
42. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 255, 259; Hays, *Response to Industrialism*, 122; Sklansky, *Soul's Economy*, 123-28.
43. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 38, 283.
44. Postel, *Populist Vision*, 4-5, 11; Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism*, 44. Karl Marx, writing from London, noted George's pro-capitalist radicalism. However, he dismissed *Progress and Poverty* as a "last attempt to save the capitalist regime." See Saul K. Padover, *The Genius of America* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), 230. For an opposing view of George and other Gilded Age reformers as conservatives trying to fend off radicalism to preserve their way of life, see Lasch, *True and Only Heaven*, 213.
45. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 288, 294.
46. *Ibid.*, 263, 272-74, 288, 294-95. For more on the traditionally American fear of land engrossment that led to the abolition of entail and primogeniture, see Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 46-50. It

- is also important to point out that George anticipated key elements of Frederick Jackson Turner's influential "frontier thesis" by more than a decade. See Barker, *Henry George*, 389–90; Ian Barron, "Frontier Realities: Frederick Jackson Turner's Debt to Henry George," *Land & Liberty* 97–98 (January–February 1991): 15; Alex Wagner Lough, "Henry George, Frederick Jackson Turner, and the 'Closing' of the American Frontier," *California History* 89, no. 2 (April 2012): 4–23; David M. Wrobel, *The End of American Exceptionalism: Frontier Anxiety from the Old West to the New Deal* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996), 3, 9–10, 13–25.
47. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 299–327.
 48. Roswell Dwight Hitchcock, *Socialism* (New York: A. D. F. Randolph, 1879), 24.
 49. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 300–27; Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, 29. For more on working-class interest in socialism and quasi-socialist ideas, see Moss, "Republican Socialism and the Making of the Working Class," 390–413; and Furner, "Republican Tradition," 171–241.
 50. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 328.
 51. *Ibid.*, 370.
 52. *Ibid.*, 328.
 53. Foner, *Story of American Freedom*, 9, 20–21, 32, 62, 113, 143; Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 292–94.
 54. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 405 (emphasis in original); Thomas, *Alternative America*, 118–19.
 55. Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism*, 59, 67.
 56. The term "single tax" never appears in *Progress and Poverty*. It was first used by George in print in an earlier article (Henry George and David Dudley Field, "Land and Taxation: A Conversation," *North American Review* [July 1885], 1–14) and was later popularized by his supporters in the late 1880s and 1890s in order to capture, in a single phrase, the essence of George's radical program. For the sake of simplicity, I will use the term from here on to describe land-value taxation.
 57. Steven J. Ross, "The Culture of Political Economy," *Southern California Quarterly* 65, no. 2 (Summer 1983): 149–50.
 58. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 403, 436.
 59. *Ibid.*, 406, 434, 438; Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism*, 44.
 60. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 454–55.
 61. Fine, *Laissez-Faire*, 3–25; Foner, *Story of American Freedom*, 54–55; Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 70, 79–80, 134, 150, 292–94.
 62. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 440–41, 455–57; Burke, *Conundrum of Class*, 108; Fine, *Laissez-Faire*, 293–94; Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism*, 74. For more on the trend toward taxing businesses to provide for public services, see R. Rudy Higgins-Evenson, *The Price of Progress: Public Services, Taxation, and the American Corporate State, 1877–1929* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), especially pages 12–51.
 63. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 458, 461–63; Furner, "Republican Tradition," 172; James T. Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870–1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 170–71; Lasch, *True and Only Heaven*, 15; Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism*, 72; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 19; Sklansky, *Soul's Economy*, 19. On the popularity of cooperation, see Steven Leiken, *The Practical Utopians: American Workers and the Cooperative Movement in the Gilded Age* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2005).
 64. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 475, 485, 537; J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Republican Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975), 545. For what he describes as George's "economic syllogism," see Barker, *Henry George*, 268–71.

65. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 508–17; Sklansky, *Soul's Economy*, 123–30.
66. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 518–19.
67. *Ibid.*, 528, 533, 535, 537.
68. *Ibid.*, 530–34; Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism*, 61.
69. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 537–38. For more on apocalyptic reform literature, see Frederic Cople Jaher, *Doubters and Dissenters: Cataclysmic Thought in America, 1885–1918* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1964), 19–32; Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 6; Kenneth M. Roemer, *The Obsolete Necessity: America in Utopian Writings, 1888–1900* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1976), 22–24, 171–78.
70. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 240–41, 537–38; Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (New York: American Home Missionary Society, 1885), 128–43; John D. Fairchild, *The Mysteries of the Great City: The Politics of Urban Design, 1877–1937* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1997), 4–5, 16–17, 23; Postel, *Populist Vision*, 1–11.
71. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 522–24.
72. *Ibid.*, 543, 546, 547, 548.
73. *Ibid.*, 521–22.
74. *Ibid.*, 527. See also Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 58–59.
75. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 548–49.
76. *Ibid.*, 552.
77. Cohen, *Reconstruction of American Liberalism*, 110–76; Currarino, *Labor Question*, 11–35; Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, 33–111; Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics*, 70; Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People"*, 13–46.
78. Furner, "Republican Tradition," 172; Michael E. McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870–1920* (New York: Free Press, 2003), 59; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 4.
79. Cohen, *Reconstruction of American Liberalism*, 160–65; William Forbath, "Caste, Class, and Equal Citizenship," in *Moral Problems in American Life: New Perspectives on Cultural History*, eds. Karen Halttunen and Lewis Perry (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1999), 180–83; Furner, "Republican Tradition," 172–76, 187; Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism*, 39; McGerr, *Fierce Discontent*, 59; Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People"*, 15, 34–38.
80. Fine, *Laissez-Faire*, 25; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 15; Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People"*, 34. See also Robin Archer, "American Liberalism and Labour Politics: Labour Leaders and Liberty Language in Late Nineteenth Century Australia and the United States," *Labour History* 92 (May 2007): 1–15; Mary O. Furner, "Structure and Virtue in United States Political Economy," *Journal of the History of Economic Thought* 27, no. 1 (March 2005): 1–27.
81. Cohen, *Reconstruction of American Liberalism*, 156–57; Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, 96–111; Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 53–138; Joseph Dorfman, *The Economic Mind in American Civilization, 1865–1918* (New York: Viking, 1949), 3:87–98, 160–64. See also Mary O. Furner, *Advocacy and Objectivity: A Crisis in the Professionalization of American Social Science, 1865–1905* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1975); Thomas Haskell, *The Emergence of Professional Social Science: The American Social Science Association and the Nineteenth-Century Crisis of Authority* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977).
82. Cohen, *Reconstruction of American Liberalism*, 158–61; Henry Clark Adams quoted in Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, 96; Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 87. See also John Bates Clark, "The Nature and Progress of True Socialism," *New Englander* 39 (July 1879).

83. Barker, *Henry George*, 299–300, 478–79, 556–58; Donald R. Stabile, "Henry George's Influence on John Bates Clark: The Concept of Rent Was Pivotal to Equating Wages with the Marginal Product of Labor," *American Journal of Economics & Sociology* 54 (July 1995): 373–82.
84. Cohen, *Reconstruction of American Liberalism*, 143–76; Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, 100–102. McGerr, *Fierce Discontent*, 58–59.
85. Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 4–5; Fine, *Laissez-Faire*, 293–94.
86. D. Appleton to HG, April 9, 1879, HGP; Barker, *Henry George*, 312–13.
87. HG to Richard George, September 15, 1879, HGP.
88. Barker, *Henry George*, 314.
89. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 315–21.

3. "NEW YORK IS AN IMMENSE CITY": THE EMPIRE CITY IN THE EARLY 1880S

1. HG to Richard George, September 2, 1880, HGP.
2. Gordon Atkins, *Health, Housing, and Poverty in New York City, 1865–1898* (Ann Arbor: Edwards Brothers, 1947) 209.
3. Seymour Mandelbaum, *Boss Tweed's New York* (New York: John Wiley, 1965), 19–26.
4. Statistics for New York's ethnic composition in 1880 are drawn from Ira Rosenwaike, *Population History of New York City* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1972), 67, 73, tables 23 and 26 respectively, and U.S. Census Bureau, *Tenth Census of the United States, 1880*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1883).
5. John J. Appel, "From Shanties to Lace Curtains: The Irish Image in *Puck*, 1876–1910," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 13 (1971): 365–75; Maureen Murphy, "Bridget and Biddy: Images of the Irish Servant Girl in *Puck* Cartoons, 1880–1890," in *New Perspectives on the Irish Diaspora*, ed. Charles Fanning (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 152–75; Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 1003–8.
6. For statistics on the occupational breakdown of Irish and Germans immigrants in the United States, see U.S. Census Bureau, *Tenth Census, 1880*, 1: 865–92. See also Ronald Bayor and Timothy Meagher, eds., *The New York Irish* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 217, 229–31, 301–4; Robert Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City, 1825–1863* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), 206–21; David Hammack, *Power and Society: Greater New York at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 67–68.
7. Stanley Nadel, *Little Germany: Ethnicity, Religion, and Class in New York City, 1845–80* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), passim.
8. Marquis James, *Merchant Adventurer: The Story of William R. Grace* (New York: Scholarly Resources, 1993), 142–79.
9. Frederick Binder and David Reimers, *All Nations Under Heaven: An Ethnic and Racial History of New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 109–13; Rosenwaike, *Population History of New York*, 77. See also James Weldon Johnson, *Black Manhattan* (New York: Knopf, 1930); and Seth M. Scheiner, *Negro Mecca: A History of the Negro in New York City, 1865–1920* (New York: New York University Press, 1965).
10. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 9–10; Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, 113–14.
11. Hammack, *Power and Society*, 46; Beckert, *Monied Metropolis*, 247–48, 257–58. See also Eric Homburger, *Mrs. Astor's New York: Money and Social Power in a Gilded Age* (New Haven:

- Yale University Press, 2004). Edgar Saltus quoted in Ric Burns, James Sanders, and Lisa Ades, *New York: An Illustrated History* (New York: Knopf, 1999), 185.
12. Beckert, *Monied Metropolis*, 257; Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham*, 1071–72; Trachtenberg, *Incorporation of America*, 87. See also Rebecca Edwards, *New Spirits: Americans in the Gilded Age, 1865–1905* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 97–98; *New York Times*, March 27, 1883, 1.
13. Walt Whitman quoted in Trachtenberg, *Incorporation of America*, 70. Whitman delivered this address several months before George published *Progress and Poverty*.
14. George, *Social Problems*, 34; Hays, *Response to Industrialism*, 122. Richard T. Ely quoted in Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People"*, 17.
15. Atkins, *Health, Housing, and Poverty*, 313; John F. McClymer, "Late-Nineteenth Century American Working-Class Living Standards," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 17 (Autumn 1986): 379–98; John F. McClymer, "The 'American Standard' of Living: Family Expectations and Strategies for Getting and Spending in Gilded Age America," *Hayes Historical Journal* 9 (September 1990): 20–43. See also Edith Abbott, *The Wages of Unskilled Labor in the United States, 1850–1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1905).
16. Statistics on women's employment drawn from U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, *Compendium of the Tenth Census of the United States*, vol. 2 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1883), 1070–77; U.S. Department of the Interior (Census Office), *Report on Manufacturing Industries in the United States at the Eleventh Census*, part 2 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1895), 390–409. Quote referring to "strictest economy" from *JSP*, November, 18, 1883, 1.
17. Roy Lubove, *The Progressives and the Slums: Tenement House Reform in New York City, 1890–1917* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1962), 25–48; Richard Plunz, *A History of Housing in New York City: Dwelling Type and Social Change in the American Metropolis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 21–49; David M. Scobey, *Empire City: The Making and Meaning of the New York City Landscape* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 71–73, 148.
18. Testimony of Charles F. Wingate, in the U.S. Senate Committee on Education and Labor, *Report of the Committee of the Senate upon the Relations Between Labor and Capital* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1885) [hereafter referred to as *RCSRLC*], 2:1044; George F. Waring, "Sanitary Drainage," *North American Review* 137 (July 1883): 57–67.
19. Lubove, *Progressives and the Slums*, 25–48; *JSP*, November 18, 1883, 1. For statistics on rents in 1889, see also Jacob A. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York*, ed. David Leviatin (Boston: Bedford, 1996), 158.
20. *New York Times*, July 4 and July 6, 1880. See also *Harper's Weekly*, August 15, 1868; August 9, 1879; and June 30, 1883.
21. Atkins, *Health, Housing, and Poverty*, 190.
22. *Ibid.*, 46–52; Charlotte G. O'Brien, "The Emigrant in New York," *The Nineteenth Century* 16 (October 1884), 531–32; *Harper's Weekly*, March 1, 1884; July 12, 1884; Scobey, *Empire City*, 140; Testimony of Frederick Koezly, *RCSRLC*, 2:404; Testimony of William H. Morrell, *RCSRLC*, 2:1004–7; *New York Times*, May 20, 1881.
23. Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*, 257; George, *Social Problems*, 24, 73, 115.
24. Quoted in Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*, 67.
25. Testimony of Charles F. Wingate, *RCSRLC*, 2:1043–49. Other sources of information regarding death rates in the tenements are found in the following: Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*, 100–101;

- JSP*, January 6, 1884, 1; *Irish World*, April 8, 1882, 4; November 17, 1883, 4; February 28, 1885, 4; *New York Times*, July 23, 1882, 5.
26. George, *Social Problems*, 114-15; *Irish World*, May 6, 1882, 5; May 13, 1882, 3; William P. McLoughlin, "Evictions in New York's Tenement Houses," *Arena* 7, no. 54 (December 1892), 48-57; Riis, *How the Other Half Lives*, 174.
 27. *New York Times*, May 16, 1880, 6.
 28. Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement*, 2:12.
 29. Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams* (New York: Modern Library, 1931), 462-63.
 30. Hammack, *Power and Society*, 31, 37-39, 40-41.
 31. U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, *1870 Census of Manufactures* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1872), 703; U.S. Department of the Interior, Census Office, *1890 Census of Manufactures* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1894), 402-3; Hammack, *Power and Society*, 51-56; Trachtenberg, *Incorporation of America*, 122.
 32. *1870 Census of Manufactures*, 702; *1890 Census of Manufactures*, 394-95.
 33. Kenneth T. Jackson, ed., *The Encyclopedia of New York City* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995), 166; Scobey, *Empire City*, 189-216, 258-65. Detailed budget statistics can be found in Edward Durand, *The Finances of New York City* (New York: MacMillan, 1898).
 34. Hammack, *Power and Society*, 41.
 35. Thomas Kessner, *Capital City: New York City and the Men Behind America's Rise to Economic Dominance, 1860-1900* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003), 33-34, 42-43, 48-49, 208-14. Frank Leslie's Weekly quote from Scobey, *Empire City*, 40.
 36. Klein, *Genesis of Industrial America*, 106-9.
 37. George, *Social Problems*, 42.
 38. Tracy Campbell, *Deliver the Vote: A History of Election Fraud, An American Political Tradition, 1742-2004* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2005), 18-22, 62-66; Jerome Mushkat, *Tammany: The Evolution of a Political Machine, 1789-1865* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1971).
 39. Kenneth D. Ackerman, *Boss Tweed: The Rise and Fall of the Corrupt Pol Who Conceived the Soul of Modern New York* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2005); Leo Hershkovitz, *Tweed's New York: Another Look* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press, 1978), 167-265.
 40. New York City Council of Political Reform, *Report for the Years 1872, '73, '74* (New York, 1875), quoted in Mandelbaum, *Boss Tweed's New York*, 113.
 41. Beckert, *Monied Metropolis*, 207-36. On the disenfranchisement effort, see also David Quigley, *Second Founding: New York City, Reconstruction, and the Making of American Democracy* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2004), 111-74.
 42. Hammack, *Power and Society*, 55-58; Mandelbaum, *Boss Tweed's New York*, 75-102; Iver Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots: Their Significance for American Society and Politics in the Age of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 201-7; Michael Gordon, "Studies in Irish and Irish-American Thought and Behavior in Gilded Age New York City" (Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, 1977), 382-447.
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 44. Adonica Y. Lui, "The Machine and Social Policies: Tammany Hall and the Politics of Public Outdoor Relief, New York City, 1874-1898," *Studies in American Political Development* 9, no. 2 (1995): 386-403.
 45. Richard Oestreicher, "Urban Working-Class Political Behavior and Theories of American Electoral Politics, 1870-1940," *Journal of American History* 74, no. 4 (March 1988): 1257-86.

46. Steven P. Erie, *Rainbow's End: Irish-Americans and the Dilemmas of Urban Machine Politics, 1840-1985* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 53, 58.
47. Herbert J. Bass, "The Politics of Ballot Reform in New York State, 1888-1890," *New York History* 59 (1961): 255-72.
48. Ira Katznelson, *City Trenches: Urban Politics and the Patterning of Class in the United States* (New York: Pantheon, 1981), 1-72.
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50. *New York Herald*, June 25, 1872, 8.
51. Bernstein, *New York City Draft Riots*, 238-39, 246-55; Lawrence Costello, "The New York City Labor Movement, 1861-1873" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1967), 357-76; David Montgomery, *Beyond Equality: Labor and the Radical Republicans, 1862-1872* (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), 326-34; Stanley Nadel, "Those Who Would Be Free: The Eight House Strikes of 1872," *Labor's Heritage* 2, no. 2 (April 1990): 70-77.
52. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement*, 1:439-40; Atkins, *Health, Housing, and Poverty*, 67-74.
53. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement*, 2:14.
54. Testimony of Charles Miller, *RCSRLC*, 1:748-50. See also the testimonies of Conrad Carl, Gabriel Edmonston, Joseph T. Finnerty, Samuel Gompers, Edward King, John S. McClelland, and John Morrison. For other specific references to the disruption wrought by mechanization, see the following issues of *JSP*: December 2, 1883, 4; October 5, 1884, 4; September 13, 1885, 1; January 24, 1886, 1; March 14, 1886, 4; May 16, 1886, 1; October 31, 1886, 4; and *Irish World*, October 22, 1881, 4.
55. Beckert, *Monied Metropolis*, 210-11, 289; *JSP*, December 9, 1883, 1, and January 31, 1886, 4 (boss tailors); January 6, 1884, 4 (boss book printers); June 29, 1884, 1, 2, and July 6, 1884, 1 (boss plumbers); July 27, August 3, August 10, and August 17, 1884, 1 (boss builders); September 14, 1884, 4 (boss stonecutters); November 2, 1884, 4 (boss framers); June 21, 1885, 4 (boss brewers); December 6, 1885, 4 (boss machinists); May 23, 1886, 4 (boss bakers); September 5, 1886, 4 (boss barbers). See also Clarence E. Bonnett, *History of Employers' Associations in the United States* (New York: Vantage Press, 1956), 102-321.
56. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement*, 2:18; Moses Rischin, *The Promised City: New York Jews, 1870-1914* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), 249. For more on the impact of immigration on unions, see A. T. Lane, *Solidarity or Survival: American Labor and European Immigrants, 1830-1924* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1987).
57. New York State Bureau of Labor Statistics (hereafter NYSBLS), *Annual Report for 1884* (Albany: Weed, Parsons, 1884), 2:145-81.
58. Beckert, *Monied Metropolis*, 192-97; Herbert Gutman, "The Workers' Search for Power: Labor in the Gilded Age," in *The Gilded Age: A Reappraisal*, ed. H. Wayne Morgan (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1963), 38-68.
59. Beckert, *Monied Metropolis*, 207.
60. Ibid., 107-97; Robert M. Fogelson, *America's Armories: Architecture, Society, and Public Order* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 51; Lisa Keller, *The Triumph of Order: Democracy and Public Space in New York and London* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 190-201; Nasaw, "Gilded Age Gospels," 127-33. The dinner honoring Spencer is detailed in Barry Werth, *Banquet at Delmonico's: Great Minds, The Gilded Age, and the Triumph of Evolution in America* (New York: Random House, 2009). See also *New York Times*,

- November 11, 1882. Quote from the Charities and Correction commissioner is cited in Beckert, *Monied Metropolis*, 216.
61. George, *Social Problems*, 46; Testimony of Thomas McGuire, *RCSRLC*, 1:779.
 62. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement*, 1:448; Samuel Gompers, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1925), 1:96; Herbert Gutman, "The Tompkins Square 'Riot' in New York City on January 13, 1874: A Reexamination of Its Causes and Its Aftermath," *Labor History* 6 (Winter 1965): 48-65; Marilyn Johnson, *Street Justice: A History of Police Violence in New York City* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003), 12-50; Keller, *Triumph of Order*, 173-78; John Swinton, *The Tompkins Square Outrage* (Albany, N.Y.: n.p., 1874); *New York Times*, January 14, 1874. See Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics*, 74-75, for a similar incident in Chicago.
 63. Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy*, 4; Sender Gardin, *Three American Radicals: John Swinton, Crusading Editor; Charles P. Steinmetz, Scientist and Socialist; William Dean Howells and the Haymarket Era* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1991), 11-13; David Nicholas Lyon, "The World of P. J. McGuire: A Study of the American Labor Movement, 1870-1890" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1972), 33-35; Eugene Debs was similarly radicalized by the violence meted out by the military during the Great Uprising of 1877; see Nick Salvatore, *Eugene Debs: Citizens and Socialist* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 31-38.
 64. Keller, *Triumph of Order*, 183-90; Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham*, 1035-36. Schneirov details a similar consolidation of bourgeois solidarity in Chicago in the 1870s and 1880s in *Labor and Urban Politics*, 57-75, 87.
 65. Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham*, 1095; Currarino, *Labor Question*, 86-145; Foner, *History of the Labor Movement*, 1:512-18.
 66. Bruce Laurie, *Artisans into Workers*, 141-46.
 67. Laurie, *Artisans into Workers*, 146-56; Craig Phelan, *Grand Master Workman: Terence Powderly and the Knights of Labor* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2000), 70-72; Robert E. Weir, *Beyond Labor's Veil: The Culture of the Knights of Labor* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 8-13. Text of the 1878 preamble in Terence Powderly, *Thirty Years of Labor, 1859-1889* (n.p.: Excelsior Publishing, 1889), 128-30.
 68. Gordon, "Studies in Irish and Irish-American Thought and Behavior," 499-501.
 69. HG to Dr. Edward Taylor, November 2, 1880; HG to James Coffey, December 15, 1880; George to [illegible], December 16, 1880, HGP.
 70. HG to Dr. Edward Taylor, December 18, 1880, HGP.

4. "RADICALLY AND ESSENTIALLY THE SAME":

IRISH AMERICAN NATIONALISM AND AMERICAN LABOR

1. HG to Dr. Edward Taylor, January 4, 1881, HGP.
2. HG to James McClatchy, February 22, 1881; HG to Dr. Edward Taylor, January 27 and May 21, 1881, HGP.
3. Barker, *Henry George*, 337; *Truth*, October 9, 1881, 2; Joan Waugh, *Unsentimental Reformer: The Life of Josephine Shaw Lowell* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 179-90.
4. HG to [illegible], August 31, 1880, HGP; HG to Dr. Edward Taylor, March 26, 1881, HGP; *Irish World*, May 1, 1880, 6.
5. For the sake of clarity, I use "Fenians" here as a term meant to encompass members of militant Irish nationalist organizations such as Devoy's Clan na Gael in the United States and the Irish Republican Brotherhood in Ireland.
6. Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (New

- York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 441-42; R. F. Foster, *Modern Ireland, 1600-1972* (New York: Viking, 1988), 397-99; Thomas N. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism, 1870-1890* (New York: J. B. Lippencott, 1966), 65-74.
7. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism*, 94; Foster, *Modern Ireland*, 402-3; Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 398-400.
 8. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism*, 80-83, 101-3; Foster, *Modern Ireland*, 403-5; Terry Golway, *Irish Rebel: John Devoy and America's Fight for Ireland's Freedom* (New York: St. Martin's, 1998), 104-14; T. W. Moody, *Davitt and the Irish Revolution, 1846-1882* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 271-281, 284-92.
 9. Michael Davitt, *The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland, or The Story of the Land League Revolution* (London: Harper and Row, 1904), 160-61.
 10. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism*, 85-98; John Devoy, *Land of Eire: The Irish Land League, Its Origin, Progress and Consequences* (New York: Patterson & Neilson, 1882), 43-44; F. S. L. Lyons, *Charles Stewart Parnell* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 79-83, 88-90; Owen McGee, *The IRB: The Irish Republican Brotherhood from the Land League to Sinn Fein* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2005), 58-65; Moody, *Davitt and the Irish Revolution*, 250-58, 261-66; William O'Brien and Desmond Ryan, eds., *Devoy's Post-Bag, 1871-1928* (Dublin: Fallon, 1948), 1:370-81.
 11. Joyce Marlow, *Captain Boycott and The Irish* (London: Cox & Wyman, 1973).
 12. James P. Rodechko, *Patrick Ford and His Search for America: A Case Study of Irish American Journalism, 1870-1913* (New York: Arno Press, 1976), 27-57.
 13. Eric Foner, "Class, Ethnicity, and Radicalism in the Gilded Age: The Land League and Irish America," in *Politics and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford, 1980).
 14. Paul Gilje, *The Road to Mobocracy: Popular Disorder in New York City, 1763-1834* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 127-42, 229-31, 245-46; 255-57; Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 125-30, 134-39, 155-56. Theodore Parker quote from Carl Wittke, *The Irish in America* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1970), 116.
 15. David H. Bennett, *The Party of Fear: From Nativist Movements to the New Right in American History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 105-55; Ray Allen Billington, *The Protestant Crusade* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964), 166-436.
 16. Foner, "Class, Ethnicity, and Radicalism," 183; Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism*, 43-60.
 17. *Irish World*, February 19, 1881, 4; May 20, 1882, 4.
 18. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism*, 49-54; Rodechko, *Patrick Ford*, 58-70.
 19. Rodechko, *Patrick Ford*, 70-90; Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism*, 49-54.
 20. *Irish World*, July 8, 1882, 4.
 21. *Irish World*, December 31, 1881, 4; Foner, "Class, Ethnicity, and Radicalism," 157-61; Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics*, 119-35. See also *Irish World*, January 8, 1881, 4; December 4, 1880, 4; June 4, 1881, 1.
 22. Testimony of P. J. McGuire, *RCSRLC*, 1:343-44. See also John R. Stobo, "Organized Labor, Housing Issues, and Politics: Another Look at the 1886 Henry George Campaign in New York City" (Masters thesis, Columbia University, 1993).
 23. *Irish World*, December 11, 1880, 4; January 8, 1881, 3; March 12, 1881, 4, 7.
 24. HG to James McClatchy, January 27, 1881, HGP; *Irish World*, April 16, 1881; July 18, 1885, 8; November 4, 1882, 6; Barker, *Henry George*, 336.
 25. For an explanation as to why most workers, especially Irish Americans, opposed free trade, see Robert E. Weir, "A Fragile Alliance: Henry George and the Knights of Labor," *American Journal of Economics & Sociology* 56 (October 1997): 421-39.

- Ladies Land League in the United States," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 27 (Winter 2008): 5-27; Tara McCarthy, "Progress and Poverty: An Irish Catholic Woman in the American Reform Tradition," *The Recorder* 19 (Summer 2007): 172-84; Tara McCarthy, "True Women, Trade Unionists, and the Lessons of Tammany Hall: Ethnic Identity, Social Reform, and the Political Culture of Irish Women in America, 1880-1923" (Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, 2005), 1-89; Margaret Ward, *Unmanageable Revolutionaries: Women and Irish Nationalism* (London: Pluto Press, 1983), 4-39; Fanny Parnell, "Ladies' Land League: A Permanent Organization to be in New York City," *Irish World*, September 25, 1880, 1.
71. *Irish World*, October 29, 1881, 4.
 72. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism*, 120-22; McGee, *The IRB*, 93-94; *Irish Nation*, December 17, 1881, 2; *Irish World*, December 17, 1881, 4; December 24, 1881, 4; February 25, 1882, 4; June 4, 1883, 4. Regarding nationalist attempts to give the *No Rent Manifesto* a conservative interpretation, see *Irish-American*, December 17, 1881, and January 14, 1882; as well as *Irish Nation*, March 11, 1882, 4.
 73. *Truth*, October 29, 1881, 1; November 2, 1881, 1; November 11, 1881; November 18, 1881; December 12, 1881; December 19, 1881, 1; December 25, 1881, 4; January 9, 1882, 4; January 23, 1882, 3; *Irish World*, December 3, 1881, 1.
 74. For detailed portrait of labor activism within New York's German community, see Dorothee Schneider, *Trade Unions and Community: The German Working Class in New York City, 1870-1900* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994). See Appendix II for the "No Rent" rally's declaration of principles.
 75. *Irish Nation*, February 2, 1882, 7; *JSP*, February 28, 1886, 1. See Appendix I for the "No Rent" rally's proclamation to the workers of the world.
 76. For the names and occupations of the founders, see O'Donnell, "Henry George and the 'New Political Forces,'" 272.
 77. J. T. McKechnie, *JSP*, February 28, 1886, 1; *Irish World*, February 11, 1882, 7; Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement*, 2:33.
 78. All references to working-class republicanism throughout this work rely upon Kim Voss's definition of the phrase. See Voss, *Making of American Exceptionalism*, 80-89. For the full text of the CLU Declaration of Principles, see Appendix II.
 79. Testimony of P. J. McGuire, *RCSRLC*, 1:808-13. See also *Truth*, April 17, 1882, 4, for an earlier version of the platform, which differs only slightly in wording (refer to Appendix II).
 80. *Irish World*, April 1, 1882, 5; *Truth*, March 20, 1882, 1.
 81. Ward, *Unmanageable Revolutionaries*, 30-32.
 82. McGee, *The IRB*, 99-102; Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism*, 124-25; Lyons, *Charles Stewart Parnell*, 207-14.
 83. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism*, 124, 126-27, 130; Lyons, *Charles Stewart Parnell*, 527-32, 537-40.
 84. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism*, 72-73, 117-27; Davitt, *Fall of Feudalism*, 330-44; *Irish Nation*, May 27, 1882, 2; June 3, 1882, 4; *Irish World*, June 10, 1882, 4; June 17, 1882, 4; *Irish-American*, June 17, 1882, 1, 4; *Truth*, June 9, 1882, 1; Moody, *Davitt and the Irish Revolution*, 519-25, 539-40.
 85. *Irish Nation*, June 10, 1882, 4.
 86. *Irish Nation*, June 10, 1882, 4. See also *Irish Nation*, June 17, 1882, 1, 2, 4, and June 17, 1882, 2; *Irish-American*, June 17, 1882, 4; July 1, 1882, 4. The original sign of a rift between Devoy and Ford appeared in 1881, when Ford accused Devoy of withholding funds raised for the cause (Golway, *Irish Rebel*, 138-139, and *Irish World*, April 16, 1881).

87. *Irish Nation*, June 10, 1882, 4; *Irish World*, June 17, 1882, 4.
88. *Irish-American*, June 24, 1882, 4; *Irish World*, July 1, 1882, 1-3; *Irish Nation*, June 17, 1882, 1; June 24, 1882, 1, 3, 5; July 1, 1882, 4; *New York Times*, June 19, 1882, 8, and June 20, 1882, 2; *Truth*, June 19, 1882, 1.
89. *Irish World*, July 1, 1882, 2.
90. *Irish World*, July 1, 1882, 3; James J. Green, "American Catholics and the Irish Land League," *Catholic Historical Review* 35 (1949): 19-42.
91. *Irish World*, July 29, 1882, 4.
92. George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 387; Bell, *Rebel, Priest, and Prophet*, 29.
93. Bell, *Rebel, Priest, and Prophet*, 29.
94. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism*, 129; Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics*, 132-33; *Truth*, June 19, 1882, 1.
95. *New York Times*, July 6, 1882, 2.
96. *Irish World*, July 15, 1882, 1.
97. *Irish World*, July 15, 1882, 1; George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 384-85.
98. *Irish World*, July 15, 1882, 1; *New York Times*, July 6, 1882, 2.
99. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism*, 122, 128; Foner, "Class, Ethnicity, and Radicalism," 157; *Irish-American*, July 22, 1882, 5; October 21, 1882, 4; *Irish Nation*, March 3, 1882, 2.
100. *Irish World*, October 14, 1882, 1, 4 (emphasis in original).
101. *Irish-American*, November 4, 1882, 4; See also *Irish-American*, October 14, 1882, 4; October 21, 1882, 1, 4, 5; October 28, 1882, 4; November 4, 1882, 4; *Irish Nation*, October 14, 1882, 1, 4; October 21, 1882, 6; November 4, 1882, 5.
102. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism*, 129-30; Lyons, *Charles Stewart Parnell*, 215, 226-34.
103. It would be six months before the American body followed suit and eight months for the New York organization to do so.
104. Testimony of P. J. McGuire, *RCSRLC*, 1:808-9.
105. *Irish World*, July 15, 1882, 1; *Truth*, May 15, 1882; May 22, 1882, 1; Testimony of P. J. McGuire, *RCSRLC*, 1:808-9; Gordon, "Studies in Irish and Irish-American Thought and Behavior," 541-49.
106. *Irish World*, October 28, 1882, 8.

5. "LABOR BUILT THIS REPUBLIC, LABOR SHALL RULE IT"

1. *Truth*, September 18, 1882, 1; October 9, 1882, 1; October 16, 1882, 3; October 18, 1882, 3.
2. Among them were Theodore F. Cuno, James E. Quinn, Edward King, Patrick Doody, William McCabe, John Jay Joyce, and Edward J. Rowe, as well as Germans Samuel Schimkowitz and August Ernst.
3. *Irish World*, November 4, 1882, 1, 6; November 11, 1882, 1, 6, 8; *New York Times*, October 21, 1882, 5; *Truth*, October 21, 1882, 1.
4. *Irish World*, October 14, 1882, 5.
5. Voss, *Making of American Exceptionalism*, 80-89.
6. The full record of the committee's hearings is contained in a five volume collection: United States Senate, Committee on Education and Labor, *Report of the Committee of the Senate upon the Relations between Labor and Capital*, 5 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1885), cited throughout as *RCSRLC*.
7. Fumer, "Republican Tradition," 197.
8. *Truth*, October 10, 1882; February 12, 1883, 1; February 19, 1883, 3. Letter of Louis F. Post to *RCSRLC*, 1:501-2; Fumer, "Republican Tradition," 201-2. See the Testimony of Edward King,

- RCSRLC, 1:687, for an articulation of labor's concern over fraudulent individuals "appearing to speak for the workingmen."
9. Dawley, *Struggles for Justice*, 25; Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 344; Kazin, *Populist Persuasion*, 16, 344-45; Lasch, *True and Only Heaven*, 64; Aileen S. Kraditor, *The Radical Persuasion, 1890-1917: Aspects of the Intellectual History of the Historiography of Three American Radical Organizations* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981), 75; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 16; Trachtenberg, *Incorporation of America*, 54.
 10. Testimony of Joseph Finnerty, RCSRLC, 1:740-46, and Testimony of James E. Smith, RCSRLC, 1:765-70.
 11. Testimony of Thomas McGuire, RCSRLC, 1:771-83; Testimony of Jeremiah Murphy, RCSRLC, 2:678-87. See also Licht, *Industrializing America*, 184-85.
 12. Testimony of Conrad Carl, RCSRLC, 1:413-16; Testimony of Joseph Finnerty, RCSRLC, 1:740-46; Testimony of John Morrison, RCSRLC, 1:756; Testimony of Charles L. Miller, RCSRLC, 1:746-54.
 13. Testimony of Conrad Carl, RCSRLC, 1:416; Testimony of Joseph Finnerty, RCSRLC, 1:740-46; Testimony of Samuel Gompers, RCSRLC, 1:376; Testimony of John Morrison, RCSRLC, 1:760.
 14. Testimony of P. J. McGuire, RCSRLC, 1:343-44.
 15. Testimony of Robert Blissert, RCSRLC, 1:842, 859; Testimony of James E. Smith, RCSRLC, 1:765-70.
 16. On the pervasiveness of the self-made man ideal in the Gilded Age, see Judy Hilkey, *Character Is Capital: Success Manuals and Manhood in Gilded Age America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), passim; Kilmer, *Fear of Sinking*, 1-21; Leary, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 55-57; Edwards, *New Spirits*, 88-89; Daniel T. Rodgers, *The Work Ethic in Industrial America, 1850-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 125-52.
 17. Testimony of Joseph Finnerty, RCSRLC, 1:740-46; Testimony of Thomas McGuire, RCSRLC, 1:771-72; Testimony of Charles L. Miller, RCSRLC, 1:746-54; Testimony of P. J. McGuire, RCSRLC, 1:358; Kazin, *Populist Persuasion*, 36; Trachtenberg, *Incorporation of America*, 74.
 18. Testimony of Thomas McGuire, RCSRLC, 1:775.
 19. Testimony of John Morrison, RCSRLC, 1:760.
 20. Beckert, *Monied Metropolis*, 256-60; Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 193-202; Testimony of Conrad Carl, RCSRLC, 1:419.
 21. Testimony of Edward King, RCSRLC, 1:688-89, and RCSRLC, 2:869-70; Klein, *Genesis of Industrial America*, 132; Richardson, *Death of Reconstruction*, 190; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 14; Tomlins, *State and the Unions*, 51. For other examples of worker criticism of labor as a "mere commodity," see the text of P. J. McGuire's speech, *Irish World*, November 4, 1882, 1, 6, and the letter of W. A. Millington, "Brooklyn Harness Makers," *JSP*, February 24, 1884, 4.
 22. Testimony of Thomas McGuire, RCSRLC, 1:778.
 23. *Ibid.*, RCSRLC, 1:781; Testimony of John Morrison, RCSRLC, 1:760; Trachtenberg, *Incorporation of America*, 74-78.
 24. Testimony of Edward King, RCSRLC, 2:888.
 25. Burke, *Conundrum of Class*, 133-58; Kazin, *Populist Persuasion*, 34-35; Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People"*, 20; Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory*, 208; Testimony of P. J. McGuire, RCSRLC, 1:343-44. See also Terence Powderly, "A Few Practical Hints," *Journal of United Labor* 1 (1880): 21, for a typical condemnation of "class."
 26. Testimony of Edward King, RCSRLC, 2:878-83.
 27. Voss, *Making of American Exceptionalism*, 80-81; Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People"*, 20; Furner, "Republican Tradition," 172; Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory*, 170-95; Currarino, *Labor Question*, 14-15; Testimony of P. J. McGuire, RCSRLC, 1:326.

28. Testimony of Robert Blissert, RCSRLC, 1:860; Testimony of John Morrison, RCSRLC, 1:758. See also Richardson, *Death of Reconstruction*, 196-97; Jaher, *Doubters and Dissenters*, passim.
29. *Truth*, May 15, 1882; *JSP*, February 28, 1886, 1; Jonathan Grossman, "Who Is the Father of Labor Day?," *Labor History* 14, no. 4 (1973): 612-23; Michael Kazin and Steven J. Ross, "America's Labor Day: The Dilemma of a Workers' Celebration," *Journal of American History* 78, no. 4 (March 1992): 1125.
30. *Truth*, September 6, 1882, 1; *New York Times*, September 5, 1882, 1; September 6, 1882, 1; September 7, 1882, 2; *Irish World*, September 16, 1882, 1; *Irish Nation*, September 9, 1882, 8; *New York Herald*, September 6, 1882; Matthew Dennis, *Red, White, and Blue Letter Days: An American Calendar* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2002), 243.
31. *Truth*, August 7, 1882, 1; August 21, 1882, 1; August 28, 1882, 1; September 4, 1882, 1; September 5, 1882, 1; September 6, 1882, 1; *New York Times*, September 5, 1882, 1; September 6, 1882, 1; September 7, 1882, 2; *Irish World*, September 16, 1882, 1; *Irish Nation*, September 9, 1882, 8; *New York Herald*, September 6, 1882.
32. *Truth*, August 20, 1883, 3; September 3, 1882, 1; September 6, 1883, 1; *Irish World*, September 15, 1883, 4, 5; *New York Times*, September 6, 1883, 4, 8.
33. *JSP*, August 10, 1884; August 17, 1884, 4; September 7, 1884, 2; *Boycotter*, August 2, 1884; August 16, 1884, 2; August 23, 1884, 1; August 30, 1884, 3; September 13, 1884, 1; *New York Times*, September 1, 1884, 1; September 2, 1884, 8; *Irish World*, September 13, 1884, 5.
34. Knights of Labor, *Record of the Proceedings of the General Assembly* (Philadelphia, 1884), 726; Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions, *Report of the Fourth Annual Session of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada* (Chicago, 1884), 16; *JSP*, September 6, 1885, 1; *New York Times*, September 8, 1885, 8; *Irish World*, September 12, 1885, 4, 5; *JSP*, September 12, 1886, 4; *Irish World*, September 11, 1886, 4.
35. See Dennis, *Red, White, and Blue Letter Days*, 243, for his observation about the dual quality of Labor Day celebrations.
36. Testimony of P. J. McGuire, RCSRLC, 1:808; *New York Herald*, September 6, 1882, quoted in Kazin and Ross, "America's Labor Day," 1302.
37. *JSP*, September 7, 1884, 2. See also *JSP*, February 28, 1886, 1.
38. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement*, 2:32-33; Julie Greene, *Pure and Simple Politics: The American Federation of Labor and Political Activism, 1881-1917* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 55-58; Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy*, 3-37.
39. Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy*, 24-25; Greene, *Pure and Simple Politics*, 58; Phelan, *Grand Master Workman*, 134-37; Testimony of Robert Blissert, RCSRLC, 1:860; Testimony of Thomas B. McGuire, RCSRLC, 1:783.
40. For more on the development of party loyalty, see David Brody, "Labor Movement," in *Encyclopedia of American Political History*, ed. Jack P. Greene (New York: Scribner's, 1984), 709-27; Voss, *Making of American Exceptionalism*, 120-22. For more on the many structural obstacles faced by third parties, see Greene, *Pure and Simple Politics*, 55; Katznelson, *City Trenches*, 45-72, and "Working-Class Formation and the State: Nineteenth-Century England in American Perspective," in *Bringing the State Back In*, eds. Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 257-84; Richard Oestreicher, "Urban Working-Class Political Behavior and Theories," 1282-84.
41. "Circular Letter, no. 3," *Truth*, March 27, 1882, 3; *Truth*, April 3, 1882, 3; April 17, 1882, 4; *New York Times*, April 17, 1882, 8.
42. *Truth*, June 26, 1882, 4.
43. *New York Times*, July 10, 1882, 10; *Truth*, July 17, 1882, 3.
44. *New York Times*, July 20, 1882, 2.

45. *Truth*, August 7, 1882, 1.
46. *New York Times*, July 20, 1882, 2; *Truth*, July 24, 1882, 1; August 7, 1882, 1; August 16, 1882, 1; September 23, 1882, 3. For a detailed discussion of this election and a list of the ULP's platform demands, see O'Donnell, "Henry George and the 'New Political Forces,'" 365-66.
47. *Truth*, August 7, 1882, 1; August 8, 1882, 1; September 4, 1882, 1; September 9, 1882; September 11, 1882, 3; September 18, 1882, 1; November 27, 1882, 2; December 4, 1882, 2; January 8, 1883, 3; *New York Times*, August 28, 1882, 8. On the fear of political meddling in labor's affairs by outsiders, see Testimony of P. J. McGuire, *RCSRLC*, 1:809.
48. *Truth*, October 2, 1882, 1.
49. *Truth*, August 9, 1882, 2.
50. *Truth*, November 9, 1882, 1; November 13, 1882, 3; December 25, 1882, 3; and January 8, 1883, 2. For a comparison with the views and strategies of workers in Chicago, see Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics*, 82, 89, 139, 145, 152, 162, 172.
51. *Truth*, November 13, 1882, 3; July 9, 1883, 3; *Irish World*, July 28, 1883, 7.
52. *Truth*, October 8, 1883, 3; October 15, 1883, 2; October 22, 1883, 4; October 29, 1883, 3; November 5, 1883, 1; November 12, 1883, 3; *New York Times*, October 22, 1883, 5; November 5, 1883, 5.
53. William Forbath, "The Ambiguities of Free Labor: Labor and Law in the Gilded Age," *Wisconsin Law Review* 4 (July-August 1985): 816.
54. *Boycotter*, February 21, 1885, 1; November 14, 1885, 3; December 5, 1885; December 19, 1885, 2; January 9, 1886, 2; January 16, 1886, 3; January 23, 1886, 1; *JSP*, January 18, 1885, 4; February 1, 1885, 4; February 8, 1885, 4; Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy*, 18-37; Greene, *Pure and Simple Politics*, 55-58; Gerald N. Grob, *Workers and Utopia: A Study of Ideological Conflict in the American Labor Movement, 1865-1900* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969), 34-59; Montgomery, *Beyond Equality*, 195-96, 249-60; Norman Ware, *The Labor Movement in the United States, 1860-1895: A Study in Democracy* (New York: D. Appleton, 1929), 350-70. For more details on continued efforts by labor activists to promote an independent labor party, see O'Donnell, "Henry George and the 'New Political Forces,'" 379-84.
55. Testimony of Edward King, *RCSRLC*, 1:691.
56. *JSP*, November 29, 1885, 4; December 6, 1885, 4; June 13, 1886, 4; September 12, 1886, 4; *Truth*, May 8, 1882, 1.
57. *JSP*, December 6, 1885, 4; February 7, 1886, 4; May 16, 1886, 4; *Boycotter*, January 23, 1886, 3.
58. *Boycotter*, December 19, 1885, 2; *Irish Nation*, June 24, 1882, 1, 3, 5; July 8, 1882, 8; *Irish World*, July 1, 1882, 1-2; July 15, 1882, 1; April 26, 1884, 1; *JSP*, April 6, 1884; April 13, 1884, 4; May 4, 1884, 4; September 14, 1884, 4; October 19, 1884, 4; June 7, 1885, 1; December 27, 1885, 4; January 31, 1886, 4; February 7, 1886, 4; May 2, 1886, 1; *New York Times*, June 20, 1882, 2, and October 21, 1882, 5; *Truth*, May 15, 1882, 1; May 22, 1882, 1; October 20, 1882, 3; Gordon, "Studies in Irish and Irish-American Thought and Behavior," 498.
59. George, *Social Problems*, 46.
60. *Truth*, July 17, 1882, 3. See also *Truth*, November 13, 1882, 3.
61. For biographical information on Swinton, see Garlin, *Three American Radicals*, 3-46; Marc Ross, "John Swinton, Journalist and Reformer: The Active Years, 1857-1887" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1969); Frank T. Reuter, "John Swinton's Paper," *Labor History* 1 (Fall 1960): 298-307; *JSP*, June 1, 1884.
62. Letter of CLU Secretary J. T. McKechnie, *JSP*, November 15, 1885, 2.
63. Testimony of George G. Block, *RCSRLC*, 1:437-42; *Irish World*, July 28, 1883, 7; *JSP*, August 10, 1884, 4; March 1, 1885, 4; March 28, 1886, 1; Semi-Annual Report of CLU Secretary Charles Miller, *JSP*, July 13, 1884, 4; *JSP*, November 1, 1885, 4; January 17, 1886, 4; *New York Times*, April 25, 1881,

- 8; May 3, 1881, 8; May 4, 1881, 5; *Truth*, July 9, 1883, 3; Samuel Gompers, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor*, 1:143-55; Schneider, *Trade Unions and Community*, 89-118.
64. Estimates on the number of women workers and their earnings come from *JSP*, November 25, 1885. For additional articles regarding the effort to organize women workers, see *JSP*, February 10, 1885, 4; February 24, 1885, 1; February 22, 1885, 4; March 1, 1885, 4; March 15, 1885, 4; April 19, 1885, 4; April 26, 1885, 4; May 3, 1885, 2; June 7, 1885, 4; June 14, 1885, 4; July 5, 1885, 4; July 19, 1885, 4; August 9, 1885, 4; August 16, 1885, 4; September 6, 1885, 1; October 11, 1885, 4; November 1, 1885, 1; December 13, 1885, 4; January 24, 1886, 4; January 31, 1886, 4; March 14, 1886, 1, 4; May 16, 1886, 4; May 30, 1886, 4; July 18, 1886, 4.
65. *JSP*, August 2, 1885, 4; August 16, 1885, 4; August 23, 1885, 4; September 6, 1885, 4.
66. Testimony of P. J. McGuire, *RCSRLC*, 1:820-21; Testimony of John S. McClelland, *RCSRLC*, 1:152, 209. See also Edwin Gabler, *The American Telegrapher: A Social History, 1860-1900* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1988), 5-29, and Edward Renchan, *The Dark Genius of Wall Street: The Misunderstood Life of Jay Gould* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 279-80.
67. *JSP*, April 11, 1884, 4; Semi-Annual Report of CLU Secretary Charles Miller, *JSP*, July 13, 1884, 4; *Irish World*, June 28, 1884, 8. See Licht, *Industrializing America*, 173-74, for statistics on Gilded Age strikes that show a 47 percent success rate nationally between 1880 and 1900.
68. Testimony of P. J. McGuire, *RCSRLC*, 1:808-9; *JSP*, February 17, 1884; March 2, 1884, 4; August 10, 1884; August 2, 1885; October 11, 1885; November 8, 1885; May 2, 1886; May 9, 1886, 4; May 16, 1886, 4; September 26, 1886; October 10, 1886; October 17, 1886, 4.
69. *JSP*, November 30, 1884, 1; December 7, 1884, 1; June 7, 1885, 4; August 2, 1885, 4; February 14, 1886, 4; May 9, 1886, 4.
70. Gordon, "Studies in Irish and Irish-American Thought and Behavior," 541-600. For more on the history of American workers' use of the boycott, see Lawrence B. Glickman, *Buying Power: A History of Consumer Activism in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Harry W. Laidler, *Boycotts and the Labor Struggle Economic and Legal Aspects* (New York: John Lane, 1914); and Leo Wolman, *The Boycott in American Trade Unions* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1916).
71. Gordon, "Studies in Irish and Irish-American Thought and Behavior," 541-600; Ware, *Labor Movement*, 334-45; Gutman, "The Workers' Search for Power," 38-68.
72. NYSBLS, *Third Annual Report*, Senate Documents 3, no. 23 (1886), 343; *JSP*, September 13, 1885, 4; November 2, 1885, 4; January 17, 1886, 4; September 26, 1886, 4; April 25, 1886, 4; *Boycotter*, January 9, 1886, 2, and Jan 16, 1886, 3. For a discussion of similar efforts by Chicago workers to organize and manage boycotts, see Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics*, 123-28, 192.
73. *Bradstreet's*, December 19, 1885, 394-97; NYSBLS, *Third Annual Report*, 333-62; NYSBLS, *Fourth Annual Report*, Assembly Documents 5, no. 27 (1887), 738-43; NYSBLS, *Fifth Annual Report*, Assembly Documents 5, no. 74 (1888), 521-23. See also William A. Hammond, "The Evolution of the Boycott," *Forum* (June 1886), 369-76.
74. *JSP*, February 10, 1884, 4; *Irish World*, March 1, 1884, 7; Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham*, 1013, 1036, 1095-98, 1192, 1201-2; Johnson, *Street Justice*, 12-86; Keller, *Triumph of Order*, 49-60, 173-78; 189-90.
75. *JSP*, April 13, 1884, 2; February 8, 1885, 1; *Truth*, May 1, 1882, 1; *Irish World*, July 15, 1882, 1; *Irish Nation*, July 8, 1882, 8; *Truth*, July 3, 1882, 1; Keller, *Triumph of Order*, 22, 29-31. Schneirov cites a similar incident in Chicago in *Labor and Urban Politics*, 75.
76. *JSP*, May 4, 1884, 4; Dawley, *Struggles for Justice*, 200-9. *Boycotter*, May 17, 1884, 2.
77. *JSP*, March 16, 1884, 1, 4; *Truth*, July 24, 1882, 1.

78. *JSP*, February 17, 1884, 4; February 24, 1884; March 16, 1884, 1.
79. *JSP*, October 19, 1884, 1; Eileen Boris, "A Man's Dwelling House Is His Castle: Tenement House Cigarmaking and the Judicial Imperative," in *Work Engendered: Toward a New History of American Labor*, ed. Ava Baron (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991), 114-44; William E. Forbath, *Law and the Shaping of the American Labor Movement* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), 38-39; Gompers, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor*, 1:183-198.
80. Daniel R. Emst, *Lawyers Against Labor: From Individual Rights to Corporate Liberalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 70-76; Forbath, *Law and the Shaping*, 61-62, 88-89, 131; Hays, *Response to Industrialism*, 177; Tomlins, *State and the Unions*, 36-52.
81. Voss, *Making of American Exceptionalism*, 33; Wilentz, *Chants Democratic*, 286-94; Beckert, *Monied Metropolis* 302-4; Hays, *Response to Industrialism*, 175-79; Tomlins, *State and the Unions*, 44-49; Montgomery, *Beyond Equality*, 146-47; John R. Commons et al., *History of Labour in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1936), 2:404-12. For a detailed, line-by-line critique of the New York State Penal Code, see *Truth*, May 29, 1882, 1.
82. *Truth*, May 22, 1882, 1; David Montgomery, *Citizen Worker: The Experience of Workers in the United States with Democracy and the Free Market during the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 47-50, 151; Laurie, *Artisans into Workers*, 137-38; Victoria Hattam, "Economic Visions and Political Strategies: American Labor and the State, 1865-1896," in *Studies in American Political Development*, eds. Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 4:82-129; *New York Times*, April 16, 1883, 4; *Truth*, April 16, 1883, 3. For a useful overview of the penal code and the effort to amend it in 1882, see Peter Speck, "The Singletax and the Labor Movement" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1915), printed in the *Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin*, no. 878, Economic and Political Science Series 8, no. 3 (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1917), 53-56.
83. Phelan, *Grand Master Workman*, 134-37.
84. *JSP*, March 9, 1884, 4; March 30, 1884, 4; April 13, 1884, 2, 4; April 20, 1884, 4; April 27, 1884, 4; May 11, 1884, 4.
85. *JSP*, February 3, 1884, 4 (ironclad oath); February 24, 1884, 4 (the penal code); March 2, 1884, 4 (tenement manufacturing); March 2, 1884, 4 (foreign contract labor); April 20, 1884, 4 (eight-hour workday); June 1, 1884, and July 13, 1884, 4 (CLU condemnation); February 22, 1885, 4 (child labor); April 5, 1885, 4 (contract convict labor). For an examination of the struggle between progressives, including labor activists, and the courts, see William G. Ross, *A Muted Fury: Populists, Progressives, and Labor Unions Confront the Courts, 1890-1937* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994).
86. Knights of Labor membership statistics drawn from Leo Wolman, *The Growth of American Trade Unions, 1880-1923* (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1924), 31-33.
87. Phelan, *Grand Master Workman*, 70-72, 77-79; Gordon, "Studies in Irish and Irish-American Thought and Behavior," 503-16. See also Weir, *Beyond Labor's Veil*, regarding the centrality of rituals in the culture of Knights members.
88. Henry J. Browne, *The Catholic Church and the Knights of Labor* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1949), passim; Robert Emmett Curran, *Michael Augustine Corrigan and the Shaping of Conservative Catholicism in America, 1878-1902* (New York: Arno Press, 1978), 189-94.
89. Phelan, *Grand Master Workman*, 47-80.
90. Speck, "The Singletax and the Labor Movement," 41; Knights of Labor, *Record of the Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor of America* (Richmond, Va., 1886), 326-28.
91. Letter of Matthew Maguire, William Horan, Theodore F. Cuno, et al. to HG, April 17, 1881, HGP. For more on the role of DA 49 in the rise of the Knights in New York and the subsequent contro-

- versies associated with its "Home Club" faction, see Craig Phelan, "The Warp of Fancy: The Knights of Labor and the Home Club Takeover Myth," *Labor History* 40, no. 3 (August 1999): 283-99; Robert E. Weir, "Here's to the Men Who Lose: The Hidden Career of Victor Drury," *Labor History* 36, no. 4 (Fall 1995): 530-56; Robert E. Weir, "Powderly and the Home Club: The Knights of Labor Joust Among Themselves," *Labor History* 34, no. 1 (Winter 1993): 84-113; Robert E. Weir, *Knights Unhorsed: Internal Conflict in a Gilded Age Social Movement* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2000), 23-46.
92. Patricia A. Cooper, *Once a Cigar Maker: Men, Women, and Work Culture in American Cigar Factories, 1900-1919* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 21-25; Foner, *History of the Labor Movement*, 2:133; Gordon, "Studies in Irish and Irish-American Thought and Behavior," 561.
93. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement*, 1:517-18.
94. Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham*, 1091.
95. Phelan, *Grand Master Workman*, 33; Barker, *Henry George*, 433-35. For details on George and Powderly's meeting, see Terence Powderly, *The Path I Trod* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), 182-83; HG to Terence Powderly, April 19, 1883, and July 25, 1883 in Terence Powderly Papers, Catholic University, Washington, D.C.; and *Baltimore Sun*, August 2, 1883.
96. Powderly, *Thirty Years of Labor*, 335-51; Ware, *Labor Movement*, 88-89, 364-67.
97. Brundage, *Making of Western Labor Radicalism*, 33-34; Gompers, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor*, 1:82; Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics*, 133; George, *Social Problems*, 60-61; Testimony of Edward King, *RCSRLC*, 2:76. See also the letter of W. A. Millington, "Brooklyn Harness Makers," in *JSP*, February 24, 1884, 4, and the Testimony of Robert Blissert, *RCSRLC*, 1:854, for representative expressions of worker admiration for George's *Progress and Poverty*.
98. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 11; Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People"*, 41-44.
99. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 537.
100. Ely, *Recent American Socialism*, 18; Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, introduction to *Ruling America: A History of Wealth and Power in a Democracy*, eds. Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005), 10; Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 345.
101. Cohen, *Reconstruction of American Liberalism*, 160-65.
102. Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 342.
103. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 453.
104. Ross, "Culture of Political Economy," 151; Kazin, *Populist Persuasion*, 33; Leary, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 10; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 13; Kenneth Fones-Wolf, *Trade Union Gospel: Christianity and Labor in Industrial Philadelphia, 1865-1915* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), xv, 64-94. See also McLeod, *Piety and Poverty*.
105. Oscar, *Henry George*, 32-50, and Rose, *Henry George*, 29, quoted in Ross, "Culture of Political Economy," 152; Burke, *Conundrum of Class*, 140-51.
106. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 559.
107. Ely, *Recent American Socialism*, 19; *Irish World*, November 4, 1882, 4; Ross, "Culture of Political Economy," 151-52.
108. Foner, "Class, Ethnicity, and Radicalism," 184; Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 130-32, 189-91; Klopfenberg, *Uncertain Victory*, 208; Laurie, *Artisans into Workers*, 150-58; Richard Oestreicher, "Terence Powderly, the Knights of Labor, and Artisanal Republicanism," in *Labor Leaders in America*, eds. Melvin Dubofsky and Warren Van Tine (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 34-36; Ross, "Culture of Political Economy," 148, 157-58; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 16-17; Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People"*, 42-43.
109. George, *Progress and Poverty*, 543; Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 345; Ross, "Culture of Political Economy," 151, 154; Rossinow, *Visions of Progress*, 18. See the CLU's Declaration of Principles (Appendix II) for an assertion nearly identical to Georges.

110. Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 375.
111. For examples of reports sounding the alarm regarding the sharp increase in wealth inequality in late nineteenth-century America, see W. M. Dickson, "The Apotheosis of the Plutocrat," *Magazine of American History* 18 (1887), 497-509; Eltwed Pomeroy, "The Concentration of Wealth," *Arena* 17 (December 1896), 82-96; Robert N. Reeves, "Has Wealth a Limitation?" *Arena* 18 (August 1897), 160-67; Thomas G. Shearman, "The Owners of the United States," *Forum* 8 (November 1889), 262-73; Charles B. Spahr, *An Essay on the Present Distribution of Wealth in the United States* (New York: T. Y. Crowell, 1896).
112. Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham*, 766-73; Currarino, *Labor Question*, 23-24; Foner, "Class, Ethnicity, and Radicalism," 184; Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 259-95; Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism*, 60-68; Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics*, 176; Thomas, *Alternative America*, 3, 50-53, 64-65; Wrobel, *End of American Exceptionalism*, 3-25. For more on the appeal of land reform in the antebellum period, see Jamie L. Bronstein, *Land Reform and Working-Class Experience in Britain and the United States, 1800-1862* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999), passim, and Norman Ware, *The Industrial Worker, 1840-1860: The Reaction of American Industrial Society to the Advance of the Industrial Revolution* (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1974), 181-84.
113. W. M. Dick, "Two Views of the Knights of Labor: Centennial Symposium, Chicago, May 1979," *Labour/Le Travail* 5 (May 1980): 185-92; Jason Kaufman, "Rise and Fall of a Nation of Joiners: The Knights of Labor Revisited," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 31, no. 4 (March 2001): 553-79.
114. Postel, *Populist Vision*, 4-5, 11; Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People"*, 42.
115. Hays, *Response to Industrialism*, 93; Voss, *Making of American Exceptionalism*, 81-89; Furner, "Republican Tradition," 194-95. For more on the emergence of an economic dimension of citizenship, see Eric Foner, *Story of American Freedom*, 139-62.
116. Huston, *Securing the Fruits*, 150; Voss, *Making of American Exceptionalism*, 83.
117. Currarino, *Labor Question*, 60-83; George, *Progress and Poverty*, 319-21; Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory*, 170-95; Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossing*, 140; Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics*, 176; Stromquist, *Reinventing "The People"*, 42. For a discussion of George's popularity among telegraph operators due in part to his call for state ownership of telegraph lines, see Gabler, *American Telegrapher*, 133-34, 206-8.
118. Weir, *Beyond Labor's Veil*, 68; Fones-Wolf, *Trade Union Gospel*, 64-94; Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 10; McLeod, *Piety and Poverty*, 103-26. For examples of worker antipathy toward organized religion, see Testimony of Edward King, *RCSRLC*, 2:80-85, and Testimony of P. J. McGuire, *RCSRLC*, 1:358. An examination of the linkage between Christianity and labor reform can be found in David A. Zonderman, *Uneasy Allies: Working for Labor Reform in Nineteenth-Century Boston* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), 174-81. For an analysis of George's impact on the social gospel movement, see Kazin, *American Dreamers*, 77-79; Eileen W. Lindner, "The Redemptive Politic of Henry George: Legacy to the Social Gospel" (Ph.D. diss., Union Theological Seminary, New York, 1985); and Fred Nicklason, "Henry George: Social Gospel," *American Quarterly* 22, no. 3 (Autumn 1970): 649-64.
119. Letter of C. P. Atkinson, *JSP*, October 24, 1886, 2.
120. George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 425; Barker, *Henry George*, 431-48.
121. George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 408.
122. According to Henry George Jr. (*Life of Henry George*, 408, 425), Sumner had *Progress and Poverty* in mind when writing his essays. George's series ran from April 14-October 20, 1883; Sumner's ran from February 24-May 5, 1883. Sumner, like George, later published his essay in book form under the title, *What Social Classes Owe Each Other* (New York: Harper's, 1883); Barker, *Henry*

- George*, 425-27; Joshua Brown, *Beyond the Lines: Pictorial Reporting, Everyday Life, and the Crisis of Gilded Age America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 183-84. For a comparative analysis of George and Sumner, see Jeff Sklansky, "Pauperism and Poverty: Henry George, William Graham Sumner, and the Ideological Origins of Modern American Social Science," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 35, no. 2 (Spring 1999): 111-38.
123. Henry George, "Problems of the Time: The Necessity of Giving Greater Attention to Social Questions," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 14, 1883, 119.
124. Trachtenberg (*Incorporation of America*, 42) posits that George's warnings about mechanization appeared to be in direct response to an essay a few months earlier by Carroll Wright ("The Factory System as an Element of Civilization," *Journal of Social Science* 16, no. 1 (1882), 101-26).
125. George, *Social Problems*, 6, 9, 15, 16, 47, 49, 140, 150-60.
126. *Ibid.*, 181.
127. *Ibid.*, 160.
128. *Ibid.*, 84.
129. *Ibid.*, 129.
130. *Ibid.*, 78.
131. *Ibid.*, 176.
132. *Ibid.*, 15. See also pages 97-98 for a similar statement.
133. *Ibid.*, 40-48.
134. *Ibid.*, 34, 57, 177, 191. For more on George's views on socialism, see Charles R. McCann, "Apprehending the Social Philosophy of Henry George," in *Henry George: Political Ideologue, Social Philosopher and Economic Theorist*, ed. Lawrence S. Moss (New York: Blackwell, 2008), 74-80.
135. Ely, *Recent American Socialism*, 16-21.
136. For more on the widespread popularity of a loosely defined socialism in the 1880s, see Greene, *Pure and Simple Politics*, 55; B. H. Moss, "Republican Socialism and the Making of the Working Class in Britain, France, and the United States," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 35, no. 2 (April 1993), 390-413; Phelan, *Grand Master Workman*, 66-68, 101-2, 146-47; Rodgers, *Work Ethic in Industrial America*, 117-18; Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics*, 54, 145, 173-76.
137. Some of these works include: Richard T. Ely, *Recent American Socialism* (1885); Laurence Gronlund, *The Cooperative Commonwealth* (1884); and Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (1885). In addition to these works of nonfiction, many novels also appeared, such as: Stewart Denison, *An Iron Crown: A Tale of the Great Republic* (1885); George T. Dowling, *The Wreckers: A Social Study* (1886); Martin Foran, *The Other Side: A Social Study Based on Fact* (1886); and John Hay, *The Bread Winners* (1884).
138. Strong includes in his 1885 book a quotation from one of George's essays in *Social Problems* (67).
139. George, *Social Problems*, 9, 63.
140. Barker, *Henry George*, 427-31; Steven B. Cord, "Walker: The General Leads the Charge," in *Critics of Henry George: A Centenary Appraisal of Their Strictures on Progress and Poverty*, ed. Robert V. Andelson (Cranbury, N.J.: Associated University Presses, 1979), 178-86; John K. Whitaker, "Enemies or Allies? Henry George and Francis Amasa Walker One Century Later," *Journal of Economic Literature* 35, no. 4 (December 1997): 1891-1915.
141. Brown, *Beyond the Lines*, 183-84.
142. George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 410.
143. Testimony of Henry George, *RCSRLC*, 1:466-524.
144. *New York Times*, September 6, 1883, 8.
145. Ely, *Recent American Socialism*, 20; *New York Times*, September 6, 1883.
146. Brown, *Catholic Church*, 228-30, 317-19; Curran, *Michael Augustine Corrigan*, 214-15.

147. George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 395.
148. Barker, *Henry George*, 395; Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings*, 5, 31.
149. George Jr., *Life of Henry George*, 444-47; Barker, *Henry George*, 395-410; His Grace the Duke of Argyll [George Douglas Campbell], "The Prophet of San Francisco," *Nineteenth Century* 86 (April 1884), 537-58. George responded to the duke with an essay that appeared in the journal's July issue: Henry George, "The 'Reduction of Iniquity,'" *Nineteenth Century* 89 (July 1884), 134-55. See also J. A. Hobson, "The Influence of Henry George in England," *Fortnightly Review* 68 (December 1897); and John Plowright, "Political Economy and Christian Polity: The Influence of Henry George in England Reassessed," *Victorian Studies* 30, no. 2 (Winter 1987): 235-52.
150. *New York Times*, April 30, 1884, 2.
151. Barker, *Henry George*, 444.

6. "THE COUNTRY IS DRIFTING INTO DANGER"

1. Edward T. O'Donnell, "Striking Scenes: Robert Koehler, *The Strike* (1886), and Competing Visions of Labor-Capital Conflict in the Gilded Age," *Common-Place* 11, no. 1 (October 2010), <http://www.common-place.org/vol-11/no-01/lessons/>; *New York Times*, April 4, 1886, 4.
2. Licht, *Industrializing America*, 173.
3. Richard T. Ely, *The Labor Movement in America* (New York: T. Y. Crowell, 1886), 113.
4. Painter, *Standing at Armageddon*, 40-45; Phelan, *Grand Master Workman*, 158-61, 178-83; Renchan, *Dark Genius of Wall Street*, 280-81. For a full treatment of the strike, see Theresa A. Case, *The Great Southwest Railroad Strike and Free Labor* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2010).
5. President Grover Cleveland, Special Message to the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate, April 22, 1886, in full-text at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=71895&ixzz1r73tSCJn>. See also Gerald Friedman, "Worker Militancy and Its Consequences: Political Responses to Labor Unrest in the United States, 1877-1914," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 40 (Fall 1991): 5-17.
6. Burrows and Wallace, *Gotham*, 1098; Donna T. Haverty-Stack, *America's Forgotten Holiday: May Day and Nationalism, 1867-1960* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 24-32; Montgomery, *Beyond Equality*, 176-85; David R. Roediger and Philip S. Foner, *Our Own Time: A History of American Labor and the Working Day* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1989), 123-44.
7. *New York Times*, May 6, 1886, 1.
8. James Green, *Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement, and the Bombing That Divided Gilded Age America* (New York: Anchor Books, 2006), 3-11, 174-208; Painter, *Standing at Armageddon*, 48-50; Haverty-Stack, *America's Forgotten Holiday*, 32-37.
9. *Forum* (August 1886).
10. *Irish World*, April 24, 1886, 7; HG to Richard McGhee, April 14, 1886, and June 4, 1886, HGP.
11. Sidney L. Harring, "Car Wars: Strikes, Arbitration, and Class Struggle in the Making of Labor Law," *Review of Law and Social Change* 14 (1986): 849-72; Sarah M. Henry, "The Strikers and Their Sympathizers: Brooklyn in the Trolley Strike of 1895," *Labor History* 32 (Summer 1991): 329-53; Schneirov, *Labor and Urban Politics*, 168-73.
12. NYSBLS, *Annual Report for 1886* (1886), 4:744, 809.
13. Testimony of Samuel Gompers, *RCSRLC*, 1:270-85; *JSP*, February 24, 1884, 1; NYSBLS, *Annual Report for 1886*, 4:809-39; *Boycotter*, March 6, 1886, 2.

14. *New York Times*, January 26, 1886, 3; February 2, 1886, 8; February 4, 1886, 8; February 5, 1886, 4; February 17, 1886, 2; February 18, 1886; February 19, 1886, 4, 5; February 20, 1886, 2; *JSP*, January 31, 1886, 4; February 21, 1886, 4; *Boycotter*, January 16, 1886, 2; January 30, 1886, 2; February 20, 1886, 2.
15. For details on the Dry Dock Company, see *Harper's Weekly* 30, no. 1525, March 13, 1886, 172; and *Irish World*, March 13, 1886, 7.
16. NYSBLS, *Annual Report for 1886*, 4:823-26; *JSP*, March 7, 1886, 4; *Irish World*, March 13, 1886, 7.
17. *Irish World*, March 13, 1886, 7; *Boycotter*, March 6, 1886, March 13, 1886, 2. For details on the Dry Dock Company's financial health, see *Irish World*, March 13, 1886, 7.
18. *Harper's Weekly* 30, no. 1525, March 13, 1886, 172; *New York Sun*, March 5, 1886, 1; *New York Times*, March 5, 1886, 1; *New York Tribune*, March 5, 1886, 1.
19. *Harper's Weekly* 30, no. 1525, March 13, 1886, 172; *New York Sun*, March 5, 1886, 1; *New York Times*, March 5, 1886, 1; *New York Tribune*, March 5, 1886, 1.
20. *New York Sun*, March 5, 1886, 1; *New York Times*, March 5, 1886, 1; *JSP*, March 14, 1886, 1. For more on the role of women in community protests, see Elizabeth Ewen, *Immigrant Women in the Land of Dollars: Life and Culture on the Lower East Side, 1890-1925* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1985).
21. *New York Times*, March 5, 1886, 1.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Beckert, *Monied Metropolis*, 292-301; Nasaw, "Gilded Age Gospels," 136; Novak, *People's Welfare*, 235-48; Richardson, *West From Appomattox*, 2-3. Richard Schneirov notes that in the early 1880s Chicago's police practiced a conscious neutrality when it came to labor disputes, but that they shifted dramatically to a pro-business stance in the wake of a major 1885 streetcar strike (*Labor and Urban Politics*, 111-14, 151, 168-73, 192).
24. *Boycotter*, October 23, 1886, 2; July 17, 1886, 2.
25. *Irish World*, March 13, 1886, 7.
26. *New York Times*, March 6, 1886, 1; *New York Sun*, March 6, 1886, 1; *Irish World*, March 13, 1886, 4.
27. *New York Times*, March 6, 1886, 1; March 11, 1886, 3; *New York Sun*, March 6, 1886, 1; *New York Tribune*, March 6, 1886, 1; *Irish World*, March 13, 1886, 7; *JSP*, March 14, 1886, 1; *Boycotter*, March 6, 1886, 2.
28. *New York Times*, March 11, 1886, 3.
29. *New York Times*, April 18, 1886, 1.
30. *New York Times*, March 20, 1886, 2; April 30, 1886, 1. For another example of a denunciation of unions as tyrannical organizations, see Henry Clews, "The Labor Crisis," *North American Review* 142 (June 1886), 598-602.
31. *New York Times*, April 16, 1886, 1; *Boycotter*, April 24, 1886, 2; Cohen, *Reconstruction of American Liberalism*, 128; Kraditor, *Radical Persuasion*, 81; Tomlins, *State and the Unions*, 6. For a vivid cartoon depicting labor unions as tyrannical, see "The New Slavery and the New Slave-Driver," *Puck*, March 9, 1887.
32. *New York Times*, April 17, 1886, 1. For a similar expression invoking "the public" by Jay Gould, see *New York Times*, March 16, 1886, 1.
33. *New York Times*, April 19, 1886; April 20, 1886, 1.
34. *New York Times*, April 19, 1886, 1; April 21, 1886, 1; April 30, 1886, 5.
35. *New York Times*, April 19, 1886, 1; Phelan, *Grand Master Workman*, 178-83.
36. *New York Times*, April 30, 1886, 3.
37. *New York Times*, April 21, 1886, 1; April 23, 1886, 5; April 26, 1886, 1; May 3, 1886, 8; May 4, 1886, 2; May 15, 1886, 3; *Irish World*, May 1, 1886, 7.