



*The Greatness of the Great Lakes**

By WILLIAM GANSON ROSE



” **T**HE GREAT CENTERS of the future will not be London, Paris and Berlin.” So spoke, in 1930, Dr. J. Paul Goode, outstanding student of natural resources. Then he added, “The greatest centers of the future will be located in the Great Lakes area,” and he mentioned as examples Chicago, Cleveland and Milwaukee. If the Great Lakes have as great an influence as this, we should become better acquainted with them, and learn in what ways we can capitalize upon the many advantages they offer.

Called “Great” because they constitute the largest body of fresh water in the world, their true greatness has a far broader significance. More than any other influence they have furthered the industrial and commercial development of our country; their contribution to America’s ever higher standard of living is incalculable; their service to the states bordering upon them has made this district the most important trade empire in the world. The Great Lakes are indeed great !

For their formation we must thank the glaciers of 20,000 years ago, which were also responsible for the area’s fertile hills and valleys, for its useful rivers and small lakes and for other natural resources that justify the statement—the Great Lakes district was born great. Some scientists affirm that the glaciers will return in a million years to cover the entire United States. This would be an excellent solution to our many problems but it’s too slow of execution.

“Condensation of an address presented at the annual meeting of the Great Lakes Historical Society, April 14, 1950, at Cleveland, Ohio. Mr. Rose is a prominent Cleveland publicist, whose new book *Cleveland, The Making of a City* is a best seller.