

Benjamin Franklin fought and defeated France, Spain and England, in Paris, in 1783, when they sought to set the limits of the United States at the southern shores of these bodies of water; but he has been thwarted now by a generation of statistical geographers in our own country who seem to consider the 60,000 square miles of American-owned Great Lakes water nothing but a general nuisance, who have discounted and discredited it, and even disregarded it completely.

This water right now is bearing the most important traffic in the world. Save for the iron ore which must pass over our Great Lakes, the Allied Nations could hold up their hands in complete surrender. Compare the value of this region—now excluded by arbitrary dictum from the total area figures of the Great Lakes States and the United States—with the hundreds of thousands of useless acres of land which are counted in the area of other states such as Texas.

The press of Michigan and Wisconsin has strongly advocated the correction. The best legal opinion in the country says that the case for the Great Lakes States is clearly proven and unanswerable. The Committee on Constitutional Revision in Michigan will include the accurate total area of Michigan in the new constitution of that state.

The Bureau of the Census can correct the situation in the world's reference books by a simple revision of its major area table. Sooner or later this will have to be done.

Meanwhile every one concerned with accurate knowledge rather than the exigencies of statistics will wish to correct his atlas as follows:

TOTAL AREA IN SQUARE MILES			
Illinois .....	57,926 (land,	55,947; water,	1,979)
Indiana .....	36,519 (land,	36,205; water,	314)
Michigan .....	96,791 (land,	57,022; water,	39,769)
Minnesota .....	86,280 (land,	80,009; water,	6,271)
New York .....	53,203 (land,	47,929; water,	5,274)
Ohio .....	44,679 (land,	41,122; water,	3,557)
Pennsylvania .....	46,068 (land,	45,045; water,	1,023)
Wisconsin .....	66,216 (land,	54,715; water,	11,501)
UNITED STATES ..	3,082,809 (land,	2,977,128; water,	105,681)

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### MISUSE OF THE TERMS "CLASS DISTINCTION" AND "DEMOCRACY"

PROFESSOR MAST'S letter on page 465 of the May 21, 1943, issue of SCIENCE misuses these two terms. Regardless of its validity, no recognition of outstanding ability can properly be called "class distinction." Certainly no one should think that a democracy implies a group of individuals either having absolutely uniform ability or a pretense at such uniform ability

such as would be implied by the elimination of all marks of recognition for outstanding ability. A literal and logical acceptance of the plea to eliminate "starring" of names in the biographical directory of American Men of Science would mean the abolition of all honorary societies, all medals and awards, and, in fact, all recognition of outstanding ability and achievement.

The means by which "stars" are awarded in the various editions of the biographical directory may not be perfect, but it is probably the most "democratic" method by which any recognition of outstanding achievement may be determined.

As to a referendum on "starring" scientists, I would hazard the guess that while many of those with "stars" might vote against the system there would be an overwhelming majority in favor of the system from those not so "decorated."

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### THE DISCOVERY OF "STARS"—A PRESENT PROBLEM

I HAVE been interested in the discussion of the "stars" in SCIENCE, believing that such discussion is wholesome. I have heard of Americans being called "dollar chasers" abroad, and I have seen "money grubbers" myself and I have assumed that a broader American culture would supply a wider variety of goals for man to strive for. Hence I have seen no harm in prizes, academic honorary degrees, societies with honorary memberships and even those with qualified membership, since they are supposedly awarded for personal merit. Every one will recognize that a quiet Willard Gibbs might in any generation be overlooked by an Academy of Sciences in its elections. Nevertheless, the peers of such a Willard Gibbs should be the best qualified to locate the "stars" of their generation.

It is of great benefit to the public that the star is located because (1), his productivity may thereby be enhanced, either by the encouragement or by increased facilities afforded; (2) his work may be more certainly preserved for posterity; (3) their results may be utilized, and his work used for the emulation of others.

It is not a question of personal vanity at all. It is not a matter of concern whether the ancestors of Gibbs came over on the *Mayflower* or were aborigines. It is rather what he did, how well we can use those results and what we can learn from his life. Mozart, Schubert and Poe were indeed stars, but it is difficult to believe that neglect on the part of the public of their period made them great. On the other hand, we instinctively feel that our neglect caused the loss of invaluable treasures of music and art.