

## PREFACE.

---

THE Indians of Caughnawaga are an offshoot from the Mohawks, one of the divisions of the Six Nations, formerly in pseudo occupation of western New York, and known to the French by the general name of Iroquois. Long before the cession of this Province to Great Britain, they were settled at the head of the rapids of the St. Lawrence opposite Lachine, on a tract of land ten miles square, or 64,000 acres held in common, but lately separated into lots to be divided among the people as individual property.

Contrary to what has been the too common fate of aborigines brought into close contact with foreigners, the Caughnawagas, with some mixture of white blood, have maintained throughout their Indian customs, manners and language, with the manhood of their ancestors, in an alertness, strength and power of endurance wherever these qualities have been required: in the boating or rafting on our larger rivers and the hardships of *Voyageurs* in the North-West.

As a high tribute to this known excellence, the call for Canadian *Voyageurs* to assist in the boat navigation of the Nile was accompanied by a special requirement that there should be a contingent of fifty Caughnawagas. They responded quickly to the call, performed the task committed to them in a manner most satisfactory as described in these pages, and returned to their homes at the end of six months, after a voyage of more than 12,000 miles, sound and resolute as when they started, with the loss of but two men.