

THE COUNTRY OF THE NEUTRALS.

BY
JAMES H. COYNE.

In that part of the township of Southwold included in the peninsula between Talbot Creek and the most westerly bend of Kettle Creek there were until a comparatively recent date several Indian earthworks, which were well-known to the pioneers of the Talbot Settlement. What the tooth of time had spared for more than two centuries yielded however to the settler's plough and harrow, and but one or two of these interesting reminders of an almost forgotten race remain to gratify the curiosity of the archæologist or of the historian. Fortunately, the most important of all is still almost in its original condition. It is that, which has become known to readers of the Transactions of the Canadian Institute as the Southwold Earthwork. It is situated on the farm of Mr. Chester Henderson, Lot Number Four North on Talbot Road East. Mr. David Boyle in the Archæological Reports printed in 1891 has given the results of his examinations of the mounds. A carefully prepared plan made from actual survey by Mr. A. W. Campbell, C. E., for the Elgin Historical and Scientific Institute of St. Thomas, was presented by the latter to the Canadian Institute. (a) These will together form a valuable, and, it is hoped, a permanent record of this interesting memorial of the aboriginal inhabitants of South-western Ontario.

The writer of this paper has been acquainted with "the old fort," as it was called, since the year 1867. At that time it was in the midst of the forest. Since then the woods have been cleared away, except within the fort and north of it. Indeed, a considerable number of trees have been felled within the southern part of the enclosure. In the mounds themselves trees are abundant, and there are many in the moat or ditch between. The stumps of those which have been cut down are so many chronological facts, from which the age of the fort may be con-

(a) Mr. J. H. Scott, of St. Thomas, has made a number of photographs of the mounds at the instance of an American lady, who, it is understood, will reproduce them in a work about to be published by her.