

*Table-lands* or *Plateaus* are elevated regions of flat or undulating country, rising to heights of 1000 feet and upward above the level of the sea. They are sometimes bordered with steep slopes, which descend from their edges, as the table-land of the Spanish peninsula does into the sea. In other cases, they gradually sink into the plains and have no definite boundaries; thus the prairie-land west of the Missouri slowly and imperceptibly ascends until it becomes a vast plateau from 4000 to 5000 feet above the sea. Occasionally a high table-land is encircled with lofty mountains, as in those of Quito and Titicaca among the Andes, and that of the heart of Asia; or it forms in itself the platform on which lines of mountains stand, as in North America, where the ranges included within the Rocky Mountains reach elevations of from 10,000 to 14,000 feet above the sea, but not more than from 5000 to 10,000 feet above the table-land.

Two types of table-land structure may be observed.

1. Table-lands consisting of level or gently undulated sheets of rock, the general surface of the country corresponding with that of the stratification. The Rocky Mountain plateau is an example of this type, which may be called that of Deposit, for the flat strata have been equably upraised nearly in the position in which they were deposited.
2. Table-lands formed out of contorted, crystalline, or other rocks, which have been planed down by superficial agents. This type, where the external form is independent of geological structure, may be termed that of Erosion. The *fjelds* of Norway are portions of such a table-land. In proportion to its antiquity, a plateau is trenched by running water into systems of valleys, until in the end it may lose its plateau character and pass into the second type of mountain-ground above described. This change has largely