and the other in south-eastern California, the arid floors of the deserts descend 300 feet beneath sea-level. An outflowing branch of the Colorado in time of flood occasionally turns northwards on reaching the delta, and flows into the latter depression, forming a short-lived lake. Sometimes the valleys are filled for a thousand feet or more with rock waste; some of the gently inclined slopes

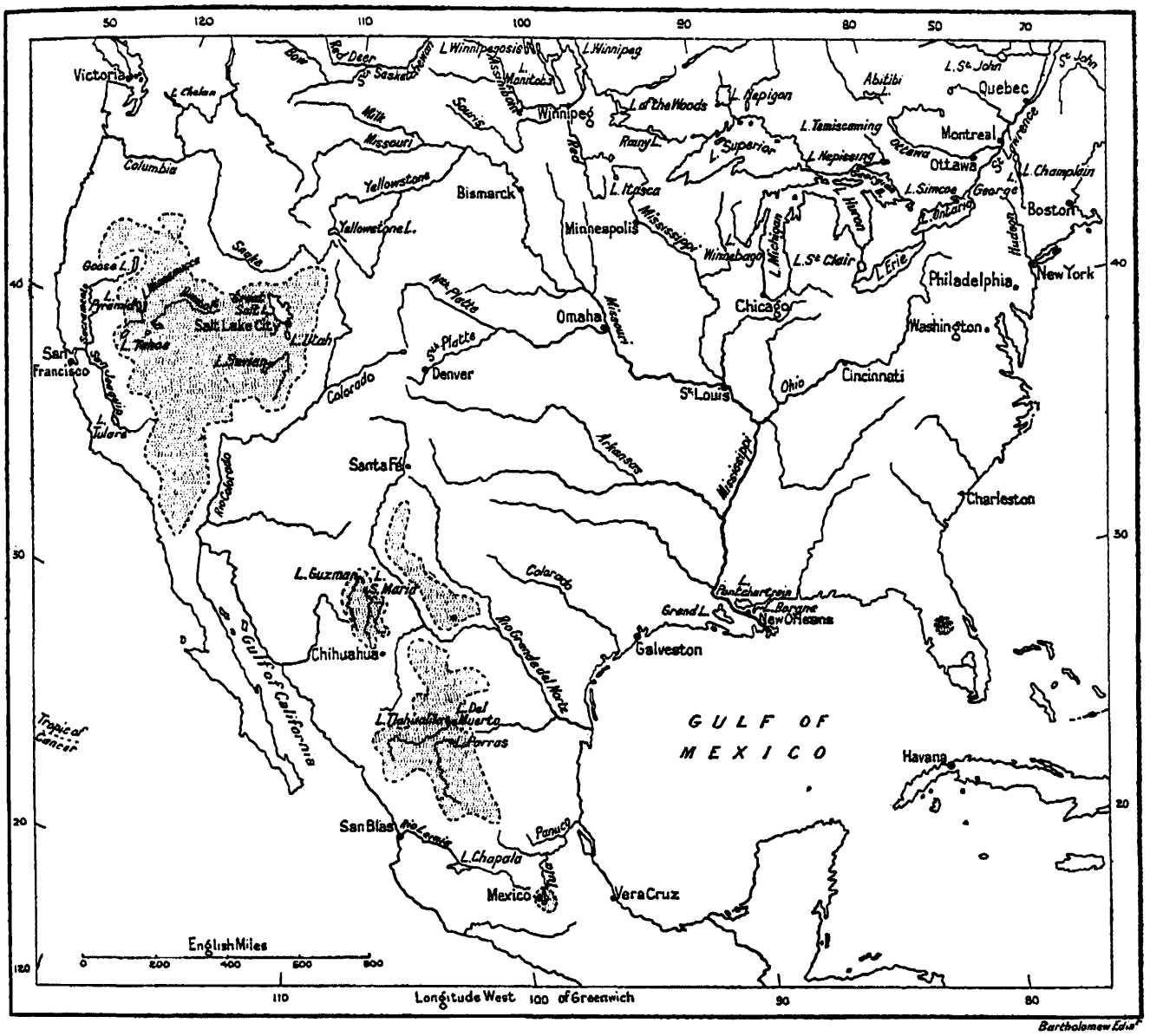

FIG. 66.—Inland drainage areas of the Great Salt Lake region, Central America, and Mexico; showing also the Mississippi River basin.

[The inland drainage areas are stippled.]

at the foot of the mountains are rock-floored, bearing only a thin veneer of waste here and there. The streams issuing from the mountains after a shower find no channels, but spread out in a sheet a mile or more broad and 1 or 2 feet deep, washing the gravel veneers forward down the inclined rock-floor; this peculiar style of drainage has been termed a "sheet flood." Many small streams from the mountains dry up on the waste slopes, owing to the great evaporation; the larger ones unite to form shallow salt lakes in the lowest part of the troughs lying between the mountains. Others form shallow