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**Annexation
Again
Fails.**

One more attempt to annex Ravinia to Highland Park has proved abortive. After a fight lasting more than a year the promoters of the annexation petition requested its withdrawal from the city council. The reason for this action was the fact that a number of the signers of the petition sent in their withdrawals, making the document invalid, as without the names of those who withdrew, it failed to contain three fourths of the voters as required by law.

So far as Highland Park is concerned the failure of the annexation proposition is to be deprecated. Had it carried, the city would not only have obtained control of a large tract of territory that would have added materially to the city treasury in the shape of taxes, but, of equal importance to Highland Park, the Sheridan Road would have been at once completed to the Cook county line.

As to the advantages Ravinia would gain by annexation there appears to be a difference of opinion. The pro-annexationists state that it is necessary to get the territory under a corporation government in order to obtain street improvements, without which, they say, the town cannot develop. The anti-annexationists claim

that the movement has been fathered by large real estate owners who hope to create a mild boom through the alchemy of Highland Park's name and then unload at an advance, leaving the town in a stagnant condition when the inflation collapses. They say annexation will increase their taxes and leave them in a hopeless minority on the outskirts of a good sized city.

The opposition to the project have stated, however, that they would sign for annexation if certain concessions are granted them. They stipulate (1) that the territory to be annexed be organized into a separate ward and be given two aldermen in the city council; (2) that Highland Park construct a bridge over the Roger Williams avenue ravine; (3) that this street, part of which is now private property, be opened through to the lake, and (4) that some of the large holders of lake shore property donate a park site so as to insure the public free ingress and egress to and from the lake at all times. At present Ravinia has no street to the lake, all the highways opened being over private property, so that whenever Raviniaites go to the lake they are in a sense trespassers. In fact, the only available roads to the lake have been fenced up several times. This, the Ravinia people say, is a woeful lack of public spirit on the part of shore property owners, and that before signing away any rights they propose to take measures to conserve the lake.

It seems probable the entire matter will drop into obscurity, at least for the time being, as the large shore owners seem indisposed to donate anything for park purposes, while the voters, on their part, appear equally decided that the town shall not be annexed unless their stipulations are complied with.

North Shore Ravines. So far as the NEWS-LETTER is aware, there is nothing within a radius of fifty miles from Chicago that will bear comparison with the North Shore ravines. It has taken centuries to erode these picturesque water courses, and they have a wild grandeur that can not be counterfeited by any work

of man. In and out they wind in their search for the lake—a labyrinth of shrubbery and foliage with here and there a giant oak or hoary hickory stretching its limbs skyward. The ravine sides are the habitat of wild flowers in wonderful profusion. When the tiny stream in the bed becomes swollen by the spring rains some of the larger varieties of fish leave the lake and seek a spawning ground in the deep, quiet, pools that are found at intervals in the ravine beds.

When town sites were first laid out on the North Shore the ravines were regarded in the light of a disadvantage. The cheaper class of houses were built on their brinks, and property abutting on a ravine sold at a discount. But time has removed this ban from these marvels of the Creator's handiwork. Every year the demand for ravine sites increases, and it seems safe to predict that this class of property will at some future time command a premium over all other property, unless perhaps bluff sites immediately overlooking the lake be excepted.

In outlying districts, at different times, the ravines have been used in lieu of sewers, and their value disregarded in other ways, but the folly of this course has become apparent, and a reform has taken place. The ravines are one of the North Shore's most valuable assets and steps should be taken by each municipality to see that their natural beauty is preserved.

The NEWS-LETTER would call the attention of the new aldermen to the unlawful use of some of the prettiest ravines in the Park, as a dumping ground for tin cans and other refuse by persons who certainly should be made cognizant of the fact that they are doing something that is not only unlawful, but which will not be tolerated by the city authorities. Surely the time has come when all residents of Highland Park, in appreciating the natural beauty and rare loveliness of the ravines, will do—and see that others do—nothing to mar or lessen that beauty.

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