

going to begin any day. And as soon as it did, anyone left in the area would be put out in the street with no further warning. "That was all I heard," one holdout remembers. "If you don't get out, we'll put you out in the street." Out in the street! Out in the street! As the Tsar had harried them—or their fathers or their grandfathers—out of the *shetls* of the Pale, the Coordinator harried them out of East Tremont. By November, the Nassau Management Company could proudly announce: "In less than ten months, we have relocated 90 percent of the 1,530 occupants of Section 2."

38. One Mile (Afterward)

AFTER THE TENANTS had been rushed out of their homes, it turned out that there had been no real need to rush after all.

To obtain the initial state consent to build the Cross-Bronx Expressway, Moses had, as usual, drastically underestimated its cost—which inflation was pushing higher by the month, anyway. By the time—November 1955—that Nassau Management boasted that almost all the tenants were gone, so was almost all the state's highway construction fund, which had to bear half the expressway's cost. Passage of a referendum authorizing a new bond issue for highways would, in 1956, give the state another \$400,000,000, but the state was not anxious to spend this new money on the Cross-Bronx: with congestion on Moses' Bronx-Whitestone Bridge worsening, by 1955 he was allocating Triborough funds for another, Throgs Neck, span on the east and the expressway would have to be extended eastward to reach it; with congestion on the George Washington Bridge at the expressway's western end also worsening, and with two intersecting Moses expressways already under construction (the Sheridan, named after engineer Arthur Sheridan, and the Bruckner, named after long-time Bronx borough president Henry Bruckner) obviously going to dump even more traffic onto the Cross-Bronx, it was apparent even before its tragic mile through East Tremont had been cleared that traffic on the Cross-Bronx was going to be immensely heavier than expected—too heavy to possibly be accommodated on the old Washington (not the George) Bridge (constructed in 1888 under the sponsorship of George Washington Plunkitt), on which the road had been expected to cross the Harlem River. Moses decided to build a new bridge—the Alexander Hamilton—right next to the Washington. Designing the expressway extension and the Hamilton Bridge—particularly the bridge, for immense curls of cloverleaf spaghetti would be required to link it to the Deegan and Harlem River highways flanking the river more than a hundred feet below—would take an estimated eighteen months. Obviously, the Cross-Bronx Expressway was not going to be finished—or anywhere near finished—for years. There were other highways around the state that could be finished sooner—in time, say, for the 1958 gubernatorial election for which Averell Harriman was so anxious to be able to cut ribbons—and the money might better be spent on them. Moreover, the colossal true cost of the Cross-Bronx could no longer be concealed; before it was finished, the highway, including its interchanges with other highways and the bridge carrying it

over the Harlem, would be the most expensive road constructed in all history, would cost not the \$47,000,000 that Moses had originally "estimated" but \$250,000,000. Now that Moses had cleared the right-of-way for the expressway, he had no money to build it—and, in fact, was not able to get it under way again except on a token construction scale until 1957, after the Federal Interstate Highway Act of 1956 had authorized an increase in the federal contribution from 50 to 90 percent. Even then, moreover, there would be continual delays. Bids came in far over contract estimates; new estimates would have to be prepared and new rounds of bidding held. Construction of the final segment of the Cross-Bronx Expressway—the Bruckner traffic circle near its eastern end—would not be completed until 1973. The rest of the Cross-Bronx Expressway would not be completed until 1963. And the one mile of the expressway in East Tremont would not be completed until 1960—five years after Moses had removed from that mile the people who lived in it.

Five thousand people had been removed from East Tremont, but that was 5,000 out of 60,000. There were still 55,000 left. Chance, moreover, had spared East Tremont the fate of other communities disemboweled by a Moses highway operation—the heart of this community, bustling East Tremont Avenue, had escaped the Coordinator's scalpel.

But the thuds of the "skullcracker," the huge swinging wrecking ball, the crash of crumbling walls and the rumble of trucks carrying the walls away had been merely a prelude, the rattle of rifle fire from a skirmishers' picket line before the battle is fully joined and the big guns come into play. For Moses' Cross-Bronx Expressway had been designed by a single criterion: its efficiency as a traffic-moving device. This meant keeping the expressway as level as possible, and East Tremont was a neighborhood of hills. "To keep the grade down, we had to go down," Ernie Clark explains. Going down meant going under the surface of East Tremont. And under that surface was solid rock, and there is only one way to get rid of solid rock.

"First you heard the sound, and then, a few seconds later, you felt the tremor, like a rumbling in the earth, a shaking under your feet," recalls Barney Lambert, whose office was seven blocks away. The sound of the explosions of the huge masses of dynamite required "was a boom, a real boom—like a bomb." Says Mrs. Silverstein: "The whole neighborhood seemed to be shaking."

It was shaking. The blasting found out every flaw in the earth under East Tremont. It caused the bed of a subterranean river beneath Southern Boulevard to shift. Mortar and brick were jarred loose from one end of the neighborhood to the other. As apartment houses settled or were pushed up as the earth beneath them heaved, huge gaping fissures began to appear in their walls and ceilings. Tenants were hastily evacuated—some in the middle of the night.

Lambert and Mrs. Silverstein lived blocks away from the blasting. People who lived closer felt as if they were at ground zero in an air raid.

The scene in the great excavation—a deep gash in the earth 120 and more feet wide and a mile long—was fantastic. Looming through the clouds

of dust were a mile of tall cranes, huge earth-moving machines, batteries of bulldozers, battalions of trucks—and an army of men, their helmets glinting through the dust stretching away as far as the eye could see.

At intervals, red flags would be unfurled and men in pairs would carry them up to the streets crossing the excavation and, standing well away from the excavation, wave traffic to a halt. Then, at some signal that could not be discerned from above, the men down in the pit would all run to take shelter behind their equipment. There would be a pause and then the explosion would come, and the giant steel-mesh mats that had been placed over the explosion areas would rise in the air and fly several feet away as if they were bits of carpet. Sometimes long black limousines would pull up to the edge of the embankment, and men carrying rolls of maps and blueprints under their arms would clamber out and scramble down the embankments with their aides, and even if the residents did not know that these were the general staff of the campaign—Colonel Chapin and General Farrell, who had built highways through jungles; Captain Praeger, who had built the Normandy invasion drydocks—there was no mistaking the commander in chief, for sometimes, in the late afternoon, the longest black limousine of them all would pull up, generally at one end of the mile, and out, to see the job "on the ground," he would jump and, barking orders and questions at map-carrying aides, he would stride through the dust and the grime, seemingly oblivious to it, until he reached the other end of the mile, where the limousine, having crept around the side streets, would be waiting for him.

The blasting was only intermittent, and it went on no more than a year. But from the huge pit came also the harsh, staccato, machine-gun-like yammer of the jackhammers, the deep rat-tat-tat of the drills cutting holes for the dynamite, the clank and grind of the treads of the bulldozers, the hoarse bellow of the huge earth-moving equipment, and the heavy, jarring pound of the pile drivers driving down the shafts of steel called "long rock anchors" to strengthen unstable formations and, where the ground was soft, piles that would last for centuries—all combining in a roar that made the air shudder. The blasting was bad enough but the roar was unbearable. "It was the drilling, the constant drilling. You just heard it constantly through the day hours. You never got used to it."

Worst of all, to these people for whom cleanliness was so important, was not the noise or the danger but the dirt. One of the by-products of blasting or drilling in solid bedrock is rock dust, an extremely fine-grained, abrasive grit. The grit—East Tremonters called it "fallout"—arose from the excavation in a continual fine mist. "It just filled the air," Lambert recalls. "If you closed your windows and put towels in to seal them up, it was there anyway. I don't know how. You got up in the morning, and you felt like you had slept in dust. When you came home from work, you couldn't sit down without sweeping it out of the chair. It was impossible to live cleanly—you felt like you were covered with silt. All the time."

Many of the stores nearest the area around the excavation—those on Southern Boulevard and Marmion—had been torn down. Reaching the others was difficult because they had been fenced for the duration of the con-

struction work. Getting to East Tremont Avenue from the area on the south side of the expressway was difficult. When the expressway was completed, there would be overpasses to get across it, but the overpasses would not be built until it was finished. And many of the streets that would be left across it were closed for weeks at a time during various stages of construction. "To go shopping and come back with bundles was like going to Brooklyn," one housewife recalls. Families on the north side found it difficult to get across to the amenity on the south that was also an important part of their lives: Crotona Park. And, worst of all, there was the uncertainty about when the construction work would be over. "It went on year after year, you know," explains Lambert. "Sometimes it would stop for a month or two or three months without any explanation being given, and then it would start up again. After a while, it seemed to have been going on forever." There were perhaps 10,000 people living right next to the excavation. They began to move out.

Some of East Tremont's landlords, trapped for years in the squeeze between rising costs and rents that could be raised only when a tenant moved out, and cursed with tenants who seemed never to move out, welcomed the opportunity of replacing them with tenants whose poverty and lack of family stability insured a higher turnover and more 15 percent increases, and whose lack of big-city sophistication in dealing with landlords made it easier for landlords to skimp on services. The people moving into the vacated apartments were mostly Negroes—not the middle-class or lower-middle-class Negroes with whom East Tremont's middle-class and lower-middle-class Jews had found it easy to be compatible, but impoverished Negroes—many on welfare, many newly fled to New York from the rural slums of the Deep South—to whom the Jews found it impossible to relate, even had they wanted to. Frightened because the newcomers seemed the advance guard of the ravaging army that had previously been kept at bay on the far side of Crotona Park, they didn't want to.

"The vandalism started then all over the neighborhood," one housewife recalls. Furniture in apartment-house lobbies was slashed, urinated on and finally simply lugged boldly out, to be replaced perhaps once, perhaps twice, but finally not to be replaced, so that the lobbies stood empty and bare. The walls of the elevators were marked by things sharp, were painted, were marked again—and finally not painted any more. Break-ins began. New, stronger locks appeared in apartment doors, and then strips of steel to keep intruders from prying under the door jamb. The break-ins increased. Then there began to be the first, terrifying, reports of muggings.

Still, most of East Tremont's people stayed; their apartments were simply too precious to them for even fear to scare them away. In 1960, the year the expressway's East Tremont section opened, there were still—four years after demolition in the area had begun—an estimated 25,000 Jews in that neighborhood.

Because most of the East Tremont section of the expressway runs through a deep cut, all one sees of the great road from adjoining streets is a gap in the ground. There is nothing visible rising out of that gap. But sit

next to that gap—in one of the playgrounds that Moses built on "excess condemnation" parcels—or open the window in one of the apartments—approximately 3,000 apartments—whose windows face the gap during rush hour, when, down below, the expressway is packed solid with cars and trucks six lanes across, and one soon realizes that something is rising from that gap, filling the air above and around it, filling it with something that, if one touched a match to it, would make it burn with a pale-blue flame—the flame emitted by burning carbon monoxide.

The human constitution apparently adapts itself to such fumes. One can sit next to the expressway for five days, observing it, and notice that by the fifth day, the nausea and headache and dizziness one felt at first are gone. But no one knows what the inhalation of carbon monoxide—and assorted hydrocarbons emitted by automobile motors—in diluted form produces, for no study has ever been done on the effect of prolonged exposure to such gases.

Rising out of that gap in the ground also—concentrated by its high walls—is the noise of herds of cars and trucks. And that noise is much harder to get used to than the fumes. Talk to people who live in the 3,000 apartments next to the Cross-Bronx Expressway and one hears applied to that noise, over and over again, a single adjective: "unbearable."

At rush hours, the sound of a great expressway on the flat is the sound of the sea, a steady, surging roar. But the Cross-Bronx Expressway in East Tremont is not flat. As the huge diesel tractor-trailers, the monsters of the highways, come to each incline, they are forced, having been unable to maintain speed because of the creeping rush-hour traffic, to shift gears and inch their way up the hill, accelerator pedal jammed hard to the floor. So the sound of the Cross-Bronx Expressway at rush hour is a roar, punctuated by the snarl and grind of shifting gears and the snort and growl of acceleration, and, of course, the sudden, loud harsh backfires—and all of this sound, magnified by the underpasses and the high brick walls that line the sides of the expressway cut, comes out of that cut and over the neighborhood as if out of a gigantic echo chamber. "At nights, you should hear those trucks," says a man-who lives a full block from the expressway. "You should hear those trucks at four o'clock in the morning. It's noisy all the time, but you usually wake at about that time, and you can't get back to sleep."

More people moved out of the buildings bordering the expressway. Some of the vacancies were filled by the type of family that would have filled them in the days before there was an expressway, for there were still tens of thousands of Jewish families in New York struggling to get out of the lower East Side and other slums. But, with the noise, most moved out again—as fast as they could. And the families that replaced them were the families from the other side of the park. Muggings increased, and there began to be reports of robberies, thieves breaking right into your home. Before long, the old residents of the 3,000 apartments bordering the expressway were gone, moved away. Then the residents of the apartments next to those began to move, and then the residents of the apartments next to those.

The demolition for the expressway had taken 5,000 of East Tremont's

60,000 residents. Now the expressway had forced out 10,000 more. The new, predominantly nonwhite residents, Saul Janowitz says, "shopped to the south"—in Morrisania, where they had always shopped. They didn't patronize East Tremont's stores. As break-ins increased, insurance premiums began to soar. Merchants who had barely been making a living before weren't making one any more. Storekeepers who had been in East Tremont for decades began to look for a way out. Many could find no buyers; when they moved out, their stores were simply boarded up. Each year, reports of muggings increased. Sometime in 1962 or 1963, exactly when isn't clear, a young, pretty teacher took her third-grade class to the park for the "nature trip" that East Tremont youngsters had been taking for generations. Details of the crime vary—it was never reported in the newspapers—but the neighborhood believes that a man with a knife forced her away from her class, took her to a deserted area of the park and raped her. If there was a last straw, that was it. When word of the crime circulated, undoubtedly exaggerated in the telling, the people of East Tremont stopped using the park, and the young families that had always been attracted to East Tremont, moving into its big, roomy apartments when the older people who had lived in them died, moved in no longer. The people of East Tremont—particularly the young families whose breadwinners were not "in cloaks and suits" but in the professions, and who could afford to live in the suburbs or at least in Riverdale—moved out. Faster and faster they left, and faster and faster, wider and wider, spread the urban decay.

Still, what was left of the people of East Tremont tried to fight. They attempted to regroup in the community's northern reaches, a natural defensive position possessed of the strategic asset—a big and beautiful park, Bronx Park—from which they had been driven in the south, and to which the forces of decay had not yet penetrated. There was one major weakness in the position. This northern section, immediately adjacent to the 180th Street station of the White Plains elevated, had filled up about fifteen years earlier than the southern. Its apartment houses were even older. And, since at the time they had been constructed, landlords had not been convinced that families moving up to the Bronx could afford significantly higher rents than they had been paying on the Lower East Side, those apartment houses were of cheaper construction. By 1960 they were in far worse condition than those in the southern Section 2 that Moses had destroyed. Couples already living there were used to it, but it would not attract younger couples—a consideration important to East Tremont, which felt, as Barney Lambert put it, "that if young people want to move into the same area in which they grew up, they ought to be able to do it." But, the community felt, this weakness could be remedied: the papers were full of new programs for the city—"Title I," "Mitchell-Lama"—which, the papers said, were designed to provide housing at rents that people could afford to pay.

Lillian Edelstein was gone—as were most of ETNA's old leaders, who, having lived in the destroyed southern section of the community, were no longer part of it. But the community found new leaders, including Lambert and Vivian Dee, an eager, vivacious young housewife. Under the auspices

of the East Tremont Neighborhood House, they worked up a plan for a Title I development called "Bronx Park South," brought Lyons and every other politician who seemed interested in on the planning from the beginning, and one day in 1959 found themselves—to their shock—accompanying the borough president to Randall's Island for an appointment—a personal appointment—with the Mayor's Committee on Slum Clearance, Robert Moses, chairman. "In a smaller room, his personality was even more overwhelming [than in the Board of Estimate chamber]," Lambert recalls. But this time, he was cordial. With a grin that filled the room, he began the meeting by saying to Lyons: "Well, Jim, what can I do for you?"—and when Lyons told him, he said he would do it. Knowing his power, Lambert and the rest of the committee were optimistic. "It was refreshing to have him on our side," he would recall.

But Moses' concept of the project soon expanded. While ETNA had conceived of it as one of limited size, limited to an area of run-down tenements so as not to hurt sound housing in the area, under Moses it was, to their dismay, expanded into a huge concept of 5,400 units—that would destroy no fewer than twenty-four of the best remaining apartment houses in the area. Moses' concept of middle-income rents, moreover, proved to be higher than ETNA's—so much higher that the people of East Tremont, who had proposed the project, realized that they were not going to be able to afford to live in it. One resident vividly recalls the ETNA meeting at which the Moses-proposed scale of rents was announced: "A groan of despair went up from the room."

ETNA tried Mitchell-Lama, over which, by 1959, Moses had little control. After weeks of effort—Janowitz, taking time away from his store, personally canvassed every vacant site of any size in the neighborhood—they came up with one that seemed perfect: a vacant tract next to the Bronx River, large enough for a 200-unit development. Officials of the Housing Redevelopment Board told them the tract was already owned by the city, so that there would be no problems with acquisition. In innumerable meetings with city departments, they plowed their way through masses of red tape. They found a developer who would build the project at a cost that would keep rents down to the level they wanted, and the developer's plans were approved by the Housing Redevelopment Board. And then it turned out that the board's original description of the ownership of the tract was not complete. The city did, indeed, own it—but only in the technical sense that it owned all land under the control of the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority. Moses had acquired the tract some years before for another of his highways, the proposed Sheridan Expressway. "We found out who had title, and we were in despair when we heard it was Moses," Mrs. Dee says.

Mrs. Dee learned that only part of the land was needed for the expressway, and that if its route was shifted from the center of the tract to the side, plenty would be available for the housing project. Even if it wasn't moved, there would be enough land available for a smaller, but still feasible, project. "I asked [Triborough] for an appointment," Mrs. Dee says. "They said it would take time and they would be in touch with us. They

weren't." When she pressed for an answer about moving the expressway, "they just said 'impossible.'"

Then how about the rest of the tract, the part not needed for the expressway? she asked. "I mean, this was something we could have gone ahead and done ourselves. Everything was ready. Triborough said that the Park Department had jurisdiction over anything left over. So I spoke to [Park Department executive officer John Mulcahy]. He said it would be okay if Triborough would say okay. Triborough said the Park Department had to decide. This went on for about a year." What happened at the end of the year, basically, was that the community gave up the fight. "You know, there wasn't one hell of a lot of fight left in it any more," Ed Korn says. "They had taken our best housing. Our best people were gone." And Moses "had taken the heart out of" those who were left. "The manner, the style, in which he operated affected them. The way he changed Bronx Park South. It was the same way he had operated with the expressway. Waking up Monday morning and finding out that he had announced something, and there was nothing you could do about it. It wasn't just that this [the 159 structures torn down for the Cross-Bronx Expressway] was very good housing stock. And that it was just torn down. It was the manner in which this was done. The manner had a major impact on how the community reacted to change thereafter. He left them with feelings of being isolated, left alone—that no one cared, no one listened to them. When they tried to protest, they were powerless. No one seemed to be interested in their problem. This does generate a feeling of helplessness, of resentment. We're abandoned! The manner, the implementation, of the highway affected the area as much as the highway. They had had their licks [on the expressway]. They had had their big community thing. And they had found out you couldn't do anything against him. There was a feeling of letdown, of discouragement, that nobody cared about them. Certainly he didn't care, and nobody else in the city interfered with him. The city just wouldn't listen. Downtown wasn't interested. People threw up their hands. What was the use?" Mrs. Dee and her associates had been begging the young couples who wanted to stay in the community to hold on "for another year or two," until the new housing was available. "We got them to stay on for a while," she says, "but after a while we just couldn't keep telling them to wait—or, if we told them that it wouldn't be long now, they didn't believe it. To tell you the truth, we didn't believe it, either." With each month that passed, of course, the young couples could see the blight creeping closer to them. They began to move out, faster and faster, and into the apartments they vacated moved the tenants East Tremont feared. Some of the older people in the area began to leave.

As they left, the chief reason for staying in the neighborhood left with them. "To me, East Tremont was friends," Cele Sherman says. "When there was a Jewish holiday, you met your neighbors on the street, walking. Well, one Rosh Hashanah, I walked down from my house down Clinton Avenue to Southern Boulevard, crossed over and walked back, and didn't meet one person I could say 'Hello' to. What was the sense of staying?" Thanks to the middle-income housing programs of the mid-1960's, there were now at

least apartments—rentals and low-priced cooperatives—in "decent areas" that couples such as the Shermans could afford to rent or buy. Says Cele Sherman: "We left, too."

The one mile of the Cross-Bronx Expressway through East Tremont was completed in 1960. By 1965, the community's "very good, solid housing stock," the apartment buildings that had been so precious to the people who had lived in them, were ravaged hulks. Windows, glassless except for the jagged edges around their frames, stared out on the street like sightless eyes. The entrances to those buildings were carpeted with shards of glass from what had been the doors to their lobbies. In those lobbies, what remained of the walls was covered with obscenities. And not much remained. Plaster from the walls lay in heaps in corners; the bare wood which had been exposed was shattered and broken. The pipes which had been behind the wood were gone, ripped out, melted down and sold for the few dollars that would buy the next fix. Elevators no longer worked. Staircases were broken and shattered. Banisters had been ripped from their sockets, for scrap and a fix if they were iron, for malice, an expression of hatred and revenge on an uncaring world, if they were wood. Raw garbage spilled out of broken bags across the floor. The stench of stale urine and vomit filled the nostrils. One tried to look down only enough to avoid stepping on the piles of feces, whether mercifully dried or reeking fresh—animal and human. There was no heat in those buildings; if they were homes, they were homes as the cave of the savage was a home. And yet they *were* homes—homes for tens of thousands of people. They were homes for welfare tenants and for the poorest of the working poor, for families that drift from one apartment to another without, seemingly, ever paying a month's rent in full—urban gypsies—for mothers who say desperately to the stranger, when they can be induced to talk to the stranger: "I got to get my kids out of here," and for children who come to the door long after the knock is heard and peer around and ask the stranger, with fear in eyes and voice: "Are you the man from the welfare?"

After seven o'clock, the residential streets of East Tremont are deserted, roamed by narcotics addicts in gangs like packs of wolves. Even on East Tremont Avenue, by nine o'clock most of the stores are closed, the lights out, huddled behind steel gates and iron bars.

The streets of East Tremont are carpeted so thickly with pieces of shattered glass that they shine in the sun. Garbage, soaked mattresses, bits of broken furniture and, everywhere, small pieces of jagged steel fill the gutters. The sidewalks are full of holes, the streets—particularly the streets overlooking the expressway, for the expressway has made them dead-end, reducing traffic on them to a minimum—with the hulks of stripped automobiles. Once East Tremont, while the expressway was being built, had had the look of blitzkrieged London; now it looked as London might have looked after the bombs, troops had fought their way through it from house to house. It had the look of a jungle.

Of the people who had lived in East Tremont, who had found in that neighborhood security, roots, friendship, a community that provided an anchor—friends and synagogue and Y—a place where you knew the people

and they knew you, where you could make a stand against the swirling, fearsome tides of the sea of life, only the very old, too poor to move, still lived, almost barricaded in their freezing apartments. As for the rest of the people who had lived there, they were gone.

39. The Highwayman

ON JULY 3, 1945, with the end of the war obviously near, flashbulbs popped as a gray two-door sedan, the first civilian passenger car to be produced in the United States since February 1942, was driven off the assembly line at the Ford Motor Company's River Rouge plant to signal the resumption of automobile production. Within the month, River Rouge and a dozen other giant assembly lines were debouching 25,000 cars per day onto the nation's highways. And on the very first weekend after V-J Day, gasoline rationing ended and America took to the road, with editorial writers cheering "the seemingly endless procession of automobiles" as a welcome return to normalcy.

It took just two weeks for the cheers to turn to groans. Streets and highways, so empty for forty-four months, filled up with astonishing speed; mounting day by day, by the end of those two weeks traffic was back practically to its December 1941 levels. Nowhere did it mount faster than in New York, and New Yorkers who may have forgotten that in December 1941 traffic jams had ceased to be a joke had their memories harshly jogged. The city's consternation was echoed by its press, which detailed the jams in the type of page-one scare headlines that for forty-four months had been reserved for war bulletins (AVENUE TRAFFIC IS TIED UP BY CROSS-STREET CONGESTION, read one *Times* headline. "North-South Arteries Jammed 3 Times in 2 Hours as Lines of East-West Vehicles Extend Across the Intersections"). By August 23, the *Herald Tribune* was demanding to know why the city had not, during the long breathing space afforded by the war, come up with congestion "remedies."

Moses' response—a letter, four times longer than the editorial, sped to the *Tribune* by limousined secretary—accused the newspaper of "ignoring and playing down what in other less busy and sophisticated communities would be hailed as great achievements."

What has New York done about street congestion? Bless your little journalistic hearts—a hell of a lot. And why sit we idly by without further plans for the big jam singing "Who Threw the Whiskey in the Well?" while up in the Roaring Forties editors are cutting up tires into rubber heels? Tush, tush! The blue-prints are oozing from our files and spilling over the floors. Every day sees visiting firemen in New York not only from the hinterland of America but from the four corners of the emancipated globe, examining our work and asking for copies of our plans. Why are they here if there is nothing to see?