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The Ottawa, by which the waters of this region find their way out of the Laurentian mountains, at the Lac des Chats, upon the plain of Montreal, is so copious of flood, that it colors with its brown waters the north side of the current of the St. Lawrence River as far down as Lake St. Peter ; just as the turbid waters of the Missouri color the west side of the Mississippi far below St. Louis. Large as the St. Maurice River is, it is not larger than the Gatineau, one of the northern branches of the Ottawa. The Saguenay is but a tidal estuary arm of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the outlet of Lake St. John; but into this also flows from all sides the drainage of another section of the same area. Reviewing, then, the narrow southern and western border, and feeble tributaries of the chain of great lakes, and the small rain areas of the peninsulas of Michigan and Upper Canada inclosed between them; and on the other hand, the great outspread of the northern basin, its many large rivers and standing lakes, it may be justly said that the basin of the St. Lawrence is the basin of Canada; that it belongs almost wholly to the North, and finds its grandest hydrographic traits of character in a country almost unexplored. Its whole area Sir William Logan has stated at five hundred and thirty thousand square miles, more than eight tenths of which he says belongs to Canada, and the residue to the United States. Its chief peculiarity lies in the reservoirs of water, great and small, scattered over almost its entire sarface, protecting its rivers from those disastrous floods which desolate the river banks of other regions of the world, especially the neighboring valleys of the Western States. So effectual is this protection, that the total variation of the level of the St. Lawrence River, due to excessive rains or melting snows, and exclusive of the local influence of the ice-gorges a its narrows, does not exceed three to four feet; whereas the Ohio River at Cincinnati has been known to rise sixty feet in as many hours.

Having described the leading features of the topography of the basin, and shown how this must depend so largely upon the geological features of the whole district, it is further to be remarked that sheets of water, besides the larger lakes, the names of which have frequently occurred in this description, are vory numerous, and that they are found extending over a vast area of country principally on the north side of the longitudinal axis of the basin.

It may be said that all the largest of these lakes are hollowed out in the old Laurentian formation, and in its bands of limestone; and, as has been mentioned, similar depressions occur in the azoic rock (f the Adirondack country. The smaller lakes occur, also, to a very large extent, in drift on both sides of the axis of the valley; and of these we may mention the series lying upon the course of the Otonabee and the Trent, on the north side of Lake Ontario. But the most extensive development of these small surfaces of water occurs in that flat region of country forming the great southern peninsula of Michigan, which is generally described as covered with a great thickness of drift.

In the course of the Michigan survey, the topographers have already laid down on the maps fourteen hundred and twenty-five lakes, occupying areas of