

have been surprised and destroyed by the earlier readiness of an enemy, there should be at hand, actually stored and kept in perfect condition, all the means for converting these large and swift steamers, &c., into vessels of war—that is to say, all the armament and its supplies," &c.

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 "Moreover, if for want of adequate protection of this nature the towns and cities had to resort to local defence, these, in many instances, could only be made sufficient at great expense," &c.

The committee are permitted to quote the following paragraph from a communication of *General McClellan*:

"The accumulation of ordnance material in appropriate localities is highly important, and measures for the establishment of a national foundry and manufactory of small arms in the northwest should at once be taken. Chicago is a suitable point for these establishments."

Means of arming the merchant service of the lakes is thus presented as of primary importance.

The lakes are to-day naked of arms; we therefore urge the immediate establishment of this national work, and a collection of naval stores at three points—one on Lake Michigan for the upper lakes, one on Lake Erie, and one on Lake Ontario.

These measures are of the more importance because of the existence of treaty stipulations between the United States and Great Britain, limiting armed vessels in the lakes. This treaty, concluded in 1817, contains the following provisions:

"The naval force to be maintained upon the American lakes by his Majesty and the government of the United States shall henceforth be confined to the following vessels on each side, that is:

"On Lake Ontario, to one vessel not exceeding one hundred tons burden, and armed with one 18-pound cannon.

"On the waters of Lake Champlain, to one vessel not exceeding like burden, and armed with like force.

"On the upper lakes, to two vessels not exceeding like burden, and armed with like force.

"All other armed vessels on these lakes shall be forthwith dismantled, and no other vessels of war shall be built.

"If either party should hereafter be desirous of annulling this stipulation, and should give notice to that effect to the other party, it shall cease to be binding after the expiration of six months from the date of such notice."

Whether this treaty includes Lake Michigan, which is entirely inland, may perhaps admit of doubt.

Great Britain has, by means of her Canadian canals, facilities for bringing gunboats and vessels of war from the St. Lawrence and the ocean into the lakes. This is an advantage not to be overlooked. These advantages can only be equalized by the enlargement of the Illinois and Michigan canal. The canals around the rapids of the St. Lawrence are built to pass vessels, from the St. Lawrence to Lake Ontario, 186 feet long, 44½ feet beam, and 9 feet draught. The Welland canal, around the Falls of Niagara, connecting Lakes Ontario