CITY OF NEW YORK,

DEPARTMENT OF

PUBLIC PARKS.

REPORT FOR 1894.

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS.

ANNUAL REPORT.

JANUARY, 1895.

Hon. W. L. STRONG, Mayor:

SIR-The Commissioners of Public Parks present a report of the operations of the Department for the year 1894.

The Department is organized under section 42 of the City Charter, known as the Consolidated Laws of 1882, chapter 410.

The Commissioners in office, in the order of their appointment, are:

Nathan Straus, Abraham B. Tappen, George C. Clausen, Edward Bell.

The compensation of the office, by section 52 of the charter, is as follows:

To the President, \$5,000; to the other Commissioners, nothing. Either Commissioner may draw a sum not exceeding \$300 per year for actual expenses, but this item has not been called for by the present Board or their predecessors for many years.

By chapter 418, Laws of 1893, the office of Vice-President, without salary, was created, and has been found very useful.

Many provisions of law specify numerous duties and powers to be performed and exercised by the Commissioners in their official capacity.

The appropriation for the year 1894 in the tax levy is the sum of \$1,177,195.

While this amount is to be expended by the Department, less than one-half thereof is for maintenance of the entire Park system.

The several items of that appropriation, some of which are fixed by law, are as follows: Maintenance of Public Parks—old and new. \$460,000 00 Police salaries and supplies..... 348,500 00 Two Museums and Aquarium..... 180,000 00 Menagerie..... 30,000 00 Salaries of President and principal officers and Clerks. 39,755 00 Bridges.... 32,000 00 Music.... 27,500 00 Office rent, telephone and sundry other items, make up a total of..... 1,177,195 00

The principal officers are, President of the Board, Vice-President, Secretary (also acting as Assistant Treasurer), Superintendent of Parks and Engineer in Chief.

There is also a clerical force, Foremen, Gardeners, Specialists and Laborers, skilled and unskilled, Stablemen and Menagerie Keepers.

The park system maintains a Meteorological Establishment of very considerable importance. Also a Menagerie; some of the animals belong to the city and some are deposited for safe keeping a part of the year by various traveling exhibitions. The Menagerie is an unfailing source of pleasure to thousands of visitors.

There is also a stable of 80 work horses, for park work, and a flock of sheep, Southdowns, of superior blood.

At a yearly expense of \$27,500 the Commissioners are enabled to provide a most popular attraction in the summer season by means of instrumental concerts in many of the old and new parks.

Attractive and orderly amusements are provided in Central Park, as follows:

A carrousel; donkeys with saddles; goat carriages; swings; boats on the lakes, and skating in season; also tennis courts, and picnic grounds.

The Commissioners have been desirous of utilizing an elephant with howdah trappings to carry visitors, but the crowd to be attracted thereby and other reasons have prevented.

Two first-class restaurants, Isaac's Casino and McGown's Pass Tavern, are maintained in Central Park, and one in Claremont. The lessees pay as rental a percentage of sworn receipts, monthly. This mode of compensation has been established for many years for the large and small places of public resort in the several parks.

The park system south of the Harlem river embraces the following principal parks, now in use, and many smaller plazas, squares and open places:

z.	Central Park8	40.	acres.
2.	Riverside Park	77.8	
3.	Morningside Park	31.238	66
4.	High Bridge Park, in a natural state	23.38	**
5.	Mount Morris Park	20. 174	"
6.	East River Park.	12.546	46
7.	Tompkins Square	10.508	**
8.	Stuyvesant Park	4.229	46
9.	Bryant Park	4.775	"
10.	Madison Square	6.84	66
	Union Square	3.483	"
12.	Rutgers Park	small.	
13.	City Hall Park	8.239	"
14.	Battery Park	21.190	44
15.	Jeannette Park	.81	"
16.	Parks at Washington Bridge	small.	
17.	Washington Square	8.115	44
18.	Numerous detached small parks on Fourth or Park avenue, over the tunnel.		

Small parks, such as Cooper Park, Abingdon Square, Canal Street, Duane and Franklin Street, and others, are to be added to the above. Other proposed new parks are specified in this report.

Add to this list, Seventy-second street, west of Eighth avenue, as a boulevard; also Morningside Drive; Cathedral Parkway (chapter 275, Laws of 1891, and chapter 45, Laws of 1894; this improvement widens One Hundred and Tenth street, from Seventh avenue west to Riverside); and a limited jurisdiction over Fifth avenue and Fifty-ninth street adjoining the park.

OBSERVATORY.

By section 693 of the Charter, authority is given to erect an Observatory in Central Park. No provision has been made therefor. The study of the "starry heavens" presents great attraction, improves the intellect and gives the thoughtful student new subjects for reflection. It is fervently hoped that the enterprise may be an accomplished fact before many years, and it is earnestly commended to the favor of that great body of liberal citizens who have done so much for our growing metropolis.

BOTANICAL GARDEN.

By chapter 103, Laws of 1894, amending previous laws, the establishment of a Botanical Garden in a public park is authorized on certain terms, and when the incorporators, comprising many prominent citizens, shall have secured by subscription \$250,000, the City of New York is authorized to add an additional sum of five hundred thousand dollars, and this Department is also authorized to set apart 250 acres of land for the use of the Garden in any park north of Harlem river within the city limits. Certain trustees specified in the act are then empowered, after construction of buildings, to take charge of and manage the Botanical Garden, with competent Professors of Botany. It is to be hoped that an enterprise so useful may in the future make more rapid progress than heretofore. This Department will most readily assign the 250 acres in Bronx or Van Cortlandt Park, or any suitable location to be selected by the trustees.

NEW PARKS.

By previous legislation, Laws of 1883 and 1884, and the legal proceedings thereby authorized, the people of the City of New York in 1889 became the owners of nearly 4,000 acres of land now known as the new parks north of the Harlem river. The cost thereof, including the expenses of surveying and legal proceedings, aggregates ten millions of dollars, which, in the year 1889 was necessarily added to the bonded debt of the city.

A portion of Van Cortlandt Park by law is set apart for the use of the National Guard (chapter 522, Laws of 1884) and the expenditure authorized by law to grade and sewer the Parade Ground, all of which has been completed, amounts to \$250,000 (chapter 265, Laws of 1884 and subsequent legislation).

The Van Cortlandt Mansion, built in 1748, is in good state of preservation, and the Commissioners have placed the following inscription thereon:

"This Mansion received General Washington as a Guest on his journey from White Plains to occupy New York City, evacuated by the British Forces November 25th, 1783, the culminating event of the War of the Revolution.

All honor to the Patriots, Soldiers and Statesmen of that Epoch.

Through their courage, services and sacrifices, Independence was gained by the Colonies, and a

New and Free nation established."

The historical mills in the park are said to have been used in Revolutionary times for army supplies, and should be preserved.

Van Cortlandt Lake, having a surface of 20 acres, is an attractive feature in the summer time, and a great skating resort in the winter.

The area of the new parks is separately stated as follows:

Van Cortlandt	1,132.35 &	cres.
Bronx	661.60	"
Pelham Bay	1,756	"
Bronx and Pelham Parkway	95	4.
Mosholu Parkway	80	"
Crotona	141.65	"
Crotona Parkway	12	"
Claremont	30.05	**
St. Mary's	28.70	**
St. Mary's	17.47	46

Under former administrations of this Department many buildings in the new parks were sold and moved off by the purchasers, but in Pelham Bay Park the principal buildings, large and small, including old family mansions, still remain. Rents are obtained in some cases, but it is difficult to obtain permanent tenants for all the buildings, and care-takers, being Laborers and others in the employ of the Department, occupy some of the houses. In some instances several of the original owners remain in possession at a fair rent. The difficulty in securing desirable permanent tenants arises from the fact that the grounds are public and declared by law to be public parks.

When the question of leasing buildings arose five years ago, the Law Department gave written opinions that no such authority could be exercised (see opinions of Corporation Counsel Henry R. Beekman and his successor W. H. Clark), and certainly no privacy of grounds can be guaranteed to occupants. The Commissioners have endeavored to secure some income in rent, and also in license privileges for places of public resort, and in all cases tenants agree to make reasonable repairs. For summer outings for children the Commissioners allot the Holcomb House on the City Island road, and other houses when required. The "Little Mother's Society" has done much good in this direction, and has had the use of the Holcomb Mansion for several summers.

In the City Parks an old Colonial Mansion in East River Park can be used for similar benevolent purposes the coming year.

The recent report of the Commissioners of Accounts as to arrears of rent is erroneous as to the fact and the law. During the last 30 days of each year, available collections are rapidly realized. The legal opinions referred to will indicate the legal difficulties arising from the construction of the laws governing the parks and the Department.

People residing in the populous villages near the new parks, such as St. Mary's, Cedar, Crotona and Claremont, enjoy the freedom of the public domain; but the remoter parks, such as the northerly part of Van Cortlandt and all of Pelham Bay Parks, are too far from the "busy crowd," are not convenient of access, and for the many would-be visitors the expense of transportation is quite an obstacle. The policy has therefore obtained, with the approval of the City authorities, that these Parks are chiefly to be maintained in their natural state and preserved

for use of the present and coming generations. The Commissioners are very desirous of popularizing them for all out-door sports, and now recommend them to the community for such purpose.

The appropriation for maintaining the new parks is chiefly expended in making new roads, repair of existing highways and bridges, including drawbridges, and other charges, and an item of \$1,300 for annual insurance.

A well built macadamized road, opening beautiful vistas has been constructed on Mosholu Parkway, and a country road near Woodlawn in Van Cortlandt Park.

The income from the entire park system from all sources appears further on in this report.

It will be seen that nearly 3,000 acres, contained in Van Cortlandt, Bronx and Pelham Bay Parks, are not convenient for extensive public resort, and are therefore to be maintained and preserved in their rural and natural condition, with such improvements from time to time as may be required when these parks are in greater demand for public use than is now the case.

The maintenance of ione-half of City Island Bridge, including the drawbridge as a part of the Pelham Bay Park, as well as all other bridges and highways in the new parks is charged by law upon the City of New York, acting through this Department. (Chapter 522, Laws of 1884, and chapter 421, Laws of 1888.)

By chapter 638, Laws of 1894, an appropriation of \$75,000 is authorized for the construction of a new City Island Bridge, and this Department is awaiting the necessary co-operation of the County Bridge Commissioners of Westchester County. In the meantime the present dilapidated structure is repaired so far as possible. The draw piers are sunken and the draw cannot be used. The Westchester authorities have been invited to and should co-operate with this Department without further delay.

These large new parks, with their extended domain and remoteness, present a problem which can only be solved in the future. The City is paying \$300,000 annual interest on the debt created for acquiring the property in addition to cost of maintenance. The future usefulness of these parks is generally conceded by all who have studied the question.

Bronx Park with the Bronx River Gorge and Adirondack group of dense hemlock forest and other features, presents great natural attractions and seems to be the most popular, and is the most easily reached of the new parks north of Crotona Park.

ADDITIONAL CITY PARKS.

By Supreme Court proceedings completed in 1893, under chapter 529, Laws of 1884, Corlear's Hook property became a public park. It is prettily located on a bend of the East river, with river view. It contains about ten acres of land, and the Commissioners intend to improve it as a children's play-ground, very much needed in that part of the city. The land was largely occupied with tenement-houses and factories. These have all been sold and removed, and under an appropriation now for the first time available, the grounds will be put in condition for public resort the ensuing season. The work should be well done, with more economy than is indicated in the appropriation of \$200,000, authorized by chapter 511, Laws of 1894.

Mulberry Bend Park was acquired under the Small Parks Act, chapter 320, Laws of 1887. Supreme Court proceedings are ended, and a debt of one million and a half dollars created as remuneration to the several owners. As the annual expenditure is limited to one million of dollars,

under that act the Finance Department has not been able to pay the awards, and the Park Department is not in possession. During the present year it is fair to assume that a considerable sum, by the creation of a further bonded debt, will be necessary for the expense of clearing the land of large tenements and fitting the park for public use.

Riverside Park—An extension of the park to the bulkhead-line is authorized by chapter 152, Laws of 1894. By this extension all docks and commerce are excluded from the water-front between Seventy-second street and One Hundred and Twenty-ninth street, a distance of nearly three miles, with the exception of 1,200 lineal feet of water-front reserved for use under the jurisdiction of the Dock Department.

By chapters 56, 366, 581, 746 and 749, Laws of 1894, five additional parks are created, and proceedings are pending in Court to acquire title.

The parks are: One Hundred and Eleventh to One Hundred and Fourteenth street, First avenue to East river; lands at High Bridge Park; Fort Washington Point; St. Nicholas Park; Colonial Park. Legal proceedings are also pending to condemn the old burying-ground bounded by Hudson street, Morton and Clarkson streets as a small park of about two acres.

When title shall be acquired this Department can spend no money on any of those parks until the Board of Estimate and Apportionment make an appropriation, either in the annual tax levy or by the creation of a bonded debt.

AQUARIUM.

The Aquarium is located in Castle Garden, Battery Park, and the expense of construction and maintenance is authorized by chapter 28, Laws of 1892. Much progress has been made in its construction. The work of maintenance and of public exhibition can be entered upon as soon as construction, which has been a difficult and novel task, shall be completed.

SHADE TREES IN CITY STREETS.

By chapter 46, Laws of 1894, the Commissioners were charged with the duty of planting and preserving all trees on West End avenue. The avenue is not in charge of the Department: In accordance with the law the sum of \$25,000 was inserted in the estimate for 1895, on the report of the Superintendent of Parks, and was not approved by the Board of Estimate.

If the City is to be made responsible for shade and ornamental trees on public sidewalks a very great expense will be the result, and a Forestry Commissioner should have charge of the work with a suitable appropriation.

SNOW AND ICE.

The regular labor force in each park is set at work immediately after each snow fall with snow scrapers and shovels to remove the snow from principal interior paths and from all park sidewalks.

In the City Hall Park, which is a great thoroughfare, an extra force is required to meet the exigency without an hour's delay. This extra force must be taken from idle men standing by, and they are paid off at the end of each day's work without waiting for the regular pay-roll. The work can be done in no other way. Snow and sleet frequently congeal when falling and cannot be removed at once, but removal must be assisted by rising temperature.

DISPOSITION OF SWEEPINGS.

Leaves and sweepings accumulate in large quantities, especially in Central Park, in the autumn. It has been found necessary to burn them in a secluded but open place in the park. The Commissioners have had several plans prepared for a crematory, and have inspected one in operation in Yonkers, but no satisfactory result has been reached.

TELEPHONE SERVICE.

The contract for this service costs \$5,200 per year, and the company, having a monopoly, refuses to reduce the price, although earnestly requested to do so. The system in this Department extends to the administration offices and outlying offices in Van Cortlandt and Bronx Parks.

It is suggested that the City government should have one contract for all the important Departments.

BRIDGES.

In addition to the bridges in the new parks, the maintenance of the bridges of Harlem river and Spuyten Duyvil creek is charged on the Department by section 676, chapter 410, Laws of 1882, and the Laws of 1890, chapter 545, to the extent below stated.

The constant, continuous and growing use of these bridges makes this a most serious task, and a Special Bureau of Bridges should be created in this Department or the Department of Public Works, which has control of all the streets leading to the bridges.

By recent legislation the new bridge over the Harlem River Ship Canal (chapter 232, Laws of 1892) and the construction and care of the old and new Third avenue bridges (chapter 413, Laws of 1892) and of Willis Avenue Bridge (chapter 147, Laws of 1894) are vested in the Department of Public Works.

The following bridges are now in the care of this Department:

- 1. Bridge over Spuyten Duyvil creek, at Riverdale avenue.
- 2. Bridge over the river at the Broadway crossing.
- 3. Farmers', or Hadley's Bridge, at Kingsbridge.
- 4. Washington Bridge.
- 5. Foot bridge attached to the Northern Railway Bridge.
- 6. The magnificent new bridge known as Central Bridge, and the temporary bridge now in use.
 - 7. Madison Avenue Bridge.

The two latter bridges have heavy draws, moved by steam. The draws are opened very often, because of the increased river traffic. To handle these draws and bridges a force of Engineers, Firemen and Bridge-tenders must be on duty twenty-four hours in the day, divided into eight hour shifts.

The new Central Bridge is deserving of special mention as the most magnificent drawbridge in the world. It will be open to public use at an early day. Mr. Alfred P. Boller is the Superintending Engineer of Construction.

The Harlem river and the bridges will be the subject of a further communication. The subject is one of importance, especially in relation to having the bridge draws closed at certain hours. An order of this Department to that effect is now in force.

PARK POLICE.

A force of 300 men is maintained, consisting of Captain (Christopher C. Collins), Sergeants and Roundsmen, Patrolmen and Doormen. The Police Surgeon is Dr. E. T. T. Marsh.

By section 690 of the Charter, the Department is authorized to make temporary or transient appointments on this force, a power not yet exercised. With the very great enlargement of the park system now in prospect under recent legislation, the question of an increased Police force must be met, and the very considerable expense thereof fully considered. Of the present force 26 are mounted men. It is found by experience that a mounted officer in the large parks is very useful, and that the mounted force can be increased with satisfactory results.

In the supervision of the Park Police force the Commissioners hold a monthly session at the Arsenal, Central Park, for the trial of officers against whom complaints have been made, principally for neglect of duty and violation of the rules, which are 170 in number. Occasional complaints are made by citizens for rude conduct on the part of officers. Fines are imposed in every case where the charge is sustained, and a number of officers have been broken during the year for improper conduct, which includes a variety of offenses. The monthly trials take in about 25 cases, on the average, or 300 per year.

The Central Police Station is at the Arsenal, and sub-stations are maintained at McGown's Pass, Union Square, Riverside and Van Cortlandt Parks.

By chapter 515, Laws of 1892, a Park Police Pension Fund is established, by diverting thereto various sources of revenue.

The fund is in charge of the Secretary and Treasurer of the Department, under the Park Commissioners, who are by law made trustees of the fund.

December 31, 1894, amount of fund		\$29,958 36
Invested as follows:		
Cash in Central National Bank	\$11,826 89	
Cash in Broadway Savings Bank	2,805 47	
Cash in Emigrant Savings Bank	2,826 00	
New York City Bonds, 3 per cent	12,500 00	
-		29,958 36

The pensioners are seven widows and four retired officers; the aggregate of their pensions for the year 1894 is \$4,475.

Chapter 756, Laws of 1894, granting pensions and special privileges to Doormen, should be repealed.

THE MILLION-DOLLAR LAW.

Chapter 11, Laws of 1894, authorized the extra expenditure by the Department in improving, "in their discretion," the parks and parkways in their charge. The expenditure could not be made until an appropriation therefor was authorized by the Board of Estimate, and from time to time appropriations were made as follows:

In making appropriations the Board of Estimate, on the 23d of February, 1894, at a public meeting, announced that none of the money was to be spent under the contract system, and so instructed the Commissioners. These instructions, coupled with the language and purpose of the

act, governed the Commissioners thereafter in employing labor and purchasing large quantities of material to keep the force employed on the various works, a list whereof and the appropriations therefor appear below: 1. Central Park, Improvement of-Widening Bridle Roads, One Hundred and \$16,000 00 Third Street, East Drive, to Ninety-third Street, West Drive..... 2. Central Park, Improvement of-Ninety-seventh Street to One Hundred and Second Street, between Fifth Avenue and East Drive..... 55,000 00 3. Central Park, Improvement of-Manhattan Square Walks, Drainage, etc., West Side, Museum of Natural History..... 39,000 00 4. Central Park, Improvement of-Walk Entrance, Fifth Avenue and Eighty-fifth street 9,000 00 5. Central Park, Improvement of-Central Park, West, Completion of Tree Planting, between Ninety-seventh and One Hundred and Tenth Streets...... 9,000 00 6. Central Park, Improvement of-Between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, from One Hundred and Fourth to One Hundred and Tenth Streets, etc..... 43,000 00 7. Central Park, Improvement of-Reconstructing the Entrance Drive, etc., Fifth Avenue and One Hundred and Second Street..... 5,000 00 8. Central Park, Improvement of-Construction Walk connecting Seventy-ninth Street and Fifth Avenue with Ramble..... 3,500 00 1,600 00 9. Central Park, Improvement of-Pipe Sewer in Transverse Road No. 4 10. Central Park, Improvement of-Pointing the Inclosing Walls, etc 7,000 00 11. Central Park, Improvement of-Resurfacing Walks with Asphalt, from Fifty-ninth 112,820 00 12. Central Park and City Parks, Improvement of-Painting Settees, Fences, Bridges, etc..... 20,000 00 13. Central Park and City Parks, Improvement of-Repairing Settees by Carpenters 44,800 00 14. Transverse Road No. 1, Improvement of, etc..... 8,500 00 15. Transverse Road No. 2, Improvement of, etc...... 10,500 00 16. Transverse Road No. 3, Improvement of, etc...... 3,500 00 17. Transverse Road No. 4, Improvement of, etc...... 49,000 00 12,000 00 18. Central Park, Improvement of—Graveling Roads in upper portion...... 19. Fifth Avenue, Repaving of-Between Ninetieth and One Hundred and Tenth Streets, Plaza, etc..... 80,000 00 20. Cathedral Parkway, Improvement of-Seventh Avenue to Riverside Avenue.... 40,000 00 21. Morningside Park, Improvement of-North of One Hundred and Twentieth Street, and Completion of Walks south of One Hundred and Twentieth Street 52,000 00 22. Morningside Park, Improvement of-Improving Sidewalks bounding said Park, Laying Water-pipes, etc 15,000 00 23. Riverside Park, Improvement of—Seventy-ninth to Ninety-sixth Street...... 50,000 00 24. Riverside Park, Improvement of-Between Ninety-sixth and One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Streets 100,000 00 25. Riverside Avenue, Improvement of-Covering with Asphalt the westerly Walk, from Seventy-second to One Hundred and Twentieth Street...... 29,080 00

26. Macomb's Dam Road, One Hundred and Fifty-fifth Street and Seventh Avenue,	
Improvement of-Removal of Rock to Grade	\$54,000 00
27. Van Cortlandt Park, Mosholu Parkway, Bronx Park, etc., above Harlem River,	
Improvement of-Stone Breaking and other Work	40,000 00
28. Bronx Park, Improvement of-Old Boston Post Road, northerly side Kings-	
bridge Road to Bronx River Bridge	8,000 00
29. Pelham Park, Improvement of-Improving Eastern Boulevard, etc., Waterbury	
Lane to Pelham Bridge	9,000 00
30. Pelham Avenue, Improvement of-Southern Boulevard through Bronx Park,	
Lorillard Lane, etc	10,000 00
31. Crotona, Van Cortlandt and Bronx Park and Mosholu Parkway, Improvement	
of—Removing Dead Trees, etc	10,000 00
32. Mosholu Parkway, Improvement of—Building	13,000 00
33. Mount Morris Park, Improvement of-Covering Walks with Asphalt, etc	10,000 00
34. Mount Morris Park, Improvement of—Completing the entrance	7,200 00
35. Central Park, Improvement of-Manhattan Square, Constructing Stone Sub-	
structure, etc., on Walks north side of Seventy-seventh Street and south side	
of Eighty-first Street, etc	6,000 00
36. Paving Sidewalk adjoining Central Park on the westerly side of Fifth Avenue,	
from Eighty-fifth to One Hundred and Tenth Street Plaza	17,500 00
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Each of these appropriations is opened as a separate account on the office books, and the extra labor entailed on the Commissioners and the several officers of the Department in carrying out this law, can only be appreciated by those who participated in it.

By this law and the fact that there were thousands of men needing work and largely dependent on charity at an inclement season, the Commissioners suddenly had to confront the most important and difficult social problem of the times in a great city, namely "work for the unemployed."

Men inured to outdoor labor and men accustomed only to indoor labor, all in destitute condition, thronged the offices of the Department, seeking work, and the Department suddenly became a great labor bureau that was expected to find outdoor employment for thousands at a season of the year when but little could be accomplished.

As the stated force of the Department was required for regular park work, an organizer or Superintendent of Labor of great experience was employed for one month. Foremen, Laborers and teams were put at work as fast as possible, implements, tools and supplies were purchased in open market and in large quantities, and with little delay a laboring force of over 2,000 men, calling with the permanent force for a weekly labor pay-roll of \$30,000, were put at work wherever and whenever the labor could be utilized.

The appropriation enabled much good to be accomplished for destitute men and families, and work to be done in Riverside and other parks, and especially a renovation of asphalt pavements and other useful improvements in Central Park not covered by the annual expenditure.

The men employed comprised all kinds and sorts of people. Volumes of letters, memorials and recommendations, and long lists of names were received from charity organizations, church

societies, labor unions of all kinds, private citizens and public men and their constituents, and after all was done that could be accomplished, the fact remained that there were thousands of idle people for whom it was not possible for any municipal or other government to furnish employment. The experience of the Commissioners leads them to request that any future duty in this line be committed to some other public body or special committee of citizens desirous of the task and willing to serve without any compensation and to become the objects of unthinking and unjust criticism.

CONTRACTS FOR VARIOUS IMPROVEMENTS.

In addition to the usual and comprehensive duties of the Commissioners the following contracts for public work are made by the Department under various laws; some of the contracts were completed during the year 1894, and the others are yet in process of execution:

		Title of Work.	Approximate Amount.
ı.	Constructin	g New Macomb's Dam Bridge	00 000,000
2.	Constructin	g Approaches to New Macomb's Dam Bridge	99,225 00
3.	Constructin	g Railings, Lamps, etc., New Macomb's Dam Bridge	10,513 00
4.	Museum of	Art—Boiler-house, Engine-room, etc	47,700 00
5.	"	Electric-lighting Plant	21,400 00
6.		Same	9,265 00
7.	44	Gallery Cases	7,271 00
8.	"	Same	9,338 00
9.	"	Boilers and Machinery	39,894 ∞
IO.		Gold Room Furniture	5,104 00
II.	"	Gallery Cases	9,462 00
12.	Riverside F	ark—Woman's Cottage	5,483 00
13.	**	Retaining-walls, etc	52,617 00
14.	"	Same	53,580 00
15.	Central Pa	rk—Cleaning and Concreting Pond	29,650 00
16.	**	Entrance One Hundred and Tenth Street and Fifth Avenue	5,594 00
17.	**	Ninety-ninth Street Sewer	3,836 00
18.	66	Gravel	36,040 00
19.	**	Tool-house	12,300 00
20.	46	Entrance West Ninetieth Street	14,198 00
2 I.	"	Asphalting Materials	23,095 00
22.	"	Gravel	8,480 00
23.		Asphalting Materials	5,713 00
24.	44	Asphalting Materials	36,309 00
25.	. "	Entrance One Hundred and Tenth Street and Eighth Avenue	19,871 00
26.	"	Garden Mould	3,850 00
27.	Aquarium-	-Tanks, Pools, etc	34,300 00
28.	"	Tiling same	2,850 00
29.	**	Rubber Piping	2,790 00
30,	"	Same	3,997 00

31.	Aquarium—Drainage	\$1,594 00
32.	" Tile Flooring	8,180.00
33.	" Painting	2,660 00
34.	Museum Natural History—New Wing and Enlargement	257,000 00
35.	" Completing same	73,500 00
36.	" Repairing and Equipping	184,750 00
37.	"Area Wall, Drainage, etc	4,157 00
38.	Van Cortlandt—Parade Ground	93,138 00
39.	" Parade Ground Extension	45,975 00
40.	Forage	8,239 00
41.	"	7,745 00
42.	Harlem River Driveway—First Section	629,916 00
43.	" Second Section	751,240 00
44.	"Tunnel and Elevator	17,144 00
45.	" Supplemental Contracts	144,560 00
46.	Settees	4,025 00
	New Parks—Broken Stone	5,875 ∞
48.	" Road Roller	3,800 00
49.	" Screenings	2,490 00
50.	Menagerie, Paddock Inclosures	2,500 00
	Telephone Service	5,200 00
	Stuyvesant Square, Women's Cottage	2,875 00
53.	Cement	6,501 00
54.	Mt. Morris Park, Stone Work, Entrances	5,212 00
	Morningside Park, Paving Sidewalks	20,399 00
56.	Rock, One Hundred and Fifty-third Street and Seventh Avenue, Removal	3,417 00
	-	

Besides the special appropriations in previous years, the following city bonded debt is authorized by the Laws of 1894, for various public works in this Department. The appropriation is in the first instance to be made by the Board of Estimate.

Chapter.	Amount.	, Оврест.
Chapter 11	\$1,000,000 00	Construction work on the parks for relief of the unemployed.
" 45	200,000 00	Improvement of Cathedral Parkway.
" 63	200,000 00	Equipping Museum of Natural History.
74	750,000 00	Improvement Riverside Park,
" 190	50,000 00	For Monuments in Parks.
ff 511	200,000 00	Improvement Corlear's Hook Park.
" 523	50,000 00	For Monument at Battery.
" 545	50,000 00	For Parade Ground.

It will be seen that the Legislature of 1894 was exceedingly liberal in granting these sums, some of which are laudable and necessary, but many of the items were not sought by the Commissioners and cannot be judiciously used.

INCOME.

The income of the Department (not including items diverted by law to the pension fund) rents, licenses and privileges, including carriage service in Central Park and Riverside Park, and rent for public bath at Battery and from all other sources, amounts to \$48,701.03, all paid to the General Fund. The Department has not the use or control or credit of the fund. A portion of it might be appropriated by law to the following purpose:

If a building in a convenient park location were authorized at a cost of about \$30,000, it could be occupied by the Department on May 1, 1896, and the rent of the present offices \$6,500, per year, under a Sinking Fund Commissioners' lease, expiring at that time, could be saved.

MUSEUMS.

Central Park is graced by two noble and capacious institutions. The Museum of Natural History is located on Central Park, West, and the Museum of Art in that part of the park near Fifth avenue and Eighty-second street.

The numerous galleries and halls of these buildings are filled with contributions and objects of great value, and the attractions presented draw crowds of visitors who derive both pleasure and instruction from the object lessons there gathered.

The Boards of Trustees are incorporated and have entire charge of the buildings and contents, and in fact every object on exhibition has been contributed by the Trustees and their friends and by gifts of citizens, all constituting a most magnificent and valuable collection, "A Treasury of Art" and "A Treasury of Natural History."

Lectures on science and art and various branches of instruction are given free during the lecture season by professors eminent in their special vocations. No public appropriation by the City is better bestowed than the annual appropriation for each museum, to enable the Trustees to offer free admission and to comply with a contract for Sunday openings.

The appropriation does not cover the entire expense, but the Trustees have always contributed additional sums yearly from their personal resources. The sum granted by the City may be increased with great propriety.

These Museums are justly a source of public pride, and they should be enlarged on the plan heretofore established.

HARLEM RIVER DRIVEWAY.

The Harlem River Driveway is authorized by chapter 102 of the Laws of 1893, and the subject merits the following notice:

A Speedway Bill of 1892 was passed, authorizing the construction of that road in Central Park. This law was never approved by this Department, and subsequently at the same session it was properly repealed in response to public opinion. The parties who prepared and advocated the law so repealed, procured the enactment of the above law of 1893, and the Park Commissioners had no voice therein save to execute its provisions. The chief merit of the law is that it opens a secluded section on the west bank of the river for a distance of two miles to public use and eventually to trade and commerce, which may be expected to increase with the opening of the Harlem

River Ship Canal and the dredging of the river channel under the directions of the General Government. No more expensive location for a two-mile road could be selected. The law does not limit the expense, but the Commissioners have deemed it their duty to the entire community to authorize and limit reasonable expenditure necessary to meet the contracts for construction and consistent with the work and not for any fancy purpose. The contracts call for over a million and a half dollars. Other schemes have been advanced to treat the work as a Boulevard, for which the location is entirely unfitted, being bounded by high cliffs on one side and the dock line and river brink on the other for almost the entire distance.

Besides this, the law authorizing the work gives no authority, express or implied, to build a park boulevard. The additional expense thereof will be large and involve an improvident and wasteful expenditure of public money.

The Commissioners last year sought a legislative amendment placing the work in some other department of the City Government, and will renew that request to the coming Legislature, and if approved by his Honor, the Mayor, the change sought in this respect can be had at an early day, and the Commissioners, an unsalaried body (except as to the President), being otherwise overworked, will be able to bestow their time and service on more legitimate park work.

Unfair and unjust criticism has been visited upon the Commissioners, but they have steadily sought to keep the best interests of the community in view in the construction and progress of the work, for which a competent corps of Engineers under Mr. Charles H. Graham is employed, and fair progress is being made under two separate contracts. No person can appreciate the situation save by personal and intelligent examination.

As the law creating the road intended preference to be given in the use of the road for high speed and trotting horses, it is quite manifest that for such purpose this Department cannot consider it as a park road or boulevard in any sense.

Construction and management should devolve on the Department of Public Works, where it was originally interded that the work should be placed, but an error of hasty legislation named the Department of Parks, and that error should be corrected.

The Commissioners most respectfully ask to be relieved of further connection with it.

STATUES IN THE PUBLIC PARKS.

This subject will be treated in a separate paper and from an artistic standpoint. The past two years have seen the following statues erected in the various parks, all the cost being contributed by popular or personal subscription, save the Ericsson Statue, for which the City paid, by special law, ten thousand dollars (chap 266, Laws of 1889).

- I. Column and Statue of Columbus.
- 2. Columbus, after Sunol's Madrid Statue.
- 3. Thorvaldsen.
- 4. Nathan Hale.
- 5. Horace Greely.
- 6. Roscoe Conkling.
- 7. Ericsson.
- 8. Dr. J. Marion Sims.
- 9. Peter Cooper. This statue will be erected this coming Spring.

Before statues are accepted the work or the model must be examined and approved, under the rules of the Board, by an Art Committee, consisting in the last-named case of T. W. Wood, President of the Academy of Design, H. G. Marquand, President of the Museum of Art, and N. LeBrun, President of the N.Y. Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

The Cooper Statue meets their approval, and considering the great service and public spirit of that eminent citizen, it has been suggested that the Art Committee and the Committee of Contributors, of which the Hon. Franklin Edson is Chairman, have a voice in selecting the location, subject to the approval of this Department.

Many of the statues above enumerated have not been gracefully located, whereas the subject intended to be commemorated is entitled to the highest consideration in that respect.

This report embraces the principal features of the Park Department of the City of New York, but there are abundant details and questions constantly arising which cannot be stated within the limits of this paper.

The bicycle question, the demand for new entrances in Central Park by reason of increased population, the lighting of that park, and the preservation of the Obelisk in a hostile climate, are all questions for active consideration.

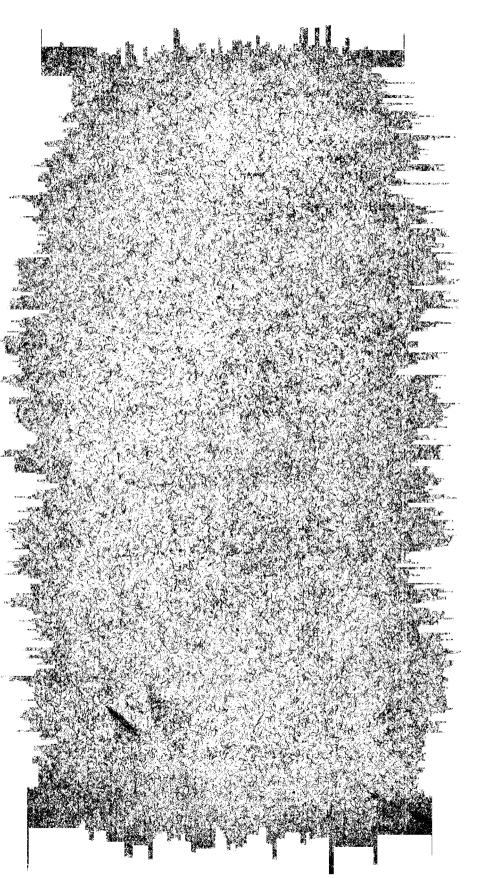
In the outskirts of a foreign city, a capacious stone bench is located by the wayside, with the following inscription:

"To the bright town which gave me health and peace Year after year in life's brief prilgrimage,
Grateful, I dedicate this Seat, a rest
Where youthful love and wayworn age,
Remembering all that Life has lost and given,
May pause to gaze upon the sunny scene
And think upon the rest of Heaven."

This sentiment may well be inscribed in the sunny places and beautiful retreats to be found in the public parks of the City of New York.

Respectfully submitted,

GEORGE C. CLAUSEN, Commissioners. A. B. TAPPEN,





CITY OF NEW YORK,

DEPARTMENT OF

PUBLIC PARKS.

REPORT FOR 1894.

MARTIN B. BROWN MARTIN BRAND STATIONER

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC PARKS.

ANNUAL REPORT.

JANUARY, 1895.

Home W. L. STRONG, Mayor:

The Commissioners of Public Parks present a report of the operations of the Department for the year 1894.

Affine Department is organized under section 42 of the City Charter, known as the Consolidated Laws it 1882, chapter 410.

le Commissioners in office, in the order of their appointment, are:

Nathan Straus, Abraham B. Tappen, George C. Clausen, Edward Bell.

The compensation of the office, by section 52 of the charter, is as follows:

To she President, \$5,000; to the other Commissioners, nothing. Either Commissioner may draw a sum not exceeding \$300 per year for actual expenses, but this item has not been called for the present Board or their predecessors for many years.

By chapter 418, Laws of 1893, the office of Vice-President, without salary, was created, and been found very useful.

Many provisions of law specify numerous duties and powers to be performed and exercised by the specific official capacity.

e appropriation for the year 1894 in the tax levy is the sum of \$1,177,195.

his this amount is to be expended by the Department, less than one-half thereof is for the entire Park system.

To several items of that appropriation, some of which are fixed by law, are as follows:

auntenance of Public Parks—old and new.	\$460,000 00
filice salaries and supplies	348,500 ∞
Two Museums and Aquarium	180,000 00
Menag trie	
Salarie of President and principal officers and Clerks.	39,755 ∞
Hodg A.	32,0 0 0 00
1 sic	27,500 00
Geogram, telephone and sundry other items, make up a total of	1,177,195 00

sprincipal officers are, President of the Board, Vice-President, Secretary (also acting as istait (Treasurer), Superintendent of Parks and Engineer in Chief.

There is also a clerical force, Foremen, Gardeners, Specialists and Laborers, skilled and unskilled, Stablemen and Menagerie Keepers.

The park system maintains a Meteorological Establishment of very considerable importance. Also a Menagerie; some of the animals belong to the city and some are deposited for safe keeping a part of the year by various traveling exhibitions. The Menagerie is an unfailing source of pleasure to thousands of visitors.

There is also a stable of 80 work horses, for park work, and a flock of sheep, Southdowns, of superior blood.

At a yearly expense of \$27,500 the Commissioners are enabled to provide a most popular attraction in the summer season by means of instrumental concerts in many of the old and new parks.

Attractive and orderly amusements are provided in Central Park, as follows:

A carrousel; donkeys with saddles; goat carriages; swings; boats on the lakes, and skating in season; also tennis courts, and picnic grounds.

The Commissioners have been desirous of utilizing an elephant with howdah trappings to carry visitors, but the crowd to be attracted thereby and other reasons have prevented.

Two first-class restaurants, Isaac's Casino and McGown's Pass Tavern, are maintained in Central Park, and one in Claremont. The lessees pay as rental a percentage of sworn receipts, monthly. This mode of compensation has been established for many years for the large and small places of public resort in the several parks.

The park system south of the Harlem river embraces the following principal parks, now in use, and many smaller plazas, squares and open places:

ı.	Central Park	840.	acres.
2.	Riverside Park	177.8	
3.	Morningside Park	31.238	
4.	High Bridge Park, in a natural state	23.38	16
5.	Mount Morris Park	20.17	€.
6.	East River Park.	12.54	, "
7.	Tompkins Square	. 10.50	3
8.	Stuyvesant Park	4.22	. "
•	Bryant Park		· "·
10.	Madison Square	. 6.81	46
ıı.	Union Square	. 3.40	, · · ·
12.	Rutgers Park	. smali.	
13.	City Hall Park	. 8.239) "
14.	Battery Park	. 21.1)	· "
15.	Jeannette Park	81	65
16.	Parks at Washington Bridge	. small.	
17.	Washington Square	. 8.115	5 "
18.	Numerous detached small parks on Fourth or Park avenue, over the tunnel.		

Small parks, such as Cooper Park, Abingdon Square, Canal Street, Duane and Franklin Street, and others, are to be added to the above. Other proposed new parks are specified in this report.

. जी हैं जिसे . Add to this list, Seventy-second street, west of Eighth avenue, as a boulevard; also Morningside Drive; Cathedral Parkway (chapter 275, Laws of 1891, and chapter 45, Laws of 1894; this improvement widens One Hundred and Tenth street, from Seventh avenue west to Riverside); and a limited jurisdiction over Fifth avenue and Fifty-ninth street adjoining the park.

OBSERVATORY.

By section 693 of the Charter, authority is given to erect an Observatory in Central Park. No provision has been made therefor. The study of the "starry heavens" presents great attraction, improves the intellect and gives the thoughtful student new subjects for reflection. It is fervently hoped that the enterprise may be an accomplished fact before many years, and it is earnestly commended to the favor of that great body of liberal citizens who have done so much for our growing metropolis.

BOTANICAL GARDEN.

By chapter 103, Laws of 1894, amending previous laws, the establishment of a Botanical Garden in a public park is authorized on certain terms, and when the incorporators, comprising many prominent citizens, shall have secured by subscription \$250,000, the City of New York is authorized to add an additional sum of five hundred thousand dollars, and this Department is also authorized to set apart 250 acres of land for the use of the Garden in any park north of Harlem river within the city limits. Certain trustees specified in the act are then empowered, after construction of buildings, to take charge of and manage the Botanical Garden, with competent Professors of Botany. It is to be hoped that an enterprise so useful may in the future make more rapid progress than heretofore. This Department will most readily assign the 250 acres in Bronx or Van Cortlandt Park, or any suitable location to be selected by the trustees.

NEW PARKS.

By previous legislation, Laws of 1883 and 1884, and the legal proceedings thereby authorized, the people of the City of New York in 1889 became the owners of nearly 4,000 acres of land now known as the new parks north of the Harlem river. The cost thereof, including the expenses of surveying and legal proceedings, aggregates ten millions of dollars, which, in the year 1889 was necessarily added to the bonded debt of the city.

A portion of Van Cortlandt Park by law is set apart for the use of the National Guard (chapter 522, Laws of 1884) and the expenditure authorized by law to grade and sewer the Parade Ground, all of which has been completed, amounts to \$250,000 (chapter 265, Laws of 1884 and subsequent legislation).

The Van Cortlandt Mansion, built in 1748, is in good state of preservation, and the Commissioners have placed the following inscription thereon:

"This Mansion received General Washington as a Guest on his journey from White Plains to occupy New York City, evacuated by the British Forces November 25th, 1783, the culminating event of the War of the Revolution.

All honor to the Patriots, Soldiers and Statesmen of that Epoch.

Through their courage, services and sacrifices, Independence was gained by the Colonies, and a

New and Free nation established."

The historical mills in the park are said to have been used in Revolutionary times for army supplies, and should be preserved.

Van Cortlandt Lake, having a surface of 20 acres, is an attractive feature in the summer time, and a great skating resort in the winter.

The area of the new parks is separately stated as follows:

Van Cortlandt	1,132.35	acres.
Bronx	661.60	"
Pelham Bay	1,756	"
Bronx and Pelham Parkway	95	44
Mosholu Parkway	80	46
Crotona	141.65	44
Crotona Parkway.:	12	44.
Claremont	38.05	
St. Mary's	28.70	**
Cedar Park	17.47	66

Under former administrations of this Department many buildings in the new parks were sold and moved off by the purchasers, but in Pelhath Bay Park the principal buildings, large and small, including old family mansions, still remain. Rents are obtained in some cases, but it is difficult to obtain permanent tenants for all the buildings, and care-takers, being Laborers and others in the employ of the Department, occupy some of the houses. In some instances several of the original owners remain in possession at a fair rent. The difficulty in securing desirable permanent tenants arises from the fact that the grounds are public and declared by law to be public parks.

When the question of leasing buildings arose five years ago, the Law Department gave written opinions that no such authority could be exercised (see opinions of Corporation Counsel Henry R. Beekman and his successor W. H. Clark), and certainly no privacy of grounds can be guaranteed to occupants. The Commissioners have endeavored to secure some income in rent, and also in license privileges for places of public resort, and in all cases tenants agree to make reasonable repairs. For summer outings for children the Commissioners allot the Holcomb House on the City Island road, and other houses when required. The "Little Mother's Society" has done much good in this direction, and has had the use of the Holcomb Mansion for several summers.

In the City Parks an old Colonial Mansion in East River Park can be used for similar beneyolent purposes the coming year.

The recent report of the Commissioners of Accounts as to arrears of rent is erroneous as to the fact and the law. During the last 30 days of each year, available collections are rapidly realized. The legal opinions referred to will indicate the legal difficulties arising from the construction of the laws governing the parks and the Department.

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People residing in the populous villages near the new parks, such as St. Mary's, Cedar, Crotona and Claremont, enjoy the freedom of the public domain; but the remoter parks, such as the northerly part of Van Cortlandt and all of Pelham Bay Parks, are too far from the "busy crowd," are not convenient of access, and for the many would-be visitors the expense of transportation is quite an obstacle. The policy has therefore obtained, with the approval of the City authorities, that these Parks are chiefly to be maintained in their natural state and preserved

for use of the present and coming generations. The Commissioners are very desirous of popularizing them for all out-door sports, and now recommend them to the community for such purpose.

The appropriation for maintaining the new parks is chiefly expended in making new roads, repair of existing highways and bridges, including drawbridges, and other charges, and an item of \$1,300 for annual insurance.

A well built macadamized road, opening beautiful vistas has been constructed on Mosholu Parkway, and a country road near Woodlawn in Van Cortlandt Park.

The income from the entire park system from all sources appears further on in this report.

It will be seen that nearly 3,000 acres, contained in Van Cortlandt, Bronx and Pelham Bay Parks, are not convenient for extensive public resort, and are therefore to be maintained and preserved in their rural and natural condition, with such improvements from time to time as may be required when these parks are in greater demand for public use than is now the case.

The maintenance of one-half of City Island Bridge, including the drawbridge as a part of the Pelham Bay Park, as well as all other bridges and highways in the new parks is charged by law upon the City of New York, acting through this Department. (Chapter 522, Laws of 1884, and chapter 421, Laws of 1888.)

By chapter 638, Laws of 1894, an appropriation of \$75,000 is authorized for the construction of a new City Island Bridge, and this Department is awaiting the necessary co-operation of the County Bridge Commissioners of Westchester County. In the meantime the present dilapidated structure is repaired so far as possible. The draw piers are sunken and the draw cannot be used. The Westchester authorities have been invited to and should co-operate with this Department without further delay.

These large new parks, with their extended domain and remoteness, present a problem which can only be solved in the future. The City is paying \$300,000 annual interest on the debt created for acquiring the property in addition to cost of maintenance. The future usefulness of these parks is generally conceded by all who have studied the question.

Bronx Park with the Bronx River Gorge and Adirondack group of dense hemlock forest and other features, presents great natural attractions and seems to be the most popular, and is the most easily reached of the new parks north of Crotona Park.

ADDITIONAL CITY PARKS.

By Supreme Court proceedings completed in 1893, under chapter 529, Laws of 1884, Corlear's Hook property became a public park. It is prettily located on a bend of the East river, with river view. It contains about ten acres of land, and the Commissioners intend to improve it as a children's play-ground, very much needed in that part of the city. The land was largely occupied with tenement-houses and factories. These have all been sold and removed, and under an appropriation now for the first time available, the grounds will be put in condition for public resort the ensuing season. The work should be well done, with more economy than is indicated in the appropriation of \$200,000, authorized by chapter 511, Laws of 1894.

Mulberry Bend Park was acquired under the Small Parks Act, chapter 320, Laws of 1887. Supreme Court proceedings are ended, and a debt of one million and a half dollars created as remuneration to the several owners. As the annual expenditure is limited to one million of dollars,

under that act the Finance Department has not been able to pay the awards, and the Park Department is not in possession. During the present year it is fair to assume that a considerable sum, by the creation of a further bonded debt, will be necessary for the expense of clearing the land of large tenements and fitting the park for public use.

Riverside Park—An extension of the park to the bulkhead-line is authorized by chapter 152, Laws of 1894. By this extension all docks and commerce are excluded from the water-front between Seventy-second street and One Hundred and Twenty-ninth street, a distance of nearly three miles, with the exception of 1,200 lineal feet of water-front reserved for use under the jurisdiction of the Dock Department.

By chapters 56, 366, 581, 746 and 749, Laws of 1894, five additional parks are created, and proceedings are pending in Court to acquire title.

The parks are: One Hundred and Eleventh to One Hundred and Fourteenth street, First avenue to East river; lands at High Bridge Park; Fort Washington Point; St. Nicholas Park; Colonial Park. Legal proceedings are also pending to condemn the old burying-ground bounded by Hudson street, Morton and Clarkson streets as a small park of about two acres.

When title shall be acquired this Department can spend no money on any of those parks until the Board of Estimate and Apportionment make an appropriation, either in the annual tax levy or by the creation of a bonded debt.

AQUARIUM.

The Aquarium is located in Castle Garden, Battery Park, and the expense of construction and maintenance is authorized by chapter 28, Laws of 1892. Much progress has been made in its construction. The work of maintenance and of public exhibition can be entered upon as soon as construction, which has been a difficult and novel task, shall be completed.

SHADE TREES IN CITY STREETS.

By chapter 46, Laws of 1894, the Commissioners were charged with the duty of planting and preserving all trees on West End avenue. The avenue is not in charge of the Department. In accordance with the law the sum of \$25,000 was inserted in the estimate for 1895, on the report of the Superintendent of Parks, and was not approved by the Board of Estimate.

If the City is to be made responsible for shade and ornamental trees on public sidewalks a very great expense will be the result, and a Forestry Commissioner should have charge of the work with a suitable appropriation.

SNOW AND ICE.

The regular labor force in each park is set at work immediately after each snow fall with snow scrapers and shovels to remove the snow from principal interior paths and from all park sidewalks.

In the City Hall Park, which is a great thoroughfare, an extra force is required to meet the exigency without an hour's delay. This extra force must be taken from idle men standing by, and they are paid off at the end of each day's work without waiting for the regular pay-roll. The work can be done in no other way. Snow and sleet frequently congeal when falling and cannot be removed at once, but removal must be assisted by rising temperature.

DISPOSITION OF SWEEPINGS.

Leaves and sweepings accumulate in large quantities, especially in Central Park, in the autumn. It has been found necessary to burn them in a secluded but open place in the park. The Commissioners have had several plans prepared for a crematory, and have inspected one in operation in Yonkers, but no satisfactory result has been reached.

TELEPHONE SERVICE.

The contract for this service costs \$5,200 per year, and the company, having a monopoly, refuses to reduce the price, although earnestly requested to do so. The system in this Department extends to the administration offices and outlying offices in Van Cortlandt and Bronx Parks.

It is suggested that the City government should have one contract for all the important Departments.

BRIDGES.

In addition to the bridges in the new parks, the maintenance of the bridges of Harlem river and Spuyten Duyvil creek is charged on the Department by section 676, chapter 410, Laws of 1882, and the Laws of 1890, chapter 545, to the extent below stated.

The constant, continuous and growing use of these bridges makes this a most serious task, and a Special Bureau of Bridges should be created in this Department or the Department of Public Works, which has control of all the streets leading to the bridges.

By recent legislation the new bridge over the Harlem River Ship Canal (chapter 232, Laws of 1892) and the construction and care of the old and new Third avenue bridges (chapter 413, Laws of 1892) and of Willis Avenue Bridge (chapter 147, Laws of 1894) are vested in the Department of Public Works.

The following bridges are now in the care of this Department:

- 1. Bridge over Spuyten Duyvil creek, at Riverdale avenue.
- 2. Bridge over the river at the Broadway crossing.
- 3. Farmers', or Hadley's Bridge, at Kingsbridge.
- 4. Washington Bridge.
- 5. Foot bridge attached to the Northern Railway Bridge.
- 6. The magnificent new bridge known as Central Bridge, and the temporary bridge now in use.
 - 7. Madison Avenue Bridge.

The two latter bridges have heavy draws, moved by steam. The draws are opened very often, because of the increased river traffic. To handle these draws and bridges a force of Engineers, Firemen and Bridge-tenders must be on duty twenty-four hours in the day, divided into eight hour shifts.

The new Central Bridge is deserving of special mention as the most magnificent drawbridge in the world. It will be open to public use at an early day. Mr. Alfred P. Boller is the Superintending Engineer of Construction.

The Harlem river and the bridges will be the subject of a further communication. The subject is one of importance, especially in relation to having the bridge draws closed at certain hours. An order of this Department to that effect is now in force.

PARK POLICE.

A force of 300 men is maintained, consisting of Captain (Christopher C. Collins), Sergeants and Roundsmen, Patrolmen and Doormen. The Police Surgeon is Dr. E. T. T. Marsh.

By section 690 of the Charter, the Department is authorized to make temporary or transient appointments on this force, a power not yet exercised. With the very great enlargement of the park system now in prospect under recent legislation, the question of an increased Police force must be met, and the very considerable expense thereof fully considered. Of the present force 26 are mounted men. It is found by experience that a mounted officer in the large parks is very useful, and that the mounted force can be increased with satisfactory results.

In the supervision of the Park Police force the Commissioners hold a monthly session at the Arsenal, Central Park, for the trial of officers against whom complaints have been made, principally for neglect of duty and violation of the rules, which are 170 in number. Occasional complaints are made by citizens for rude conduct on the part of officers. Fines are imposed in every case where the charge is sustained, and a number of officers have been broken during the year for improper conduct, which includes a variety of offenses. The monthly trials take in about 25 cases, on the average, or 300 per year.

The Central Police Station is at the Arsenal, and sub-stations are maintained at McGown's Pass, Union Square, Riverside and Van Cortlandt Parks.

By chapter 515, Laws of 1892, a Park Police Pension Fund is established, by diverting thereto various sources of revenue.

The fund is in charge of the Secretary and Treasurer of the Department, under the Park Commissioners, who are by law made trustees of the fund.

Park Police Pension Fund-Investment and Expenditure.

December 31, 1894, amount of fund	\$29,958 36
Invested as follows:	
Cash in Central National Bank	
Cash in Broadway Savings Bank	
Cash in Emigrant Savings Bank	
New York City Bonds, 3 per cent	
	29,958 36

The pensioners are seven widows and four retired officers; the aggregate of their pensions for the year 1894 is \$4,475.

Chapter 756, Laws of 1894, granting pensions and special privileges to Doormen, should be repealed.

THE MILLION-DOLLAR LAW.

Chapter 11, Laws of 1894, authorized the extra expenditure by the Department in improving, "in their discretion," the parks and parkways in their charge. The expenditure could not be made until an appropriation therefor was authorized by the Board of Estimate, and from time to time appropriations were made as follows:

In making appropriations the Board of Estimate, on the 23d of February, 1894, at a public meeting, announced that none of the money was to be spent under the contract system, and so instructed the Commissioners. These instructions, coupled with the language and purpose of the

act, governed the Commissioners thereafter in employing labor and purchasing large quantities of material to keep the force employed on the various works, a list whereof and the appropriations therefor appear below: 1. Central Park, Improvement of-Widening Bridle Roads, One Hundred and Third Street, East Drive, to Ninety-third Street, West Drive \$16,000 00 2. Central Park, Improvement of-Ninety-seventh Street to One Hundred and Second Street, between Fifth Avenue and East Drive..... 55,000 00 3. Central Park, Improvement of-Manhattan Square Walks, Drainage, etc., West Side, Museum of Natural History..... 39,000 00 4. Central Park, Improvement of-Walk Entrance, Fifth Avenue and Eighty-fifth 9,000 00 street 5. Central Park, Improvement of-Central Park, West, Completion of Tree Planting, between Ninety-seventh and One Hundred and Tenth Streets...... 0,000 00 6. Central Park, Improvement of-Between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, from One Hundred and Fourth to One Hundred and Tenth Streets, etc...... 43,000 00 7. Central Park, Improvement of-Reconstructing the Entrance Drive, etc., Fifth Avenue and One Hundred and Second Street..... 5,000 00 8. Central Park, Improvement of-Construction Walk connecting Seventy-ninth Street and Fifth Avenue with Ramble...... 3,500 00 9. Central Park, Improvement of-Pipe Sewer in Transverse Road No. 4 1,600 00 10. Central Park, Improvement of-Pointing the Inclosing Walls, etc 7,000 00 11. Central Park, Improvement of-Resurfacing Walks with Asphalt, from Fifty-ninth 112,820 00 12. Central Park and City Parks, Improvement of-Painting Settees, Fences, Bridges, etc..... 20,000 00 13. Central Park and City Parks, Improvement of-Repairing Settees by Carpenters 44,800 00 14. Transverse Road No. 1, Improvement of, etc..... 8,500 00 15. Transverse Road No. 2, Improvement of, etc..... 10,500 00 16. Transverse Road No. 3, Improvement of, etc..... 3,500 00 17. Transverse Road No. 4, Improvement of, etc..... 49,000 00 18. Central Park, Improvement of—Graveling Roads in upper portion...... 12,000 00 19. Fifth Avenue, Repaving of-Between Ninetieth and One Hundred and Tenth Streets, Plaza, etc..... 80,000 00 20. Cathedral Parkway, Improvement of-Seventh Avenue to Riverside Avenue.... 40,000 00 21. Morningside Park, Improvement of-North of One Hundred and Twentieth Street, and Completion of Walks south of One Hundred and Twentieth Street 52,000 00 22. Morningside Park, Improvement of-Improving Sidewalks bounding said Park, Laying Water-pipes, etc 15,000 00 23. Riverside Park, Improvement of—Seventy-ninth to Ninety-sixth Street...... 50,000 00 24. Riverside Park, Improvement of-Between Ninety-sixth and One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Streets 100,000 00 25. Riverside Avenue, Improvement of-Covering with Asphalt the westerly Walk,

from Seventy-second to One Hundred and Twentieth Street......

29,080 00

26.	Macomb's Dam Road, One Hundred and Fifty-fifth Street and Seventh Avenue,	
	Improvement of—Removal of Rock to Grade	\$54,000 00
27.	Van Cortlandt Park, Mosholu Parkway, Bronx Park, etc., above Harlem River,	
	Improvement of - Stone Breaking and other Work	40,000 00
28.	Bronx Park, Improvement of-Old Boston Post Road, northerly side Kings-	
	bridge Road to Bronx River Bridge	8,000 00
29.	Pelham Park, Improvement of—Improving Eastern Boulevard, etc., Waterbury	
	Lane to Pelham Bridge	9,000 00
30.	Pelham Avenue, Improvement of-Southern Boulevard through Bronx Park,	
	Lorillard Lane, etc	10,000 00
31.	Crotona, Van Cortlandt and Bronx Park and Mosholu Parkway, Improvement	
	of—Removing Dead Trees, etc.	10,000 00
32.	Mosholu Parkway, Improvement of—Building	13,000 00
33.	Mount Morris Park, Improvement of-Covering Walks with Asphalt, etc	10,000 00
34.	Mount Morris Park, Improvement of-Completing the entrance	7,200 00
35.	Central Park, Improvement of-Manhattan Square, Constructing Stone Sub-	
	structure, etc., on Walks north side of Seventy-seventh Street and south side	
	of Eighty-first Street, etc	6,000 00
36.	Paving Sidewalk adjoining Central Park on the westerly side of Fifth Avenue,	
	from Eighty-fifth to One Hundred and Tenth Street Plaza	17,500 00

Each of these appropriations is opened as a separate account on the office books, and the extra labor entailed on the Commissioners and the several officers of the Department in carrying out this law, can only be appreciated by those who participated in it.

By this law and the fact that there were thousands of men needing work and largely dependent on charity at an inclement season, the Commissioners suddenly had to confront the most important and difficult social problem of the times in a great city, namely "work for the unemployed."

Men inured to outdoor labor and men accustomed only to indoor labor, all in destitute condition, thronged the offices of the Department, seeking work, and the Department suddenly became a great labor bureau that was expected to find outdoor employment for thousands at a season of the year when but little could be accomplished.

As the stated force of the Department was required for regular park work, an organizer or Superintendent of Labor of great experience was employed for one month. Foremen, Laborers and teams were put at work as fast as possible, implements, tools and supplies were purchased in open market and in large quantities, and with little delay a laboring force of over 2,000 men, calling with the permanent force for a weekly labor pay-roll of \$30,000, were put at work wherever and whenever the labor could be utilized.

The appropriation enabled much good to be accomplished for destitute men and families, and work to be done in Riverside and other parks, and especially a renovation of asphalt pavements and other useful improvements in Central Park not covered by the annual expenditure.

The men employed comprised all kinds and sorts of people. Volumes of letters, memorials and recommendations, and long lists of names were received from charity organizations, church

societies, labor unions of all kinds, private citizens and public men and their constituents, and after all was done that could be accomplished, the fact remained that there were thousands of idle people for whom it was not possible for any municipal or other government to furnish employment. The experience of the Commissioners leads them to request that any future duty in this line be committed to some other public body or special committee of citizens desirous of the task and willing to serve without any compensation and to become the objects of unthinking and unjust criticism.

CONTRACTS FOR VARIOUS IMPROVEMENTS.

In addition to the usual and comprehensive duties of the Commissioners the following contracts for public work are made by the Department under various laws; some of the contracts were completed during the year 1894, and the others are yet in process of execution:

		Title of Work.	Approximate Amount.
1.	Constructin	g New Macomb's Dam Bridge	\$1,000,000 00
2.	Construction	g Approaches to New Macomb's Dam Bridge	99,225 00
3.	Constructin	ng Railings, Lamps, etc., New Macomb's Dam Bridge	10,513 00
4.	Museum of	Art-Boiler-house, Engine-room, etc	47,700 00
5.	"	Electric-lighting Plant	21,400 00
6.	46	Same	9,265 00
7.	44	Gallery Cases	7,271 00
8.	**	Same	9,338 00
9.	"	Boilers and Machinery	39,894 🚥
10.	44	Gold Room Furniture	5,104 00
II.		Gallery Cases	9,462 00
12.	Riverside I	Park—Woman's Cottage	5,483 00
13.		Retaining-walls, etc	52,617 00
14.	66	Same	
15.	Central Pa	rk-Cleaning and Concreting Pond	29,650 00
16.	**	Entrance One Hundred and Tenth Street and Fifth Avenue	5,594 00
17.	"	Ninety-ninth Street Sewer	3,836 00
18.	"	Gravel	36,040 00
19.	**	Tool-house	12,300 00
20.	"	Entrance West Ninetieth Street	14,198 00
21.	**	Asphalting Materials	23,095 00
22.	"	Gravel	8,480 00
23.	44	Asphalting Materials	-
24.	**	Asphalting Materials	36,309 00
25.	"	Entrance One Hundred and Tenth Street and Eighth Avenue	19,871 00
26.		Garden Mould	3,850 👓
27.	Aquarium-	-Tanks, Pools, etc	34,300 00
28.	"	Tiling same	
29.	4.6	Rubber Piping	2,790 00
30.	66	Same	3,997 00

31.	Aquarium-1	Drainage		\$1,594	00
32.				8,180	00
33•	**	Painting		2,660	00
34.	Museum Nat	ural History-	-New Wing and Enlargement	257,000	00
35.		ii .	Completing same	73,500	00
36.		"	Repairing and Equipping	184,750	00
37.		"	Area Wall, Drainage, etc	4,157	00
38.	Van Cortland	dt-Parade G	round	93,138	00
39.	"	Parade G	round Extension	45,975	00
40.	Forage			8,239	00
41.				7,745	00
42.	Harlem Rive	er Drivewa y —	-First Section	629,916	00
43.		44	Second Section	751,240	00
44.		"	Tunnel and Elevator	17,144	00
45.		"	Supplemental Contracts	144,560	00
46.	Settees			4,025	00
47.	New Parks-	-Broken Ston	e	5,875	00
48.	"	Road Roller		3,800	00
49.	"	Screenings	,.,	2,490	00
50.	Menagerie, I	Paddock Inclo	osures	2,500	00
51.	Telephone	Servic e		5,200	00
52.	Stuyvesant S	quare, Wome	n's Cottage	2,875	00
53.	Cement		,	6,501	00
54.	Mt. Morris P	ark, Stone W	Vork, Entrances	5,212	00
55.	. Morningside Park, Paving Sidewalks			00	
56.	Rock, One H	Hundred and I	Fifty-third Street and Seventh Avenue, Removal	3,417	00

Besides the special appropriations in previous years, the following city bonded debt is authorized by the Laws of 1894, for various public works in this Department. The appropriation is in the first instance to be made by the Board of Estimate.

Chapter.	Amount.	Onyrct. Construction work on the parks for relief of the unemployed.	
Chapter 11	\$1,000,000 00		
" 45	200,000 00	Improvement of Cathedral Parkway.	
" 63	200,000 00	Equipping Museum of Natural History.	
" 74·····	750,000 00	Improvement Riverside Park.	
" 190	50,000 00	For Monuments in Parks.	
" 511	200,000 00	Improvement Corlear's Hook Park.	
" 523	50,000 00	For Monument at Battery.	
" 545	50,000 00	For Parade Ground.	

It will be seen that the Legislature of 1894 was exceedingly liberal in granting these sums, some of which are laudable and necessary, but many of the items were not sought by the Commissioners and cannot be judiciously used.

INCOME.

The income of the Department (not including items diverted by law to the pension fund) rents, licenses and privileges, including carriage service in Central Park and Riverside Park, and rent for public bath at Battery and from all other sources, amounts to \$48,701.03, all paid to the General Fund. The Department has not the use or control or credit of the fund. A portion of it might be appropriated by law to the following purpose:

If a building in a convenient park location were authorized at a cost of about \$30,000, it could be occupied by the Department on May 1, 1896, and the rent of the present offices \$6,500, per year, under a Sinking Fund Commissioners' lease, expiring at that time, could be saved.

MUSEUMS.

Central Park is graced by two noble and capacious institutions. The Museum of Natural History is located on Central Park, West, and the Museum of Art in that part of the park near Fifth avenue and Eighty-second street.

The numerous galleries and halls of these buildings are filled with contributions and objects of great value, and the attractions presented draw crowds of visitors who derive both pleasure and instruction from the object lessons there gathered.

The Boards of Trustees are incorporated and have entire charge of the buildings and contents, and in fact every object on exhibition has been contributed by the Trustees and their friends and by gifts of citizens, all constituting a most magnificent and valuable collection, "A Treasury of Art" and "A Treasury of Natural History."

Lectures on science and art and various branches of instruction are given free during the lecture season by professors eminent in their special vocations. No public appropriation by the City is better bestowed than the annual appropriation for each museum, to enable the Trustees to offer free admission and to comply with a contract for Sunday openings.

The appropriation does not cover the entire expense, but the Trustees have always contributed additional sums yearly from their personal resources. The sum granted by the City may be increased with great propriety.

These Museums are justly a source of public pride, and they should be enlarged on the plan heretofore established.

HARLEM RIVER DRIVEWAY.

The Harlem River Driveway is authorized by chapter 102 of the Laws of 1893, and the subject merits the following notice:

A Speedway Bill of 1892 was passed, authorizing the construction of that road in Central Park. This law was never approved by this Department, and subsequently at the same session it was properly repealed in response to public opinion. The parties who prepared and advocated the law so repealed, procured the enactment of the above law of 1893, and the Park Commissioners had no voice therein save to execute its provisions. The chief merit of the law is that it opens a secluded section on the west bank of the river for a distance of two miles to public use and eventually to trade and commerce, which may be expected to increase with the opening of the Harlem

River Ship Canal and the dredging of the river channel under the directions of the General Government. No more expensive location for a two-mile road could be selected. The law does not limit the expense, but the Commissioners have deemed it their duty to the entire community to authorize and limit reasonable expenditure necessary to meet the contracts for construction and consistent with the work and not for any fancy purpose. The contracts call for over a million and a half dollars. Other schemes have been advanced to treat the work as a Boulevard, for which the location is entirely unfitted, being bounded by high cliffs on one side and the dock line and river brink on the other for almost the entire distance.

Besides this, the law authorizing the work gives no authority, express or implied, to build a park boulevard. The additional expense thereof will be large and involve an improvident and wasteful expenditure of public money.

The Commissioners last year sought a legislative amendment placing the work in some other department of the City Government, and will renew that request to the coming Legislature, and if approved by his Honor, the Mayor, the change sought in this respect can be had at an early day, and the Commissioners, an unsalaried body (except as to the President), being otherwise overworked, will be able to bestow their time and service on more legitimate park work.

Unfair and unjust criticism has been visited upon the Commissioners, but they have steadily sought to keep the best interests of the community in view in the construction and progress of the work, for which a competent corps of Engineers under Mr. Charles H. Graham is employed, and fair progress is being made under two separate contracts. No person can appreciate the situation save by personal and intelligent examination.

As the law creating the road intended preference to be given in the use of the road for high speed and trotting horses, it is quite manifest that for such purpose this Department cannot consider it as a park road or boulevard in any sense.

Construction and management should devolve on the Department of Public Works, where it was originally intended that the work should be placed, but an error of hasty legislation named the Department of Parks, and that error should be corrected.

The Commissioners most respectfully ask to be relieved of further connection with it.

STATUES IN THE PUBLIC PARKS.

This subject will be treated in a separate paper and from an artistic standpoint. The past two years have seen the following statues erected in the various parks, all the cost being contributed by popular or personal subscription, save the Ericsson Statue, for which the City paid, by special law, ten thousand dollars (chap 266, Laws of 1889).

- 1. Column and Statue of Columbus.
- 2. Columbus, after Sunol's Madrid Statue.
- 3. Thorvaldsen.
- 4. Nathan Hale.
- 5. Horace Greely.
- 6. Roscoe Conkling.
- 7. Ericsson.
- 8. Dr. J. Marion Sims.
- 9. Peter Cooper. This statue will be erected this coming Spring.

Before statues are accepted the work or the model must be examined and approved, under the rules of the Board, by an Art Committee, consisting in the last-named case of T. W. Wood, President of the Academy of Design, H. G. Marquand, President of the Museum of Art, and N. LeBrun, President of the N.Y. Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

The Cooper Statue meets their approval, and considering the great service and public spirit of that eminent citizen, it has been suggested that the Art Committee and the Committee of Contributors, of which the Hon. Franklin Edson is Chairman, have a voice in selecting the location, subject to the approval of this Department.

Many of the statues above enumerated have not been gracefully located, whereas the subject intended to be commemorated is entitled to the highest consideration in that respect.

This report embraces the principal features of the Park Department of the City of New York, but there are abundant details and questions constantly arising which cannot be stated within the limits of this paper.

The bicycle question, the demand for new entrances in Central Park by reason of increased population, the lighting of that park, and the preservation of the Obelisk in a hostile climate, are all questions for active consideration.

In the outskirts of a foreign city, a capacious stone bench is located by the wayside, with the following inscription:

"To the bright town which gave me health and peace Year after year in life's brief prilgrimage, Grateful, I dedicate this Seat, a rest Where youthful love and wayworn age, Remembering all that Life has lost and given, May pause to gaze upon the sunny scene And think upon the rest of Heaven."

This sentiment may well be inscribed in the sunny places and beautiful retreats to be found in the public parks of the City of New York.

Respectfully submitted,

GEORGE C. CLAUSEN, Commissioners.