

to defray the expenses of exploring, by the affirmative votes of some who declared that they voted for the small amount, because it could not do any harm and might be productive of some good. And when, after long delay and protracted opposition, and much of that opposition from the city which has derived a large share of its benefits, the Act of April 15th, 1817, was passed by the Legislature, committing the State to the canal policy, the whole scheme narrowly escaped destruction in the Council of Revision.

Nor did opposition to the project disappear immediately after the State entered upon the momentous work; but the progress made by the judicious efforts of those charged with its management, and the far-seeing policy and self-denying labors of the chief executive officer of the State, gradually brought the scheme into general favor, and the story of the beginning, progress and completion of the canal, will perpetuate honors to the memory of CLINTON, so long as the waters of Erie shall flow into that channel of commerce.

The celebration of the completion of the middle section, on the 4th of July, 1820, three years from the day of its commencement, was the culminating point where opposition ceased or was disarmed; and the resources of a united people were thenceforth devoted to the accomplishment of an enterprise which was expected greatly to increase the wealth and the happiness of all the people, and secure to the State, in all coming time, a high and controlling position in the trade and commerce of the North American continent.

But previous to this a disposition had been manifested to learn about the "Origin of the Canal," and