



THE FIRST KNOWN PICTURE OF NIAGARA FALLS.
(From Father Hennepin's "Nouvelle Decouverte," 1697.)

Catholic church as they carried the gospel to the various Indian tribes in the unknown wilderness. To this region came the French, first officially in the person of La Salle; afterwards, by their armies, seeking conquest and the control of the fur trade. At the mouth of the Niagara river the French established one of their most important posts. There they traded with, conferred with and intrigued with the Indians, making firm friends of some of the tribes and bitter enemies of others; and during the fourscore years that France held sway on the American continent, this region was a famous part of her domain in the new world.

Later on, steadily but surely driving the French before them, and finally totally depriving them of their possessions, came the English. Shortly after England became the undisputed owner of the region, the American Revolution began, and within twenty years after England had dispossessed France of this famous territory, she herself was compelled to recognize a new nation,

formed by her own descendants, and to cede to it one-half, or, counting the islands, more than one-half of the lands bordering on the Niagara river. From that time on, the United States and Great Britain have held undisputed possession of all this wondrous section.

Looking back in history for the first references to the Niagara region, we find them derived from Indian tradition or hearsay, and that, almost entirely by reason of the Falls and Rapids. However, it was not their grandeur, but the fact that the Indians were compelled to carry their canoes so many miles around them that impressed them. Thus, the existence of a great fall at this point was known to the Indians all over the North American continent, we know not how far back; certainly as early as the arrival of Columbus at San Salvador.

In 1535 Jacques Cartier made his second voyage to the St. Lawrence, and the Indians living along that river narrated to him what they had heard of the upper part of that stream, and of