

## THE MOUND BUILDERS.

A LOST RACE DESCRIBED BY DR. BRYCE, PRESIDENT OF THE  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

A MOUND in our region is a very much flattened cone, or round-topped hillock of earth. It is built usually, if not invariably where the soil is soft and easily dug, and it is generally possible to trace in its neighborhood the depression whence the mound material has been taken. The mounds are, as a rule, found in the midst of a fertile section of country, and it is pretty certain from this that the mound builders were agriculturists, and chose their dwelling places with their occupation in view, where the mounds are found. The mounds are found accordingly on the banks of the Rainy River and Red River, and their affluents in the North-west, in other words upon our best land stretches, but not so far as observed around the Lake of the Woods, or in barren regions. Near fishing grounds they greatly abound. What seem to have been strategic points upon the river were selected for their sites. The promontory giving a view and so commanding a considerable stretch of river, the point at the junction of two rivers, or the debouchure of a river into a lake or vice versa is a favorite spot. At the Long Sault, on Rainy River, there are three or four mounds grouped together along a ridge. Here some persons of strong imagination profess to see remains of an ancient fortification, but to my mind this is mere fancy. Mounds in our region vary for 6 to 50 feet in height, and from 60 to 130 feet in diameter. Some are circular at the base, others are elliptical.

The mounds have long been known as occurring in Central America, in Mexico, and along the whole extent of the Mississippi valley from the Gulf of Mexico to the Great Lakes. Our North-west has, however, been neglected in the accounts of the mound-bearing region. Along our Red River I can count some six or eight mounds that have