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THE NEW CANADA : ITS NATURAL FEATURES AND CLIMATE.

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SOME time ago I sailed up the Mississippi from the mouth of the Wisconsin River to St. Paul, in the path followed by Father Hennepin, the Recollet friar, nearly two hundred years before. I ascended in a big Mississippi steamer crowded with passengers, and impelled by an agency which Hennepin, had he met it on his route, would have instantly attributed to the devil. He ascended in a bark canoe, having ventured up the Great Lakes, and with indomitable perseverance penetrated the savage wilderness for a distance of nearly two thousand miles. Not far below Lake Pépin he was captured by a war-party of Dacotahs, and carried northward to *Lac des Mille Lacs*, giving their name to the Falls of St. Anthony on the way ; and after incredible hardship and suffering at length returned to Quebec. Thence he went to Holland, where he published a narrative binding up fancy and fact, and discharging his malice towards certain of his rivals in a most happy and gratifying manner. He and his two companions were the first white men who beheld the great prairies of the North-West. His narrative, published in London in 1698, contains a

rough wood-cut of the bison, the first time that shaggy animal had the honour of appearing in print, and another, equally rude, but the first, of Niagara Falls. The sketch is taken from the American descent, and gives a foreshortened view of Lake Erie, exhibiting the surrounding country as a wilderness of cedar and pine. On a rocky plateau overlooking the Falls are represented the Chevalier de la Valle, with whom Hennepin descended the Mississippi, and three others of his party, one of whom holds his palms to his ears to drown the thunder of the waters ; whilst, at the foot of the cliff, below Table Rock, on the opposite margin, are clusters of Indians. His description of the Falls is so interesting and quaint that I am tempted to quote a portion of it :

"Betwixt the lakes *Ontario* and *Erie*," he says, "there is a vast and prodigious Cadence of Water, which falls down after a surprising and astonishing manner, insomuch that the Universe does not afford a parallel. At the foot of this horrible Precipice we meet with the river *Niagara*, which is not above half a quarter of a League broad, but is wonderfully deep in some places. It is