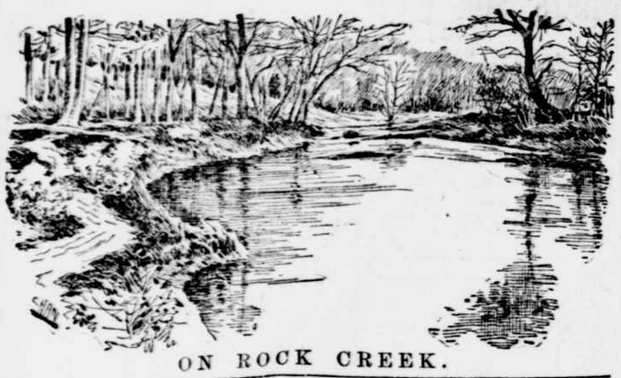

ON ROCK CREEK.

WINNING THE PARK.

A Great Project Now Near Accomplishment.

PROTECTING ROCK CREEK.

The Park as a Sanitary Measure and a Business Proposition—Its Acquirement Calculated to Save Many Millions in the Future—A Description and History of the Park.

OVER TWENTY-FIVE years ago Maj. Michler of the engineer corps, in response to a resolution of the Senate, prepared maps of a park to include the land bordering Rock creek, the park then proposed being similar to the one which now awaits only the President's approval to become a reality. In the quarter of a century that passed the project always had its friends, several bills were introduced and many reports were made, but it was not until the year 1890 that Congress became so impressed with the practical wisdom of the park scheme as to enact the legislation required to secure the park. Congress may be excused for so long delaying an act now universally acknowledged to have been a wise one, as it is only within a few years that it has been plain to every one that the rapid growth of the city would soon make of a stream noted for its scenic beauty along all its winding length in the District limits a noisome and pestilential sewer.

The securing of a beautiful suburban park at the gates of the national capital was in itself an object which many men in Congress and out considered worth working for, but when it became evident that unless Rock creek was protected from pollution by the establishment of the park, many millions more than the park would cost would ultimately have to be expended in wiling and arching the creek, practical men who had not been much interested in the proposed park as an ornament to the capital gave their earnest support to the project as a prudent business measure. Senator Gorman, in a statement published in THE STAR, called attention to the costly experience Baltimore had had with Jones' creek. To wall and bridge that creek, when the city encroached upon it, had cost Baltimore $1,250,000 a mile. At that rate Mr. Gorman estimated that it would cost $10,000,000 to wall in Rock creek. "Washington," he said, "can now get a magnificent park for what it cost Baltimore to wall up one mile of its creek. This, besides adding to the beauty and health of the city and increasing the taxable value of property, will save the city and the government from the immense expenses which must result from the occupation of this valley by dwellings or factories."

THE COST OF COVERING ROCK CREEK.

The facts stated by Senator Gorman had been discussed by officials before and had been emphasized by the state of that section of Rock creek already inclosed by the city. In the report made by Capt. Symons, assistant to the Engineer Commissioner, for the fiscal year ending June, 1888, much space was devoted to urging the need for the abatement of the nuisance arising from this "large stretch of comparatively stagnant and sewage-polluted water," and to discussing a plan for accomplishing the desired object.

The plan then suggested proposed tunnels and arches for carrying the creek. The tunnels proposed were 920 feet long and the archway 2,070 feet long, and the entire cost for this work, a little more than half a mile long, was estimated at $660,000, or more than half the amount appropriated for the purchase of Rock Creek Park, which is to inclose many miles of the meandering stream.

The same view of the case was presented also very strongly in a report made to the House by Mr. Hemphill from the District committee January 26, 1889. That report said:

"Rock creek drains a large section of the county practically and flows through the city of Washington. If residences should be placed along its banks the sewerage would be emptied into that stream and necessarily endanger the health of the city. The consequence would be either that this continuous risk must exist or that this picturesque creek must be covered in and used exclusively as a sewer. That portion of the creek along which dwelling houses have already been built is now an open sewer flowing through the city, from which disagreeable and noxious odors constantly rise, greatly to the detriment of the health of the people along its banks and to the injury of property in that section, and, in the opinion of your committee, the time is near at hand when this portion of the creek must be covered over or some other mode of protection adopted at a cost of many thousand dollars. The preservation of both banks of Rock creek, as proposed in the pending bill, will at once avoid this danger and cost and preserve the existing beauty of a large territory. Looking at this measure merely as a practical business matter it seems to be wise. Such a preservation of the natural beauties of a section so near the city will conduce greatly to the physical as well as the moral improvement of the people."

A SOLITARY BOATMAN.

A NATURAL PARK.

Aside from the satisfaction which this happy and comparatively inexpensive deliverance of the city from grave danger gives to all, the prospect of having a park which will be a constant source of delight, a beautiful region dedicated forever to the people as a pleasure ground and adding to the charms of the capital city, is something that appeals to the pride of all. The Rock Creek valley is a natural park, possessing scenic attractions, combinations of wood and grassy bluff, rock and stream, which years ago made it famous. Nature had accomplished there works, which an army of landscape gardeners, with unlimited appropriations to draw upon, could not hope to equal in any less favored locality. Those who early advocated the park project, as they became discouraged by the years of delay, were saddened by the thought that the picturesque surroundings of the winding creek would disappear as the real estate syndicates, with their subdivisions and their unromantic rows of city houses, made their way to the very edge of the stream.

But now all misgivings on either account—the fate of the creek or the possible destruction of the beauty of the valley—seem to be at an end. Those who have given their time and energies to securing this happy result have had to overcome obstacles which would have discouraged men whose devotion to the public good had not been unwavering. It may not be out of place here to briefly recapitulate the leading points in the long history of the park movement.

THE FIRST BILL.

The first Rock Creek Park bill was introduced twenty-five years ago in the Thirty-ninth Congress. After that from year to year a number of measures were formulated. They all were similar to the first in having the same object in view—the acquisition of the land bordering Rock creek for park purposes—though they differed from that and from each other in the methods prescribed for acquiring the ground, the limit of cost, as well as the number of acres to be purchased, and in minor details concerning the commissioners to have charge of the park.

In response to a resolution adopted by the Senate on motion of Mr. Hendricks on the 18th of July, 1866, Maj. N. Michler of the corps of engineers in January of the following year submitted to the Senate a report giving maps of the Rock creek region and proposing two plans, one for a park of 2,540 acres and the other for a park of 1,800 acres. Upon this report a bill was formulated by the committee on public buildings and grounds providing for the purchase for park purposes of a tract of ground within the lines projected by Maj. Michler and which included 2,700 acres. Gens. Meigs and Wright and Maj. Michler were constituted a committee to negotiate with the owners of the land. No appropriation was made, the commission being required to report the result of its negotiations to the next Congress.

This bill, however, failed to become a law, although it had an eloquent advocate in the Senate in the person of B. Gratz Brown.

A RENEWED EFFORT.

No further effort appears on record until 1883, although in 1880 Capt. Hoxie in a report had suggested turning the whole Rock creek valley into a park with an ornamental lake and reservoir by a system of dams. November 17, 1883, W. W. Corcoran, W. Strong and Josiah Dent joined in a letter to the District Commissioners calling attention to the abandoned project and urging "the desirability and policy of securing these grounds for a public park without needless delay."

Nothing, however, was then done in the way of attempted legislation. Attention was called to the project again in January, 1886, by the announcement of an offer by Judge Ord to donate twenty-five acres of his land on Rock creek for the location of a zoological park and public baths, but Congress did not avail itself of the offer.

In the Forty-ninth Congress a bill was offered in the Senate authorizing the District Commissioners to plat for condemnation a tract of land not exceeding 1,000 feet in width, on both sides of Rock creek, beginning at the intersection of Massachusetts avenue extended and the creek and extending to the boundary line of the District. No appropriation was made, the bill requiring the Commissioners to report to Congress the results of their negotiations and condemnation proceedings. On this bill, in June, 1886, at the request of the Senate District committee, the District Commissioners made a report stating that the plat of the proposed park, as drawn, shows a park 1,000 feet in width, from Lyon's mills to the boundary of the District. The quantity of land included was 919 acres. Should Congress desire to proceed further in the matter, they suggested, important modifications would be made in the plan by a careful consideration of the topography of the several portions of the proposed park. No uniform width need be adhered to. Where the banks are steep only such acreage would be required as would suffice to control the crest and slopes and provide for the construction of suitable drives. Where the elevations lie more remote from the banks of the stream a greater width would be requisite.

A favorable report was made on the bill to the House January 31, 1887, by Mr. Rowell from the District committee.

The bill failed to become a law.

Mr. Ingalls reintroduced the same bill in the Senate December 13, 1887. January 9, 1888, Mr. Rowell introduced it again in the House, and it got so far this time as to have an amendment attached to it declaring that in the event the government failed to provide for the payment for the land condemned within two years then all proceedings under this act should be void. A favorable report was made on the bill by the District Commissioners and also by the House District committee.

During the discussion of the park project in the House, August 13, 1888, the proposal was made in amendments offered by Messrs. Cannon and Hopkins to assess the adjacent property and to charge half of the cost of the park to the District. The bill was then recommitted and got no further consideration at that time.

THE LAST SUCCESSFUL MOVEMENT.

No further steps were taken until the winter of that year, 1888, when the project was revived. The movement then begun was like an uprising of citizens. The realization that their Rock creek region was about to be invaded by real estate syndicates, and that the creek would in course of time become a sewer and a source of pestilence, came with such force to a number of influential citizens that they took up the

THE SYCAMORES.

park movement and gave to it an energy that it never had before. They went at work systematically and with an interest that never flagged. Defeats only inspired them with new vigor. They devoted their influence and their time and strength to the campaign and at last won the park for the people. The committee of citizens never ceased to work and was not dissolved until the park bill became a law by the President's approval. THE EVENING STAR, which had ever urged the establishment of the park, sounded the keynote of the new and successful campaign in an editorial in THE STAR December 29, 1888, in which energetic cooperative action was urged. January 11, 1889, THE STAR made a further appeal in the interest of "a project so entirely void of selfish personal interests that it does not enlist the support of lobbyists, jobbers or speculators and must depend for its success upon the active cooperative efforts of the general public."

That night a meeting of citizens was held at the Atlantic building, and, following the counsel of THE STAR, the action was there taken that ultimately led to success. A resolution was adopted at this meeting indorsing the plan of securing the park as proposed by the bill then pending in Congress, and an executive committee was appointed to urge action. This committee was composed of C. S. Noyes, B. H. Warner, C. C. Glover, A. T. Britton, F. A. Richardson and George E. Lemon.

Among the persons present at the meeting were Judge Strong, Dr. J. C. Welling, W. T. Hornaday, Judge Hillyer, C. S. Noyes, Wm. H. Clagett, Col. W. F. Switzler, John T. Given, Dr. A. P. Fardon, C. C. Glover, Jas. M. Johnson, Theodore W. Noyes, S. W. Woodward, Beriah Wilkins, Frank Hatton, John H. Crane, George Truesdell, Jos. Paul, Col. J. M. Wilson, H. J. Dent, John Joy Edson, W. C. Dodge, M. I. Weller, Hallet Kilbourn, Noble D. Larner, ex-Commissioner Loring, Prof. Langley, Dr. Robt. Reyburn, R. Ross Perry, Reginald Fendall, Wm. R. Smith, B. H. Warner, L. D. Wine, B. F. Gilbert, Geo. E. Lemon, A. B. Brown, N. W. Burchell, J. L. Barbour, C. B. Church, W. J. Stevenson, J. Q. Thompson, Jesse B. Wilson, Thos. Somerville, E. D. Tracy, Jas. E. Fitch, M. F. Morris and W. S. Thompson.

WHAT LED TO THE MEETING.

This was the first public record of the new park movement. It had been thought out and planned, however, in private conference by public-spirited men, who realized that the time had come for a supreme effort. The proceedings which led to practical results were initiated by Mr. Charles C. Glover of Riggs & Co. in November of 1888. In consultation with Mr. James M. Johnston, Mr. Calderon Carlisle, Capt. Thomas W. Symons, Thomas Hyde and R. Ross Perry the preliminary work was blocked out and Mr. Johnston drew up a bill, which was the basis of the one that finally became a law. A few evenings later another meeting was held at Mr. Glover's house, at which were present the gentlemen named and a number of other citizens, including Washington McLean, Crosby S. Noyes, S. H. Kauffmann, Gen. H. V. Boynton, Henry Wise Garnett, A. T. Britton, Geo. E. Lemon, Chas. Nordhoff, B. H. Warner, Stilson Hutchins, F. A. Richardson, M. M. Parker, Lewis J. Davis, Charles J. Bell, F. P. B. Sands, Wm. Corcoran Hill, Duncan S. Walker, O. C. Green, Hallet Kilbourn, Col. James A. Bates and E. W. Fox. At this gathering, over which Mr. C. S. Noyes presided, the general plan and bill prepared by Mr. Glover and his associates were approved and it was decided to begin public effort.

Next came the meeting at the Atlantic building and the appointment of the executive committee.

The work done by that executive committee, in which Mr. Glover was the leading spirit, was enormous. It had hearings before congressional committees, and through its spokesmen presented facts clearly and impressively. Thus far its work was apparent to the public. In private it was a committee on education, a bureau of information, a body of propagandists. Misconceptions of the park measure and of the motive behind it prevailed in many quarters and had to be combated.

FRIENDS ON THE FLOOR.

Both in the House and Senate were men who gave warm support to the measure in the House, and in the Senate the cause of the park was championed valiantly by Messrs. Edmunds, Ingalls, Harris, Gorman, Sherman and Gibson and others. There were citizens, not on the committee, too, whose industry and interest contributed much to the final result. Among these were James M. Johnston, Ross Perry, Myron M. Parker, Alex D. Anderson, Gen. H. V. Boynton, Ex-Auditor McConville and Aldis B. Browne. As the work progressed, THE STAR, which had been foremost in advocating the park, devoted its space freely to the enterprise, meeting every demand for information and publishing maps and illustrated articles to give an intelligent idea of the project.

THE BILL INTRODUCED.

The bill drawn up and approved by the citizens' committee was introduced in the House by Mr. Hemphill January 14, 1889. This bill provided for a purchase of a tract of land not exceeding 2,500 acres, following the course of the creek, beginning at Woodley Lane bridge, of a width not less at any point than 400 feet. The chief of engineers, the secretary of the Smithsonian Institution and the Engineer Commissioner of the District were named as the commission to locate and purchase the park, with the assistant of the Engineer Commissioner as executive officer of the commission. One-half of the cost of the park, according to the bill, was charged to the District, and the park when purchased was to be under the control of the District Commissioners.

The tenor of debates in the House had convinced those who were urging the park project that it would be quite impossible to get any measure through that did not propose to make the District pay one-half of the cost. While this was considered unjust the citizens' committee deemed it wisest to secure the park on the best terms possible and leave it to Congress in the future to make amends for the wrong done the people of the District. In that view THE STAR, January 16, 1889, proposed that the national government should advance whatever may be necessary for the park and be reimbursed gradually by the District, as in the case of the alleged water works extension.

THE CITIZENS' COMMITTEE AT WORK.

The executive committee of citizens began its active work January 18, when it appeared before the House District committee and urged the passage of the Hemphill bill. From that time on the committee lost no opportunity to impress upon Congress and its committees the importance and advantages of the proposed park.

The first decided result of the work of the executive committee was a thoughtful and forcible report made in the House January 26 by Mr. Hemphill from the District committee, recommended the passage of the measure introduced by him on the 14th. The committee recommended an appropriation of $1,500,000 for the purchase of the park.

On the 15th of February the Senate District committee approved and substituted the Hemphill bill for the one it had reported, which made no appropriation, but required the Commissioners to report its work to Congress. An effort was made by Mr. Hemphill, February 28, 1889, to get the matter through before the Fiftieth Congress expired by attaching the bill substantially as an amendment to the "Zoo" bill, which was under consideration. Then the friends of the bill sought to secure its enactment as an amendment to the sundry civil bill, but failed, though their efforts probably resulted in securing the coveted place in the sundry civil bill for the "Zoo" amendment, which, thus nestled under the wings of a great appropriation bill, went safely through.

IN THE FIFTY-FIRST CONGRESS.

Promptly at the beginning of the Fifty-first Congress the park bills were reintroduced. December 4, 1889, both Mr. Ingalls and Mr. Sherman offered bills in the Senate. Mr. Ingalls' bill limited the width of the park to 1,000 feet, made it begin at Massachusetts avenue and extend all along the creek to the District line. The Commissioners of the District were charged with negotiating for or condemning the property and required to report their action to Congress. No appropriation was made. Mr. Sherman's bill was similar to Mr. Hemphill's, except that it named the Kingle Ford bridge as the starting point, and, instead of making a direct appropriation, provided for the issue of $1,200,000 in District bonds to pay for the park, provision being made that one-half the sum should be refunded by the United States to the District.

ON ROCK CREEK SANDS.

CHANGES PROPOSED IN THE HOUSE.

This bill was passed by the Senate January 28, 1890. When the bill went to the House District committee it was there modified considerably. The name of the park was changed to Columbus Memorial Park. This was done in deference to the Columbus sentiment that then had a big swing at the Capitol. For the first time the limitation as to width south of the Broad Branch and Blagden Mill roads appeared. This strip of the park was not to exceed 500 feet on either side of the creek. The whole tract to be acquired was limited to 2,000 acres. A direct appropriation of $1,200,000 was inserted, one-half to be charged to the District, and provision was made that half the annual charge of maintenance should be paid by the District. Another change placed the park, when purchased, under the joint control of the District Commissioners and the chief of engineers of the army.

A TEMPORARY DEFEAT.

March 24 the bill was up in the House and warmly debated. Strong speeches in favor of the bill was made by Messrs. Grout, Cannon, Atkinson, Moore, Hooker, Heard and Hemphill, while Messrs. Kerr, Payson and Blount opposed it. The proposed name of the park was cut down from "Columbus Memorial" to plain "Columbus." Before the consideration of the bill was completed it went over. April 28 it came up again in committee of the whole. An amendment by Mr. Payson to assess the benefits to adjacent lands was agreed to. The bill was favorably reported to the House the same day and defeated—ayes 78, noes 88. Mr. Hemphill, who had voted in the negative for the purpose, immediately moved a reconsideration. The friends of the bill were not discouraged by the temporary defeat. An active and careful canvass made of the members absent or not voting that day led them to believe that the result might have been different in a fuller vote. The bill came up again May 26, on the motion to reconsider, and the excellent work done meanwhile by the citizens' committee was shown when the bill was passed by a vote of 107 to 83.

The bill then went to conference committee, where it underwent further changes. One thing done by the conference committee was to drop the name Columbus and restore the name of Rock creek. The House amendment providing for assessing benefits to adjacent property was retained. The amount of $1,200,000 was appropriated, and it was provided that the commission should be composed of the chief of engineers, the Engineer Commissioner of the District and three citizens to be nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

THE FINAL VICTORY.

By good management Mr. Hemphill secured the consideration of the conference report by the House September 25, 1890, and the report was agreed to—ayes, 123; noes, 65. On the following day it was agreed to by the Senate. The next day it reached the President and became a law, having received his signature Saturday, September 27. The President showed a deep interest in the measure, not only by his prompt approval of it, but by immediately nominating the three civilian commissioners, so there might be no delay in carrying its provisions into effect.

The commission was composed of Gen. Thomas L. Casey, the chief of engineers, and Lieut. Col. Henry M. Robert, the Engineer Commissioner of the District, who were members of the board by virtue of their offices, and three citizens appointed by the President, Gen. H. V. Boynton, Prof. S. P. Langley and Mr. R. Ross Perry. In addition Capt. Rossell, the assistant to the Engineer Commissioner, in charge of public highways, became by law the executive officer to the commission. Upon the retirement of Col. Robert from the office of Engineer Commissioner of the District, Capt. Rossell, who was appointed Engineer Commissioner, by virtue of that fact became a member of the Rock Creek Park commission and Capt. Fiebiger became the executive officer of the commission.

A PICTURESQUE SPOT.

THE WORK OF THE PARK COMMISSION.

The work of the commission was begun at once, but many obstructions were placed in their way. Upon Mr. Perry, who is the lawyer of the commission, devolved labors of unexpected magnitude, but at a great sacrifice of his personal interests he devoted himself to combating the constant and ingenious efforts made on the part of owners of land to defeat the will of the people, as expressed by Congress, as to the disposition of Rock creek. However great the credit awarded to the citizens whose efforts resulted in securing the park legislation, no smaller debt of gratitude is due by the public to the park commissioners and especially to its representative in court, Mr. Perry, for a steady loyalty to the trust imposed in them and a vigorous management of the affairs intrusted to them, that preserved what the citizens' committee had won and which might have been lost if the commission had been satisfied with a mere perfunctory discharge of duty.

First the commission had to make a thorough exploration and survey of the whole park region. In March, 1891, the final map of the proposed park prepared by the commission was filed and the report of their findings as to value made. In April the report was approved by the President and an offer for the land was sent to each of the property owners. In the same month the commissioners were obliged to ask an injunction from the courts to protect the trees in the park, which were being cut by some of the property holders. Several hearings were given and in May Judge Hagner granted the injunction. The sums offered by the commission were accepted by a number of owners, and so about 300 acres were purchased by private agreement, as provided in the act. A considerable number of owners held out, however, and the commissioners petitioned the court, as provided by law, for the appointment of an appraising commission. A Mr. Watson, one of the owners, intervened the proceedings by petitioning for an order restraining the commissioners from interference with his property, which petition, however, was refused. The property owners in June petitioned to have the request of the commissioners for appraisers disallowed. They pleaded the unconstitutionality of the original act. Arguments followed before the Court in General Term, and in July the petition of the owners was denied, and G. J. Seufferle, Norval W. Burchell and J. L. Norris were appointed appraisers.

THE APPRAISEMENT.

The appraisers immediately began work, first making an extended visit to the different holdings. In July the long work of hearing testimony in regard to values was begun. In August the owners petitioned the Supreme Court for a writ of error, which was refused by Judge Harlan in the same month. In October the long hearings were finished and the arguments commenced. The question of the ownership of any mineral wealth in the property was raised and the Court in General Term decided that the minerals were the property of the government. December 19 the board of appraisers made their report, awarding in the aggregate $1,105,957 to the owners of property within the limits of the proposed park. This amount, together with about $240,000 paid to property owners who accepted the prices offered by the managing commission, exceeded the appropriation of $1,200,000 made for the park.

This fact was made the basis of a vigorous legal attack on the part of owners who were dissatisfied with the awards. Every conceivable point was raised against the report in the Court in General Term and many days were spent in argument. The court gave patient hearing to all, but finally on the 8th instant made its order confirming the report.

THE LAST STEP.

Now the proceedings have reached the last step before the commission can pay for and take possession of the land condemned. The law provides that the report of the appraising commission, after it has been approved by the court, shall be submitted to the President for his approval. The report is now in the hands of the President. The fact that the President promptly approved the park bill when it was passed by Congress and made the most careful selection of the commissioners who were charged with executing the provisions of the law is taken as an assurance of his deep interest in a measure that means so much of good to the District and that he will not on any trifling consideration render of no avail the great work already done by the commissioners he appointed. There have been a number of suggestions made as to the excess of the awards, together with the money already paid over the appropriation of $1,200,000, but it is claimed that this question is one that need not be considered officially until the President has given his approval to the report and thereby authorized the park commission to purchase the land. The commission then, it is held, are restricted by the limits of the appropriation from taking more land than can be paid for, but this restriction does not prevent the President from approving the awards as just and reasonable or the project as proper and expedient. Besides taking and paying for the land and adjusting the purchase to the limits of the appropriation the commission will still have the duty to perform of assessing as provided by law lands which are benefited by the location of the park.

WHAT THE ACT PROVIDED.

The act provided that a tract of land not exceeding 2,000 acres in extent lying on both sides of Rock creek should be "secured and perpetually dedicated and set apart as a public park or pleasure ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the United States, to be known by the name of Rock Creek Park." The sum of $1,200,000 was appropriated to pay for the land, one-half of the amount to be reimbursed to the treasury of the United States in four annual installments, with interest at 3 per centum per annum. The act did not undertake to define the boundaries of the park further than to prescribe that it should begin at the Klingle Forge bridge where it joins with the Zoological Park and run northwardly. Between Klingle ford and the junction of the Broad Branch road and Blagden Mill road the act says the park must be at no point less than 600 feet or more than 1,200 feet wide, including the bed of the creek, of which not less than 200 feet shall be on either side of the creek. North of the roads named the park was to be of such greater width as the commissioners might select.

The act provides also that the commission having ascertained the cost of the land, including expenses, shall assess such proportion of such cost and expenses upon the lands, lots and blocks situated in the District of Columbia specially benefited by reason of the location and improvement of the park as nearly as may be in proportion to the benefits resulting to such real estate. The assessment when confirmed by the court shall be divided into four equal payments and may be paid by any party interested in full or in one, two, three and four years, with 6 per cent interest on all deferred payments. In case the assessment yields an excess over the cost of the park not exceeding $10,000 such excess shall be used in the improvement of the park, but any excess above $10,000 shall be refunded ratably.

ABOVE BLAGDEN'S MILL.

The meanderings of the creek, which add to the beauty of the region, greatly increased the perplexities of the problem that presented itself to the park commission when they began the work of laying out the creek. They had to lay out a park which would be on both sides of the creek, contain not more than 2,000 acres, and comply with other restrictions of the act. As it was well known that one purpose of the act was to secure Rock creek against pollution, the commission set about the work with a view to include all of Rock creek from Klingle ford to the District boundary within the park.

THE ROCK CREEK REGION.

The beauty of the region is proverbial. It has been celebrated by poets and painters.

Major Michler in the original report made to the Senate in 1866 was so moved by the loveliness of the region he had explored that he rose above the ordinary statistical level of a "pub. doc." and thus discoursed: "In no place has nature been more bountiful of her charms than in the vicinity of this city, and all can be found so near and accessible—the valley of the Rock creek and its tributaries, the Broad and Piney branches, and the several minor rivulets, with the adjoining hills overlooking these beautiful streams, present to the capital of the nation advantages not to be lightly disregarded in providing a park worthy of a great people. All the elements which constitute a public resort of the kind can be found in this wild and romantic tract of country. With its charming drives and walks, its hills and dales, its pleasant valleys and deep ravines, its primeval forests and cultivated fields, its running waters, its rocks clothed with rich ferns and mosses, its repose and tranquility, its light and shade, its ever-varying shrubbery, its beautiful and extensive views, the locality is already possessed with all the features necessary for the object in view. There you can find nature diversified in almost every hue and form, needing but the taste of the artist and the skill of the engineer to enhance its beauty and usefulness; gentle pruning and removing what may be distasteful, improving the roads and paths and the construction of new ones, and increasing the already large growth of trees and shrubs, deciduous and evergreen, adding to them those of other climes and countries."

Another matter-of-fact engineer officer was equally affected many years after, for Capt. Symons in his report on the park project in 1899 said: "There lies within the District of Columbia a region of marvelous natural beauty, a region of rugged rocks, running water and stately trees, of lovely deep and shady valleys, steep forest-covered slopes and rolling sunny uplands. This region, yet largely in a state of nature and lying just beyond the present city limits, seems specially designed by the Creator for the recreation grounds of this large and rapidly growing city, and set deeply in the hearts of all citizens of Washington, worthy of the name, is the desire that it may be secured to them and all who come after them for a grand public park."

ALONG THE CREEK.

At every step along the creek from the District line to Klingle ford, the southern limit of the park, there are attractive views. At the District line the stream is narrow and swift. It dashes over rocks forming cascades and falls. As one descends the stream he has on one hand wild rocky ravines overhung with ancient moss-covered trees and on the other soft undulating meadows. Not far south of the District line are the so called Rock Creek falls, which form the main object in the wildest landscape on the stream. For a hundred rods the stream tumbles, white with spray and foam, over boulder after boulder. The descent is ninety feet in as many rods. Just off from Brightwood the Military road crosses the creek at one of its pretty points. All along the upper region of the creek, and in fact for its entire course, the banks are continually changing in aspect, and new and enchanting views are disclosed at every turn. Below the Military road are the ruins of the Argyle mill, with its moss-covered wheel still in place. From the Argyle mill a picturesque and romantic road runs on down the creek, now disappearing in the woods and again coming close to the dashing stream. Not far below is Shoemaker's mill and the mill dam, over which the water rolls in a broad, majestic stream. Above the dam the water stretches out into a pretty little lake. In the vicinity of the creek at this point are beautiful villas and smooth, easy roads. Below Shoemaker's mill the creek goes sweeping on toward the lower limits of the park. At some places the water spreads out into a considerable expanse and in others is narrowly confined by the abutting hills. Above Klingle Ford bridge the creek affords a splendid stretch of water. Below Klingle ford, where the creek winds into the Zoological Park, the banks of the stream rise in precipitous cliffs, clothed with a thick growth of timber. In the limits of the proposed park is to be found almost every variety of tree and shrub and vine which the climate affords.

There are many spots, too, of some historic interest along the stream. Joel Barlow selected a home overlooking this picturesque glen, and John Howard Payne, whose mortal remains now lie in the cemetery on the slopes above the creek in Georgetown, found such attractions in this region that it was one of his favorite haunts. On the banks of the creek stood the mill built by John Quincy Adams and the house where Adams at intervals found rest from public toil. Along the creek, too, are relics of the war, earthworks which formed a part of the cordon of forts that encircled the capital.

THE BOUNDS OF THE PARK.

The park as laid out by the commission comprises 1,980 acres and extends from Kingle Ford bridge to the District line. The lower or southern part of the park is narrow, as the width there is limited by law, but north of the junction of the Blagden Mill and Broad Branch roads it widens out. The narrow section forms a sort of parkway connecting the main park with the Zoological Park. The eastern boundary of the park from Blagden Mill road all the way out to the District limits is a straight line, which would be the line of 16th street if that street were extended. The park strikes the northern boundary of the District line or rather the District lines as the north corner of the District, where two of the lines meet, is included in the park. The west boundary is a line running along the Daniels road and the Broad Branch road.

WHY SHE LEFT THE FLAT.

She Could Submit to Snubs, but "Neighboring" Was Too Much for Her.

From the New York World.

They were coming down town together in a Broadway car and the woman in the plush jacket was pouring her tale of woe into the sympathetic left ear of her neighbor in the sealskin coat.

"Yes, I've moved," she said. "We've given up flat life and are going to live in a hotel for a while. No, it wasn't the traditional causes that drove me out, either. I'd grown used to the dumb waiter, had established fairly friendly relations with the janitor and my servant agreed beautifully with the other servant, who washed on the same day she did.

"We had lived in the flat almost six months. No one had called, and I, being used to the ways of smaller cities, had decided that the people meant to snub me. I didn't mind it. Harry and I were very comfortable. I had mother with my part of the time, and—well, everything was lovely.

"One evening about two weeks ago I was in the bath-room, which opened off the court. I had a severe cold in my lungs, and I confided the fact to Harry, who sat in our 'den' further down the hall. I suppose that I must have raised my voice just a bi-ttle, when Harry suggested that I use goosegrease and I replied that I hadn't any in the house.

"Well, my dear, in just ten minutes the bell rang and my maid came to me with a saucer and a message from the old lady who lived in the flat above me. The saucer contained goose grease and the message was to the effect that the dear old lady had heard me express a wish, &c., and begged I would accept it.

"I was pleased. It was so sweet and nice of her that tears came to my eyes as I took the saucer and retreated into the bath room again. The door had hardly closed when—another ring, another maid, another saucer, this time from the young married woman on the top floor.

"How ungrateful I had been! How kind and truly good were all these people! My meditations were interrupted by another ring, another maid, another supply of the goose grease. The maiden lady who kept house for her brother had sent it up, and would I please rub it in well and go to bed at once. Then the Irish servant girl across the hall brought some in and gave it to the queen of my kitchen, and I had to take in and shelter two more consignments while they were exchanging the courtesies of the evening.

"All were represented before the evening was over, except that the offerings varied. The widower on the first floor said his Maria had died of a neglected cold on the lungs, and he sent me a bottle of the Consumptive Sufferer's Relief, which she had found very soothing in her last hours. A sweet old grandmother on the second floor sent me a mustard plaster all ready for application, and the widow who boards with her contributed a box of four-grain quinine pills and a medical journal.

"Martha and I spent the entire evening receiving these neighborly offerings, while Harry sat still and chuckled. By 11 o'clock we had ample stock for a small apothecary shop.

"From that night everybody in the block regarded me as being snatched from death by his or her remedy. I gave them all a common interest to discuss. Harry was waylaid in the hall, Martha was intercepted on her way to and from the clothes line, I myself was subjected to various medical questions by the widower, the grandmother and the young married woman on the top floor.

"I was growing thin and pale. I simply had to have a change of scene—and people. So we moved. No, I am not exaggerating. I haven't even done the subject justice."

But the woman in the sealskin coat thought she had.

THE CUT IN SALARIES.

President Soden of the Bostons Gives His Ideas on the Subject.

President Soden of the Boston Base Ball Club has given utterance to his sentiments about salaries. Mr. Soden is tired about haggling with base ball players year after year, and he wants to have it done away with. He wants the men to be signed by a committee. This committee will receive the names of the players reserved and the salaries their clubs will pay them, and secure them on the best terms possible.

President Soden said that salaries will have attained their height in 1892. There will be a cut of from 20 to 30 per cent in salaries in 1893 of such players who have not bound their clubs by contract covering that time. In the Boston club the only two men who cannot be cut during that time will be Nash and Duffy. Both have contracts with one more year to run. The three-year contracts of Clarkson, Long, Nichols, Bennett, Ganzel and Tucker expire with this season.

It is not the intention to pay low salaries, but simply to lower them. Liberal figures will still prevail, but instead of paying a salary list of $59,000 the Boston club will surely not pay over $45,000 in 1893, and less than that in 1894.

Mr. Soden further said that the public was not aware of the immense sums of money spent in base ball during the two seasons past and how large a sum would be necessary for the league to square and carry on the campaign of 1892 and fulfill all its obligations. The cut down, therefore, was absolutely necessary to protect the clubs from further loss.

Business Manager Frank Bancroft of Cincinnati says that no club could make money this year on account of the big salary lists and the consequent high cost of running a club.

A Chemical Change.

From Puck.

Farmer Baldwin taking his load to the cider mill.

Farmer Baldwin taking his load home from the cider mill.

STAGE AND SAWDUST

Some Interesting Information About the Dime Museum and the Circus.

ENGLAND TO SEE FREAKS.

A Manager Who Will Set Up a Rival to the London Concert Halls—How Dime Museums Were First Established—Statesmen as Special Attractions in the Circus.

NEW YORK, February 27.

ENGLAND IS GOING to have a visitation from an institution that is peculiarly American—the dime museum. Less than a week ago there sailed from this port for the British metropolis a man who is worth half a million dollars and who has made every cent of that sum in the ten-cent amusement business. It would be a betrayal of confidence to tell his name. But he "knows his business," that is sure, and he goes forth not as a blind man, but as a disciple of a new principle in foreign theatricals. This man has spent the greater part of the past year in London. He declares that he has studied the people who go to the big music halls, who crowd the pits and the galleries of the high-priced theaters, and who have put a fortune into the pockets of Barnum and Bailey, "Buffalo Bill" Cody, Imre Kiralfy and two or three other venturesome American managers; and, following the lead of those men, but on a scale literally so cheap as to astound the Briton, the new speculator will proceed to make another half million. In short, he is going to place in the very heart of London a dime museum. He is going to "bill it out of sight," he vows; he is going to advertise in the daily prints with such apparent prodigality that even Sir Augustus Harris will gaze in open-mouthed wonder, and, finally, he is going to give the untutored English public a most felicitous introduction to the curio and freak worlds which form so large a part of American amusements today. The speculation is a bold one. To divorce the London masses from their old love of the music hall, with its ever handy liquid refreshment attachment; to take them away from the pit, with its privilege of a free voice in praise or condemnation; to make them believe that the strangest things in the circus side shows can be seen for ninepence, is the task which this nervy manager has set before himself. He says he can win success. He knows the objections which face him. He can overcome them, he says, but he won't tell how. But this he does promise, however. Inside of a twelvemonth there will be in London an equivalent of the American dime museum. It will have the hourly variety performances common with us; it will have the greatest of the freaks, among them many who were shown to gaping crowds by Barnum at Olympia; it will give wax figures to compare with those at Mme. Tussaud's; it will have the standard English dramas acted in forty-five minutes by actors who have played in the best and biggest of the London theaters; all these it will have for ninepence or thereabout. "How can they get away from me?" asks this bold innovator. "I'll give them ten times their money's worth. They've got to support me. I'll get the freaks, too. I'll take over there Jo-Jo, and I'll pay that dog-faced boy $600 a week—think of it, £120—and where's the leading man or the leading woman in London who earns as much as that for a week's work? Moreover, I'll have a swarm of copy of Jo-Jo's contract with me printed in the advertising columns of the newspapers. I'll give them Millie Christine, the two-headed black girl, who has never in her life worked for less than $500 a week. I'll give them Unzie, another high-priced one. And I'll give them Circassians, tack eaters, frog eaters, glass dancers, snake charmers, Zulus, turtle boys, Albinos, strong men, chest expanders, hard-skull men, iron-jawed women, stone breakers and a hundred other more or less 'fakey' curios. I'll make the Circassians ever there to save steerage money. A 'fright wig' well greased will make a fine Circassian for any museum. I'll manufacture my Albinos there, too, with white wigs and pink-colored eyes. If I can find the right men, also, I'll get up my own 'elastic skin' freaks and 'hard-skulled men.' I'm looking for half a dozen cocaine fiends and morphine eaters in London, too. I want to make 'human pincushions' out of them. They are very thick with us, you know, but lately the public has 'turned 'em down.' They'll go in London, though. You can torture a good cocaine fiend elegantly without any objection from him, and it sets the people crazy.

"But the variety part of my show will be straight. I've laid a plan that must succeed. I can afford to pay the performers big wages, because they'll work only for me, not doing several 'turns' at the music halls, and so lessening their nightly expense considerably. The only doubt expressed by those with whom I consulted in London was on the ground of my