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SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENT OF LAND VALUES.

Whenever a proposal is made that the tax system be changed and land values be made to bear a neavier share of the burden, the question is always raised, how can the value of a city lot, apart from the building, be fairly as-

To answer this question the Toronto Tax Reform League are inviting business men and municipal officials to attend a demonstration of the Somers' System of land valuation at the convention of the League in Toronto on Tuesday afternoon, September 5th.

Before the National Association of Real Estate Exchanges a year ago, Mr. Doty, who will speak in Toronto, gave an address on the Unit System of land valuation, and explained the difficulties that faced assessors in part as follows:

The land value of city lots is simply a site value. The land of a city lot may be fertile or it may be barren. This has nothing to do with its value; this value arises entirely because of its location amid the people of the city through its frontage. The value of city lots varies as do the size and location of this frontage. The value is modified by the amount of land that is connected with the frontage; this is called the depth. Therefore, there are three things that affect the value of the city lot, and I name them in the order of their importance; location, size, shape. of their importance; location, size, shape.

In ascertaining the value of any particular lot these three elements must always be taken into consideration, and it is because of the existence of these three differing factors of value that we find it practically impossible to compare the value of one city lot with that of another. In comparing the value of two lots, it is necessary to compare three factors on the one hand with three on the other, and three factors on the one hand with three on the other, and the human mind does not quickly, accurately and satisfactorily compare three things with three things. It is the attempt to make comparisons in this way that produces the uncertainty in arriving satisfactorily at the comparative value of city property. value of city property.

It is largely the attempt to make comparisons of lot values in this impossible way that produces the very wide differences of judgment sometimes noted in so-called expert opinions of value in our courts and before our taxing boards. Each expert views the matter in question with many affect ing factors in mind; and these affecting factors are as numerous and different as the experts. Heretofore, there has been no method devised by which each expert would be conveiled. compelled, or even expected to employ factors for the basis of judgment the same as other experts attempting to solve the same problem. The use of the Somers Unit System eliminates the side issues or the subsidiary factors of site valuation and simplifies the problem to the end that different judgments of different men are weighing only the same factor of value. This makes it easy to use the judgment and knowledge that the appraiser or expert has. And when we make a task case of performance whether that task be we make a task easy of performance, whether that task be mental, physical or mechanical, we make for efficiency and accuracy of result.

At the Tax Reform League's Convention a practical application of the Somers' plan will be made on a central block of city property, and leading real estate men will be invited to assist. The proposal is creating interest.