

**PUBLIC RECREATION  
IN STATE PARKS.**

The movement to establish state parks in Louisiana as public recreation grounds is meeting the enthusiastic support of Commissioner M. L. Alexander of the Department of Conservation. The establishment of such parks is being considered in every section of the country, and Mr. Alexander holds that Louisiana possesses advantages for the establishment of such parks not possessed by any other section. Reforestation of denuded lands has long attracted the attention of Mr. Alexander and he has used every effort to secure regrowth on cutover lands. He considers state parks a means to this end, besides the other advantages of such parks. There are cutover tracts of land in Louisiana of great natural beauty, a beauty marred by the ax of the woodsman or by the blighting touch of a forest fire. The selection of such a place for a state recreation ground would mean regrowth on these spots to restore their beauty, and this would be a step forward in reforestation, which must be practiced in Louisiana on a broad scale in the near future, unless the state is to lose the immense revenue it has enjoyed from the lumber trade. Mr. Alexander urges the economic value of selecting some of these cutover lands as state parks. The necessary land could be secured at small cost

and with very little assistance nature would soon beautify the spot. Trees are usually associated in the public mind with parks, and tree growth is absolutely necessary to the future prosperity of Louisiana. There are, of course, tracts of land already wooded suitable for such parks, but there will be found an advantage in some localities in selecting cutover lands for the purpose. The destruction of the virgin forests had reached a point where something must be done for their re-establishment, and both soil and climate in Louisiana make the work much easier than in less favored regions, where the people have gone actively at work already in the establishment of state parks. Michigan having established 23 of them.

The adoption of Mr. Alexander's idea would result in a plan primarily

intended to be aesthetic and recreational being made of decided economic value to the state and its people, for the marketing of the annual product of the parks would not only save the state the cost of their maintenance, but would be of value to the entire people otherwise by adding in some measure to the annual product of lumber, a commodity essential to the welfare of the people.

Lands now waste would be beautified by reforestation, and desert spots marring the beauty of the landscape would be made attractive, while those in need of outings would be afforded an opportunity to enjoy them at the least cost. The necessity of reforestation is rapidly seizing hold of the imaginations of the people, who are beginning to recognize the danger of the wholesale destruction of the forests.

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