

## CHAPTER I.

# The Days of the Indians



WOULD like my readers to imagine they are again little girls and have been rummaging through the garret, and have perhaps come across an old horse-hair trunk hidden in an out-of-the-way corner, under rafters thick with dust and tangled in a meshwork of cobwebs.

We have not been looking for the trunk but being girls and full of wholesome curiosity we settle ourselves on the floor before it with little "ohs" of delight. It must be great grandmother's trunk, we exclaim, and we push the wobbly cover, and begin to poke eagerly into its musty depths. Yes, truly it is great grandmother's trunk. And such a wealth of dear old-fashioned things we find in our treasure-trove. A chintz-covered band-box with a quaint lavender poke bonnet; a yellow piece of canvas with the motto, "Jane Adams, her sampler;" a bundle of letters tied with a ribbon; a queer old spelling book; a pair of tiny high-heeled slippers; and last of all, a short-waisted, short sleeved muslin gown, sprigged with tiny, faded lavender blossoms with bits of dried lavender still clinging in the folds.

With exclamation of wonder and delight, and a good deal of hushed laughter, we all try on the lavender bonnet, and vainly try to get our feet into the diminutive slippers.

"Let's go and ask grandmother to tell us all about the dear funny things." So gathering our spoil into our arms, we troop down the stairs to gather about grandmother's chair and hear her tell of the days long long ago, when great-grandmother was a little girl, and she begins the story by telling a little of the country before her ancestors settled in it.

When Samuel de Champlain returned to Canada from France in 1615, he brought with him four Franciscan friars to undertake mission work among the Indians of the country. One of these Franciscans, Joseph Le Caron, with twelve French soldiers, the very first summer of their stay in Canada went all the way from Montreal to where the Huron tribes lived, guided by a party of Hurons who had come there some time before to trade. Champlain followed eight days later, with two other Frenchmen and another party of Hurons. They came by the route used in those days, up the Ottawa river, across Lake Nipissing, and down the French river, thus reaching the shores of the Georgian Bay. Then going down its easterly side they arrived in the