

INTRODUCTORY.

The County of Elgin lies on the northern shore of Lake Erie, and extends from south-east to north-west, over a distance of sixty miles. Its breadth from north to south varies from 10 to 25 miles. It covers an area of 765 square miles; and embraces 491,200 acres of land, chiefly in the hands of hardy and industrious settlers. It is composed of ten Municipalities, and are, in order, beginning at the western extremity; Aldborough, Dunwich, Southwold, St. Thomas, Yarmouth, Malahide, Aylmer, S. Dorchester, Vienna and Bayham. St. Thomas is the Capital, and is invested with the Municipal powers of a Town Corporation; Vienna and Aylmer with that of Incorporated Villages—the rest being Township Municipalities. It is divided into two electoral divisions—the three first named Municipalities forming the West Riding, and the other seven the East Riding. The surface is undulating, the soil fertile, and a very small portion of it (if indeed an exception must be made) unfit for cultivation. The climate is mild and uniform—the extremes of heat and cold being considerably tempered by close proximity to the Lake. As a consequence, there are few sections of country in Canada in which the labours of the husbandman have been so successful in filling his barns with plenty, and in securing to him a home surrounded with all the comforts and luxuries of advanced civilization, and all the joys and delights of enlightened society. Many of the inhabitants are among the oldest settlers in Canada; many have been born and brought up to manhood and advanced age within its borders; while great accessions have been made to the population by immigration from nearly every state in America, and from every country in Europe. Its growth in this respect has been rapid; and the confidence inspired by the various fields which the settlement offered for the exercise of patient toil and honest industry has produc-