

TABLE SHOWING THE DIMENSIONS OF THE FIVE GREAT AMERICAN LAKES.

LAKES.	Greatest length. Miles.	Greatest breadth. Miles.	Height above sea. Feet.	Area in sq. miles.
Superior.....	460	170	600	81,500
Michigan.....	320	85	576	22,000
Huron.....	260	160	574	20,400
Erie.....	240	70	545	9,600
Ontario.....	180	60	232	6,500
Total.....	1,460			90,000

"The entire area drained by these lakes is estimated at 335,500 square miles, and their shore lines are nearly 5,000 miles in extent.

"These rivers are as diverse in character as in direction. The Mississippi is the longer, but the St. Lawrence discharges the greater volume of water; the one abounds in difficult rapids, the other in stupendous cataracts; the one is subject to great fluctuations, the other preserves an almost unvarying level; the waters of the one are turbid, those of the other possess an almost crystal purity; the one affords few lake-like expansions, the other swells into vast inland seas. Both have become the great highways of commerce,

enriching the regions through which they flow, and supplying the inhabitants with the varied products of distant climes."—*Foster and Whitney's Report on Lake Superior.*

"The commerce of these lakes, whose annual value reaches \$450,000,000—more than twice the external commerce of the whole country—is carried on by a fleet of 1,643 vessels, of the following classes:—

	No.	Tonnage.	Value.
Steamers.....	148	58,523	\$2,190,800
Propellers.....	254	70,238	3,573,300
Barks.....	74	33,203	982,900
Brigs.....	85	24,831	525,200
Schooners.....	1,068	227,831	5,955,550
Sloops.....	16	667	12,770
Barges.....	8	3,719	17,000
Totals.....	1,643	413,026	\$13,257,020

The following are the distances of some of the commercial routes, taking Chicago as the initial point:

Chicago to Mackinac (direct).....	360 miles.
" " Fond du Lac Superior.....	900 "
" " Georgian Bay.....	650 "
" " Buffalo, N. Y.....	950 "
" " Quebec.....	1,530 "
" " Gulf of St. Lawrence.....	1,950 "

PROGRESS OF DEVELOPMENT.

The first colony of English extraction, planted in the territory of the Upper Mississippi, was in 1788—just seventy-five years ago—at Marietta, within the present limits of Ohio. This was the origin of that spirit of colonization, which, within the lifetime of many living men, has peopled this region with nine millions of human beings; has subdued and brought under cultivation, an area greater than that of all the cultivated lands of the British Empire; has connected the principal commercial points with a net-work of railways more than eleven thousand miles in extent; and has built up a domestic industry, the value of whose annual product is in excess of three hundred and fifty millions of dollars. Out of this territory

has been carved not less than nine States, which are indissolubly linked together by a similarity of conditions in soil and climate, and by the geographical features of the country. They have already received the appellation of the "FOOD-PRODUCING" States—an appellation which they are destined to retain for all time.

The rivers and the lakes, which water this region, offer the most magnificent system of internal communication to be found on the surface of the earth. No mountain barriers interpose to divide the people into hostile clans, or divert the great currents of trade in their flow to the markets of the world. With a soil sufficiently rich in organic matter for fifty successive crops; with almost boundless fields of coal, stored

BASIN.

at the internal Mississippi Valley; but, even through its precarious, suspended, and viewed as a great plain, the great plain ranges, elevated above the sea, the ocean; of the Monongahela, the Ohio, the north, 800 the west, at 500 feet. The mountain ranges, and ridges, and prairie. The west of the uniformly yields an healthy for the region migration of

connecting the waters of Mexico forming an 00 miles— tropical and is most

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