

### How to Promote Progress

The obvious step is to make site-value the sole basis of revenue taxes and incidentally to abolish all taxes upon food, clothing and shelter; live stock, orchards and farm improvements; buildings, ships and machinery; trade, transportation, manufacturing and agriculture; thrift, skill and efficiency; and upon success in useful business.

The adoption of this policy—with taxes upon site-value increased at least to the point where adequate use of valuable land, whether for buildings or for open spaces, becomes uniformly more profitable to owners than inadequate use or non-use—would mean the solution of the land question; with it would be solved the tax question.

The Site Value System by entirely untaxing the use of land would add a large new value to land ownership; by entirely untaxing improvements it would make the taxes lower than now upon nearly all farms, as it would also to a wide extent upon other improved real estate. By destroying the speculative demand for land, it would reduce the price of land and reduce the total carrying charge (interest and taxes combined) upon ALL land bought after the change. It would permit the market supply of land, urban and rural, to keep pace with the demand and would thus reduce to a minimum the cost of land-ownership and of land use.

The taxes paid by each taxpayer would then be proportioned to the market-value of publicly-maintained benefits actually placed at his command. They would no longer be proportioned to the skill and success with which he serves himself and the public.

The Site Value System would abridge nothing in private ownership of land but its abuse. Constructively by securing revenue and protecting industry by a plan more effective than tariffs, it would lessen and probably remove the demand for economic barriers between us and those with whom our citizens wish to trade. It would open ample opportunities within our own borders for capital and thus reduce the incentive to economic imperialism. It would aid us immeasurably in

meeting the problems of reconstruction, and by undermining certain formidable economic causes of war, would materially contribute to making an end of war.—*Prof. Lewis J. Johnson at Detroit Open Forum.*