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SHADE TREES FOR THE HARLEM SPEEDWAY.

It will be seen from our concluding article on the Harlem Speedway that the second section is marked by the same general excellence which was noted in our description of the first half of the work. On that part of it which lies north of Washington Bridge, there are no limitations such as necessitated a reduction in the width of the roadway on the first section, and the board was able to give the Speedway its maximum width and lay out the planting spaces continuously on each side of it for nearly the whole of the distance.

We are informed that the planting spaces were put in on the recommendation of a prominent landscape architect, now deceased; but it is not definitely stated, and we cannot believe, that he advocated walling up the roots of the trees with masonry. The bare suggestion of the thing is so radically opposed to the first principles of tree culture, that the public will be slow to believe that this device was suggested by a landscape architect, and a prominent member of his profession at that.

The longer one contemplates this device, the more amazing it appears. If ingenuity itself had set out to discover a sure tree-killer, it might have devised a more speedy, but it could never have found a more certain device than this. The outlying roots of a tree, which always delight to push their way among the crevices of such broken and rocky material as surrounds the present trenches, will here run up against a solid wall.

Unless the future appearance of the Speedway is to be ruined, there is but one course to pursue, and that is to stop all further construction of the trenches and remove every yard of wall that has been put in. It is certain that, if it is not removed now, it will have to be at a later date, and at a considerably greater expense to the city.

Structures of this kind are not built for a day, a decade, or a generation. In all the details of their planning and execution it should be borne in mind that they are intended for the use of the public in the years to come. In considering what to do in the present emergency this fact must not be forgotten. It would betoken a narrow spirit, a selfish point of view, to determine to let the planting trenches remain as they are, on the ground that their destructive action will not be felt in the immediate future.

Now that this matter has been brought to the attention of the Board, it behooves it to investigate the matter thoroughly and ascertain who is responsible for this wretched work, which has cost the city so many thousands of dollars and which has provided what is likely to prove, not a feature of beauty in time to come, but an ever increasing source of regret and mortification at the shortsightedness or lack of judgment of the projectors of the work.

THE RECLAMATION OF THE NEW JERSEY MEADOWS.

Travelers who come to New York over the railroads that have their terminal stations in Jersey City will remember the long stretch of marshy land which is crossed just before reaching the outskirts of the latter city. It forms a prosaic and monotonous finish to the picturesque ride through New Jersey, and is apt to give a first and last impression of metropolitan surroundings which is in flat contradiction to the reputation for picturesque beauty to which the environs of New York are justly entitled.

The objections to the meadows on the ground of their intrinsic ugliness, however, is the least serious that can be raised, for their existence has always been a menace to the health of the surrounding districts, and in the summer months they form a prolific breeding ground for the hordes of mosquitoes that render life burdensome in the many picturesque and otherwise desirable suburbs of Jersey City.

At various times schemes have been proposed for reclaiming this waste land, and the alternative methods of filling or diking and pumping have been made the subject of investigation and report to the governing boards of the neighboring districts. The latest and most comprehensive scheme is that proposed by the Geological Survey of New Jersey. State Geologist Vsnock recently visited Holland and investigated the vast drainage systems in that country, and the whole matter is made the subject of an exhaustive report by Engineer C. C. Vermuele, from which we learn that underlying the 27,000 acres of marsh is a mass of alluvium mixed with peat, wood, and other vegetable matter, more or less decayed.

It is stated that of the two systems of reclamation, filling and diking, the latter is the better and, indeed, the only one feasible in this case. It is stated that, even if these marshes are filled up for city purposes, pumping will still have to be resorted to, as there will not be sufficient fall to sewer and drain the district by gravity. Filling to the extent of six feet will cost an average of \$2,500 per acre. The area can be embanked and pumping works installed for about \$1,000,000, or less than \$40 per acre.

As the taxable value of the neighboring districts is about \$3,000,000,000, the cost of this improvement could readily be borne, even if it presented no return other than improved sanitary conditions and a mitigation of the mosquito pest. To make the improvement of the greatest sanitary benefit, the whole area should, as rapidly as possible, be brought under cultivation.

It is recommended that at first only the embankments and main ditches and pumping plants should be constructed, the whole area being laid out in twenty acre farms and sold as promptly as possible, on the express condition that they should be immediately and thoroughly ditched and brought under cultivation. It is urged that the prompt improvement of each plot should be considered more important than the purchase price. As soon as sanitary conditions have been brought about, the improvement of water front and business and manufacturing sites could be carried out as fast as they could be sold, the proceeds paying for the improvements.

The interest charges and operating expenses are estimated at \$6 to \$7 per acre, and it is predicted that in a few years this charge could be entirely covered by assessments on the property itself, any deficiencies in the interim being met by the surrounding districts that are benefited by the undertaking.

If the estimates of the report are not too sanguine, the whole scheme should meet with hearty approval. The substitution of over forty square miles of good land for a dismal and malodorous swamp in the midst of a district whose taxable value is \$3,000,000,000 is a proposition that should commend itself strongly to the authorities and property owners who are immediately affected, and indirectly to the State at large.

THE GREEN CROSS.

In addition to the Red Cross Society and the White Cross, which gives aid to sick or convalescent soldiers, there has just been established at Vienna a new order which will be known as that of the "Green Cross," says the Medical Record. Its object and aim is to give succor to Alp climbers and excursionists in mountain regions. It originated in the Austrian Alpine Club. The intention is to establish huts upon high mountains and to keep supplies and relief stores or boxes containing articles apt to be required in emergencies at conveniently located points.