

best arms in Canada. The lakes are utterly without arms, what few there were having been taken to the Mississippi. It is therefore of the utmost importance that means of arming these vessels, and the fortifications to be constructed, should be furnished at the earliest possible period. Fortunately we have all the materials for the manufacture of arms and ordnance of the best quality at command, and skilled machinists and artisans, so that, with proper action of the government, the work of making heavy guns may be immediately begun. We insert the following extract from the official report of Messrs. Morris, of the navy, and Totton, of the army, on this point:

"Nearly all the steam vessels, and many sailing vessels, could be very soon prepared to carry heavy guns, and some of them could carry several without inconvenience. If, therefore, the government shall make deposits of ordnance and ordnance stores at convenient posts, and be prepared to officer and man the vessels which they could purchase, the naval control of these important lakes may be considered secure against any attack."

In this connexion, the committee desire to call the attention of Congress to the fact that such is the nation's need of ordnance that we are told by very high authority that it will require three years, with all the means, public and private, now at the command of the government, to furnish the ordnance necessary to arm the fortifications now constructed, or in the process of construction. The committee, therefore, earnestly recommend the immediate establishment of a foundry on the upper lakes. This foundry, the committee recommend, should be located at Chicago. Some of the reasons why, in our judgment, it should be located there, are as follows: Chicago is the great centre of the region to be supplied with arms, and facilities for cheap and rapid distribution are unequalled. She has direct water communication, by lake, and canal, and river, with every portion of the west. Thirteen great trunk railways radiate from her as a common centre, with more than 6,000 miles of railway, and upon these railroads, centring at Chicago, the government can obtain 16,000 cars for transportation. Chicago is, concededly, one of the greatest railway centres on the continent. She can obtain, by cheap and convenient water connexion, the best ores and metals for guns, and especially the inexhaustible ores of Lake Superior, which it should be the policy of the government to develop. With the best materials at command, with an abundant supply of labor and mechanical skill, Chicago, in the judgment of the committee, combines more advantages for the location than any other point.

In regard to the necessity of a manufactory of ordnance, as of primary importance to the defence of the northern frontier, the committee call the attention of Congress to the following remarks from the communication of General Totten:

"The great superiority of our steam and other merchant vessels on the upper lakes, (including Lake Erie,) any portion of which may be promptly converted into war vessels, greatly simplifies defensive arrangements on the shores of these lakes. But that this superiority may be assumed with the requisite promptitude before these means