

Parks and Playgrounds Association.

The Parks and Playgrounds Association in Montreal is an institution that can be introduced into every municipality with great advantage. The aims of the Association are two fold as the double name implies. The preservation, extension and improvement of public parks is surely an object which ought to appeal to every good citizen, not merely from the aesthetic point of view, but also from the Commercial standpoint; because the city with many beautiful parks possesses an immense attraction.

Then the absolute necessity of playgrounds for city children, where they can expend their surplus energy and get that best of medicines, fresh air, is a matter of business as well as of philanthropy, for if the children do not grow up healthier, the cost to the city in every way is appalling.

The Parks and Playgrounds Association of Montreal owes its inception to a projected attack upon Mount Royal Park by the Montreal Street Ry. Co. The Company was seeking powers to construct 2 miles of double track in Mount Royal Park. A few ladies started an agitation; made a canvas, and petitioned the Council, asking that the franchise should not be granted. Needless to add, the Street Ry. at once retreated, and withdrew their request.

In order to forestall any future attacks, a Committee of ladies, both French and English, was formed with Lady Hingston as president, and a clause added to the charter, securing the Park, as was believed.

But in March 1900, a member of the Quebec Legislative, without the consent of the City Council, and in spite of their protests, secured an amendment, permitting the City to sell part of the Park.

This led to the need of a permanent organization, and as the question of playgrounds for the children was being discussed, the Parks and Playgrounds Association was formed, with two special duties: first, to preserve from alienation all parks and open spaces, and to urge upon the City Council the need of more, rather than less, breathing spaces for the public: second, "to establish public playgrounds and sand-gardens for the children and older boys."

"Playgrounds are divided into classes: I.—Those sand-gardens for the young, opened in the school yards for three hours daily during ten weeks of the Summer vacation, under suitable supervision and with one or more kindergarten teachers to oversee games, &c., with three duties impressed upon the frequenters—"To play fair, to keep clean and to speak the truth." II.—Those opened on park property, with ball grounds, ponds for sailing boats, baths, &c., of which we have an excellent example in the Westmount Park.

"The first class are somewhat allied to the vacation schools, in so far as they are able to teach, though out of doors, many useful things, such as sewing,

knitting and even carpentry, while good conduct and diligence may be rewarded by a trip to the country on a botanizing expedition. The second class are, naturally, entirely devoted to play, and beyond certain restrictions as to fighting, swearing and damaging property, which can be enforced by the usual park attendant, little of educational advantage is aimed at save those lessons that freedom, bodily exercise and happiness may teach."

The Montreal Association has done splendid work, and is increasing this all the time as better appreciation gives larger support, and we cordially commend this work as one that can be copied with the greatest advantage in other cities and towns.

Clarion vs. Daily Mail.

The London, Eng. "Daily Mail" is strongly—and unscrupulously—anti-municipal, and has had a lovely piece of news to distort into its own particular style of supplying its readers. A small tradesman committed suicide because he could not pay his rates. This is recorded by the "Mail" under the scare heading of "Killed by Rates." The "Clarion," also of London, Eng., points out how utterly unjust and misleading, and shows that the argument of the "Mail" that municipal trading increases rates, is entirely untrue.

The "Clarion" goes further and says that the "policy of the "Daily Mail" is to keep the people poor" the municipal trading undertakings which excite anger are those which make *profits* for the people."

It quotes the Parliamentary returns for boroughs carrying on trading services, to March 1902, and they are:

	Gross Profits	Per Cent.
97 Gasworks.. . . .	£1,367,735	7.3
102 Electricity.. . . .	473,896	4.2
45 Tramways.. . . .	482,406	5.6
Total.. . . .	£2,324,037	

After payment of interest and sinking fund, the net profits were £505,850, say two million dollars.

The "Daily Mail" says "on the municipalists, theory the growth of the debt which has accompanied municipal trading in a colossal scale should have led to a decrease in the rates." To which the "Clarion" replies: "No municipalist ever put forward such a theory. No one but an ignoramus or a rogue could evolve such a theory" for of the 373 million pounds forming the total municipal debt, only 58 millions are for gas, electricity and tramways, the overwhelming proportion being used for waterworks, highways, sewers, and other non-productive works.

And the "Daily Mail" believes—or wants its readers to believe—that the productive undertakings, which show a large profit, are the cause of the large increase in rates!

It really looks as if the "Daily Mail" had its anti-municipal editorials supplied by that so-called Industrial Freedom League, which is the organ of the company promoters.