

DOCUMENTS

OF THE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

OF THE

Department of Public Parks

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING APRIL 30th, 1874.



NEW YORK:

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1874.

DOCUMENT No. 44.

BOARD
OF THE
Department of Public Parks.

JUNE 23, 1873.

The Landscape Architect submitted a report exhibiting the present standing of the principal undertakings of the department under his supervision.

Ordered, That said report just presented by the Landscape Architect be accepted and printed as a document of the Board.

ISAAC EVANS,
Assistant Secretary.

MEMORANDUM OF PROPOSED WORKS.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS, }
Office of Design and Superintendence. }

June 21, 1873.

The subjoined memorandum is intended to concisely exhibit the present standing of the principal undertakings of the Department under the general supervision of the Office of Design and Superintendence, especially such as are thought to require the early attention of the Board.

FRED. LAW OLNSTED,
Landscape Architect.

I.

EIGHTH AVENUE WALL.

The foundation and base of this wall, according to plans adopted by Board of Commissioners of Central Park, 1860, have been in progress by Park force until stopped, May 12th.

The Treasurer was instructed by Board, March 31st, 1873, to invite proposals for building 6,000 feet of parapet-wall on Eighth avenue, and to arrange a contract as soon as possible, subject to the approval of the Board, but, so far as known, took no action on the order.

The Board is recommended to immediately advertise for proposals for the construction of this upper wall, and to authorize construction of base-wall by Park force. The estimated cost of both, to be met this year, is \$115,000.

(See Plans.)

II.

PARK SLOPES ALONG EIGHTH AVENUE.

The grading and shaping of these slopes was in progress until May 1st.

Estimated cost of completing them \$35,000, of which \$25,000 may be used to advantage this season.

III.

MERCHANTS' GATE.

The Treasurer was authorized by the Board to proceed with the erection of this gate, in accordance with the plans, July 30th, 1872. Bids were obtained and laid before the Board. Owing to discrepancies in them which were thought to indicate errors of estimate, the Treasurer was instructed to obtain new bids before January 1st, but, so far as known, nothing more has been done.

The work was included in items for which payments might be made from Construction Fund, Nov. 20th, 1872.

Immediate advertising for bids is recommended.

If a contract for the whole work should be closed before July, not more than \$50,000 would come due within the present year.

(See Designs.)

IV.

ENTRANCE AT EIGHTH AVENUE AND EIGHTY-FIFTH STREET.

Work has been in progress (rendered necessary by the revised grades of the avenue) until lately.

It could be completed within two months after resumption.

An order to go on is recommended.

Estimated cost of reconstruction, \$3,000.

V.

ENTRANCE AT EIGHTH AVENUE AND 100th STREET.

Work has been in progress (rendered necessary by the revised grades of the avenue) until lately.

It could be completed within two months after resumption.

An order to go on is recommended.

Estimated cost of reconstruction, \$2,000.

VI.

NEW SYSTEM OF PROTECTED WALKS IN SOUTHEAST QUARTER
OF PARK, INCLUDING THE INSCOPE AND OUTSET ARCHES.

General Design.—The general design approved by Board Dec. 11th, 1872; plans for the Arches approved, immediate construction directed, and the Treasurer authorized to pay for same from Construction Fund, Jan. 15th, 1873.

(See Plans.)

Walks.—The grading of the portion of walks east of pond is partly done; work suspended in May.

Inscope Arch.—Requisition was made upon Treasurer for granite-work, masonry and wood-work of Inscope Arch, March 6th, 1873. Proposals were received and contracts made, but not signed. Park Superintendent notified to make excavations and put in foundations Jan. 24th, 1873. Work suspended in May.

(See Plans.)

Outset Arch.—Working drawings and specifications for Outset Arch nearly complete, are here presented.

The Board is recommended to order all this work to be proceeded with as rapidly as possible. The estimates for it are as follows :

For Inscope Arch.....	\$31,300
“ Outset Arch.....	18,150
“ East-side Walks.....	6,000
“ Peninsular Walks.....	7,000
“ Bridge, narrows of Pond.....	8,000
	<hr/>
	\$70,450
	<hr/>

of which \$60,000 might be required this year.

VII.

CONCERT GROUND ON THE MALL.

A plan has been adopted for enlarging the accommodation for the audience at the promenade concerts on the Mall, by constructing a graveled area with lines of fixed seats, so placed as to guard the turf, which was last year destroyed by the crowd upon it. Park Superintendent was notified March 31st, 1873, to grade the walk-surfaces to be modified. This work was in progress up to May 15th, then stopped.

A requisition on Treasurer was made May 1st, 1873, for timber for seats and flag-staffs for concourse.

Work of filling is now in progress, under a special order of the Board of June 14th, 1873.

The Board is recommended to order the immediate completion of all the work proposed, except on that part of the ground where nothing has yet been done. The cost of doing this is estimated at \$8,500. Cost for the whole \$12,000.

(See Plans).

VIII.

BOAT HOUSE.

Plans were approved, and Treasurer authorized to proceed with work by Board Dec. 11th, 1872. Requisition was made on Treasurer for the iron work April 1st, 1873. Estimates obtained, but contract not awarded.

The larger part of the wood-work has been prepared by Park Force, and is ready to be put in place.

The Park Superintendent was notified to build the foundations February 27th, 1873. Nearly all the stone for foundations has been cut.

Work stopped May 12th.

The design has been slightly modified in the working plans.

The Board is recommended to approve the plans as now presented and order the work to proceed.

Estimated cost \$20,000, of which \$8,000 has probably been already incurred.

(See Plans.)

IX.

PERGOLA.

Gratings for ventilation of soil under concrete have been delivered.

Park Superintendent was notified October 8th, 1872, to set these and rearrange pavement.

Nothing has been done.

An order to complete is recommended.

The cost will not exceed \$1,000.

(See Plans.)

X.

CASINO.

Work has been commenced, in accordance with plans, for alterations and enlargements, as approved by Board, March 22d, 1873.

The work was in rapid progress when stopped, May 12th.

The delay is very inconvenient.

Estimated cost \$9,000, of which \$3,500 has been incurred.

An order to go on is recommended.

(See Plans.)

XI.

CARROUSEL.

The building has been recently moved, but remains blocked up, work having been stopped May 12th.

The building can be put in condition for use in three weeks after resumption of work upon it.

An order to complete is recommended.

Estimated cost of work already done, \$1,500.

Estimated cost of completing the building and making certain required changes of adjoining ground, under \$3,000.

An order to complete immediately is recommended.

(See Plans.)

XII.

COTTAGE AT FARMERS' GATE.

Nearly complete. The Park Superintendent was notified to do necessary painting April 29th, 1872. Not yet done. A requisition was made on Treasurer for the mantels November 7th, 1872. Not yet met.

An order to complete the work is recommended. The probable cost would not exceed \$500.

(See Plan.)

XIII.

SHEEPFOLD.

Study for alteration of sheepfold to aquarium, made by order of Board; referred back for further consideration December 18th, 1872.

To turn this structure to any valuable account, the construction of an archway over the Bridle Road will be needed.

A complete and satisfactory arrangement of an aquarium, with convenient means of access, would perhaps cost \$50,000, of which not more than \$20,000 would be required this year.

XIV.

CONSERVATORY.

The foundations and piers of basement story for this structure were laid under Mr. Sweeny's administration, and there is considerable material on hand not laid. The cost of all has been \$120,000.

A revised plan, with arrangements for occupying the basement as a hall for music and flower-shows, was approved by the Board October 24th, 1872. The Treasurer was authorized to pay for work on it when it should proceed from the construction fund November 20th, 1872.

(See Plans.)

XV.

BELVEDERE.

Landscape Architect requested to provide estimates for completion on the original plan November 20th, 1872.

Detailed plans and specifications are now ready, and the work may be put under contract. Estimated cost to complete, \$35,000.

(See Plans.)

XVI.

DEER Paddock.

A keeper's lodge, with sheds and an enclosure for deer, are contemplated, on the east side of the north park, between 102d street entrance and the fourth transverse road.

Present enclosure can no longer be occupied, and the ground will be needed in proceeding with the construction of the Art Museum.

Estimated cost \$10,000.

XVII.

IMPROVEMENT ON AND NEAR EAST DRIVE, SOUTH OF TRANSVERSE
ROAD No. 4.

Some changes, not yet ordered by the Board, are here contemplated, and would be desirably undertaken this summer.

Estimated cost, \$3,000.

XVIII.

ROAD STEPS.

Granite blocks are intended to be set at the south end of the Mall, and a change is to be made in the step near the Dairy.

Estimated cost, \$600.

XIX.

ESPLANADE.

An improvement in the flag-staffs and bases on the Esplanade is proposed.

Estimated cost, \$1,000.

XX.

INDIAN HUNTER PEDESTAL.

Granite work under contract made with J. Williams. Contract date June 7th, 1872.

Not finished.

The stones are in part to come from Scotland. Expected within a month.

Estimated cost, complete, \$2,500.

XXI.

URINALS, SEATS, DRINKING FOUNTAINS, RAILINGS AND FENCES.

For these matters, an allowance is made in the estimates for the remainder of the year of \$5,000. There is an order of the Board to do away with all brick urinals.

XXII.

PEDESTAL TO SHAKESPEARE MONUMENT.

The granite delivered, and waiting action of Monument Committee to be set.

XXIII.

MANHATTAN SQUARE.

The filling of the low parts of square has been and continues in progress under contract.

XXIV.

MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.

Preliminary studies approved August 7th, 1872. Foundation work begun under order of Board August 21st, 1872—continued with a strong force until May 12th, 1873.

Requisition for iron work made in March. Bids had been obtained for the whole building, but the matter postponed for new Board.

See plans and special report of architect.

XXV.

ART MUSEUM.

Preliminary plans presented July 17th and 30th, and working plans and estimates ordered.

Working plan for basement submitted September 18th, 1872.

Order for excavation of basement given by Board November 2d, 1872.

Earth on lines of basement excavated to rock.

The architect will make a special report on this undertaking.

XXVI.

PLACE AT FIFTH AVENUE, FIFTY-EIGHTH AND FIFTY-NINTH
STREETS.

The south platform has been curbed and graded. Trees set in accordance with design. Requisition made October 23d, 1872, for paving platform. Bids received and contract arranged but not concluded.

Order to complete recommended. Estimated cost \$5,000.
(See Plan.)

XXVII.

SOUTH OUTER MALL OF CENTRAL PARK.

A system of lighting, and providing seats and rails to defend the tree plats of this mall has been advanced in plans, but no definite action has been taken by the Board.

The estimated cost of the proposed system of lighting is \$12,000.

(See Plan.)

XXVIII.

BATTERY.

Sea-wall was laid under Mr. Sweeny's administration in 1871.

The filling back of it has been undermined, and the concrete of walk has settled and is badly broken.

The injury is serious and involves some danger to persons using the walk, as they are liable to fall into cavities below.

A special report on the subject is submitted from General Green, as consulting engineer, in which various measures of repair are recommended, with an estimate of their cost, which is \$8,972.

The construction of a shelter at the landing basin will be recommended ; estimated cost \$5,000.

(See Plan.)

XXIX.

CITY HALL PARK.

Fountain.—The stone work of the large fountain is finished. The bronze work has been designed, estimates for a part obtained, but no contract issued. Pipe has been laid for drinking fountains at different points; one is ready; for others the pattern adopted for Madison square is recommended. The cost would be \$450 each. They are much needed.

There is a small patch of pavement to be laid around the large fountain. Requisition was made on Treasurer to have this done October 28, 1872. Estimated cost \$700. Some slight work by park force required before setting pavement. The portion of footways laid with hydraulic cement concrete is in good condition.

The portion laid with bituminous concrete is in bad condition, and will need radical repair or relaying before long.

The removal of the iron fountain west of the Court House and the substitution of a simple and not costly design will be recommended.

Order to obtain estimates for fountain, four drinking fountains and pavement work recommended.

Estimated cost for these \$7,200.

(See Plans.)

XXX.

FIVE POINTS PARK.

Design for improvement adopted by Board October 24th, 1872.

Park Superintendent notified to grade and shape the surface April 19th, 1873. Nothing done.

An order is recommended to proceed at once with the work and to obtain tenders for so much of it as cannot be done to advantage by park force.

Estimated cost of improvements, complete, \$16,000.

The present condition of the ground is disgraceful and dangerous. Complaints of city missionaries and others have

been received. The proposed improvements would have a beneficial influence on a class of people whose interests demand special consideration.

(See Plans.)

XXXI.

JACKSON PARK.

Exterior Pavement.—Board directed walks adjacent to be laid with stone flagging as soon as practicable, November 20th, 1872.

Requisition for same made on Treasurer December 4th, 1872.

Estimated cost \$2,500.

Understood to be postponed last year on account of frost.

Perhaps concrete pavement can be now used rather than flagging, with advantage.

Some slight work by park force will be required before laying the pavement.

XXXII.

WASHINGTON SQUARE.

Fountain.—The outer wall of basin is complete, except a portion of the coping, the stone for which is not yet received from the contractors (Bigelow Company), but is now due.

The design for centre is waiting result of experiments at Union square.

Walks.—Park Superintendent was notified to do the sub-grading for several required connections between the walks, October 23d, 1872, and requisition made on Treasurer same date for paving same with concrete. Nothing has been done.

Drinking Fountains.—Two are ready to be set as soon as Superintendent has force.

An order to go on with walks and drinking fountain recommended.

Estimated cost, walks, \$2,900, drinking fountain, \$900.

(See Plan.)

XXXIII.

UNION SQUARE.

Lodge.—Wood-work in progress under contract, made August 19th, 1872, with Henry Grubé.

Plaster ceiling to be done by park force. Park Superintendent notified March 17th, 1873.

Plumbing nearly finished; delayed on account of plastering. No furniture ordered.

The lodge could be entirely finished within a month.

Light Iron Railing.—Connecting south steps with basement entrances.

Requisition made on Treasurer March 27th, 1873. Not yet acted on. This is much wanted immediately.

(See Plans.)

Decorative Flag-staffs and Gas-fixtures.—This work is waiting the replacement of iron castings delivered by contractor but rejected on inspection for bad workmanship. It is believed that the contract was taken at too low a price, and that the contractor is unable to carry it out satisfactorily.

Commissioner Wales is trying to adjust this difficulty, which has been very annoying.

Fountain.—Coping, centre-stone and bronze-work ready.

Park Superintendent notified to set coping April 14th, 1873. May be started at once and completed in three weeks. Centre is delayed for trial of hydraulic apparatus, which has been supplied, but did not prove satisfactory.

Drinking Fountains.—Two drinking fountains are ready for setting as soon as the work is authorized by the Board.

Concrete Walks.—A few points of surface re-finishing only required. Will be done by contractor.

Belgian Pavement.—Some revision to be made by contractor is in progress and may be done in two weeks.

Lincoln Monument Enclosure.—An order was given by Mr. Hilton, as Treasurer, to Henry Parry, July 26th, 1871, to supply the granite work at \$6,700, with no stipulation as to time.

None has been delivered. The contractor has been repeatedly called upon, and continues to promise that it shall be ready soon.

It is recommended that bids be obtained without further delay for the bronze work, which will probably cost \$5,000. The Department has been requested to do the work by the Common Council.

With regard to the other work in Union Square, the Board is recommended to order the immediate finishing of the lodge, fountain, drinking fountains and the iron and stone-work.

Estimated cost of these, \$19,600.

(See Plans.)

XXXIV.

MADISON SQUARE AND WORTH MONUMENT.

Gasolier.—Gas standards, iron and bronze-work ready for delivery by contractor, waiting for foundations and stone bases to be set by Park force.

These bases are on the ground.

The work can be completed in ten days after authorization by the Board, and will cost about \$500, besides the contractor's work.

Fender-Posts.—On the ground. Park Superintendent notified to set them, March, 1873. Not yet set.

Drinking Fountains.—Two drinking fountains are ready to be set. Park Superintendent was notified to set them April 21st, 1873.

Horse Fountain.—Was delivered by contractor last autumn, too late for setting, on account of frost. Park Superintendent was notified to set it April 21st, 1873. A few days' work only required, and much wanted.

The Board is recommended to order all suspended work on and about Madison square to be proceeded with.

Estimated cost of all, \$26,000.

(See Plans.)

XXXV.

RESERVOIR SQUARE.

Drinking Fountain.—Stone and castings for a fountain delivered by contractor last fall. Park Superintendent notified to set same April 21st, 1873.

It is much wanted, and an order to immediately go on is recommended. Estimated cost, \$1,200.

(See Plans.)

XXXVI.

PUBLIC PLACE—BOULEVARD AND SIXTY-THIRD STREET.

Plan of improvement adopted by Board Aug. 7th, 1872. Park Superintendent notified to fill, grade and shape Aug. 19th, 1872. Filled nearly to grade.

Exterior and interior curbing, some filling and some soil is now required. Afterwards, pavement and fountains.

To complete will probably cost \$9,000.

Order to go on recommended.

(See Plan.)

XXXVII.

PUBLIC PLACE—BOULEVARD AND SIXTY-FIFTH STREET.

Plan of improvement adopted by Board Sept. 4th, 1872. Park Superintendent notified to fill, grade and shape, Aug. 19th, 1872. Filled nearly to grade.

Exterior and interior curbing, some filling and some soil is now required. Afterwards pavement and fountains.

To complete will probably cost \$6,000.

An order to go on with the work recommended.

(See Plan.)

XXXVIII.

MOUNT MORRIS SQUARE.

Structures.—Park Superintendent notified to remove wooden structure from Central Park Belvedere and rebuild it on Central Plaza of Mount Morris square, Nov. 9th, 1872. The building has been moved to the square, but nothing has been done towards rebuilding. A ladies' cottage has been proposed to be built this year, and some material is on hand for the foundation of one.

XXXIX.

TREE GRATINGS.

On the sidewalks bounding most of the small parks, trees have been standing two years or more in spaces of soil which, in wet weather, becomes miry, and is at all times unsightly and inconvenient.

It is proposed to set some form of grating on most of these before next winter.

Plans fitting the various spaces are in preparation, and will soon be presented.

The amount of the general appropriation due to this purpose is \$20,700, not all of which can now, probably, be used this season.

XL.

MORNINGSIDE PARK.

A plan for the improvement of Morningside Park is nearly ready. Should it be adopted by the Board, work may be begun upon the ground at once, and about \$100,000 be expended with advantage this season.

XLI.

RIVERSIDE PARK.

A preliminary report on this ground was presented to the Board in March, suggesting that certain legislation be asked for. The views of the report in this respect were adopted by the Board, and it is understood that the required legislation has been obtained.

As soon as the legal powers of the Board in the premises shall have been distinctly defined, the study of a design for laying it out can be proceeded with.

It is probable that a plan can be so far digested as that, if the leading propositions should be adopted by the Board, work may be begun this summer, for which the general appropriation for construction may be assumed to allow \$200,000.

It is now so late in the season, however, that it is not probable that so much can be used to advantage.

The sum of \$200,000 is in addition to that which it is presumed will be available by transfer from the Department of Public Works for construction within the avenue lines.

XLII.

PARADE GROUND.

Some study has been given to a plan of this ground, in connection with Major-General Shaler, commanding the First Division, but no drawings have yet been made.

An amount of about \$400,000 will be available to the Department for its improvement, but it is not probable that any of it will be expended this year.

TABLE,

Comparing present estimates for work proposed with those made previously to the appropriation of \$1,000,000 by the Legislature of 1873.

	As proposed by L. A. in February.	As reduced by advice of Comptroller.	As now proposed in distribution of appropriation of \$1,000,000.
Eighth avenue wall and Park slopes along avenue.....	\$215,000	\$115,000	\$140,000
Merchants' Gate.....	75,000	75,000	50,000
Entrance Eighth avenue and Eighty-fifth street.....			3,000
Entrance Eighth avenue and 100th street.....			2,000
Filling on line of 110th street.....	13,000	13,000	
Drives and borders near 110th street.....	22,000		
New system of protected walks in south- east quarter of Park, including In- scope and Outset Arches.....	70,450	60,450	60,000
Concert ground on the Mall.....	12,000	12,000	12,000
Boat-house.....	20,000	20,000	20,000
Piling and foundation boat-house.....			1,500
Pergola.....	1,000	1,000	1,000
Casino.....	7,000	7,000	7,000
Carrousel and grounds about it.....	7,000		4,500
Cottages.....	25,000	25,000	25,000
Sheepfold.....	50,000	30,000	20,000
Conservatory and its plants.....	106,000	56,000	56,000
Belvedere.....	35,000	25,000	25,000
Deer paddocks, fences and stables.....	10,000	10,000	10,000
Antelope " " ".....	15,000		
Alterations at Fourth Transverse Road.....	3,000	3,000	3,000
Menagerie.....	1,800	1,800	1,800
Road steps.....	600	600	600
Terrace Fountain.....	3,000	3,000	3,000
Improvement of Esplanade.....	1,000	1,000	1,000
Horse Fountain, Lake Concourse.....	1,800	1,800	1,800
Indian Hunter Ped-stal.....	2,500		2,500
Seats, urinals, drinking fountains, rail- ings, fences.....	5,000	5,000	5,000
General planting.....	20,000	10,000	20,000
Constructions in shops, stables, offices, work yards and propagating establish- ment.....	500	500	500
Manhattan Square.....	120,000	50,000	50,000
Contingencies.....	10,000	10,000	42,800
Small Parks and places, including Fifty- ninth street, adjacent to Central Park.....	203,500	167,250	131,000
Morningside and Riverside.....	500,000	300,000	300,000
Totals.....	\$1,556,150	1,003,400	1,000,000

TABLE

Showing suggested distribution, among the various contemplated works, of the sum of \$1,000,000, understood to be available for construction accounts.

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES FOR WORK INTENDED TO BE COMPLETED THIS YEAR.	ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE TO BE MADE DURING THIS YEAR FOR OTHER WORK.
Entrance Eighth avenue, 85th street.....	\$3,000 00
" " 100th street.....	2,000 00
Inscope Arch.....	31,300 00
Outset Arch.....	18,200 00
Concert ground on Mall.....	12,000 00
Boat-house.....	21,500 00
Pergola.....	1,000 00
Casino.....	7,000 00
Carrousel and grounds adjacent.....	4,500 00
Cottage at Farmers' Gate.....	500 00
Deer paddocks, fences and stables.....	10,000 00
Alterations near Fourth Transverse Roads.....	3,000 00
Menagerie.....	1,800 00
Road steps.....	600 00
Terrace Fountain.....	3,000 00
Improvement of Esplanade.....	1,000 00
Horse fountain Lake Concourse.....	1,800 00
Indian Hunter Pedestal.....	2,500 00
Seats, &c.....	5,500 00
General planting.....	20,000 00
Contingencies, Central Park.....	42,800 00
\$193,000 00	
	193,000 00
	Eighth avenue wall..... } \$140,000 00
	Park slopes, Eighth avenue..... } 50,000 00
	Merchants' Gate..... 10,500 00
	S. E. Walk System (in addition to arches)..... 24,500 00
	Cottages..... 20,000 00
	Sheepfold..... 56,000 00
	Conservatory and its plants..... 25,000 00
	Belvedere..... 50,000 00
	Manhattan Square.....
	\$376,000 00
	City Parks and Places, including 59th street, adjacent to Central Park..... 181,000 00
	Morningside and Riverside..... 300,000 00
	Total..... \$1,000,000 00

DOCUMENT No. 45.

BOARD
OF THE
Department of Public Parks.

JUNE 25, 1873.

The PRESIDENT *pro tem.* presented to the Board the report of the Civil and Topographical Engineer, relative to the state of all works under his direction, as requested on the 4th inst.

Ordered, That the report of the Civil and Topographical Engineer, and all documents referring thereto, be received and ordered to be printed for the use of this Board.

ISAAC EVANS,
Assistant Secretary.

[*Report of Civil and Topographical Engineer, presented to the Board, June 25, 1873.*]

CITY OF NEW YORK, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS, }
Office of Civil and Topographical Engineer, }
MOUNT ST. VINCENT, CENTRAL PARK, }
New York, June 16, 1873.

Hon. H. G. STEBBINS,
President of Board of Commissioners
of Department of Public Parks.

SIR,—In answer to the resolution of the Board of June 4th, I submit the following “Statement of all work under my charge now going on, and such as has been commenced, and is now suspended.” I have embodied in this statement such portions of my report of May 21st, as were appropriate for the object, and as needed no modification at this date. In accordance with the request of the President I have also added such suggestions and remarks as seemed necessary.

I refer to the accompanying map to illustrate the information given.

FIRST DIVISION—CITY OF NEW YORK.

The work in progress is north of 155th street. The force employed consists of Mr. Cooke, Division Engineer, and three Assistants—one of the Assistants having been transferred to this work from the Harlem river work on May 28th.

The work consists of laying out streets, preparing plans of grades of streets formerly laid out by Central Park Commissioners north of Inwood and Dyckman streets, and grades around parade ground, defining bulkhead lines and exterior streets on Hudson and Harlem rivers.

Instructions are desired for completing work pertaining to extension of F street, near Inwood, and changing line of street north of that point, as petitioned for by property owners, and as reported upon to the Board, March 22d. (See Appendix B.)

Instructions are also wanted for preparing maps for filing the streets formerly laid out and adopted (by Commissioners of Central Park) north of Inwood, with such changes as have been necessitated by the parade ground.

Modifications of bulkhead lines are suggested in the progress of the work, which will be specially reported upon for the consideration of the Board.

A good deal of the work at the north end has been delayed by reason of the involved jurisdiction of the Department of Parks and Department of Docks over the bulkhead lines and exterior streets, and in consequence of laying out the parade ground.

There appears to be no reason now why it should not be completed, if funds are applicable, the matter of jurisdiction having been determined by the new charter.

SECOND DIVISION--HARLEM RIVER.

Mr. Cushing, Division Engineer, with a party of three assistants.

Since May 28th, Mr. Cushing's principal assistant has been transferred to the 1st Division, New York, and Mr. Cushing has been engaged on 3d Division, Westchester, in town of Kingsbridge; the two remaining assistants are employed in securing or monumenting the more important points of surveys of Harlem river, in case of any prolonged delay in proceeding with the work. These two men, Matthew Cox and Samuel Boggs, chainmen, I must recommend for discharge, unless further work is authorized on the Harlem River Division. They have not been paid since 1st April. I could employ them on very necessary work in West Farms (monumenting streets that have been adopted by the Board), if funds were available to purchase the necessary stone monuments.

A survey and map have been made of the Harlem river, with reference to the improvement of the navigation, and locating the Suspension Bridge and the tunnels at head of Seventh avenue and at Kingsbridge, and connecting the streets and avenues of the city with similar projected improvements on the

Westchester side of the river ; also defining the line of jurisdiction (low-water mark) between New York and Westchester.

To complete the river survey with reference to the improvements of the channel, a series of soundings will be required ; this latter work has been deferred for the further action of the Board.

The suspension bridge and the tunnel at the head of Seventh avenue, also await the action of the Board for further progress.

In regard to Harlem river work, I am unable to determine how it is affected by the new charter and supplementary acts not yet received, and annexation act.

It seems to be the intention of the laws that the work shall proceed. The necessity for the early construction of the tunnel at the head of Seventh avenue is very apparent, as the old draw-bridge at that point cannot long be continued in use without a large outlay, in addition to what has already been incurred, for repairs and reconstruction.

The surveys and examinations with reference to the suspension bridge, and the tunnel at the head of Seventh avenue, have been perfected, so as to permit the commencement of these works as soon as plans shall be approved by the Board.

THIRD DIVISION—WESTCHESTER COUNTY.

Mr. Croes, Division Engineer, with two assistants, and since May 28th, the Division Engineer of Harlem river.

The topographical surveys of the entire district, embracing (with Morrisania) about 13,000 acres, have been completed and mapped out ; plans of streets have been prepared and submitted to the Board, covering about 500 acres, and work is in hand, more or less advanced, for plans covering about 1,000 acres.

A contract with T. C. Cornell, for laying down a plan of streets, as prepared under the direction of the Department, in the southern part of the town of Kingsbridge, which was to have been completed on 1st of May, is not completed, in consequence of delays caused by local objections to the plan, on the part of a few property owners. This contract was made under a resolution of the Board of 21st February, 1872.

A reference of the questions as to the best plan of streets

for adoption in this case, and the views of the property owners, was made to Mr. J. J. Serrell and myself, by a resolution of the Board, of March 10th, and a meeting of the property owners was held, but before any definite result was arrived at in the matter, Mr. Serrell resigned the position in consequence of ill health.

I refer to my report on this subject, with the accompanying maps and papers, of June 3d. (See Appendix C.)

Instructions are desired as to further action in the matter.

The progress of the work of laying out streets in Westchester has been generally retarded for the want of funds. The town of Kingsbridge is the only town in which ample provision has been made (or seems now clearly to exist) for meeting the necessary expenses for a vigorous prosecution of the work. The present engineer force of the Westchester division is now employed in that town.

It will be very detrimental to the interests of West Farms if the work is long deferred in that town for want of funds, as a good deal of the field work done during the last three years will be liable to deteriorate by loss of land-marks, &c.

The engineer force has been employed since 1st April, under written agreement, that they can claim no pay for work in Westchester until money is provided from the towns in Westchester.

In order to proceed intelligently with the work in Westchester, it is necessary that plans of tunnels and bridges connecting with New York should be established as early as practicable, and, in connection with those works, a general plan of the improvement of the navigation of Harlem river, and the exterior or immediately adjacent streets.

Mr. Cornell is doing no work at present under his contract in Kingsbridge, in consequence of the plan of streets remaining undetermined.

George S. Greene, Jr., is completing his contract for making a topographical map of a part of West Farms, and the work is nearly done, except verifying and correcting errors and omissions.

All work in West Farms by the engineer force employed by

the department has been suspended, except that one draftsman is employed in testing and verifying the maps and surveys of George S. Greene, Jr.

Chap. 89 of Laws of 1873 requires a plan of streets, sewerage and drainage, for the town of Kingsbridge, to be completed and filed on or before 1st February, 1874. There are about 4,000 acres in this town, and it will require vigorous measures and an efficient engineering force to prepare the plans within that period.

The property owners in the town, who obtained the passage of the act making the appropriation, are very desirous that the work should be completed as early as practicable.

The detriment to public and private interests generally, caused by a delay of the work in Westchester and on the Harlem river, and the obstacles growing up in the way of selecting the best ground and planning a harmonious system of improvements, have been heretofore reported upon. For a more full detail of matters connected with Westchester work, I would refer to my report of December 31, 1872. (See Appendix A.)

An accurate topographical map of the Westchester territory is now in the hands of the lithographer.

FOURTH DIVISION—CITY OF NEW YORK, "EAST SIDE."

Surveys and maps have been made of this district, showing the position and extent of all buildings and existing improvements, division lines of property, and the arrangement heretofore established of streets and avenues; but the subsequent work under the act (Chap. 626 of Laws of 1870) of "laying out boulevards and public squares and places," etc., has been suspended.

The foregoing work, in the city of New York, is done under—

Chap. 565	of Laws of	1865,
" 697	"	1867,
" 626	"	1870,
" 628	"	1871,
" 534	"	1871,

and in Westchester county, under—

Chap. 534 of Laws of 1871,
“ 89 “ 1873.

Harlem river work, under—

Chap. 534 of Laws of 1871.

Very respectfully,

WM. H. GRANT,
C. & T. Eng.

APPENDIX A.

To the Honorable the Legislature of the State of New York :

The Board of Commissioners of the Department of Public Parks of the city of New York respectfully submit the following report, in conformity with an act of the Legislature, passed April 15th, 1871, relating to improvements of portions of the counties of Westchester and New York, the improvement of the navigation of Harlem river and Spuyten Duyvil creek, and to facilities of communication between said counties.

The proceedings of the Board, since the date of the last annual report to the Legislature, have been restricted for the want of funds applicable to the various classes of work embraced in the acts.

The means for carrying on the work, of surveying and preparing plans for laying out streets and other improvements in Westchester county are provided, under the law, by annual assessments upon the towns in which the work is done; and the means applicable to the construction of the Harlem river bridges and tunnels, the improvement of the navigation of the river, and repair and maintenance of existing bridges, are provided for by the issue of bonds by the counties of New York and Westchester respectively.

Attention was called in the last annual report, to the deficiency then existing in the means applicable to surveys in Westchester county, and also to the delays the Board had experienced in regard to the Harlem river works, by reason of the failure of the Westchester authorities to coöperate with the Board in proceedings required by law for the issue of bonds.

Other impediments to a full and uninterrupted discharge of the duties of the Board were referred to, and some suggestions were made for additional legislative action to meet the apparent necessities of the case.

It is a matter of regret that these difficulties have continued during the past year, and have prevented the Board from reporting at this time such an advanced state of progress of the works committed to it as the various public interests urgently require.

Solicitations from property-owners in Westchester county have been numerous and pressing for the advancement of the work of laying out streets and avenues, and have been based upon the reasonable grounds, that improvements cannot be safely made by them, by building upon existing lines of streets and roads, while the uncertainty exists as to whether such streets or roads will be continued, closed, or materially changed, under a general plan when adopted ; that new avenues, partly completed at large expense, and others much needed for the public convenience, cannot be opened and brought into use ; and that divisions and transfers of property, cannot be made satisfactorily to buyer or seller, while the plans remain in abeyance.

The Board, fully appreciating these difficulties, has endeavored to meet them as far as practicable, by preparing partial or local plans of streets and avenues where the urgency was greatest, and has, in these cases, procured the field-work to be done by contract, under stipulations providing for payment for the service only from the proceeds of assessments as they are hereafter made by the towns.

Proposals have also been invited and received from surveyors for larger amounts of work to be done in this way, based upon the same condition as to future payment, but they have been at prices so much above a fair cash value that the Board has not accepted them.

The experience that has been gained shows that it is of doubtful expediency to carry on the work by means of partial and isolated plans ; it increases the aggregate labor and cost, and the longer the completion of the work, as a whole, is delayed, the greater will be the embarrassments growing up in the way of devising a harmonious and well-arranged system.

The topographical surveys and maps of the entire district embraced in the law, covering 13,500 acres, are now very nearly completed and ready for laying down the final design, and

designating it upon the ground by monuments, and filing the maps, and it would obviously be for the best interests of the people of the several towns to provide the means for expediting the work, so that the benefits to be derived from its fulfillment might accrue at a much earlier day than is practicable by means of the small annual appropriations now provided by law.

The Harlem river works of bridging and tunneling, and improvement of navigation of the river, are intimately connected with the system of streets and avenues extending from the city of New York into Westchester county, and must, to a great extent, be planned and executed in connection with it, and the urgency of these works, on the ground of existing and rapidly increasing public necessities, is the same in this case as in that of the more extended Westchester improvements.

Of the requisitions made by the Board upon the Treasurer of Westchester county, in 1871, for money to apply to surveys for the year of 1872, only \$14,500 has up to this date been received, the requisitions being for \$10,000, as provided by law, from each of the towns of Yonkers, West Farms, Westchester, East Chester and Morrisania. Only the towns of Yonkers and West Farms have in part responded. The Legislature, by an act passed June 8th, 1872, exempted the towns of Westchester and East Chester from further surveys and requisitions.

The Board made the usual annual requisitions under the law, upon the Treasurer of Westchester county, in November last, for \$10,000 from each of the towns of Yonkers, West Farms, and Morrisania, to apply to the surveys in those towns. These amounts will not accrue, in the ordinary course of collections from the towns, before the ensuing spring.

The following statements show the amounts of receipts and expenditures on account of Westchester surveys and Harlem river works, up to December 31st, 1872 :

STATEMENT of moneys received and disbursed on account of surveys in Westchester county, by the Department of Public Parks, to December 31st, 1872.

Total amount paid by the Department for surveys, to December 31st, 1872	\$97,267 56
Total amount received by the Department from Westchester county, upon requisitions	68,844 29
	<hr/>
Excess of payments over receipts	\$28,423 27
In addition to which there are audited and unpaid bills, for work done under contracts, amounting to	17,957 91
	<hr/>
Total deficiency	<u>\$46,381 18</u>

Requisitions have been made by the Department on Westchester county, during the years of 1869, 1870, 1871, and 1872, under the provisions of Chapter 826, Laws of 1869, Chapter 797, Laws of 1870, and Chapter 534, Laws of 1871, for	\$140,000 00
Of which sum the towns of East Chester and Westchester were, by laws of 1872, exempted from their portions	\$20,000 00*
No work having been done in the town of Morrisania, the amount called for, was not levied by the Supervisors.	20,000 00
	<hr/>
	40,000 00
	<hr/>
	\$100,000 00

The total amount paid to the Department of Public Parks by the Treasurer of Westchester Co., on account of above requisitions, is	68,844 29
	<hr/>
Balance due on requisitions	<u>\$30,155 71</u>

STATEMENT of receipts and disbursements by the Department of
Public Parks, for account of Harlem river and Spuyten
Duyvil improvements :

Received in 1869, from the city of New York	\$10,000 00
“ 1871, “ “ “	30,000 00
“ “ “ sale of old lumber, Central bridge	291 66
“ “ “ sale of old lumber, Harlem bridge	13 90
“ “ “ sale of old lumber, Fordham bridge	7 00
“ 1872 “ sale of old lumber, King’s bridge	10 00
	<hr/>
	\$40,322 56

Expended on surveys, soundings. &c. :

In 1869	\$34 79
In 1870	1,513 07
In 1871	16,102 01
In 1872	7,758 94
	<hr/>
	25,408 77

Repairing Central bridge :

1871	\$29,553 27
1872	3,159 34
	<hr/>
	32,712 61

Repairing Harlem Bridge :

1871	\$2,216 41
1872	4,388 79
	<hr/>
	6,605 20

Repairing Fordham Bridge :

1871	\$724 07
1872	390 00
	<hr/>
	1,114 07

Repairing Kings Bridge :

1871.....	\$378 00	
1872.....	6 34	
		\$384 97

Repairing Canal Bridge :

1871.....		7 14
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Suspension Bridge :

1872.....		2,013 01
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Tunnel :

1872.....	1,750 31	
		\$69,996 08

Excess of payment over receipts.....		\$29,673 52
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In addition to the foregoing, there are due and unpaid bills for repairing Central and Fordham bridges, amounting to.....

	6,135 35
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Total deficiency.....		<u>\$35,808 87</u>
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Among the points to which the attention of the Legislature was called by the Board, in the last annual report, was the amendment of Chapter 534 of the Laws of 1871, by striking out the following words that occur at the end of Section one of that act: "Provided, however, that nothing in this act shall be so construed as in any way interfering with any improvement which has been or may be authorized by an act of the Legislature, in the district described in the first section of this act." It was stated that "this provision renders inoperative, or affects several of the provisions of the act in a way that does not seem to have been intended, and is not in harmony with the general tenor of the act." Subsequent experience in conducting the work, has strengthened the objection to this provision, and it is found that if it continues to remain in force, the labors of the Board must be, in many respects, fruitless of the proper and apparently intended results. The original act of 1869 did not contain this provision.

The question of jurisdiction between the Board of Commissioners and the Department of Docks, in reference to the bulk-head line of the Hudson and Harlem rivers and Spuyten Duyvil creek, and streets connected therewith, to which attention was called in the last report, remains in the same condition as at the date of that report, as also, the questions which were then referred to, relating to the projected Hudson and Harlem river canal across the northern end of the island of New York.

The stone-arched bridge, which had been planned and the construction contracted for by the Department of Public Works, to cross Spuyten Duyvil creek, has been turned over, together with the contract and materials delivered therefor, by the Commissioner of Public Works to this Department since the date of the last report. The erection of the bridge in the position designed, being at variance with the law, it has been discontinued.

The Legislature of 1872 amended Chapter 534 of Laws of 1871, by striking out Sections 8 and 10, relating to the powers of the Board of Commissioners in respect to certain railway grades, and the adaptation of street crossings of such grades to the security of life and property, and relating to the proper fencing and guarding of railway tracks on each side of bridges and at other points and places near any road or avenue now or hereafter to be established in the county of Westchester, and crossed by any railroad. The Board of Commissioners, in behalf of the public interests, and in consideration of the responsible duties devolved upon it by the Legislature, respectfully remonstrates against the repeal of those provisions.

It was the apparent object of the Legislature that enacted the provisions, to provide proper safe-guards against a class of accidents that are frequently and culpably occurring in this country in connection with railway travel and transportation, and also to protect the rights of property, wherever injuriously affected by the location and operation of railways in such manner as admits of reasonable and not unjust alleviation.

The removal of the power from the Board to exercise a limited discretion in the matter, and without substituting some equivalent means to meet the case, operates not only harshly

toward property owners directly affected, but perpetuates a state of things in which the public apprehension is constantly excited and human life endangered.

The Board, in the discharge of its duties, as committed to it by the law, will endeavor to obviate the difficulties in question as far as circumstances will permit, but in so doing it will be compelled to resort to plans and expedients in adjusting the positions and grades of streets and avenues, and of approaches to bridges and tunnels in the vicinity of railways, which it would not otherwise deem for the public interests.

Reference is made to the accompanying report of the Engineer in charge of the work for further details.

HENRY G. STEBBINS,

*President of the Department of Public Parks
of the City of New York.*

City of New York,
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS, }
265 Broadway.
Dec. 31st, 1872.

CITY OF NEW YORK,
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS, }
Office of Civil and Topographical Engineer. }

Dec. 31, 1872.

Hon. HENRY G. STEBBINS,

President of Department of Public Parks :

Sir—During the past year the topographical surveys of the Westchester District have all been completed, except about 1,500 acres, which are being done by contract, and to be completed by 1st May next.

The maps have been prepared for laying down upon them the system of streets, avenues, and other improvements contemplated by the law. This latter service has been progressing as fast as the limited means provided by the several towns would permit.

Under the Act of 1869, the Westchester district embraced 8,900 acres; by the Act of 1871, it was extended to 25,000 acres; and by the amendment of the latter Act, in 1872, it was reduced (by the omission of the towns of Westchester and Eastchester) to an area of 13,500 acres, and now embraces the towns of West Farms, Morrisania and the new town of Kingsbridge (late Yonkers), and a portion of the city of Yonkers.

About 3,000 feet of streets and avenues have been laid out, adopted by the Board and filed; 74,000 feet, or 14 miles, of streets and avenues, have been laid out, and submitted to the examination of the property owners affected, and are in readiness for the farther action of the Board; and about 27 miles of streets and avenues have been preliminarily studied, and only await the further order of the Board for completion, in the form necessary for final decision. The most of this work has been done during the past year.

The partial suspension of the work in October last, owing to the insufficiency of appropriations, has prevented the progress in the work that would otherwise have been made.

The condition of surveys and maps is now such, that the work, in the future, may be expedited to any extent that the appropriations will warrant.

I have heretofore called attention to the disadvantages, in point of economy, that result from delays to follow up the preliminary work and perfect the final designs, and secure the work from chances of error which arise by the loss of numerous landmarks; and to the disadvantages that result to the property owners, by deferring the settlement of lines and divisions of property, and the establishment of plans of streets, which govern purchasers in the selection and improvement of sites for residences or business.

The people of the district have become fully impressed upon these points, and are now manifesting a desire to hasten the work by means of larger appropriations than have hitherto been made.

The topographical map herewith submitted shows, on a small scale, the character of the preliminary work that has been performed.

In addition to this map, working maps have been prepared,

on a larger scale, as before mentioned, upon which have been laid down the designs and studies for streets and avenues as far as the work of this nature has progressed.

The topographical work has been thorough to the extent required for the object, and is believed to be accurate and reliable. The information obtained affords not only the necessary means for devising and laying out the contemplated system of improvements, but perpetuates a record of the existing physical features and characteristics of property of the district, which will, in the course of time, become modified or obliterated.

In regard to the general principles which have thus far guided me in preparing plans for the consideration of the Board, I refer to the following outline, which was prepared at the request of the President, in July last :

The terms of the law admit of a large discretion on the part of the Board, the plans of the work being indicated only so far as the same may be devised "with benefit to the property affected and to the public interest."

As far as plans have been matured, and submitted by direction of the Board to the examination of property owners, they seem to have met with a fair degree of approval.

OUTLINE OF PLAN FOR LAYING OUT THE WESTCHESTER DISTRICT.

The topography of the ground of the Westchester district is very variable ; some portions being low and moderately broken by irregularities of surface, but the larger portion being high and rolling, with large areas of ground of too great declivity to admit of easy improvement. These features suggest the future occupation of the lowest and most accessible ground for commercial and manufacturing purposes, and the higher, for residences. The prominent lines of transit and transportation will pass through the least elevated portions of the territory. Such lines should evidently be made commodious and should be interlaced with as many easy and commodious communications with the upland as are found practicable. The regions destined to be occupied for commercial and manufacturing

purposes it is desirable should be developed by streets and blocks of rectangular form, so as to give the greatest facilities of communication, and for utilizing the ground by compact occupation. The districts occupied for domestic purposes, it is believed, may be judiciously treated—must necessarily to a large extent be treated—in a different manner, being governed in this respect by the exigencies of topography. Such districts, after being subdivided by as many prominent through-lines, of easy grade, as are practicable, can best be developed, it is believed, by winding roads of a more rural character, avoiding deep cuttings or fillings, and large expense, and conforming to the surface of the country. The divisions and plots of this character to be governed in size by circumstances that may be developed as the work progresses.

The increased facilities of rapid transit are encouraging a tendency of population to spread into suburban and rural districts, and to occupy areas of ground somewhat larger than city lots, and a large portion of this district invites such occupancy.

The drainage of ground of this character needs to be ample and well studied. The prevailing system of drainage and sewerage of cities will doubtless be applied to the portions of the district likely to be most densely populated. In this case, the rules and practice are tolerably well established; it is a question of population, area, rainfall, artificial supply of water, and the requisite size and inclination of sewers.

For a very considerable suburban or rural area, with a population more sparse, different sanitary conditions, streets and improvements of a different character, mostly elevated ground, with comparatively small but rapid drainage, a different system may be advantageously considered.

The first point suggested would be, whether deep drainage or sewerage would be expedient: *i. e.*, at the depth ordinarily adopted in cities to drain cellars and basements of dwellings situated immediately on the line of the street. It would be necessary to determine whether sewage matter and mere surface drainage could be separated; in short, how sewage matter could be disposed of by any other than the prevailing faulty system. For surface and road drainage, the plan adopted in

Central Park, which has operated efficiently for a number of years, seems well adapted. I think it could be applied to drainage in Westchester successfully, and it is probable that, for a number of years to come, no other provision would be needed for a considerable part of the district.

It will further facilitate the study of plans, and prevent questions from arising with property owners, involving changes and repetitions of work, if the following general rules are laid down to govern the work.

The re-arrangement of roads and streets, as at present laid out, to be governed by the interest to the property affected and the public interest, and to conform as far as practicable to a general harmony of plan. Property owners have laid out, and are now laying out, irregular and detached plots of streets, that will not conform to a general plan adapted to the public interests. Local districts have been improved upon such irregular plans, and much interest is manifested by parties affected about the adoption by the Department of such plans. The extent or frequency of streets to be laid out, size of blocks, &c., to be governed by the apparent necessity in any local district for small or large subdivisions. If not laid out in small subdivisions, it will be necessary to study the work with reference to the practicability of the smallest probable future subdivisions.

Prominent streets and avenues to be 75 to 100 feet in width; the next class of streets below these to be 60 feet in width, and the least width of any streets (on precipitous or rocky ground) to be 50 feet. Short lanes and passages for drainage or footways, on precipitous ground, to be not less than thirty feet wide.

Maximum grades of prominent streets and avenues not to exceed an inclination of one foot in twenty feet of distance. Maximum grades of streets in general not to exceed one foot in twelve, except in special cases.

As the work progresses, additional points, that cannot now be provided for, will arise, requiring instructions. Among these will be the selection of sites for public squares and places, the treatment of water front, &c. The question of water supply to the district will also require further development.

The Harlem river surveys have been continued during the

past season, with a small force, except during interruptions for other duties.

The line of jurisdiction (low-water mark) between New York and Westchester has been defined, except on a small portion of Harlem river, at the easterly end.

The soundings of the channel, with reference to the improvement of the navigation, chiefly remain to be done.

At the two principal points where rock occurs in the bed of the channel, at the head of Seventh avenue and at Kingsbridge, soundings and borings have been made, with special reference to tunnels at those localities, sufficiently to determine the general extent and depth of the rock below high-water.

The bed-rock has also been developed in a part of the channel, at the site of the projected suspension bridge, about 1,800 feet north of the "Highbridge."

Investigations have been continued, by sounding, boring and sinking shafts, for perfecting the necessary information in regard to position and details of plans for the suspension bridge, and the tunnel at the head of Seventh avenue. These latter investigations have been made since September last, with the advice of Gen. George S. Greene, Consulting Engineer.

The question of tunnels connects itself directly with that of the improvement of the navigation of Harlem river, as the depth to which tunnels are sunk will govern the depth of water for navigable purposes. The questions are of much importance, and have received a good deal of attention by the collection of information and statistics bearing upon the subject. A diversity of opinion is found to exist as to the largest class of vessels that should be provided for to pass through the improved channel from the Hudson to the East river; property owners more immediately affected along the route hold different views; the general public sentiment of those upon whom the expenses will fall is not known, and the law authorizing the work refers to it only in general terms.

A large expenditure is involved, embracing the improved channel above and the tunnels below, and this will be materially affected, as well as the time required to complete the respective works, by the depth of water determined upon.

The least depth of water that will meet the wants of naviga-

tion and commerce, is the most favorable for the convenient adaptation and use of tunnels.

The limit is to be found in the consideration of the subject with reference to the probable future requirements of commerce, and the more immediate and accessible questions connected with the practical ends to be subserved, in the position, depth, declivity, and length, of approaches of tunnels.

The investigation of these points is being made with reference to the tunnel first to be constructed at the head of Seventh avenue, and such judgment as can be formed, with the aid of the Consulting Engineer, will be submitted to the Board.

Very respectfully,

WM. H. GRANT,
Civil and Topographical Engineer.

APPENDIX B.

CITY OF NEW YORK,
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS,
Office of Civil and Topographical Engineer, }
265 Broadway, }

March 19th, 1873.

Hon. H. G. STEBBINS,

President of Board of Commissioners D. P. P.

SIR:—The Secretary has furnished me with a copy of a petition with diagram, from Mr. E. S. Mauran and others, owners of property at Inwood, in relation to the laying out of a short street in that vicinity, and I am informed by the Secretary that the same are referred to me by the Board for examination and report.

I have examined the subject, and find no difficulties in the nature of the ground or topography in the way of the desired street. The grade may be made quite as easy as that of the street termed "Prescott avenue," of which the proposed street is a direct continuation. If the portion of street termed "F street" is already opened as alleged, and lots have been laid out upon it and sold fronting upon that street, it would seem to strengthen the case in favor of the extension of the street to the "Bolton road."

It would evidently be a convenience to people residing in the district north of Inwood street, as it would shorten their approach to the Inwood depot and wharf.

I can see that there might be objections to the street on the part of property owners immediately affected, as it cuts some lots into smaller dimensions than is usually considered desirable, but, as I am not apprised of objections, or of the nature of them, I am unable to determine whether they would overbalance the apparent advantages.

I submit a profile showing practical grades for the proposed street and connecting streets.

Very respectfully,

WM. H. GRANT,
Civil and Topographical Engineer.

APPENDIX C.

CITY OF NEW YORK, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS, }
 OFFICE OF CIVIL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL ENGINEER, }
 MOUNT ST. VINCENT, CENTRAL PARK, }

June 3d, 1873.

Hon. H. G. STEBBINS,

President of Board of Comm'rs D. P. P.:

Sir,—In accordance with your instructions, I submit a report of proceedings under the resolution of the Board of March 12th. The resolution is in the following words:

“*Resolved*, That the Board hereby engage the services of Mr. J. J. Serrell, C. E., to act conjointly with Mr. Wm. H. Grant, Engineer of the Department, to consider the proposed map, laying out streets, avenues, &c., in the town of Kingsbridge, and that they be instructed to hear the views of the respective owners of property, and report the result to this Board.”

Mr. Serrell came to the office March 15th, and we looked over the maps and profiles. We met again on the 19th, and proposed meeting the property owners on the 22d, if convenient to Gen. Ewen. It was found that the 22d was not convenient to Gen. E., and Monday, 24th, was appointed, and sixty property owners were served with notices in writing. It was agreed by Mr. Serrell and myself that all persons owning property within the Department map of January 27th, 1873, should be notified.

March 24th we met the property owners at the office of the Department; the resolution adopted by the Board was read; the map of streets prepared by the Department, dated Jan. 27th, 1873, was exhibited; and also the map which had been prepared by Gen. Ewen—(also a copy of map of Jan. 27th, omitting bulkhead street, marked B); and the views of those present were variously expressed. Gen. Ewen opposed the Department map; said the streets, by running straight, cut buildings unnecessarily; he claimed a valuation of property of \$102,000 in favor of his plan; Mr. Johnson claimed a valuation of \$182,000 in favor of Department plan; Gen. Ewen said it would cost \$100,000 for buildings taken and removed from the

proposed Park grounds. W. C. Wetmore and Austin D. Ewen approved Gen. Ewen's plan; Mr. Wetmore was opposed to the Park, and said the Department plan of streets cut his land badly. Gen. Ewen's plan was signed by

W. C. WETMORE,
 P. O. STRANG,
 AUSTIN D. EWEN,
 E. D. EWEN (for self and estate),
 J. R. WHITING,
 J. A. HAYDEN,
 JOHN EWEN,
 JOHN LEA, and
 ISABELLA PORTER (per Mr. Strang).

Mr. Serrell requested all persons present who were in favor of Gen. Ewen's plan to come forward and sign it. No person signed it at the meeting.

Mr. Delafield thought the Department plan should be adopted, unless Gen. Ewen could show that the property owners did not approve it. He, Mr. Delafield, approved it entire, including the Park.

Gen. Ewen's plan gave few north and south streets and more east and west streets, which was the reverse of what was needed and of what was provided by the Department plan. Mr. Hutchings was opposed to Riverdale avenue crossing the railroad track at grade; was in favor of the Park if taken at once. Mr. Shepard, on the part of the Spuyten Duyvil & Port Morris Railroad Company, approved the Department map, including the Park. The map represents convenient and good railroad crossings and good and convenient roads. Mr. Petrie and Mr. Johnson also expressed the same approval.

Mr. Ackerman was understood to be in favor of the Department map as to crossing the railroad on Riverdale avenue. A vote of the meeting was taken on the Park question, and twelve property owners voted against it and thirty-one in favor of it. A proposition to take a vote on the general plan of streets was opposed by Gen. Ewen. Mr. Serrell thought it not advisable, and it was not taken. This is about the substance of the proceedings as noted at the time.

Mr. Serrell appointed Wednesday, March 26th, to meet me and confer on the maps, &c.

March 26th.—Mr. Serrell, at office, sent for Gen. Ewen's map—failed to get it; compared votes taken at the meeting, together with previous petitions, as to proposed Parks; a majority of assessed valuation found in favor of Park, as follows:

IN FAVOR.

Vote at meeting, assessed valuation.....	\$65,400
Petitions for Department plan, including the Park, as per petitions to department dated February, 1873, and submitted herewith (the petitioners who voted at meeting are not included), assessed valuation.....	100,000
	<hr/>
Total.....	\$165,400

AGAINST,

Vote at meeting.....	\$127,250
	<hr/>
Majority of assessed valuation in favor of Park....	38,150
	<hr/>

A valuation of \$35,000 was not represented or expressed at the meeting for or against the Park.

Appointed meeting to morrow, 27th; Mr. Serrell to get Gen. Ewen's map in the mean time. Mr. Hayden came in and explained to Mr. Serrell and myself that he had signed Gen. Ewen's remonstrance, principally for the reason that he was opposed to the Park. He thought the omission of a short street through the Whiting property would remove the objection of Mr. Whiting to the Department map.

March 27th.—Mr. Serrell had been informed by General Ewen that Mr. Ogden had changed his views as to the Park and plan of streets, and desired to see Mr. Ogden's letter to the President. Enquired of Secretary, and unable to find

the letter. Mr. S. desired, before examining General Ewen's map, to have the levels put on it in figures.

March 29th.—Levels had been put on General Ewen's map; Mr. S. unwell; cursory examination as to grades on General Ewen's map near his house; appointed Monday, 31st, for next meeting.

March 31st.—Mr. S. did not come.

April 1st.—S. came and looked over map, but not well; said he would come to-morrow and appoint a day to go to Spuyten Duyvil and go over the ground.

April 11th.—S. did not come till this morning; looked over map and profiles, but not well, and appointed to come in to-morrow at 12 M.

Mr. Ogden's letter had come to hand (referred to March 27th). This was our last interview—Mr. S. having resigned the position a few days later on account of ill health.

Previous to this date Mr. Whiting, who had signed Gen. Ewen's map, came to the office and said he was in favor of the straight 100-foot street, as shown on the Department map (which General Ewen had changed on his map), and that he did not approve the steep road as proposed by General Ewen, north of his (Gen. E.'s) house; he preferred the road on the Department map in place of it. He preferred Gen. Ewen's streets on a part of his north and south lines, west of Yonkers road. If Park is left without immediate action by the Department, he would be satisfied on that point.

As Mr. Serrell resigned before we had reached any definite result, I can only report my subsequent individual examinations and conclusions.

1st.—As to Views of Property Owners.

Besides the public meeting that was held, we had before us the previous petitions, remonstrances, and other papers, which

had at various times been presented to the Department. The records of the office show that the property owners principally interested, were notified in writing in August last, that the preliminary map was then ready for their examination, and objections, if any, were requested in writing. Ample time seems to have been given to property owners to form their opinions. The names of those who have objected to the plan in writing, and prefer General Ewen's plan, are those previously mentioned as having signed General Ewen's map and remonstrance. They are nine in number, but two of them who represent a large property—Messrs. Whiting and Hayden—have in a great measure explained away their objections or annulled their approval of General Ewen's map. It is also understood that the "estate of D. Ewen," of $20\frac{1}{2}$ acres, is assessed to A. D. Ewen, and covers E. D. Ewen's interest; and that the property of Isabella S. Porter is assessed to P. O. Strang; so that it would seem that the nine positive objectors should be reduced in number.

The whole property represented by the map is assessed at.....	\$327,650 00
Taking the assessed property of the nine objectors at the full amount claimed by General Ewen...	102,000 00
	<hr/>
Leaves a balance of.....	\$225,650 00

Taking into consideration the foregoing facts in connection with the failure at the meeting to obtain any additional signatures to, or affirmation of, Gen. Ewen's map by the property owners assembled, and also all the circumstances attending the examination of the plan by the property owners during a space of six or seven months previously, and their expressions of approval, and also the few written objections, I conclude that the views of the property owners are strongly in favor of the department plan.

2d. As to the Plan of Streets.

The plan of January 27th, 1873, was the result of a careful study of the ground, some of which is the most difficult in the

Westchester district. Such modifications were made from time to time, to conform to the individual views of property owners as were found practicable from the nature of the ground, and in consonance with the general idea of adapting the plan as a whole, to "the benefit of the property affected and the public interests," as the law requires.

Upon a review of the map at the special request of the President, for the purpose of adapting it as far as practicable to the views of objectors, I have made some modifications which are more favorable to the property of Gen. Ewen, Mr. Wetmore, A. D. Ewen and estate of D. Ewen. I have not been able, however, to follow out Gen. Ewen's plan in many points where he thinks it important for his interests; I would be glad to do so, if it were compatible with my sense of duty.

Since the resignation of Mr. Serrell, Gen. Ewen has struck out some parts of his map and made changes of location, but at the two points where he is most concerned I am unable to adapt the plan (of January 27th) to his views. One of these points is near Gen. Ewen's residence. Gen. Ewen's last plan here is to continue Riverdale avenue and the road coming down the hill from the west, north of his residence, in their present positions, and retain the grade, or nearly the present steep grade of the latter road. Riverdale avenue to cross obliquely the railroad and Tibbitt's brook to the east by bridges, on a new line, and also to continue on as at present, southerly and cross the railroad as now on the rails. This plan is impracticable, for the reason that it would annul the cross street coming down the hill from the west; the grades are too steep, and the road, as Gen. Ewen proposes, has been properly objected to by Mr. Whiting and several others; it is for the same reason (grades) impracticable to connect the new street running southwesterly from the railroad crossing, with Riverdale avenue on the level of the rails. The plan, if practicable, would be very expensive. In order to make it practicable and not steepen the grade of Riverdale avenue beyond its ruling grade on other parts, and limiting the grade of the branch street up the hill north of Gen. Ewen's residence to 1 in 12, I have assumed such grades in a calculation of the cost of the plan, and find it to cost over \$100,000 more than the Department plan at the same place.

The Department plan estimated on has been here considerably improved for Gen. Ewen's interests over that of the plan of January 27th.

The other point is the straight 100-foot street running north and south on the plateau on the top of the hill. In order to save a house of Gen. Ewen's, he has changed the location, direction and width of this street, so that, in order to meet his views, the plan of January 27th must be remodeled to a very large extent.

The expression of property owners (Mr. Whiting among others), by petition and in other ways, has been such in regard to this street, and the general plan in connection with it, that I doubt if they would be willing to change it. I have, however, prepared a revised or alternative plan, embodying such change, and submit it herewith for the consideration of the Board. It is so material a change of the general plan (of January 27th), that it would seem necessary, in case the Board should think it advisable to substitute it for that plan, to submit it to the individual property owners before adoption.

Very respectfully,

WM. H. GRANT,
C. and T. Engineer.

Plans of Kingsbridge streets, submitted with report of Civil and Topographical Engineer of June 3, 1873.

- A.**—Plan examined and generally approved by property-owners since August, 1872, and submitted to the Board January 27, 1873.
- B.**—Copy of plan **A**, omitting Bulkhead street, submitted to Board February, 1873.
- C.**—Modification of plan **A** (of June 3d).

D.—Alternative plan, in which plan **A** is remodeled to avoid a house of Gen. Ewen's, on the 100 foot avenue.

E.—Gen. Ewen's plan.

Remonstrances, petitions and other papers accompanying Report and Plans, marked 1 to 13 inclusive.

DOCUMENT No. 46.

BOARD

OF THE

Department of Public Parks.

JULY 17, 1873.

The PRESIDENT submitted the report of the Special Committee on Statues and Monuments on the Central and other Parks, appointed February 19th, 1873.

Ordered, That said report be accepted and printed as a document of the Board.

ISAAC EVANS,

Assistant Secretary.

REPORT
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON THE SUBJECT OF STATUES
ON THE CENTRAL PARK.

25th April, 1873.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS,
OFFICE OF DESIGN AND SUPERINTENDENCE, }
NEW YORK, 25th April, 1873.

*To the Board of Commissioners
of the Department of Public Parks :*

At the request of the Board, the undersigned have considered the subject of Statues in the Central Park, with a view to the determination of some general rules which shall govern the question of accepting and disposing of them.

During the first half of this century but one statue was placed in the public places of this city, and it may be difficult to believe that the offer of such costly and substantial presents to the public is likely to be at all frequent in the future. A consideration of certain facts will, however, show that the inclination to this form of benefaction has, with the progress of wealth, luxury, and a taste for refined enjoyments, been very rapidly increasing.

It is less than ten years since the Drive was opened through the Park ; the improvement of some important sections of the grounds is not even now begun ; the larger portion is yet in a sketchy state, and a few residences are but now beginning to be occupied at one end of its border.

Nevertheless, we find that already more than twenty works of sculpture—the majority full length statues in bronze—have been formally offered to the Commissioners, and it is known that the tender of a number of others is likely soon to be made. During the same period three other statues have been paid for by voluntary contributions and set up elsewhere in the city. Another is at this time in the sculptor's hands, and still others are projected.

In nearly every instance, those offering a statue have designated the position in which they would have it stand, and, in the majority of cases, have made the concession of their selected position a condition of the gift. At least two offers have been withdrawn because the Commissioners hesitated to promise what was thus required ; one of these coming from a man who proposed to make the statue of a relative the central object of the Mall. On two other occasions, the positions fixed by the Commissioners have been refused, with some feeling, by those offering statues, and, in several, the Commissioners have been requested to remove well grown trees in order to give greater prominence to a selected site.

It will thus appear probable, first : that before the design of the park is at all maturely realized, the number of statues for which positions will be sought upon it will be very great ; and, second : that if the question of placing them is in each case to be determined without reference to defined and strongly established rules, narrow considerations of temporary expediency will almost necessarily have undue weight, both with respect to the choice of statues for the park, and to the positions which they shall be allowed to occupy. Rules applicable to the question can be established only by a consideration of the major purposes of the park, and of the essential properties by which it serves those purposes. The main popular want to be ministered to in a large park situated like the Central Park, with respect to a great city, is the natural craving of its residents for opportunity to exercise a variety of capacities for enjoyment which must necessarily remain unused, and through disuse tend to feebleness or distortion under the ordinary limitations of a city experience,

however rich this may be in other respects. Three things should be supplied in a park not to be had in the city elsewhere: First, air, purified by abundant foliage. Second, means of tranquilizing and invigorating exercise, as in good quiet roads and walks, kept free from the irritating embarrassments of the city streets. Third, extended landscapes, to refresh and delight the eye, and, therefore, as free as possible from the rigidity and confinement of the city and from the incessant emphasis of artificial objects which inevitably belong to its ordinary conditions. The chief difficulty of a park enterprise is to meet the latter requirement as fully as desirable.

In a well drained and cultivated territory extending over several miles, the air naturally remains fresh and pure, and a liberal area of ground planted with shade trees at intervals along properly constructed roads and walks, can hardly fail to offer good facilities for healthful out-door exercise. But the preparation and preservation of the best possible landscape effects will always depend on a series of conditions of a subtle and delicate character, that are much more liable to be interfered with and encroached upon.

If a park, as a whole, is to be considered as a work of art, it is in this direction, then, that it most needs to be carefully protected; for the demands of the special art of which it is an example must always have the first claim to consideration.

The essence of the park, that is to say, must be in its landscapes. If, as years elapse, the pictorial effects prove to be as broad, well-marked and varied as was possible under the circumstances of the site, a corresponding measure of success is assured. If, on the other hand, a general impression is conveyed to the eye of a series of groups with comparatively small features, and crowded with details and accessories, the result will be a failure, however beautiful the details and accessories in themselves may be.

The Central Park labors under marked disadvantages in this respect. Its actual dimensions in acres do not seem small, but the spaces of turf or water that have to be depended on to estab-

lish the required impression of indefinite extent and comparatively open landscape, are very contracted.

The first practical deduction to be derived from this review of the facts is, that in the consideration of all propositions for adding to or altering its details and accessories, the due relation and subordination of the various parts to the general design require to be constantly borne in mind, and as this relation can hardly be understood and appreciated without much special study, and is liable not to be at all distinctly recognized by those who may represent a proposed new statue, the duty of the Board is obvious to reserve to itself the question of location for decision after each work has been accepted on behalf of the city. It is equally obvious, that while there must be difficulty in establishing rules which shall neither be too restrictive to be endured nor too lax to be of any practical value, it is certainly dangerous to proceed without reference to fixed standards when dealing with delicate questions of art, by which the character and value of so important a public property as the Central Park is to be permanently affected. It is the duty of your Committee, therefore, to seek to reduce the general views which have thus far been presented, to a form in which they may be definitely applied to particular cases.

Positions are likely to be sought for two classes of statues; First, those designed expressly for a commemorative purpose, as the statues of Shakespeare, Scott, and the allegorical figure Commerce. Second, those designed to present objects of beauty or dramatic interest, as those of the Indian Hunter, the Falconer and the Tigress.

The first, when worthy to be brought upon the Park, are entitled to positions of dignity; and it is desirable, also, that the feelings which they are intended to inspire should be sustained and supported as far as possible by other objects to which they shall stand in some easily recognized relation.

It is with this view, as well as to avoid the intrusion of artificial objects of any class not locally necessary as a matter of public convenience, upon the natural scenery of the Park, that

it has hitherto been contemplated that portrait or commemorative statues should be placed either in immediate association with the entrance-ways or in juxta-position with the formal lines and avenues of the Mall.

With regard to the entrance-ways, it is not desirable that the gates should be built until other and substantial improvements have been made in the neighborhood of each. When this period arrives, it is to be assumed that an outlay may be commanded sufficiently liberal to secure structures of a satisfactory architectural character, with unexceptionable positions for noble statues and other works of sculpture illustrating the class of human interests from which the gate in such case takes its name.

When, as in the case of the bust of Humboldt, which has been placed at the Scholars' Gate, or the statue of Commerce, near to the Merchants' Gate, a satisfactory position shall at once be found in connection with the appropriate entrance; a work of sculpture may at the outset be placed in its final position, although the architectural features of the general design of the entrance and the companion figures that are expected to be placed opposite or adjoining it are yet entirely lacking.

When, on the other hand, owing to the little use yet made of the appropriate entrance-way, or the unfinished and unsuitable condition of the ground near it, no satisfactory position is thus immediately found for a statue, it may be placed on the Mall, but with the distinct expectation that it shall be removed when the appropriate gateway shall be built, and a suitable position made for it.

In determining the position of such works of the second or more distinctly idealistic class as shall be worthy of a place at all upon the Park, the point chiefly to be guarded against is, that they shall not dominate the landscape, and thus put those considerations in the subordinate place, which in the main work have throughout been assumed to be primary considerations; that is to say, of sylvan or idyllic interest; antithetic to

those in which the mind of man is the larger element, as in architectural and gardening work as well as sculptural. It is probably impracticable to lay down any rule of more definite application in this respect than that no position shall be given to a statue in which it shall be a prominent object from a distance, or in which, when regarded from the front, it will divide or obstruct the view of any of the few expanses of the Park.

There is no class of works of art of which so few are found permanently satisfactory as statues, none which, if awkward, ungraceful or unfitting to the situation in which they are placed, are so obtrusive and unsatisfactory.

Although it may not be denied that works of sculpture, even if inartistically conceived and executed, may be of considerable interest to some persons, from an association of ideas in connection with the subjects represented, or that they may have a strictly archaeological claim to attention, if relics of another age; it may yet be laid down as a general rule, so far as the Department of Public Parks is concerned, that no statue can have a just claim to a position in any portion of the public pleasure-grounds of the city unless it is a work that has artistic merit of so marked and individual a character, that its introduction can be completely justified on that ground alone. As it is to be anticipated that the liberality of citizens will hereafter lead to a multiplicity of offers to contribute works of sculpture for erection in the Central and other city parks, and as it may be difficult at times to decide the exact line that ought to be drawn in respect to the art character of the work under consideration, it is suggested, that to make this rule a practical one, it should be determined that when any statue of importance is offered to the Department, the Landscape Architect shall be instructed to confer with the President of the National Academy of Design, the President of the American Museum of Art, and the President of the American Institute of Architects, in regard to its artistic value, and to make a report to the Board on the subject prior to any action being taken.

If it becomes the settled policy of the Department to require that their acceptance of any work of sculpture should be without qualification as to time or place of erection on the park, and if in some such manner as has been indicated the critical value of every important work is determined before the proposition in regard to it is acted on by the Board, there will be no universally valid reason for a refusal to receive statues in honor of living men.

With the view, however, of avoiding, in a simple manner, the difficulties and evils that might otherwise arise, it seems desirable to make it a fixed rule of the Department to postpone any action in regard to the erection of a portrait statue till five years after the death of the individual it is designed to commemorate.

We are convinced that if the suggestions which have thus been made should be adopted as by-laws, so that they could not be hastily put aside, and if the Board were able to answer applicants and enquiries by reference to them, the park would thereby be protected from serious evils, and much agitation, trouble and heart-burning be saved.

The following is a recapitulation of these suggestions in a form for consideration as by-laws or rules, and which are thus recommended for adoption :

First.—Before any engagement is made to place a statue, or allow a statue to be placed, on the Central Park, it shall be seen in a finished condition, or in the form of a finished model, and a judgment as to its merits, as a work of art, shall have been requested of the respective Presidents of the American Academy of Design, the American Museum of Art, and the American Institute of Architects.

Second.—The determination of a site for any statue shall be reserved until after its acceptance.

Third.—On each side of the main walk of the Mall, on a

line with the statue of Scott, now placed, a series of statues may be ranged, commemorative of men or of events of far reaching and permanent interest. At or near each of the gates of the park, portrait or commemorative statues may also be placed, appropriate to the name of the gate. Portrait or memorial statues shall hereafter be placed nowhere else in the Central Park.

Fourth.—Statues or sculptured works designed to represent objects of beauty, or dramatic and poetic interest, may be placed at any points in the park where they shall not dominate a landscape, or, when seen in front, divide the view over an expanse, lawn or glade.

Fifth.—A statue, commemorative of any person, shall not be placed in the Central Park, nor accepted with a condition that it shall be placed in the Central Park, until after a period of at least five years from the death of the person represented.

FREDERIC E. CHURCH.
CALVERT VAUX.

HENRY G. STEBBINS,
Pres. and Ex Of. of Com.

DOCUMENT No. 47.

BOARD

OF THE

Department of Public Parks.

JULY 17, 1873.

The Landscape Architect submitted a report on the changes recently made in the management of the Keeper's Force, &c., in compliance with resolution adopted June 27th, 1873.

Ordered, That said report just presented by the Landscape Architect be accepted and printed as a document of the Board.

ISAAC EVANS,

Assistant Secretary.

REPORT
OF THE
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

ON THE
RECENT CHANGES IN THE KEEPERS' SERVICE.

Called for by the Board, 27th June, 1873.

Read from rough draft before the Committee of the Whole
on By-Laws, 9th July, 1873.

Presented to the Board 17th July, 1873.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS,
OFFICE OF DESIGN AND SUPERINTENDENCE, }
NEW YORK, 8th July, 1873.

To the

Hon. HENRY G. STEBBINS,

President of the Board of Commissioners :

SIR :—A resolution of the Board requests me to explain the changes recently made in the management of the keepers' force; to report my observations of their working and to advise the Commissioners what improvements are desirable.

The changes referred to having been made at my suggestion, and partly in the exercise of the discretion given me by the late Board, I may answer the first requirement chiefly by a narration of personal observations. Reference will also be desirable to an experience of your own, Mr. President, directly

communicated to me and to matters of the recent history of the Department, not of record, but of your knowledge, which occurred before the appointment of any other of the present Commissioners. For these reasons and in view of the terms of the request, I trust that I shall be excused if I adopt a more personal manner of reply than might otherwise be appropriate in a report intended for the Board.

What is known as the old arrangement of the keepers' service was devised and introduced by me, as the records of the Board will show, and under my management, while Superintendent of the Park, from 1857 to 1861 (as later under the Comptrollership of Mr. Green), had been regarded as working fairly well. I found it still followed when I became President of the Department in 1872, but certainly then not working well.

I did my best during the five months of my occupancy of that position to restore efficiency under it, but with little success. Soon after my resignation, I recommended, on a call of the Board, as the result of my experience, that certain expedients of improvement should be adopted; these were not introduced, however, until after I had had, as General Superintendent, six months' further observation of the working of the old arrangement, with a force much weeded of its worst constituents, and after the removal of a commander against whom most of the men were strongly prejudiced, and the restoration of one whom they desired.

The new arrangement has not yet been fully introduced and has by no means had a fair trial. The prospect of a satisfactory degree of efficiency under it has not, however, been very encouraging.

I thus recognize that my recent superintendence of the keepers' service, both before and since the change, and both as President and as your general executive officer, is not to be regarded as successful.

Under these circumstances, although my desire that the

Board shall act prudently, wisely and resolutely in this matter, outweighs all other interests I have in its proceedings, I am not anxious to defend any plan before it, and have no wish to urge any plan upon it. But if the Commissioners can have the patience to allow me to present the more important aspects of this part of the business they have before them, with something like the degree of fulness, which in my judgment is necessary to do justice to its importance and its difficulty, I shall be grateful.

I am aware that, if I truly represent my own estimate of its importance relatively to any and all other of the Department's business, those to whom the subject is new can hardly fail to regard this estimate as a heated and extravagant one. I wish, therefore, first of all, to indicate the general line of reasoning by which it is influenced.

The designers of the Central Park aimed to provide, or rather to retain and develop, in it certain elements of interest and attraction which, if they were successful, would be almost peculiar to itself. They saw, from the beginning, that the danger of failure lay chiefly in the liability of misunderstanding, misuse and misappropriation of these elements of the design by the public. They saw also quite as distinctly sixteen years ago as now, that in this respect the practicability and value of their plan turned upon the question, whether a keepers' service *adequate to its special requirements* could be maintained upon it. The Commissioners adopting the plan were distinctly warned of this. I, myself, stated to them, in full Board, that I should be unwilling to take any responsibility in respect to the Park unless assured that I would be allowed to exact a degree of faithfulness, activity and discipline in the keepers' force that would be extraordinary in any service of the city.

And I now affirm, that every dollar that has been spent thus far on the Park, or that can be spent on it, without changes in plan, uprooting its very foundations, will have been spent on the assumption of a much more efficient keepers' service than has ever yet been had upon it. Not a line of the Park would

otherwise have been laid where it is, not a tree planted where trees now stand. It has been a mistake from the beginning.

And the deplorableness of this mistake is not to be measured by the millions of dollars that will have been thrown away upon it, or the deprivations which will result from it to the people of New York. This park is, in many respects, an experiment, by the results of which the welfare of vast numbers of people in other great cities than New York cannot fail to be affected.

I have indicated the grounds of this claim in a paper read at the Lowell Institute, in Boston, in 1870, and printed in the *Journal of Social Science* of that year, and can barely give a clue to it here.

The growth of great cities, which began in Europe with the rise of trans-oceanic commerce in the sixteenth century, and which has lately, in all civilized countries, been so greatly stimulated by the inventions of the steam-engine, the railway, the steamship and the telegraph, brings with it great evils and dangers.

The old parks of the great cities of Europe have come to be within them by accident, and their adaptations to popular use are in every case limited, desultory and ill-combined. Experience shows, nevertheless, that they serve the purpose of mitigating and limiting the special evils of great cities, in varying but always notable and important degrees. Setting aside the elements of accessibility, local sanitary conditions and others, there is reason to believe that they are thus valuable in the ratio in which they chance to be so formed as to allow multitudes of people to experience the enjoyment of pastoral and sylvan scenery, and to the degree of that special enjoyment which they are adapted to furnish.

It follows that there is good reason for believing that had a true nature-loving art been applied to this purpose, in the

formation of a park from the outset, in the choice and disposition of trees, in the arrangement of roads and walks, and of other structures required for the comfortable accommodation of multitudes of visitors, and had liberal expenditures been directed to this purpose, with as profound study and as much skill as it has been to the supplying great cities with palaces and prisons, fortifications, monuments, museums and statues, the result would have been beneficent beyond computation.

That it is worth while for civilized communities to use their wealth in this way; that humanity and patriotism and religion require that every community which occupies territory in which it is reasonably certain that a great city is to grow, should, if necessary, at some sacrifice of immediate convenience and comfort and prosperity, begin the formation of a park of this comprehensive and artistically complete character, is a conclusion that no intelligent man, who will carefully study the effect on the people of the existing few and almost chance-formed city parks of the world, can resist.

Yet the demonstration of experience is lacking, and if the design of the Central Park is ever realized, will be first found in its realization. If, then, there is ground for the conviction held and stated by the designers, that the practicability and value of their plan is to turn upon the question whether a keeper's service can be maintained upon it adequate to its special requirements, neglect to secure this one condition involves much more than a waste of resources and a calamity to the people of New York. It must necessarily cause discouragement to enterprise in the same direction everywhere, and is a wrong and misfortune to the civilized world.

I have said that the designers had undertaken to retain and develop certain elements of great value with reference to the purpose of the park, and which would be almost peculiar to itself, and that they saw that the chief difficulty of doing so would be that of preventing the misuse of these elements.

Few persons fully comprehend the purposes of a park, and still fewer, especially of city-bred persons, fully appreciate the

conditions upon which the real value of the various elements of a park depend. It requires some little reflection to understand that nearly all that is agreeable and refreshing at present on the Central Park would speedily disappear if practices, harmless elsewhere, were to be continued in it; if the multitude of visitors were to move through it, for example, as freely and inconsiderately as visitors at a watering place are allowed to move through the neighboring woods and fields.

The Central Park is necessarily peculiar in this respect, and must be used with certain special restraints, because of the means employed in it to overcome the naturally harsh and forbidding landscape quality of much of its rocky surface.

It is with reference to the prevention of ignorant and inconsiderate misuse of the park that the keeper's force chiefly needs to be organized, instructed, trained and disciplined. If it is sufficient for the part required of it, in the design of the park, in this respect, it will certainly be sufficient for protection against crime. And if its members are trained or allowed to hold the notion that their chief duty is to bring criminals to punishment, they will never serve the purpose of their organization effectively.

A clear understanding of this principle must lie at the foundation of any wise provisions for the keeping of the park.

Nevertheless, as the danger of the misuse of the park for criminal ends is a much more definite and obvious one, and the necessity of certain conditions, which have not recently existed in the keeper's force, is just as clear with reference to it as to the more important duty, I shall now ask attention especially to this class of dangers inherent in the plan of the park.

They exist more especially in the opportunities which it presents for ready concealment, for slipping quickly out of sight of others, for lying in ambush, for dodging and doubling on a pursuer, and for temporarily putting articles carried by hand out of sight.

To measure the importance of guarding against this class of dangers in the park, let it be considered that the larger part of the advance which has occurred in the value of real estate adjoining the park since its design began to be understood, and which amounts to a sum of \$160,000,000, has grown out of a conviction that, for persons of great wealth and of certain social habits, a family residence near the park will be more attractively situated than anywhere else on the continent, while the number of this class is likely constantly to be larger than the number of such sites that will be available to meet the demand.

If the grounds of this conviction are analysed it will be found that they do not, by any means, lie wholly in the expectation of the outlook toward the park which will be commanded from houses so situated, for the advance in value applies to sites from which no view of the park can be obtained, but that they exist largely in the presumption that it will be safe, healthful and pleasant for women and children to walk from their houses into the park, as they would into their private grounds, when living in a country house. In short, it is assumed that in a residence near the park, there may be combined greater advantages of the city, with less of its disadvantages, especially to women and children, than anywhere else, and in this assumption the actuality of an immense amount of the nominal wealth of many of the capitalists of this city is absolutely dependent.

Suppose, then, that such statements come once to be generally believed, as were lately published in the *Tribune*, as to the danger of robbery, and of insults and outrages to women in the park; as to the frequency of criminal assignations in it, as to the use made of it by great numbers of common prostitutes, as to the prevalence of wantonly mischievous, lawless, reckless and brutal manners among its visitors, and as to the practical immunity from arrest which ruffians of every stamp feel themselves to enjoy in it. Clearly such a state of things, or an evident dangerous liability to such a state of things, would almost certainly lead on to a financial disaster, through which the city would lose much more than all that has been spent on the park.

What, then, are the qualities required in the keepers' force to supply a sufficient insurance against such a liability? I wish to gain and hold the attention of the Commissioners at this time to one only, or rather to one class of qualities.

Places of sylvan seclusion on the park are so numerous, and are so distributed, that anything approaching a constant police surveillance of visitors is out of the question. So far, then, as those who come into the park are to be prevented, either from careless misuse of it, or from indulgence in mischief, vice and crime, by fear of police interference, it will be from the estimate they are led to form of the chances of a keeper's coming, within a given time, in sight of any particular spot from which he was previously at a distance. Their calculation of these chances will start with two factors: first, a certain number of keepers; second, the degree of their activity. If there were thirty times—I mean literally so—as many keepers on duty as there ever yet regularly have been, it would be but one for an acre, and if each of them were to stand as a sentry, or to move at an even slow pace back and forth on a given strip of road or walk, several hundred men might easily be engaged in illegal, licentious and rascally acts on the park, with perfect confidence that they would not be detected.

Thus it will be seen that the value of a keeper depends, first of all, on the impression which he produces on the mind of observers of *activity* in his duty; for upon this impression will be the estimate found of the liability that he or some other keeper will be looking at any particular spot of ground within a given time.

I ask the Commissioners to keep this essential requirement of the keepers' force continuously in mind—this prime necessity of a habit of activity during the whole period of duty.

It will be obvious, without argument, that the necessary number of men for the service will never be secured who will, from a simple sense of obligation for their wages, and from their own understanding of the necessity, at once fix them-

selves in such an active habit as is required, and constantly maintain it.

The force, then, needs officers able and disposed to instruct the keepers in this respect, and to enforce their instructions by a sufficient discipline. When it is considered how the keepers are to be scattered; that they are to be for the most part alone, out of view of their officers; that they are liable to fall in with friends; that they have to be out in all weathers; that parts of their beats will be much exposed to the sun, or to wind and rain, others sheltered, it will be seen that the sufficient discipline must be unusually exacting.

Nor is argument necessary to show that the difficulties of establishing and enforcing such a degree of discipline as is required are very great; nevertheless I must ask the Commissioners to reflect for a moment on what, under the circumstances, is the chief difficulty.

The effect of political patronage—of the doctrine “to the victors belong the spoils”—has been to gradually familiarize the public mind with the idea that any public office or employment is a privilege and a favor, and it has been, from the first, difficult to make any man in the employment of the Board believe that he owes his employment to the fact that it is supposed that he will render better service of a certain kind, for a certain price, than any other man who can be obtained; it has been difficult to overcome the notion that the money paid him is only in part the wages of the labor or service he renders and that the remainder is given him to purchase the favor or satisfy the demand of some person, party, club or class, or possibly out of personal regard or charity toward himself or his family.

It was only by great toil, and at some political peril for the whole undertaking, that this difficulty was overcome as it once has been, at least in a great degree, in respect to the keepers' force.

But the difficulties of this class which formerly existed in

the minds and habits of the men to be employed as keepers, were small compared with those which must now be met, because of two influences which have been latterly operating upon them.

First.—The law which forbids the city to allow any workman to work in its employment more than eight hours a day, and which in its effect makes a present to any man who obtains by any means the privilege of working for it, of an addition (in the case of laborers at the present time) of twenty per cent. to the value of his work, and which thus demonstrates the value of political patronage.*

Second.—The difficulties are greatly increased, because, under the government of the city during the years 1870 and 1871, public employment was more distinctly, avowedly and systematically made a privilege and a matter of patronage and favor, and thus used as a property by those who controlled it more than ever before, and because the value of all such property was made greater, not only by increasing the rates of pay for service, but *much more by reducing the measure and quality of the service required.*

This reduction was very great in nearly all public service, not a few employments having been made actual sinecures; and in accordance with a well established law in political economy, the standards having been once greatly lowered, it is slow and hard work to get back again to the old mark of efficiency in any direction. No class of men on the park, or any where in the city service, are willing to work as hard or take as much pains in their work now as they were a few years ago; and even if the special service of the park keepers had not been directly tampered with, it was inevitable that it should be affected injuriously by the general tendency.

*Mr. Ryan, your Superintendent of labor, thinks that every laborer you employ is now paid at least 30 per cent., on an average, more than he could obtain for equivalent service in private works, as the effect, direct and indirect, of the law in question.

But I shall show that the standard of requirement with respect to the keepers was directly lowered during these two years.

According to the testimony of the captain, as you have reported it, Mr. President, when you returned to your seat at the close of the year 1872, more than fifty men had been added to the force who were not wanted for the purpose of keeping the parks, but whom he had been instructed to call for. They were placed on the force simply and solely and avowedly, as a privilege—as an act of patronage to oblige politicians.

Obviously, if anything like the degree of activity which was necessary to make the keepers' service efficient had been required of these new men, the purpose of their employment would not have been met. An appointment to a place on the keepers' force would no longer have been regarded as a privilege. The "gift" of such a place would no longer have been a valuable perquisite of those holding it. It was necessary for the purpose of their appointment that the service should be easy and agreeable to them.

But there is good reason for supposing that many of those appointed were not able, even had they been disposed, to meet any requirement of extraordinary activity and endurance; that they were not able even to be ordinarily active and enduring. After more than sixty men had been dismissed, represented by the captain to be the least valuable part of the force, the surgeon was instructed to ascertain by medical survey the physical capacity of the remainder, and found that one in five were incapacitated by disease and physical injuries for active bodily exercise. (Ninety-nine men were examined, of whom thirty-two were found in a decidedly unsound condition, and nineteen pronounced positively unfit for duty. There were seven cases of hernia, some very aggravated, and thirteen of unsound lungs. Applications for appointment as keepers are not unfrequently urged on the ground that the applicants' lungs are diseased, or that he has Bright's disease.) It is certain, then, that the service required of these men had been very light.

As, however, the fact of their special disabilities for ordinary exertion and endurance had not, before the examination, been recognized, and as they had had no special privileges on account of it, it is clear that the customs of the whole force had been accommodated to the limitations on activity and endurance required of these invalids.

There were numbers of excellent men on the force—hale, hearty, active, enduring men, and honest men. But honest men do not care to work harder or endure more or practice greater restraint for a given sum of money than others in their trade. Thus inevitably the whole force had been habituated, gradually and not perhaps by a clearly conscious process, to a very low standard in respect to activity.

The natural results were to be seen in the condition in which you found the force in November, 1871, and in the habits and notions as to their rights, privileges and duties which were still common with its members, when, in May, 1872, you turned its general management over to me. At this time you expressed in strong terms the dissatisfaction you had experienced in dealing with it. You had dismissed a third part of the men, represented to be the most indolent and inefficient, and yet had been only more and more impressed with the demoralization which existed. You remarked, especially, that you never went to the park that you were not disgusted with the loaferish appearance of the men you saw on duty.

On my first subsequent visit to the park, I said to the captain, that from your statements and from what I had myself observed, I inferred that his command was in a very bad state of discipline. He replied that it was so, and would necessarily remain so until the men should learn that they held their places less by means of the influence which they could command, through friends and otherwise, with the Commissioners, than by reason of their own good conduct. He said that after all who had been dismissed there were undoubtedly men still upon the force who had never done half a fair day's duty, and who never expected to; others whose chief diligence was in acting as spies with a view of finding visitors in positions

which they would be distressed to have publicly reported, and so getting a chance to blackmail them, and but few who would give themselves more trouble in their duty than they thought necessary to avoid being discharged. Even this consideration, he repeated, operated but little with many, so great was their confidence in the influence of friends to serve them, and punish the officers who might report against them.

In the course of the summer facts came to my knowledge showing that each of these imputations—indeed some of a more disgusting character—were justified, with respect to particular individuals, and though I believed that the main body was composed of men of fair character, able and willing, but for mistaken or insufficient notions of their duty, to meet all reasonable requirements upon it, there was no room for doubt :

1st. That such requirements were not met.

2d. That there was no general desire or intention of meeting them.

3d. That any special requirement on the part of an officer, or any unusual effort on the part of an officer to secure faithful service, was habitually resented as an act of personal usurpation on his part, and that any official report against a man's conduct was generally attributed to personal malice.

4th. That the men were generally disposed to depend much more on their standing with certain persons having no responsibility in respect to the park, than upon the evidence of their conduct as keepers ; thus, almost invariably, if a man was called upon to answer a grave charge, he began by producing, often with an expression of confidence that was almost insolent, a letter from some one requesting that he might be dealt with leniently.

During a period of four months, I was striving faithfully to secure improvement under the old arrangement ; nor should I have urged such changes as have since been made as soon as I did, nor, indeed, precisely such changes at all, had I not been compelled by the proceedings of the Board.

On the 2d of October last, a resolution was offered ordering an immediate reduction of the keepers' force, and especially in the number of its inspecting officers. At my request it was withdrawn, and as a substitute I was asked to devise and report to the Board some plan of securing a more economical and efficient administration of the force, with the understanding that I should propose means of lessening the number of its officers, and otherwise reducing its expenses.

I need hardly say that my own judgment did not approve this policy; but there is a time for all things, and this happened to be the time, not so much for increasing the efficiency of the city's service, as for reducing outlays for it. Accepting the necessity, therefore, I set about the duty given me, and at the meeting last before your return to the presidency, I presented the required report, which was printed as Document No. 41.

On the 20th of November it was discussed in the Board, and as the result, I was directed to make as large a reduction as practicable in the regular force, and to organize an auxiliary force from the workmen; the method of such reduction being left to my discretion.

If the Commissioners will take the trouble to read the report above referred to, they will find the occasion fully stated for some of the changes since made, and I propose now to show only what is not there fully stated, namely, the motives which induced me later to recommend the introduction of "the round system."

It was obvious that, as matters stood, one of the chief difficulties of recovering a tolerable state of discipline in the force lay in the unfrequent inspection of the men in the field, and in the consequent fact that neglect of duty and gross acts of insubordination might be much indulged in, with no fear of punishment or even reproof. I saw, therefore, that to reduce the number of officers without making radical changes in the routine of duties, by which, in some way, this difficulty would be met, would necessarily open the way to even greater laxity of discipline.

To fully understand this, some knowledge of the existing state of affairs under the old system will be necessary.

Each keeper, when going on duty, was assigned to a defined district or beat, within which, *theoretically*, he was answerable for all that occurred; that is to say, he was supposed to pass from one point of it to another at such frequent intervals that the chances would be small that any person would do wrong in it without his seeing and checking or arresting him. As the ground thus assumed to be covered by a keeper was an area generally of over fifty acres, and sometimes of fully one hundred acres, mostly of very broken surface, with innumerable concealments of rock and bush, this supposition may seem preposterous. I must explain, therefore, that it was at least much less so in the condition of the park before it had been planted, or before the shrubs had attained the height of a man's waist, and when the number of visitors in summer was but one-third as great as now. As I had planned the system of keeping at that time, the district patrolmen were, as the shrubs grew larger and the park came to be more used, intended to be supplemented by uniformed working-men who would be at all times disposed irregularly in all parts of each keeper's beat, and who would, incidentally to their duties as workmen, assist its responsible guardian in the capacity of watchmen.

They were also to be mainly relieved of the necessity of attention to carriages in motion by a special patrol of mounted men on the drives.

But as the organization remained in 1872, it will be evident that if this theory of the responsibility of each keeper for the conduct of all visitors within a district of from fifty to a hundred acres was in the least degree to be realized, the keeper had necessarily to be in almost constant active motion, and constantly looking about him, far and near, in all directions. With the increased difficulties arising from the growth of foliage and the enlarged number of visitors, there was need that he should have grown more and more active, and more and more vigilant and quick-sighted.

But what were the facts ?

In making the circuit of the park, I often saw all but one or two of the whole number of the section on duty either upon the Drive or within twenty feet of it, from which it was evident that the really weak points, the interior sections of the park, were almost wholly unprotected. Moreover, the appearance of both the patrolmen and the gatemen, as I saw them, was nearly always that of idlers ; of men with nothing to do—waiting for something to turn up. I never saw a man moving with a brisk wide-awake air but I found it was time for him to quit duty.

My observations, in these respects, had been confirmed by comparing them with those of others. I had requested friends, when walking in the park, to notice how often they found a keeper apparently on active duty in the more secluded parts, and they invariably reported that they found none ; that with the exception of a man on the more level walks of the Ramble and another near the Terrace, the force seemed to be concentrated on the Drive, and that even when men were found at a distance from the Drive, they were commonly engaged in conversation and giving no attention to their duty. I found, on inquiry of the Superintendent of the Park, that he believed that, with very few exceptions, the keepers never went off the Drive, unless they had some special call to do so, or went to seek their own ease. The captain also acknowledged it to be so.

There were at this time eight officers, each of whom took his turn inspecting the keepers on their beats. The chances were, however, that a keeper, after he had left the station until he returned to go off duty, would be seen by an officer, or the fact of his being on his post or on the park established in any way, not oftener than once in five hours ; when seen he would be under notice not more, probably, than one or two minutes.

Under the beat system, it was, then, a very easy matter for a keeper, however unfaithful in his disposition, to so manage as not to be caught by his officers in distinctly derelict acts.

For all that, the more common report against the keepers was, that they had been found by one of their inspecting officers, on his regular round, sitting or lying down in some retired place, in complete abandonment of duty. There were many evidences to show that the instances in which these marked examples of neglect were observed and reported to me were but a small fraction of those which occurred. Nearly two-thirds of all such reports were made, for example, by one-third of the inspecting officers, the lieutenant alone making double the average of all, and, as I have before said, those complained of nearly always took the ground that, for some special reason of personal malice they had been singled out to be brought before me.

I had not yet proposed to resort to the "round system" as a means of breaking up these habits, but had endeavored in every way I could to impress upon the force the danger to themselves of their habits, as well as the danger to public interests. I had repeatedly posted written warnings in the station for that purpose.

I had dismissed a number of those whose offences in this special respect were distinctly proven, and had removed two officers of whose unfaithfulness in reporting such offences I was satisfied.

Yet in six months scarcely the smallest degree of perceptible improvement had been gained. I had too many other responsibilities to be able to spend much time on the park; but to show that my impressions in this respect were not the result of accidentally more unfavorable observations than would have been the case if they had been more extended, I may quote the opinion of the Superintendent, who had been in close and daily observation of the keepers in all parts of the park for fourteen years. He said to me, "You will find that they have been indulged in these lazy habits so long that they are now inveterate, and you cannot get the better of them except by breaking up the force altogether and starting again with new men."

Before I had acted on the resolution of the Board requiring

a revision of the organization, the change in the captains had been made. Captain Mills' influence on the force had, I think, been in some respects unfortunate. My principal reason for thinking so will be found stated on page 7 of my report, Document No. 41. But Captain Mills had an advantage over Captain Koster, with reference to this special difficulty of inactivity.

He was himself a notably alert man, nervous and active to a fault. Captain Koster's faults are of the opposite class.

Three months' further observation of the men under Captain Koster's command satisfied me as a matter of fact, that, at least nothing was being gained with respect to this difficulty.

After much deliberation, then, and with the very deliberate approval of the captain and lieutenant, and the unanimous sanction of the Board, a modification was made of the old arrangement, under which it was believed that something might be gained.

To one element in the modified plan a certain degree of public attention has been called, which, truly stated, is this. Out of the thirty-six patrolmen employed on the park, sixteen are daily required, in fine weather, to make three rounds of the park drive within a given time. The chief difference in this respect between their present and former mode of doing duty being that now they walk at a very moderately rapid rate and never sit or lounge except in the station-houses.

But there are some other differences between the old and new arrangements of perhaps more consequence, and they may be best shown by stating in what way the keeping of the park is provided for at a given period, and I take for the purpose that from 10 A. M. to 2 P. M.

There were before the changes a certain number of men each at a gate; there are the same number since, and, without doubt, the gate duties are better performed now than before, though the difference is not of much importance.

There were before the change twelve men, each nominally patrolling a beat, of whom the chances were that seven or eight were at any moment on the Drive or within sight of it.

There are never less than that number now on the Drive, but there is this difference: the men on the drive now are never seen standing still (unless on an occasion of duty) never sauntering, never conversing long with friends, and they never leave the Drive to take a seat except at the station. They report in person to an officer at least every hour and a half instead of every four or five hours, they can not leave the park or go off their duty ten minutes at a time without its being known to their officers, and their precise position is registered at least every half hour.

There are besides, under the new arrangements, four keepers constantly on beat duty, and the chances are that at any moment at least three of them are in those parts of the park not seen from the Drives.

Then there are, under the present arrangement, daily (after 10 A. M.), on the walks thirty men (the "extra keepers"), each having his district, and being obliged at certain not unfrequent intervals to visit every nook and corner of it which is open to the public; nor can he fail to do so without leaving evidence of his neglect. These men have nearly all had from ten to sixteen years' experience on the park; most of them have for years acted as special policemen on Sundays and holidays. They are selected as of good character, honest and industrious. They are competent to meet nine-tenths of the ordinary requirements of visitors on the keepers' system; to give advice, directions and needed information, and to interrupt and caution those who are disposed to petty mischief. Being associated with the change which compels the patrolmen to a certain degree of activity in their duty, they have been subject to slander and ridicule, and in some measure made to feel themselves in a weak, ridiculous and unpopular position. But one specific complaint has, however, been made as yet against any of them, and I am assured by visitors that they have found them

attentive, civil and equal to the duties required of them. My own observation is that since they went on duty there is less straggling out of the walks, less breaking of the shrubs and less petty pilfering in the interior parts than before. Mr. Manning, who has a general oversight of the shrubbery and walks of that part of the park which is most frequented by visitors, assures me that there is no question of it.

On the whole, there can be no doubt that the parts of the park of most importance to be well kept—that is to say, the retired and secluded parts—are much better kept now than before; neither can there be any doubt that the gates and entrance roads are better kept; nor yet any that the keepers of all classes are much more steadily in active duty, or that they engage much less in practices which were forbidden, and which were disgraceful and demoralizing.

The cost, in salaries and wages, of the force under the new arrangement, including the night-watch, has been at the monthly rate of \$7,945. The cost of the force during the corresponding period of 1872 was \$9,980; of 1871, \$12,697.

It remains to examine the disadvantages of the new arrangement.

Because, under the old arrangement, patrolmen spent a greatly undue part of their time on the Drive at the expense of the interior parts of the park, wider spaces will now sometimes be found on the Drive on which there is no patrolmen, and fast driving is thought to be more prevalent than formerly. If so, it is in part to be accounted for by the fact that the mounted Metropolitan police have this year put a stop to fast driving on the wooden pavement of Fifth avenue adjoining the park.

Supposing the new system is defective in this respect, however, it is not difficult to apply a remedy: at the expense of half a dozen mounted men the evil of fast driving, no matter how great it shall come to be, can be broken up whenever desired, more effectually than by an addition of double that number of stationary foot-keepers placed on beats.

I now come to the only serious objection to the present arrangement—the alleged demoralizing influence it has had upon the men.

The *rationale* of this demoralization is as follows: The men (so far as they are affected by it) consider that the requirement of walking certain distances within certain periods of time is in itself so hard, so much beyond what the Department has a right to ask of them, that they are excusable for avoiding other duties with respect to which they must necessarily be put on their honor and their discretion. They feel it to be necessary to keep steadily moving on the lines of shortest distance between the points they are required to visit, and that they can not afford to have their attention diverted from this single duty of making time by watchfulness of visitors, or any service to them except on occasions of distinct and notable necessity.

More than this, with some of the men the methods by which the requirement of a certain degree of rapidity of movement is enforced, are felt to be tyrannical and cruel in such a degree as to provoke and establish a desire, and a more or less distinct purpose, to bring the system into public contempt and odium, and a degree of inefficiency is thus accounted for beyond what would result directly from the defects of the system.

It is necessary to state that I have no official knowledge of this state of mind on the part of the men. I have not heard the smallest complaint, or remonstrance or expression of desire to be tasked less, from one of the force: the captain, though he believes that the men are so affected, reports to me that he has not.

My presumption that it exists results from a few statements made to me by visitors of occurrences under their observation and of conversation with keepers; from newspaper reports, and from my own observation of the manners of the keepers on duty, confirmed as it is by the impressions made, as I am informed, on the minds of some of the Commissioners. It is, therefore, difficult for me to review these objections because they are so indefinite and intangible.

But it is to be observed, in the first place, that the requirement of three rounds applies to but sixteen out of the thirty-six patrol keepers in any day; that the whole number of patrol keepers have been selected by the surgeon and officers from a body of men of twice their number, and that by an ordinance of the Board, this body had been recruited by selection of the fittest from the gate-keepers. They are thus now picked men, and are paid as picked men half a dollar a day more than the post-keepers, and a dollar a day more than the extra keepers.

A man on round-duty is in very light marching order; he carries no arms, no club; nothing but his necessary light clothing; he is not belted; he suits himself with shoes; he wears a Panama hat; he is required to make a halt of one or two minutes three times in every hour; he is required to halt ten minutes, (and then is allowed to sit and take refreshment if he wishes), four times in every five hours; he is not marching over rough ground, nor in dust, nor mud, but on watered, raked and rolled pleasure-roads, of very easy grade, frequently arched by shade-trees; he is asked to move at an average rate of but a few yards more than two and a half miles an hour, which is not as fast as the ordinary military marching rate. The time he is thus required to occupy (in movement) is eight hours a day.

At the outside, he is asked to walk twenty-one miles in nine hours, including stoppages, and this never in stormy or very hot weather, and never three days in succession.

Haswell, who has the highest reputation for accuracy in such matters, makes a walk of *thirty* miles, meaning on common country roads, the equivalent of a fair day's work of an ordinary laborer. I have myself walked thirty miles a day on an average, carrying a knapsack, and across a hilly country, for weeks in succession; never feeling excessive fatigue, and gaining in strength and weight.

After the battle of Gettysburgh, as General Secretary of the Sanitary Commission, I engaged several surgeons and other

trustworthy agents to make special inquiry as to the physical condition in which the Union army entered upon that struggle. It was established that 144 regiments had been marching, each, at a rate of over twenty miles a day, and some thirty, for two or three weeks previously, carrying muskets, ammunition, knapsacks and rations. They were living chiefly on hard-tack and coffee with some salt pork, a few only having had a little beef, and marching on wretched roads, in clouds of dust and in a temperature higher than we have had this summer. In the opinion of the commanding officers and the surgeons of a majority of these regiments, the health of the men had been favorably affected by the march.*

Let the statements, grossly exaggerated as they are, which are made in the name of the keepers, as proof of the intolerable hardship and cruelty of the walk required of them, be read in the light of facts like these, and their chief importance will be found to lie in the evidence which they afford of how greatly these keepers had before been habituated to come short of the service which should have been required of them. This, let me repeat, was to move constantly and with as much activity as practicable during a period of eight hours from one part of their beats to another, to guard against the possible trespasses of visitors and all disorder.

If they had been doing their duty before would it have been thought hard to ask them to walk for eight hours a day at the rate of two and a half miles an hour, and if the discipline and morale of the force appears to be, in the least degree, lower than it was before the change, is it not much more rational to attribute the fact to a previous inefficiency of management than to a present excessive exaction?

Whatever the Board may think of the fitness of the means used to train the force to habits of greater activity, and to secure an observance of the most important general orders, it cannot be doubted that some change from the old

* *Vide* INVESTIGATIONS IN THE MILITARY AND ANTHROPOLOGICAL STATISTICS OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS, by Benjamin Apthorp Gould; New York: Hurd & Houghton, 1869; pp. 603-610.

arrangement, favorable to this purpose, was absolutely necessary, nor that, in certain particulars of what was meant to be accomplished, success has been attained.

For the rest, it certainly was not to be expected that entirely satisfactory results would be reached in two months' time in an undertaking to increase the effective strength of the force while reducing its cost, and under the conditions which have existed; the force itself hotly disposed to resent and resist the purpose; its officers insufficient if not obstructive, and a strong interest using unscrupulous means from without to foster discontent, distrust and insubordination.

I am finally asked to state what improvements I now think desirable in the arrangements; but if the Board should not be disposed to leave with me the executive management of the business, under its general orders, I presume that after what I have now said, it will care to hear very little more of my views in this respect.

If the Board should be disposed to trust me further with it, there are several improvements which I have many years had in my mind, and for which I should be glad, in due time, to ask its consideration. For the present I should recommend that, as soon as its general policy is firmly settled, the force should be recruited to the full number assumed in the present organization, which would require the promotion of one man from the position of post to that of patrol-keeper, and an addition of twelve post-keepers. I have not heretofore recommended this to be done, because, in the condition of expectancy and demoralization in which the force more or less has been of late, the education of new men would begin under great disadvantages. I should advise that a portion of the recruits be obtained by promotion from the extra keepers, if men can be found among them who are able to pass the proper examination. I should also advise that the additional force for the small parks, recommended in a report now lying on the table of the Board, be at once organized under the immediate direction of a discreet officer detailed for that purpose from the Central Park force, and that

the place of such officer be supplied by promotion from the ranks. I should recommend that the subject of a small mounted force have early consideration.

But all these are details of no pressing importance. What is first of all wanted is that every man, and especially every officer, should be made to believe that this new Board cares to know nothing about him except what he is worth in himself for the business of park-keeping; that this new Board will have a strong and sustainedly strong policy with reference to this business, which will be carried out in every detail with a single eye, energetically, resolutely and without fear or favor.

Hitherto, at least for the last two years, every standing order has been regarded as tentative, every act of authority as the manifestation of a purpose of no significance except for the moment. The thoughts of the force, from top to bottom, instead of being upon the means of satisfying the organic requirements of the public interests, have been upon the question, who are to be the next Commissioners and who is to have "influence" with them?

Whatever else is to be done for its improvement, means must be taken for putting it under much more careful education and much more thorough discipline. The manner in which the men shall be disposed, the time and place in which each shall perform his duty, is a matter of wholly secondary consequence to this.

Respectfully,

FRED. LAW OLMSTED,

Landscape Architect and General Superintendent.

DOCUMENT No. 48.

OPINION

OF THE

Assistant Counsel to the Corporation,

AS TO

THE PROPER METHOD TO RAISE MONEY, TO
DEFRAY THE EXPENSES OF LAYING OUT
THE NORTH END OF THE ISLAND.

AUGUST 27th, 1873.

Presented to the Board, and ordered to be accepted and
printed as a document of the Board.

WM. IRWIN,
Secretary D. P. P.

OPINION

OF THE

ASSISTANT COUNSEL TO THE CORPORATION, AS TO THE
PROPER METHOD TO BE ADOPTED FOR RAISING
MONEY TO DEFRAY THE EXPENSES OF
LAYING OUT THE NORTH END
OF THE ISLAND.

CITY OF NEW YORK.
LAW DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF COUNSEL TO THE CORPORATION. }

August 23, 1873.

WM. IRWIN, Esq.,

Secretary Department of Public Parks :

SIR:—Your letter of the 22d instant to the Counsel to the Corporation, enclosing a copy of a resolution adopted by the Commissioners of the Department of Public Parks, is received.

The resolution in question is as follows :

“ That the Secretary be directed to request the Counsel to the Corporation to inform the Board, as to the proper method to be adopted, under the existing laws, for raising money to defray the expenses of laying out streets, avenues and squares north of 155th street, in the city of New York.”

The manner in which money is to be raised to defray the expense of laying out streets, avenues and squares north of 155th street, is prescribed by Section 7 of Chapter 565 of the Laws of 1865. For the payment of the expenses, charges and disbursements incurred in laying out the city above 155th street, and in executing certain other powers given to the Commissioners of the Central Park by said act, it is made the duty of the Comptroller, by said section, to issue county bonds "at such time and times, and in such manner, of such description and in such amounts, as may be directed by resolution of the Commissioners of the Central Park."

The powers given to the Commissioners of Central Park, in reference to the *laying* out of streets, avenues and squares, being now vested in the present Department of Public Parks, the proper course for the Board is, to adopt and transmit to the Comptroller a resolution, directing him to issue county bonds to such an amount as is necessary to provide money for the expenses in question.

I am, Sir,

Yours very respectfully,

[Signed]

GEORGE P. ANDREWS,
Assistant Counsel to the Corporation.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

DOCUMENT No. 49.

STATEMENT

OF THE

Facts connected with the Contract for the Mason Work

OF THE

MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

WITH

MESSRS. D. C. WEEKS & SON,

AND

THE OPINION

OF THE COUNSEL TO THE CORPORATION THEREON.

SEPTEMBER 10, 1873.

Received and ordered to be printed as a document of the
Board.

WM. IRWIN,

Secretary D. P. P.

NEW YORK, August 25th, 1873.

Hon. E. DELAFIELD SMITH,

Counsel to the Corporation:

Sir—I find on file in the office of the Department of Public Parks, the following correspondence:

“ CITY OF NEW YORK,
“ DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS, }
“ 36 Union Square.
“ MAY 29th, 1873.

“ E. DELAFIELD SMITH, Esq.,

Counsel to the Corporation:

“ Sir—I am instructed by the Board to request you to furnish
“ this Department with your opinion on its right to proceed to
“ make a contract for the construction of the Natural History
“ Museum buildings, upon bids received prior to the passage
“ of Chap. 335, Laws 1873.

“ Respectfully,

“ (Signed)

F. W. WHITTEMORE,

“ *Secretary D. P. P.*”

“ CITY OF NEW YORK,
“ LAW DEPARTMENT, }
“ OFFICE OF COUNSEL TO THE CORPORATION.
“ JUNE 16th, 1873.

“ *To the Commissioners of the Department of Parks:*

“ Gentlemen—The letter of Mr. Whittemore to the Counsel
“ to the Corporation, asking his opinion as to your right to
“ make a contract for the construction of the Natural History
“ Museum building upon bids received prior to the passage of
“ Chapter 335 of the Laws of 1873, was duly received.

“ As the question submitted is not free from difficulty, and
 “ as the pressure of business upon this office is very great, the
 “ answer to Mr. Whittemore’s letter has been necessarily de-
 “ layed. After a careful consideration of the matter, the Coun-
 “ sel to the Corporation is of the opinion that if the bids re-
 “ ferred to were *opened* prior to the passage of the new charter
 “ the contract must be deemed to have been confirmed in and
 “ to the lowest bidder, with adequate security, at the time of
 “ such opening, and should be awarded to him.

“ See Section 1, Chapter 308, Laws of 1861.

“ If the bids were not *opened* until after the passage of the
 “ new charter, or have not yet been opened, it will be necessary
 “ for for you to re-advertise for bids, and otherwise comply
 “ with the provisions of the charter, in reference to the
 “ making of contracts.

“ Mr. Smith is absent from the city, and I therefore answer
 “ on his behalf.

“ I am, gentlemen,

“ Yours, very respectfully,

“ (Signed) GEORGE P. ANDREWS,

“ *Asst. Counsel to the Corporation.*”

Knowing as I do, the importance of having the facts in every case fully stated, and as the above communication addressed to you did not fully state all the facts that, in view of recent legislation, seem to be necessary, I take the liberty of again troubling you for an opinion in reference to the same subject.

Prior to the 7th day of August, 1872, designs for the Natural History building were submitted to the Board and approved; in accordance with those designs, work was commenced, and the foundations were laid prior to the passage of Chapter 335, Laws of 1873.

The following report, recently made by Mr. Vaux, will give you a detailed statement of bids received, and the dates of their reception :

“ NEW YORK, June 21, 1873.

Hon. H. G. STEBBINS,

President Department Public Parks :

“ Sir—In reference to the estimates for the first section of
“ the Natural History Museum, the proceedings have been as
“ follows :

“ After the general design was approved, August 7th, 1872,
“ and while the working plans were being prepared, considerable
“ fluctuations in price occurred in iron, and in order to carry out
“ the views of the Trustees, in regard to future students' rooms,
“ it was found expedient to design the iron-work of the upper or
“ roof story with a more expensive construction than was at
“ intended. This made the iron contract the ruling element first
“ in the work to be done, as the use of this material in a fire-
“ proof building could not be reduced beyond certain definable
“ limits, while the other parts of the design admitted of modi-
“ fication.

“ Estimates were therefore first invited for the iron-work;
“ and six bids were opened March 28th, the lowest being from
“ Janes & Kirtland, who offered to do the work for Two hun-
“ dred and twelve thousand four hundred and ten dollars. As
“ this seemed too high a proportional amount, with reference
“ to the masonry and other work, to admit of all the iron-work
“ being carried out precisely as indicated, definite reductions
“ were arranged in certain items that did not affect the in-
“ tegrity of the construction, and Janes & Kirtland revised
“ their bid accordingly, and on April 16th reduced the amount
“ to One hundred and eighty thousand two hundred and
“ twenty-four dollars (\$180,224).

“ Estimates were in the meantime requested for the mason’s
“ and also for the granite-work.

“ Bids were received from five parties for the mason’s work,
“ which were opened April 17th, the lowest being from Weeks
“ & Son, whose estimate was One hundred and thirty-five
“ thousand one hundred and fifty-eight dollars (\$135,158).

“ Modifications in certain items were arranged and possible
“ deductions made from this amount to the extent of Seven
“ thousand two hundred and sixty-four dollars, leaving the
“ estimate One hundred and twenty-seven thousand eight hun-
“ dred and ninety-four dollars (\$127,894).

“ Five estimates were received and opened at the same time
“ for the granite-work, the lowest being from Deeves & Parry,
“ whose price was One hundred and thirty thousand and forty-
“ nine dollars (\$130,049).

“ Messrs. Deeves & Parry, on being informed that their bid
“ was the lowest, notified the Department that, having framed
“ their estimate for granite in conjunction with an estimate
“ they had presented for masonry, and the masonry contract
“ not being awarded to them, they desired to withdraw their
“ proposal for granite.

“ The next bid above theirs was that of T. W. Rollins, at
“ One hundred and thirty-one thousand dollars (\$131,000).

“ Possible modifications in some items of the design were
“ arranged, and Mr. Rollins’ estimate was thereby reduced
“ Seven thousand six hundred and ninety-five dollars (\$7,695),
“ leaving it at One hundred and twenty-three thousand three
“ hundred and five dollars (\$123,305).

“ When invited to bid on the granite, Mr. Rollins asked per-

“ mission to present also an estimate for the iron-work, which
 “ could, he thought, be advantageously executed in conjunction
 “ with the stone-work. He was informed precisely in regard
 “ to the extent of the work as modified, and forwarded a letter
 “ to the Department when presenting his granite bid, offering
 “ to execute the iron-work (in conjunction with the granite) for
 “ One hundred and sixty-eight thousand seven hundred and
 “ thirty-four dollars (\$168,734), which was Eleven thousand four
 “ hundred and ninety dollars (\$11,490) lower than Janes and
 “ Kirtland’s revised bid.

“ At the meeting of the Board on May 26th, the various re-
 “ ductions in the work corresponding with the reductions in the
 “ estimates were explained and approved, and the Treasurer
 “ was instructed to prepare contracts according to the law.
 “ The lowest estimates as they now stand are :

“ Mason’s work, Weeks & Son.....	\$127,894
“ Granite “ T. W. Rollins.....	123,305
“ Iron “ T. W. Rollins	168,734
	<hr/>
	\$419,933

“ This will leave about eighty thousand dollars of the appro-
 “ priation of five hundred thousand, which it is calculated will
 “ be sufficient for the wood-work, slating, plastering and other
 “ items needed to prepare the building for the occupation of
 “ the Museum.

“ I append a letter received to-day from Messrs. Cooper,
 “ Hewitt & Co., giving me their judgment as manufacturers,
 “ in regard to the expediency, under certain circumstances, of
 “ connecting an iron with a masonry contract.

“ Respectfully,

“ (Signed)

CALVERT VAUX,

“ *Architect.*”

“ COOPER, HEWITT & Co., }
 “ No. 17 Burling Slip, }

“ New York, June 21, 1873.

“ CALVERT VAUX, Esq. :

“ Dear Sir—We beg leave to say that it is a very common
 “ practice for the mason who contracts to erect buildings also
 “ to contract to put up the iron-work, and in our experience we
 “ have always found that this plan works well, and is economi-
 “ cal, because there is no delay or waste of effort, such as is apt
 “ to occur when two operations which should proceed together
 “ are committed to a divided management.

“ We have heretofore furnished beams for buildings erected
 “ by Mr. T. W. Rollins, and we have no doubt of his ability to
 “ execute any contract he may make for mason or iron-work to
 “ your entire satisfaction.

“ Respectfully yours,

“ (Signed)

COOPER, HEWITT & Co.”

The bids therein referred to were not received in answer to a public notice, but in answer to private communications addressed by the Department to various parties, who were considered able to do the work in the most satisfactory manner ; in other words, it was not what is called a statutory letting. It appear that the Department was in the habit, at that time, of soliciting bids by this means, and if it was deemed advisable and more advantageous for the interests of the city, to reject them all.

The question I would submit for your consideration is this :

Has this Department the right to make a contract, under the above letting, with Weeks & Son, who were the lowest bidders for the mason's work, or must it advertise and go through an-

other letting, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 335, Laws of 1873 ?

In this connection, I respectfully call your attention to the words "excepting such *works now in progress* as are authorized by law or ordinance to be done otherwise than by contract."

(Chap. 335, Laws 1873, §91.)

Hoping you will give this matter your earliest attention,

I remain,

Respectfully yours,

(Signed)

DAVID B. WILLIAMSON,

Com. D. P. P.

CITY OF NEW YORK,
LAW DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF COUNSEL TO THE CORPORATION, }
September 6th, 1873.

Hon. DAVID B. WILLIAMSON,

Commissioner Department of Public Parks :

Sir,—I duly received your letter of the 25th ultimo, enclosing copies of the correspondence heretofore had between the Department of Parks and this Department, in relation to contracts for the building of the Natural History Museum, and stating additional facts concerning the matter not heretofore submitted for my consideration.

The opinion given by my assistant, in my absence, was based upon the assumption that the "bids" referred to in the letter from the Secretary of your Department, were sealed bids, made in compliance with public notice, duly advertised in newspapers of the city, agreeably to the provisions of law in force immediately previous to the passage of the Charter of 1873.

As there was nothing to indicate the contrary, it was presumed that the word "bid" was used in its ordinary legal sense, and in that case the contract would have been confirmed in and to the lowest bidder, with adequate security, at the time of the opening of the bids, as was stated in the letter of my assistant.

It now appears, however, from the statement made by you, that the then Commissioners of the Department of Parks, in making arrangements for the construction of the Museum of Natural History, did not proceed under the general laws in reference to the letting of contracts, which were applicable to other Departments of the City Government, but under special laws, which authorized them to have the work done in such manner as they might deem to be most for the public interest; and the bids were not made in compliance with any public notice advertised in the newspapers, but were merely the private offers of persons wishing to obtain the contracts.

Under these circumstances, the law of 1861, confirming the contract to the lowest bidder, at the time of the opening of the "bids," had no application to the matter, and the sole question to be determined was whether the powers of the Commissioners were limited by Section 91 of the Charter of 1873. That section requires that all contracts for work or materials, involving an expenditure of more than \$1,000, shall be founded on sealed bids or proposals, made in compliance with public notice duly advertised in the *City Record* for at least ten days; but this provision, by the express terms of the section, is not to apply to "such works now in progress as are authorized by law or ordinance to be done otherwise than by contract."

I am clearly of the opinion, from your statement of the facts in reference to the matter, that the building of the Museum of Natural History was a work in progress when the Charter be-

came a law, and that it was authorized by law to be done otherwise than by contract, and that the Department of Parks has the right to make a contract with the lowest bidders without another letting, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 335 of the Laws of 1873.

I am, sir,

Yours respectfully,

(Signed)

E. DELAFIELD SMITH,
Counsel to the Corporation.

DOCUMENT No. 50.

BOARD

OF THE

Department of Public Parks.

OCTOBER 11, 1873.

The Landscape Architect submitted a preliminary study of a design for the laying out of Morningside Park, together with a report and an estimate of the cost of carrying same into effect.

The report and estimate were ordered to be printed as a document of the Board, accompanied with photo-lithographs of the plan presented therewith.

WM. IRWIN,

Secretary D. P. P.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS.
 OFFICE OF DESIGN AND SUPERINTENDENCE, }
 NEW YORK, 11th October, 1873.

To the

Hon SALEM H. WALES,
President of the Board:

SIR:—I have the honor to present a preliminary report on the improvement of Morningside Park.

The city property which has received this designation is a strip of steep hill-side, equal in length to the distance from the Battery to the City Hall, or about three-quarters of a mile; its width for the most part is less than that of the planted part of Union Square (100 yards). The only surfaces within it, not steeply inclined, are in two small patches lying widely apart, against the northeast and southeast corners respectively; most of the remainder being precipitous hill side, formed by the rounded face of a ledge of gneiss, difficult, unsafe, and in parts, impracticable to travel over. At one point only a break of this ledge occurs about three hundred feet in length, and here the slope is sufficiently gentle to allow the hill to be mounted with moderate directness. The difference of elevation between the west and the east sides is a little less than one hundred feet, and the western boundary is to be a public highway carried at a still higher level and generally supported by a nearly vertical stone wall, which, at some points, is thirty feet in height. There will, consequently, be no view from the Park to the westward, and from the accessible parts the view to the eastward will be cut off whenever the adjoining valuable private lands shall be built upon.

In studying the practical public uses for which ground of this kind is available, they will be found unusually limited.

The city is still deficient in many provisions which unquestionably will soon be urged upon it by advancing civilization; such as already exist in the principal towns of Europe, and for which considerable spaces of open ground are necessary. New

York, for example, has no ground for the athletic exercises of young men, the open spaces of the Central Park not being suitable for this purpose, and being already devoted to the athletic education of the children of the city, for whose use they will eventually prove much too small—no grand promenade, the Central Park roads and walks being designed for rural and not for urban recreation. It has no proper market places, no fair grounds nor places adapted to the display of fireworks or other exhibitions. Within four miles of Morningside Park there is no ground suitable to exercises in arms, civic receptions, or any great public ceremonies. There is no ground in the city or its suburbs adapted to special education in general botanical science, arboriculture, horticulture, pharmacy or zoology, nor have any of the thirty-five reservations, large and small, termed parks, in New York and Brooklyn, been selected for or devoted to any of these purposes. Unfortunately Morningside Park but adds another public ground chosen without the slightest reference to any of these special requirements of the city, and happens to be singularly incapable of being adapted to them.

Having the Central Park on one side, Mt. Morris on another, Riverside on the third, the most distant being but a thousand yards away and the nearest less than two hundred, there is no part of the city in which there is less occasion for another ground adapted simply to the airing of young children, and to general strolling and lounging of the residents of the neighborhood, and should its plan have no other very evident motive, it would be hard to justify the maintenance of any public park in this situation at the general expense of the city.

Studying the ground in search of opportunities for serving larger interests, a series of circumstances are to be observed, as follows :

First.—Although no distant or expanded view can be controlled within the limits of the Park itself, from the public high-way which overhangs it on the west, as before described, a prospect will be had (above the house-tops of that quarter of

the town now growing on the Harlem plain) far out across a wide range of beautiful country, and over the waters and islands of the river and sound, the eastern sea-gate of the metropolis.

It is not from one point alone, but from all parts of the road, that this fine view may be enjoyed. It is only to be regretted that the advantage which it thus possesses had not been recognized in laying out the new highway, and more importance given to it by an increased breadth. Even as it stands, however, there is ample space for several thousand persons to make use of it at a time while moving in carriages or on foot, and with proper management, it may be made a public resort of no small importance in the general system of grounds for the healthful recreation of the city.

Taking this terrace road in connection with the ground below it, the latter will be found to serve a very important purpose, for had it remained private property, it would in time unquestionably have been used in such a manner as to utterly destroy the special advantage to the public of the highway.

This consideration will be found to have an essential bearing on the question of the laying out of the ground, for if those portions of it lying immediately below the terrace road should be planted as in conventional landscape gardening, the view would be as entirely cut off in a few years by lofty trees as if the ground were covered with tall buildings.

Second.—The break in the general face of the ledge, before referred to, presents a position considerably elevated above, yet easily approached from the lower side of the Park. A retaining wall of moderate extent, connecting the two opposite piers of rock, would here make practicable an esplanade or level space 500 feet long and over 100 feet deep, which might be turned to account in various ways. It would, for example, form a fine site for any structure of such moderate elevation, that it would present no obstruction to the view from the terrace road above. The introduction of an artificial feature of this character, with the suitable decoration of the retaining

wall and staircases ascending it, would enhance, by contrast, the effect of the natural bold and rugged elements of the Park.

Third.—The natural conditions of the Morningside site are of a similar character, but rather inferior in interest to those of the northern portion of the Central Park. The two being not three minutes walk apart, for many years to come the greater number of visitors will probably reach it by way of the Central Park. It is desirable, then, as a matter of art, that Morningside Park should be, if possible, so treated as to contrast with the nearer parts of Central Park, and not produce the effect of a small and weak pendant of the older and more important ground. It is particularly desirable that the southeast angle should offer a direct and inviting entrance upon a scene strikingly interesting in character. The topographical conditions just here are, as it happens, unusual. With the construction of the necessary embankments of the street and avenue, a considerable basin will be formed of a generally triangular outline, two sides being steeply sloping; the third, a natural and quite picturesque cliff of rock, which is a prominent object in approaching from the direction of the Central Park. The earth at its base is light and easy of excavation, and in the process of grading in the vicinity, will be needed as material of embankment. The ground rises behind the rock on the north and west, and it will thus be seen that an area can here be formed about two acres in extent, which would be remarkably well protected from winds. The local conditions indicated offer advantages such as are possessed nowhere else by the city for either of two purposes :

It is, namely, admirably suited to a small enclosure in which some of the tamer tropical animals could be allowed to graze, and in which suitable accommodations for lodging them throughout the year could be placed, or to a special garden for the display of what are known as sub-tropical plants. The latter is probably the simpler and more immediately attractive suggestion.

With respect to an entrance at this point, there are some special difficulties to be met. The sidewalk of the street, will be

20 feet above the adjoining surface of the park, and from the angle the street grade descends rapidly to the north, and ascends to the west. Under these circumstances, an architectural construction of an original character is desirable to supply such an entrance as is required.

Fourth.—Although there are rocky points on the Central Park more interesting perhaps than any that can here be found, by a moderate excavation of the alluvial deposit along the base of the steep rocks between the line of 116th and 120th streets, a walk may be obtained, which, with skillful management of the materials at hand, may present a greater continuity of picturesque rocky border than an equal distance of walk on any other park possessed by the city.

Fifth.—Near the northwest end, the whole breadth of the park is occupied by masses of rock, like a craggy mountain side. There is no soil for the support of large trees, but the conditions are well fitted for the advantageous display of the very interesting forms of vegetation technically termed Alpine plants.

Sixth.—Argument is hardly necessary to prove that by no appropriate treatment could a ground having the natural features of Morningside Park, be made a safe and reputable place of resort at night. At least access to all the precipitous and rocky parts should be rigidly prevented by suitable barriers.

The six general considerations which have been thus developed, may be regarded as supplying the specifications to which a plan should conform, and in which provisions for meeting them should be agreeably related and combined.

In examining the study of a design here presented it will be necessary to bear in mind the extreme steepness of the ground, as it is impossible to represent on a plan (in which every ob-

ject is assumed to be looked at directly from above) the nearly perpendicular faces of the rocks that, seen from below, will be such important features of the park.

The principal parts of the plan will be easily recognized as follows :

Beginning the examination at the point nearest the Central Park, an enlargement of the sidewalk at the angle formed by the junction of the street and avenue will be seen forming a balcony looking into the basin which has been described, and also serving as the upper landing of a double staircase, descending 22 feet, to a paved court below. From wall fountains under the balcony, water flows into a large semi-circular basin. On the other side, the court opens upon a body of water, which by an arrangement of points and islands, is designed to be seen in vistas radiating from its centre, and terminating at interesting points of the high rocks opposite.

Aquatic plants break the surface of these little lagoons, and they are overhung by luxuriant and intricate foliage of tropical character, of apparently natural growth from their banks. These will be backed and protected by thickets of large but inconspicuous hardy shrubs. Walks lead out laterally from the entrance court, which are carried on the opposite face of these thickets, but, at certain points, openings occur, from which other vistas are seen of a like character to those which extend from the court. The rare plants, while seen to advantage, will be out of reach, and secure from injury by visitors.

Further to the right occurs the break in the outcrop of the ledge which has been described.

The suggested esplanade, the larger part of it occupied by a building, will here be seen, forming the most prominent object in the plan. A series of staircases, steps and walks will be noticed leading to the level of its site from two points on the terrace-road above, and from three in the avenue below. Passages are thus formed from the upper to the lower borders

of the Park, the elevation being overcome by a convenient combination of stairs and sloping walks. Between the two entrances on the upper and the three on the lower side of the Park a distinct district is here designed, which is treated in an urban and gardenesque style. A fountain and flower beds will be observed, and, in connection with the architectural elements of the stairs, terrace and arcade, admirable positions will be found for the display of statues and other works of art, such as private munificence may hereafter offer for the purpose. The whole is so arranged that the walks leading north and south into other parts of the Park can be closed by gates, and this division, being well lighted, may then be left open for free passage at all times during the night, all due precaution being taken for safety both against accidents and violence.

The principal walk leading northward from this district will be observed near the middle of the plan, and is designed, as required by the fourth specification, to be formed in an excavation along the foot of the ledge. Although broad and not indirect in course, it is to be deeply shaded and to have a wild, picturesque and secluded character until it reaches the second walk, crossing from east to west, at 120th street. Immediately beyond this point it opens upon the only quiet, sunny lawn on the Park. This is bordered by shrubbery and flowering plants, and a chalet for refreshments is built on the rocks overhanging it on the west.

Leading westward from the lawn, the walk ascends, by steps, a rocky defile, the Alpine ground of the fifth specification, beyond which, the entrances to the Park from Tenth avenue are reached.

A mall, nowhere less than twenty feet wide, surrounds the Park, and is separated from it by a parapet wall, over which, at intervals, views into the Park can be enjoyed. The mall is planted with a double row of trees, is furnished with seats, and is to be well lighted, that it may be safely used at night when the rugged and more obscure parts of the Park are closed.

On the upper side of the Park, at the best points for enjoying the distant prospect to the eastward, balconies are built out, from four of which staircases give access to walks in the Park below. At 120th street, a third crossing is arranged, to be lighted and kept open at night.

Fourteen entrances to the Park will be observed, in the arrangement of which there is much variety of character.

Between two of these, on the eastern avenue opposite the esplanade, the outer roadway is widened so as to form a bay in which carriages may stand for the accommodation of visitors without interruption of general movement in the highway.

It will be recognized that the variety of scenery in the several divisions of the Park which have been indicated, is very marked, but that the transition from one to another is nowhere abrupt and sensational. The visitor passes through the exotic luxuriance of the tropical garden ; thence through dense masses of foliage he comes upon the terrace district, with its striking architectural and floral decorations ; then through the wild, picturesque and sombre walk along the foot of the ledge ; then along the bright open lawn, simple in character but highly cultivated ; then, mounting the craggy hill-side, with its low growth of brilliant Alpine plants springing from the crevices of the rocks, and by a stairway up the vine-covered wall, he reaches the terrace road mall. By this he may return to the point of starting, enjoying in a further walk of half a mile the broad distant view which is the crowning attraction of the Park.

Respectfully,

FRED. LAW OLMSTED,

L. Architect;

For himself and CALVERT VAUX,

Late Consulting L. A.

The following is an approximate estimate of the cost of construction of Morningside Park, upon the general plan submitted.

It has been chiefly prepared by Mr. Bogart from data furnished by recent experience in the Central Park, and of course assumes a style of workmanship similar to that which has there been commonly used.

General interior earth and rock work.....	\$130,000
Grading and improvements outside of Parapet wall..	28,000
Walk construction and drainage.....	100,000
Steps and entrances (except S. E. angle).....	65,000
Planting.....	25,000
Buildings, shelters and park furniture.....	50,000
Exterior walls and foundations.....	188,000
S. E. entrance, balcony, fountain and court.....	125,000
	<hr/>
	\$711,000
Add for superintendence and contingencies... ..	105,150
	<hr/>
	<u>\$816,150</u>

Wood-work substituted for stone as the means of inclosure, and for the larger part of the stairways and entrance-ways, would answer all necessary purposes for at least ten years. By this means the cost of the work may be reduced to.....

Work may be reduced to.....	\$456,000
Add for superintendence and contingencies.....	67,000
	<hr/>
	<u>\$523,000</u>

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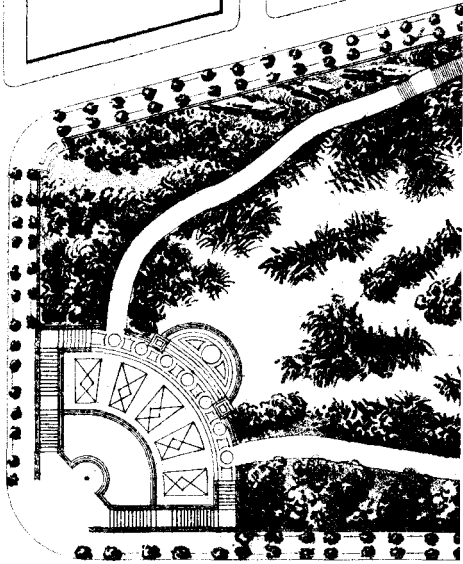
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111th STREET

NINTH AV.

ONE HUNDRED AND TENTH STREET

111th ST.



DOCUMENT No. 51.

BOARD

OF THE

Department of Public Parks.

OCTOBER 11TH, 1873.

The Landscape Architect presented a report on the disposition of the zoological collection of the Department.

Report received and ordered to be printed as a document of the Board.

WM. IRWIN,
Secretary D. P. P.

DEPARTMENT PUBLIC PARKS, }
 OFFICE OF DESIGN, }
 October 11th, 1873. }

To the Hon. S. H. WALES,
President of the Board:

SIR:—As the question of a plan for the ultimate disposition of the collection of living animals belonging to the city is complicated with other questions requiring early discussion, at your request the following statements and suggestions are respectfully submitted as a report to the Board.

Under the old Board of Commissioners of the Central Park the chief features of a plan had been adopted, of which an outline was published in the Annual Report of 1866, page 42, and in a communication from the Landscape Architects appended to the same document, page 149.

In this plan accommodations were to be furnished for all animals requiring artificial heat during the winter, on Manhattan Square; others were to be provided for in different parts of the Central Park; these two grounds then being all the territory under the control of the Commissioners.

Under the administration of Mr. Sweeney, in 1871, this plan was discarded, and it was determined to form within the Central Park a zoological garden of the general character of those of the principal towns of Europe. Under the second Board of the Department of Public Parks this plan was, in its turn, set aside, for the reason that it involved the complete diversion from its original purpose of the best part of the Central Park. A large building which was nearly completed was ordered to be removed and the ground restored to its former condition. Manhattan Square having, in the mean time, been devoted by law to other purposes, the first plan, in so far as that ground is concerned, cannot be resumed.

There is one consideration by which, with but a single exception, the plans of all the European collections of this class have been affected, which consideration, so far as at present determined, would not apply to that in custody of the Department. They are the property of societies, and though more or less aided by governments, are largely dependent for their means of support on the entrance fees paid by visitors. In the inception of the enterprise the collection has been established on land offered to the society by governments, or obtained on a lease for a long term of years at a low rent. The plans for the disposal of the animals have been accommodated to the conditions of such sites as were thus available. With the subsequent growth of the collection, new buildings generally have been placed wherever space could be conveniently made for them, and not where they were otherwise most desirable. Various features have also been introduced among the accommodations for the animals, having no appropriate association with them, but intended to occupy the ground in the manner best calculated to increase the income of the society.

Setting aside all considerations of this class, which directly and indirectly have influenced the arrangements of the European collections, it is to be observed that the conditions of health and convenience of management and satisfactory exhibition which should be fulfilled in a plan differ with different animals. The feline animals of the tropics, for instance, must be confined in strong cages within a building, the air of which can be artificially heated. The grazing animals of temperate regions should have shelters essentially similar to those of our ordinary domestic animals, with considerable spaces of open ground in which they can be turned out during the day. In this view it is clearly better to take detached pieces of ground, each of which shall be well suited to the requirements of some one division of a collection, *rather than place any at disadvantage within one general enclosure.*

With respect to the management of public grounds, within which provision for a collection of animals is required, a division of the collection between several localities offers some decided advantages.

A given length of ordinary park-walk, say 100 yards, will comfortably accommodate 1,000 people moving at different rates of speed and in opposite directions. If double this number undertake to pass over it at the same time, the difficulties of preserving order and securing a tolerable degree of convenience and comfort will have increased in much greater proportion than the increase in number of the people. Consequently, the more a given number of objects of interest with a park are separated, and the more the number of visitors seeking them is divided and led to take different routes, the less the difficulties of management, the greater the convenience and comfort of the public. The less, also, will be the crowd standing at any time before any object of interest and, consequently, the better the opportunities of observation.

In the specifications of the plan for the laying out of the Central Park no provisions were required for the exhibition of animals and, in the present stage of the development of the plan, it would be utterly impossible to find suitable accommodations for all the divisions of a collection as large and varied as any of the more important ones of Europe. There are however spaces of limited extent, on each of which a certain division might be provided for satisfactorily.

For example, the proposition has already been favorably considered by the Commission to establish suitable sheds on the hillside facing south, between the East Drive and Fifth avenue, near the line of One Hundredth street, for the grazing animals now kept on the ground near Fifth avenue at Eightieth street, lately appropriated to the Art Museum, and to assign the valley to the southward, between the hillside and the fourth transverse road, as the grazing ground for such animals. The suggestion has also already been made that the meadow between the Reservoir and the fourth transverse road be appropriated to sub-hardy grazing animals, such as the antelope; suitable buildings for their summer and winter accommodation being erected on the north side of it, at which point they would be inconspicuous and obstruct no extended views.

It is now further suggested that another division of the collection might be satisfactorily accommodated on the proposed esplanade of Morningside Park, in a building of the following description :

A conservatory 450 feet long, and, in the main body, 60 feet wide and 30 feet high, consisting of a quadrangular hall with a pavilion at each end. The glass of the roof and sides to be movable, so that in summer the whole or either of the three apartments may be thrown open and the atmosphere within the house, whenever desirable, made the same as that without. The temperature in winter to be heated and regulated as in an ordinary green-house and ventilation to be accomplished by the apparatus now commonly used in large hospitals, to be driven by a steam engine, which would also serve to supply water for fountains and general distribution throughout the building. Exotic plants to be grown from the floor and trained along the rafters as vines in an ordinary grapery; the whole building thus forming a winter garden and sanitarium. The central parts of the two pavilions to be occupied by aviaries; the central parts of the main hall by a series of double cages 24 feet square; these cages to be appropriated to the feline tropical animals. It will be observed that the advantages for securing cleanliness and ventilation for such animals are very great, and that each will be under observation by spectators from three sides at once. Such a structure, so situated, will be out of sight from the nearest private buildings, nor can any tainted air or noise of the animals reach them. The greatest length of the building will be in a line almost exactly north and south, and the sunlight from both sides will fall directly upon the animals. It will offer no obstruction to the view, and, though very low, will have an elegant and brilliant character. It is completely protected on the north and west by high walls of rock.

Respectfully,

FRED. LAW OLNSTED, L. A.

For himself, and

CALVERT VAUX,

Late Consulting L. A.

DOCUMENT No. 52.

BOARD
OF THE
Department of Public Parks.

NOVEMBER 20TH, 1873.

Communication of Mr. Dexter A. Hawkins, on the subject
of Kingsbridge road.

Received and ordered to be printed as a document of the
Board.

WM. IRWIN,
Secretary D. P. P.

To the Commissioners of the Department of Public Parks :

At your invitation I make the following communication :

By Chapter 565, Laws of 1865, the Commissioners of the Central Park were empowered to lay out streets, roads, &c., above One hundred and fifty-fifth street, and prepare, certify, acknowledge and file three similar maps of the same. By the Charter of 1870, this power became vested in the Department of Public Parks.

Under said chapter 565, the Department of Public Parks laid out, widened and straightened Kingsbridge road from One hundred and fifty-fifth street to Inwood street, and prepared, certified, acknowledged and filed the three similar maps of the same. They also had a preliminary survey and a sketch of the same made, for the widening and straightening of said road from Inwood street to the Harlem river, upon which preliminary survey, from the fact of its adoption by the Board, it would seem that the Board intended at some time to lay out (under the Act 565, sections 2 and 3) this part of said road also, and to prepare, certify, acknowledge and file the three similar maps of the same, but it appears they never did do this, and that there is no legal location of the widening and straightening of Kingsbridge road above Inwood street.

On May 24th, 1870, the Department of Public Parks, by resolution, ordered the necessary steps to be taken in Court, under section 4 of said act, to acquire title to lands required for "that portion" of Kingsbridge road laid out, widened and straightened by the Commissioners of Central Park, under said Act 565.

This resolution would cover the portion from One hundred and fifty-fifth street to Inwood street, and no further, it seems to me. The usual proceedings were taken under section 4 in Court, and the surveyor has proceeded as though you had made, under the Act, chapter 565, Law of 1865, a legal location of the widening and straightening of said road from One hundred

and fifty-fifth street up to the Harlem river, whereas the fact seems to be, you had done it only to Inwood street.

By Chapter 872 of the Laws of 1872, the powers conferred upon you by said Chapter 565, were taken away and conferred upon the Department of Public Works.

But by Chapter 335 of the Laws of 1873 (new charter), section 83, as amended by section 13 of Chapter 757, the power was taken away from the Department of Public Works, and restored to the Department of Public Parks, "of laying out and preparing maps and plans of all streets, avenues and drives above Fifty-ninth street."

This puts the whole power of laying out streets, &c., and of preparing maps and plans of the same, and filing the same, so as to make them binding on all parties, as prescribed by sections 2 and 3 of said Act 565, into the Department of Public Parks, and it gives the Department of Public Parks the power whenever they see fit to exercise it, of locating the widening and straightening of Kingsbridge road above Inwood street, and preparing the surveys, maps and plans of the same, and certifying, acknowledging and filing the three similar maps as prescribed by sections 2 and 3 of said Act 565.

The construction of streets, roads, &c., and the making of construction or working maps and plans, and also the taking proceedings in Court to acquire title is probably still in the Department of Public Works, under section 7 of said Act 872.

It is very desirable that the streets, roads, avenues, &c., above One hundred and fifty-fifth street should be permanently fixed and decided upon, and the maps filed, which the law prescribes, shall, when filed, be binding upon all parties so that the owners may know how to locate and divide up their property.

New York, November 8th, 1873.

Yours respectfully,

(Signed.)

DEXTER A. HAWKINS.

DOCUMENT No. 53.

BOARD

OF THE

Department of Public Parks.

DECEMBER 3, 1873.

Report of the President on the law relative to furnishing copies of documents to, and allowing the inspection of same by, citizens.

Adopted and ordered to be printed as a document of the Board.

WM. IRWIN,
Secretary D. P. P.

*To the Board of Commissioners
of the Department of Public Parks.*

THE UNDERSIGNED, to whom was referred, on the 26th Nov., 1873, a communication of Mr. John Foley, requiring copies of certain official papers in the Department, with a request that he examine and report concerning the law relative to furnishing copies of documents to, and allowing the inspection of the same by, citizens, begs leave to report as follows :

That he has carefully examined the section 107 of the Charter of 1873, which provides that the heads of all departments (except the Police) and the chiefs of bureaus shall, with reasonable promptness, furnish to any taxpayer desiring the same a true and certified copy of any book, account, or paper kept by such bureau or officer, or such part thereof as may be demanded, upon payment, in advance, of five cents per hundred words by the person demanding the same.

The application by a taxpayer, under this part of the section, should be a reasonable application—that is, he should have some personal interest in making it. It appears to me it could not have been the intention of the Legislature to allow every taxpayer, whether he had a personal concern in the matter or not, to demand copies of the official books and papers of any of the departments of the city government.

Such a view of the law would encumber the duties of the departments unreasonably.

A score of persons, with no object but vexation and mischief, might, simply on the ground of being taxpayers, claim to have copies of the books and papers, which a clerical force, at a large outlay of expense, could alone satisfy.

The duties of the department might be obstructed by such willful and unreasonable demands.

The second branch of the 107th section allows to the taxpayer inspection of all books, accounts and papers of any department or bureau thereof, subject to reasonable rules and regulations in regard to the time and manner of such inspection.

Under this branch of the section it has been held by one of the judges of the Supreme Court (Fancher) that an application cannot be made by any taxpayer for a promiscuous inspection,

and that the inspection which the statute authorizes is one in which the particular taxpayer is concerned who makes the application.

Under this ruling, one taxpayer cannot for another have an inspection, nor, because he is a taxpayer, can he have a general inspection of the books and papers of the department.

But the person applying must have a personal interest in the particular inspection applied for, and when such an inspection is had, the statute is satisfied.

The statute was not intended as a roving commission to any and every taxpayer to rummage through all the books and papers of the city departments, to gratify curiosity or a meddling disposition. On the contrary, it was intended to give to taxpayers having an interest in the matter proper facility for the inspection that directly concerns their own affairs.

Under the first head, the board will determine upon the merits of each and every application made for copies of books, papers, &c.

Under the second head, it seems to the undersigned that, in view of the ruling of Judge Fancher, this board will be justified in denying all applications for inspection of books, accounts and papers unless the applicant has a personal interest in the matter.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

(Signed) S. H. WALES,

President D. P. P.

New York, Dec. 2d, 1873.

DOCUMENT No. 54.

BOARD

OF THE

Department of Public Parks.

JANUARY 7TH, 1874.

Report of the Landscape Architect of the Estimates for
Construction for the year 1874.

Ordered to be printed as a Document of the Board.

WM. IRWIN,
Secretary D. P. P.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS,
OFFICE OF DESIGN AND SUPERINTENDENCE, }
New York, 20th January, 1874.

To the Hon. S. H. WALES,
President of the Board :

SIR:—On the 7th inst. I laid before the Board a series of calculations and estimates, prepared at your request, as a basis for a proposed communication to the Legislature in respect to the future requirements of the Department. After conversation on several of the items, I was requested to make such revision of the estimates as would reduce their total sum to exactly \$1,000,000, in addition to present resources, and to compile additional information in regard to the latter. This has been done in the tables which are presented below.

In the column of estimates for 1874, the items distinguished by an asterisk refer to works, all of which are carried well toward completion, and the immediate completion of which is thought specially desirable. The total sum required for these works is \$284,000, being \$196,000 on the Central Park, and \$88,000 on the small parks. Of the remainder, \$100,000 is chiefly for expenses which can be avoided only by a general suspension of works, and \$600,000 for the large works on Riverside and Morningside Parks, lately entered upon.

Respectfully,

FRED. LAW OLMSTED,

Landscape Architect.

ITEM.	Original Estimate for 1873.	Reduced Estimate for 1873.	Amount expended, 1873, in accordance with reduced Estimate.	Amount expended, 1873, for work not intended to be done in reduced Estimate, but since ordered by Board.	Required to Complete.	Estimate for 1874.	Estimated amount of work or materials ordered or contracted for, but not yet rendered.	Estimated amount required for 1874, in addition to existing orders or contracts.	NOTES.	
Eighth Avenue Wall.....	\$160,000	\$115,000	\$115,000	\$44,250	\$99,500	*\$99,500	\$87,850	\$11,650	This Estimate is exclusive of that portion of Eighth Avenue lying between the Park proper and the ground appropriated to the Museum of Natural History (Manhattan Square), the design of which is incomplete.	
Eighth Avenue Slopes.....	55,000	25,000	25,000	11,660	.....	13,000	.....	13,000
Filling on line of 110th Street.....	13,000	.....	.....	3,950	.....	*2,000	.....	2,000
Drives and Borders near 110th Street.....	22,000	.....	.....	.....	33,400	33,400	.....	33,400
Entrance Eighth Avenue and 110th Street.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	80,000	40,000	.....	40,000
Changes of Walks near Eighth Avenue and 85th Street.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2,000	2,000	.....	2,000
Entrance Eighth Avenue and 100th Street.....	.....	2,000	1,730	.....	2,800	2,800	.....	2,800
Wall on 110th Street.....	.....	.....	.....	26,990	43,000	40,000	.....	40,000
Wall on Fifth Avenue.....	5,810	125,000	50,000	50,000		Park force.
Fifth Avenue Slopes.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	4,000	.....	4,000
Merchants' Gate.....	75,000	50,000	207,000	50,000	50,000		Contracts arranged to amount of \$140,000, but not executed.
System of protected walks in southeast quarter of Park, including Inscope and Outset arches.....	70,450	60,000	15,500	15,000	59,150	*59,150	19,950	39,200		Estimate enlarged on account of quicksand.

Concert Ground on Mall.....	12,000	12,000	6,100	.....	5,900	*5,900	.....	5,900	
Boat House.....	20,000	21,500	8,100	.....	13,400	*13,400	4,650	8,750	
Carrousel.....	7,000	4,500	3,300	3,500	500	*500	.....	500	Lacks painting only.
Cottages.....	25,000	25,000	500	.....	.....	24,500	.....	24,500	
Sheepfold or Aquarium.....	50,000	20,000	.....	1,050	50,000	5,000	.....	5,000	Plan of last year suspended, \$5,000 for special contingencies.
Conservatory and its Plants.....	106,000	56,000	2,550	.....	450,000	50,000	.....	50,000	
Belvedere.....	35,000	25,000	2,700	.....	32,300	30,000	250	29,750	
Antelope Paddock, fences and house.....	15,000	.....	.....	.....	15,000	15,000	.....	15,000	
New House for Animals.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	4,000	4,000	.....	4,000	Ordered by the Board.
Alterations near 4th Transverse Road.....	3,000	3,000	.....	.....	3,000	3,000	.....	3,000	
Road Steps.....	600	600	.....	.....	600	*600	.....	600	
Esplanade Flagstaffs and Bases.....	1,000	1,000	.....	.....	1,000	1,000	.....	1,000	
Additional Seats, Urinals, Drinking Fountains, Fences and Railings.....	5,000	5,000	2,500	.....	.....	*5,000	.....	5,000	
General Planting.....	20,000	20,000	6,900	.....	.....	*10,000	.....	10,000	
Constructions in Shops, Stables, Offices, &c.....	500	500	500	260	.....	500	.....	500	
Manhattan Square.....	120,000	50,000	38,650	.....	.....	50,000	.....	50,000	
Contingencies—Central Park.....	10,000	42,800	25,000	25,000	
Casino.....	7,000	7,000	7,000	1,370	440	440	
		\$544,900	\$639,690	\$113,140	\$526,550	

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ITEM.	Original Estimate for 1873.	Reduced Estimate for 1873.	Amount expended, 1873, in accordance with reduced Estimate.	Amount expended, 1873, for work not intended to be done in reduced Estimate, but since ordered by Board.	Required to Complete.	Estimate for 1874.	Estimated amount of work or materials ordered, or contracted for, but not yet rendered.	Estimated amount required for 1874, in addition to existing orders or contracts.	
Morningside Park.....	\$300,000	\$100,000	\$11,400		\$816,150	\$300,000	\$4,150	\$295,850	
Riverside Park.....	200,000	200,000	5,000			300,000	4,100	295,900	
Battery.....	\$9,500	\$9,500		\$10,250		\$9,500	\$206	\$9,300	No part of expenditures of 1873 was for purposes contemplated in estimate. The sum of \$8,128.73 was paid by the Finance Department during the year, on account of unsettled claims incurred for work done on the Battery under Mr. Sweeney's administration.
City Hall Park.....	10,700	10,700	6,000			12,000	3,050	8,950	
Five Points Park (Mission Square).....	16,000	16,000	3,100			*12,900	200	12,700	
Jackson Park.....	3,500	3,500	1,200			*1,000		1,000	
Washington Square.....	17,900	17,900	5,800			*16,500		16,500	
Union Square and Lincoln Monument,.....	33,100	33,100	26,450			23,300	13,400	9,900	
Madison Square and Worth Monument.....	25,850	25,850	20,450	15,560		35,500		35,500	The sum of \$15,560 was paid during 1873 on account of unsettled claims for work done on Madison Square, incurred under Mr. Sweeney's administration.
Reservoir Square.....	3,150	3,000		590		*3,150		3,150	

Places—Boulevard—63rd Street and 65th Street	15,250	15,250	4,050	.....	*11,200	.....	11,200
Mount Morris Square.....	10,000	.....	6,800	.....	*16,000	.....	16,000
Place—Fifth Avenue—58th and 59th Streets.	5,250	5,500	200	.....	*5,300	.....	5,300
59th Street, adjacent to Park... ..	12,000	12,000	.....	.....	*12,000	.....	12,000
Park Avenue Parks.....	2,900	.....	1,450	.....	500	.....	500
Christopher Street and Abingdon Parks.....	1,000	.....	100	.....	1,000	.....	1,000
Canal Street Park.....	750	.....	100	.....	750	.....	750
Tompkins Square.....	1,900	.....	1,200	.....	*10,000	550	9,450
Grand Street Park.....	3,950	.....	200	.....	3,950	.....	3,950
Duane Street Park.....	600	.....	50	.....	600	.....	600
Beach Street Park.....	400	.....	30	.....	400	.....	400
Stuyvesant Square.....	29,800	6,000	850	.....	29,800	.....	29,800
.....	\$158,300	†	.....	.....	\$205,350	\$17,400	\$187,950
Miscellaneous Account.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	\$100,000	\$3,050	\$96,950

† This item of \$158,300 was last year reduced in gross to \$131,000, to bring the total estimate to exactly \$1,000,000.

Includes salaries of general offices, coal, nurseries, and other undistributed expenses.

SUMMARY.

	Estimate for 1874.	Estimated amount of work or materials ordered or con- tracted for, but not yet rendered.	Estimated amount re- quired for 1874, in addition to existing orders or contracts.
Central Park.....	\$639,690	\$113,140	\$526,550
Morningside Park.....	300,000	4,150	295,850
Riverside Park.....	300,000	4,100	295,900
Smaller Parks and Places.....	205,350	17,400	187,950
Miscellaneous Account.....	100,000	3,050	96,950
Totals.....	\$1,545,040	\$141,840	\$1,403,200
Resources.....	545,040		403,200
Additional amount required.....	\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000

FRED. LAW OLMSTED,
Landscape Architect.

DOCUMENT No. 55.

B O A R D

OF THE

Department of Public Parks.

JANUARY 7, 1874.

Report of the Landscape Architect on the boat and refreshment houses, and giving a list of urinals and privies on the Central Park.

Accepted and ordered to be printed as a document of the Board.

WM. IRWIN,
Secretary D. P. P.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS,
OFFICE OF DESIGN AND SUPERINTENDENCE, }
NEW YORK, 26th December, 1873.

To the Hon. S. H. WALES,
President of the Board:

SIR :—I have been requested to show the Board, on a map, the location of the various urinals and privies on the Central Park ; I do so on the sheet herewith presented, distinguishing by figures respectively :

1st. The brick urinals, of which there are	10
2d. The iron urinals.....	1
3d. The earth closets for men, to which urinals are attached, with attendants, of which there are	8
4th. Water-closets for men, without attendants.....	1
5th. Water-closets for men, with attendants.....	4
6th. Water-closets for women, with attendants	10
7th. Additional closets for the skating season.....	6
8th. Closets for park force	5
9th. Urinals in other buildings	4

The total number of all structures of these classes is 49
accommodating about 300 persons.

I have also been instructed to report on the subject of the boat and refreshment houses on the lake of the Park.

The subject is intimately related to several others of prime importance, and I wish to place, as fully as practicable, before the Board the considerations which have led to the existing arrangements, and those which will govern my recommendations.

The project of a boat-house is a recent one, having grown out of complaints and reports of inconvenience to the public, made in 1872 by the contractor for the boat business, which reports were confirmed by the Superintendent and by personal observation.

The subject being under study, suggestions of the contractor and of the Superintendent that other objects should be combined with plans for a boat-house were considered, the site of the present movable skating-house being visited for the purpose by Mr. Vaux and myself in their company. We afterwards invited the Commissioners to inspect the lake with us that they might the better understand the matter, and they did so.

The necessity of removing the principal boat station from the esplanade being conceded, it was agreed, after examination of the shore, that at no point could provision for the ordinary boat business be made as convenient and as inconspicuous as at the point on the east bay, opposite the Trefoil Arch. This site was accordingly fixed upon. The principal objection to it was one which applies to every site that could be thought of for the purpose, namely, that any building, no matter how low, set upon it would be interposed between visitors and a view of the lake, and that it would tend to crowd the nearest walk with persons waiting for the boats, and watching their departure and arrival. The plan of the house afterwards approved was designed in adaptation to the site, and, in order to compensate for the interruption of the view from

the walk, and better accommodate those who should wish to wait in the vicinity, the roof was made a deck to be covered with awnings and furnished with seats, so that the advantages for looking over the lake, instead of being diminished, should be increased. A project for an additional temporary shelter near this point, for use during the skating season, being before the Commissioners at the time this plan was presented, it was pointed out to them that the proposed boat-house was adapted, incidentally to its main purpose, to very well serve this object. Its construction was then immediately ordered, with a view to use the following winter. The shop work, however, proceeded too slowly to accomplish this end, and in February a special order was given the Superintendent to set piles for foundations through the ice, in order to make sure that the public should have the benefit of the improvement in the spring, when the boating season opened, and that the esplanade should be cleared of encumbrances before setting the Bethesda fountain upon it. Piles were purchased for the purpose, but the order was not executed, and the spring arriving, the water was raised in the lake and the boating business resumed.

On the organization of the new Board, the matter was presented for its consideration in my report of 21st June, 1873, and some doubt being expressed in regard to the site for the boat-house, at my suggestion, action was postponed, that the commissioners might visit the ground. I went three times with the new members of the Board to the site proposed to explain its advantages, and in a discussion which subsequently occurred it was unanimously agreed that the work should proceed. On the 27th of October I reminded the Board that this agreement had not been made effective, and by a special resolution the superintendent was again ordered to complete the boat-house.

A month later, being informed by the President that he would be obliged to discharge some of the carpenters unless new work could be found for them, I called attention to the fact that this order still remained unexecuted, and to the undesirableness of losing the use of the boat-house during another skating season.

By a resolution of the Board, adopted immediately thereafter, the question of site was again reopened, and with the suggestion that an addition should be made to the plan with a view to better accommodations for the public during the skating season, referred to me to report upon. I am informed that the suggestion relates to a proposition formerly urged and decided against, for saving the annual cost of taking down and setting up the present skating-house at the south end of the main lake, by the substitution for it of a permanent structure. This annual cost is estimated to be about \$2,000. The building is not yet five years old, and as some improvement has been added to it every year, is probably now nearly, if not quite, as good as new. It was built in adaptation to the site it occupies.

The boat-house will contain a certain amount of enclosed space, and a certain amount of space covered but not enclosed. The skating-house contains a cubic space, entirely enclosed, ten times as great as that of the boat-house, and five times as great as that covered, added to that enclosed by the boat-house. To design accommodations of corresponding capacity to those of the skating-house, as a supplement to those of the boat-house would, of course, be to treat a large affair as secondary to a small one. The boat-house is designed in adaptation to a different site from that of the skating-house, and its construction is now so far advanced that it would now be but little more practicable to make any considerable

alteration or addition to its plan if it were standing in its proper place instead of being stored in the shop.

So far as the purposes hitherto had in view in the plan of the boat-house itself are concerned, the facts before recited show that there has been no lack of deliberation in determining its site, or of study in preparing its plan, and that the result of repeated reviews of the question by different minds, has always been the same. I shall assume, therefore, that further discussion of this question is not required, and that the only matter now needing to be debated is whether the Department should undertake the construction of a permanent restaurant building on the shore of the lake, and associate accommodation for the boating business with it.

As a means of improving the boating business and the restaurant business, the plan has everything to recommend it. It by no means follows that the public would thereby be better served. In this case, as always, and with every project of alleged improvement for the Central Park, the Commissioners are bound to bring the matter to the test of this question: "*Will the Park, through the plan proposed, be made more valuable as a substitute to the mass of the people of the city for a visit to the country—as affording the greatest possible healthful change of scene, of air, of mental associations, from those to which they are subject under the ordinary conditions of city life.*"

The use of boats must be regarded as that of a convenient and attractive form of carriage by means of which this primary use of the lake, in its effect on the mind of the visitor, is greater than it would otherwise be.

The use of a refreshment house in the summer, if required at

all near the lake, must be regarded as that of relieving the visitor, by the satisfaction of his hunger, of what would otherwise detract from his enjoyment of its scenery.

The lake, as an element of scenery, must be considered to be not merely the water of the lake but the margins, by reason of which it is anything else than a reservoir. The use of the lake, as a skating-pond, though not necessarily in the least opposed to its primary use, is diametrically different from it. The ice, in fact, is simply a temporary floor for an amusing and healthful exercise during, on an average, but one-tenth part of the year, when the use of the lake for its primary purpose is almost entirely intermitted. The skating-floor being movable, and this use of the lake being a temporary one, wholly different from the more important and general use for which its margins have been designed, the special and peculiar accommodations which the public require on its margins are also temporary and movable, arriving and departing with the ice.

As to their character, it is to be remembered that a majority of the visitors who are attracted to the shores of the lake during the winter are not skaters, but find their chief amusement in watching the movements of the skaters. For this purpose, elevated positions overlooking the main body of the ice, are desirable. All such positions are very bleak, and visitors standing upon them are liable to be excessively chilled, and, much more than the skaters, need temporary shelter, refreshments and other means of restoring warmth. What is required in a structure in connection with the ice is not, therefore, simply that it may be entered directly from the ice by skaters, but also, and more particularly, that it shall be convenient for the larger spectator class. It is also desirable that a comfortable place of observation overlooking the main field of ice shall be provided for ladies, and that all the accommodations shall be conveniently accessible to persons approaching from

carriages or on foot along the higher ground back from the shore.

It was for these reasons that the Commissioners abandoned the original arrangement of a number of small movable houses and tents, scattered at various points on the shore of the lake, each set up, owned and managed by a different person, licensed under suitable regulations for the purpose. This arrangement, faulty in some respects, had the advantages of establishing a healthy competition in the business of supplying refreshments, of dividing the mass of persons to be accommodated, and thus lessening the danger of concentrating a great crowd at one point, of affording a variety of accommodations adapted to persons of different tastes and means, and of much smaller demands on the maintenance fund.

The inconvenience of this system, however; its failure to meet the requirements which have been enumerated, and especially the fact of its forcing the spectator class to come to the level of the ice, were thought to be such serious defects, that in 1867 plans of a single building were ordered to be prepared, with the design of wholly superseding it.

To fully meet the specified requirements, it was necessary that the proposed building should be of two stories, and situated with one front on the water's edge of the main lake. It was also necessary that it should be placed on the south side of the lake, as will be seen in the following reasons: 1st. Because a person facing the sun, as one would do at times anywhere but on the south side, when looking upon the field of ice is blinded by the glare. 2d. Because neither on the north, east or west sides of the lake is there any open space nearly large enough for a building of the required size. 3d. Because only on the south and west sides are there direct foot approaches

from the cars, and only on the south side are the walks leading toward the lake ample and direct from the principal entrances. 4th. Because only on the south and west sides could a building be approached by carriages, and only on the south side, without causing serious obstruction to the ordinary use of the main drive. On the south side a large concourse for carriages overlooking the lake was a part of the original design, and had been long in use, summer and winter.

In the preparation of the required building plan, the architects of the Commission considered that the crowd which would concentrate at any single building would on occasions be so large that, to avoid great inconvenience and disorder, all the accommodations must be spacious, and two plans were offered, in succession, each of which was rejected before the reduced plan, on which the present building has been constructed, was submitted. In construction, this plan was further reduced and greatly injured in effect and convenience. Experience shows that the evils of the arrangement are fully as great as the architects imagined that they would be, and no Commissioner who will attempt to enter and pass through the house, obtain refreshments, and make such other use of it as it is designed to serve, on any winter day when the ice is specially attractive, will fail to be disgusted with its inadequacy.

Considering it, then, to be demonstrated that if this concentration of the refreshment and other business of the movable house is necessary, a smaller structure than that at present used for the purpose is out of the question, and that the only satisfactory position for a large house on the lake is at its south end, in connection with the concourse and the main approaches from the east and south entrances, an examination of the ground at any time will further satisfy the Com-

missioners that nowhere else is there room for it, except in the exact position now occupied.

A little study of the lake from all sides, in summer, could not fail to satisfy them also that any permanent building of the size, or of half the size, of the boat-house, in that situation, to say nothing of such a building as would be required to combine the accommodations of the present movable house with those of the boat-house, would be utterly inconsistent with the primary purpose of the lake as before defined. A glance toward the present building, from the balcony bridge, will even now make this sufficiently manifest, but it should be remembered that the topography of the ground surrounding the lake is such that the space between the lake concourse and the lake shore, now shut out of view by the building, affords the only situation in all the Park where, in summer, the eye falls upon a body of water in association with a quiet slope of green sward. It should be observed that special arrangements for enjoying it from several points of view were included in the design, and have been established at considerable expense, and that the object of thousands of details of the general plan would be subverted by the introduction of such an object at the point in question.

Again, looking from a point south of the skating-house, it will be seen that the only broad, general view of the lake to be had from a carriage would be much encroached upon, and the designed effect entirely ruined by the introduction of such a feature as the boat-house.

I trust that it has thus been made sufficiently evident that the proposition to combine a restaurant with the boat-house, and to make the combination serve the purpose of the present movable skating-house, should not be entertained.

In regard to the permanent arrangements for supplying needed refreshments on the Park, it may be well here to say that the original design of the Park in this respect has been perverted through the use of temporary expedients, familiarity with which gives them the effect of permanence and of bad design. The Casino, east of the Mall, for instance, was not built for a general restaurant ; the arcade of the Terrace was not designed to be used as a shop for the sale of ice cream and soda-water. Neither of these structures is adapted to its present uses, and the present use of both interferes with the use for which they were designed.

The present arrangements for provisioning the public on the Park are, in short, inadequate and most unsatisfactory, and the need of improving them has been often urged by your landscape architects as well as by your contractor for providing refreshments.

Spacious refectories will be desirable in connection with the Museum of Natural History and the Museum of Art. Besides these, there are needed smaller houses each containing a counter and a few tables at which ices and simple refreshments, rather than full meals, can be obtained, and from which there will be access to retiring rooms, respectively for women and for men, on the general theory of the plan lately presented the Board for a building in Madison square. Buildings of this class, with low roofs, could be so placed that while one could always be reached by a short walk by visitors needing to make use of it, in whatever part of the Park they might be, they would yet be scarcely seen by those who had no occasion to look for them. Two necessary buildings, each covering a space of 16x30 feet, were last year placed in positions where they have since been passed within 100 feet by a large majority of all the visitors to the Park without being seen, and without causing the slightest

offense. All necessary refreshment rooms, privies and urinals can be arranged so as to be perfectly convenient without being obtrusive or injuring the rural character of the park. I strongly urge that the construction of one or two such buildings should be immediately undertaken. I recommend that a small iron urinal be placed near each of the entrances of the Park, in charge of the gate keeper, and that the order of the Board of June 12th, 1872, directing all the brick urinals be replaced by iron, be repeated.

I also recommend that the order respecting the boat-house be repeated.

Respectfully,

FRED. LAW OLMSTED,
Landscape Architect.

DOCUMENT No. 56.

BOARD
OF THE
Department of Public Parks.

JANUARY 8TH, 1874.

Report of the Civil and Topographical Engineer on the condition and extent of works now in progress under contracts in the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Wards, and as to what action is necessary in regard to the same.

Received and ordered to be printed as a document of the Board.

WM. IRWIN,

Secretary D. P. P.

CITY OF NEW YORK,
 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS,
 Office of Civil and Topographical Engineer. }

MT. ST. VINCENT, January 6th, 1874.

Hon. S. H. WALES,

President of the Board of Commissioners D. P. P.

SIR:—I submit the following report on the second clause of the resolution of the Board, of the 26th inst., relative to the annexed district. This clause of the resolution calls for a report on "The condition and extent of works now in progress under contracts, and what action is necessary in regard to such works and contracts."

The works under contract are in the town of Morrisania and West Farms. In Morrisania contracts exist for grading, curbing and guttering several short streets, embracing, in all, a length of about 16,000 feet, and a total estimated cost of \$87,000. Also, a contract for a sewer of about 400 feet in length, at an estimated cost of \$2,800.

The work is provided for by assessments upon the property benefited, the assessment districts having been defined and established.

In addition to these contracts, Third avenue is under contract for a distance of 9,000 feet, at an estimated total cost of \$65,000, and has been conducted by a special commission, the expense being charged upon the town at large.

The total estimated cost of all the works, including contingencies, is about \$155,000. The estimated cost of work done is about \$16,000, on Third avenue, and \$29,000 on the other contracts.

The work done under assessments has been in charge of an engineer employed by the Trustees, who gives lines and stakes, and the necessary directions, and makes out the estimates and sees to the proper execution of the work.

The engineer is competent for the duty, and I have, in a previous communication, recommended his continuance in the employ of the Department, as his services will be of value in the further examination of the work and the contracts, which will be necessary, as time is afforded to determine more fully all questions connected with the contracts, their execution and settlement.

As the duties connected with the supervision of these contracts, including Third avenue, are light, I think the engineer can attend to them, and to the maintenance and repairs of streets and sewers in the town. Both classes of work are necessarily more or less connected, and require similar services, and they are not likely, for some time to come, to require more than one competent person in charge.

Third avenue improvement includes the widening of the present avenue; the buildings in the way have been removed, and the awards for the property and damage have been paid. The many inconveniences to the public consequent upon the prosecution of the work, make it desirable that it should be completed with as little delay as possible.

The work under contract in West Farms is estimated, in all at about \$7,000, and consists mainly of cutting down some steep places, and improving or opening a few roads at Mount Hope and Fairmount, that were previously barely passable or not in use. From the best information I can obtain in the time afforded, this work has been somewhat irregular.

An amount of \$9,000 was appropriated for the object, by authority of the Board of Supervisors, by the issue of town bonds, and was apportioned to the several works, and repairs of bridges, and verbal contracts were made with three Commissioners of Highways to execute the work.

No provision appears to have been made for the accurate measurement of the work, or for its proper supervision.

It is not clear that the expenditure was judicious, or that the power existed to perform some of the work, which appears to come within the Laws of 1869 and 1871, Chap. 534, estopping such improvements until the streets and roads were laid out by this Department. I think no further expenditure should be permitted by the Department until further investigation can be made of the whole matter.

In connection with works under contract, Central avenue and Southern boulevard may be mentioned. These expensive avenues were completed two to four years ago, but the Commissioners who had them in charge have not yet closed up their accounts, and turned the works over to the towns. The repairs and maintenance, which are understood to amount to \$10,000 per year, have continued in the hands of the Commissioners appointed for their construction, and are defrayed by the issue of bonds.

It would seem proper that the further care of these avenues should be committed to the person appointed by the Department to oversee and maintain the highways generally of the district in which they are situated, and that all matters entrusted to the Commissioners shall be closed up without unnecessary delay.

This remark will also apply to other recently constructed avenues in the annexed districts, in case the accounts have not been closed up. I have not been able as yet to obtain accurate information upon this latter point.

I submit with this report a map of Morrisania, showing the work under contract in that town, with some additional information.

Very respectfully,

(Signed)

WM. H. GRANT,

C. and T. Engineer.

DOCUMENT No. 57.

B O A R D

OF THE

Department of Public Parks.

MARCH 4, 1874.

Communication of Messrs. Fred. Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux on a proposition to place a colossal statue at the south end of the Mall in the Central Park.

Received and ordered printed as a document of the Board.

WM. IRWIN,
Secretary D. P. P.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS,
OFFICE OF DESIGN AND SUPERINTENDENCE, }
New York, March 4, 1874. }

To the

Hon. S. H. WALES,

*President of the Board of Commissioners
of the Department of Public Parks :*

SIR :—You ask us to report in answer to the following question :

Is it desirable that a statue, which with its pedestal would be thirty feet in height, should be placed in the centre of the oval plat of turf at the south end of the Mall of the Central Park?

The position, outlines and color of every object in this part of the Park, as in every other, have been studied, first by reference to the main purpose of the Park, and afterwards with reference to special local purposes, consistent with and more or less contributive to that paramount purpose.

It may be assumed that the desirability of the introduction of any additional object at any point can best be determined by a similar process of study.

We shall consider the proposition, therefore, with reference, first, to the general design of the Park, and afterwards to the special design of the Mall, and other local conditions.

In providing for recreation from the effects of constant urban confinement of the people of a great city, it would but for one reason be better to have several comparatively small grounds rather than a single large one. This reason is that a sense of escape from the confinement of buildings and streets is in itself an important element of the desired recreation, and that the degree in which this is produced depends largely on the extent of open country which can be brought into view. The site of the Central Park was unfortunately selected with no

regard for this desideratum, and happened to be divided in the middle by the reservoirs and further subdivided by rocky hillocks in such a way that in but few places was there any general rural view more extensive than might be found in a tract of land but one-tenth as large. It has consequently been a primary object in its design to get the better of this most conspicuous defect of the site, and to take the utmost advantage of such opportunities as were offered in the topography to make the visitor feel as if a considerable extent of country were open before him.

Such opportunities were therefore made key-points in the design of the park.

Of these key-points, the locality in question was considered to be of the first importance, for the following reasons :

The eminence at the southwest corner of the reservoir, called Vista Rock, is the most distant natural object which can be seen from any point in the southern part of the park ; and the Drive, south of the Mall, is the nearest point to the entrance from Fifth avenue at which it can be brought into view. A little to the right and left of the line of view towards it from this point, large rocky elevations shorten the prospect by more than one-half. Further to the right and left, the prospect opens again much more broadly, but not to so great a distance. The strongest effect of distance can only be had, therefore, for a moment in passing this spot ; and it was, in the estimation of the designers, worth so much that, to the enhancement of the possible impression it might make on the visitor, every element of the plan for long distances about it was subordinated. Not only, for instance, were the lines of the Mall, and the choice of trees upon it and its borders, controlled by this motive, but it influenced the courses of all roads and walks south of Seventy-second street ; it led to the very costly excavation of large bodies of rock, and determined the selection of trees and color of foliage nearly half a mile away. The towered structure on Vista Rock itself was placed where it is and designed, by its grey colors and the small proportions of its elevated parts, solely to further this purpose.

The middle line of the vista of the Mall is the line on which all these operations centre, and in looking along which every-

thing tends most to favor the desired impression. The space proposed for the base of the statue centres on this line of view, and if occupied as proposed, would interrupt it at a short distance from the most southerly point of observation.

It is obvious, then, that the adoption of the proposition would be a direct repudiation of the primary motive of the general design.

It may be said that the view would still be open on either side. It is true that it would, but aside from the fact of its being divided and narrowed by the introduction of the statue, if an object of the character proposed were so placed in the foreground the intended importance of the distant elements of the scene would certainly be lost.

So far also as the statue would be visible to those passing on the drive, their attention would be drawn by it to a lofty object near at hand and of course withheld from the distant scene below upon which it has heretofore been assumed that every means should be used to concentrate it.

With regard to the special purpose of the Mall, it is the only place in the park where large numbers of people are expected to congregate in summer, the walks elsewhere being designed for continuous motion, with seats and spaces of rest for small clusters of persons only.

Walks from all sides lead towards the Mall, the principal approaches being carried by arched passages under the carriage roads: this element of the design of the park, therefore, stands, with reference to all others, as the hall of audience to the various other rooms, corridors and passages of a palace. Although the elms by which it is to be completely arched over and shaded are as yet not nearly half grown and but two of the many objects of art, by which its dignity is expected to be supported and its perspective effect increased, are yet placed along its borders, it even now begins, in popular use, to assume its designed character. On a fine day in summer thousands of people who have been walking rapidly while in the various approaches to it, here move more slowly, often turning and returning, and the seats which are then placed at its side with accommodation for several hundred persons are often fully occupied.

The proposition is to place a colossal statue in the middle of

the south end of this grand hall of the park *with its back set square to the people.*

The impropriety of such an arrangement is plain.

But it is also to be remembered that a colossal statue in the proposed position would tend to establish a scale to which no other object in the vicinity has been or can be adapted. Relatively to it the adjoining walks and plats and the spaces between the trees would seem cramped and mean. It would have the effect of dwarfing and, so to speak, of casting in the shade the statue of Shakespeare and all others which are designed to be placed in the vicinity, of which there are four now provided.

With reference to the value of what has already been acquired in the park, it is thus clearly not desirable that the proposition should be entertained.

We shall proceed to consider, whether, setting aside the fact that by far the greater number of visitors to the park would see only the back of the statue, the position proposed for it is one adapted to its favorable and dignified presentation.

On the elliptical plat of turf to be occupied there are four trees, and in the design of the park there are no more important trees upon it. They were the very first, or among the very first, planted on the park, and their trunks have already grown to be over one and a half feet in diameter. In a few years they will be three feet. The entire figure of the statue would be elevated above the point at which the branches spread out from these trunks.

If the base of the pedestal at the ground should be a square of about fifteen feet, as is probable, one of these trees would stand opposite each corner, at a distance from it of fifteen feet, and a quartering view of the statue from any greater distance would therefore be wholly obstructed.

Nearly at the same range, but a little more toward the front, stand two other trees of the same character; still further toward the front two more, all of which, as will be plainly seen by the annexed diagram, would be between the statue and the carriage-way, and the most distant less than eighty feet from the base, and within equal distance, laterally, there are several others.

These trees have suffered from ice storms while young, and

were, unfortunately, trimmed up under Mr. Sweeney's administration; their heads have consequently not yet grown in fair proportion with their bodies, and are not well filled out, but it is only necessary for an observer walking around them to day to imagine what they will be in June, five years hence, to be convinced that there is no point of view in which, during the summer, the proposed colossal statue would be even visible at the distance, and from the positions in which a colossal statue at the proposed elevation should be seen to the best advantage. If it were to be set up even two years hence, as it has been suggested that it might be, with a view to the centennial anniversary of Independence, and an audience were to gather as large as greeted the unveiling of the Shakespeare statue, not half of those assembled would be able to see the head of the figure.

If such a statue had been expected to stand in the proposed position, and the designers of the park had, at the outset, been instructed to arrange the foot approaches to the Mall, and to set the trees about the position in such a way that only the pedestal would be conspicuous, the result would be very much what it is.

Even were the dozen trees, which have been referred to away, the position from which the statue would be seen to the best advantage is at the meeting of three carriage ways, and the busiest and most disturbed place in all the park, so much so, that it has long been the custom to station a keeper upon it to prevent people on foot from attempting to cross it, and to guard against collisions. Such a spot is certainly not one to be selected for the worthy contemplation of a great work of art.

The views which have thus been expressed as to the motives which should be controlling in respect to every object introduced at or near the point in question, are those adopted by the Park Commissioners before the first stroke toward the construction of the park was ordered. To show this, we quote from the explanation of the plan published by the Commissioners in 1858:—"From this plateau a view is had of nearly all of the park up to the Reservoir, in a northerly direction, and in looking to the south and west we perceive that there

“ are natural approaches from these directions, which suggest
 “ that we have arrived at a suitable point of concentration for
 “ all approaches which may be made from the lower part of the
 “ city to the interior of the park. Vista Rock, the most pro-
 “ minent point in the landscape of the lower park, here first
 “ comes distinctly into view, and, fortunately, in a direction
 “ diagonal to the boundary lines, from which it is desirable to
 “ withdraw attention in every possible way. We therefore
 “ *accept this line of view as affording an all-sufficient motive to our*
 “ *further procedure.* * * * * *

“ The idea of the park itself should always be uppermost in
 “ the mind of the beholder. Holding this general principle to
 “ be of considerable importance, we have preferred to place the
 “ avenue [or Mall] where it can be terminated appropriately at
 “ one end with a landscape attraction of considerable extent,
 “ and to *relieve the south entrance with only so much architectural*
 “ *treatment as may give the idea that due regard has been paid to*
 “ *the adornment of this principal promenade, without interfering*
 “ *with its real character.*”

Mention should perhaps be made of the fact that a statue has once been offered to the Commissioners of the Park, with the expectation that they would place it on the spot now in question. The Commissioners declined to do so, and the offer was withdrawn.

Respectfully,
 FRED. LAW OLNSTED, } Designers of the
 CALVERT VAUX, } Central Park.