

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE CANADIAN PEOPLE

CHAPTER I

THE GREAT NEW WORLD

Section I.—The Old Surmises

AN old story was told by Egyptian priests to the wise Greek Solon, as repeated by Plato—six hundred years before Christ—of a great island named Atlantis.

Atlantis which lay outside the Straits of Gibraltar, or Pillars of Hercules as they were then called. They related that the people of Atlantis entered the Mediterranean in ships and invaded both Greece and Egypt, but that their yoke was thrown off by the brave Greeks. But no continent or island of Atlantis could ever be found in the Atlantic Ocean and the story has usually passed as a myth. If such an invasion ever took place it was more likely that these hordes of desperate mariners were Norsemen coming in their ships through the Pillars of Hercules from the north-west coast of Europe. With the usual mythic mixture the Egyptian story stated that the land of Atlantis was destroyed by fire and earthquake.

Shortly after the Christian Era the well-known Roman writer Seneca, who was a Spaniard, and accustomed to look out upon the stormy Atlantic Beyond
Thule. Ocean, wrote in his native tongue: "There shall come a time in later ages when Ocean shall relax