

OUR GRAND ERIE CANAL has been a prolific theme for statesmen and politicians, for orators and essayists, during more than half a century. The visions of wealth and greatness that would result from its construction, to our common country, and especially to our own State, which filled the mind of him who first published to the world the project of such a canal, have been eagerly adopted by those who became its advocates. The politician at the caucus, the legislator in the Capitol, and those occupying seats of authority, have been alike emulous of being regarded as its special champions.

Considerations of political economy, and of political and commercial supremacy, in all their various phases, have been urged and repeated in favor of its original construction, and of its subsequent enlargement; and of yet further enlarging and perfecting its capacity, as the increase of its business and the wealth of the country—foretold by its projector—have demonstrated to be necessary.

It was not so from the beginning.

The first promulgation of the project met with such derision that its author was deemed a visionary enthusiast, and the publication of the project was nearly strangled at its birth. The first successful movement in regard to it in the Legislature was treated in much the same manner; a few hundred dollars being appropriated