

ocean navigation at Montreal, or by the Erie Canal and Hudson River to New York.

ST. MARY'S CANAL

A few miles down the St. Mary's River from Lake Superior there are rapids of eighteen feet fall. From 1856 to 1884 these rapids were overcome by a canal some two miles long, with two narrow locks containing twelve feet of water. This, of course, was the limit of draft for vessels running from the lower lake ports in the Lake Superior trade. Since the construction of these locks the size of lake vessels have increased nearly four-fold and their depth of draft from six to eight feet to seventeen and eighteen feet; hence a very large and the better part of the lake marine was unable to enter the Lake Superior trade.

In September, 1884, a new lock 500 x 80 feet, with eighteen feet of fall in a single lift, instead of two in the old locks, was completed. Its capacity was also increased from admitting a single or two small vessels at a time to a fleet of five or six of our largest craft at a single passage, thus not only saving more than half the time, but increasing its capacity four to six-fold, and by the deepening of the St. Mary's River, where needed, to an increased depth of sixteen feet, to correspond with the new lock, has Lake Superior navigation been put quite on a level with Lake Michigan, by admitting the largest lake vessels to profitably enter its trade.

THE EFFECT OF THESE IMPROVEMENTS

has been marvellous, notwithstanding the general dullness, especially of iron, one of the greatest of Lake Superior exports. Not only have freight rates fallen even more than half, but the tonnage passing these locks shows a tremendous increase over any previous year in this the first year of these completed improvements. To illustrate: if the same ratio of increase is continued through the balance of this season—and our fall shipments are always the heaviest—as has prevailed so far, there will pass through the canal, going eastward alone, over 2,700,000 tons of freight, or as much

AS THE EIGHT TEUNK LINES

of railroads took east from Chicago last year, the same being the products of our forests, fields and mines. Do we need a more practical showing to give our General Government (and it is not a single one by any means) of the great benefit of improving our waterways?

The labors of every man, of all classes, from Lake Superior westward to eastern Oregon, and south-west to Colorado, will receive increased remuneration, not only for this, but the years to come, from this single improvement.