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THE AMERICAN CIVIC ASSOCIATION'S MOVEMENT FOR A BUREAU OF NATIONAL PARKS

President Taft on a National Parks Bureau

ADDRESS ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1911

The Need for a Bureau of National Parks

ADDRESS OF HON. WALTER L. FISHER
Secretary of the Interior

Are National Parks Worth While?

ANNUAL ADDRESS BY MR. J. HORACE McFARLAND
President American Civic Association

PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL PARKS SESSION OF THE AMERICAN CIVIC ASSOCIATION, HELD WEDNESDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 13, 1911, IN THE NEW WILLARD HOTEL, WASHINGTON, D. C., AS PART OF ITS SEVENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

For a Bureau of National Parks

SPECIAL MESSAGE OF PRESIDENT TAFT TO CONGRESS, FEBRUARY 2, 1912

"I earnestly recommend the establishment of a Bureau of National Parks. Such legislation is essential to the proper management of those wondrous manifestations of nature, so startling and so beautiful that everyone recognizes the obligations of the Government to preserve them for the edification and recreation of the people.

"The Yellowstone Park, the Yosemite, the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, the Glacier National Park and the Mount Rainier National Park and others furnish appropriate instances. In only one case have we made anything like adequate preparation for the use of a park by the public. That case is the Yellowstone National Park. Every consideration of patriotism and the love of nature and of beauty and of art requires us to expend money enough to bring all these natural wonders within easy reach of our people. The first step in that direction is the establishment of a responsible bureau, which shall take upon itself the burden of supervising the parks and of making recommendations as to the best method of improving their accessibility and usefulness."

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ARE NATIONAL PARKS WORTH WHILE?

The one evening session of the Seventh Annual Convention of the American Civic Association, held at Washington, D. C., December 13, 14 and 15, was devoted exclusively to the national parks of the United States, with especial reference to the necessity of creating by Congress a Federal Bureau of Parks, within the Department of the Interior, to make possible their more adequate administration.

Hon. Walter L. Fisher, Secretary of the Interior, presided, and introduced the several distinguished speakers of the evening, all of whom were staunch advocates of a more comprehensive development of the great national parks. The most distinguished speaker was the President of the United States, who had in his recent annual message to Congress (and later in a special message) strongly recommended the creation of a Bureau of National Parks.

PRESIDENT TAFT'S ADDRESS

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It costs a good deal of money to run a government, and the first ambition of any one responsible for a government is economy—at least it ought to be. Therefore, the proposition to add a bureau or a department sends gooseflesh all over the body of anyone who has any sort of responsibility in respect to the finances of the government, for it means another nucleus for the increase of governmental expenses. Yet a modern government, in order to be what it ought to be, must spend money. Utility involves expense.

Now, we have in the United States a great many natural wonders, and in that lazy way we have in our Government of first taking up one thing and then another, we have set aside a number of national parks, of forest reservations, covering what ought to be national parks, and what are called "national monuments." We have said to ourselves, "Those cannot get away. We have surrounded them by a law which makes them necessarily Government property forever, and

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we will wait in our own good time to make them useful as parks to the people of the country. Since the Interior Department is the 'lumber room' of the Government, into which we put everything that we don't know how to classify, and don't know what to do with, we will just put them under the Secretary of the Interior." That is the condition of the national parks today.

Those of you who have first been in the Yellowstone Park and admired its beauties, and thought of the ability of the army engineers to construct such roads as are there there, and then have gone on to the Yosemite and have seen its beauties, and found the roads not quite so good, and then have gone to the Grand Canyon, and found a place where you could bury the Yellowstone Canyon and the Yosemite, and never know that they were there, and found no roads at all, except a railroad that was built at a great expense, and probably at great loss, to the side of the Canyon, and only a trail called the "Bright Angel Trail," down into the Canyon—down which they would not let me go because they were afraid the mules could not carry me—you will understand that something needs to be done in respect to those parks if we all are to enjoy them.

I am in favor of equality of opportunity, and I resent an exclusion from the enjoyment of the wonders of the world that it only needs a little money to remove!

Now the course that was taken in respect to the Yellowstone Park ought to be taken in respect to all of our parks. If we are going to have national parks, we ought to make them available to the people, and we ought to build the roads, expensive as they may be, in order that those parks may become what they are intended to be when Congress creates them. And we cannot do that, we cannot carry them on effectively, unless we have a bureau which is itself distinctly charged with the responsibility for their management and for their building up.

When the Secretary of the Interior, therefore, asked me to come here, and told me the subject of the meeting tonight, I was glad to come. It is going to add to the expense of the Interior Department, and it is going to swell those estimates, but it is essential that we should use what the Lord has given us in this way, and make it available for all the people. We have the money. It is not going to take enough to exhaust the Treasury. It is a proper expense, a necessary expense. Let us have the bureau.

Secretary Fisher, in following the President, explained in detail "The Need for a Bureau of National Parks," pointing out the limitations of the existing provisions for their administration and emphasizing the larger and more dignified administration that would be possible with a regularly constituted bureau.

ADDRESS OF HON. WALTER L. FISHER

Secretary of the Interior

During the past summer, or early fall—I have forgotten for the moment the exact date—there was held at the Yellowstone Park the first conference that had ever been held of the people who were interested in a practical way in the administration of the national parks and in the various interests that lead up to and are connected with them, such as the railroads and the concessionaires for the hotel privileges, transportation privileges, photographic concessions, and matters of that sort within the parks. I have not seen the tabulation of the roster of that conference, but my recollection of it is that there were in attendance something in excess of one hundred. This conference was the result of an effort which had gone on for some considerable time on the part of the chief clerk of the Department of the Interior, Mr. Ucker, and Mr. Carr, who is the next in command in that line of administration, and the other people connected with the administration of the parks in the office of the Secretary. They were joined in this, however, and had been in the preliminary arrangements and discussions, as I understand it, by the representatives of this organization, the American Civic Association, and others who were interested in the general subject of the improvement of our national parks. The conference that was held was a very practical one. There were a great number of developments considered by those who had been asked to prepare suggestions upon particular phases of park management and control and other matters connected with the national parks, and they were followed by general discussions from the floor, and, of course, much discussion and much talk quietly during the various recesses and in the evening.

The American Civic Association, very naturally and properly, was represented at that meeting by its long-time

president, who is so well known to you and to the country at large for his work in this direction. The discussions that went on, of course, related mainly to the question of what we could do to improve our national parks to make them more accessible to the public, and more attractive to the public. I do not know whether I shall in any way intrude upon the field which is to be covered by Mr. McFarland in his address, or by Senator Smoot, but I think it is proper I should call to your attention, for fear that they may not speak of, or be able to include in their remarks, some of the things that we often pass by, but which may be interesting and instructive to you and I think are to be considered.

In the first place, the national parks, like Topsy, have "just growed;" at least that is the impression which has been produced upon my mind from such investigation and discussion as I have given to them. There is no consistent theory of legislation with regard to the national parks. While some of them follow the general lines of previous statutes, there are wide variations in the statutory authority under which the parks are carried on today. The whole park work of some states is wholly different from that of others, and the situation in detail is almost radically divergent. For instance, I find some such question as this: Whether the revenues derived from a particular national park shall be available for the use of that park, its improvement and development. We have no consistent action. Two of our important parks are without statutory authority to that effect, so that such revenue as is derived from the park itself in any way has to go back into the general fund of the Nation, to be used in such a way as that derived from any other general source is used, and appropriated directly and specifically for that purpose. In other parks a very large per cent of the money available is directly available without appropriation. The same thing is true with regard to appropriations which Congress gives to the parks. The importance and the political pressure which a particular park possesses bring to it appropriations larger than those which may be given to another. The result is that we have no consistent theory of park administration.

There are many questions which any one could see at a glance are similar in all these parks. Take, for instance, the question of road-making. We have practically the same problems in all of the parks with regard to road-making; at least in a very considerable number of them. For instance, there

may be three or four parks where these problems are so similar that the general specifications, the general principles that should be applied, are identical, but they may differ from another class of these parks.

Take many of the other questions that are raised in the parks. The whole question of the protection and disposition of the trees, the concessions, how the hotel concessions shall be managed, what requirements shall be made of the hotel proprietors, what regulations shall be made with regard to the casual ordinary visitor for his protection and so that he may receive the proper sort of service. These are very similar in all these parks, or, at all events, it is quite apparent that an examination into any given question in one of the parks would throw a great deal of light upon the same problem when it arises in other of the parks.

I mention these things, simple as they may seem, to call your attention to the singular fact that, although there has been a great deal of talk of improved efficiency in our Government affairs, we have absolutely no machinery and no legal authority to use any machinery for the coördination of these parks so we may state this problem as a whole. The only thing we can possibly do in the way of coördination in the Interior Department is to see that questions that come to us for determination are referred to the same individuals in the Department. We can see that the chief clerk, or his assistant, shall primarily pass upon these matters; we may say that the assistant secretary—as distinguished from the first assistant, there being two—shall be the person to whom appeals shall go, the person to whom the chief clerk shall go for final determination of questions of importance; and we do. When we have done that we are through. We may use our Division of Mails and Files. We may use our Division of Publications and get a certain amount of effective work there; and we have Mr. Schmeckebier of that Division, who has accomplished some quite remarkable results, in my judgment, in the publicity line simply in getting out some material to those who are eager to have it. We have found that the American public is greedy for real news about the national parks; that it is genuinely interested in the national parks and ready to get anything that is not simply perfunctory news upon this subject. But when we have done these things the Department of the Interior is through. That is all that it can do toward coördination. It would seem that it requires practically no argument to convince that the

one thing we need at once for the efficiency of administration and economy in expenditure is to get these parks together under some division or bureau where they can receive the benefit of a central staff, where we can take the men who are now studying road-making, or the management of roads, or the sprinkling problem—which is, after all, to the traveling public probably the most important question connected with the administration of the parks, because the hotels will do a certain amount of looking after their own interests along the lines of intelligent and enlightened selfishness. And the revenue is there. But if the roads are to be sprinkled and taken care of, that must be done purely as a matter of expenditure, and unless it is looked after by the administrative force it will not be looked after at all.

Now it is perfectly apparent what we ought to have. We ought to have some sort of a central organization, something in the nature of a bureau, with a head and subordinates, so we can get proper expert talent and men who will devote their time to these matters, not merely with regard to one park but all the parks where the questions arise. It is perfectly apparent that if we were studying any one of these questions with regard to any one of these parks, and were confined to that and the appropriation for that park, we could not get as good a man to study the problems in the case of the others. And, in the second place, after we have done it once, unless we can utilize his advice and experience some place else we won't get it at all. Then, another thing. We get rid of a good many of these isolated and separate and distinct appropriations. We would not have several appropriations made distinctly for the Yellowstone Park and made for the Yosemite Park and so on down the line, and each appropriation confined to that particular park or some particular function or interest in that park, but we would begin to learn that many of these problems are alike, that it is not enough to treat one park in one way and another in another way. We would have our Bureau bring forward the things in our parks which now do not receive particular attention, very largely through ignorance of the subject because the experience of the particular man who has that park in charge has not been so great as has been that of some other man.

The result of all these reflections was that the conference to which I have referred was, so far as we were able to ascertain, unanimous upon the proposition that there should be

established as promptly as possible a Bureau of National Parks, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, so that that Bureau might coördinate these parks and their administration and vastly improve their condition and their advantage to the public. In this conference, this was not merely the expression of foresters, of those interested in the parks from the theoretical point of view, but the conviction of men who attended there representing the large railroad systems which lead up to those parks and which are directly interested in them. And it was a very significant thing to me, as I think it will be to you, to find that the Northern Pacific Railroad Company, whose road leads to one of our principal parks, was, and is, much in favor, through its representatives, of having a National Park Bureau established, embracing other parks as well, purely from a scenic point of view. In other words, each particular railroad, which led to a particular park, was not interested solely in working for that park, but these men have reached that degree of enlightenment in their selfishness—in their self-interest—that they have come to the conclusion that it was for their own best interest to have a National Park Bureau established.

I have talked this matter over with the President, and I know that he is favorably interested in it, and that he gladly accepted the suggestion that he come over here this evening to meet this audience and express his own views in favor of this movement in which the American Civic Association is taking so prominent and leading a part. But you do not expect me to fill the stage this evening to the exclusion of those who have been regularly selected as speakers, and particularly not to take the place of, or infringe upon the time allowed to, Mr. McFarland, President of the American Civic Association. Recognizing, as I do, the practical and vigorous manner in which he has gone into this, as he has into most of the other problems in which the American Civic Association is interested, I feel that we have gained an ally—I should not put it that way—that we are allies with him, and that we are willing to help him and this Association in carrying on this work and see that we get from this coming Congress, if possible, a bill along the lines of that which Senator Smoot has advocated, which will permit of the establishment of a bureau of the sort I have described.

I take pleasure in presenting Mr. McFarland. [Applause.]

ADDRESS OF MR. J. HORACE McFARLAND

President American Civic Association

"ARE NATIONAL PARKS WORTH WHILE?"

There can be only a negative reply to the query of the subject, unless it be conclusively shown that the national parks add definitely something of value to the life or the resources of the Nation. Mere pride of possession cannot justify, in democratic America, the removal from development of upward of five millions of acres of the public domain.

THE AMERICAN PARK IDEA

To establish true value, real worth-whileness, therefore, it is necessary to put the national parks on trial. Indeed, as the national parks are but a larger development of municipal, county and state parks, we may quite properly put on the stand the whole American park idea.

It is necessary to call the recent rapid development of a certain kind of parks in the United States an American idea, for it has no close parallel abroad. Examining, for instance, the admirable plan upon which the capital of Belgium has been developing since 1572, we note in Brussels an almost entire absence of such parks as those of Boston. The present-day plan of Paris shows that inside the old city there had been provided almost as large an area of cemeteries in which to store the dead as of parks in which to restore the energies of the living. Great London has barely an acre of parks for each thousand of her people—only a tenth of the ideal American provision of an acre for every hundred inhabitants. Even model Berlin is long on municipal forests and short on well-distributed municipal parks. The recently published Encyclopedia Britannica, written abroad, devotes just 31 lines to the discussion of the word "park," and 17 of these lines refer to its military significance!

So the American service park is a New World idea, and it is even quite new in the New World; for, at the date of the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, parks in the United States were few in number, small in extent, and largely upon European models. Within five years, indeed, a contest has

raged in Greater New York around the idea of diverting a portion of Central Park from the service of the relatively few in the way of purely pleasure development to the service of the very many through the establishment of well-equipped playgrounds.

Yet inquiry has developed that, in 1909, 74 American cities owned 41,576 acres of parks, an average of about four-tenths of an acre to the 100 of their population, and spent upon them that year for maintenance—that is, to make them of service to the people—an average of $91.42 per acre. Some of these cities are in what I call the honor class of American communities, in that they own and maintain an acre or more of parks for each hundred of their people. Such cities are Council Bluffs, Minneapolis, Harrisburg, Colorado Springs and Springfield, Ill.

PLAYGROUNDS—THE FIRST AIDS TO CHILDHOOD

This American service park idea, into which we are inquiring critically as to its true value, its relative efficiency, has its intensive development in modern playgrounds—those first aids to endangered American childhood, of which few examples are found abroad, and not nearly enough in our own county. We have multiplied schools in which to cultivate the brain, but have delayed long in providing adequate facilities to develop and keep in order the body which houses the brain. Our cemeteries, our juvenile courts and our reform schools have increased much more rapidly than the means by which the city can hold back the population of the one and decrease the business of the others.

Chicago, for instance, has notably discovered the truth as to this relation between crime and disorder and the small park and social center. It is a departing relation; for in 1909 it was discovered that within a half-mile radius of her twelve splendidly equipped and maintained breathing-spots, veritable life-saving stations in the midst of the sea of industrial strain and stress, juvenile delinquency had decreased 44 per cent, while in the same year it had increased 11 per cent in the city as a whole.

Here, then, is the first evidence for the defendant at the bar—the American park idea. The service park, the ordered and supervised playground, act immediately and favorably on the health and the orderliness of the community, and

consequently increase materially the average of individual efficiency. In other words, they pay dividends in humanity.

AMERICAN PARK SYSTEMS

The park idea we are examining has a development in another way. The joining of separated parks by a highway of green, usually called a parkway, is the step taken when a community develops from the simple having of parks to the proud possession of a park system. The one may merely have happened; the other is always the result of a careful plan. Minneapolis, Hartford, Kansas City, Boston, Buffalo and other prosperous and advanced American cities have such systems. Chicago has a great plan for a park system, and owns some links in the chain which is to bind it together.

An adequate park system, looking toward the future of the city, and giving to every inhabitant easy access without expense for transportation to the relief of a spot of green, to the recreation of a playground, is the most profitable investment a city can make. It is profitable in promoting the welfare of the people; it is profitable in providing along its borders increased taxable values. For instance, Kansas City's Paseo, cut through her length, has cleared fully its cost in increased values, and even old Central Park in New York has returned to the city more than eight times the total amount spent in purchase and development within sixty years.

I bring then before the court the second witness for the character and worth-whileness of the American park idea. Well-considered park improvements always react favorably upon community values. Proper park investments are usually placed at what amounts to compound increment.

WHAT FOSTERS TRUE PATRIOTISM?

But there is another witness for the defendant. It is typified in the American flag, the emblem of our national existence, the concrete, visible essence of that love of country which manifests itself in the essential virtue of patriotism. Consider what it is that inspires us as we sing the national hymn. Is it our wonder of mining, showing in the hideous ore dumps, the sordid mining village? Is it in the burned-over waste that has followed the cutting of much of our forest wealth? Is it the powerhouse in which is harnessed the beauty of Niagara? Is it the smoking factory chimneys, the houses

of the grimy mill town, the malodorous wharves along our navigable rivers? Is it even the lofty metropolitan skyscraper, or the great transcontinental steel highway?

No; not one of these produces patriotism. Listen to the most sordid materialist who is American in birth or residence, as he boasts: it is always of the beauty of his town, his state, his country! Our devotion to the flag begins in that love of country which its beauty has begotten; it may end, at the last supreme test, in the beauty of soul that makes the patriot ready to die for his country in battle—if just battle there may ever again be.

Now these parks that have been presented to you, and those I am yet to present, are, all of them, planned to show forth the beauty of the land. Never a service park have I seen or heard of that failed to use to the utmost the trees and the plants, the grass and the flowers that stand for our native land. Playgrounds are sometimes, perforce, on limited city spaces, but always there is at least the attempt to get the blue of the sky opened to the boys and girls. Into the brick and concrete heart of the city the park brings a little of the primeval outdoors, and here grows best the love of country which sees with adoration the waving stars and stripes.

So I hold that, in safeguarding and stimulating the essential virtue of patriotism, the beauty of the American park stands forth as most of all worth while. I urge that, as an antidote to the teachings of social disorder, as a counter-irritant to the saloon, as a relentless foe to the slum, the American park idea in the playground is most completely justified.

THE NATION'S LARGER PLAYGROUNDS

It is but a step across the country and the state park to the national park. There come, increasingly in these work-filled American days, times when the tired spirit seeks a wider space for change and rest than any city, or indeed, any state, can provide. The deep forests of the Sierras call, the snow-capped peaks of the Rockies beckon. The roar of Niagara can drown the buzz of the ticker. Old Faithful's gleaming column of silver spray shuts off the balance sheet. El Capitan makes puny the capital of any state, or of the nation. The camp under the oaks of the Hetch-Hetchy Valley, near the ripple of the Tuolumne, restores vigor, up-

lifts the wearied spirit. What cathedral of man's building shows forth the power of God unto health of soul as does the Grand Canyon of the Colorado? The glacier wonderland of the Northwest gives us lessons on the building of the continent, and the giant sequoias of the Pacific Slope teach us of our own littleness.

These national parks, then, are our larger playgrounds. Everything that the limited scope of the city park can do as quick aid to the citizen, they are ready to do more thoroughly, on a greater scale.

To the vast open spaces, the sight of great mountains, the opportunity to live a mile or more higher up, they add possibilities of real life in the open just touched upon as yet, even though more than three thousand horses this year drew their owners on camping trips into the Yellowstone alone.

The national playgrounds, too, can, if they are held inviolable, preserve for us, as no minor possessions can, our unique scenic wonders, our great natural mysteries. The spouting geyser basins and marvelous hot springs of the Yellowstone, the atmospheric splendors of the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, the silver threads of the Falls of the Yosemite, the ancient homes of the cliff-dwellers on the Mesa Verde, the ice marvels of the Montana glaciers, the blue marvel of Crater Lake, the towering temples amid the big trees of the Sierras—how long would they last unharmed and free to all the people if the hand of the Federal Government was withdrawn from them? Ask harassed, harnessed Niagara—depending right now for its scenic life upon the will of this Congress—after, indeed, Congress alone has saved it until now from state neglect!

THE DIFFERING FUNCTIONS OF FORESTS AND PARKS

The nation now has, it should be said, vast and admirably handled national forests, potential with profit for all the people. But there must be no confusion between the differing functions of the forests and the parks.

The primary function of the national forests is to supply lumber. The primary function of the national parks is to maintain in healthful efficiency the lives of the people who must use that lumber. The forests are the nation's reserve wood-lots. The parks are the nation's reserve for the main-

tenance of individual patriotism and federal solidarity. The true ideal of their maintenance does not run parallel to the making of the most timber, or the most pasturage, or the most water-power.

Our national parks are young. They are yet undeveloped to any considerable extent. But one of them, the Yellowstone, is comfortably accessible. Their value to the nation is potential, more than instant, simply because they are not, as a whole, yet known to our people. The nearest east of them is fifteen hundred miles west of the country's center of population in Indiana. Our people yet cross three thousand miles of salt water to see less impressive scenery, less striking wonders, less inspiring majesty in canyon, waterfall and geyser, than they have not seen at home, because the way to Europe has been made broad, comfortable and "fashionable!"

THE NATIONAL PARKS BUT LITTLE USED

In 1910, barely two hundred thousand visitors to our thirteen national parks and our twenty-eight national monuments were reported, but all the east-bound Atlantic greyhounds were crowded to their capacity. We have not yet begun to use the national parks; we have not commenced to attract to them a share of the golden travel tide which is said to have taken from America to Europe $350,000,000 in 1910.

Indeed, we are not ready for visitors in our national parks. We have, as yet, no national park system. The parks have just happened; they are not the result of such an overlooking of the national domain as would, and ought to, result in a coördinated system. There is no adequately organized control of the national parks. With 41 national parks and monuments, aggregating an area larger than two sovereign states, and containing priceless glories of scenery and wonders of nature, we do not have as efficient a provision for administration as is possessed by many a city of but fifty thousand inhabitants for its hundred or so acres! In a lamentable number of cases, the administration consists solely in the posting of a few warning notices!

LACK OF PARK MANAGEMENT

Nowhere in official Washington can an inquirer find an office of the national parks, or a desk devoted solely to their

management. By passing around through three departments, and consulting clerks who have taken on the extra work of doing what they can for the nation's playgrounds, it is possible to come at a little information.

This is no one's fault. Uncle Sam has simply not waked up about his precious parks. He has not thrown over them the mantle of any complete legal protection—only the Yellowstone has any adequate legal status, and the Yosemite is technically a forest reserve. Selfish and greedy assaults have been made upon the parks, and it is under a legal "joker" that San Francisco is now seeking to take to herself without having in ten years shown any adequate engineering reason for the assault, nearly half of the Yosemite. Three years ago several of us combined to scotch and kill four vicious legislative snakes under which any one might have condemned at $2.50 per acre the Great Falls of the Yellowstone, or even entered upon a national cemetery for the production of electric power at the same price for the land!

Now there is light and a determination to do as well for the nation as any little city does for itself. The Great Father of the nation, who honors us tonight by his presence, has been the unswerving friend of the nation's scenic possessions. He has consistently stood for the people's interest in Niagara; he now stands for their interest in the nation's parks.

His Secretary of the Interior, the presiding officer of the evening, has applied his great constructive ability to the national park problem. It was at his invitation that the first national park conference was held in September last. He has visited most of the parks, and, coming from a city where intensive park development has proceeded to be a greater beneficence than in any other in the world, he comprehends fully the American service park idea.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL PARKS

There is, then, hope for the parks. The Congress will not refuse, I am sure, to enact legislation creating a Bureau of National Parks, to the custody of which all the nation's pearls of great price shall be entrusted. Under such a bureau, aided by a commission of national prominence and scope, I predict that there will be undertaken not only such ordering of the parks as will vastly increase their use and their usefulness, but such a survey of the land as will result in the establishment of many new national parks, before it is too late.

Niagara, never more in danger than at this moment, must eventually, if it is to be a cataract and not a catastrophe, come under the federal mantle as a national reservation as President Taft has again recently urged. In no other way can America be saved from the lasting disgrace that now threatens our most notable natural wonder. A nation that can afford a Panama Canal cannot afford a dry Niagara!

There is something inspiring in the thought of a national park sacred to the memory of the great liberator, and adding to the beauty and dignity of the city in which he poured out his last full measure of devotion. A Lincoln Memorial National Park, joining the lovely forests between Washington and Baltimore and Annapolis to the Potomac, would be a thousand times more fitting tribute to the glory of our first martyr than a mere commercial highway.

He whose genius made the nation, and whose wisdom planned this Federal City to be a fitting capital for a hundred millions of free people when yet there were but a scant three millions clinging to the Atlantic seaboard ought also to be thus memorialized. Why shall not Mount Vernon and its environs come into a great Washington Memorial National Park which shall link together anew, as it reaches the Potomac, the fame of our two greatest presidents, and forever blot out a line once fought over in civil warfare?

Nothing is more certain than that eventually the nation will come to own memorial areas, which shall serve a double purpose in their tributes to the departed great and their beneficence to the living. Delay means but enhanced and compounded cost. With such a truly patriotic provision for the future as well as the present as would be involved in the creation of a great national park system, available to the people of the East as well as to those of the West, our federal scenic possessions would come to attract the travel of the world. Inadequate though they are now, inaccessible as they are now, unadministered as they are now, our national parks have added very definitely to the resources of our people, and are well worth while. When they shall have been given the attention that is in the minds of our President and our Secretary of the Interior, they will increase in efficiency, in beauty, in extent, and in benefits open to all the people, so that they will even more be entirely worth while.

Secretary Fisher: "I am sure that there is no one from whom this audience and the country would rather hear on

this subject than the chairman of the Public Lands Committee of the Senate, who has shown in many ways his interest in park questions, and I take great pleasure in introducing to you Senator Smoot, of Utah, who will speak on the subject of 'What the National Parks May Mean to the West.'"

HON. REED SMOOT, SENATOR FROM UTAH

The difficulties which are now experienced in administering the affairs of the national parks and in developing them after any given plan were emphasized by Senator Smoot. "Separate appropriations are now made for each park, making it impossible for the Secretary of the Interior to concentrate the efforts of his department in their behalf," the Senator said, and in this connection he referred to the subject matter of a bill, which he had introduced in Congress which, he said, would correct this evil and would also result in a saving.

"If we do thus centralize the control of the parks," the Senator continued, "I am sure it will make the greatest playgrounds of the nation of vastly more benefit to all of the people. Instead of the expenditure of many millions of dollars traveling to Europe, we will then see the money being spent on American railroads, in American hotels, for American guides and with American merchants and farmers. The time will come when it will be both popular and fashionable for Americans to have seen the marvels of the National Parks."

The Senator spoke of the increasing popularity of these great Government reservations of the West and said that while the number of visitors last year was only 186,000, the number of visitors this year was 224,000. But, he declared, the value of the parks cannot be estimated in mere sordid dollars and cents; for if the city parks can be said to be the lungs of the city, the national parks can be said to be the lungs of the nation.

MR. ENOS A. MILLS, ESTES PARK, COLORADO

Mr. Enos A. Mills, of Estes Park, Colorado, well known as a lecturer and writer on nature subjects, was listened to with rapt attention as he told a delightful story of "Wild Life in a National Park."

MR. HERBERT W. GLEASON, OF BOSTON

The session concluded with the presentation of "Some Picturesque Features of Our National Parks," by Mr. Herbert W. Gleason, of Boston, illustrated with more than one hundred exquisitely colored stereopticon views, the result of Mr. Gleason's own observation and visits in the national parks, over a period of many years. These pictures presented features unsuspected by the average citizen of the United States, and, in particular, drew emphasis to the exquisite floral life of the national parks. President Taft remained during nearly the whole of Mr. Gleason's address, which was listened to with the utmost gratification.

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