

you in short with a few questions to promote the welfare of all humanity. Respectfully, J. Otto —."

Here are the questions he asks:

"First. Is it just that a 40-acre farm is taxed two-thirds higher than an 80-acre of like character of soil, 'only because the former has just as good or better improvements as the latter?'"

"Second. Is it honorable if the law taxes a farm one to ten times higher than another of equal value, 'only because it is cultivated more or less well than the other?'"

"Third. Does it show a noble temperament if any good grain farm is taxed discriminatingly from another of any kind, whether cattle, fruit or vegetable farm, if similar conditions of soil are present?"

"I am willing to testify that under a simple, just taxation of land and money any small farmer, as well as any other mechanic or tradesman, can get along; for that reason my knowledge is permeated with the belief and confidence that homelessness and worthlessness, as well as need and recklessness, will in a short time sink almost into impossibility. With the conviction that I am in a position to prove this to any one, I remain, respectfully, very submissively,

—New York Tribune, of April 19, 1903.

### THE BIOGRAPHY OF A SAINT.

For The Public.

There recently passed away a life, known to myself and a few others, which ought to be told if only in brief outline.

Five years ago this man knew his days were numbered. He might live a few years, he might pass away at any moment. I have never read or known truer heroism than he showed in those doomed days that stretched into five long years. So far as he himself was concerned he would have greeted death with a smile any day of these years—the sooner the better for him. But for the world about him it was well that he lived every day that was granted to him.

I had known him eight years. Several years before I came to meet him, he had become acquainted with the works of Henry George, and these writings became a gospel to him. Deeply religious by nature, and a devoted adherent of the church, he saw in George's teachings the very culmination of the gospel for this world as taught by Jesus. The theory that all of God's children were equally entitled to God's world was a veritable revelation to him.

Some years ago I received a letter from him in which he said: "In the midst of the dark injustice of the world, and seeing no light ahead, I found that my faith in God was dying. No words can tell my agony. Was the misery of poverty all that the masses could expect here? Had God made this rich and beautiful world for the few? Was there to be no chance of happy development for all his people? Could this be God's world, if so few owned its usage and fruitage? Were the millions that surely had divine souls put here only to slave for all their days in the bare effort for food? Surely, I thought, if this be so, then is it not God's but some Devil's world."

It is easy for us to see how, writing thus, he welcomed Henry George's books as almost a divine revelation to his darkened vision of life. And so it was. From the day he saw what he conceived to be the truth in "Progress and Poverty," his whole view of life was changed. Life became again a buoyant aspiration, and it continued so until his death. All that he did had reference to the fresh truth, which, however old, had come to him as a new birth in these closing years.

He was a man of position in his community, a leader in various social and philanthropic activities. His antecedents and education had given him an assured station among the people in whose midst he had been born and reared. He was as popular as a man could be whose life was quiet, and free from all pretense and immodest push.

Now herein lay his heroism. In a community where the single tax was then unknown, he, the prominent, conservative citizen, had to proclaim his new platform. And he not only proclaimed it in his former unassuming manner, but he became aggressive. He soon found that his hitherto commanding position in the community was being undermined. People did not listen to him, did not defer to him as formerly.

Then it was that more than ever his nobility, as well as his good sense, showed itself to some of us. Instead of allowing himself to be set aside, he redoubled his efforts in all the chief interests of his community. He deliberately set himself to maintaining his influence as a public spirited citizen, and he did this with the sole purpose of being able to accomplish more for the cause to which he had devoted himself. Prominence was really distasteful to his nature, and many things he did were crosses to him, assumed, as I have said, deliberately in behalf of

furthering and giving weight to his influence in maintaining the teachings of Henry George.

Few knew the depth of his purpose and the heroism with which he adhered to it, all the while facing the doom of an incurable malady. To those who did know, his life was a benediction and an inspiration. No medieval saint was ever fired with deeper enthusiasm, was ever hallowed with a more perfect spirit of devotion and sacrifice.

J. H. DILLARD.

### THE CULTIVATION OF PHILADELPHIA'S VACANT LOTS.

The Philadelphia Vacant Lots Cultivation is a charity in which sociologists take the keenest interest. For this is a charity that aims, paradoxically, to be not a charity at all; that aims to help as a friend helps, without causing amongst its pensioners that degradation which is, termed, in sociology, "the pauperizing influence."

R. F. Powell, of No. 14 South Broad street, is the superintendent of the association, and its directors are James T. Shinn, Dr. Thomas S. K. Morton, Nathaniel B. Crenshaw, Frederic W. Spiers, Franklin B. Kirkbride, Samuel McCune, Lindsay and Joseph Fels. It was organized in 1897, and in the five years of its life it has developed very remarkably. At the end of 1903, indeed, its development will have been about 1,000 per cent.

The association borrows from certain benevolent owners of real estate vacant tracts of land. These tracts it divides into quarter-acre gardens, which it lends to poor people—to old men principally, to invalids and to maimed persons. It advances to its pensioners the seed, the fertilizer and the few simple tools that truck gardening requires, and it directs the work of planting, growing and gathering of the various crops of potatoes, peas, cabbages, beans, tomatoes, onions and corn. The pensioners begin in April to work. They are engaged pleasantly and healthfully for two or three hours a day, and by June they start to take in their crops, and by the end of the season they have, in many cases, vegetables enough to see them through the winter.

All this food comes to them through their own work, and hence they feel that they earn it. To be sure, they do not pay rent for the land they till; but, on the other hand, they improve the land greatly, grad-