

These rivers and lakes have been the most important factors in the settlement of the country, as they formed the earliest lines of approach for the penetration and exploration of the interior, and for the exploitation of our forests. The lumberman followed the trapper and the fur trader, the axe supplanted the rifle, and thus the country was opened up by men who knew not only where to begin, but, by their calling, were best equipped as pioneers.

The frontier, where not already occupied by the French, was necessarily rapidly settled in the first place by the Loyalists of 1776, who could not stand upon the order of their departure after their homes were confiscated. These found the rivers their earliest friends from whence they obtained the means of shelter and of employment in the only industry by which money could then be obtained, viz., the floating of timber and potash to Montreal and Quebec.

Over a length of several thousand miles between Labrador and Alaska and over a width of several hundred miles, there is an almost continuous distribution of lakes, lakelets and rivers;—the lakes of varied outlines, dimensions and elevations above sea level, and many possessing facilities for the storage of their flood waters. This power of storage has been largely taken advantage of by lumbermen to retain the needed supply for their spring "drive" into the main stream. In many places the outlet from the lake, or the connection between a chain of lakes, is a narrow cleft in rock where an inexpensive dam will hold back the water supplied by the winter's accumulation of snow.

With the exception of her prairie region, the rivers of Canada differ from the Mississippi, Missouri and Ohio, and the larger part of their tributaries, in that they are not naturally navigable from their mouths, or above tidal influence to any considerable extent, except in detached sections; while the former are navigable for thousands of miles and are therefore without water power. Those great western rivers flow upon a nearly uniform grade of a few inches per mile, whilst the St. Lawrence and its tributaries are interrupted by rapids, chutes and cataracts, affording a great variety, quantity and quality of water power.

In the United States, between the Atlantic coast and the Rocky Mountains, as far south as the Gulf of Mexico, and as far north as the Dakotas, (with the exception of part of New York and New England) there is an entire absence of lakes; while throughout Canada, north of the St. Lawrence and stretching northwest toward the Mackenzie River Basin, these are innumerable, in fact have never been numbered, and thousands of the smaller ones have never been represented on any map.

The upper sections or sources of most of the Canadian rivers are chains of lakes, occupying in many instances the greater portion of the