Mr. President, Members and Guests of the Commercial Club:

I deeply appreciate the honor conferred on me by your invitation to show you the designs for the improvement of the Lake Front. But I come here tonight with considerable diffidence because I realize that my lack of skill in making the presentation may result in a less convincing argument than the importance of the undertaking demands. If, therefore, my explanation shall seem to you to be tame, I beg that you will look beyond the uttered words and see for yourselves that the cause is one which should arrest your attention, arouse your sympathy and enlist your heartiest co-operation.

You are the men who have made Chicago, who have fought her battles and won her victories, who have never been content to pause and rest after deeds accomplished, but whose faces have always been turned toward the future and whose motto has ever been, "I WILL."

Many things which have seemed to be well-nigh impossible, have been completed by the men of Chicago; always with the same impatience of delay, imperiously overriding every obstacle. The destroyed City rebuilt in a year; the drainage canal now almost complete; the World's Fair designed in '91 and completed in '93; are but samples of the unchanging genius of the place; and I am confident that what is now proposed will be looked back upon by you in a few years as an accomplished undertaking; and so,
looking toward the future, I suggest that the time is come for Chicago to make herself attractive.

It is surprising that no public effort has yet been made in all these years to restore to the people of the city the seven miles of water frontage lying between the river and Hyde Park. This effort we now propose to make, and if the purpose be carried out, it will add a new and beneficent element to individual lives in the city. The effect of lovely scenery on man is not imaginary but positive and is not felt alone through the mind upon the body, but skillfully played upon, the possibility of a violin increases until the instrument comes to vibrate readily to the harmonious sound waves transmitted from the strings. He who habitually listens to good music learns to love and appreciate it and it affects him not alone through the ear, but through the direct impact of the sound waves upon his body, so that the latter being constantly vibrated by the concord of sweet sounds grows sympathetic and incidentally responsive in that the man feels harmony through all his nerves as well as through specific ones that connect his brain with the drum of his ear. Visual nature, reflecting color waves which bear a strict relation to those of sound, often creates vibrations of lengths and combinations producing what is called in music, a harmony. And just as a violin vibrates every particle of his body, so a beautiful landscape exerts a similar physical effect which, if it be strong enough, creates in man what for want of better words we call inspiration. An
inspiration comes forth in music and poetry from his throat or his fingers. In the realization of this an individual is apt to believe that his thoughts are original; but I fancy he is merely for the time an involuntary transmitter of the song of the scene. At any rate, beauty in nature is good for us and every one is benefitted by it. Carlyle says: "All deep things are a song. It seems, somehow, the very central essence of us, a song. As if the rest were but wrappings and hulls, the primal element of us and of all things."

When a citizen is made to feel the beauty of nature, when he is lifted up by her, to any degree above the usual level of his thoughts and feelings, the state of which he is a part, is benefitted thereby and a very purpose will be served if the lake shore be restored to the people and made very beautiful for them.

If the plan of improvement is carried out you will have taken a long step towards cementing together the heterogeneous elements of our population and toward assimilating the million-and-a-half of people who are here now but who were not here some fifteen years ago.

But apart from mere pleasantness and contentment which great natural beauty fosters and enhances, the material prosperity which should follow as a result is perhaps far more importance.

You all know that there is a tendency among our well-to-do people to spend much time and money elsewhere, and that this tendency has been rapidly growing in late years.
We have been running away to Cairo, Athens, and The Riviera, Paris and Vienna, because life at home is not so pleasant as in these fashionable centers; - thus a constant drain upon the resources of the town has been going on, no one has estimated the number of millions of money made here in Chicago and annually expended elsewhere, but the sum must be a large one. What would be the effect upon our retail business at home if this money were circulated here?

Does any one grown rich in the mines, the forests or the plains of our country come here to life, or even stay for pleasure? Does he not pass through our city remaining only long enough to have his car transferred? We get neither himself nor his money.

Now what would be the effect upon our prosperity if the town were so delightful that most of the men who grow financially independent in the Mississippi Valley or West of it would come to Chicago to live? And should we not without delay do something to beautify and make our City attractive not only to ourselves but to these desirable visitors?

When I show you the plan you will see that the execution of it is a comparatively simple matter. Given the means, and a few years will see such another transformation as occurred in '93 at Jackson Park, only this time it can be made far more beautiful, and, better still, it can be made permanent.

In the '50's Napoleon III took old Paris to pieces and put
it together again. The changes as brought about by him made that
city famous, and as a result the idle people of great menace have
lingered there ever since and I am told that the Parisians annual-
ly gain in profits from visitors more than the Emperor spent
in making the changes. People will grow wealthy all over this
country and will either go to New York to live or come here if we
can bring about conditions which will attract them. Beauty al-
ways has been and ever will be better than any other commodity.

Athens was a commercial city and she controlled the commerce
of the then known world, but a time came when she saw that her
supremacy was about to slip away. Pericles, her ruler, perceived
this and determined that though men might seek wealth in other
lands they should come to Athens to spend it, and he gathered up
all the wealth of the Attic colonies and improved the city, which
ever since that time has been, and even to-day nearly three hundred
years afterwards is still living off of the money brought there by
visitors who were drawn principally by the public improvements in-
stituted by Pericles. He determined that the city should prosper
in the future even more than in the past and by building superb
monuments he accomplished the purpose he had in view. In short,
a commercial city is one of all others that should be interested
in putting on a charming dress and assuming a
appearance. Pericles was a political genius and knew how to
persevere the prosperity of a city.
are now in a position to take possession of the downtown Lake Front. Nothing has been done toward securing the right to build a boulevard from Park Row to 56th Street, but it is proposed that this shall be owned and operated by the South Park Commission for the public good. In order to raise the necessary money it is proposed while building the grand avenue to build in behind it so as to leave a broad strip of ground between the avenue and the lagoon, and to sell and rent this made ground to private persons or corporations. You will see on the plan that this strip of ground faces both the avenue and the lagoon and that it is in the aggregate 28,000 feet long, all of which will be valuable for the purpose of raising money to build and for revenue afterwards, provided certain legal difficulties can be surmounted, which difficulties can be overcome if the owners of riparian rights upon the shore will consent. If this financial scheme is allowed to be carried through, the land itself will pay for the entire improvement and leave a revenue for the maintenance of the Park system thereafter, which revenue will be derived from charges for ball games and other events. The design shows three parts which will be worked into an harmonious whole. This plan involves the improvement of the Lake Front, the connection of this with the North Shore and with Jackson Park Boulevard and the building out in the lake of a park-way from 12th to 56th Street. The treatment of the 300 foot strip and
and of the park in front of it is to be formal rather than natural because this location is surrounded by large buildings which cannot be brought into harmony with Woodland effects.

Between Randolph and 12th Streets there are thirteen coming out of the city and terminating at Michigan Avenue. The central one is Congress Street, which will be made the principal axis of the design. The chief aim for the three hundred foot strip is to bring about as far as practicable a symmetrical appearance of the parts on each side of the access.

The second aim is to design the park itself so that it will be true back in the old city. This will be brought about by the placing upon it opposite the center of each street some monumental object which shall fittingly mark that entrance which always shall be plainly visible to any one travelling eastward toward the lake. In other words the great terrace called the Lake Front is not only to have its effect upon the beholder who stands upon Michigan Avenue, but it is to penetrate far into the commercial community and become a constant up-lifting of life there.

I have not much time to dwell upon the details but will pass in review a few of the principal ones.

The continuation of Congress should form a broad approach to the outside park. There should be other approaches from Michigan Avenue and they should be at Peck and Hubbard Courts and at Jackson and Monroe Streets. On each side of Congress Street should be a place for a fountain and each should bear a proper name.
They should be of the type used in modern Rome wherein the water is thrown up from the rim of the basin to a common center. In the South and next to Park Row the South Shore Drive will begin. Between it and Peck Court will be a place left for a monument. Between Peck Court and Hubbard Court is the location of the equestrian statue of General Logan by Saint Gaudens, which statue is now built and ready to be placed. Upon Jackson and Monroe Streets is the ground upon which the Art Institute stands. These two entire blocks should be finished so as to produce the highest possible effect and enhance the beauty of that building. It has been suggested that the finish North and South of the Institute might be in peristyles exactly reproducing the finest orders of architecture. It has also been suggested that the Art Institute shall bridge over the Illinois Central to a twin building which shall rest West of the track; this would enter beautifully into the whole scheme. The orders of architecture spoken of above would nobly adorn the space and become of value to students of that profession.

The rest of the 300-foot strip, that lying between Monroe and Randolph Streets should be devoted to a building for annual expositions and for a monumental entrance to the tunnel which should connect Michigan Avenue with Pine Street on the North side.

The main feature of the outer part should be the Field Museum lying in the center of it with parade ground on the North and play ground on the South. In the extreme Southern quadrangle
might be placed the Crerar Library. North of Monroe Street is to be the prominent building of the first brigade of the Illinois National Guard, which will contain large drill halls, brigade headquarters, two rooms for each company of each regiment, all necessary hospitals, kitchens and other appurtenances of such an organization. At the North end of the enclosure of this camp should be a special building for the Naval Reserve, which will form a water gate through which will be an approach for the small harbor, which would be accessible directly from this camp.

The military buildings as a whole would present a front from 800 to 900 feet long, East and West which might be over run with vines and serve to screen the Illinois Central Railway from the public gaze.

On the main axis, that is to say, the center of Congress Street produced at the margin of the lake should be a fountain such as the one which was in the front of the Administration Building at the head of the grand Court of Honor in the Fair. Between the Museum and fountain should stand the monument of Columbus, such an one as was designed by Miss Lawrence and Mr. Saint Gaudens. South of the monument should be the Crerar statue of Lincoln. North of the monument of Washington. East of the monument on the main axis should be a place for some monument to be built in the future.

A broad roadway is to run around the four sides of the quadrangle, as a section of it towards the lake which will form part
of the South Shore drive which is to skirt the play ground, Museum, statues, fountains, parade ground, and the military camp and then go North over the viaduct which shall cross the river connecting with the Lincoln Park improvements so that coming back into the city one can drive along by the margin of the lake past Edgewater and Evanston to Fort Sheridan and beyond.

There are many minor places for statues, fountains, vases, and other objects but I will not stop to explain them here tonight. The entire design of the downtown park should be severely simple and formal as far as the plan is concerned, but exceedingly rich in details. In front of the outer part there is already established a very perfect yacht harbor. At the North end of the outer part there is already established a very harbor for smaller craft which are to ply on the lagoon inside of the great South Shore Drive.

The tunnel of which I have spoken should be of marble and should be adorned with statues and mural tablets and should be an object which would do high credit to the city.

Picture to yourselves a stately white Museum on the grand terrace called the Lake Front, and into all the elements of it. The lawns, the fountains, the monuments, all of which should be placed so as to have some reference to that particular building. Would not such a park form a fitting entrance way to the city itself, and yet it must be looked upon as a vestibule and nothing more, for still more important will be the avenues that are to meet upon
it. From it the people will pass across Michigan Avenue, and enter the iron loop that already encloses the world of commerce in Chicago. In the south end there will be a broad park-way, commencing at Michigan Avenue going eastward up from the Illinois Central Railway to the lake, thence by a stone bridge of the old Roman pattern to the first great outer concourse; from this concourse the South Shore Drive seven and a half miles long will extend to the lower end of Jackson Park. This avenue should be reached from the land by seven viaducts each going over the Illinois Central and resting upon a broad concourse of its own. These viaducts should be of stone and where the arches spring from below should be abutments continuing upward until they become pedestals on the parapets and on which pedestals should be a statue or a vase. The piers of the viaduct might be planted with clinging vines which would enhance the beauty of the masonry.

The drive-way itself should have a sea-wall designed to express dignity as well as to afford security. Behind this wall should be a broad stone terrace with seats made in the old Grecian pattern of cement placed so that the sitter would look out to sea. Next this wall lies a planting space on which will grow tall shrubs disposed to partly conceal and partly reveal the lake and then should come a bicycle course with the green sward behind it and with colored flowering plants. Next to this plantation should be an equestrian way and next towards the West should come the great South Shore Drive itself with its broad green sward on either hand and its rose of stately trees. Beside
the Drive on the West side of it should be another terrace with here and there old Greek resting places of stone or cement, some single, some for many people, some curved into the banks out of which should flow fountains of water. The floor of this walk and all of the recesses should be paved in small colored pebbles in geometrical patterns. The wall itself which is to be next West of the walk should be built of long slivers of sparkling stone like those enclosing the Roosevelt farms that skirt along the Hudson North of Poughkeepsie.

Level with the top of this wall should begin the broad undulating grounds some 300 to 400 feet in width which should finally slope down into the waters of the lagoon. These grounds should be planted magnificently.

The concourses where the viaducts end should be treated in a monumental manner. There are seven of them in all, including those at each end of the Drive. The one on the North end would stand at the end of the great harbor of Chicago, and upon it should be a statue representing the genius of the city,—the fair figure of a young man, visible from the harbor and from the driveway along its entire length. It should form the pharos of our inland sea, and upon its brow should be a diadem of brilliant lights.

The composition of the roadway and of the lawns, of the resting places and of the trees, of the monuments and of the plant life should be full of mystery; but the element in the landscape that will most appeal to the poetic mind is the lagoon.
Notice the high bank west of the railway. Behind it the earth should be piled up so as to form lawns from which one can overlook the fair scene beneath. This wall should be covered with blossoming vines and should be fortified with nodding flowers and rich colored foliage, with here and there a statue symbolizing a mood or force of nature. From the wall stone balconies should here and there project, and there should be open spaces through which shady ravines might be seen, planted delicately in the Japanese manner.

Between the railway and the water need be no wall,—the lagoon, the buildings, the banks, the avenues and the lake itself should be seen through vistas kept always open. The lagoon should be from 400 to 1000 feet broad and some 30,000 feet in length. In it should be many islands ranging in length from 50 to 800 feet and in breadth from 30 to 300 feet. The South one might be called "University Island," and upon it might be placed the boat houses of the University crews, because the waters of the lagoon will form a beautiful race course five miles long. Other islands might be used by athletic associations in the city, their buildings being put up under the control of the South Park, every one beautiful and proper for its place.

No building of wood should be allowed anywhere upon the entire system of boulevards, parks, and islands.

The South end of the lagoon should be a channel leading through to the internal waters at Jackson Park. This should be 200 feet.
broad. So, you see any one might sail or row or float in launches or gondolas from the South harbor at 12th Street to the South harbor of Jackson Park, a distance of about seven-and-one-half miles; and he would be safe to pass along the entire length of the water way in the lightest of canoes even when a storm was raging outside in the open lake.

Both shores of the lagoon should be ornamented with trees and shrubs adapted to our climate, and especially with those that blossom,—the apple, the pear, the peach, the horse-chestnut, the wild chestnut, the catalpa, the crab, the lilac, syringas, acacia, dog-wood, etc.

Much of May and June should be a festival time upon this water. In the spring and summer or in the autumn when sailing here, one should be conscious of the presence of flowers, both by sight and by their perfume. On the banks should be heliotrope, mignonette, wild sweet grasses, sweet briar and other plants in order to fill the air with fragrance. The form and color of the foliage in planting is as important to the design as the general arrangement of the driveway itself. At the margin of the lagoon are to be the lotus, the lillies and the lesser colored plants. The water itself should maintained at a fixed level by means of rocking locks between the lagoon and the lake and no currents should be allowed to tear or damage the delicate plantations.

Under the eastern end of each viaduct should be a canal from the lagoon to the lake, and under the western end should be boat and bath houses.

The land lying along side the South Shore Drive should be
rented for clubs, hotels and private villas. These buildings
should be brought into harmony with the general monumental
scheme of design, so that they shall be valuable elements in the
landscape. Without them the whole scheme would lack a certain
quality which it would be wrong to neglect.

Over this land frequent vistas should be kept open leaving
glimpses of the lake for people passing along the lagoon, the
Illinois Central or the private terraces West of the railway.

Each house should face both the lagoon and the drive. It
should have no back door or stable unless concealed by architect-
tural court yards.

The planting upon the lawns should be such as would produce a
charming effect for an individual villa and at the same time be
a part of the grand design as a whole.

The trees of the avenue should be very tall. I have taken
pictures of many of these growing along the lake from Waukegan to
Calumet. There are maples 80 feet high and the same in breadth;
elms over 100 feet in height; cottonwoods that are over 120 feet
in height. An avenue of pines, elms and cottonwoods can be formed
on the South Shore Driveway,- 600 trees in all we will say, every
one of which shall approximate 100 feet in height, when set in
place, and every one of which shall flourish. There are many
thousands of acres of noble trees around Lake Michigan which can
be reached by water. The question of moving these giants is one
of expense. If money enough be allowed, any healthy tree, no
matter what its size, can be transplanted, and in five years from
to-day, if the order were given, this avenue can be finished
and appear as if it had there for centuries. Imagine to yourself
such an avenue, winding along by the margin of the beautiful lake.
Suppose the 600 trees to cost half a million dollars. Has any
building ever been erected for twice or four times that sum which
would be considered as beautiful and as valuable to the city as
such an avenue as I have mentioned?

(SHOW THE TREES.)

You will be interested by a few pictures of trees which are
actually growing close to Chicago (Here show the tree slides.)

I now wish to show you a sketch of the improvement as it will
appear. I am aware that it is meager and of value only as a
hint.

× × × × × ×

Now, can this dream be carried out? It rests with you.

Having the money, five years from this spring the picture I have
shown you can be realized and far more gloriously than it is
possible now to portray. The ablest artists should be employed
on the work. When such men assemble for a specific purpose in-
spiration comes with urgent force. Minds grow subtle, eager,
intuitive; thoughts stimulate each other and suggestions crowd
to their lips for their pencil bearing fingers. Given an artis-

-16-
tic problem and real men to solve it and I would almost say the shorter the time the better, because intensity stimulates the mind to greater flights than ever come in quiet moments.

Let us suppose the five years have passed and the dream is realized. Before us spreads a plantation of majestic trees shadowing over lawns and roadways upon the margin of the lake. In contrast with it the shining lagoon stretches away to the North. Behind this the soft banks of the shore, the trains glancing in and out through waving willows. Behind them all the wall of a stately terrace covered with clinging vines and crowned with statues. Further over grounds with flowering plants, and back of all lovely homes.

It seems as if the lake has been singing to us all these years until we have become responsive and now we see the broad water revealed by the gentle breeze upon its breast, the glint of oars, the gleam of raising sails, the outlines of swift gliding launches or of dark bodies gondolas. We see racing shells sweep by urged on by bronzed athletes. We hear the reply of the waves co-mingled with youthful laughter, and music swelling over the lagoon and dying away under the low branches that nod above the water. A crescent moon surmounts the Western sky shining heavenly upon us in the deepening twilight. We float by lawns where villas swanlike rest upon their terraces and where white balustrades and wood nymphs are just visible in the gloaming. The evening comes with myriad colored lights twinkling through the air perfumed with water lilies. We are merged into mature and
become part of her.