

THE COMMERCIAL

The recognized authority on all matters pertaining to trade and progress in Western Canada, including that portion of Ontario west of Lake Superior, the Provinces of Manitoba and British Columbia and the Territories.

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D. W. BUCHANAN,
Publisher.

The Commercial certainly enjoys a very much larger circulation among the business community of the vast region lying between Lake Superior and the Pacific Coast, than any other paper in Canada, daily or weekly. The Commercial also reaches the leading wholesale, commission, manufacturing and financial houses of Eastern Canada.

WINNIPEG, DECEMBER 10, 1898.

LAKE MANITOBA CANAL

A brief dispatch from Ottawa would indicate that the government has decided to go ahead with the work of lowering the level of Lake Manitoba, by cutting a short ditch at the northern end of the lake with the object of increasing the outflow of water via Lake St. Martin.

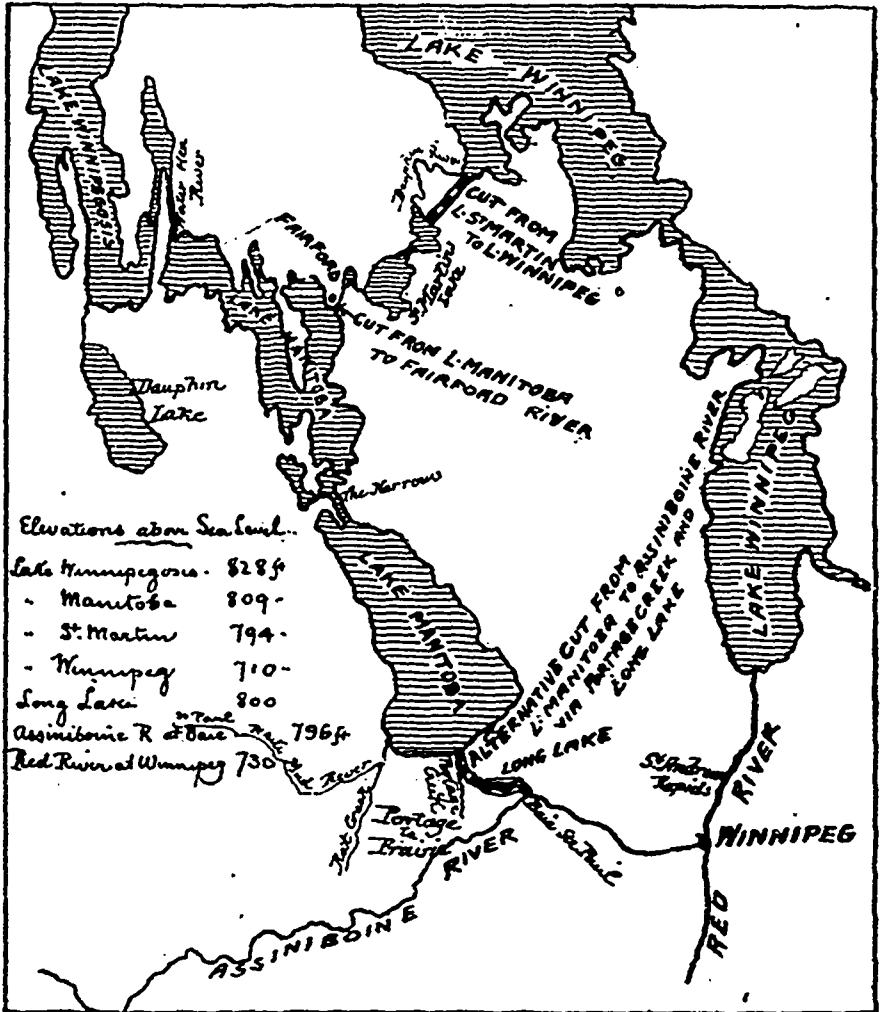
The question of lowering or controlling the water level of Lake Manitoba, has been agitated for a number of years. The volume of water running into Lake Manitoba is considerably greater than the outlet capacity. A number of rivers and creeks flow into the lake, while its only outlet is the Fairford river to Lake St. Martin and thence via the Dauphin river to Lake Winnipeg. This outlet has not the capacity of carrying off as much water as flows into the lake from other streams, hence considerable areas of land around the lake have been flooded.

An important matter to be taken into consideration in connection with the lowering of the lake is its value as a navigable body of water. Some persons who have made a study of the question, claim that the lake is of greater value for purposes of navigation than the flooded land in its vicinity. Lake Manitoba is quite shallow, and if the water is materially lowered it will destroy naviga-

tion on the lake. Again, the evaporation from this lake is very great, and this of course is a great benefit to the agriculturist in our comparatively dry climate. Some years hence we may find it necessary to endeavor to store the waters of this system instead of hastening their escape to the sea.

Now, as for the work proposed to be done to lower the level of the lake, it is worth while making some inquiry. As early as 1881 the late Thos Guerin, one of the most able hydraulic engineers in the employ of

should be made from the latter lake to Lake Winnipeg, otherwise the country about Lake St. Martin would be flooded. Mr. Guerin found that 14,833 cubic feet per second of water was being discharged by the Fairford river into Lake St. Martin, while the outlet from the latter lake to Lake Winnipeg, via the Dauphin, or Little Saskatchewan river as it is sometimes called, is only 12,486 cubic feet per second. The land around Lake St. Martin, which is quite as valuable as the flooded territory around Lake Manitoba, was therefore also sub-



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LAKE MANITOBA BASIN

the Dominion government, made an extended examination of the lake, with the object of discovering what could be done to reclaim the flooded lands and prevent a recurrence of the trouble. Mr. Guerin made a very full report as to the result of his work. He recommended that the outlet be enlarged by cutting a channel about two miles long, from the lake to the Fairford river, below the rapids on that stream. This would increase the outflow to Lake St. Martin. In order to provide for the carrying off of this increased inflow to Lake St. Martin, he also provided that another cut

be made from the latter lake to Lake Winnipeg, otherwise the country about Lake St. Martin would be flooded. To increase the outflow into Lake St. Martin without providing for an additional or larger outlet into Lake Winnipeg, would simply result in flooding the country around Lake St. Martin. Mr. Guerin estimated the cost of the short cut from Lake Manitoba to the Fairford river at \$36,000, while the cost of the cut from Lake St. Martin to Lake Winnipeg, he placed at \$245,000, or a total cost of \$281,000 to reclaim the 200,000 acres of flooded land around the lake.

The Dominion government, it now appears, has decided to go ahead and