



Another



Evolution Of A Swamp

Mayor Harry Evans stood at the entrance, passing out hammers. "What's this, a knocker's club?" inquired Ed Oswald, Chief of the Clinks. "You'll find out when you get inside," replied the Mayor.

When Ed and his delegation reached the inner chamber, Bill Tuttle took the hammers away and passed out the horns. "Blow!" said the Democratic candidate for Congress. Our motto is "Change your hammer for a horn!" "Toot! Toot!" replied all the Clinks in union. Charlie Denman said, "We're for home enterprise everytime and all the time."

The tooting was terrific when Governor Fielder, an old-time Democrat, entered, leaning on the strong Republican arm of Assemblyman Arthur Pierson. It was the Assemblyman's party really, for he was president of the Board of Trade and had organized this Know-Your-Town Exhibit. Naturally, the Governor was impressed. Representative citizens from 400 other communities, including Rye and Tarrytown-On-the-Hudson, were impressed also, and before the week was over the entertainment committee had to send out for 1,000 more horns. The object of the exhibit was not merely to show how good the old town was, but how much better it could be made by careful planning. Mr. Pierson's ideas were conveyed by maps, charts and a model of the proposed park, which met with generous approval.

Along the main artery of trade and travel, were two eye-sores which were detrimental to health and progress—one, the mill pond, swamp and dumping ground extending from Broad St. through to Mountain Ave.; the other, the crossroads and buildings on West Broad St. and Westfield Ave., opposite the Methodist Church. The East Broad St. tract was a fertile breeding ground for disease-carrying insects. A major operation was necessary to clean out and properly channel the stagnant pond, fill in the swamp, bury

an unsightly pile of miscellaneous debris, known as Peckham's dump, under many feet of redeeming earth, and convert the landscape into a beautiful park.

Mindowaskin was not the handiwork of man. Nature designed it and provided the materials which the Park Commission, under the wise direction of Chairman Pierson, used skillfully. Mr. Pierson took charge in the final stages of reclamation. Then, costs had mounted well above first estimates, and the Town Council was unwilling to vote more funds until it knew specifically what the cost of completing the work would be. The contractor was in rebellious mood and threatened to quit. "It will cost a pretty pile of money to lay a road through that swamp," he said. "I've already spent too much dredging this mill pond and I'll go broke if I don't watch out."

Chairman Pierson surveyed the scene and cogitated. A molasses-like residuum of clay, muck and tarvia was being poured onto the bank by the big steam shovel. He noticed that it congealed readily.

"Look here!" said he to the contractor, "suppose you take this stuff over there and use it for ballast for the road. I think it will do the trick, if you mix it with gravel. Any way, it's worth trying."

And it did the trick at a considerable saving of time and money. The muck of Clark's Pond laid in the quagmire of an ancient swamp forms the bed of the road through Mindowaskin. It will endure the wear and tear of centuries of travel.

Mindowaskin Park was completed during the First World War. It cost the Town (exclusive of the mill pond, which was purchased by public subscription) \$55,000. And that, it is agreed, it is a modest sum to pay for an improvement of inestimable value to the community.