

erally north-west and south-east, into three distinct prairie steppes, or plateaux, as they are generally called. The first of these is known as the Red River Valley and Lake Winnipeg Plateau. The width at the boundary line is about 52 miles, and the average height about 800 feet above the sea; at the boundary line the height is about 1,000 feet. This first plateau lies entirely within the Province of Manitoba, and is estimated to contain about 7,000 square miles of the best wheat-growing land on the continent, or in the world. The second plateau or steppe has an average altitude of 1,600 feet, having a width of about 250 miles on the national boundary line, and an area of about 105,000 square miles. The rich, undulating, park-like country lies in this region. This section is especially favourable for settlement, and includes the Assiniboine and Qu'Appelle districts. The third plateau or steppe begins on the boundary line at the 104th meridian, where it has an elevation of about 2,000 feet, and extends west for 465 miles to the foot of the Rocky Mountains, where it has an altitude of about 4,200 feet, making an average height above the sea of about 3,000 feet. Generally speaking, the first two steppes are those which are most favourable for agriculture, and the third for grazing. Settlement is proceeding in the first two at a very rapid rate; in the third plateau it is beginning, numerous and prosperous cattle ranches and homesteads having been established.

12. The northern part of the centre of the Dominion, extending from the Rocky Mountains to Hudson's Bay, is very extensively wooded, and has generally been considered for the most part unfit for settlement, and only useful as a preserve for fur-bearing animals. But during the Session of Parliament of 1888 a committee of the Senate held an investigation into the capabilities of these regions, the result being that all previous ideas have been upset. The area inquired into was about 1,260,000 square miles, and of these it was estimated 860,000 square miles were fit for settlement and about 400,000 square

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