

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS

FOR

QUEEN VICTORIA NIAGARA FALLS PARK

1896.

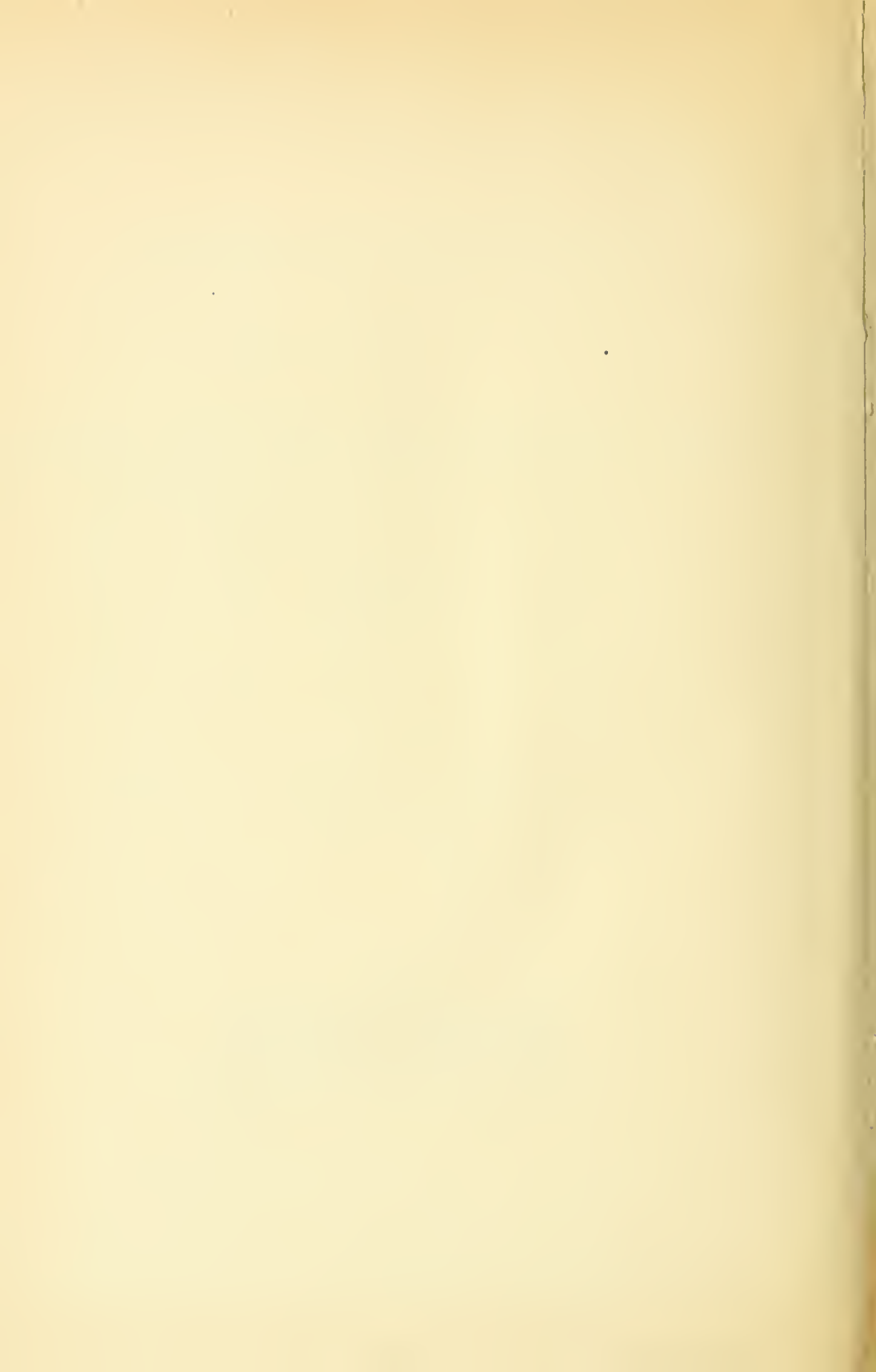
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TORONTO, 9th March, 1897.

SIR,—I have the honor to transmit herewith, to be presented to His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, the Eleventh Annual Report of the Commissioners for Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park, being for the year ended 31st December, 1896.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. W. LANGMUIR,

Chairman.

HON. E. J. DAVIS M.P.P.,

Provincial Secretary, Toronto.

ELEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
COMMISSIONERS
FOR THE
QUEEN VICTORIA NIAGARA FALLS PARK.

*To the Honorable GEORGE AIREY KIRKPATRICK,
Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario.*

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOR:—

The Commissioners for the Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park beg to submit their Eleventh Annual Report, being for the year ended 31st December, 1896.

In their last report the Commissioners deemed it advisable to mark their entry on the second decade of their trusteeship by giving a somewhat detailed history of the Park scheme from its inception in the year 1878, when Lord Dufferin suggested the establishment of a system of international parks at Niagara Falls, down to the close of the year 1895: but with more particular reference to the active operations of the past ten years resulting in the acquirement, restoration and improvement of the various properties now comprising the Niagara Falls Park system.

Through the courtesy of Prof. G. K. Gilbert, of the United States Geological Survey, the Commissioners were able to insert in that report a valuable illustrated monogram on the geological history of the Niagara River and Falls which, together with a choice selection of views of Park scenery as well as maps of the territory placed under the care of the Commissioners, made a very handsome volume which the Commissioners have reason to believe was much appreciated by the public.

OBITUARY.

On the 25th of March the Board was deprived by death of the services of Mr. John A. Orchard, who had been a valued member of the Commission from April, 1887. At a meeting held in April, 1896, the following minute was adopted by the Commissioners and engrossed in the minute book of the Board:

“The Commissioners desire to place on record their deep sense of the loss they have sustained by the death of their esteemed colleague, Mr. J. A. Orchard, who for a period of nearly nine years has given the benefit of his matured judgment to all matters requiring the consideration and attention of the Board. His fellow Commissioners testify to the valuable services of Mr. Orchard and his earnest endeavor at all times to further the best interests of the Park.”

The retirement of Colonel Sir Casimir Gzowski and the death of Mr. Orchard left two vacancies on the Board of Commissioners, to fill which an Order-in-Council was passed on September 23rd, 1896, appointing Messrs. Benjamin Ernest Charlton, of the City of Hamilton, and James Bampffield, of the Town of Niagara Falls.

GENERAL BROCK'S CENOTAPH.

The attention of the Commissioners having been repeatedly called to the neglected condition of the grounds surrounding the small monument at the base of Queenston Heights, which had been erected to mark the spot where General Sir Isaac Brock fell on 13th October, 1812, and finding on examination that the title to the land in question had never been acquired, the Commissioners secured the same and purchased an additional piece of land of sufficient area to enable them to fittingly mark this historic spot. The work of restoration will be taken into hand in the spring and the property put in a condition more in harmony with public sentiment.

QUEENSTON HEIGHTS PARK.

Since the date of last report the monument grounds at Queenston, now under the control of the Commissioners, have been enlarged by the addition of some twenty acres of ordnance lands and the initial work of cleaning up and improving the property has been commenced. There remains, however, several disjointed portions of the original reserve comprising chiefly the steep escarpment on both the east and west extremities of the monument grounds, which the Commissioners are of opinion should become part of the Park domain. Negotiations are now in progress to secure these remaining lands, which it is hoped will result in the whole of this commanding and historic ground being brought within the scope of the Park and made subject to its by-laws and regulations.

FORT ERIE AND NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE RESERVE.

Numerous petitions have been presented to the Commissioners by municipal and other representative bodies in the county, asking that the grounds around the ruins of Fort Erie, which form a small part of the original ordnance reserve of one thousand acres at that point, should be taken over from the Dominion Government and improved and maintained under the jurisdiction of the Commissioners, as a portion of the Niagara Park system. The lands in question are only separated from the southern extremity of the chain reserve, now vested in the Commissioners, by about two miles of flat shore land.

The inhabitants of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake have also petitioned the Government and the Commissioners to have such of the military lands at that point as are not actually required for military purposes placed under the Commissioners and cared for as part of the Park system, and similar action was also recommended by many in respect to the balance of the ordnance lands at Queenston Heights.

That the Board might intelligently consider all the questions relating to these several properties, the Park Superintendent was instructed to make an examination of the grounds in each case and report upon the works which would be required to put the lands in good order, and also to furnish an estimate of the minimum cost of the initial improvements, as well as the cost of future maintenance.

The reports of the Superintendent are as follows :—

NIAGARA FALLS, August 25th, 1896.

J. W. LANGMUIR, Esq., Chairman.

DEAR SIR:—As desired by the Honorable the Attorney-General, I beg to submit the following memorandum in respect to the military reserve at Fort Erie, which it is proposed by the people of the vicinity should be placed under the control of the Park Commissioners, and become a portion of the Park system, as set forth in the copy of resolution attached hereto, which was passed at a large public meeting held at the site of the old fort on 25th July last.

The area of the plot of ground which immediately surrounds the old fort is seventeen and one-half acres in extent; it fronts the lake but is separated from it by the beach and the highway, which is called the lake shore road.

Originally the lands reserved for military purposes extended along the lake shore for a distance of two and a quarter miles, embracing an area of one thousand acres, or from the Garrison Road on the north to Helena Street on the west, and to the lake shore.

Some years before Confederation, however, the block was laid out into parcels and nearly all of it sold off; the only portions reserved being the seven-

teen and one-half acres at the old fort, the lands then occupied by the Buffalo and Lake Huron Railway Company, and the beach lands lying between the lake shore road and the edge of the water.

Since that time some of the lots have reverted to the Crown; the railway lands have been abandoned, and part of the beach disposed of by sale and a considerable extent of it leased for a term of years for a pleasure ground: so that at the present time the Dominion Government controls:

1. The reserve at the old fort	17½ acres.
2. Lands formerly occupied by the Buffalo and Lake Huron railway, say	25 “
3. Beach lands	7½ “

Or a total of about 50 “

and some lots which have reverted, the area of which I do not know.

The plan herewith shows in color these lands as follow:—

Green.—The reserve at the old fort.

Yellow.—Lands formerly occupied by the railway but not so used since 1873; also the beach in front of the lake shore road.

I have also indicated in a green color the chain reserve in front of the village lots, which is fully dealt with in my report of July 28th, 1893.

The resolution passed by the citizens, asking that the ordnance lands adjacent to the old fort be put under the control of the Commissioners, does not specify clearly the lands intended: but I have assumed that all the lands now in the Dominion should be included in the recommendation and especially that the beach in front of the railway should, if possible, be saved from further damage by recurring storms.

Should the property become vested in the Commissioners, the triangular block containing about seventeen and one-half acres, upon which the principal fortifications were built, could be put into fair condition and maintained without much expense—the chief works required being to fence in the front with an ornamental wire railing and the converging sides with a substantial seven strand and post fence.

The lands not covered by the fortifications should be set out with suitable trees and shrubbery, the turf brought to as good a surface as possible and the whole kept nicely by constant attention. Perhaps it would be desirable to make some slight repairs to the masonry, where it has been injured by vandals: but a very small outlay only should be made for this purpose and for planting creepers to cover up the raggedness of the walls now standing.

A few years ago the rear bastion had a much more imposing appearance than at present, but the stone work was thrown down and the best of the stones removed to furnish material for the Episcopal church at the north end of the village.

The protection of the shore of the lake will be a very important, but also an expensive work, as the whole reach of the frontage which may be transferred will require to be substantially rip-rapped, and the back of the wall filled in with soil to a level to be determined on. Stone for the walling may, however, be quarried on the spot, and the cost reduced to a minimum, while material for filling in can be obtained from the railway lands. Of course it would not be necessary to carry out the whole of this work at once, but the piece in front of the old fort should be done with as little delay as possible.

There is a tract of land some twenty-five acres in extent, which was at one time occupied by the Buffalo and Lake Huron Railway Company, but has reverted to the Government and which should be included in the transfer, that might be made to assist in providing funds for the maintenance of the property. It is of triangular shape and could be laid off into villa lots and disposed of to good advantage, while the central portion should be reserved for ball grounds and put in shape for that purpose.

In any case the property should be improved and a large number of trees planted, either on the lines of proposed streets, or to form a grove about the ball and play grounds proposed.

With respect to the cost of the improvements which have been outlined, it is of course impossible to give a definite estimate until the extent of the works to be undertaken is determined on, and detailed surveys made. As an approximation, however, of the minimum amount which would be required to do the work outlined above, the following figures may be given:

1. Cleaning up and putting into shape the grounds around old Fort, making a driveway and paths, fencing front and sides, planting trees and shrubs and creepers, mending recently broken places in walls, flagstaff, etc.	\$2,000
2. Building revetment wall along the water's edge for a distance of 500 yards, and filling in with soil to form a terraced promenade, planting, etc.....	\$7,000
3. Fencing, laying out streets, planting, making ball grounds, etc. at old railway reserve.....	\$1,000
	-----\$10,000

MAINTENANCE.

1 working man in charge, 365 days at \$1.25.....	\$456 00
Day laborers.....200 " 1.75.....	250 00
Hire of team..... 30 " 3.00.....	90 00
Tools, materials, etc.	104 00
	----- \$900
Interest on \$10,000 at 4%	400
Annual charge.....	----- \$1,300

From this it will be seen that by the sale of ten thousand dollars worth of park bonds the Fort Erie reserve can be put into good shape, and form a fitting southern terminus to the park system. The maintenance charge of \$1,300, as has been stated, may be materially reduced should it be found advisable to dispose of part of the old railway occupancy for villa lots. The creation of a park and marine promenade, so near at hand, would doubtless enhance the value of all the property in the neighborhood, and make these lots most desirable for city people.

At the present time all the Government lands in this vicinity are utterly neglected. Many hundreds of soldiers were buried in the neighborhood of the fortifications, but of these only one or two can now be identified and there are no headstones or other marks to locate the graves.

Fort Erie has had an eventful history. Through the kindness of Captain Cruikshank, the well-known historical writer, and who resides in the neighborhood, I am enabled to give the following summary of the events which have transpired in connection with it, viz:

The first fortification known as Fort Erie was a block house and barracks built on the edge of the lake by General Bradstreet in 1774. This work became ruinous and was greatly damaged by a storm in the spring of 1779.

On March 16th, Capt. R. Matthews, secretary to General Haldimand, reported as follows:

‘The state of this place owing to the late storm and flood, the wall upon which the logwood and picketing is erected on the side next the river is almost destroyed, there being four breaks made quite through it, one being twenty-four feet long from within three feet of the east bastion towards the waterport; another of twelve under the waterport and two smaller ones. There are several others but not through the wall, and other parts of the fort that remain standing are considerably shaken. In this season of the year nothing more can be done than to make up the breaches in the most expeditious and best manner possible to prevent the bastions from falling.

In the summer it will be absolutely necessary to pull the whole down and rebuild it properly with stone and lime or (what I think should answer better) with a very stout frame filled in with dry stone work. The situation is a flat solid rock where a foundation for a wall cannot be sunk. Masonry, therefore, unless well executed and very solid, must always be subject to injury from a very violent surf which rolls against it from the lake with strong westerly winds which prevail most here and always occasion very high water. The place in other respects is very much in need of repairs. The pickets have become very rotten, and the barracks and storehouses must be new shingled the ensuing summer. I have written to stop the lime from Niagara; as it will be attended with much less

expense and perhaps more certainty, from the precariousness of the passage, to burn some lime here. I am, in the meantime, cleaning the barracks and making other preparations for the work.'

On August 17th, 1803, Lieutenant-Governor Peter Hunter wrote to Lord Hobart that 'Fort Erie was so completely in ruins that temporary expedients can be no longer resorted to, and it is indispensably necessary without delay to make some new establishment. The expense is to be £9,649 Os. 1½d., to be carried out gradually.' He enclosed a report and estimate by Col. Gother Mann, R.E., dated Quebec, 1st August, 1803. Col. Mann said: 'Fort Erie being the situation at the head of the communication between the Lakes Ontario and Erie, which has long since been chosen as the temporary deposit of provisions, stores and merchandise on this passage both up and down, and where the King's and merchant vessels navigating the upper lakes assemble and take in and discharge their lading. Some protection and defence here has been considered as a proper measure, although from various causes the latter has been long much neglected.

The post which was constructed here was altogether of a temporary nature, being nothing more than an enclosure of strong picketing, containing some buildings serving as quarters for troops, store houses, etc., all of wood and equally perishable with the enclosure. The whole for the last twenty years has been in a progressive course of decay, and has been for some time scarcely tenable. The expensive mode of temporary repairs from year to year has kept a part of the building from falling entirely to pieces; but what time and decay has not accomplished was completed by a storm which happened on the 16th January last, and the whole is now in ruins except one stone building which is a storehouse and blockhouse constructed in 1797, and in good condition

One of the principal causes of the neglect of this fort has been owing to a fault in its position, being completely commanded by a rising mountain immediately in its rear at the distance of only about 500 feet, and as a new fort had long been considered necessary, and the rising ground the most proper place for it to stand on, it was not thought prudent to construct any permanent works or buildings, the storehouse above mentioned excepted, at the old position. The time has now arrived when temporary expedients no longer avail. Although a certain position of defence being indispensably necessary, and the more so, perhaps, now on account of its vicinity to an American post lately established at the Black Rock about a mile and a-half below on the other side of the water. I do not look upon Fort Erie as a place requiring works of any considerable magnitude. I should propose to erect a small fort on the rising ground, having a secure communication with the water, of sufficient extent to contain occasionally 200 or 300 men, and that the works and buildings for the purpose be of substantial masonry.

ESTIMATE.

	£	s.	d.
Fortifications buildings.....	4,941	8	0
Two stone buildings, loop holed on one side each ninety- six feet long, of two stories, as quarters for troops, each to contain 100 men	1,700	0	0
A building 160 feet long as quarters for officers	1,000	0	0
Storehouse within fort	600	0	0
Guardhouse, small powder magazine, etc	800	0	0
Contingencies	220	0	0
Pay a foreman.....	38	7	1

According to the plan attached the old fort in ruins stood in front (that is west) of the site for new fort, where there was a slip for small vessels, and the King's store, merchants' store and landing lay farther to the south.'

In a despatch dated Downing street, 9th of January, 1804, Lord Hobart authorized General Hunter to 'commence works according to proposed plan and carry them on gradually as circumstances may render expedient.'

On the 24th August, 1811, Lieutenant-Colonel R. H. Bruyere, R.E., reported to Sir George Provost that 'Fort Erie is situated at the entrance to Lake Erie, eighteen miles above Fort Chippewa. The old fort on the borders of the lake is in ruins and totally abandoned. The construction of a new fort projected by Lieutenant-General Mann on the rising ground above the site of the old fort to be built of masonry was begun in the spring of 1805, in conformity with the report approved by Lord Hobart, Secretary of State, in a letter to General Hunter. This work was continued until the latter end of the year 1807, when it was put a stop to by order of the Lieutenant-General Sir James Craig on his arrival at Quebec. At the time of closing the two piles of barracks together with the masonry of two bastions fronting the lake were finished, the ditch excavated and part of the masonry foundations of two bastions towards the land. The interior of the barracks only partly completed to accommodate troops quartered at the post. The remainder is unfinished and has received some injury from remaining so long neglected. Fort Erie cannot be considered a strong military position, but as it is necessary always to have some troops stationed at this post to carry on transport and communication with Amherstburg and St. Joseph, the necessary security and accomodation might be probably obtained by completing this post.

On the 27th of May, 1813, it was dismantled and abandoned by the British forces and taken possession of by United States troops under Col. Preston, who in their turn abandoned it on 9th June, 1813.

On 3rd July, 1814, Capt. Martin, R.E., reported that 'Fort Erie is in a tolerable state of defence, strongly enclosed in rear with palisades: a small block-house commenced to flank the picketing; three guns mounted; two twelve and one nine pounder.'

"It surrendered to the American army on 3rd of July, 1814, and was immediately much strengthened by earthworks and abbatiss.

After the sanguinary battle of Lundy's Lane the American army precipitately retreated within the shelter of Fort Erie, which was immediately besieged by Lieut.-Gen. Drummond with his entire available force. Since its occupation by the Americans on 3rd July, the post had been greatly strengthened. To effect its speedy reduction Gen. Drummond decided on a night attack, when he expected to take the garrison by surprise, and at two o'clock in the morning of August 15th a vigorous and general attack was directed against the Fort and entrenchments. The Americans, however, anticipated the attack, and were fully prepared. The British were received at all points with a murderous fire of artillery and musketry, and although they succeeded in obtaining virtual possession of the Fort, the explosion of a mine within its walls caused such havoc in their ranks that they were finally compelled to withdraw with a loss of 950 men. Notwithstanding this disaster, General Drummond continued the siege, and in the course of a month succeeded in placing three batteries, mounted with heavy guns, within six hundred yards of the fortifications and prepared for another assault.

On 17th September, the Americans heavily reinforced by fresh troops from Black Rock made a sortie, drove in the pickets and succeeded in destroying two of the batteries before the British supports could be brought up.

A few days afterwards General Drummond abandoned the siege, the post remaining in possession of the Americans until November 15th, 1814, when it was evacuated and blown up by them.

Fort Erie has since remained in a state of utter ruin and neglect; its condition being a sad commentary upon the apathy that would deny proper care to a place rendered so sacred by such heroic displays of British valor and patriotism.

The whole respectfully submitted.

Yours very truly,

JAMES WILSON,
Superintendent.

APPENDICES.

1. Resolution of public meeting held at Fort Erie, addressed to chairman of Commissioners.
2. Copy of resolution of public meeting held at Fort Erie, addressed to the Hon. the Attorney-General.
3. Letter from W. M. German, M.P.P., to Hon. A. S. Hardy, heartily approving of the proposal.
4. Letter from Hon. A. S. Hardy to Superintendent asking for a report.
5. Plan of the locality.

The report of the Park Superintendent in connection with the lands at Niagara-on-the-Lake is also given as follows:—

NIAGARA FALLS,

August 26th, 1896.

J. W. LANGMUIR, Esq.,

Chairman.

DEAR SIR,—In accordance with your instructions, I have made an examination of the ordnance lands at Niagara-on the-Lake, including the remains of the fortifications known as Forts George and Mississauga, particularly with a view to reporting on the advisability of acquiring control of these properties for Park purposes, and in order to preserve them from further injury and neglect.

There are two large tracts of land pertaining to the Dominion Government at Niagara, viz: The Garrison Reserve near the mouth of the Niagara river, comprising some three hundred and forty (340) acres, and on which stands the ruins of Fort George, Butlers' Barracks, etc.: while half a mile away, and situate upon the shore of Lake Ontario, there is a tract of about sixty acres lying about the Fort Mississauga, the two pieces aggregating about four hundred acres. The Garrison Reserve is a fine level tract of land about fifty feet above the level of the river which it skirts for three-fourths of a mile, and from which it is separated by an almost perpendicular bank. At its greatest width it is about a mile, and its greatest depth is nearly three-quarters of a mile. The Erie and Niagara Railway was originally built across the east side of the reserve, and although much of the track was long ago removed, yet the deep cutting by which the road-bed was graded down to the dock level still remains, and is far from being a desirable feature. The southerly part of this old track still remains and now forms a spur from the Michigan Central Railway by which excursion parties are brought to "Paradise Grove," a pleasantly wooded portion of the reserve now under lease to the railroad company.

Old Fort George lies at the north-eastern extremity of the reserve, and now consists of an earthwork redoubt only, all the buildings having been destroyed excepting parts of the two magazines. A somewhat dilapidated wooden house stands within the enclosure which is occupied by the caretaker who pastures the ground.

At the south-westerly end of the reserve stands a large number of buildings, chiefly of wood and most of them in an advanced state of decay, which at one time formed the head-quarters for the troops stationed here, and were known as "Butlers' Barracks." Some of these are still made use of by the militia when in camp on the reserve, but most of them are past use and should be removed.

Several roads cross the common, but none of them have been macadamized. A speeding course has also been formed and some slight grading done in connection therewith, but not to any great extent.

With the exception of the south-easterly corner of the reserve which is known as "Paradise Grove," the land is practically destitute of good foliage or shade trees.

As this reserve is occupied for a short time each year by the militia, and is most suitable for the purposes of a camping and parade ground, nothing should be done which would in any way militate against its use for such a purpose: but a great deal could be accomplished to make it in every way more desirable as a military rendezvous for the volunteers and militia of this part of our Dominion.

To this end I would suggest transplanting a large number of young maples, elms and other desirable shade and foliage trees, and planting a fringe of timber around the whole of the reserve.

At the angles, and at points where it would not in any way interfere with the requirements of the military authorities, plantations of shrubbery should be made, with clumps of evergreens and flowering trees to afford a pleasing variety and for winter effect. A delightful driveway could be made along the high bank of the river and around the reserve, with numerous attractive and commanding outlooks over lake and river. The Fort should have a water service so arranged as to permit of every portion of the ramparts being supplied in the dry season and all the sodding maintained in proper condition by frequent cutting.

These works, together with some alterations to make the appearance of the dwelling within the earthworks more presentable, would add vastly to the attractiveness of this spot, so famous in the early history of our Province, and so sacred in the eyes of every patriotic Canadian by reason of the noble sacrifices of both blood and treasure made by our forefathers in the defence of our country and for the preservation of our unity with the great Empire of which we form a part.

Mississauga Reserve consists of an irregular shaped piece of table-land which is admirably adapted for a park. It has a frontage on Lake Ontario of three-fourths of a mile with a maximum depth towards the east end of one-quarter mile, taling off to a point at the west. Fort Mississauga is situated on the lake near the west end of the reserve, and consists of a substantial earthwork redoubt, star shaped, with a masonry tower in the centre. This work is in much better preservation than Fort George, being of a more recent construction, and having been put in repair some years ago by the Government in response to urgent appeals of the citizens of the town.

Owing to the erosive action of the lake water during storms the face of the redoubt has been damaged considerably, and from the same cause several acres of the frontage have been eroded from the reserve. If the fortification is to be preserved it is imperative that means be taken to protect it from the wash of the lake by permanent works constructed in stone or wood: in fact, the whole of the frontage requires to be protected in this way, as the storm water is relentless in its action and appears to be cutting away the bank at the rate of two feet per year on an average.

The area of the reserve proper is now about fifty-six acres with a four acre plot immediately opposite to it, which was originally intended for an hospital site, but has never been required, nor is it likely to be, for that purpose.

All this ground requires planting, especially around the boundaries, and a pleasure drive, with walks and arbors constructed. Much of the surface should be ploughed and levelled and seeded down with good grass where not planted. There is abundance of room for ball and cricket grounds, and the rifle ranges now located on this reserve need not be interfered with if suitable precautions are taken to exclude the public from the range when in use by the militia.

An efficient water supply could readily be obtained for this plot, as the town mains are already laid on the streets adjoining it.

Altogether a most charming park can be made at this point, with a moderate outlay, and the work of development could be practically completed within three years. The important works for the protection of the shore could be taken in hand after the other work is done, and a reach of two or three hundred yards put in each year until the whole is completed. By this means the total outlay could be divided into equal annual amounts and the expenditure in any one year minimized.

Doubtless the Town of Niagara would willingly assist in the work and put in the necessary water pipes and furnish water for the maintenance of the property. Electric lights where required would no doubt be also supplied by the town, and police protection afforded.

Fort Mississauga was constructed in the year 1814, and has not acted so prominent a part in history as Fort George: but in the heavy operations preceding the close of the war with the United States it had its full share of the so-called 'glorious panoply of war,' and is deserving of preservation as an earnest of our country's gratitude for the doughty deeds performed by her sons in its vicinity.

It is somewhat difficult to give an estimate of the cost of improving these important reserves, as so much must depend upon individual opinion of what should be done. Of course if quick effects are desired the cost will be correspondingly great, as it is much more expensive to buy and transplant trees of a large size and which are expected to furnish shade and landscape effect at once than to procure nursery stock and wait for a few years for it to mature.

Assuming that the latter course would of necessity be adopted, I am of opinion that the works outlined above can be performed for the following sums, viz. :—

Putting the grounds into shape, planting, driveways, walks, etc.....	\$10,000 00
Annual maintenance of both reserves, including in- terest on initial outlay	2,400 00

In addition to the grounds I estimate the cost of protecting the shore of the lake, in front of the Mississauga Reserve, to be \$10,000. Interest and renewals on this sum would add \$800 to the annual charge for maintenance, or say a total outlay of \$20,000, and a yearly charge of \$3,200.

At first sight this amount may appear to be large and difficult to obtain, but as the Dominion Government would have the benefit of the improved grounds for all military purposes, and without cost except in so far as maintenance of barracks is concerned, a yearly payment of a considerable portion of this amount might confidently be expected from that Government, and the patriotism of the Province could surely be depended on to contribute an equal amount, leaving but a comparatively small charge against the Park funds.

A map of the lands referred to is appended hereto.

Respectfully submitted,

(Sgd.) JAMES WILSON,
Superintendent.

The Park Superintendent made the following report in relation to the lands at Queenston Heights, which the Commissioners desire to have attached to the Park system :—

NIAGARA FALLS,

August 25th, 1896.

J. W. LANGMUIR, Esq., Chairman :

DEAR SIR,—As directed by you I beg to report on the present standing of the Park Commissioners in respect to the lands forming the Military Reserve at Queenston Heights, and the desirability of taking over the balance of these lands for park purposes. Originally the ordnance reserve at this point covered an area of about 137 acres : but I find on a careful examination of the property that out of this total quantity only about seventy-five acres remain vested in the Crown, the balance having been disposed of by letters patent at various dates.

Of this seventy-five acres the Commissioners have been put in possession of the following several parcels, namely :

No. 1, 20th June 1891.—A license of occupation for a strip along the highway and down to the edge of the Niagara River.

No. 2, December 17th, 1895.—Lease of two parcels at base of the heights and near the margin of the river.

No. 3, May 5th, 1896.—Transfer of lands about Brock's monument.

The area of these several parcels is forty-one and one half acres. Some doubt having arisen, however, as to the sufficiency of the license of occupation referred to, it would be best to include the lands covered by this document in

with the remaining lands adjoining, which have not been transferred in any application which may be made for them to the Dominion authorities. For the sake of convenience it might be advisable to include the two small parcels secured by lease on 17th December, 1895, in the patent sought for, and thus obviate the necessity of making a yearly payment of rent, even though the amount is merely nominal.

By an inspection of the maps attached hereto it will be seen that in order to preserve the foliage along the escarpment forming the Queenston Heights, it is essential that these lands in question, which are tinted in pink on the map and cover an area of thirty-nine and eight-tenths acres, should all be included in any scheme for the development of the property as a part of the Niagara Falls Park system.

Nearly the whole of this territory is now covered with timber, much of it with evergreens; but a great variety of the most desirable indigenous foliage and shade trees are also here found, and although a great deal of cleaning up and trimming are required, yet the necessity of preserving this charming range of landscape is apparent to the most casual observer, and there can be no question that it should all form part of the monument grounds to be maintained in connection therewith, and the possibility of it being treated in any distinct and inimical manner by a separate control at any future time makes it all the more desirable that it should all be secured.

In respect to the expenditure which would be required to put the property in fair condition, I estimate that the sum of \$1,000 will do the works which are needed at once, and that an allowance of \$300 per annum would provide for its future maintenance, irrespective of the bond interest.

The whole respectfully submitted.

(Sgd.) JAMES WILSON,
Superintendent.

Viewed as a whole, the suggestions contained in the petitions from the various bodies, and which have been so minutely dealt with by the Park Superintendent in the foregoing reports, are most inviting. These several parcels of land are situated at important points on the river, one at either extremity and the third at the commanding position occupied by the Heights at Queenston, where long ago Niagara Falls began its mighty task of channelling out the far-famed canon—a work which has not ceased day or night since, and which to-day is one of the marvels of the world. For nearly the whole distance between the two extremities the shore of the river is now vested in the Commissioners, and the acquisition of these desirable parcels of land as terminal parks would make the Niagara Falls Park system exceedingly complete and comprehensive.

Upon the most careful consideration of the whole question, and a personal inspection of the grounds, the Commissioners came to the conclusion, while it was

clearly in the best interests of the Park system that effect should be given to the recommendations, that owing to the inadequacy of the funds at the disposal of the Commissioners to meet current engagements, the works could not be undertaken by the Board, either at Fort Erie or Niagara-on-the-Lake, without substantial assistance from the Dominion or Provincial Government. The Commissioners, however, strongly recommended the acquirement of the remaining portions of the ordnance reserve at Queenston Heights in order that the works of improvement might be carried on at that point to the greatest advantage.

OFFICIAL INSPECTION.

When learned in the early part of the summer that Sir Oliver Mowat had decided to sever his connection with the Ontario Government in order to accept the position of Minister of Justice for Canada, the Commissioners deemed it most appropriate that the retiring Premier should make a final inspection of the improvements and developments of the entire Park system with which he had been closely associated in his official capacity during the preceding ten years. They also considered it important that his successor in office, the Honorable Mr. Hardy, to whom would be committed the future interests of the Park, should become thoroughly conversant with the condition of the Park system by a complete inspection of every part of it. The Commissioners considered it advisable that such inspection and visitation should be official in character, and to that end His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor and Mrs. Kirkpatrick, the Cabinet Ministers of the Province and their wives, Sir Casimir Gzowski, the late Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, and Lady Gzowski, together with a few others who had been closely identified with the Park scheme, should be invited. In furtherance of this decision invitations were issued to meet at the Clifton House on the evening of 24th July, and on the following morning the party took a special car on the Niagara Falls Park & River Railway and made a thorough inspection of the Park properties from Chippawa to Queenston Heights.

The beautiful scenery of the Dufferin Islands was much admired, and the appropriate character of the improvements that had been carried out at that point in the way of foot paths and rustic bridges was approved and commended, as was also the substantial appearance of the long stretches of costly crib work constructed to protect the west shore from the destructive erosion of the rapid currents in summer and the heavy floes of ice in winter. It was pointed out that in addition to the crib work being used for a protection of the shore it was also intended to serve the further useful purpose of a promenade, to enable visitors to enjoy some of the finest scenery in the park. The various important improvements which had been made in the lower sections of the park, including the removal of unsightly structures, the construction of drives and pathways, the

planting of choice flowering shrubs and ornamental beds of annuals at the picnic grounds where accommodations are provided for large parties of excursionists were all viewed with interest and satisfaction by the visitors.

The visit to Niagara Glen, formerly known as Foster's Flats, afforded a great surprise to all, as the existence of such a wild and picturesque spot is little known to the public.

At Queenston Heights an inspection was made of the grounds and improvements, including the lands added by the commissioners since assuming the management of this portion of the park system. The remains of the old military forts or redoubts, erected by the British in 1814, and which have lately been included in the park territory, were examined with much interest and the unrivalled beauty of the panorama in view from the heights aroused the greatest admiration of the visitors.

During the afternoon the party drove across to the American side of the river where they inspected the electrical works and machinery of the large power house of the Cataract Construction Company. They also visited the extensive manufactories of the Niagara Falls Paper Works Company and of the Aluminum Works, and were much impressed with the importance and magnitude of these industries.

On Saturday evening, when the work of inspection was over, the visitors, together with a few local guests, were entertained at a banquet tendered them by the Commissioners at the Clifton House. After spending a quiet Sunday the party returned to Toronto early on Monday morning, all having heartily enjoyed their visit to the Park, and well pleased with the works and improvements which had been accomplished.

GENERAL WORK.

During the year a considerable amount of work has been done, more particularly in the Niagara Falls and Queenston Heights Parks, as will appear from a reference to the report of the Superintendent appended hereto. Not only has the property been maintained throughout the year in a creditable condition, but many works of permanent construction have been taken in hand and advanced as much as the means at the disposal of the Board would admit of.

Owing to the limited amount of park revenue in the past, and considering that the largest portion of it had to be applied to the annual payment of interest on the Park bonds, the Commissioners have been compelled from time to time to draw attention to the inadequacy of the balance available to carry on the works of improvement and meet current maintenance. Having regard to the expensive character of the works connected with the park system and the necessity of maintaining it in a manner worthy of this great national park, and in harmony

with the grandeur of the surrounding scenery, a much larger sum than the Commissioners have had at their disposal should be annually used for maintenance alone.

Although the Park has been maintained in a manner which has met with general approval, and at the same time several important works of a permanent character have been constructed, these facts only prove that the limited funds available have been expended with the utmost economy. In the various cities of the United States and other countries large sums are spent annually in providing suitable parks for the citizens, and the sentiment grows stronger year by year that even greater liberality should be exercised in this direction. There are few, if any, places of public resort where a generous appropriation for works of improvement could be used to better advantage than in the Niagara Falls Park system, which now comprises an area of some 675 acres, and which may be considerably increased in the near future. The utter inadequacy of the sum of \$20,000, which is annually available for maintenance and improvements, will be at once shown when a comparison is made with the expenditure in other places for park purposes. In last year's report reference was made to the amount which had been expended in connection with the State Reservation at Niagara Falls, where the area of the ground occupied is only 107 acres, and it may be of general interest to give the results of undertakings on a larger scale, taken from the latest published report of parks in the United States, and for which we are indebted to the courtesy of the park officials of the different cities.

Buffalo.—The park system of Buffalo has an area of 942½ acres, under the control of a board of park commissioners. Of this 718 acres is park land, 165 acres being boulevard approaches to the several parks from the centre of the city, and sixty-one acres in small squares scattered over the city. The total expenditure on its park system from 1870 to January 1st, 1896, had been \$3,778,828.39; lands costing \$765,410.95, and improvements \$3,013,215.96. The expenditure in 1895 was \$194,589.60.

Boston. The magnificent park system of Boston contains 2,523 acres, including some 587 acres of flats reclaimed. There are thirty-seven miles of driveways, sixty-five miles of walks and eight miles of bridle-paths in connection with the parks. The amount paid for lands was \$6,030,784.25, and for improvements \$7,278,455.95, a total cost to date of \$13,309,240. The yearly expenditure for maintenance is now about \$120,000.

Brooklyn. Brooklyn park system at the end of 1895 comprised 689½ acres within the city limits, and 878 acres outside of the city, making a total of 1,567½ acres. The present estimated value of the city parks is \$33,971,000. The cost of the 878 acres outside of the city purchased in 1895 is given at \$4,415,000, or \$5,028.47 per acre. There are thirty miles of parkways in connection with the

park system, which cost an additional sum of \$12,300,000. The expenditure for maintenance for city parks in 1895 was \$386,079.39, and on bond account \$160,180.56, making a total of \$546,259.75.

Toledo. The park system of Toledo contains an area of 704 acres, of which the total value on January 1st, 1896, was estimated at \$825,870.63. This sum includes the cost for lands and improvements up to that date. In 1895 \$6,286.00 was paid for lands, and \$35,040.00 for maintenance and new works, or a total of \$41,526.00.

San Francisco. Golden Gate Park at San Francisco contains 1,040 acres. The citizens are justly proud of this park which is now one of the most attractive public parks on the continent. The expenditure for 1895 was \$114,000 for improvement and \$115,000 for maintenance, or a total outlay for that year of \$229,000.

St. Louis. St. Louis has a park system of 2,176 acres, of which a considerable portion was donated for park purposes, and the balance acquired at a cost of \$1,309,944.04. The sum of \$3,527,241.43 has been spent on park improvement, or a total of \$4,817,985.47 for all purposes. The amount expended for maintenance in 1894 was \$84,896.79.

Cleveland. The area of the park system of Cleveland is 1,100 acres, much of which was donated to the city. In 1895 there was expended in connection with its care, improvement and extension, \$133,164.77 for lands, \$247,292.10 for maintenance and improvements, and \$44,000 on bond account, making a total expenditure for the year of \$424,456.87.

Chicago. Chicago has three distinct systems of parks which are under separate Boards of Commissioners, but all connected by spacious boulevards that are maintained as parts of the general park system and are a charge upon the park funds. The following figures will show the principal items of interest in each case :—

—	Park. (acres.)	Boulevard. (acres.)	Total (acres.)	Cost to January, 1896.	Cost in 1895.
				\$ c.	\$ c.
South Park.....	994.90	311.85	1,306 75	13,796,681 74	786,271 23
West	596.45	{ 371.34 (12 miles) }	967.79	7,210,228 71	334,267 51
Lincoln	300.00	200.00	500.00	7,000,000 00	448,712 92
Totals.....	1,891.35	883.19	2,774.54	28,006,910 45	1,569,251 66

New York City. The park system of the Metropolitan City, prior to its enlargement as Greater New York, including squares and open spaces, embraced a total area of over five thousand acres of which the principal developed area,

Central Park, together with Manhattan Square, covers some 859 acres of the most elaborate landscape gardening in America. The annual expenditure on the park system is over \$1,300,000, which amount includes the maintenance of the Art and Natural History Museums located in Central Park.

Montreal. Montreal is well provided with park areas. Mount Royal, 464 acres in extent, was acquired many years ago at a cost of over one million dollars. Logan's Park and St. Helen's Island, each of 85 acres, were secured by lease from the Dominion Government, whilst numerous squares and open spaces in the city make up a total of over 660 acres. Over \$25,000 is expended per annum in maintenance charges.

Suburban Parks. As an example of enlightened public sentiment in relation to the great economic value of park spaces, Essex County, New Jersey, may be quoted, where the sum of \$2,000,000 has recently been voted for the purpose of acquiring a series of parks within the county, to aggregate not less than 4,000 acres. The Board of Commissioners appointed to carry out the project have received *carte blanche* to select lands and make improvements forthwith.

Territorial Parks. Within the last few years many territorial parks have been set apart in the United States to ensure the permanence of the forest at important water sheds, or to preserve the characteristic and sylvan surroundings of imposing natural phenomena. California has four such parks aggregating 8,500 square miles, and Colorado a total of 4,850 square miles. In all there are over 20,000 square miles of park and forest reserves in the United States, in some of which, such as the Yellowstone National Park, important works to facilitate access to the chief points of interest are being carried out.

The Province of Ontario has quite recently established the Algonquin Park, with an area of 1,733 square miles, in the northern part of the Province, in addition to other and smaller reserves: while the Dominion of Canada has a park of noble proportions at Banff, near the base of the Rocky Mountains and within view of some of its snow-clad ranges.

Viewed in the light of these great civic and territorial undertakings the Niagara Falls Park system appears but small in area. When, however, the sublime beauty of its natural features is considered it stands out unique and unrivalled, and a comparison with other systems only emphasizes the need for greater efforts being put forth for the development of the property in accordance with the plans of the Commissioners in order to make the artistic condition of the grounds, even in some small measure, harmonize with the great natural charms which the Creator has impressed on the character of the surrounding scenery.

WORKS URGENTLY REQUIRED.

Among the many improvements which have been for some years in contemplation, and which the Commissioners have been obliged to postpone from year to year for want of funds, the laying of a permanent form of driveway from the picnic grounds southwards past Table Rock and on to the foot of Cedar Island is unquestionably the most urgent. The roadway for the whole of the distance (some 800 yards) is so frequently drenched with spray that it is impossible to maintain a respectable driveway with the material at hand, and from the same cause the gravelled footpath alongside the roadway is very often practically impassable. After viewing the matter in all its bearings the Commissioners have decided that the only way to overcome this difficulty and provide suitable approaches for visitors in carriages or on foot to the edge of the Horse Shoe Fall at Table Rock, which is the chief point of attraction in the Park, and to which access is most desired, is to put down with as little delay as possible a substantial permanent and clean roadway over the whole of this distance; and for the main footpath along the edge of the cliff, either flagstone, brick, or cement, as may be found to be most economical or desirable, and ample provision should be made at the same time for drawing off the surface water. The Commissioners find that the means now at their disposal for permanent works is quite inadequate to permit of either of these important measures being taken in hand, and they have therefore to ask assistance from the Government in order that the work may be done during the ensuing summer.

Attention has been drawn in previous reports to the serious erosion of the west bank of the Niagara River at many points between Chippawa and Fort Erie, owing chiefly to the grinding action of floating ice at periods of high water, caused by storms on Lake Erie, which drive a portion of its waters into the river. In this, as in other matters already referred to, the Commissioners have been precluded from taking active steps for want of funds.

UTILIZATION OF WATER POWER.

In the early part of the year application was made by the company having the privilege of developing electrical power for commercial purposes from the waters of Niagara River within the Park, for an eighteen months' extension of time within which, under their agreement with the Commissioners dated April, 1892, the initial works were to be constructed. Many meetings were held with the representatives of the company and a large volume of correspondence was carried on during the year in order that the Commissioners might become fully informed in respect of the reasons that called for the extension of the time limit on the part of the company. The Commissioners also desired to consider all the circumstances and conditions involved in the application, and their bearing upon the future interests of the Park.

As the subject is not only of great public importance but vitally affects the future interests of the Park, and as considerable opposition has been manifested to an extension of the time limit or to any variation of the agreement with the company—although such opposition is largely confined to the residents of the Niagara district—the Commissioners think that a historic resumé of all the facts connected with the utilization of the water power of the falls is called for in order that an intelligent opinion may be had in reference to the subject.

At the outset the fact must again be emphasized that in founding the Park the Government of Ontario made it a *sine qua non* that its establishment should not entail any financial burden on the province, but that the property should be made to yield a revenue sufficient for its yearly maintenance and improvement, and in addition pay interest on the whole outlay necessary for the purchase of the lands and for the extensive works of reclamation and reconstruction. The necessity of providing annually a sum of not less than forty thousand dollars for this purpose had from the beginning a most important bearing upon the policy of the Commissioners. Having made efforts for some years to secure this very large revenue without success, the Commissioners were compelled to look for new sources of income, and among these their attention was naturally drawn to the immense water power of the falls as one of the most promising means at command for raising revenue, more especially as a great enterprise had been organized on the American side, having in view the utilizing of the water power of the falls for commercial purposes. In the early part of the year 1889 a proposal was received by the Commissioners on behalf of a number of American gentlemen, among whom was ex-Governor Cornell and other well known capitalists, for a grant under which some of the water power of the Horse Shoe Fall could be used for the purpose of generating electricity as a motive power, and for lighting purposes, not only for local requirements but for transmission to cities and towns in Canada and the United States.

The Commissioners carefully considered the subject in all its bearings and decided that certain conditions should govern any agreement which might be arrived at, viz.: That all the constructions required for electrical works should be placed as far as possible from the bank of the river, and in a manner which would not detract from the Park design, and that all such works should be subject to the approval of the Park Commissioners, both as to position and character; and, further, that the conduct of operations within the Park should be subject to the rules and regulations framed by the Commissioners.

After protracted negotiations with the American applicants for the granting of a franchise on these conditions, an agreement was finally entered into under which the lessees were to pay twenty-five thousand dollars per annum, of which two years' rent was to be paid in advance, and at the expiration of ten years the rental was to be increased at the rate of one thousand dollars per annum until it

reached thirty-five thousand dollars per annum in the twentieth year. It was further agreed that the lease should be extended for three further terms of twenty years at the maximum rental of thirty-five thousand dollars per annum.

Time was given to the promoters to enable them to organize as an incorporated company and to obtain the requisite capital to successfully carry on the operations. Having failed to accomplish this, however, the Park Commissioners were finally compelled to terminate the negotiations.

Some time after, proposals for privileges similar to those arranged for with the American capitalists were received on behalf of Mr. Ferranti, an eminent English electrician who, in association with well known London capitalists, was then engaged in constructing an extensive electrical plant in London. As an evidence of bona fides, ten thousand dollars was required as a forfeitable deposit, and one year was granted in which to organize and conclude a definite contract. Owing to unforeseen delays and to the seemingly interminable difficulties in connection with the problem of transmission from their power station at Deptford to their London station, a distance of over nine miles, the time for the closing of the contract passed and the deposit was forfeited.

Several offers were then made on behalf of other United States capitalists who were desirous of securing the franchise, but as they all asked for a considerable reduction in the annual rental that had been previously decided upon, and proposed the payment of royalties and other considerations in lieu of such rental, the negotiations were necessarily abortive.

After some time had elapsed, the English capitalists renewed their application for the franchise, and having paid a second sum of ten thousand dollars as a forfeitable deposit, the option was renewed. Efforts, however, to finance the scheme in England again failed, but the representative of the English capitalists at last succeeded in inducing the present holders of the franchise, who are men in command of unlimited capital, to join the English capitalists, take up the option and pay in the large sum necessary to make up the two years' rental; whereupon an agreement was executed in April, 1892, and ratified by the Legislature of Ontario at the spring session in that year. Under the terms of this agreement the company were granted until May, 1897, to prepare plans, arrange finances, and begin work, which was to be sufficiently advanced on the 1st of November, 1898, to have water connections made for twenty-five thousand horse power, and to have actually ready for use, supply and transmission, ten thousand electrical horse power.

Since the execution of the agreement the holders of the franchise have complied with the financial obligations imposed, and have up to the present time paid in the sum of one hundred thousand dollars as rental up to 1st November, 1896, without receiving any material benefit therefrom. They now represent that as the transmission of electricity for considerable distances is still in the experi-

mental stage, and that before beginning work it is desirable, if not necessary, that this problem should be successfully solved, and additional time given, and they ask that an additional eighteen months be allowed for the completion of the works stipulated in the agreement to be ready by the 1st of November, 1898.

It may be pointed out that the works of the Niagara Falls Power Company, which are situated on the American side, and which are based upon precisely the same principle of development of the water power, and for which no rental is paid to the State, have been up to the present time wholly unremunerative, although the expenditure on the works and plant to date is stated to have been over five million dollars.

In view of the magnitude of the operations required for the carrying out of this gigantic undertaking, and the exceptional character of the machinery employed, the Commissioners deem it but reasonable that sufficient time be given the Canadian Company in which to thoroughly test and perfect all the appliances necessary to secure the success of the enterprise before operations are begun; and although it would appear that a somewhat smaller expenditure of capital will be called for in the execution of the works on the Canadian side, it will undoubtedly require an outlay of millions of dollars to complete the works which have already been submitted for the approval of the Commissioners.

When the great financial responsibility and keen business experience of the group of English and American capitalists forming the Canadian Niagara Power Company is taken into account, it must be admitted that it would be difficult to obtain a company more capable of developing the work in a broad and comprehensive scale, and that their application for an additional period of eighteen months (during which the rental is to be personally guaranteed) is at least well worthy of consideration.

It has always appeared to the Commissioners improbable that a market could be found in the vicinity of the Falls on the Canadian side for large units of electric power, at least for years to come; but that the success of the enterprise must depend chiefly on the possibility of transmitting the energy over a wide area and distributing it to large and small consumers in cities and towns more or less remote from the Falls. The difficulties attending the economic transmission of electrical power, even to places as near to the Falls as Hamilton or Toronto, do not appear to be as yet fully overcome; while the machinery and appliances required to convey and deliver the energy to consumers will under any circumstances require the expenditure of vast sums of money. It will thus be quite apparent that only an organization having the command of unlimited capital, and the knowledge which alone comes from experience, could reasonably hope to obtain a successful future.

In order to provide ample facilities for meeting any demand for electrical power which may arise prior to the carrying out of the works, the Company have offered to arrange with the Niagara Falls Park and River Railway Company, subject to the approval of the Government, for the temporary use of the surplus power which can be made available at short notice in the power house of that company, and they have also further intimated that the main works will be gone on with immediately it is found possible to secure responsible customers in the vicinity of the Falls on the Canadian side to assure a market for the use of even five thousand electrical horse power.

Having regard to the foregoing considerations, and the difficulties and delays which attended the securing of reliable parties to take up the franchise in the first instance, and, above all, having regard to the responsibility resting upon the Commissioners to secure the large revenue needed to maintain the park and its extensive outlying territories, the Commissioners, after the most careful and exhaustive consideration of the whole subject, decided to recommend the Government to grant the extension of eighteen months asked for on the following conditions :—

1. " That the Company shall not exercise the option in the agreement to terminate the same during the period covered by the extension, but that the payment of the stipulated rental should be guaranteed for that time.

2. " That in the event of a local demand for electric power arising in the interval, the Company should be authorized to arrange for the temporary use of the Niagara Falls Park and River Railway surplus power, but that the use of such power shall not be sanctioned beyond the date of the extension asked for, nor to an extent beyond the present capacity of the railway wheelpits and buildings, and upon such other terms and conditions as may appear just and as shall protect the interests and revenues of the Park.

FINANCIAL.

The following summary will show the receipts and expenditures for the year:

RECEIPTS.

Balance on hand at Imperial Bank, January 1st, 1896..	\$2,336 54
Rental from photo and refreshment privileges, and the right to conduct visitors "Under the Falls"	8,200 00
Rental from the Niagara Falls Park & River Railway Company.....	7,500 00
Rental from the Canadian Niagara Power Company ...	25,000 00
Receipts from tolls on carriages over islands..	\$1,516 40
" Brock's Monument Park.....	218 13
	<hr/> 1,734 53
Receipts from sundries, sales of old materials, etc., etc..	115 15
Imperial Bank, interest on deposits.....	65 40
" overdraft	3,473 06
	<hr/>
Total	\$48,424 68

EXPENDITURES.

Capital Account—

Permanent improvements, including cost of materials, etc	\$4,227 51
Wages of mechanics and laborers	2,723 76
Land purchases	1,201 07
Miscellaneous.....	24 79
	<hr/>
	\$8,177 13

Maintenance Account—

Salaries and wages, including wages of laborers, teams, etc	\$11,679 15
Materials	2,722 91
Office expenses	352 51
Commissioners' expenses	311 36
Miscellaneous.....	852 53
Interest on overdrafts during year.....	134 90
	<hr/>
	16,053 36
Coupon interest and charges	24,194 19
	<hr/>
Total	\$48,424 68

All of which is respectfully submitted.

J. W. LANGMUIR,
Chairman.
GEORGE H. WILKES,
B. E. CHARLTON,
JAS. BAMPFIELD.

APPENDIX.

TO THE COMMISSIONERS FOR THE
QUEEN VICTORIA NIAGARA FALLS PARK;

GENTLEMEN,—I beg to submit the following report of the works done in connection with the Park during the year ending 31st December, 1896.

MAINTENANCE.

The general works incident to the maintenance of the grounds comprised within the limits of the Parks proper, at Niagara Falls and at Queenston Heights, have all been carried out with as much care and at as little expense as was possible. As the amount available for this purpose is practically uniform from year to year, it is of course impossible to effect any marked changes; but as the area reclaimed and brought under close cultivation is extending each year, it becomes more necessary to economize in order to overtake the work, and ere long it will be necessary to increase the amount if even the present standard is to be maintained.

The means taken to afford facilities to picnic and excursion parties visiting the Park were very much appreciated, and the Canadian excursionists were even more numerous than in any previous year, although in some cases the parties were not so large.

Good order was maintained throughout, and notwithstanding the persistent coming of several crooks and pickpockets, especially with excursion parties from Buffalo, the Park police were successful in a marked degree in preventing lawlessness.

LAST YEAR'S REPORT.

The issue of the special illustrated report of the Park for the past ten years, which was sent out early in the season, was very much appreciated, and aroused a greater interest in the Park and its outlying territories than had been previously manifested. The report of the results of the classification of the plant life found on the premises was of special interest to very many, as the study of botany is now required in all the superior schools of the Province, and the vicinity of the Falls is well known to be the most favorable situation for the practical study of this delightful science.

The learned monograph on the geology of the Niagara from the pen of Professor G. K. Gilbert excited great interest, and has led to much research and investigation by eminent geologists during the past season, which will doubtless result in the attainment of a more perfect knowledge of the past history of our noble river.

NEW WORKS.

In addition to works of maintenance, a great deal has been accomplished in the course of the past season in providing new and permanent improvements to the property. Last year reference was made to the important work, then under way, of protecting the shore of the upper reach of the river from erosion by putting a substantial cribwork revetment at the edge of the stream from the Burning Spring gate down to Clark Hill. This work has now been practically completed, and the undermining of the high bank of the river, which had in many places suffered serious injury from this cause will in future be prevented. The extension of the pleasant walk, known as Riverside Ramble, from its present termination to the Dufferin Gate, can now be proceeded with. This I propose should be a gravelled walk in preference to timber, six feet in width, and protected by a substantial rustic railing on the water side. One or two rustic arbors, located in cozy spots should also be provided.

The cribwork at Tempest Point has been extended down stream, and further danger from erosion at this point is thereby reduced to a minimum.

Another important work of construction was the building of a proper closet and lavatory at Table Rock, where visitors congregate in large numbers throughout the season. A substantial stone building equipped with modern conveniences has been erected for this purpose, and the surroundings greatly improved.

Reference was made in last year's report to the preparatory work then performed for the extensive bed of ornamental shrubbery designed to fill the swampy space between Table Rock House and the restaurant building. This was completed early in the season and planted with a choice selection of the best perennials and full flowering plants, arranged so as to afford a constant succession of bloom throughout the season. The rhododendrons and azaleas, which had been planted in the picnic grounds as an experiment, were found to winter well and were removed to this bed where it was considered they would do even better. It is intended to add considerably to the collection of choice varieties of herbaceous and flowering plants in the ensuing spring.

As the season of 1896 was most unfavorable for planting out new stock, and the means at command were limited, extensive work in this connection was deferred; but over three hundred selected thrifty specimens of hardy trees and shrubs were procured and set out, and in addition a large selection of our nursery grown stock was used to fill up bare spaces.

An abundant supply of bedding plants was afforded by our propagating houses, erected two years ago, and which have hitherto cost but a trifle to maintain. It would certainly add very much to the attractiveness of the Park if a suitable greenhouse were built in connection with the propagating houses, for the display of delicate and winter blooming plants, and to which the public should have free

access. We have already the nucleus for a very fair exhibit, and a comparatively small outlay would suffice for a building that would answer the purpose for many years, and which could be extended if found desirable.

The picnic grounds were improved by the placing of a neat sandstone coping around the circular pond near the monument to Sir Casimir Gzowski; the remaining two ponds require to be similarly protected, as, owing to the crowded state of the grounds on the occasion of large excursions, the safety of children is endangered for want of proper guards.

Ever since the construction of the electric railway, the bridge leading to Cedar Island has been a source of anxiety, owing to the narrow space left for carriages at the eastern end. During the season a substantial double way bridge, on a different alignment, and provided with strong rustic railings, was substituted and the surroundings put into better shape. Near the south end of Cedar Island a dam was placed across the channel in order to raise the water surface to something like its former level, as the excessively low water prevalent in the river for the past three or four years had left the timbering of the south bridge much more exposed than formerly, and therefore subject to decay. Incidentally it has much improved the appearance of the channel above the site of the dam.

On the Dufferin Islands, several reaches of the pathways, where the shallow streams were crossed by wooden bridges, were filled in with gravel and permanent walks made. The numerous little bridges which were left all received a thorough overhauling, and neat rustic railings put up in each case.

VICTORIA PARKWAY.

The northern section of the Victoria Parkway, or from the north limit of the town to the Muddy Run Creek, was Macadamized early in the year; in accordance with an agreement entered into with the town authorities of Niagara Falls. This parkway is thenceforth to be maintained at the joint expense of the town and the Park, and some repairs were effected under this agreement during the year, chiefly in the vicinity of the Clifton House.

North of the Railway Suspension Bridge, there is no guard railing along the edge of the cliff. As this region is much visited by sight seers eager to gaze on the turbulent waters down in the canon, and in order to do so to advantage it is necessary to stand upon the very edge of the precipice, it would appear to be a desirable precaution that a railing similar to the one which extends along the edge of the bank from the Suspension Bridge to Table Rock should be continued northwards as far as the Whirlpool Point.

In front of the town the thickets of sumach and red cedar along the cliff between the edge and the railway, were carefully trimmed and vistas of the river afforded at desirable points along the way.

NIAGARA GLEN.

A beginning was made this year in opening up the beauties of the Niagara Glen to the public. Pathways were cut from the track of the electric railway to

the edge of the cliff, a substantial stairway of some seventy steps, in short easy stages, was constructed to the talus below; and from that point to the water's edge a winding pathway of easy descent made by which visitors can enjoy some of the delightful scenery of this romantic spot. It is proposed that this walk shall be extended the ensuing summer, and in time all the interesting portions of this remarkable work of nature be made accessible.

QUEENSTON HEIGHTS.

The new driveway, which was undertaken early last year, was completed early in the spring and proved of great service in affording much more convenient access to the monument and grounds. The open portions of the lands which were acquired on the west of the Government ground were levelled and sown, and a fringe of nice young maples, elms and birches planted on each side of the roadway and along the bare western boundary. The lush surrounding the earthwork reoubts, and extending south to the highway, was thoroughly underbrushed and cleaned up, and the interior of the redoubts stripped of their rank overgrowth of wood.

During a storm in the winter, the flag staff on the edge of the heights was blown down and a new one was required. A magnificent 90 ft. stick of white pine was procured, trimmed into suitable shape, equipped with the necessary gearing, and erected in the same place as the former one, but in a much more substantial manner; the base being enclosed in a heavy bedding of concrete, and the entire pole above the ground surface well coated with paint.

About twenty acres of Government property was added to the lands under park management during the year, and a beginning was made towards cleaning up this additional territory.

Nothing was attempted in respect to the narrow strips of property vested in the Commissioners, which extend along the upper reach of the Niagara River, from Chippawa to Fort Erie, and along the lower river from Queenston to Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Reference to the continual encroachment of the river on much of this long stretch of property was made in previous reports, and I have again to recommend that steps be taken on a comprehensive scale to prevent the serious wasting which is now going on, and to confine the waters of the river within permanent bounds.

I would also draw attention to the advisability of having a survey made of all this outlying territory, in order to determine the extent of the rights of the Commissioners under the patents issued by the Crown.

Respectfully submitted.

JAMES WILSON,

Superintendent.

NIAGARA FALLS, February 1st, 1897.

