

known as the Manitoba Scarp. This Scarp has been cut into deeply by the Assiniboine, Swan and Saskatchewan Rivers and really exists as a series of uplands of from 1,600 to 2,600 feet high called the Turtle, Riding, Duck, Porcupine and Pasquia Mountains.

The second Prairie step stretches westward from this Scarp at a mean altitude of 2,000 feet. It, too, was glaciated. When the ice retreated large glacial lakes were left, known as Lakes Souris, Regina and Saskatoon. Lake-bed deposits to-day form some of the flattest and most fertile areas. Elsewhere, the ground is rather hummocky, with innumerable sloughs. Another great scarp occurs west of Weyburn and Moose Jaw; it is a continuation of the Missouri Coteau, a well-marked feature in the United States, and is divided by great re-entrants into individual sectors, the most important of which are Wood and Bear Mountains.

West of the Coteau extends the third and highest Prairie step with an altitude of between 3,000 and 4,300 feet. In the south it is quite hilly, where the Cypress Hills rise above it to shed the waters into the Saskatchewan or Missouri basins. Covered with till, it has generally a slightly rolling surface, suited particularly to ranching. Old glacial lakes along the Bow and Oldman Rivers provide excellent agricultural areas, as do outwash plains in front of the moraines between Calgary and Edmonton.

The three Prairie steps are united by the great arms of the Saskatchewan River flowing from the Rockies to Lake Winnipeg, and also by the soil zones which form broad west-east arcs. Railways, roads and crop-belts accentuate these natural ties. So also do the coal, oil and gas fields. The Prairies are underlain by Canada's chief fuel-bearing rocks. From Estevan through Drumheller to Macleod are a succession of coal fields. Southwest Manitoba and south Saskatchewan lie on the edge of the Williston oil basin. Western Alberta is the site of another large oil field. Gas is important in southern Alberta and in the Peace River district.

A low divide of moraine-capped hills separates the Prairies from the Mackenzie Lowland. This huge area, 1,100 miles long and as wide as 300 miles, consists of an asymmetrical plain, tilted from plateau-like levels in the west, at 4,000 feet, to basin-like stretches in the east, at 500 feet. The main channel follows the eastern depression. Long, rapid, deeply entrenched tributaries, such as the Athabasca, Peace, Liard, Arctic Red and Peel Rivers, come in from the west. Where the Lowland meets the Shield, a few pronounced hollows occur, filled with great lakes. These were much larger during glacial times and consequently glacial-lake beds are exposed all around Lesser Slave, Athabasca, Great Slave and Great Bear Lakes; the more southerly of these areas provide reasonably good agricultural or forest lands. The Athabasca and Peace Rivers, emptying into glacial Lake Athabasca, formed extensive sand deltas; an even larger delta of this type is the one formed by the Slave River at Great Slave Lake. The Mackenzie delta is one of the largest on the continent.

Though the southern part of the Lowland, particularly in the Peace River district, forms good agricultural land, the northern part is climatically unsuited to commercial farming. The lead and zinc deposits at Pine Point and the oil field at Norman Wells, together with oil potential in the middle Mackenzie and Peel basins, are valuable northern assets.

**The Northern Interior (Hudson Bay and Inner Arctic) Lowlands.**—Palæozoic sedimentaries, they dip gently north from the main height of land between the Hudson Bay and Great Lakes drainage basins. They are thus a parallel structure