

sized vessels has been added to the Upper Lake United States fleet, whilst there is not a single one of the class referred to owned in Canada. As both governments are debarred by treaty from establishing naval stations, and ship-yards, or maintaining armed vessels on the lakes, the Committee of Congress relies on their powerful commercial marine, as the Government of Washington is doing to some extent in their present coast operations, for defensive and offensive war. That many of these screw steamers, could speedily be made available for such purposes has been well demonstrated by the improvised fleets so recently fitted out at New York, Boston and other ports.

This, of course, is a game at which two can play. But do we hold the cards? If we do not how are we to get them? Our neighbors, moreover claim that Lake Michigan, being wholly an American Lake, is exempt from the stipulations of the treaty, and the authorities of that State have sent agents to Washington to urge the propriety of building a number of war vessels at Grand Haven and other points on the Lake, and to form a regular ship yard, and naval station at some of the ports in Michigan.

Every body knows or ought to know what has given our neighbors the commercial supremacy of the Lakes, and yet our merchants either from apathy, or want of capital and enterprize have scarcely put forth a feeble effort to counteract these obvious causes. Prior to 1825 the whole trade of the West found its way to market by the St. Lawrence. The opening of the Erie Canal in that year caused an immediate diversion of the rising commerce of the Lakes to New York, and at the same time added such a stimulant to the settlement of the Western States, that from a population of about a million in the whole of them—including Ohio, they have increased to 7,000,000 and the trade has kept pace with the population.

To counteract this state of things our Provincial Government set to work and built the magnificent system of canals which overcome the rapids of our river and form a navigation of almost infinitely superior capacity. There was one mistake committed in the design of these truly grand works. The Canal which connects the lower with the four great upper lakes, the shores of which are the granaries of the West, is of smaller magnitude except as regards depth, than those of the St. Lawrence. This circumstance has, until recently, interposed an insuperable obstacle to our entering into successful competition, for the trade of those