

THE PRAIRIES OF MANITOBA.

By A. T. DRUMMOND.

In August of this year, another opportunity occurred to me of examining the superficial deposits around Portage la Prairie, Birtle and Kinbrae—the last named place about thirty miles north-west of Fort Ellice. The resulting facts will prove of interest in connection with questions that have been discussed about the origin of the north-west prairies.

At Portage la Prairie the country is on all sides flat, and bears evidence of two to three periods of growth and decay of grasses and reeds in shallow water, alternating with periods of subsidence of the land. The general surface is perhaps twelve feet above the Assiniboine River, and that stream is in turn about the same number of feet higher than Lake Manitoba, which lies only fourteen miles to the northward. The banks of the river, in a height of twelve feet, show three layers of black loam, each from six to twelve inches or more in thickness, alternating with a creamy gray clay, and the whole underlaid near the water's edge by a reddish clay. Boulders throughout this section of the country and eastward to Winnipeg are unseen, even in the bed of the river at low water. Towards Westbourne, the large tract of low land, usually covered with water, and lying between Rat Creek and the Westbourne marsh proper, and through which the Manitoba and Northwestern Rail-