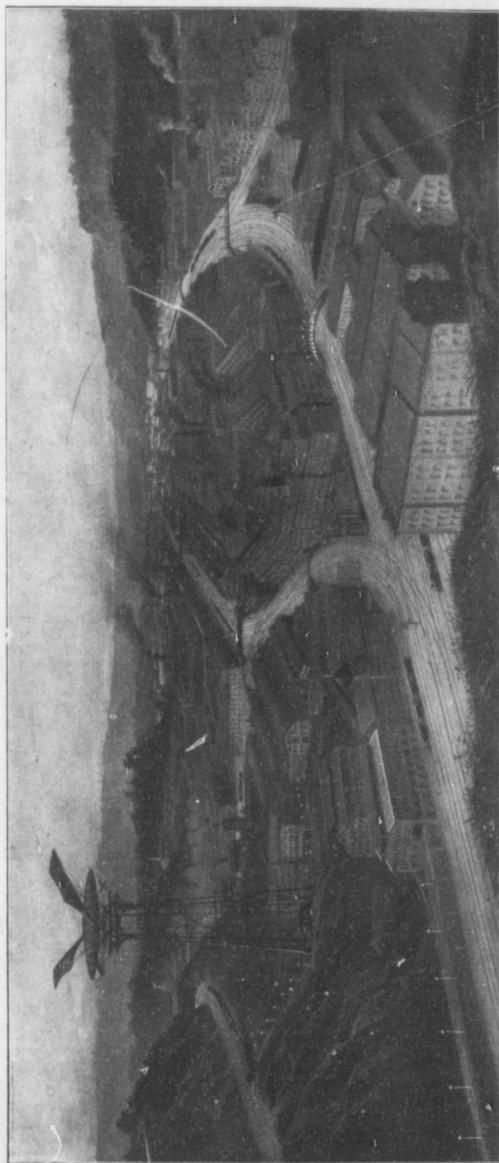


Hamilton Spectator Carnival Souvenir



"Including all the valley land between Crematory Hill and the city's western limits."

Light Concern was organized. It promised to build the canal, provide unlimited electric power and light for all purposes, and supply water to the city. In return it was to have exclusive privileges in all these, and the city was to pay for the water used at a price not greater than that of the cost of pumping under the old system. On the surface the plan was promising, but a close investigation revealed the fact that if the deal were put through the city would be practically owned by the Erie-Hamilton Concern. The more the deal was investigated the more odious it appeared, and finally, after several mass meetings of citizens the puppet aldermen of the Concern were forced to resign, a new city charter was secured, and government by commissioners was inaugurated.

The first work done by the commissioners was to make a reality of the Lake Erie water power dream. The rapid advancement of the city industrially, and the inability of existing electric power companies to supply the ever increasing demand made the financing of the enormous undertaking a comparatively easy matter. British capitalists, having just successfully completed the transformation of the Sahara desert into an immense fruit growing country by means of irrigation works, were in the humor to turn their attention and their wealth in new directions, and it was an easy matter to interest them in this project. The canal idea was abandoned, and that of an immense cement lined tunnel took its place. The work occupied four years in its construction and cost \$20,000,000. Citizens of to-day well know its value to the city. It is the backbone of Hamilton's industrial preeminence among the great cities of the world.

With the Erie tunnel well under way, the commissioners dealt with the other franchise holders. The company supplying electric current for light and power purposes, having its lighting contract cancelled, sought terms of capitulation and was generously dealt with, being bought out at a scrap iron valuation. This done the city was in the light and power business for itself, besides having its water supply assured for all time. Power was offered to manufacturers at such rates as could not be matched anywhere else, and at once the city bounded ahead in manufacturing greatness.

Five years later the commissioners dealt with the transit companies holding public franchises. Public opinion was opposed to the electric car for short distance transportation within the city limits, and the commissioners refused to extend the franchises. The tracks were taken from the streets and the municipal electric van service was inaugurated—a service that gave accommodation to all the people, traversing every street in the business and central residence districts, and every second street in the suburbs, with a single fare transfer system for the whole city.