

Article 1.—A Deep Waterway to the Sea.

Do you realize what it would mean to Detroit to have ocean vessels landing at our docks? It is within your power to make Detroit a seaport.

The ability to place its produce and its manufactured goods in the home markets and in the markets of the world at the minimum of cost, makes a successful nation.

When traffic can conveniently be conveyed by water, transportation at the minimum of cost is obtained, therefore the question of utilizing to the fullest extent possible the magnificent stretch of waterways with which this country has been endowed, is one that should interest every citizen of the United States.

In the early history of our country the lakes and rivers formed the means of communication with the great outside world and they were the channel through which supplies were received and shipments made to the desired markets. The canoe and the batteaux were the first freight carriers to the interior, but they were quickly replaced by the sloop and schooner, and they in turn gave way to the magnificent fleet of steamers which can be seen daily during the season of navigation, passing up and down the beautiful river which flows past this city. While these wonderful changes in navigation have taken place and over fifty million tons of traffic are now handled yearly on the great lakes, it remains a fact that the waterways are not yet being used to the best advantage, because the traffic so handled is purely local traffic for the home markets and they are not being used to furnish transportation at the minimum of cost to and from the markets of the world, and there is grave danger that they never will be so utilized unless the people awaken to the fact that there are men in the United States and in Canada, who are seeking to divert the waters of the lakes for their own selfish purposes, and who, should they succeed in accomplishing their designs, will lower the level of the lakes and make it impossible to so improve the waterways that they can be made to serve the best interests of the country at large.

The benefits which would accrue to the western section of this continent through the opening of a deep waterway from the lakes to the ocean are almost incalculable, and the lowering of transportation tolls which would result therefrom would greatly improve the position of both the producer and consumer in our inland territory.

Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Boston and Montreal are the great distributing centers for foreign traffic and the cost of carriage between the Atlantic seaboard and the interior is comparatively heavy. With a deep waterway from the lakes to the ocean these distributing centers would be removed to what are now lake ports, and the rail carriage from these ports to and from the interior would be materially lessened, thereby reducing the cost of transportation.

With ocean vessels landing at Detroit this city would be the natural distributing point for foreign trade with the entire state of Michigan; Chicago would become the distributing center for Illinois and territory tributary thereto; Milwaukee would be the distributing point for Wisconsin; Duluth for the great northwest, and these cities would enter upon an era of substantial prosperity undreamed of by those who have not given this question serious thought.

What has been accomplished by an inland city like Manchester in England can be successfully duplicated by the cities located on the great lakes.

The first settlements in this country were located within easy reach of the rivers and lakes so that the settlers would be in a position to take advantage of the water facilities for the carriage of their traffic. Gradually, however, they wandered farther inland and as they receded from the waterways the necessity for some other means of transportation became apparent, and with a realization of that necessity came the creation of the steam railways. In the first