

Chicago, Ill.

April 11, 1913.

Mr. John S. Macbeth, President,
Park Commissioner,
City Hall,
Denver, Colo.

Dear Sir:-

Amir
I beg to submit a report upon the location of the proposed new greenhouses in City Park [and upon the location of the Children's Fountain from Dusseldorf.] In doing so I crave the patience of the Board for the presentation of certain general considerations affecting the whole character of City Park, considerations which cannot be presented very briefly and which at best seem rather vague and general but which are in my opinion of the gravest consequence.

The present condition of City Park with all its merits and with the accompanying defects has apparently resulted not from following any consistent general plan but from the more or less accidental combination of successive fragmentary improvements. By all odds the most valuable landscape features thus acquired are the large numbers of fairly good-sized trees and two bodies of water. It is of course unfortunate that many of the trees are of the short-lived unsatisfactory species, soft maples, and there should be a systematic policy of planting and cutting that will gradually substitute better

press without at any time sacrificing the enormously valuable quality of umbrageousness which already characterizes a large part of the park.

The people of today ought to be duly thankful for the foresight which led to the early planting of so many trees, no matter how placed or of what kinds, and thankful also that the somewhat casual and fragmentary manner in which the park has been improved has resulted on the whole so well; they ought also to be extremely respectful and conservative in regard to any plans of improvement, however fragmentary, upon which their predecessors deliberately entered, because it is only by adhering to the same purpose for long periods of time that first class results can ever be secured in park work; but neither of these considerations will excuse the people of today for continuing to make changes and additional investments in the park without some definite general policy and controlling purpose.

From the very fact that City Park is the largest park in the city, and probably will remain the only large park very near the mass of the population, I feel very clear that to whatever other uses it may be incidentally put -- and such uses are innumerable -- it should always be managed with a view to providing to the utmost degree one valuable quality that is absolutely unattainable in a city except in a large park, ~~the~~ quality that gives a sense of spaciousness in contrast with the crowding that is elsewhere forced by the high land values of a city. Compared with many old cities Denver is relatively spacious everywhere, in its residential parts at least, but buildings

elbow each other pretty closely at that. The economic pressure toward the intensive occupation is everywhere manifest and the crowding will increase. The crowding of buildings, both public and private, is to a large degree inevitable in a city; and the most foolish of all expedients to which people are tempted to resort in the desire to avoid, or minimize this sense of crowding in respect to individual buildings intended for public use is to so place them in the parks that the only chances for really impressive spaciousness within the city are sacrificed for the sake of gaining a relatively greater liberality of effect in the grounds of a small percentage of the city's buildings.

Without pursuing this argument further at present, I repeat that in my opinion the size and location of City Park make it incumbent upon all who are responsible for its care and improvement to shape their whole policy with a view to securing in this area what can be secured better here than in any park in Denver and what the people will need more and more keenly as time goes on, namely the quality of refreshing spaciousness of landscape in contrast with more or less crowded buildings which constitute the rest of the city.

I propose in May to prepare specific general plans for improvements in the landscape compositions of the park, chiefly in the foliage masses, by additional plantings, by certain gradual substitutions of other plants, and by some absolute removals of existing masses; and the chief object of all these proposed improvements will be to secure the above mentioned