

PROPOSED NEW PARKS.

The Commissioners appointed to select and locate lands for public parks in the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Wards and vicinity have submitted a voluminous and exhaustive report. They show the lack of foresight which has left New-York sadly deficient in comparison with the other great cities of the world in the matter of public grounds. It has at present but 1 acre to every 1,363 inhabitants, while London has 1 to every 205 inhabitants, Paris 1 to 13, Vienna 1 to 100, Berlin 1 to 235, Philadelphia 1 to 300, Chicago 1 to 200, St. Louis 1 to 167, Boston 1 to 190, and so on. They discuss the value of parks from hygienic, moral, and material points of view, and show how Central Park has brought to the City \$17,000,000 over and above its entire cost in consequence of the increased value of adjacent property. They speak of the need of spaces for botanical and zoological gardens and a site for a World's Fair. They make glowing calculations of the City's future growth, and dwell upon the wisdom and economy of providing parks for the time to come. All this is admirably calculated to prepare the mind for a favorable reception of the scheme of new parks, and all that is said is very true.

But the real matter of interest in the report is the system of proposed parks itself. It includes a tract of 1,070 acres, embracing the Van Cortlandt estate, half a mile or more beyond Spuyten Duyvil Creek and about an equal distance east of the Hudson River; a tract of 653 acres on the Bronx River, a mile further to the east; a space of 1,700 acres on the Sound, some two miles or more from the present city limits, and three small spaces between this series and the Harlem River. The aggregate area is 3,800 acres. It is proposed to connect the Van Cortlandt and Bronx Parks by the Mosholu Parkway, 600 feet wide, and the Bronx and Pelham Bay Parks by the Bronx and Pelham Parkway, 400 feet wide and two and one-half miles long. Crotona Park, with an area of 135 acres, it is proposed to connect with the Bronx Park by a similar parkway. Claremont and St. Mary's Parks are smaller spaces located with reference to the growing population of the annexed district.

The scheme looks well on the face of it, and it is to be hoped that it will not become in any way complicated with real estate speculations, to which it will present great temptations. The Commissioners claim that these 3,800 acres for parks and parkways can now be acquired at an average cost of \$2,000 per acre, or a total of less than \$8,000,000. They expatiate fondly on their natural beauties and attractions, which will make the cost of improvement small and not imperative for the present. It is their belief that they will all be needed and that now is the time to acquire them to the best advantage, and they are also convinced that it will be a most profitable investment for the City, of which there is no manner of doubt, provided all jobbery is kept out of the scheme and the City can secure a Park Department fit to take care of such a magnificent domain.

It is impossible to form an independent judgment of the merits of this scheme without a careful examination of all that it involves, but the Commissioners are reputable citizens who have apparently given the subject careful consideration. All that they say of the present and future needs of the City and the desirability of acquiring lands for parks on an ample scale now may be accepted without question. With the future development of facilities for communication with the upper wards no doubt these sites will prove easily accessible and available for the many uses which public parks should serve. But the execution of any such project must be guarded with the utmost care against the perils of jobbery and mismanagement which beset all public works in this City and discourage the people from supporting them.