

INTRODUCTION.

PHYSICAL FEATURES.

The Township of Medonte has a central position in the hilly tract between Georgian Bay and Lake Simcoe, where the Huron Indians lived during the first half of the seventeenth century. It is of a regular shape, about nine miles from north to south, and twelve from east to west. An alluvial plain occupies nearly all of its westerly side. Proceeding from this plain, three sharply-cut valleys (whose bottoms have a level similar to that of the plain) traverse diagonally from southwest to northeast the remaining parts of the township, dividing its surface into four well-defined portions. I shall call these its four ridges, though each might be more fitly called a group of ridges than a single one. Through each of the three valleys flows a river, thus more effectually dividing the township into four natural divisions. The names of the rivers are the Hogg, Sturgeon and Coldwater. Besides these, the North River crosses the southeasterly corner of the Township, but only slightly affects the physical features. The four ridges thus formed, with a river between every two, may be named: (1) The Waverley Ridge, west of Hogg River; (2) the Vasey ridge, between that river and the Sturgeon; (3) the Mount St. Louis ridge (which in Tay I called the Rosemount ridge), lying between the Sturgeon and the Coldwater; (4) the Coulson ridge, lying along the whole southerly side of the township, and which really consists of the ends of various high ridges in the northern part of the adjoining Township of Oro.

Each ridge consists of high rolling ground, well suited for Huron occupation; and on all the ridges village sites are found in considerable numbers, especially along their edges, where the land rises out of the valleys. The distribution of Huron village sites depends on the physical features—on the extent and directions of the ridges and the courses of the rivers—as I pointed out in the township reports previously issued. It is not a part of the plan of this enquiry to give a complete account of the physical features of the township, but it is indispensable for the proper understanding of Huron occupation to know the main features of its surface.

THE RAISED BEACHES.

Up the sides of the ridges there are many raised lake beaches, and the terraces cut by them may be clearly seen. Everywhere we see these proofs that what is now land has been lake bottom, and that this change from water to land has taken place in very recent geological ages. Though at first sight these raised beaches may appear to have little bearing upon our subject, at a closer examination they will be found to possess an intimate relation to the villages.

Now, along these old beaches in many places there are swampy patches, often quite narrow, but made very wet by springs issuing