

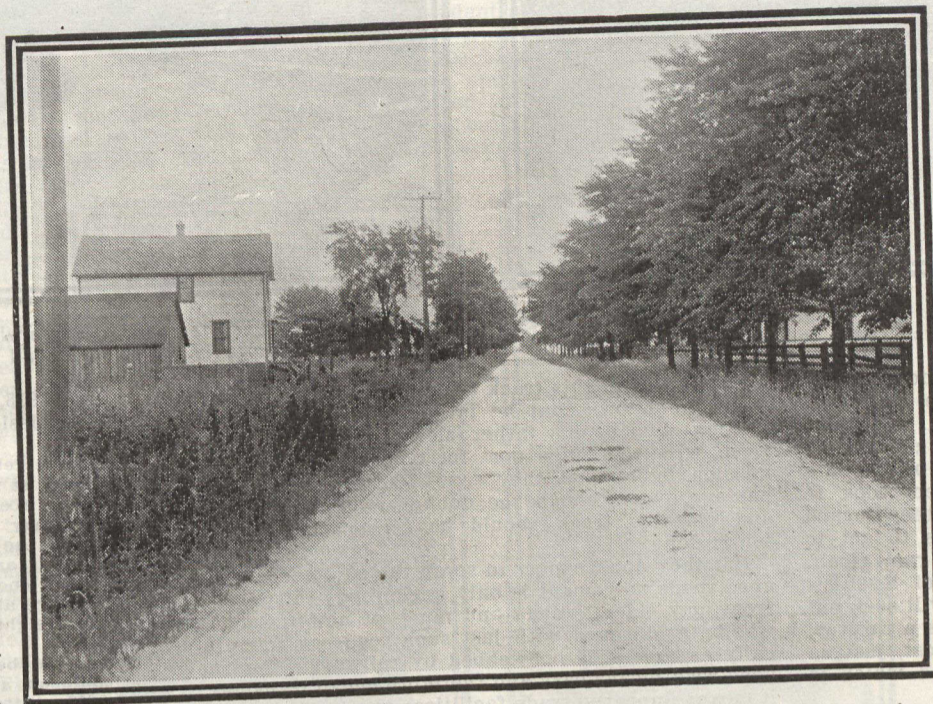
CANADA'S MOST MODERN HIGHWAY

A Thirty-five Mile Concrete Road that will Create Traffic, Increase Land Values and Link Up Two Cities at a Cost of \$600,000



G. H. GOODERHAM, M.P.P.,

Chairman of the Commission supervising the building of the Toronto and Hamilton Highway. He has been a consistent advocate of good roads, but undertook this work as a public service.



An experimental mile of concrete road built by the Ontario Government in Essex county. It is known as the Tecumseh Road.



M. H. IRISH, M.P.P.,

Who was the first to suggest the new highway as a relief to "unemployment." He assisted in securing the assent of the municipalities, and undertook the placing of the bonds with loan and trust companies.

By AUGUSTUS BRIDLE

termine how much and at what rate each should pay was another. Finally, to raise the money was a third. The Gooderham-Irish combination accomplished all three. The work of raising the money fell to Mr. Irish, who got several loan and trust companies and banks to take the bonds, totalling \$600,000.

The Toronto-Hamilton Highway Commission was

anywhere between the two cities. Chief Engineer Van Scroyce went on the job Nov. 4th; construction began Nov. 8th, over a line already partly determined by Provincial Engineer of Highways W. A. McLean. In three camps, nearly 400 men worked at the road all winter. Up till May 1, 1915, the Commission had spent over \$93,000 on the road. By this time next year the total amount spent will be at least half a million of the original \$600,000.

Of the total amount, Toronto, with about 500,000 population, pays \$150,000; Hamilton, with less than a fifth as many people, \$30,000; the Ontario Government, \$4,000 a mile; each county and other municipality en route, \$4,000 a mile for the mileage contained in each; a yearly frontage tax of 11-2 cents a foot and an acreage tax of 20 cents, 15 cents and 10 cents an acre for three acres in depth behind the 300-ft. frontage.

To the ordinary mathematician, the assessment on the cities, the Government and the counties looks obvious enough. But why the frontage and the acreage tax? That is the one most modern factor in the whole problem—the unearned increment. Property along this new 35-mile road must contribute \$140,000, or somewhere between 1-4 and 1-5 of the cost. Why? Because already property-owners are waiting till the first donkey engine comes chugging along with its dinky train of crushed stone, gravel and cement to boost the price of foot frontages and acreages just as much as the traffic will stand when the road is completed. The one permanent and vital result of the new highway will be to increase the value of foot frontages for summer cottages and permanent residences, and the value of the acreage in production. With a good road, the city back-to-the-lander on a small scale can drive his low-power car into business, minus mud-holes, sand-wallows, and high grades; and over the same road the motor-truck of the plain farmer with his team loads of produce can get his stuff to the metropolitan markets at a minimum cost.

In five years the new road between two cities will be a picture such as Ontario saw a generation or

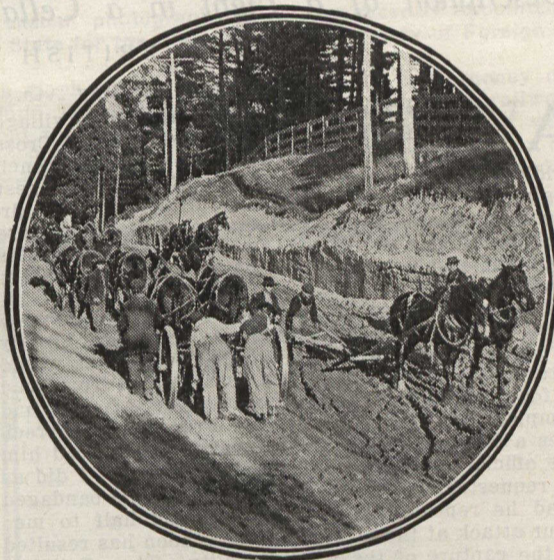
TORONTO and Hamilton are a joint population of about 600,000. Up to the present they have been kept as far as possible apart by one of the worst highways in the world, by lack of electric road connection, and by mutual bad jokes about "Hogtown" and "the Mountain." In all Canada there are no two cities of such population so close together. For some years suburban homes, summer cottages and millionaires' rural residences have been reaching out from both Toronto and Hamilton, with Oakville as the focus of one and Burlington that of the other. For ten years motorists have been counting hills, curves, sand-wallows and mud-holes along the highway where for miles out of Toronto the price of land is anywhere from \$5 to \$20 a foot, and between city and city is nowhere less than \$1,000 an acre.

Business, traffic, real estate values, the back-to-the-land movement and pleasure have all been co-operating haphazardly for years to bring these two cities together over the 35 miles between limit and limit. One thing only has kept the movement back. Lack of transportation; a rotten public road; picayune parish politics on the highway question. Fruit, garden truck and produce by thousands of tons from a fat, fertile country were fighting its way into market against high prices; pleasure-travellers were compelled to travel for anything but pleasure; frontage values went so far and then stuck waiting for a good road; country lots bought and not built upon because the owners saw no way of getting in to business except by rail or driving a motor over a diabolical road.

YEARS ago the Ontario Motor League decided that the pathmaster method of making roads was no good. They tried to line up the counties and municipalities between the two cities to build a modern road. Most of the counties balked. One went ahead; and a sample of the road they built is now to be taken over by the new Highway Commission and whatever it costs to be ripped up and thrown on the dump-waggon.

The Toronto-Hamilton highway scheme was an abortion, because nobody interested would co-operate to make the road. It might have remained an abortion but for a near accident. Last summer, when the unemployment problem looked like a menace to municipalities, four citizens, Mr. George Gooderham, M.P.P., Mr. Mark Irish, M.P.P., Mr. G. Frank Beer, and the editor of the Canadian Courier, sat at lunch in Toronto wondering how to reduce unemployment by public works. One of them mentioned the Toronto-Hamilton pale elephant scheme. The others endorsed it. It was time government took hold of a thing that municipalities bungled; to get the municipalities to co-operate on a scheme as necessary as enlisting soldiers, and that should give work to hundreds of idle men. Such a scheme had been talked up and talked out for years—with nothing but talk to follow.

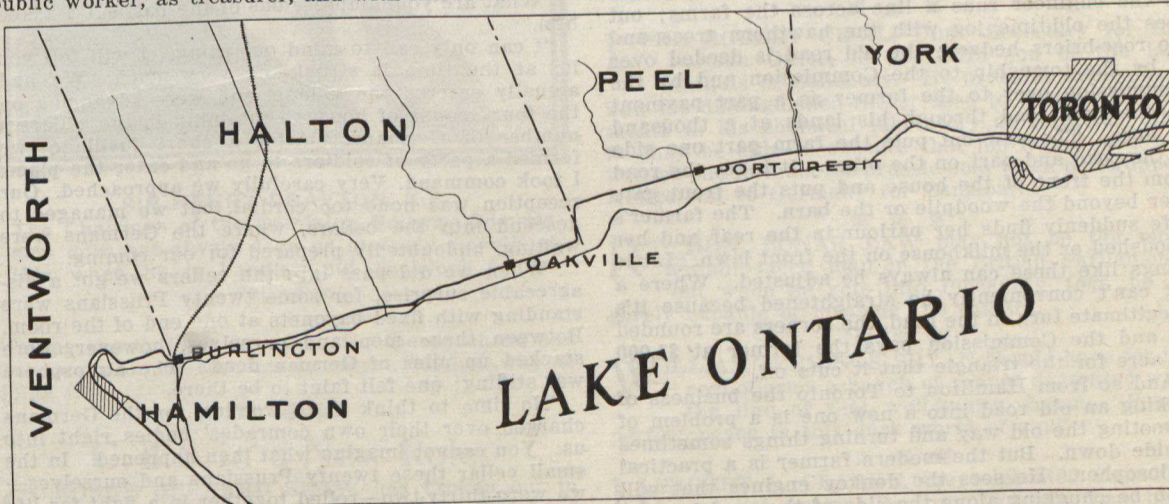
The bill went through the Legislature by the shirt-sleeves route. There was everything to do without much precedent. To get Toronto, Hamilton, four counties and a number of small municipalities en route to act together on the resuscitation of this elephant was an elephantine job, which none but an aggressive M.P.P. could have accomplished. To de-



MAKING NEW GRADES.

Besides being a good road, this Toronto-Hamilton Highway will have easy grades and curves.

appointed Sept. 17th, 1914, with George Gooderham, M.P.P., as chairman; G. Frank Beer, an untirable public worker, as treasurer, and with members from



ROUTE OF CANADA'S FIRST CONCRETE HIGHWAY.

It runs westward from Toronto through Port Credit, Oakville and Burlington into Hamilton, along the Shore of Lake Ontario.