

became mistaken for the main channel intended - what difference did it make then? A few thousand square miles of virgin territory, claimed by one side or the other, with populations numbered in individuals little pre-occupied in the result. In those days there was plenty of timber and fish and game for all, and these were about the only products of the wilderness of any interest.

And the native tribes whose alliance and later dominance was sought were characteristically transient or migratory and so not very specifically associated with particular areas. The requirements of navigation by canoes or other small craft were satisfied by equality of use and freedom of passage on either side by portage around the rapids and falls which then, of course, were only a nuisance as obstacles to be surmounted in the passage of the fur traders or early settlers, and in the movement downstream of timber in rafts or as loose logs to be floated to the settlements nearer the coast.

As for water power, anything but the smaller streams with concentrated heads of less than a score of feet or so had no value whatever, for, except for some small primitive wheel to turn a grist mill, there was no requirement for any larger provision of mechanical power in the locality and, even if there had been, there were then no physical or engineering means or methods by which such a requirement could be satisfied. And electricity as a means for transmitting power from a remote site to a distant place of use had, at that time, not even been dreamt of.

Such, then, were the conditions which dictated the demarkation between the political units which gradually formed along the Atlantic Coast of North America, competed with one another, crystallized into states, changed their allegiance with conquest or purchase or declarations of independence, and finally merged into nations with boundaries formally defined in treaties. These boundaries were later to be quarreled over, then interpreted and finally marked on the ground by monuments along the way so that uncertainty might end and in the hope that controversy would cease.

Unfortunately, this was a vain hope, for the river-line boundary has proved to be most singularly difficult and unsuited to the conditions inherent in the highly nationalistic states which came into existence on either side of river lines of political cleavage. And to add to the disadvantages, the rising tide of settlement and the widening application of science and engineering not only called for and made necessary, but also made available the means to carry out, the deepening of channels for water-borne traffic and the provision of locks and other aids to navigation. It was then that the serious defects of rivers as boundaries became apparent, because of the difficulties, under divided administration, of arranging for the timely construction and operation of the desired improvements.

These difficulties and disadvantages became of increasing significance when it became possible to develop the rapids and falls of the rivers, however large, into electrical power and to transmit it great distances. Certainly now, when conditions have come to favour the river basin as the unit of development in which all natures