

**THE LAND RENT OF MANHATTAN—1813 to 1912.  
A CENTURY OF TRIBUTE**

**SHOWING THE BILLIONS THE LANDOWNERS HAVE EXTRACTED  
FROM THE PEOPLE OF THE METROPOLIS.**

*(For the Review)*

By **ALBERT FIRMIN.**

According to the last census the average United States farm consists of 131.1 acres. One hundred farms of this area would approximately equal the extent of Manhattan Island, since its area is but 13,226 acres. The island is not quite thirteen miles long, and it does not exceed two and a half miles across at the widest part. Many timber tracks and ranches of greater area have been owned in this country by single individuals, but the value of this little patch of the earth's surface, and the speed with which this value has grown, are staggering. Nowhere else on the surface of the globe have such values been reached in so short a time, nor is there any other spot where the relation between land values and the growth of the community is more clearly discernible.

The growth from wilderness to metropolis has been phenomenal. To thoroughly grasp what this marvelous development amounts to, it must be borne in mind that the island never had any mineral resources, and though at the time of discovery it was richly timbered, and parts were fertile, the timber had then no commercial value owing to its distance from the European market and its soil was no more fertile than millions of acres of other land equally available. True it is that the island was beautiful to look upon, and when the courageous crew of the Half Moon first sailed along its western shore, it presented a panorama of picturesque hills, full mantled with a primeval forest of oak, of conifers and chestnut, and towering stately above all, the dominating giant tulip. The shores were indented with pebbly beaches, which to the mariners long confined to restricted decks, must have invited dalliance, and seemed like open, inviting portals to the beauties that lay beyond, half revealed and half concealed. But great as were the natural beauties of the island, they had then no sale or rental value in the eyes of man, and distant as it was from civilization, these beauties could no more have been capitalized at that time than the glories of a rainbow, or a mirage on the horizon. It was not until the discoverers were followed by immigrants in numbers, and the strategic advantage of the position for settlement realized, that the land assumed any considerable value, but just as the current of immigration has set toward this spot, and population has increased, have the land values risen.

To dwell upon the early rise of these values through the first two centuries of the island's history, would be superfluous for the purposes of this article, and I will confine myself to the period embraced in the last century—

that is, from 1812 to the present time—except that I may mention that in 1688 the assessment lists had grown to 78,231 pounds, or \$265,000. Within this period, and from this little dot on the earth's surface, the owners have reaped riches over and above and apart from any they may have achieved through the exercise of industry and intelligence, but solely by virtue of their parchment titles, that surpass the dreams of Midas. Even the wealth of far-famed Golconda, the riches of Ophir as described by the Phoenicians, or the resources of Darius and of Croesus, are insignificant in comparison with the land values of Manhattan.

The history of Manhattan during the century under consideration has been an unparalleled record of growth and achievement. Probably nowhere else has the genius, industry and zeal of man found a more favorable situation for expression, but the participants in the development of Manhattan have not been permitted to enjoy unmolested the rewards of their industry and genius, but have throughout paid heavy tribute to those persons, they and their descendants, favored by fortune, who happen to have preempted the site on which the city has spread. The facts which will be brought forth in respect to this tribute must not be regarded as mere milestones marking whence we have come, but as defining the path we are now treading, and which also opens out before us. And this path, hard and trying though it be, unless indeed there be most radical changes, must be trod not only by this generation but by others yet to come even beyond the ken of man. More than this, the probabilities are that these conditions will even intensify the further we proceed in the direction we are pursuing.

Whether we have in mind former generations, the present one, or those yet to come, we can divide all the inhabitants of our island into two classes; namely, landowners and tenants. From this division there is no escape. And recognizing this, we are forced also to acknowledge that all are either the receivers of rent or the payers of it. Or in other words, those who pay to live and those who live on what is paid. It is not my purpose, however, to indulge in a condemnation of the landowners as such, for we must recognize that they are merely a feature of an economic system, and that responsibility for this system rests as much upon the ignorance, apathy and gambling instincts of the victims as upon any active defense by the beneficiaries.

I wish further to bring to mind preliminary to the statistics which follow, that if a man becomes the owner of any product of labor, no matter how substantial it may seem, that use will wear it out, and that eventually without use, merely under the influence of time, it will decay and lose whatever value may have originally attached to it. Certain things may be pointed to as exceptions to the general law, the value of which may even be enhanced with age. But the number of such things is very limited. The exceptions are, moreover, apparent only, for on close inquiry it will be found, though the end of these things may not be in sight, and it may be practicable to postpone such end for an indefinite period, that it will inevitably be reached. Generally it will be found that in order to defer final disintegration in such cases,

very great labor and care must be continuously expended, and that the aggregate of human effort to extend the ordinary existence of things is equal to if not greater than the effort which would be required for duplication. In such cases the reasons which prompt protection and care are usually sentimental rather than utilitarian; or else the articles are such that duplication would be impracticable. Thus it will be seen that if those who invested their money in Manhattan land two centuries ago, or even but two generations ago, had invested it in practically any product of human labor such product would long since have ceased to be. In fact we can safely assume that existence of the property would have terminated before the passing of the second generation.

Investigation into investments in Manhattan land discloses an entirely different condition; in fact, the very antithesis of this. Instead of age or time impairing, and finally annihilating value, as in the case of a product of labor, land, as time advances, increases in value. True it is that in the case of agricultural land there may be discovered an apparent impoverishment consequent upon cultivation over a long period, but even here a well selected rotation of crops and scientific cultivation will maintain fertility unto eternity. And in the case of land such as we have under consideration, that is the land of Manhattan, the value of which has throughout the major part of the time been dependant not upon its fertility but upon its advantages as a center of population, there can never be a diminution consequent upon age so long as the forces which control values are in operation, and these are as eternal as the force of gravity or the laws of inertia. It may be objected that though land values are not affected by time they are subject to fluctuations due to other causes observed in the progress of time, and this is true, but the extent of these fluctuations in Manhattan has been so small and transient compared with the great volume of steadily advancing values that they may be disregarded, particularly as we are considering the situation in its largest features as affecting the two divisions of people concerned, and not individuals within either group who may happen to vary as to the benefits derived from ownership or penalty suffered from lack of it. In a well known fairy tale there is a magic pitcher, from which can be poured on desire a plenteous stream of milk, yet which never empties. From the land of Manhattan the holders have for centuries been enjoying a golden stream of rent, yet there is no diminution of the supply, but on the contrary the source is higher than ever and the volume is in every way greater. Land value rises with the community, endures so long as the community endures, and terminates when and only when the community ceases to exist. The owner can do but little if anything either towards increasing or diminishing land values. The owner is the beneficiary not the creator. The following table shows the assessed valuation of real estate in Manhattan, as reported by the successive Commissioners of Taxes and Assessments from 1813 to 1905 inclusive, and the assessed value of the land from 1906 to 1912 inclusive, the entire table comprising the full century. By the assessed value of real estate is meant both land and the fixed improvements upon it, but not personal property.



In 1812 the legislature enacted a law that became operative in 1813, requiring full value assessment, but as only one of the several assessors secured a copy of the law prior to the appraisals for that year, his ward was the only one even alleged to have been assessed thereunder. It should be said that throughout the century it is probable that there has been no single year when real estate has actually been assessed at its full value, though individual parcels and different sections from time to time may have been. The history of the period is replete with arguments as to the duties of the assessors in respect to this requirement of the law.

Following this act there was no measure of any real importance affecting the methods of assessment until the passage of the act which became Chapter 454, vol. 2, of the laws of New York for 1903, providing for the first time in this State for the separate assessment of land and improvements. As to the separate assessment of land and improvements, prior to the then current agitation which resulted in the passage of the law of 1903, the vital distinction between land and improvements thereon had attracted practically no attention in the State of New York, yet at frequent intervals the public had been deeply aroused on the subject of taxation, and Commissions had been appointed by the legislature to study the matter. In the neighboring State of Connecticut, a special committee on taxation reported to the General Assembly as early as 1887 in favor of the separate assessment of land and improvements, and this as well as the final passage of the New York act of 1903, are doubtless attributable to the enlightenment of the community through the agitation of Henry George, including his epoch-making campaign of 1886. The far-reaching effects of the separate assessment of land and improvements have not been even yet more than dimly discerned. In the absence therefore, of official figures during the period when no distinction was made, it is necessary to determine as nearly as practicable what the actual value of the land was, and the figures of recent years will afford at least a guide. Allowing several years for the assessors to have become familiar with the practical workings of the law, I have selected the figures for 1912 from the report of the Commissioner of Taxes and Assessments, and they are as follows:

Borough of Manhattan.....	66.9	per cent	land value.
"    Bronx.....	59.9	"	"
"    Brooklyn.....	50.5	"	"
"    Queens.....	66.4	"	"
"    Richmond.....	52.7	"	"
All Boroughs.....	62.6	"	"

The maximum difference is seen to be between Manhattan, 66.9 and Brooklyn 50.5. The fact that the rate of land value is so great in Manhattan is explained by the fact that the land in certain sections has become so immensely valuable that no matter how imposing or sumptuous the structure, nor how high into the heavens it may reach, the value will not be likely to equal the value of the land site. Clearly this condition did not prevail a

century ago, but has been reached only during recent years. Hence we cannot take the present percentage for Manhattan and apply it to 1813 or for many years thereafter.

In new communities improvements are likely to be more valuable than land, since much land is ordinarily available while improvements are difficult to effect, and though it cannot be said that Manhattan in 1813 was new, it can truthfully be said that it was still young, and that the conditions which are characteristic of new communities still lingered. On the other hand, even in 1812 the density of population in Manhattan had reached 8 per acre, or more than double the present density of Queens and Richmond, which with the Bronx and Brooklyn make up the city of New York to-day. In Queens, owing to the wide area of vacant land held for speculative purposes and the minor character of most of the improvements, the percentage of land values to the total value of real estate as shown is 66.4 per cent. In Richmond, where conditions prevail somewhat similar to those in Queens, as far as improvements are concerned, but where the demand for land owing to inaccessibility has not prompted speculation to the same extent, the percentage of land values is seen to be but 52.7. In the Bronx where the character of improvements, at least of recent date, have been exceptionally valuable for outlying sections, due chiefly to the superior transit facilities afforded by the subways and elevated lines, the percentage of land values is but 59.9.

Brooklyn ranks next to Manhattan in density of population, but so much land has been available there for an extended period owing to the wide and far spread of its trolley lines, etc., that it has been difficult to monopolize it. The value of the land for some time, moreover, has been great enough to largely prohibit acreage holdings, yet low enough to be within reach of home builders. This has brought about an extensive construction of dwellings, of a modest character it is true when regarded individually, but in the aggregate of a value so great that they almost balance the value of the land; the actual percentage of land value being 50.5

On the whole it is thought it would be fair to assume that for Manhattan from the date first covered in our inquiry up to 1890 the land value was equal to 50 per cent. of the assessed value. It could not well be less, not only in view of the facts just mentioned, but since, as previously said, the assessments have throughout the entire period under consideration failed to represent the full value of the land though ostensibly doing so. It is on the basis of 50 per cent., therefore, that the following table has been based. From 1891 to 1906 inclusive, however, there is good reason to believe the ratio of land value to total assessed value should be increased. In 1904 the law to assess land and improvements separately went into effect, but though this law may have been observed so far as the assessment was concerned, the municipal statisticians took no account of the separation until the figures for 1906 were compiled, when the value of the land of Manhattan was fixed at 68 per cent. of the total assessed value of all real estate. It would, therefore, seem justifiable to gradually rise from the estimated value assigned to

the period that terminated with 1890 until we reach 1906, and accordingly the following table is based on the advance of one per cent. per annum from 1891 to 1905 inclusive, after which latter date the official statistics are available.

TABLE SHOWING APPROXIMATE LAND VALUES BASED ON ASSESSED VALUATION OF REAL ESTATE FOR ONE CENTURY IN MANHATTAN.

1813.....	\$11,755,402	1859.....	\$189,477,465
1814.....	14,045,748	1860.....	199,266,809
1815.....	21,349,929	1861.....	203,477,832
1816.....	28,654,100	1862.....	199,775,657
1817.....	28,899,717	1863.....	201,098,326
1818.....	29,913,642	1864.....	205,347,742
1819.....	30,245,222	1865.....	213,702,192
1820.....	26,031,979	1866.....	239,497,467
1821.....	25,309,860	1867.....	277,833,576
1822.....	26,665,787	1868.....	311,650,130
1823.....	25,092,114	1869.....	342,124,436
1824.....	26,009,865	1870.....	371,051,537
1825.....	27,303,587	1871.....	384,653,205
1826.....	32,456,425	1872.....	398,562,557
1827.....	36,166,685	1873.....	418,345,990
1828.....	38,569,940	1874.....	429,320,815
1829.....	38,917,790	1875.....	430,506,515
1830.....	43,801,790	1876.....	434,821,772
1831.....	47,797,167	1877.....	436,075,519
1832.....	52,080,302	1878.....	438,927,850
1833.....	57,062,283	1879.....	447,763,640
1834.....	61,624,640	1880.....	459,834,852
1835.....	71,871,212	1881.....	476,702,187
1836.....	116,866,151	1882.....	508,358,240
1837.....	98,225,054	1883.....	529,082,186
1838.....	97,271,679	1884.....	547,120,266
1839.....	98,470,067	1885.....	573,594,306
1840.....	93,610,852	1886.....	586,564,999
1841.....	93,179,974	1887.....	610,851,045
1842.....	88,256,546	1888.....	632,266,080
1843.....	82,477,657	1889.....	646,185,734
1844.....	85,968,795	1890.....	676,946,736
1845.....	88,603,995	1891.....	720,924,300
1846.....	90,740,267	1892.....	754,528,047
1847.....	93,657,693	1893.....	797,104,166
1848.....	96,501,453	1894.....	837,249,629
1849.....	98,870,959	1895.....	869,078,925
1850.....	103,571,288	1896.....	922,280,315
1851.....	113,557,928	1897.....	965,849,248
1852.....	126,639,192	1898.....	1,042,518,546
1853.....	147,318,648	1899.....	1,212,393,286
1854.....	165,150,198	1900.....	1,238,843,391
1855.....	168,487,933	1901.....	1,295,782,938
1856.....	170,486,049	1902.....	1,358,897,634
1857.....	176,479,401	1903.....	2,082,997,779
1858.....	184,173,148	1904.....	2,331,624,519

1905.....	\$2,335,255,117	1909.....	\$2,829,746,871
1906.....	2,600,140,211	1910.....	2,905,201,140
1907.....	2,707,862,301	1911.....	3,114,812,658
1908.....	2,807,194,281	1912.....	3,127,852,473

Of the land of Manhattan it is unfortunately true that certain of it has been held idle by the owners even to this day, but in the main it has throughout the period under consideration been in use, the use varying in a degree according to the requirements of the time. It is not to be inferred from this that the land has been put to its maximum service, for our inverted system of taxation has operated throughout against this, but the use has corresponded with the character of the city as it has undergone a metamorphosis from the prosperous center of 1813 to the metropolis of the continent in 1912.

It is safe to estimate that the return to the owners of New York, as a class, combining the used, the partially used and the unused land together, has throughout been not less than five per cent. per annum. This sum has been taken of course as rental. In this connection it may be mentioned that the legal rate of interest has never been within the century less than six per cent in the State of New York; and that bonds of the city of New York, though it has enjoyed good credit, have at times within this period been issued on as high as a seven per cent. basis; so that when the return to the land owner is placed as low as five per cent., if there be error, it is certainly in the rate being placed too low rather than too high. Five per cent. may seem to be much too low, but it is to be remembered that allowance is to be made for land which has for periods of varying length earned no rental at all, the calculations being placed on the entire area without exempting these parcels specifically. This course is the only one practicable. It may be contended that during the early part of the century there were periods when less than five per cent. was earned, but values were then small compared with those of recent years, and whatever may have been the deficiency of that period must have been more than made good since, so that the average has been maintained. On this basis, therefore, the following table has been prepared, and it shows what the land-holders have as a class absorbed from the remainder of the community in the form of rent—that is for the privilege of residence and the pursuit of industry within the confines of the island.

TABLE SHOWING THE ESTIMATED LAND RENT AT FIVE PER CENT. FOR THE LAND OF MANHATTAN, FOR ONE CENTURY, BASED ON THE ASSESSED VALUATION OF REAL ESTATE.

1813.....	\$587,770	1820.....	\$1,301,596
1814.....	702,287	1821.....	1,265,493
1815.....	1,067,496	1822.....	1,333,289
1816.....	1,432,705	1823.....	1,254,605
1817.....	1,444,985	1824.....	1,300,493
1818.....	1,495,682	1825.....	1,365,179
1819.....	1,512,161	1826.....	1,622,821



1827.....	\$1,808,334	1870.....	\$18,552,576
1828.....	1,928,497	1871.....	19,237,660
1829.....	1,945,889	1872.....	19,928,127
1830.....	2,190,089	1873.....	20,917,299
1831.....	2,389,858	1874.....	21,466,040
1832.....	2,604,015	1875.....	21,525,325
1833.....	2,853,114	1876.....	21,741,088
1834.....	3,081,232	1877.....	21,803,775
1835.....	3,593,560	1878.....	21,946,392
1836.....	5,843,307	1879.....	22,388,182
1837.....	4,911,252	1880.....	22,991,742
1838.....	4,863,583	1881.....	23,835,109
1839.....	4,923,503	1882.....	25,417,912
1840.....	4,680,542	1883.....	26,454,109
1841.....	4,658,998	1884.....	27,356,013
1842.....	4,412,827	1885.....	28,679,715
1843.....	4,123,882	1886.....	29,828,249
1844.....	4,298,439	1887.....	30,542,552
1845.....	4,430,197	1888.....	31,613,304
1846.....	4,537,013	1889.....	32,309,286
1847.....	4,682,884	1890.....	33,847,336
1848.....	4,825,072	1891.....	36,046,215
1849.....	4,943,547	1892.....	37,726,402
1850.....	5,178,584	1893.....	39,855,206
1851.....	5,677,896	1894.....	41,862,481
1852.....	6,331,959	1895.....	43,453,946
1853.....	7,365,932	1896.....	46,114,015
1854.....	8,257,509	1897.....	48,292,462
1855.....	8,424,396	1898.....	52,125,927
1856.....	8,524,302	1899.....	60,619,664
1857.....	8,823,970	1900.....	61,942,169
1858.....	9,208,657	1901.....	64,789,146
1859.....	9,473,873	1902.....	67,944,881
1860.....	9,963,340	1903.....	104,149,888
1861.....	10,173,891	1904.....	111,581,225
1862.....	9,988,782	1905.....	116,762,755
1863.....	10,054,916	1906.....	130,007,010
1864.....	10,267,387	1907.....	135,393,115
1865.....	10,685,109	1908.....	140,359,714
1866.....	11,974,873	1909.....	141,487,343
1867.....	13,891,678	1910.....	145,260,057
1868.....	15,582,506	1911.....	155,740,632
1869.....	17,106,221	1912.....	156,392,623

The city of New York has from the very earliest time not only levied taxes upon real estate, but has levied assessments thereon for local improvements, street openings, parks, etc., in cases where adjacent property has been benefitted thereby. In considering the land rent, estimated at five per cent. no deduction has been made for taxes paid, or expenses incidental to ownership, since five per cent. has been regarded as the net rental after all such expenses have been met. To arrive at the net gain in value, however, the assessments levied upon the real estate should be added to the original cost before that amount is deducted from the value of the land as esti-

mated at the end of the century. It is impossible, however, to determine accurately just what amounts have been actually collected. In many cases long after assessments have been levied such have been cancelled by the courts, and the records, moreover, are far from complete. From data obtained by Mr. Edward Dana Durand, and given in his very able book, "The Finances of New York City," and from various reports of the Comptrollers of the city, I am of the opinion that the assessments collected on real estate in the century have not exceeded \$170,000,000. Assuming this to be the case, the following figures are self explanatory.

Value of land 1813.....	\$11,755,402
Assessments collected during century.....	170,000,000
Total cost.....	\$181,755,402

Value of land 1912.....	\$3,127,852.473
Less original value and assessments.....	181,755,402

Net gain accruing to the owners (exclusive of rent)... \$2,946,097,071

In the case of the land rent covered by the table. it may be said that it represents the burdens of those who in a large percentage of cases have passed away, and that its only interest to us now is historical, but in the case of the present value of the land the situation becomes intimately and vitally personal, since the value is based not on that which has gone before, but exclusively on that which is yet to come, for manifestly land has no value other than that which enures to it as a means of extracting from the living and those yet unborn the tribute of rent, and this is the gigantic capitalization upon which the people of New York must look forward to paying interest unto the end of time, unless the system is changed.

Let us now return to the rents collected by the favored minority, namely \$2,762 465,726. The full significance of these figures cannot be realized until they are compared with others that will disclose their relative proportions.

The figures are so vast that the wage earner particularly, accustomed to measure all sums by the contents of his pay envelope, finds the thing to be measured so infinitely larger than the measure, that he is staggered by the task, and his brain only receives an impression of size without shape or definition. Since we cannot measure the rent by one pay envelope, let us take many. According to bulletin 131, of the U. S. Bureau of labor statistics, Department of Labor, Aug. 15, 1913, the following scale of wages prevailed in New York City in 1912.

	Cts. per hr.		Cts. per hr.
Bakers first hands, English union. . . . .	35.29	Cement workers, finishers.....	62.50
Bakers, second hands.....	28.57	Cement workers, helpers.....	37.50
Bakers, third hand.....	21.43	Gas fitters.....	68.75
Bricklayers.....	70.00	Hod carriers.....	37.50
Carpenters.....	62.50	Inside wiremen.....	56.25

	Cts. per hr.		Cts. per hr.
Inside wiremen, helpers.....	27.50	Pattern makers, jobbing.....	53.13
Laborers, excavating.....	22.50	Bookbinders, finishers.....	47.92
Marble setters.....	62.50	Bookbinders, forwarders, etc.....	37.50
Painters.....	50.00	Bookbinders, forwarders, etc.....	43.75
Plasterers.....	68.75	Compositors, English union.....	47.88
Plasterers, laborers.....	40.63	Compositors, German.....	52.27
Plumbers.....	68.75	Electrotypers, batterymen.....	50.00
Sheet metal workers.....	59.38	Electrotypers, finishers.....	62.50
Steam fitters.....	68.75	Electrotypers, moulders.....	62.50
Stone masons.....	57.50	Linotype operators, English union....	52.13
Structural iron workers.....	62.50	Linotype operators, German union..	65.33
Granite cutters, inside.....	50.00	Press feeders, auto.....	38.54
Granite cutters, outside.....	56.25	Press feeders, hand.....	34.38
Stone cutters, soft stone, 1st class...	62.50	Pressmen, cylinder.....	52.08
Stone cutters, soft stone, 2nd class..	56.25	Pressmen, platen color, etc.....	52.08
Stone cutters, soft stone, 3rd class...	50.00	Pressmen, platen, color, etc.....	47.92
Blacksmiths, shopmen.....	45.28	Compositors, English.....	64.44
Blacksmiths, helpers.....	28.08	Compositors, German.....	65.33
Blacksmiths, helpers, outside.....	31.00	Compositors, English union.....	71.11
Boilermakers, shopmen.....	41.67	Compositors, night work, German...	72.00
Boilermakers, outside.....	53.13	Linotype, day work, Eng. union....	64.44
Boilermakers helpers, shopmen.....	28.89	Linotype, day work, German.....	65.33
Boilermakers, helpers, outside.....	43.75	Linotype night work, English.....	71.11
Core makers.....	38.89	Linotype, night, German.....	72.00
Machinists, manfg. shop.....	38.24	Pressmen, head, day work.....	66.67
Machinists, printing press.....	38.24	Pressmen, head, night.....	81.58
Machinists, auto repair.....	43.75	Pressmen, journeymen, day work...	53.33
Machinists, printing machine.....	53.13	Pressmen, journeymen, night work..	65.79
Machinists, press room.....	56.25	Sterotypers, day.....	56.25
Molders, iron etc.....	38.89	Sterotypers, night.....	72.37
Pattern makers.....	51.00		

It will be observed that this list though far from comprehensive of all trades, is fairly representative of the skilled trades practiced in Manhattan, and includes many in which the unions are strongest and wages highest. The mean hourly wage of all is 52.13 cents, or approximately \$4.19 for an eight hour day. Allowing three hundred working days per annum, this gives an annual wage of \$1257., which of course is largely in excess of the actual earnings of the men engaged, since no allowance is made for time lost through disemployment, sickness, etc., but the figure will serve the purpose of this computation. On this basis it will be found that the landowners have absorbed through land rent from Manhattan in the past century the equivalent of the earnings of 20,000 skilled mechanics, receiving the mean wage indicated, and working in excess of 109 years.

Further let it be supposed, that the rent had not been collected but permitted to fall into arrears, and that at the end of the century it had been demanded, and it will be found that if every man, woman and child residing in Manhattan in 1910, (2,331,542,) had been employed at the full wage above given, it would have taken 282 days, or nearly one working year to have paid up.

Turning in another direction to find a standard with which to measure the rent collected during the century, let our mines of precious metals be taken. The last census, (page 545 of the abstract,) gives the total value of the product of all mines of precious metals in the United States for 1909, which is the last year included therein, at \$87,671,553., so that it would take the full production of all for over 31 years to equal the sum of the land rental during the period under investigation.

If we omit the product of the placer mines, \$10,237,252, and consider only the deep mines of metals, we find that their total output, \$77,434,301. for 1909, was less than one half the value of Manhattan ground rent for the single year 1912. Truly when we say the Manhattan landlord has a gold mine, we magnify the value of the gold mine and very inadequately set forth the value of the land.

Further investigation shows that not only has the ground rent grown to enormous proportions, but it has outstripped the growth of the population. The per capita rental in 1910 was six times greater than in 1820. The per capita rental moreover, has almost doubled in ten years.

Year	Population	Rent	per capita.
1820	123,706	\$1,301,596	\$10.52
1830	202,589	2,190,089	10.81
1840	312,710	4,680,542	14.96
1850	515,547	5,178,564	10.04
1860	813,669	9,963,340	12.24
1870	942,292	18,552,576	19.68
1880	1,164,673	22,941,742	19.74
1890	1,441,216	33,847,336	23.48
1900	1,850,093	61,942,169	33.48
1910	2,331,542	145,260,057	62.30

It is natural under these conditions that the demand for rapid transit to make accessible the outlying territory of the adjacent boroughs should be loud and insistent. And as might be expected recent events have disclosed a combination of land interests and transit interests that have availed themselves of the conditions for the better exploitation of the city and its citizens. The land interests and the transit interests hold in common the desire to postpone relief. The land interests intuitively feel that that postponement of transit development into the outlying boroughs increases rent through the intensifying of congestion in Manhattan, while the railway corporations seeing dividends in every strap hanger, and shorter rides in Manhattan than into the outlying sections, have desired to maintain the status quo, and by continually postponing development have used the pressure of the peoples' necessities as exerted upon public officials to wring from these officials recent contracts on their own terms.

Truly the figures are startling. As might be expected the social structure erected on this unnatural foundation presents most abnormal conditions and contrasts. Here the shadow of the palace falls upon the tenement, and

the extremes of great wealth and squalid impoverishment can be observed at the same time. Those who share the enormous wealth are surfeited with luxuries to the point that ennui has supplanted satisfaction. Those who contribute the wealth suffer the evils of congestion, of hunger and privation. Small wonder it is that brutality and depravity are manifest; rather the marvel is that civilization progresses as it does: even that it perseveres amid conditions so unjust, so degrading, so intolerable and anti-social. While the land value created by the community is being appropriated by the few, and diverted from the public treasury where it justly and logically belongs, we place 75,000 children attending the public schools on part time; we provide for many thousands of others but one teacher for each class of approximately forty; we turn patients from our hospitals when barely convalescent; we deny the requests of our health authorities for appropriations wherewith to war on consumption and other diseases of poverty and congestion; we permit our respectable malefactors to defy our child labor, and factory and tenement laws, secure in the knowledge that sufficient funds will not be provided to enforce them. In what a terrible cycle is the community involved. The greater the amount contributed the more necessitous are those who contribute it, and the more necessitous they become, the less means have they of combatting the evils inseparable from the system. The destruction of the poor is their poverty.

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## **SINGLE TAX WOMEN OF THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT.**

*(For the Review.)*

By **AMY MALI HICKS.**

On evening several years ago the Women's Henry George League, as was then customary, held its monthly social in the home of George and Charlotte Hampton. This special meeting has since been called our "experience meeting," because each of us in turn told how he or she became converted to the Single Tax.

Afterwards I wondered what made up the great charm of that evening, and it seemed to me that as each spoke, a different aspect of the Single Tax was brought out by the distinctly individual manner in which it was presented. I have that same feeling about the work of these Single Tax women with whom I have been associated for a number of years. There is a solidarity and unity of purpose among us while at the same time each contributes something to the cause which is distinctly individual. Each one is using means which specially appeals to her and which corresponds to the measure of her ability. As speakers, writers, organizers, or as someone has called us, "able seamen," we all have our places and parts.

Taken as a group I do not think Single Tax women have great interest