



Canada's Opportunity on the Great Lakes.

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THE vast inheritance of Canada" is a phrase that has become so trite by incessant repetition as to have lost some of its significance among the very people who have not yet reached a full realization of what it connotes.

Yet the particulars of that inheritance are certainly most imposing, for they comprise the cod fisheries of the Atlantic Coast, and the salmon fisheries of the Pacific; the illimitable forests of the eastern provinces, and the inexhaustible ore deposits of the western; the uncounted acres of the finest wheat lands of the world, and the fathomless coal areas of Nova Scotia and British Columbia; and finally an undivided half-share in the greatest inland water-way on the globe, which must ever be the channel of a stupendous and constantly increasing commerce.

It is the last item in this splendid schedule that we now purpose to consider all too briefly.

Of the five great lakes, Canada holds joint ownership with the United States in Superior, Huron, Erie, and Ontario, Michigan alone being wholly in the Republic's territory. Upon the shores of these lakes, and their outlet through the St. Lawrence to the ocean stand her three chief cities, Quebec, Montreal, Toronto; not to mention Kingston, Hamilton, Sarnia, Sault Ste. Marie, Port Arthur and Fort William. Through her administration of this part of her inheritance, more than any other, perhaps, is the proper destiny of the Dominion to be achieved.

There is but one way of clearly conveying the idea of magnitude, and that is

through the medium of figures. Let us, therefore, in order to get some conception of the gigantic commerce of the Great Lakes, have recourse to the statistics that are available.

Without attempting to take any account of the purely local traffic which does not pass through the canals of the "Soo," we will confine ourselves to the records of these canals including both Canadian and American.

These canals have a history of their own that is full of interest. They are rendered necessary by the turbulent St. Mary's Rapids, which have a fall of twenty feet. To Canada belongs the honor of building the first lock. This was done by the Hudson Bay Fur Company in 1798. It was a tiny affair with a lift of only nine feet, adapted simply to batteaux and canoes, and was destroyed by the United States troops in 1814, save for the foundation, which is still carefully preserved.

The next locks were built on the United States side in 1855, and these were enlarged in 1881, and again in 1896 at enormous cost, until now there are two magnificent locks, one of which, the Poe, is the largest in the world, being 800 feet in length by 100 in breadth. The Canadian Canal, whose lock is the longest in the world, viz., 900 feet, was completed in 1895, with a width of 60 feet.

The Canadian and the Poe locks each have a depth of twenty-two feet on the meter-sills, and the other United States lock has seventeen feet. Hydraulic power is used for operating the United States locks, and electricity generated by water-power for the Canadian.