

Land Rent And the Science of Political Economy

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ALL Natural Laws are inexorably operative, and so far as our "applied sciences" are concerned, even the acceptance and applying of them involves no moral questioning. But when they concern the self-willed doings of human beings (instead of the reactions of senseless matter) the applying of them actually depends upon personally responsible moral thinking by "common-sense sense-of-justice" voters. Although physical science laws have been "applied" without such questioning, social science laws can obviously be applied only by *democratic conviction that they are just*—by unprejudiced rather than learned thinking.

"Single Tax" is a short name for *Government Collection of the Society-Created Rent Values*, which naturally attach to land as being the Natural Law Revenue for Government Expenses. It means that the socializing of land rent, and the leaving of individually produced values to the producers of them, is the basic Law of Economic Science.

This Natural Law is the self-evident truth that all humanity produced values belong to the producers of them. And the clearly revealing scientific fact is that these rental values of land are produced by and therefore belong to human society—not to individuals.

This scientific fact is strikingly revealed in cities by high competitive biddings for exclusive possession of business or residence sites, which are more or less benefited by society improvements and services; and by the apparent fact that these rental value biddings amount approximately to the society expenditures which create and maintain them.

Present "real estate values" are a confusing aggregation of private property (buildings, etc.), with these society-created rent values which attach to God-given sites and which equitably belong to society. The frequently enormous selling values of these publicly-benefited sites are merely *speculative capitalizations* of these privately-diverted land rent values—rising with "booms" and falling with public collection.

As this fixedly-limited God-given earth is the heritage and sole store-house and work-shop for human beings of all times, races and abilities, the opportunities it affords for human living and development are given equally to all, for due reward of their varying individual doings. This obviously calls for common distribution of the rewards which are *jointly produced* by their cooperation as gregarious beings.

It is a clearly-revealed fact that these jointly-produced rewards are beneficently measured for human use by the Natural Law of Land Rent—which automatically measures privileges given by the possession of land.

"Single Tax" aims solely at fair distribution of these jointly produced site values, by using them for payment of society expenses. Without this, due reward for individual doings is impossible; with it, free operation of known Natural Laws (supply and demand, etc.), will effectually guide to correction of other economic wrongs without the interference of man-made laws.

The socializing of land rents will not only yield revenue to provide for the government expenditures which help create and maintain them, but will enable owners of privately-produced wealth to freely use it—first, in business enterprises yielding only uncertain "profits" (as earned "wages" competitively measured); and second, in guaranteed loanings with guaranteed yields (as "interest" determined by supply and demand)—but with no alternative of investing in land rent values.

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