

PLAN SAFE STREETS FOR CHILDREN'S PLAY

**Suggestion That Traffic Be
Barred at Certain Hours from
Some Thoroughfares.**

BINGHAM TO TRY THE PLAN

**Scheme Designed by Parks and Play-
grounds Association to Decrease
Accidents on Highways.**

A plan to regulate traffic for the protection of pedestrians, and particularly of children, has been submitted to Police Commissioner Bingham by Alderman Marx, with the indorsement of a number of the board. The scheme was worked out by the Parks and Playgrounds Association, and is designed to be of mutual benefit to drivers and pedestrians. Commissioner Bingham has declared himself willing to try the experiment on a small scale.

The notion briefly is this: To prohibit traffic on certain blocks after school hours, say, from 3 to 6 o'clock in the afternoon. The blocks selected will be those where the population is thickest and the normal traffic very light. Those streets would thus be made safe playgrounds for the children, while, at the same time, it would benefit the drivers by clearing the children from the neighboring blocks, thus making it much easier for both carters and chauffeurs.

Blocks for testing the plan have not yet been decided on, but will probably be a portion of either East 102d, East 76th, or West 38th Streets, where the parents are getting up petitions to that effect. Blocks of all residences or all tenements where no stores would be injured by the prohibition will be considered, but only on the expressed desire of the residents will the traffic exclusion between the hours of 3 and 6 be attempted.

The move is the result of an extended investigation carried on by the various Settlements in the Neighborhood Workers' Association this Fall. Several blocks were found where the number of children was large and the traffic light. Such was the case on one block of Seventy-sixth Street, over near the East River, which has at least 240 children. West Twenty-seventh Street, between Ninth and Tenth Avenues, has 443 children; East Ninth Street, near Avenue D, has 750 while a block of Ludlow Street, between Houston and Rivington, has 1,075, and nearly 500 below school age.

Other streets where the traffic is extremely heavy and where there are car lines to add to the danger have a large quota of youngsters. Such are Chrystie and West Forty-sixth Streets, where there are thirty-eight wagons in every

five minutes; East 104th and East Thirty-fourth, which latter has trolleys, heavy carting, and, on an average, twenty-five automobiles an hour.

Since Jan. 1 there have been about twenty children killed playing in the streets, and over forty serious accidents. Now that the warm weather has come the crowds will be greater than ever, and the accidents consequently still more frequent. These streets which are thronged with the children are mostly those at some distance from a park, except in the case of East Thirty-fourth, where the children, on the statement of the Settlement workers of the Warren Goddard House, are afraid to go into St. Gabriel's Park "because of the intoxicated men and women who lie on the benches surrounding the park."

While a hot, asphalted, treeless block does not make a beautiful playground, with the carting barred after school hours, they would at least be safe and inexpensive and clear the neighboring streets of the youngsters. If trees could be planted on those same selected blocks in the congested neighborhoods, the advocates of this new traffic regulation scheme believe that a practical way of securing adequate play space at very little cost will have been found.