

the annual decay of the ordinary prairie grasses, and perhaps of forest trees. The elevation which took place in the land was greatest at the Rocky Mountains and the different steppes between these mountains and the eastern limits of the prairie, would seem to indicate different stages or intervals in the elevation during which the various sandhills and stretches of sand at the extended edges of these steppes have been formed. The contraction in the area of this inland ocean took place from the Rocky Mountains eastward, so that the present Province of Manitoba east of the Duck, Riding and Pembina Mountains, is the most recently formed as well as the lowest in level. Between the mouth of the Saskatchewan at Grand Rapids and the Assiniboine River between Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg and thence to the United States boundary line, there is not much difference in level, as the following heights above the sea indicate:

Lake Winnipeg.....	710 feet.
St. Martin's Lake	737 "
Lake Manitoba.....	752 "
River Assiniboine, near Baie St. Paul.....	766 "
Lake Winnipegosis.....	770 "
Cedar Lake, near Grand Rapids, on the Saskatchewan.....	770 "

This comparatively level area occupies a stretch of country 330 miles in length by an average of 150 miles in breadth.

Lakes Winnipegosis and Manitoba, and St. Martin's and Water Hen Lakes, are mere shallow depressions on the surface of the prairie. The two first named lakes are each over a hundred miles in length, but increase in depth so gradually that at the narrows where they nearly unite, Winnipegosis has only six feet of water at 2,000 feet from the shore, whilst Lake Manitoba, at a mile from the shore, shows a depth of only three feet. St. Martin's Lake, again, has only eight feet, and Water Hen Lake an average of three feet of water. Lake Winnipeg is deeper, being an average of forty feet to sixty feet, with a somewhat uniformly level bottom, but it is relatively very shallow for a lake of its great