



STEELE'S  
BOOK OF  
NIAGARA FALLS



THE  
BOOK  
OF  
NIAGARA FALLS.

BY HORATIO A. PARSONS, A. M.

---

**Third Edition.**  
CAREFULLY REVISED, AND ENLARGED.  
*Accompanied by Maps.*

---

---

BUFFALO  
OLIVER G. STEELE

.....  
1836,

---

Entered according to the act of Congress, in the year 1836, by  
OLIVER G. STEELE, *Proprietor*.  
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Northern Dis-  
trict of ~~the~~ State of New-York.

---

.....  
Steele's Press, Buffalo.  
.....

## ADVERTISEMENT.

---

THE writer of the following pages, having been a resident at the Falls a number of years, and familiar with the whole scenery at all seasons of the year, as well as with all the interesting localities in the vicinity, and having omitted no means of obtaining correct information in regard to the various facts stated, feels free to offer this manual as a correct and sufficient guide to visitors, in which they will find, within a small compass, an ample fund of information respecting the Falls and vicinity.— Having no particular or private interest to serve, he has aimed to give an impartial description of the different objects of interest on both sides of the river, and to do justice to all persons concerned. The plan of publishing such a manual was formed in the year 1827, and most of the materials were then collected and arranged; but for various reasons it was not published till the year 1834, though it was the first book of the kind that had ever been published respecting the Falls. From an intercourse with a vast number of visitors at all seasons of the year,

he has been enabled to ascertain what *kind* of information they most need, and has greatly enlarged the present edition in order, if possible, to afford ample information in relation to every thing connected with the Falls and vicinity, about which inquiries would naturally be made.

¶ New editions of this Manual will be published from time to time, as they may be needed, containing notices of incidents and such additional information as may be useful to the traveller and tourist.

*Niagara Falls, 1836.*

## CONTENTS.

---

	Page.
Advertisement, . . . . .	5
Directions to Travellers, . . . . .	13
Niagara River, its Sources and Islands, . . . . .	18
The Rapids, . . . . .	23
Goat or Iris Island, . . . . .	26
The Falls, Terrapin Bridge and Tower, . . . . .	30
Biddle Stair Case, Æolus' Cave, &c. . . . .	35
The Ferry, . . . . .	39
Canada Views, . . . . .	40
Welland Canal, . . . . .	43
Brock's Monument, . . . . .	44
Burning Spring, . . . . .	45
Stair Case, . . . . .	46
Museum, . . . . .	47
Summer and Winter Scenery, . . . . .	47
River below the Falls, . . . . .	51
Remarks of Hennepin, Tonti, Hontan, &c. . . . .	52
Curiosities, &c. . . . .	66



Mineral Spring, . . . . .	67
Whirlpool, . . . . .	68
Devil's Hole, . . . . .	71
Tuscarora Indians, . . . . .	73
Battles, . . . . .	75
Bridges, . . . . .	76
Minerals, &c., . . . . .	77
Incidents, . . . . .	78
Hermit of the Falls, . . . . .	82
Village of Niagara Falls, . . . . .	86
Number of Visitors, . . . . .	91
Routes and Charges, . . . . .	96
Reed and Matheson's Description of the Falls. . . . .	98
Tables of Distances, . . . . .	109
Distances on the Erie Canal, . . . . .	112

# BOOK OF NIAGARA FALLS.

---

## DIRECTIONS TO TRAVELLERS AFTER THEY ARRIVE AT THE FALLS.

---

A few directions may be necessary to enable you to save time and see the Falls to the best advantage. Arriving on either side, it is recommended to ladies to put on leather or other stout shoes, and to gentlemen to take with them an umbrella to guard against the mist. If you arrive on the American side, turn to the right around either of the Hotels, and proceed a few rods to the bridge that leads across the rapids to Bath and Goat Islands; you will stop at the toll-house on Bath Island when you pass over, record your name in the register and pay twenty-five cents; which entitles you to visit all the islands with their appendages as often as you please during your visit, or for a year, without any additional charge. And if you choose to cross in a carriage, you pay no more.—Proceed next to Goat Island, where you will find guide-boards directing you to all the most interesting places and objects around the island. Follow the gravel walk

---

Directions to Travellers.

---

at the right, down to the cascade or centre fall and cross a narrow bridge to Luna Island, from the farther corner of which you will have the best and most splendid view of the Falls on the American side. Retracing your steps to the gravel walk, proceed next to the Biddle Staircase; descend that without fail, as you will there have a magnificent and much admired view of the two entire Falls, standing between them, and an opportunity, if the wind be favorable, of passing a considerable distance behind either sheet, with the tremendous flood pouring over you from a height of 150 feet. From the foot of the staircase, turn first to the right and go to the Cave of the Winds under the centre fall, and in returning, follow the path to the great Crescent fall.

Reaching the top of the island again, proceed to the farther corner, where you will find the Stone Tower forty-five feet high with winding steps to the top, and also the Terrapin Bridge, from both which places you will have decidedly the best and most impressive views of the Falls, that can be had from any position. Here you will realize power, grandeur, sublimity, immensity,—no pen or tongue can describe it.

Pursuing your way with a view to go entirely round the island,—as you ought without fail to do, inasmuch as you will thus get a much better view of the rapids and surrounding scenery that can be obtained any where

---

Directions to Travellers.

---

else,— you will proceed up to a beautiful cascade, where under the shelter in part of a projecting rock, you can have an opportunity to bathe in the sparkling foam of Niagara.

“ This is the purest exercise of health,  
The kind refresher of the summer heats.”

A rustic bridge was here to give you access to the Moss islands, which are well worthy a visit. Just above these islands you have the very best view of the rapids, that is presented from any place about the Falls. Proceeding round the head of the island, you cross the place, nearly opposite the saw mill, where a number of human skeletons have been dug up,— supposed to be the former site of an Indian burying ground.

If your visit is protracted at the Falls, you ought to pass around and through Goat Island by the different paths in order to observe its picturesque beauty and realize its thousands attractions. You ought also, if time permit, to visit the site of old Fort Schlosser, the mineral spring, the whirlpool, the Devil's Hole, &c. to all which places the coach-drivers will conduct you, and give such information and directions as you may need.

In order to cross the river, proceed from the bridge to the staircase near the edge of the Falls, at the foot of which you will have a very near view of the highest fall and a most charming prospect of the entire Falls.

---

Directions to Travellers.

---

“ Above, around, beneath, amazement all!  
Terror and glory joined in their extremes !”

Take a look from the window of the Staircase and you will realize the truth of Shakspeare's description,

“ How fearful  
And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!  
I'll look no more,  
Lest my brain turn and the deficient sight  
Topple down headlong.”

In crossing the river, not the least danger need be apprehended; it is a perfectly safe and most delightful excursion, and persons sometimes swim across and find it a real luxury. The time occupied in crossing is ordinarily about eight minutes, and the ferriage is 18 $\frac{3}{4}$  cents from May to November, and 25 cents from November to May. If you have trunks or other luggage to be transported from either side to the other, the ferrymen will convey them safely at a reasonable charge. The river is here 76 rods wide and 250 feet deep.

Having crossed the river, proceed up the bank by a carriage road, to Fido's elegant and inviting confectionary establishment, where, if you choose, you can refresh yourself with ice cream and other luxuries,—and thence to Table Rock, where you will find a spiral staircase, from the foot of which you can pass 153 feet behind the sheet of water. This staircase is under the care of Mr.

---

Directions to Travellers.

---

Starkey, who furnishes dresses and a guide for visitors, who wish to go behind the sheet; he also keeps a reading room and a neat and inviting shop of refreshments.

From Table Rock you have one broad and imposing view of the whole Falls, and much of the scenery of the rapids and islands. Many visitors prefer this view to any other; but it is generally conceded that the view from the Terrapin Bridge is superior,—it combines more of the beautiful and sublime.

In ascending the bank from Table Rock to the Hotels, you will have a fine and extensive view of the surrounding country, and can visit the burning spring, Chippewa, Lundy's Lane, Brock's Monument, the Welland Canal, &c. as you may have leisure or inclination.

If you arrive first on the Canada side, proceed directly to Table Rock, and when satisfied with looking at the amazing scene there, both from above and below, follow the path to the Ferry and cross to the other side, and then visit Goat Island as directed above.

To those who wish the services of a living guide in their rambles and excursions, Mr. S. Hooker, on the American side, offers himself; his office is near the Eagle Hotel. From a residence of twenty years at the Falls, he is enabled to conduct visitors to all the objects of interest in the vicinity, and to give them much valuable information.

---

Niagara River . . Its sources.

---

NIAGARA RIVER, ITS SOURCES,  
AND ISLANDS.

Niagara River, upon which the Falls are situated, receives the waters of all the upper lakes, as Erie, St. Clair, Huron, Michigan, Superior, and a number of smaller ones. The most distant source of the Niagara is probably the river St. Louis, which rises 1250 miles north-west of the Falls and 155 miles west of Lake Superior; it is 1200 feet above the level of the ocean, and falls 551 feet before it reaches the lake.

Lake Superior is 459 miles long by 109 wide, and 900 feet deep: it is discharged into Lake Huron by the Strait St. Mary, 60 miles in length, making a descent of 45 feet. This lake receives the waters of about forty rivers. Lake Michigan is 300 miles by 50 and about 900 feet deep, and empties into Huron through the straits of Mackinac 40 miles in length. Connected with Michigan on the south-west side, is Green Bay, 100 miles in length by about 20 in width. Lake Huron is 218 miles by 180, and 900 feet deep, and is discharged into Lake Erie, through the rivers St. Clair and Detroit, 90 miles, making a descent of 31 feet. Lake Erie is 290 miles by 63, and 120 feet deep, and 564 feet above the level of the

---

The Great Lakes.

---

sea. It empties itself through Niagara river, 35 miles in length, into Lake Ontario, making a descent of 334 feet, viz: from the lake to Schlosser, 12 feet; thence down the rapids, 52 feet; the perpendicular Falls, 164 feet; from the Falls to Lewiston, 104 feet; and thence to Lake Ontario, two feet.

Lake Ontario is 180 miles by 31, and 500 feet deep, and discharges itself through the river St. Lawrence into the Atlantic Ocean, 710 miles distant.

The four inland seas above the Falls—as the great Lakes may properly be called—with the hundreds of rivers, great and small, that flow into them, cover a surface of 150,000 square miles, and contain nearly half the fresh water on the surface of the globe. From these sources of the Niagara, some idea may be formed of the immense quantity of water that is constantly pouring over the Falls.

Niagara River, as it flows from Lake Erie, is about three-fourths of a mile in width, and from twenty to forty feet deep; for three miles it has a rapid current, and then it becomes calm and smooth till within one mile of the Falls.

“ So calm ;—the waters scarcely seem to stray,  
And yet they glide like happiness away.”

Five miles from the lake the river begins to expand till it becomes more than eight miles in width, measured



---

Grand Island . . . Arrarat.

---

across Grand Island, and embraces before it reaches the Falls, about forty islands. Of these the largest are Grand and Navy. The latter, belonging to Canada, contains 304 acres of good land, and terminates near Chippewa point. Grand Island commences five miles from the lake, is twelve miles in length, measured round its edge, and from three to six in width, and terminates three miles above the Falls, containing 17,384 acres. The land is well timbered, rich, and productive. As the deepest channel of the river, forming the boundary line, runs on the west side, this island, until recently, has belonged to the state of New-York; but in the year 1833, a company from Boston purchased nearly the whole of the Island, and have recently erected upon it, near the site of the famous Jewish city, Arrarat, (projected in 1825 by Major Noah, of New-York,) a steam grist mill, and a saw mill 150 feet square, containing 15 sets or gangs of saws. This mill is intended to saw ship stuff of every description, from 20 to 70 feet in length, and will probably be one of the most extensive establishments of its kind in America. The name of their village is "White Haven," situated nearly opposite Tonawanta, where the Erie Canal locks into the Niagara river. It is approached by a ferry across the river, here 100 rods wide, and has increased, since Nov. 1833, from one solitary family to more than fifty; it has also many work-shops,

---

White Haven. . . Timber Company.

---

a store, a school-house, a commodious wharf several hundred feet long, and a spacious dock made of piles, for storing and securing floating timber.

It is understood that they intend to employ constantly several hundreds of men with a competent number of teams, for the purpose of preparing and sending to the eastern cities a large quantity of ship timber. In the spring of 1834, the timber for three large merchant ships of 400, 450, and 700 tons burthen, prepared, and every piece fitted to its place during the previous winter, was sent by canal boats to Albany, and thence by sloops to Boston.

One thing connected with the founding of this village and the progress of the Company's business on this island, deserves special commendation: no ardent spirits of any kind have been used, and no man who drinks spirits can find employment there, even for a single day. Much success to their enterprise.

In July, 1759, during the old French war, two large French vessels, in danger of being taken by the British, were burnt and sunk in what is called Burnt Ship Bay, near the lower end of this island. Some parts of them are still visible; and some years since, a party of men, by raking the river at that place, secured a number of tons of iron.

---

The Rapids. . . Roar of the Falls.

---

Below the termination of Grand and Navy Islands, the river is compressed to the width of two and a half miles; and, pressing forward with accelerated motion, it commences, about three-fourths of a mile above the Falls, a rapid descent, making within that distance a slope or succession of *chutes*, amounting to fifty-two feet on the American side, and fifty-seven on the other.—The tremendous and beautiful rapids thus formed, constitute a very important part of the grand and unparalleled curiosities of this river. Were they in any other place, they would of themselves be considered as a scene of great beauty and sublimity, equalled only by the ocean when lashed into foam and fury by the angry tempest. Many visitors express themselves more delighted, and unexpectedly filled with wonder, at seeing the Rapids, than the Falls themselves.

“Through sparkling spray in thundering clash,  
The lightnings of the water flash,  
In awful whiteness o’er the shore,  
That shines and shakes beneath the roar.”

Two miles above the Falls, in approaching from Buffalo, you come in sight of the white crested breakers, more than a mile in width, dashing, foaming, and tossing from ten to thirty feet above the main current; and at the same time hear a low, monotonous, tremendous roar; and as you approach nearer, feel a tremulous motion of

---

Roar of the Falls. . . Distance which it has been heard.

---

the earth. The distance at which this roar can be heard, varies, with the state of the atmosphere, ordinarily from five to twenty miles, though it is sometimes distinctly heard at Toronto, fifty miles distant. And yet, in the village near the Falls, it is scarcely heard at all. The mist, arising like curling smoke and separating as it rises into masses of fantastic clouds, is seen at the distance of from three to fifty miles. This distance depends upon the state of the atmosphere, the height of the sun, and the force and direction of the wind. This mist sometimes rises in immense masses, and sometimes in a pyramidal shape to a very great height, and is an object of great curiosity, especially in the morning soon after sun-rise. It then sparkles like diamonds, and becomes illuminated with the most brilliant prismatic colors.

“Niagara! Niagara! I hear  
Thy tumbling waters. And I see thee rear  
Thy thundering sceptre to the clouded skies;  
I see it wave—I hear the ocean rise,  
And roll obedient to thy call. I hear  
The tempest-hymning of thy floods in fear:  
The quaking mountains and the nodding trees—  
The reeling birds—and the careering breeze—  
The tottering hills, unsteadied in thy roar;  
Niagara! as thy dark waters pour,  
One everlasting earthquake rocks thy lofty shore.”

From Table Rock, you have an extensive and picturesque view of the rapids; but they are seen to much

---

Goat Island.

---

better advantage from the shore half a mile above, and especially from the different sides of Goat Island. From the south-west corner of this island, just above the Moss islands, you have by far the best view that can be taken from any place. There, is too, an amazing rush of water between the Moss islands, the force and sublimity of which may be conceived but not described. Reader, go there, and you will be fixed for a time in mute astonishment.

---

## GOAT, OR IRIS ISLAND.

Goat Island, is so called from the circumstance, that about the year 1770, Mr. Steadman, then resident at Schlosser, contrived by some means to put a few goats upon the island; but its more appropriate and adopted name is Iris Island. It commences near the head of the rapids, almost in the middle of the river, and extends to the precipice, dividing the Falls into two sheets. It is half a mile in length, and one-fourth of a mile in width, and contains seventy-five acres of rich and heavy timbered land. Situated in the midst of the rapids and surrounded by them on three sides, this island is one of the most beautiful, fascinating and romantic places in the world; it affords a delightful retreat for "the lunatic,

---

 Scenery . . . Earliest Dates.
 

---

the lover, and the poet," to indulge in their meditations. Fanned by gentle breezes, thickly and delightfully shaded, free from noisome insects, encircled by a neat walk, and presenting to the visiter a great variety of views of the Falls and rapids, he feels a reluctance on leaving it, and is wont to exclaim with Montgomery,

" If God hath made this world so fair,  
Where sin and death abound;  
How beautiful, beyond compare,  
Will Paradise be found! "

or with Eve, in the language of Milton,

" Must I thus leave thee, Paradise?  
—— These happy walks and shades,  
Fit haunt of Gods? "

About two-thirds of this island are still covered with tall trees, many of which are clothed with a magnificent drapery of ivy and other creeping plants, and many have been killed by reason of the countless names that have been cut into their bark. So strong is the desire of man for immortality, that few can resist the temptation to leave some memorial of their visit to the Falls. The earliest genuine date of any name yet found, is in the year 1769, though names have been cut within a few years and *dated* back as early as 1745; but on the *rocks* near the Falls, on the American side, there are names chiselled out and dated 1711, 1726, 1745, &c. On Goat

---

Indian Remains. . . Garden.

---

Island, a number of human skeletons have, within a few years, been dug up; supposed to be the remains of Indians buried in a former age, and many more are doubtless now resting there in undisturbed repose. There may they rest, in nature's solitude, till the Great Spirit calls them hence. On this island is found a very great variety of wild plants, shrubs and flowers; nearly two hundred different species, some of them very rare, have already been discovered. Of the *Tillium Grandiflora*, sixteen varieties are found here. The seeds of plants and flowers, from the shores of all the upper lakes and rivers, have probably been washed upon this island. Some years since, a number of deer were put upon this island, which soon became quite tame; but visitors, in order to see them jump, would occasionally frighten them, when they would immediately betake themselves to the rapids, and thus were carried over the Falls, until all were finally destroyed.

When the present proprietor shall have completed the spacious garden recently laid out, in which he designs to cultivate all the fruits that will grow in this mild and genial climate, and shall have finished the many other improvements which he has projected, no other place, perhaps, in the world will present attractions equal to those of Goat Island. The approach to it is from the American side, by means of a bridge of the most

---

Toll House . . . Centre Fall.

---

difficult and hazardous construction, which extends from the shore, 28 rods, to Bath Island, and thence 16 rods farther, to Goat Island.

There are many other beautiful islands situated among the rapids of this river, a number of which, as Bath, Ship, and Luna are, and all the rest might be, connected with Goat Island by bridges, and afford the most charming and impressive views of the surrounding scenery. On Bath Island, which is 24 rods in length, containing about two acres, is the Toll House, kept by Mr. A. B. Jacobs, who also furnishes visitors with warm and cold baths. Let it be remembered, that

" Even from the body's purity, the mind  
Receives a secret sympathetic aid."

On this island is situated Porter's extensive Paper Mill, three stories high, in which may be manufactured yearly 10,000 reams of paper.

Luna Island, about 30 yards in width, stands directly on the precipice near Goat Island, and divides the stream, a part of which forms the most splendid cascade, perhaps in the world. This is about twenty-two yards in width, and is sometimes called the "Centre Fall," to distinguish it from the other two main sheets. Approaching this island from the foot of what is called, from the shape of the path, the "Hog's back," visitors have, from the



---

Best view of the American Fall.

---

north-west corner, a much better view of the American Fall than can be obtained from any other place. This fall, like the other, has evidently changed its shape within a few years, and has now nearly as much of a resemblance to a horse shoe as the other.

There are ten other islands in the rapids besides those above mentioned, containing perhaps from one fourth to an acre each, to all or any of which bridges might, probably, be constructed.

---

---

THE FALLS—TERRAPIN BRIDGE AND TOWER.

The broad river, as it comes thundering and foaming down the declivity of the rapids, at length leaps the cataract, three-fourths of a mile in width, and falls, as it were, to the central caves of the earth. The mind, filled with amazement, recoils at the spectacle, and loses for a moment, its equilibrium. The trembling of the earth, the mighty rush and conflict and deafening roar of the water, the clouds of mist sparkling with rainbows, produce an effect upon the beholder, often quite overpowering; and it is only after the scene has become somewhat familiar to the eye, the ear, and the imagina-

---

 Height of the Falls.
 

---

tion, that its real grandeur and sublimity is properly realized and felt.

" To sit on rocks, to muse on flood and fell,  
 To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,  
 Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,  
 And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been ;

\* \* \* \* \*

Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to lean ;  
 This is not solitude ; 'tis but to hold  
 Converse with nature's charms, and see her stores unrolled."

The water on the American side, as ascertained by frequent measurement, falls 164 feet, and on the Canada side, 158 feet. The fall on the Canada side, embracing much the largest channel of the river, is called, from the shape of the precipice, the "Crescent or Horse-shoe Fall," and near to this a bridge, called the Terrapin Bridge, has been constructed, 300 feet in length, from Goat Island, and projecting ten feet over the Falls. Near the termination of this bridge, in the water, and on the very verge of the precipice, a stone tower, forty-five feet high, with winding steps to the top, was erected in the year 1833, from which, or from the end of the bridge, the effect of the Falls upon the beholder is most awfully sublime and utterly indescribable. The sublime, arising from obscurity, is here experienced in its greatest force. The eye, unable to discover the bottom of the

---

Descriptive Extract.

---

Falls, or even to penetrate the mist that seems to hang as a veil over the amazing and terrific scene, gives place to the imagination, and the mind is instinctively elevated and filled with majestic dread. Here is

“All that expands the spirit, yet appals.”

“It seems to be the good pleasure of God, that men shall learn his Omnipotence by evidence addressed to the senses as well as the understanding, and that there shall be on earth continual illustrations of his mighty power; of creation we are ascertained by faith, not by sight; the heavenly bodies, though vast, are distant, and roll silently in their courses. But the earth by its quakings, the volcano by its fires, the ocean by its mountain waves, and the floods of Niagara by the majesty of their power and ceaseless thunderings, proclaim to the eye, and to the ear, and to the heart, the omnipotence of God. From these far distant sources and multitudinous dispersions, He called them into the capacious reservoirs of the north, and bid them hasten their accumulating tide to this scene of wonders, and for ages the obedient waters have rolled and thundered his praise.

“In beholding this deluge of created Omnipotence, the thought, how irresistible is the displeasure of God, rushes upon the soul. It requires but a little aid of the imagination to behold in this ceaseless flow of waters, the stream of his indignation, which shall beat upon the

---

 Tower and Bridge. . . Solar Bow.
 

---

wicked, in the gulf below the eternal pit; and in the cloud of exhalation, the smoke of their torment, which ascendeth up for ever and ever. With these associations, all is dark, terrific and dreadful, till from the midst of this darkness and these mighty thunderings, the bow, brilliant type of mercy, arises, and spreads its broad arch over the agitated waters, proclaiming that the Omnipotence which rolls the stream is associated with mercy as well as with justice."

"And such was that rainbow, that beautiful one,  
Whose arch was refraction, its key-stone—the sun;  
A pavillion it seemed with a Deity graced,  
And justice and mercy met there and embraced."

The solar and lunar bows, the river above and below, and indeed the whole scenery of the Falls and rapids, appear to better advantage from this point than from any other; and no visiter on either side should presume to leave the Falls without visiting this tower and bridge. From the top of the tower especially, he will realize the force and beauty of the following description, which with the change of a single word, applies admirably to this matchless scene :

"The roar of waters! From the headlong height  
*Niagara* cleaves the wave-worn precipice;  
The fall of waters! rapid as the light,  
The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss;  
The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,  
And boil in endless torture; while the sweat

---

 Lunar Bow.
 

---

Of their great agony, wrung out from this  
 Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet  
 That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set.

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again  
 Returns in an unceasing shower, which round  
 With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain  
 Is an eternal April to the ground,  
 Making it all one emerald; — how profound  
 The gulf! — and how the giant element  
 From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,  
 Crushing the cliffs, which downward worn and rent,  
 With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \* \* Look back!

Lo! where it comes like an eternity,  
 As if to sweep down all things in its track,  
 Charming the eye with dread,—a matchless cataract,  
 Horribly beautiful! but on the verge,  
 From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,  
 An Iris sits, amid the infernal surge,  
 Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn  
 Its steady dies, while all around is torn  
 By the distracted waters, bears serene  
 Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn,  
 Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,  
 Love watching Madness with unalterable mien."

The lunar bow, seen at night, in the time of full moon,  
 appears like a brightly illuminated arch, reaching from  
 side to side, and is an object of great attraction,—espe-  
 cially as the world presents only a few other places where  
 such a bow is ever seen,

" Hung on the curling mist, the moonlight bow  
 Arches the perilous river."

---

Romantic Incident . . . Biddle Staircase.

---

Goat Island, in a moonlight night, is the resort of great multitudes, where they find themselves introduced to a scene of unrivalled beauty and magnificence. The rapids at such a time sparkle with phosphoric splendor, and nature around wears an irresistible charm of loveliness. There is

“A silver light, which hallowing tree and tower,  
Sheds beauty and deep softness o'er the whole.”

The writer once had the pleasure of joining a lovely couple in marriage, about 11 o'clock on one of the brightest nights he has ever known, in full view of this enchanting scene, and then of taking a romantic excursion with the party around the island. This was poetry indeed; it was one of those bright and verdant oases sometimes met with in the journey of life. May all their days be equally bright and their rambles equally pleasant.

---

---

BIDDLE STAIRCASE—ÆOLUS' CAVE.

At the lower end of Goat Island, about one-third across it, a stair-case, erected in the year 1829, at the expense of Nicholas Biddle, Esq., of Philadelphia, gives visitors an opportunity of descending below the bank and of passing a considerable distance behind the two main sheets of water. The descent from the top of the island

---

Sam Patch. . . Cave of the Winds.

---

to the margin of the river is 185 feet. A common flight of steps leads down 40 feet to the perpendicular spiral steps, 90 in number, which are enclosed in a building in the shape of a hexagon resting on a firm foundation at the bottom. From the foot of the building there are three paths leading to the most important points of observation, one of which leads to the river below, 80 feet, where visitors will find one of the finest fishing places in this part of the world. All the varieties of fish existing in Lake Ontario are found here, among which are sturgeon, pike, pickerel, black and white bass, herrings, cat-fish, eels, &c. Here was Sam Patch's jumping place. The path at the left of the staircase leads to the great Crescent Fall, where, when the wind blows up the river, a safe and delightful passage is opened behind the sheet of water.

The path at the right leads to a magnificent Cave, appropriately named when it was first discovered, twenty five years since, *Æolus' Cave*, or *Cave of the Winds*. This cave is about 120 feet across, 50 feet wide and 100 feet high; it is situated directly behind the Centre Fall, which at the bottom is more than 100 feet wide, and were the rocks excavated a little and a few steps made, visitors could safely pass into and entirely through the cave behind the sheet of water. Beyond this cave at the foot of Luna Island, there is an open space where

---

Passage behind the Falls.

---

persons may amuse themselves at leisure upon the rocks, over which the floods are pouring, and then venture in as far as they please behind the whole American Fall.

The writer of these pages first conceived the idea of effecting an entrance into this cave, July 14, 1834, while passing in front of the American Fall in a boat, and the next day it was effected for the first time by passing round the outside of the fall and descending from the foot of Luna Island. Accompanying the above idea, was a project of passing behind the whole American Fall, 56 rods, and coming out near the ferry. This passage, though not yet effected, is believed to be possible; for the opening between the sheet of water as it falls, and the rock behind is from 15 to 50 feet wide, and there are rocks to walk upon through the whole distance. If there be any insurmountable obstacle, it will probably be found in the tremendous wind and spray occasioned by the falling flood. A passage into the cave was at first considered a great exploit, but a passage behind the whole sheet would be inconceivably greater. The cave itself is the *ne plus ultra* of wonders, a visit to which no person ought to omit. Ladies and gentlemen can very often, when the wind blows down the river, pass a considerable distance behind the sheet of water within the cave without getting wet at all. The view presented to a person while in the cave, in connexion with the tre-



---

Rain-Bow . . . Extract from Brainard.

---

mendous and astounding roar of waters, which, owing to the echoes or reverberations, is apparently a hundred times greater here than any where else, will enable him to appreciate the following beautiful and graphic lines of Brainard, — especially as there is always in the afternoon when the sun shines, a bright rain-bow visible directly within the cave and behind the sheet of water.

“ The thoughts are strange that crowd into my brain,  
While I look upwards to thee. It would seem,  
As if God poured thee from his hollow hand,  
And hung his bow upon thy awful front,  
And spoke in that loud voice, which seemed to him  
Who dwelt in Patmos for his Saviour's sake,  
‘The sound of many waters;’ and had bade  
Thy flood to chronicle the ages back,  
And notch His centuries in the eternal rocks.

Deep calleth unto deep. And what are we,  
That hear the question of that voice sublime ?  
Oh ! what are all the notes that ever rung  
From war's vain trumpet by thy thundering side ?  
Yea, what is all the riot man can make  
In his short life, to thy unceasing roar !  
And yet, bold babbler, what art thou to Him  
Who drowned a world, and heaped the waters far  
Above its loftiest mountains ?—a light wave,  
That breaks and whispers of its Maker's might.”

How little and insignificant do the efforts of man appear, when measured by this exhibition of Omnipotence ! The earthquake, the volcano, the wide-spread conflagration, the shock of contending armies are sublime and terrific spectacles, though short in their continuance and

---

Ferry to the Canada side.

---

limited in their effects; but here, ever since the flood probably, the deafening and incessant roar of the mightiest cataract on the globe has called upon the children of men to fall down and adore their Maker.

---

---

THE FERRY.

There is another stair-case leading down the bank about six rods below the Falls, where visitors will find a safe ferry to the Canada side, and have an opportunity of viewing a scene of surpassing grandeur. The deep-green glassy river beneath, the awful precipice of rocks, and the mighty floods rolling and tumbling from the heights above, and the singularly wild, romantic, and variegated scenery around, fill the mind of the beholder with sensations not to be described. Here one may perceive the propriety and beauty of the figure representing Him, who is the "Rock of ages," as "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," to those who fly to him for refuge.

" While viewing thee  
I think how grand and beautiful is God,  
When man has not intruded on his works,  
But left his bright creation unimpaired.  
Blessed scenes!

---

City of the Falls.

---

\* \* \* it is no mortal touch  
 That sharpened thy rough brow, or fringed thy skirts  
 With coarse luxuriance; — 'twas the lightning's force  
 Dashed its strong flash across thee, and did point  
 The crag; or, with his stormy thunderbolt,  
 The Almighty Architect himself disjoined  
 Yon rock; then flung it down where now it hangs,  
 And said, do thou lie there."

The Ferrymen, S. L. Ware, Esq. on the American, and Mr. J. Shultersburgh, on the Canada side, are both very civil and accommodating, well acquainted with their business, and able to give much information to visitors. Whenever required, they take parties out on pleasure or fishing excursions, and thus enable them to take a more extensive view of the gorgeous river scenery. The construction of a carriage road is now in progress down these perpendicular banks, so as to have a ferry for teams and carriages; and when this is completed, it must become a great and important thoroughfare for travellers.

---



---

CANADA VIEWS—CITY OF THE FALLS,

Directly opposite the Falls on the Canada side, an enterprising Company, having purchased the grounds formerly owned by Mr. Forsyth, have projected and laid out what they call "The City of the Falls," and are now making very considerable improvements. They

---

Clifton . . . New Hotel.

---

hope soon to have schools, churches, libraries, ball and promenade rooms, baths, public gardens, and, indeed, every thing considered necessary to an elegant and fashionable city. The lots and streets are laid out with much judgment and taste, and the city has an imposing and attractive appearance on paper; but how it will appear when actually built upon the solid earth, other generations must tell.

The table land on the river's bank below the Falls and opposite the Ferry, owned by Captain Creighton, has also been surveyed into lots for a village, to be called "Clifton;" and here, directly at the top of the ferry road, Mr. Crysler has recently built a splendid hotel, for the accommodation of visitors, which contains upwards of sixty rooms, and will accommodate from sixty to one hundred guests. This is a delightful site for a village, and will in a few years, probably, be the most central place of resort on that side of the river. The following stanza of Byron, is beautifully descriptive of this place :

" From thy shady brow,  
Thou small, but favored spot of holy ground !  
Where'er we gaze, around, above, below,  
What rainbow tints, what magic charms are found !  
Rock, river, forest, mountain, all abound,  
And bluest skies that harmonize the whole ;  
Beneath, the distant torrent's rushing sound  
Tells where the volumed cataract doth roll  
Between those hanging rocks, that shock yet please the soul."

---

Appearance of the surrounding country.

---

In ascending the high bank, the visiter is presented with some delightful views of the Falls and rapids, and of the surrounding country. Two spacious hotels, the Pavilion and Ontario House, situated on the high bank, are much frequented, and can accommodate nearly one hundred and fifty guests. The Pavilion has an imposing appearance, and from the observatory on its roof, visitors have an extensive view of the surrounding country.

A short distance from the Pavilion, at the Assembly Rooms kept by Mr. W. Anderton, visitors will find warm and cold baths, a general collection of periodicals, and news-papers, and a plentiful supply of refreshments.

Strangers who have never visited the Falls, have an idea that the surrounding country must be mountainous, like that in the vicinity of most other falls; but the general aspect of the country here for a great extent on both sides of the river, above and below, is that of an almost perfect level, and nothing indicates the existence of the river or the Falls except the constantly ascending and floating mist, and a kind of subterranean thundering roar. Below the Falls, the earth and rocks appear as though they had been suddenly rent asunder and separated one-fourth of a mile apart, in order, by the perpendicular chasm thus made, to form a channel for the river. The corresponding portions of rock are as regular in the succession of their strata, as would be the leaves and cover

---

W I L L A N D Canal.

---

of a book if they were bisected and placed opposite each other. The whole country in Canada, between the two lakes, except a narrow strip bordering upon Lake Ontario, is generally level, rich, and productive, and is becoming quite populous. In visiting the Canada side, you can cross the river at Black Rock, Lewiston, or at the Falls; and can always have carriages on that side to transport you whither you choose. Stage Coaches run from the Hotels to Queenstown and Niagara daily; also to Chippewa and Buffalo. From Chippewa two steamboats run daily to Buffalo, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. No one ought to fail of visiting the Canada side, as this grand and unparalleled scene of nature's wonders, the fame whereof is spread over the world, ought to be viewed and contemplated from every position. The views from that side, are by many considered the best; but let every one decide for himself from personal observation.

---

---

W E L L A N D C A N A L .

Eight miles west from the Falls is the Welland Canal, connecting the waters of Lake Erie with Lake Ontario, and affording a passage for sloops and schooners of 125 tons burthen. This Canal commences at Port Maitland,

---

Brock's Monument.

---

near the mouth of Grand River on Lake Erie, 48 miles west of Buffalo; it runs in a straight line across Wainfleet Marsh, crosses the Chippewa river by means of an aqueduct, and enters Lake Ontario at the mouth of twelve mile creek. It is 42 miles in length, 56 feet in width, and varies from  $8\frac{1}{2}$  to 16 feet in depth. The whole descent from one lake to the other, 334 feet, is accomplished by means of 37 locks. At the deep-cut, on what is called the mountain ridge, the excavation is 45 feet in depth; and 1,477,700 cubic feet of earth, and 1,890,000 cubic feet of rock were removed. The locks here are 22 by 100 feet, and west of this ridge they are 45 by 125 feet. The Canal was commenced in the year 1824, and completed in five years, and cost over \$1,000,000. A large part of the stock is owned by individuals in the state of New-York. The Company own all the land along the line of the Canal, including the hydraulic privileges; and another tract, containing about 16,000 acres, has been granted to them by the British Government.

---

---

BROCK'S MONUMENT.

Six miles and a half north from the Falls, upon Queens-  
ton heights, is General Brock's Monument, constructed  
of free stone 126 feet high, and admitting an ascent to

---

Burning Spring.

---

the top by a flight of 170 winding steps. From this eminence, the country around, including the picturesque lake scenery, may be seen for fifty miles. The following inscription is found on this Monument :

“The Legislature of Upper Canada has dedicated this Monument to the many civil and military services of the late Sir Isaac Brock, Knight, Commander of the most honorable Order of the Bath, Provincial Lieutenant-Governor and Major-General, Commanding his Majesty's forces therein. He fell in action, on the 13th of Oct., 1812, honored and beloved by those whom he governed, and deplored by his Sovereign, to whose service his life had been devoted. His remains are deposited in this vault, as also his Aid-de-Camp, Lieutenant-Colonel John McDonald, who died of his wounds the 14th of October, 1812, received the day before, in action.”

---

BURNING SPRING.

One mile south from the Falls, near the rapids, is the Burning Spring. This is in a state of constant ebullition, and from it issues a steam of sulphuretted hydrogen gas, which quickly ignites on the touch of a candle, and burns with a brilliant flame. The Spring is enclosed in a barrel, which collects the gas and lets it out through a



---

Spiral Staircase.

---

tube inserted at the top. This gas might, without doubt, be communicated by pipes to neighboring buildings, and substituted for candles and lamps. The keeper of the Spring, Mr. J. Conklin, expects a small fee from visitors, for his trouble. There are strong indications at this Spring of a bed of coal near, but no effort has yet been made to discover it.

---

---

STAIR-CASE.

At the Falls, near Table Rock, is a spiral Stair Case, constructed for the purpose of letting people descend and pass behind the sheet of water. The views behind this sheet, 153 feet from the outer edge, are awfully sublime and terrific, and visitors generally feel themselves well repaid for going there. The impressions there produced will probably never be effaced.

Mr. Starkey, who keeps a house of refreshment (and a cabinet of minerals here, is very accommodating to visitors, and when desired, furnishes them with a dress and guide to facilitate their passage behind the Falls. This place has been extensively known and is much frequented by visitors.

---

Museum . . . Summer and Winter Scenery.

---

## MUSEUM.

A few rods from this stair-case is Mr. Barnett's Museum of natural and artificial curiosities;—an establishment well worthy of patronage. The rooms are arranged very tastefully so as to represent a forest scene, and contain upwards of 800 stuffed animals of various kinds and descriptions. There are bipeds and quadruped; birds, fishes, insects, reptiles, shells, minerals and Indian curiosities; all calculated to delight the eye, improve the understanding, and mend the heart. Of the birds, beasts, fishes, and insects, several hundred species were caught in the vicinity of the Falls. The noblest eagles of the land delight to hover around the Falls; and here they are frequently killed, stuffed, and offered for sale. A large collection of live rattle-snakes may also be seen here.

---

---

SUMMER AND WINTER SCENERY.

The surrounding scenery on both sides of the river is in good keeping with the magnificence of the Falls. It is just what it should be,—grand, striking, and unique.

---

Scenery in Winter.

---

By most visiters it is seen only in summer. But in the winter it is also inimitably and indescribably beautiful. The trees and shrubbery on Goat and other islands and on the banks of the river near the Falls, are covered with transparent sleet, presenting an appearance of "icy brilliants," or rather of millions of glittering chandeliers of all sizes and descriptions, and giving one a most a vivid idea of fairy land,

"For every shrub and every blade of grass  
And every pointed thorn seems wrought in glass,  
The frightened birds the rattling branches shun,  
Which wave and glitter in the distant sun."

The scene presents a splendid counterpart to Goldsmith's description of the subterranean grottos of Paros and Antiparos. The mist from the Falls freezes upon the trees so gradually and to such thickness, that it often bears a most exact resemblance to Alabaster; and this, set off by the dazzling colors of the rainbows that arch the river from twenty different points, seems, by natural association, to raise the imagination to that world, where the streets are of pure gold, the gates of pearl, and night is unknown.

"Look, the massy trunks  
Are cased in the pure crystal; branch and twig  
Shine in the lucid covering; each light rod,  
Nodding and twinkling in the stirring breeze,  
Is studded with its trembling water-drops,  
Still streaming, as they move, with colored light.

---

Winter Scenery. . . Wild Ducks.

---

But round the parent stem, the long, low boughs  
Bend in a glittering ring, and arbors hide  
The glassy floor. O! you might deem the spot  
The spacious cavern of some virgin mine,  
Deep in the womb of earth, where the gems grow ;  
And diamonds put forth radiant rods, and bud  
With amethyst and topaz, and the place  
Lit up most royally with the pure beam  
That dwells in them; or, haply the vast hall  
Of fairy palace, that outlasts the night,  
And fades not in the glory of the sun ;  
Where crystal columns send forth slender shafts,  
And crossing arches, and fantastic aisles  
Wind from the sight in brightness, and are lost  
Among the crowded pillars."

The winter scenery about the Falls is peculiar, a sight of which is worth a journey of one thousand miles. Myriads of wild ducks and geese spend the day in and above the rapids, and regularly take their departure for Lake Ontario every night before dark; though some are often found in the morning with a broken leg or wing, and sometimes dead, in the river below the Falls. This generally happens after a very dark or foggy night; and it is supposed that, as they always have their heads up stream, while in the water, they are carried down insensibly by the rapids, till they find themselves going over the precipice, and then, in attempting to fly, they dive into the sheet of water, and are buried for a time under the Falls or upon the rocks.

---

Eagles. . . Ice Bridge.

---

Dead fish, too, of almost all sizes and descriptions, weighing from one to seventy pounds, are found floating in the eddies below the Falls, forming a dainty repast for gulls, loons, hawks, and eagles. The splendid gyrations of the gulls, and their fearless approaches, enveloped in clouds of mist, up to the boiling caldron directly under the Falls, attract much attention. But the eagle, fierce, daring, contemplative, and tyrannical, takes his stand upon the point of some projecting rock, or the dry limb of a gigantic tree, and watches with excited interest the movements of the whole feathered tribes below. Standing there in lordly pride and dignity, in an instant his eye kindles and his ardor rises as he sees the fish-hawk emerge from the deep, screaming with exultation at his success. He darts forth like lightning, and gives furious chase. The hawk, perceiving his danger, utters a scream of despair and drops his fish; and the eagle instantly seizes the fish in the air, and bears his ill-gotten booty to his lofty eyrie.

Sometimes during a part of the winter, the ice is driven by the wind from Lake Erie, and poured over the Falls in such immense quantities as to fill and block up the river between the banks, for a mile or more, to the depth of from thirty to fifty feet, so that people cross the ice to Canada, on foot, for weeks together.

---

River below the Falls. . . Color of the Water. . . Channel.

---

the river itself is never frozen over, either above or below the Falls, but it affords an outlet for vast quantities of ice from the upper lakes.

---

---

RIVER BELOW THE FALLS.

The river at the Falls is a little over three-fourths of a mile in width, but below it is immediately compressed into a narrow channel of less than one-fourth of a mile in width; its depth, as ascertained by sounding, is about 250 feet. Its color is deep green, and sometimes blue; occasioned, no doubt, by reflection from the sky. This channel being between perpendicular banks, from 170 to 370 feet high, is comparatively smooth for two miles, and then runs with amazing velocity to Lewiston; and, what is somewhat remarkable, while the river makes a constant descent, the banks have a gradual ascent for six miles; so that from the top of the bank to the water, at Brock's Monument, near Queenston, is 370 feet; and the heights there are 38 feet higher than Lake Erie, and 25 feet higher than the land at Schlosser. Whether the bed of the river here was once a natural ravine, or was formed by an earthquake, or worn away by the continued and violent action of the water falling upon the rocks — thus

---

Earliest Discoveries.

---

carrying the Falls back from Queenston to their present situation, it would be difficult to determine with certainty.

From descriptions of the Falls written nearly two hundred years ago, we learn that, though their *shape* has been somewhat altered since, they then occupied the place which they hold now, and exhibited the same wonderful phenomena. When and by whom among the whites they were first discovered, the writer has never yet been able to ascertain. Tradition ascribes their discovery to two missionaries, who were on an exploring tour to this part of the country, in an age anterior to any written account extant.

---

---

REMARKS OF HENNEPIN, TONTI, HONTAN, ETC.

Father Hennepin, who visited this place in December, 1678, thus describes the Falls:—"Betwixt the Lakes Ontario and Erie, 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 its parallel. 'Tis true, Italy and Suedeland boast of some such things, but we may well say that they are but sorry patterns, when compared with this of which

---

Earliest Discoveries.

---

we now speak. At the foot of this horrible precipice, we meet with the river Niagara, which is not above a quarter of a league broad, but is wonderfully deep in some places. It is so rapid above this descent, that it violently hurries down the wild beasts while endeavoring to pass it to feed on the other side, they not being able to withstand the force of its current, which inevitably casts them headlong above six hundred feet high.

“ This wonderful downfall is compounded of two great cross-streams of water, and two falls, with an isle sloping along the middle of it. The waters which fall from this horrible precipice, do foam and boil after the most hideous manner imaginable, making an outrageous noise, more terrible than that of thunder; for when the wind blows out of the south, their dismal roaring may be heard more than fifteen leagues off.

“ The river Niagara having thrown itself down this incredible precipice, continues its impetuous course for two leagues together, to the Great Rock above mentioned, with an inexpressible rapidity; but having passed that, its impetuosity relents, gliding along more gently for other two leagues, till it arrives at the Lake Ontario or Frontenac.

“ Any barque or greater vessel may pass from the Fort to the foot of this huge rock, above mentioned. This rock lies to the westward, and is cut off from the land



---

Earliest Discoveries.

---

by the river Niagara, about two leagues further down than the Great Fall; for which two leagues the people are obliged to transport their goods over land; but the way is very good, and the trees are but few, chiefly firs and oaks.

“From the great Fall unto this Rock, which is to the west of the river, the two brinks of it are so prodigious high, that it would make one tremble to look steadily upon the water, rolling along with a rapidity not to be imagined. Were it not for this vast cataract, which interrupts navigation, they might sail with barques or greater vessels more than four hundred and fifty leagues, crossing the Lake of Huron, and reaching even to the further end of the Lake Illinois; which two lakes we may easily say are little seas of fresh water.

“After we had rowed above an hundred and forty leagues upon the Lake Erie, by reason of the many windings of the bays and creeks which we were forced to coast, we passed by the great Fall of Niagara, and spent half a day in considering the wonders of that prodigious cascade.

“I could not conceive how it came to pass, that four great lakes, the least of which is four hundred leagues in compass, should empty themselves one into another, and then all centre and discharge themselves at this great Fall, and yet not drown good part of America. What is

---

Earliest Discoveries.

---

yet more surprising, the ground from the mouth of the Lake Erie, down to the great Fall, appears almost level and flat. It is scarce discernable that there is the least rise or fall for six leagues together. The more than ordinary swiftness of the stream, is the only thing which makes it to be observed. And that which makes it yet the stranger is, that for two leagues together, below the Fall, towards the Lake Ontario or Frontenac, the lands are as level as they are above it towards the Lake Erie.

“Our surprise was still greater when we observed there was no mountain within two good leagues of this cascade; and yet the vast quantity of water which is discharged by these four fresh seas, stops or centres here, and so falls above six hundred feet deep down into a gulf, which one cannot look upon without horror. Two other great outlets or falls of water, which are on the two sides of a small sloping island, which is in the midst, fall gently and without noise, and so glide away quietly enough; but when this prodigious quantity of water of which I speak, comes to fall, there is such a din and such a noise, more deafening than the loudest hunder.

“The rebounding of these waters is so great, that a sort of cloud arises, from the foam of it, which is seen hanging over this abyss, even at noon-day, when the sun is at its height. In the midst of summer, when the

---

Earliest Discoveries.

---

weather is hottest, they arise above the tallest firs, and other great trees, which grow on the sloping island, which makes the two falls of water that I spoke of.

“I wished an hundred times, that somebody had been with us, who could have described the wonders of this prodigious, frightful Fall, so as to give the reader a just and natural idea of it; such as might satisfy him, and cause in him an admiration of this prodigy of Nature, as great as it deserves. In the meantime accept the following draught, such as it is; in which, however, I have endeavored to give the curious reader as just an image of it as I can.

“We must call to mind what I observed of it in the beginning of my Voyage. From the mouth of the Lake Erie to the Great Fall, are reckoned six leagues, as I have said, which is the continuation of the great river of St. Lawrence, which arises out of the four lakes above mentioned. The river, you must needs think, is very rapid for these six leagues, because of the vast discharge of waters which fall into it out of the said lakes. The lands which lie on both sides of it to the east and west, are all level from the Lake Erie to the Great Fall. Its banks are not steep, on the contrary, the water is almost always level with the land. It is certain, that the ground towards the Fall is lower, by the more than ordi-

---

Earliest Discoveries.

---

nary swiftness of the stream; and yet it is not perceivable to the eye for the six leagues above.

“After it has run thus violently for six leagues, it meets with a small sloping island, about half a quarter of a league long and near three hundred feet broad, as well as one can guess by the eye; for it is impossible to come at it in a canoe of bark, the waters run with that force. The isle is full of cedar and fir; but the land of it lies no higher than that on the banks of the river. It seems to be all level, even as far as the two great cascades that make the main Fall.

“The two sides of the channels, which are made by the isle, and run on both sides of it, overflow almost the very surface of the earth of the said isle, as well as the land that lies on the banks of the river to the east and west, as it runs south and north. But we must observe, that at the end of the isle, on the side of the two Great Falls, there is a sloping rock which reaches as far as the great gulf; into which the said waters fall, and yet the rock is not at all wetted by the two cascades, which fall on both sides, because the two torrents which are made by the isle, throw themselves with a prodigious force, one towards the east and the other towards the west, from off the end of the isle, where the Great Fall of all is.

---

Earliest Discoveries.

---

“After these two torrents have thus run by the two sides of the isle, they cast their waters all of a sudden, down into the gulf by two great Falls; which waters are pushed so violently on by their own weight, and so sustained by the swiftness of the motion, that they do not wet the rock in the least. And here it is that they tumble down into an abyss above six hundred feet in depth.

“The waters that flow on the side of the east, do not throw themselves with that violence as those that fall on the west; the reason is, because the rock at the end of the island, rises something more on this side than it does on the west; and so the waters being supported by it somewhat longer than they are on the other side, are carried the smoother off: but on the west, the rock sloping more, the waters for want of a support, become the sooner broken, and fall with the greater precipitation. Another reason is, the lands that lie on the west are lower than those that lie on the east. We also observed that the waters of the Fall, that is to the west, made a sort of a square figure as they fell, which made a third cascade, less than the other two, which fell betwixt the south and north.

“And because there is a rising ground which lies before those two cascades to the north, the gulf is much larger there than to the east. Moreover, we must observe, that from the rising ground that lies over

---

Earliest Discoveries.

---

against the two last Falls, which are on the west of the main Fall, one may go down as far as the bottom of this terrible gulf. The author of this discovery was down there, the more narrowly to observe the fall of these prodigious cascades. From thence we could discover a spot of ground, which lay under the fall of water which is to the east, big enough for four coaches to drive abreast, without being wet; but because the ground which is to the east of the sloping rock, where the first fall empties itself into the gulf, is very steep and perpendicular, it is impossible for a man to get down on that side, into the place where the four coaches may go abreast, or to make his way through such a quantity of water as falls towards the gulf; so that it is very probable, that to this dry place it is that the rattle-snakes retire, by certain passages which they find under ground.

“From the end of this island it is that these two great Falls of waters, as also the third but now mentioued, throw themselves, after a most surprising manner, down into a dreadful gulf, six hundred feet and more in depth. I have already said, that the waters which discharge themselves at the cascade to the east, fall with lesser force; whereas those to the west tumble all at once, making two cascades, one moderate, the other very violent and strong, which at last make a kind of crotchet, or square figure, falling from south to north, and west to

---

Earliest Discoveries.

---

east. After this they rejoin the waters of the other cascade that falls to the east, and so tumble down altogether, though unequally, into the gulf, with all the violence that can be imagined from a Fall of six hundred feet, which makes the most frightful cascade in the world.

“After these waters have thus discharged themselves into this dreadful gulf, they begin to resume their course, and continue the great river of St. Lawrence for two leagues, as far as the three mountains which are on the east side of the river, and the great rock which is on the west, and lifts itself three fathoms above the water or thereabouts. The gulf into which these waters are discharged, continues itself thus two leagues together, between a chain of rocks, flowing with a prodigious torrent, which is bridled and kept in by the rocks that lie on each side of the river.

“Into this gulf it is, that these several cascades empty themselves, with a violence equal to the height from whence they fall, and the quantity of waters which they discharge; hence arise those deafening sounds, that dreadful roaring and bellowing of the waters, which drown the loudest thunder, as also the perpetual mists hang over the gulf, and rise above the tallest pines that are in the little isle so often mentioned. After a channel is again made at the bottom of this dreadful Fall, by the

---

Earliest Discoveries.

---

chain of rocks, and filled by that prodigious quantity of waters which are continually falling, the river of St. Lawrence resumes its course. But with that violence, and its waters beat against the rocks with so prodigious a force, that 'tis impossible to pass even in a canoe of bark, though in one of them, a man may venture safe enough upon the most rapid streams, by keeping close to the shore.

“ These rocks, as also the prodigious torrent, last for two leagues; that is from the great Fall, to the three mountains and great rock; but then it begins insensibly to abate, and the land to be again almost on a level with the water, and so it continues as far as the Lake Ontario or Frontenac.

“ When one stands near the Fall, and looks down into the dreadful gulf, one is seized with horror, and the head turns round, so that one cannot look long or steadfastly upon it. But this vast deluge beginning insensibly to abate, and even to fall to nothing about the three mountains, the waters of the river St. Lawrence begin to glide more gently along, and to be almost upon a level with the lands; so that it becomes navigable again as far as the Lake Frontenac, over which we pass to come to the new canal, which is made by the discharge of its waters. Then we enter again upon the river St. Law-



---

Earliest Discoveries.

---

rence, which not long after makes that which they call the Long Fall, an hundred leagues from Niagara.

“I have often heard talk of the cataracts of the Nile, which make the people deaf that live near them. I know not if the Iroquois, who formerly inhabited near this Fall, and lived upon beasts which from time to time are borne down by the violence of its torrent, withdrew themselves from its neighborhood, lest they should likewise become deaf, or out of the continual fear they were in of rattle-snakes, which are very common in this place during the great heats, and lodge in holes along the rocks as far as the mountains, which lie two leagues lower.”

The writer, after considerable inquiry and personal examination, is unable to determine what Father Hennepin means by the Three Mountains and the Great Rock; and he cannot believe that the Falls were ever six hundred feet high, as is repeatedly stated in the book. But Father Hennepin's description is, in the main, remarkably correct; and establishes the fact, that in 1678, there were three distinct falls as there are now, and that the fall on the Canada side exhibited then somewhat of the appearance of a horse-shoe. His description too of the islands, shores, &c., corresponds with their present appearance.

---

Earliest Discoveries.

---

In a work written by the Chevalier de Tonti,\* who was of the party with Father Hennepin, there is a description of the Falls and of Niagara River, corresponding with and corroborating Hennepin's, but with the addition of no important facts.

Baron La Hontan,† who visited this Cataract in May 1688, thus describes it: "As for the waterfall of Niagara, 'tis seven or eight hundred feet high, and a half a league broad. . Towards the middle of it we descry an island that leans towards the precipice, as if it were ready to fall. All the beasts that cross the water within half a quarter of a league above this unfortunate island, are sucked in by the force of the stream. And the beasts and fish that are thus killed by the prodigious Fall, serve for food to fifty Iroquese, who are settled above two leagues off, and take 'em out of the water with their canows. Between the surface of the water that shelves off prodigiously, and the foot of the precipice, three men

---

\* Entitled, "*Relations de la Louisiane et du Fleuve Mississippi*, etc., 1720, Amsterdam, Par Le Chevalier de Tonti, Gouverneur du Fort Saint Louis aux Illinois."

† His book is entitled, "*New Voyages to North America*, etc. Written in French, by the Baron La Hontan, Lord Lieutenant of the French Colony at Placentia, in New-Foundland, at that time in England. Done into English, the second edition—London, 1735."

---

Places of descent between the Falls and Lewiston.

---

may cross in abreast, without any other damage than a sprinkling of some few drops of water."

In the Philosophical Transactions, for 1722, there is a description of the Falls given by Monsieur Borassau, who had visited them at seven different times. He says that the Governor of Canada had, on the previous year, "ordered his own son with three other officers to survey Niagara, and take the exact height of the Cataract, which they accordingly did with a stone of half a hundred weight, and a large cod-line, and found it upon a perpendicular twenty-six fathoms," or one hundred and fifty-six feet.

These extracts may not be considered of much value except by those, who have a curiosity to learn something about the Falls, as they appeared in a former age.

There are at least five places between the Falls and Lewiston, where persons can descend from the top of the bank to the water, viz: from the end of Mr. Childs' and also Mr. Graves' farm, at the Whirlpool, at the Devil's Hole, and from the end of Mr. Colt's farm. There are also, on the Canada side, a number of places where visitors can descend safely to the water's edge. From these places under the bank, the river scenery appears transcendantly beautiful and sublime, and the rapids strike the beholder with more amazement, if

---

View from Brock's Monument.

---

possible, than the Falls themselves. Here may be found in reality,

“ A happy rural seat of various view ;  
 Flowers of all hue, ——— ———  
                                 umbrageous grotts and caves  
 Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine  
 Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps  
 Luxuriant.”

The top of the bank on either side, near Brock's Monument, affords a delightful and almost boundless prospect of the country and lake below. The unrivalled Niagara is traced to its outlet, guarded by two opposite Forts, and bearing sloops and steamboats into the glassy Lake; while the mighty expanse of plains and waters presents a scene so picturesque and enchanting, that the traveller leaves his position with great reluctance. From Lewiston to Lake Ontario, seven miles, the river is deep, smooth, and navigable for vessels of every description; and Lewiston, being the head of navigation, is the principal landing place for the American steamboats that run on Lake Ontario.

At the mouth of the river, on the American side, stand the villages of Youngstown and Fort Niagara; and on the Canada side, the villages of Niagara and Fort George.

The quantity of water constantly pouring over the Falls, and passing into the Lake, is computed from probable data, at 670,250 tons per minute; but Dr. Dwight

---

Quantity of Water passing over the Falls. . . Curiosities.

---

computes it, from the depth, width, and velocity of the current, at more than eighty-five millions of tons per hour; and by another calculation, supposing a swifter current, at 102,093,750 tons per hour. Darby computes it at 1,672,704,000 cubic feet per hour. These results are somewhat different, but the first is probably nearest the truth. Dr. Dwight supposes in one calculation a current of five, and in the other, of six miles per hour, the least of which is undoubtedly too much.

---

---

OBJECTS OF SPECIAL INTEREST,  
CURIOSITIES, ETC.

A number of these, as the islands, the bridges, the stair-cases, the burning spring, Brock's Monument, the Welland Canal, &c., have already been described. One mile above the Falls on the American side, is the site of old Fort Schlosser; a place somewhat distinguished in the early history of this region, and commanding a most beautiful prospect of the river and rapids, of Grand and Navy Islands, and of the village of Chippewa on the opposite shore. Nothing remains of the Fort, except the entrenchments, and a few rods of pavement within.

---

Mineral Spring.

---

A stockade was built here in the year 1672. Before the construction of the Erie Canal, all the business between the Lakes was interchanged by means of a land carriage from this place to Lewiston. Half a mile below the Falls under the bank are Catlin's Caves, a visit to which no traveller will be likely to regret. Vast quantities of calcareous tufa or petrified moss are found here in all stages of its petrifying process. On the other side, nearly opposite, is Bender's Cave, a place thought by some, to be worthy of a special visit.

---

---

MINERAL SPRING.

Two miles below the Falls, on the American side, is a Mineral Spring, containing sulphuric and muriatic acids, lime and magnesia; and by the use of its waters many important cures have been effected. For scrofulous, rheumatic, and cutaneous complaints, this spring supplies an almost sovereign remedy. From the stage road near the spring, travellers have a most delightful view of the whole Falls two miles distant; and if they see the Falls from this place first, as they generally do in coming up from Lewiston, the impression here made will probably

---

The Whirlpool.

---

never be effaced. Capt. Hall remarks respecting this place, "I felt at the moment quite sure that no subsequent examination, whether near or remote, could ever remove, or even materially weaken the impression left by this first view."

---

## WHIRLPOOL.

One mile farther down leads to a tremendous whirlpool, resembling very much, in its appearance and gyrations, the celebrated Mælstrom on the coast of Norway. Logs and trees are sometimes whirled around for days together in its outer circles, while in the centre they are drawn down perpendicularly with great force, are soon shot out again at the distance of many rods, and occasionally thrust into the channel to pass down the river. The river here makes nearly a right angle, which occasions the whirlpool,—is narrower than at any other place,—not more than thirty rods in width,—and the current runs with such amazing velocity as to rise up in the middle ten feet above the sides. This has been ascertained by actual measurement.

“ Resistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes,—  
There, gathering triple force, rapid and deep,—  
It boils, and wheels, and foams, and thunders through.”

---

The Whirlpool.

---

There is a path leading down the bank to the whirlpool on both sides, and, though somewhat difficult to descend and ascend, it is accomplished almost every day on the American side, by gentlemen, and often by ladies.

A brisk and very refreshing breeze is felt there during the hottest and stillest days of summer; and no place is better fitted to elevate and expand the mind. The whirlpool is a phenomenon of great interest as seen even from the top of the bank, especially if a small telescope be used; but to have any adequate idea of its power and motion, visitors ought to descend to the water's edge, and walk some distance up the river. The rapids here are much more powerful and terrific than they are above the Falls, and appear like a flood of watery brilliants rushing along.

Having written thus far, the writer laid down his pen, and started off on a fresh visit to the whirlpool; and now, having spent half a day there in mute astonishment and admiration, and walked more than a mile by the river's edge, he is utterly at a loss what language to use in describing it. Of the above tame and meagre description he is ashamed; and yet he can think of no language, no imagery, no comparison, that will not fall immeasurably short of conveying a just idea of the scene. He can only say, soberly and earnestly, that no gentleman ought hereafter to acknowledge that he had seen the Falls of



---

Perilous Incident.

---

Niagara, unless he could also say, he had seen the Whirlpool from the water's edge. A staircase down the bank would be a great accommodation to visitors, and it is to be hoped that one ere long will be constructed. Water for hydraulic purposes may easily be brought into use here to an almost unlimited extent.

About the year 1812, an incident occurred here, perhaps worth recording. A party of men were employed in cutting cedar logs near the river above the whirlpool, with a view to get them floated to Lewiston. One man stepping upon some of them that were rafted, was imperceptibly, or perhaps through carelessness, drawn out into the current, and swiftly carried into the whirlpool. He clung to a log and was carried round and round in the capacious basin for hours, expecting every moment to be crushed among the logs or thrust into the vortex, while his companions on shore could afford him no relief. At length, some of them ascended the bank, went to Queens-ton, four miles, and procured a boat to be drawn up by a team. This was let down the bank, and many people assembled with ropes, poles, &c., to render assistance. After the boat had been well secured, and some men had stepped in intending to push out into the whirlpool, the man upon the log, still whirling in imminent peril of his life, was, by some action of the water, sent out directly

---

Devil's Hole.

---

to the shore, and finally saved, without receiving any aid from others.

This place has been consecrated by some fabulous tales of wonder and of peril which it is not necessary here to repeat.

---

---

DEVIL'S HOLE.

A mile below the whirlpool is a place on the American side, called the "Devil's Hole," embracing about two acres cut out laterally and perpendicularly in the rock by the side of the river, and about one hundred and fifty feet deep. This name was probably given from that of the personage more frequently invoked in this region, formerly, than any other. How this hole was thus made it is difficult to conjecture. Visitors look into it with silent, inexpressible amazement. An angle of this hole or gulf comes within a few feet of the stage road, affording travellers an opportunity, without alighting, of looking into the yawning abyss. But they ought to alight and pass to the farther side of the flat projecting rock, where they will feel themselves richly repaid for their trouble. The scenery there presented is singularly captivating and sublime.

---

Devil's Hole.

---

This place is distinguished by an incident that occurred about the year 1759. A company of British soldiers, pursued by the French and Indians, were driven off this rock at the point of the bayonet. All, save one, instantly perished upon the rocks two hundred feet beneath them. This one fell into the crotch of a tree, and succeeded afterwards in ascending the bank and making his escape.

A man by the name of Steadman, who lived at Fort Schlosser, was among this company of British, but made his escape on horse-back just before coming to the bank, though many balls whizzed about him in his flight.—The Indians afterwards imagined him to be impenetrable and invincible, became very friendly, and ultimately, in consideration of some services he rendered them, gave him all the land included between Niagara River and a straight line drawn from Gill Creek above Fort Schlosser to the Devil's Hole, embracing about 5000 acres. The heirs of Steadman, so late as the year 1823, instituted and carried on a long and expensive law-suit against the State of New-York, to recover this land. But they could show no title, and the suit resulted in favor of the State and the present occupants.

---

Tuscarora Indians.

---

## TUSCARORA INDIANS.

Eight miles below the Falls and three miles back from the river, is the Reservation of the Tuscarora Indians, containing two miles in width by four in length, (about 5000 acres) of very excellent land. They consist of about three hundred souls, have a Presbyterian Church, of 50 members, a resident clergyman, and a school teacher, and a Temperance Society of more than one hundred members. They are under the care of the American Board for Foreign Missions. Their village is delightfully situated, on a high bank commanding an extensive prospect of the surrounding country, and of Lake Ontario. But the greater part of the Indians live in a settlement a mile and a half from the village, and are not generally seen by visitors.

These Indians came from North Carolina about the year 1712, and joined the confederacy of the Five Nations, themselves making the Sixth. They formerly held a very valuable interest in land in North Carolina, but have recently sold it and divided the proceeds equally

---

Tuscarora Indians.

---

among themselves. Many of them are in very prosperous circumstances; in the year 1834, one man grewed and gathered fifty acres of wheat.

Visitors at the Falls have been in the habit of going, sometimes in crowds, to this village on the Sabbath; but the Indians with their Missionary, have often expressed their desire that visitors would not interrupt them at that time. It is his impression, that such kind of visits and their accompaniments, and made too by such multitudes, have such an influence upon the Indians, as completely to counteract his efforts, for the time being, in their behalf; and he has therefore adopted the practice, on such occasions, of directing his preaching entirely to the visitors. The Indians complain of being interrupted, crowded, and made a gazing stock, and of having a constant example of Sabbath-breaking set before them and their children; and that, too, by those from whom they are taught to expect better things.

---

Battles.

---

## B A T T L E S .

In the immediate vicinity of the Falls many incidents have occurred to impart an additional interest. This was the scene of a number of battles fought during the last war with Great Britain ; those at Fort Erie, Chippewa, and Lundy's Lane, were among the most bloody and hard-fought, that are recorded in history. In the battle near Fort Erie there was, what has generally been considered, a Military Chef d'œuvre ; the Americans, to the number of 1000 regulars and 1000 of the militia, made a sortie and took the British works about 500 yards from their line, and returned in triumph. The battles in this region occurred in the following order ; viz : at Queens-  
ton, October 13, 1812 ; at York, April 27, 1813 ; at Fort George, May 27, do ; at Stoney Creek, June 5, do ; at Beaver Dams, June 24, do ; Naval Battle on Lake Erie, September 10, do ; the villages of Niagara Falls, Lewiston, and Youngstown, burnt December 19, do ; Buffalo and Black Rock burnt December 31, do ; Fort Erie taken July 3, 1814 ; battle of Chippewa, July 6, do ; at Bridgewater or Lundy's Lane, July 25, do ; at Fort Erie, August 15, and September 17, 1814. The burning of villages

---

Bridges.

---

and plunder of property on the American side, are still remembered, and the circumstances detailed with thrilling interest, by many of the inhabitants.

---

## B R I D G E S .

In the year 1817, a bridge was constructed from the shore across the rapids to the head of Goat Island, but was swept away by the ice the ensuing spring. The present bridge was constructed in 1818, and is forty-four rods in length, exclusive of Bath Island. This bridge, though crossing the foaming rapids only sixty-four rods above the Falls, over which visitors are at first disposed to walk lightly and with quickened pace, is perfectly safe for all kinds of teams and carriages, and seems destined to stand a great length of time. Multitudes inquire, with wonder and eager curiosity, how it could have been constructed in this imminently dangerous place.

They shall be informed ; and they will see that, like a thousand other difficult things, it was easily accomplished, when the *how* was ascertained. Two very long timbers were thrust out from the shore on an abutment, having the forward ends elevated a little above the rapids, and the others firmly secured upon the bank; these were

---

Minerals, &c.

---

then covered with plank for a temporary bridge. At the extremity of this bridge, very large stones were let down into the river, around which timbers were sunk, locked together so as to form a frame, which was afterwards filled with stone. To this, constituting the first pier, a firm bridge was then constructed, and the temporary bridge shoved forward so as to build a second pier like the first, and so on, till the whole was completed. The honor of projecting and constructing this bridge belongs jointly and equally to the proprietors, the Honorable Augustus and General Peter B. Porter.

Till the year 1817, there was no way of descending or ascending the bank below the Falls, except by a ladder about one hundred feet in length ; since then, a safe and convenient flight of stairs has been built, by which visitors can have an easy descent to the ferry, and an opportunity to pass a considerable distance behind the magnificent sheet of water. Perhaps there is no place where the height of the fall is so impressively realized as here.

---

---

MINERALS, ETC.

At a number of shops near the Falls, as Mr. Jacobs' and Mr. Hooker's on the American side, and Mr. Shul-



---

Incidents.

---

tersburgh's, Mr. Barnett's and Mr. Starkey's on the Canada side, may be had rich specimens of the mineral, fossil, vegetable, and animal productions of the vicinity ; and a variety of elegant articles of Indian manufacture, such as ornamented moccasins, work-bags and baskets, belts, bracelets, pin-cushions, &c. Among the mineralogical specimens kept for sale in great abundance, are, transparent crystalized selenites ; snow-white gypsum ; calcareous, bitter, dog-tooth, and fluor spar ; crystalized quartz ; petrifications ; favasites and other fossils ; shells, &c. There are also some noble specimens of bald and grey Eagles, and other animals, with which this region abounds.

---

---

INCIDENTS.

Men have occasionally been drawn into the rapids with their boats, and carried over the Falls ; but not a vestige of them or their boats has scarcely ever been found. The great depth of the water below, and the milky foam and tumultuous agitation occasioned by the eddies, whirlpools, and counter currents, make it next to impossible for any thing once sunk to rise again, until carried so far down the stream as to make fruitless any research.

---

Incidents.

---

In the year 1820, two men, in a state of intoxication, fell asleep in their scow which was fastened at the mouth of Chippewa Creek; while there it broke away, and they awoke finding themselves beyond the reach of hope, dashing over the rapids.

In the year 1822, two others, engaged in removing some furniture from Grand Island, were by some carelessness drawn into the rapids, and hurried over the cataract.

In 1825, two more, in attempting on the Sabbath to smuggle some whiskey across to Chippewa, were hurried into the rapids and shared a similar fate. A story has frequently been told of an Indian, who fell asleep in his canoe some miles above, and awoke in the midst of the rapids; perceiving that all effort to escape would be vain, he turned his bottle of whiskey down his throat, and composedly awaited the awful plunge. This story the writer believes to be fabulous, as he has never been able to find any foundation for it, except that it is a stereotype Indian story, told as having happened at all the different Falls in the country.

In September 1827, notice having been given in the newspapers that the Michigan, a large vessel that had run on Lake Erie, would be sent over the Falls, thirty thousand people, it was supposed, assembled to witness the novel spectacle. On board of this vessel were put two

---

Vessels driven over the Falls.

---

bears, a buffalo, two rackoons, a dog, and a goose ; the bears leaped off in the midst of the rapids, and miraculously almost, finally reached the shore in safety. The others went over and perished. The Michigan before she reached the Falls, having been considerably broken in the rapids, sunk to a level with the surface, and went over near the centre of the horse-shoe fall. The distance from deck to keel was sixteen feet ; and as she did not appear to touch the bottom for eighty rods before she went over, the conclusion is, that the water as it passes over the precipice there must be at least twenty feet deep.

In October 1829, another vessel, the Superior, was advertised to be sent over, which drew together about fifteen thousand people. This vessel lodged in the rapids, and remained a number of weeks, and finally passed over the Falls in the night.

In August 1828, a small sloop, abandoned by the men through fright near the mouth of Chippewa Creek, was blown with all her sails up, so far across the river as to come down on the American side of Goat Island ; but was broken to a perfect wreck in the rapids, so as to pass under the bridge and over the Falls.

In July 1832, a canal-boat was blown over from Chippewa, and lodged in the rapids a short distance above the bridge. Some men and one woman were on board, and

---

Fall of Table Rock.

---

were saved at most imminent peril, and the boat was finally secured and drawn ashore.

The rock at the Falls is hard limestone to the depth of about seventy feet, below which it is loose crumbling shale, which is constantly wearing away and leaving a projection of the limestone.

A mass of Table Rock, 160 feet in length and from 30 to 40 feet in width, fell off in July 1818, with a tremendous crash. On the 9th of December 1828, three immense portions broke from the horse-shoe fall, causing a shock like an earthquake. Another large portion fell in the summer of 1829, and the noise it occasioned was heard several miles. And yet, judging from the published accounts of the Falls which reach back nearly two hundred years, there has been but very little recession of the Falls within that period.

In October 1829, Sam Patch jumped twice, in the presence of thousands of spectators, from the top of a ladder ninety-seven feet high into the eddy below the Falls. This ladder was erected directly below the Biddle staircase. It has been stated in the public prints, that he jumped 116 feet, 125 feet, &c. ; but those who made and erected the ladder probably knew best what was its height. Poor Sam afterwards lost his life by jumping from the Falls of Genesee River at Rochester.

---

The Hermit of Niagara Falls.

---

May 19, 1835, two men in attempting to pass down the river from Tonewanta to Chippewa in a scow, were driven by the wind into the rapids, and one of them went over the Falls ; the other, after leaping from the scow, reached a shoal where he could stand in the water with his head out. In this situation he was seen from the American shore ; and two men, at the imminent hazard of their lives, went out in a boat, and succeeded in saving him, and returning safely to shore.

Again June 10, 1835, two men in passing from Schlosser to Chippewa in a skiff, were drawn into the rapids and hurried to destruction. While in the rapids, they were seen for a short time by persons on the Pavilion.—Some days afterwards, their bodies were found in an eddy a mile below the Falls, one of which was deprived of a leg and an arm.

---

THE HERMIT OF NIAGARA FALLS.

June 10, 1831, the " Hermit " was drowned while bathing in the river below the Falls. The following account of this singular being is abridged and condensed from one drawn up and published soon after his death.

---

The Hermit of Niagara Falls.

---

“A young Englishman, named Francis Abbott, of respectable connexions, either through misfortune or a morbid state of mind, which made him desire seclusion, took up his residence on Goat Island, and in the neighborhood of the Falls, for two years ; and became so fascinated with the solitude, and infatuated with the scenery, that no inducement could divert his thoughts, or draw him from the spot, where he acquired the name of the “Hermit of Niagara Falls.”

He arrived on foot in June, 1829, dressed in a loose gown or cloak of a chocolate color, carrying under his arm a roll of blankets, a flute, a portfolio, and a large book ; which constituted the whole of his baggage. He took up his abode, in the first instance, in the small inn of Ebenezer Kelly, on the American side, stipulating that the room he occupied should be exclusively his own, and that certain parts of his cooking only should be done by his host. He then repaired to the Library, where he gave his name, and borrowed some books and music books, and purchased a violin ; the following day he again visited the Library, expatiated largely, with great ease and ability, on the beautiful scenery of the Falls, and declared his intention of remaining at least a week ; for “a traveller might as well,” he said, “examine in detail the various museums and curiosities of Paris, as become acquainted with the splendid scenery of Niagara

---

The Hermit of Niagara Falls.

---

in the same space of time." On a subsequent visit he declared his intention of staying at least a month, perhaps six. Shortly after, he determined on fixing his abode on Goat Island, and was desirous of erecting a hut, in which he might live quite secluded; the proprietor of the Island not thinking proper to grant this request, he occupied a small room in the only house, being occasionally furnished with bread and milk by the family, but more generally providing and always cooking his own food. During the second winter of his seclusion, the family removed, and to the few persons with whom he held communion, he expressed great satisfaction at being able to live alone.

For some time he enjoyed this seclusion; but another family having entered the house, he quitted the Island, and built himself a small cottage on the main shore, about thirty rods below the great Fall. On the 10th of June, 1831, he was seen to bathe twice, and was observed by the ferryman to enter the water a third time about two o'clock in the afternoon; his clothes remaining some hours where he had deposited them, an alarm was created, and an ineffectual search was made for him. On the 21st, his body was taken out of the river at Fort Niagara, and was decently interred in the burial ground near the Falls. When his cottage was examined, his dog was found guarding the door, and was with difficulty

---

The Hermit of Niagara Falls.

---

removed; his cat occupied his bed; his guitar, violin, flutes, music books, and portfolio, were scattered around in confusion; but not a single written paper of any kind was found (although he was known to compose much) to throw the least light on this extraordinary character. He was a person of highly cultivated mind and manners, a master of languages, deeply read in the arts and sciences, and performed on various musical instruments with great taste; his drawings were also very spirited. He had travelled over Europe and many parts of the East, and possessed great colloquial powers when inclined to be sociable; but at times he would desire not to be spoken to, and communicated his wishes on a slate; sometimes for three or four months together he would go unshaved, with no covering on his head, and his body enveloped in a blanket; shunning all, and seeking the deepest solitude. His age was not more than twenty-eight, his person well made, and his features handsome.

Many spots on Goat Island are consecrated to his memory: at the upper end he established his walk, which became hard trod and well beaten; between the Island and Moss Island was his favorite retreat for bathing; here he resorted at all seasons of the year, even in the coldest weather, when ice was on the river; on the bridge to the Terrapin Rocks, it was his daily practice to walk for hours, from one extremity to the



---

Village of Niagara Falls.

---

other, with a quick pace ; sometimes he would let himself down at the end of the projecting timber, and hang under it by his hands and feet over the terrific precipice, for fifteen minutes at a time, and in the wildest hours of the night he was often found walking in the most dangerous places near the Falls."

It is now ascertained that this Abbott was the son of the late John Abbott, (of Plymouth, England,) a member of the Society of Friends. His guitar, that beguiled so many of his solitary hours, and soothed him in his sorrows, is still preserved as a curiosity, and may be seen at Mr. Hooker's shop in the village of Niagara Falls.

"Hush'd is the lyre—the hand that swept  
The low and pensive wires,  
Robb'd of its cunning, from the task retires.  
Yes—it is still—the lyre is still;  
The spirit which its slumbers broke,  
Hath pass'd away,—and that weak hand that woke  
Its forest melodies, hath lost its skill."

---

## VILLAGE OF NIAGARA FALLS.

The country in the immediate vicinity of the Falls on both sides of the river, presents many powerful attractions for a permanent residence. For salubrity of air

---

Village of Niagara Falls.

---

and healthfulness of climate, it yields to no spot in the United States. Here,

“Nature hath  
The very soul of music in her looks,  
The sunshine and the shade of poetry.”

The latitude here is 43 degrees 6 minutes North, and the longitude 2 degrees 6 minutes West from Washington. The winters are generally much milder than in New England, owing, as supposed, to the action of the two neighboring Lakes, that lie on either side.

In a pamphlet published in London in the year 1834, written by Robert Burford, Esq. who spent the summer and autumn of 1832, in taking a panoramic view of the Falls, it is stated that this place is “without all question, the most healthful of any on the continent of North America. The heat of summer can there be borne with pleasure, while at the same time, the annoyance of musquitoes and other insects is unknown. Various are the conjectures whence arises the remarkable salubrity of this region ; but the most natural is, that the agitation of the surrounding air produced by the tremendous Falls, combines with the elevation and dryness of the soil, and absence of all swamps, to produce this happy result.”

This accords with Armstrong’s description in his poem on health :

---

Village of Niagara Falls.

---

" The murmuring rivulet, and the hoarser strain  
Of waters rushing o'er the slippery rocks,  
Will nightly lull you to ambrosial rest,  
To please the fancy is no trifling good,  
Where health is studied; for whatever moves  
The mind with calm delight, promotes the just  
And natural movements of th' harmonious frame.  
Besides, the sportive brook for ever shakes  
The trembling air, that floats from hill to hill,  
From vale to mountain, with incessant change  
Of purest element, refreshing still  
Your airy seat."

In the summer of 1832, when the cholera raged in all the villages around, as Buffalo, Lockport, Lewiston, &c. not a single case occurred here. Again, when this disease visited many villages in the vicinity in the summer of 1834, this place was wholly exempt.

The village of Niagara Falls on the American side, formerly called Manchester, contains about 50 families. For ten years past the population here has been about stationary, while the business has been diminished.

There are two spacious Hotels in the village, the Eagle and the Cataract, which will accommodate one hundred permanent guests. The latter is kept by General P. WHITNEY, long and favorably known here in this business. The Eagle Hotel has recently been purchased by the celebrated BENJAMIN RATHBUN, Esq. of Buffalo, and it is expected that he will soon erect on the premises a new and splendid Hotel commensurate with the wants of

---

Village of Niagara Falls.

---

the travelling public. The village also contains a Presbyterian Church, and a "Union House," for the use of all other denominations when they choose to occupy it. It has a Paper Mill, a Flouring Mill, and a few Mechanic's Shops; and there is an opportunity of using water here to a great extent for hydraulic purposes.

Canal boats and sloops come from the Erie Canal and the Lake to Porter's Store-house, a short distance above the Falls; and charters have recently been granted for two Rail-Roads to this place, — one from Lockport, and the other from Buffalo; — when these go into operation, the business of this place will probably be somewhat increased. Stage coaches now run from the Falls in all directions, and the mail passes regularly twice every day. The roads from Buffalo, Lewiston, and Lockport are now very good, equal to any in this region, and afford to travellers many delightful views of the river, the Falls, and the rapids; — especially, as the road from Buffalo to Lewiston passes very near the bank of the river the whole distance. The steamboat Victory also runs daily from Buffalo to the landing two miles above the Falls, and thence across to Chippewa, stopping each way at White Haven on Grand Island, and returns daily by the same route. This is a perfectly safe and very pleasant route to the Falls. Another steamboat also runs daily from Buffalo directly to Chippewa. At Lewiston, seven miles

---

Canals. . . Roads. . . Steam-Boats.

---

below, steamboats from Lake Ontario are daily bringing and receiving passengers. Near Lewiston commences the celebrated Ridge Road, — formerly, without doubt, a sand bar on the margin of Lake Ontario, — and runs east to Rochester and thence nearly to Oswego, a distance of about 140 miles. It runs parallel with the Lake, from six to ten miles distant, is from forty to eighty yards wide, thirty feet higher than the contiguous land, and one hundred and thirty-nine feet higher than the Lake. It is an excellent road at all seasons of the year.

---

Number of Visitors.

---

## NUMBER OF VISITERS.

The number of visitors at the Falls has of late years been from twelve to fifteen thousand annually, and the number is every year increasing. On the occasion of sending the Michigan over the Falls, some years since, from thirty to fifty thousand persons were supposed to be here together, and when the Superior was sent over, fifteen thousand. The fashionable, the opulent, and the learned, congregate here from the principal cities of the country, from the Southern and Western States, South America, the West Indies, the Canadas, all parts of Europe, and indeed from all countries.

On inquiry at one of the hotels on an ordinary occasion in the summer, it was ascertained that there were three foreign Consuls, a Swiss Colonel, two of Bonaparte's Legion of Honor ; Hamburg, Madrass, Ceylon, Sidney, (N. S. Wales,) British, Spanish, and Haytien merchants, a family from Constantinople, gentlemen of various professions from Berlin, Moscow, Madrid, Maderia, and Malta ; five from Ireland, three from Scot-

---

 Number of Visitors. . . Niagara.
 

---

land, four from England, and a multitude from all parts of the United States. Exiled monarchs, foreign ambassadors, whigs, tories, radicals, royalists, naval and military officers, governors, judges, lawyers, senators, &c. with a good proportion of female worthies, assemble here to view these indescribable works of God. One of these last, during a visit here in the summer of 1834, penned the following beautiful lines, which are worthy of being preserved as a memorial of female worth and genius.

## N I A G A R A .

Flow on forever, in thy glorious robe  
 Of terror and of beauty ! God hath set  
 His rainbow on thy forehead, and the cloud  
 Mantles around thy feet. And he doth give  
 The voice of thunder power to speak of Him  
 Eternally — bidding the lip of man  
 Keep silence, and upon thy rocky altar pour  
 Incense of awe-struck praise.

And who can dare  
 To lift the insect trump of earthly Hope,  
 Or Love, or Sorrow, — 'mid the peal sublime  
 Of thy tremendous hymn ? — E'en Ocean shrinks  
 Back from thy brotherhood, and his wild waves  
 Retire abashed. — For he doth sometimes seem  
 To sleep like a spent laborer, and recall  
 His wearied billows from their vexing play,  
 And lull them in a cradle calm : — but thou,  
 With everlasting, undecaying tide,  
 Dost rest not, night or day.

The morning stars,  
 When first they sang o'er young Creation's birth,

## Niagara.

Heard thy deep anthem — and those wrecking fires  
 That wait th' Archangel's signal to dissolve  
 The solid Earth, shall find Jehovah's name  
 Graven, as with a thousand diamond spears,  
 On thine unfathomed page. Each leafy bough,  
 That lifts itself within thy proud domain,  
 Doth gather greenness from thy living spray,  
 And tremble at the baptism. Lo! yon birds  
 Do venture boldly near, bathing their wing  
 Amid thy foam and mist. — 'Tis meet for them  
 To touch thy garment's hem, — or lightly stir  
 The snowy leaflets of thy vapor wreath, —  
 Who sport unharmed upon the fleecy cloud,  
 And listen at the echoing gate of Heaven,  
 Without reproof. But, as for us, — it seems  
 Scarce lawful with our broken tones to speak  
 Familiarly of thee. Methinks, to tint  
 Thy glorious features with our pencil's point,  
 Or woo thee to the tablet of a song,  
 Were profanation.

Thou dost make the soul  
 A wandering witness of thy majesty;  
 And while it rushes with delirious joy  
 To tread thy vestibule, dost chain its step,  
 And check its rapture, with the humbling view  
 Of its own nothingness — bidding it stand  
 In the dread presence of th' Invisible,  
 As if to answer to its God through thee,

Hartford, Conn.

L. H. S.

This will no doubt hereafter become a place of great  
 resort for invalids, as the health of such is generally  
 observed to improve immediately on coming here. If any  
 place in the country is peculiarly propitious for the reco-  
 very and preservation of health, this is the place.



---

Visitors. . . Parties, &c.

---

During the winter months, though there are many visitors, they are generally such as are passing through the region on business, and stay only a short time. Frequently, however, parties from Buffalo, Lockport, Rochester, Canandaigua, and other places, visit the Falls by sleighing; and after spending a day or two, go away enraptured with the scene.

Many visitors err greatly in their calculations in regard to the time which they ought to spend here. They come hundreds and sometimes thousands of miles to view the Falls, and then hurry away before they have had time to get any very full or distinct impression of the scene, or to visit one-fifth of the interesting points, from which the Falls and rapids ought to be viewed. The object of the visit is thus in a great measure lost. Visitors ought to make their calculations, in the summer especially, to spend at least a week, and then they will begin to feel some regret at leaving. A distinct and lasting impression can be obtained only by looking at single portions and objects at a time, and examining these frequently and from different positions.

“The sight of nature in her magnificence, or in her beauty, or in her terror, has at all times an overpowering interest, which even habit cannot greatly weaken;” and let none have any apprehensions that the scenes here will lose their interest by familiarity.

---

Places of resort in the vicinity of the Falls.

---

Persons who spend some time at the Falls, will find several places in the vicinity, on both sides of the river, worthy of a special visit. Eleven miles south, on the American side, is the village of Tonawanda, from which there is a ferry across to White Haven on Grand Island; proceeding eleven miles further, you pass through Black Rock to Buffalo and Lake Erie. Going north from the Falls two miles, you find the Mineral Spring; one mile further the Whirlpool; half a mile further, the Devil's Hole; eight miles from the Falls the village of the Tuscarora Indians; seven miles, Lewiston village, where the steam-boats from Lake Ontario receive passengers; seven miles below Lewiston is the village of Youngstown, and one mile further Fort Niagara standing on the border of the Lake.

From the Falls on the Canada side, one mile south, brings you to the burning spring: two and a half miles to Chippewa battle ground and village; twenty miles through the village of Waterloo to Fort Erie near Lake Erie. From the Falls north, one mile brings you to Lundy's Lane, where the battle of Bridgewater was fought; three and a half miles to the whirlpool; six and a half to Queenston Heights and Brock's Monument; seven miles to Queenston village, opposite Lewiston; and fourteen miles to the village of Niagara and Fort George. Eight miles from the Falls west, is the "Deep Cut," so

---

Routes and Charges.

---

called, of the Welland Canal, a place much visited in the summer. To carry you to any or all of these places, carriages can always be had at a few moments' notice on either side of the river.

---

## ROUTES AND CHARGES.

Every traveller may be presumed to know his way to the Falls, and to be capable of choosing his mode of conveyance. The general routes are, — from New England, New-York, or the southern cities, — by steamboat, and stage, or by the Erie Canal. From Montreal, Kingston, Toronto, Sackets' Harbor, or Oswego, — by steamboat through Lake Ontario to Niagara or Lewiston; on which Lake, about twenty steamboats are in operation. From the Southern and Western States, — by steamboat through Lake Erie, where you will find more than thirty in operation. Persons wishing to go from New-Orleans, or any of the Western States to New-York or New England, and vice versa, will find this route much the pleasantest and the cheapest. The general charges are, from New York to Albany, \$2,00; from Albany to Niagara

---

 Routes . . . Steamboat and Stage Fare.
 

---

Falls by packet-boat on the canal, \$13,00 ; from Niagara Falls to Buffalo, \$1,00 ; from Buffalo to Cleveland, cabin passage, \$6,00 ; from Buffalo to Detroit, \$8,00 ; to Mackinaw and Saute St. Maria, \$12,00 ; and to Chicago, Green Bay, and St. Josephs, \$20,00 ; from Cleveland to Pittsburgh, \$6,00 ; from Cleveland or Sandusky to Cincinnati, \$12,00 ; from Pittsburgh to Wheeling, \$3,00 ; thence to Cincinnati by the river, \$10,00, or by stage, \$14,00 ; from Cincinnati to Louisville, \$4,00 ; to New-Orleans, \$25,00 ; return the same ; from Cincinnati to St. Louis, \$16,00 ; from St. Louis to New-Orleans, \$25,00. These charges will doubtless be reduced, as the facilities for travelling are increased. The charges at the best hotels are generally, 50 cents for dinner ; 37½ cents for breakfast or tea ; and 25 cents for lodging. When an individual spends a number of days at a hotel, the charges are very much less. Charges on Lake Ontario ; — from Lewiston to Toronto, \$2,00 ; do. to Rochester, \$3,00 ; do. to Kingston, \$7,00 ; do. to Oswego and Sackets Harbor, \$6,00 ; do. to Ogdensburgh and Prescott, \$8,00 ; do. to Montreal, \$15,00 ; do. to Quebec, \$20,00. Fare on the canal ; — in the packets, four cents per mile including board ; in the line-boats, two and a half cents per mile including board. Fare in stage coaches, average about \$1,00 per twenty miles.

---

Reed and Matheson's Description of the Falls.

---

☞ Don't suffer yourself to be imposed upon, turned from your route, and subjected to unnecessary expense and trouble, by interested boat and stage runners and agents. Much complaint is made, and that justly, about these things of frequent occurrence. ☞

---

---

APPENDIX.

The following graphic description of Niagara Falls, is extracted from a work, entitled "A Narrative of a Visit to the American Churches," by Andrew Reed, D. D. and James Matheson, D. D.

"At length we saw the spray rising through the trees, and settling like a white cloud over them; and then we heard the voice of the mighty waters — a voice all its own, and worthy of itself. Have you never felt a trembling backwardness to look on what you have intensely desired to see? If not, you will hardly understand my feeling. While all were now searching for some glance of the object itself, I was disposed to turn aside, lest it should surprise me. This, no doubt, was partly caused by the remark I had so often heard, that the first view disappoints you. I concluded, that this arose from the first view not being a fair one, and I was determined to do justice to the object of my reverence. In fulfilling this purpose, I reached the Pavilion without seeing any

---

Reed and Matheson's Description of the Falls.

---

thing ; disposed of my affairs there, and hastened down towards the Falls ; and found myself actually on the Table Rock to receive my first impressions.

“ Let any one pursue the same course, and he will not talk of first impressions disappointing him ; or if he should, then he ought to go twenty miles another way. Niagara was not made for him.

“ From the Table Rock I descended to the base. There I clambered out on the broken rocks, and sat — I know not how long. The day was the least favourable of any we had. The atmosphere was heavy ; the foam hung about the object and concealed one half of it ; and the wind blew from the opposite side, and brought the spray upon you, so as to wet you exceedingly. The use of cloak and umbrella were troublesome ; you could not wholly forget your person, and think only of one thing. However, had I not seen it in this state of the atmosphere, I should have wanted some views which now occupy my imagination. The whole is exceedingly solemn when nature frowns ; and when much is hidden, while yet the eye has not marked the outline, there is a mysteriousness spread over the object which suits your conception of its greatness, and in which the imagination loves to luxuriate. I can scarcely define to you my impressions on this first day ; I can scarcely define them to myself. I was certainly not disappointed ; but I was confounded. I felt as though I had received a shock, and required time to right myself again.

“ I returned to the Pavilion, which is about half a mile from the Falls, and retired to my chamber, which overlooked them. I mused on what I had seen, and was still

---

Reed and Matheson's Description of the Falls.

---

confounded. I sought rest that I might be fresh for the morrow ; but rest did not come so freely. The continuous deep sounds of the waters would have sung me to sleep, but the tremour of the house and ground, which shook the windows like those of a stagecoach, kept me wakeful ; and when I fell into slumbers, the flitting dreams of what I had seen, would trouble and break them.

“Notwithstanding all disturbances, I rose on the next morning in good spirits. The day was all that could be wished. The sun shining, the heavens transparent, garnished with bright and peaceful clouds. The wind, too, was gentle and refreshing ; and had shifted to our side, so as to promise the nearest points of sight without the discomfort of getting wet through.

“I now looked fairly on the scene as it presented itself at my window, in the fair lights of the morning. It is composed rather of the accompaniments of the fall than of the fall itself. You look up the river full ten miles, and it runs in this part from two to three miles in breadth. Here it has formed, in its passage, beautiful little bays ; and there it has worked through the slips of mainland, putting out the fragments as so many islets to decorate its surface ; while, on either hand, it is bounded by the original forests of pine. At the upper extremity you see the blue waters calmly resting under the more cerulean heavens ; while nearer to you it becomes agitated, like a strong man preparing to run a race. It swells, and foams, and recoils, as though it were committed to some desperate issue ; and then suddenly contracts its dimensions, as if to gather up all its power for the mighty leap

---

Reed and Matheson's Description of the Falls.

---

it is about to make. This is all you see here ; and it is enough.

“I left the hotel, and went down to the Table Rock. This is usually deemed the great point of sight ; and for an upper view it undoubtedly is. It is composed of several ledges of rock, having different advantages, and projecting as far over the gulf below as they can to be safe. But how shall I describe the objects before me ? The mysterious veil which lay heavily yesterday on a large part of it, was now removed ; and the outline of the picture was mostly seen. An ordinary picture would have suffered by this ; but here the real dimensions are so vast, and so far beyond what the eye has measured, that to see them is not to fetter, but to assist the imagination. This fall, which is called the Horseshoe Fall, is upwards of two thousand feet in extent, and makes a leap, on an average, of about 200 feet. Now just enlarge your conceptions to these surprising dimensions, and suppose yourself to be recumbent on the projecting rock which I have named, as near the verge as you dare, and I will assist you to look at the objects as they present themselves.

“You see not now above the cataract the bed of the river, but you still see the foaming heads of the rapids, like waves of the ocean, hurrying to the precipice ; and over them the light clouds which float on the horizon.—Then comes the *chute* itself. It is not in the form of the horseshoe ; it is not composed of either circular or straight lines ; but it partakes of both ; and throughout it is marked by projections and indentations, which give an amazing variety of form and aspect. With all this



---

Reed and Matheson's Description of the Falls.

---

variety it is one. It has all the power which is derived from unity, and none of the stiffness which belongs to uniformity. There it falls in one dense awful mass of green waters, unbroken and resistless ; here it is broken into drops, and falls like a sea of diamonds sparkling in the sun. Now it shoots forth like rockets in endless succession ; and now it is so light and foaming that it dances in the sun as it goes, and before it has reached the pool, it is driven up again by the ascending currents of air. Then there is the deep expanding pool below.—Where the waters pitch, all is agitation and foam, so that the foot of the fall is never seen ; and beyond it and away, the waters spread themselves out like a rippling sea of liquid alabaster. This last feature is perfectly unique, and you would think nothing could add to its exquisite loveliness ; but there lies on it, as if they were made for each other, “heaven's own bow.” O never had it, in heaven itself, so fair a resting-place !

“ Besides, by reason of the different degrees of rarity in the waters and the atmosphere, the sun is pervading the whole scene with unwonted lights and hues. And the foam which is flying off in all directions, is insensibly condensed, and forms a pillar of cloud, which moves over the scene, as it once did over the tents of Israel, and apparently by the same bidding, giving amazing variety, and sublimity, and unearthliness to the picture. Then there is sound as well as sight ; but what sound ! it is not like the sea ; nor like the thunder ; nor like any thing I have heard. There is no roar, no rattle ; nothing sharp or angry in its tones ; it is deep, awful, one !

---

Reed and Matheson's Description of the Falls.

---

“ Well, as soon as I could disengage myself from this spot, I descended to the bed of the fall. I am never satisfied with any fall till I have availed myself of the very lowest standing it supplies; it is there usually that you become susceptible of its utmost power. I scrambled, therefore, over the dislocated rocks, and put myself as near as possible to the object which I wished to absorb me. I was not disappointed.

“ There were now fewer objects in the picture ; but what you saw had greater prominence and power over you. Every thing ordinary — foliage, trees, hills — was shut out; the smaller attributes of the fall were also excluded ; and I was left alone with its own greatness. At my feet the waters were creaming, swelling, and dashing away, as if in terror, from the scene of conflict, at the rate of twenty miles an hour. Above and overhanging me was the Table Rock, with its majestic form, and dark and livid colors, threatening to crush me. While immediately before me was spread in all its height and majesty — not in parts, but as a whole, beyond what the eye could embrace — the unspeakable cataract itself; with its head now touching the horizon, and seeming to fall direct from heaven, and rushing to the earth with a weight and voice which made the rocks beneath and around me fearfully to tremble. Over this scene the cloud of foam mysteriously moved, rising upward, so as to spread itself partly on the face of the fall, and partly on the face of the sky; while over all were seen the beautiful and soft colors of the rainbow, forming almost an entire circle, and crowning it with celestial glory. But

---

Reed and Matheson's Description of the Falls.

---

it is vain. The power, the sublimity, the beauty, the bliss of that spot, of that hour—it cannot be told.

“When fairly exhausted by intensity of feeling, I strolled away towards the ferry, to pass over to the American side. The Falls here, from the distance, have a plain and uniform aspect ; but this wholly disappears on approaching them. They are exceedingly fine. They do not subdue you as on the Canadian side ; but they fill you with a solemn and delightful sense of their grandeur and beauty. The character of the one is beautiful, inclining to the sublime ; and that of the other, the sublime, inclining to the beautiful. There is a single slip of the fall on this side, which, in any other situation, would be regarded as a most noble cataract. It falls upwards of 200 feet ; it is full 20 feet wide at the point of fall, and spreads itself like a fan in falling, so as to strike on a line of some 50 or 60 feet. It has great power and beauty.

“I found that there was a small ledge of rock behind this fall, and ventured on it to about the centre. You can stand here without getting at all wet ; the waters shoot out several feet before you ; and, if you have nerve, it is entirely safe. I need not say that the novelty and beauty of the situation amply reward you. You are behind the sheet of water, and the sun is shining on its face, illuminating the whole body with a variety proportioned to its density. Here, before you, the heavy waters fall in unbroken columns of bright green. There, they flow down like a shower of massy crystals, radiant with light, and emitting as they fall all the prismatic colors ; while there, again, they are so broken and

---

Reed and Matheson's Description of the Falls.

---

divided, as to resemble a shower of gems sparkling in light, and shooting across the blue heavens.

“I passed by what is called Goat Island to the extremity of the Horseshoe Fall on this side. There is carried out over the head of this fall a limb of timber, with a hand-rail to it. It projects some 12 feet over the abyss, and is meant to supply the place of the Table Rock on the other side. It does so in a great measure ; and as, while it is quite as safe, it gives you far less sense of safety, it disposes you the more to sympathize with objects of terror. Indeed, when you fairly get to the extremity, and find yourself standing out in this world of waters on a slip of wood only large enough for your feet to rest on, and which is quivering beneath you ; when the waters are rushing down under you ; when the spray is flying over you ; and when the eye seeks to fathom the unfathomable and boisterous gulf below ; you have, perhaps, as much of the terrible as will consist with gratification. Very many of the visitors never think of encountering this point of view : those who do and have a taste for it will never forget it. It is among the finest of the fine.

“In returning, I wandered round the little island. It is covered with forest-trees of a fine growth, and is full of picturesque beauty. Days might be spent here in happy and deep seclusion ; protected from the burning sun ; regaled by lovely scenes of nature, and the music of the sweetest waters ; and in fellowship, at will, with the mighty Falls.

“The next morning was the last ; and it was given wholly to the Great Fall. I prepared, in the first instance,

---

Reed and Matheson's Description of the Falls.

---

to go behind it. This is the chief adventure ; and is by most writers described as dangerous. There is no danger if the overhanging rocks keep their places, and if you have moderate self-possession. I made use of the oil-cloth dress provided by the guide, and was quarrelling with it as damp and uncomfortable ; but that grievance was quickly disposed of. I had not made my entrance behind the scenes before I was drenched, and the less I had on the better. However, it was an admirable shower-bath ; and there was an end to the question of wet or dry. "Take care of your breath," was the cry of the guide ; and I had need, for it was almost gone. On making a further advance, I recovered it, and felt relieved. "Now give me your hand," said the guide ; "this is the narrowest part." Onward I went, till he assured me that I was on Termination Rock ; the extreme point accessible to the foot of man.

"As the labor of the foot was over, and there was good standing, I determined on making the best use of my eyes. But this it was not so easy to do. The spray and waters were driving in my face, and coursing down my sides most strangely : a strong wind from the foot of the fall was driving in the opposite direction, so as to threaten not to blow me down, but to blow me up to the roof of the vault. However, I soon ascertained that we were at the extremity of a cavern of large and wonderful construction. It is in the form of a pointed arch ; the one span composed of rolling and dense water, and the other of livid black rocks. It was some 50 feet from the footing of the rock to that of the water, and I had entered about 70 feet. On the entrance, which is mostly of

---

Reed and Matheson's Description of the Falls.

---

thinner waters, the sun played cheerfully, and with glowing power; but within it was contrasted by the dim light and heavy obscurity which are generated by the density of the fall, to which the whole power of the sun can give only a semi-transparency. What with this visible gloom, the stunning noise of the fall, and the endless commotion of wind and waters, the effect is most singular and awful. It is a scene that would harmonize with the creations of Fuseli; and it has, I will venture to say, real horrors beyond what the cave of old Æolus ever knew.

“On returning to my dressing-room, I received a certificate from the guide that I had really been to Termination Rock; an ingenious device to give importance to his vocation, but in the success of which he does not miscalculate on human nature. The rest of the morning was employed in taking peeps at the Falls from favorite points of observation; but chiefly on the Table Rock, and at the foot of the Great Fall. The day was exceedingly fine, and every feature of the amazing scene was lighted up with all its beauty; and I now communed with it as one would with a friend who has already afforded you rich enjoyment in his society. I was delighted — was fascinated. Every thing, apart or together, seemed to have acquired greater power and expression. I studied all the parts; they were exquisite, lovely, noble; I put them all together, and it overwhelmed me, subdued me, fixed me to the spot. Long I stayed; but all time was short. I went; and returned; and knew not how to go.

“I have been thus particular in my account of these Falls, because the world knows nothing like them; and

---

Reed and Matheson's Description of the Falls.

---

because I wished you to participate in my pleasures. I have seen many falls, and with unspeakable delight ; but nothing to be named with this. It would in parts present the image of them all ; but all united would not supply a just idea of it. It is better to see it than a thousand ordinary sights ; they may revive sleeping emotions, and so bring delight ; but this creates new emotion, and raises the mind a step higher in its conceptions of the power and eternity of Him whom "to know is life eternal." The day on which it is seen should be memorable in the life of any man."

## TABLE OF DISTANCES.

---

From Steam Boat landing across to Chippewa,	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	Miles.
From Fort Schlosser to Chippewa, - - -	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	"
" Pavilion Hotel, to do - - - - -	2	"
Across the River at the Falls, - - - - -	$\frac{3}{4}$	"
To Goat Island by the Bridge, - - - - -	58	Rods.
Across the Falls on the American side, - -	56	"
Across the foot of Goat Island, - - - - -	80	"
Length of Goat Island, - - - - -	160	"
Across the Horse Shoe Falls, - - - - -	114	"
Depth of water at the Horse Shoe, - - -	20	Feet.
Depth of water at the Ferry, - - - - -	250	"
From the Eagle Hotel across to the Pavilion on the Canada side, 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ miles, viz :		
From the Eagle Hotel to top of the bank, -	100	Rods.
Top of the bank down the Stair Case to the River, - - - - -	28	"
Width of River at the Ferry, - - - - -	76	"
Up the Canada Bank, - - - - -	76	"
From the top of the Bank to the Pavilion, -	256	"
	536	Rods.
From the Falls to the Mineral Spring, - -	2	Miles.
" To the Whirlpool, - - - - -	3	"
" To the Devil's Hole, - - - - -	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	"



To Erie Canal at Tonawanta, - - - -	11	Miles.
To Buffalo, - - - - -	22	"
From Buffalo to Albany, by canal, - - -	363	"
"    "    By stage through Utica, - - -	298	"
"    "    By Cherry Valley, - - - -	284	"
"    "    To Olean Point, - - - - -	76	"
"    "    Fredonia and Dunkirk, - - -	45	"
"    "    Portland, - - - - -	60	"
"    "    Erie, - - - - -	90	"
"    "    Ashtabula, - - - - -	134	"
"    "    Cleveland, - - - - -	188	"
"    "    Columbus, - - - - -	328	"
"    "    Pittsburgh by way of Erie, -	219	"
"    "    Huron, - - - - -	240	"
"    "    Sandusky, - - - - -	250	"
"    "    Detroit, - - - - -	310	"
"    "    Mackinaw, - - - - -	627	"
"    "    Green Bay, - - - - -	807	"
"    "    Sault St. Mary, - - - - -	707	"
"    "    Chicago, - - - - -	1212	"
"    "    Cincinnati, - - - - -	446	"
"    "    Chillicothe, - - - - -	381	"
From Erie Pa. to Pittsburgh, - - - - -	129	"
"    "    Ashtabula, - - - - -	45	"
From Ashtabula to Wheeling, - - - - -	143	"
From Cleveland to Pittsburgh, - - - - -	133	"
"    "    Zanesville, - - - - -	156	"
"    "    Sandusky, - - - - -	84	"
"    "    Columbus, - - - - -	139	"
"    "    Cincinnati, - - - - -	252	"
Ohio Canal from Cleveland to Portsmouth,	366	"
From Sandusky to Cincinnati, - - - - -	213	"
"    "    Louisville, - - - - -	359	"

## TABLE OF DISTANCES.

111

From Sandusky to Nashville, - - - -	540	Miles.
“ “ St. Louis, - - - - -	517	“
“ “ New Orleans, - - - - -	1712	“
From Detroit to Chicago by land, - -	250	“
From Detroit to Niagara Falls by land thro’		
Canada. - - - - -	244	“
From Niagara Falls to Tuscarora Village,	8	“
From Niagara Falls to Lewiston, - - -	7	“
“ “ Fort Niagara, - - - - -	14	“
“ “ Burlington Bay by land, - - -	62	“
“ “ Toronto by land, - - - - -	107	“
“ “ Toronto by Steam Boat, - - -	50	“
“ “ Genesee River, - - - - -	94	“
“ “ Oswego, - - - - -	154	“
“ “ Sackets Harbor, - - - - -	199	“
“ “ Ogdensburgh, - - - - -	264	“
“ “ Prescott, - - - - -	265	“
“ “ Montreal, - - - - -	405	“
“ “ Quebec, - - - - -	585	“
From Quebec to mouth of St. Lawrence,	400	“
“ “ Quebec to Boston, - - - - -	484	“
From Montreal to Boston, - - - - -	304	“
“ “ St. Johns, - - - - -	27	“
St. Johns to Whitehall, - - - - -	150	“
Whitehall to Albany, - - - - -	72	“
From Niagara Falls to Lockport, - - -	20	“
“ “ Rochester, - - - - -	84	“
“ “ Canandaigua, - - - - -	112	“
“ “ Albany by Cher. Val. Turnpike,	300	“
“ “ New-York, - - - - -	450	“
“ “ Philadelphia, - - - - -	540	“
“ “ Baltimore, - - - - -	636	“
“ “ Washington, - - - - -	674	“

# DISTANCES ON THE ERIE CANAL.

To and from Albany, Utica, Rochester and Buffalo.

Names of Places.	Albany . . .	Utica . . .	Rochester . . .	Buffalo . . .	Names of Places.	Albany . . .	Utica . . .	Rochester . . .	Buffalo . . .
Albany . . . . .	0	110	270	363	Nine-Mile Creek . . .	179	69	91	184
Troy . . . . .	7	103	263	356	Canton . . . . .	185	75	85	173
Junction . . . . .	9	101	261	354	Jordan . . . . .	191	81	79	172
Schenectady . . . . .	30	80	240	333	Weed's Port . . . . .	197	87	73	166
Amsterdam . . . . .	46	64	224	317	Port Byron . . . . .	200	90	70	163
Schoharie Creek . . . . .	53	57	217	310	Montezuma . . . . .	206	96	64	157
Caughnawaga . . . . .	57	53	213	306	Clyde . . . . .	217	107	53	146
Spraker's Basin . . . . .	66	44	204	297	Lyons . . . . .	226	116	44	137
Canajoharie . . . . .	69	41	201	294	Newark . . . . .	233	123	37	130
Bowman's Creek . . . . .	72	38	198	291	Palmyra . . . . .	241	131	29	122
Little Falls . . . . .	82	22	182	275	Fullon's Basin . . . . .	254	144	16	109
Herkimer . . . . .	95	15	175	268	Pittsford . . . . .	260	150	10	103
Frankfort . . . . .	100	10	170	263	Rochester . . . . .	270	160	0	93
Utica . . . . .	110	0	160	253	Ogden . . . . .	282	172	12	81
Whitesborough . . . . .	114	4	156	249	Adam's Basin . . . . .	285	175	15	78
Oriskany . . . . .	117	7	153	246	Brockport . . . . .	290	180	20	73
Rome . . . . .	125	15	145	38	Holley . . . . .	295	185	25	68
Smith's . . . . .	132	22	138	231	Newport . . . . .	305	195	35	58
Loomis' . . . . .	138	28	132	225	Portville . . . . .	309	199	39	54
Oneida Creek . . . . .	141	31	129	222	Oak Orchard . . . . .	314	204	44	49
Canastota . . . . .	146	36	124	217	Medina . . . . .	315	205	45	48
New Boston . . . . .	150	40	120	213	Middleport . . . . .	321	211	51	42
Chittenango . . . . .	154	44	116	209	Lockport . . . . .	333	223	63	30
Manlius . . . . .	162	52	108	201	Pendleton . . . . .	340	230	70	23
Orville . . . . .	165	55	105	198	Tonawanta . . . . .	352	242	82	11
Syracuse . . . . .	171	61	99	192	Black Rock . . . . .	360	250	90	3
Liverpool . . . . .	173	63	97	190	Buffalo . . . . .	363	253	93	0

