

## CHAPTER I.

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### HISTORICAL NOTES

Prior to the year 1535 the history of Montreal is largely conjectural. In that year the history opens with a town full in view. The discovery of Newfoundland by Cabot in 1497 was the first of a series of explorations that finally brought Jacques Cartier up the St. Lawrence. Cartier was a native of St. Malo; for some time he had been engaged in cod fishing off the coast of Newfoundland and, hearing reports of a great Town and kingdom of Hochelaga, he sailed up the St. Lawrence in 1535 and found on an island a race of Indians in a walled village containing some 1,500 souls and living by a rude agriculture and fishing.

Cartier thus describes what he saw:—

*"How the Captain and the gentlemen, with twenty-five men, well armed and in good order, went to the town of Hochelaga, and of the situation of the said place.*

"The next day at early dawn the Captain arrayed himself and put his men in order, to go and see the town and dwelling of the said people, and a mountain which is adjacent to the said town, whither went with the said Captain the gentlemen and twenty mariners, and left the rest for the guard of the barques, and took three men of the said town of Hochelaga to take and conduct them to said place. And we being on the road found it as beaten as it was possible to see, in the most beautiful soil and the finest plain; oaks as fair as there are any in forest of France, under which all the ground was covered with acorns. And