

They but for these  
large open spaces,



They are also extremely valuable as play-grounds, where young men and boys may engage in outdoor games.

How much this advantage is appreciated in Bombay is clearly shown by the large number of cricketers who assemble in the afternoon on the expanse of grassy turf between the Fort and the native town, to enjoy their favourite game. But for these large open spaces, which are nevertheless hardly large enough for the numbers who wish to use them, those who now play cricket and other outdoor games would find no proper outlet for their physical energies, and as a consequence their health and strength would suffer. It is, however, not only the young and active who derive advantage from the spacious parks now to be found in the great cities of all civilised countries.

Visit the parks of any big city on a fine summer evening, and you will see the poor man, who has laboured all day for his daily bread strolling there with his wife and children. What a relief it must be for them to escape from their crowded rooms in some noisy street and enjoy something like the peace and calm of a walk in the country! For most of the inhabitants of great towns cherish in their hearts a longing for the country, as is shown by the shrubs and flowers with which they try to decorate their window-sills in the smoky city. So they take great pleasure in a park with green grass and trees, in the midst of which they can forget, for the time, the surrounding city. Some parks have the additional attraction of zoological collections and of sheets of water tenanted by swans and other birds.

The great pleasure that the sight of strange wild beasts and birds gives to the poor of great cities, is well known to all who have been to the Victoria Gardens in Bombay, and seen the numbers of people who crowded round the

cages there on free days. In warm countries like India parks are even greater blessings than in England. The days and nights of northern Europe are often too cold to allow the people to resort to the parks in the evening, for quiet and rest after the labours of the day. But in India, for eight months of the year it is possible to sit out of doors for hours in the cool of the evening with great pleasure and no danger of catching cold. The citizens of Bombay largely use this opportunity afforded by the climate. They may be seen any evening sitting in small groups all over Marine Drive, and playing at whist or strolling along leisurely to heart's delight.

They have the cool sea breeze to fan them as they play, and are sorry to go back to the close atmosphere of their homes in the native town, where the narrow streets and lofty houses shut out the air.