NIAGARA ITS HISTORY INCIDENTS AND POETRY

By

[Signature]
GENERAL VIEW OF THE FALLS AND VESTIBULE.
NIAGARA

ITS HISTORY, INCIDENTS AND POETRY

By RICHARD L. JOHNSON


WALTER NEALE
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In announcing Mr. Johnson's book on Niagara, the publishers believe they are offering the public the most complete and artistic work of the kind ever attempted. The history of the great cataract, and its legends and incidents, are of absorbing interest, and have been told in a charming style. In it will be found all of the best poetry written on the Falls, with choicest extracts from the best prose writers. A complete guide, showing how to see Niagara aright, will be found in the last chapter of the book. It was written by one thoroughly familiar with the place, having visited Niagara not less than forty times.

The illustrations are the finest that money, talent and time can command. Attention is called to the cover, upon which is a reproduction in color-photography of F. E. Church's painting, "Niagara Falls." The half-tones are from original photographs by some of the best known artists in America, and the plate-makers stand at the head of their profession.

In short, it is a book full of the most gorgeous and brilliant descriptions of Nature's Greatest Wonder in prose, poetry and art.
DEDICATION.

To Lord Dufferin, who, while Governor General of Canada, to protect visitors to Niagara Falls from imposition and extortion, urged the purchase by the Legislatures of New York State, and of Ontario, of the property adjacent thereto, and its conversion into an International Park, to be forever free to the pilgrims of the world, and which was consummated in 1885, this poem is dedicated as a tribute of gratitude by the author.
WORKS CONSULTED.

Reference in the course of these verses and notes to historical facts, gathered from various sources, requires that special mention be made of the works consulted. This is done as a matter of justice as well as courtesy; besides, it will aid those interested in securing much valuable data, should they desire to make further research.

"Niagara Falls and their History," Prof. G. K. Gilbert. AMERICAN BOOK CO., New York.
"A Suggestion," September 12, 1882. NEW YORK TRIBUNE.
"Notes on Niagara." R. LESPINASSE, Chicago.
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NIAGARA BY MOONLIGHT.
PREFACE.

"It is without a parallel."—Father Hennepin, 1678.

It was Lord Byron, who, on being introduced to an American in Italy, began eagerly to question him about Niagara Falls, and on being told that he had never seen them, turned on his heel with an oath of unutterable disgust at the thought of a man coming from America to Europe to view its wonders, without having first seen that "wonder of the world" in his own country. A greater combined idiot and cheap mountebank never existed than the American who goes into feigned ecstasies over the lakes and crags of Switzerland, or into raptures over the palaces of Spain, when abroad, while he has never seen, or cared to see Niagara. Any description of Niagara Falls approaching the beautiful and graphic, interspersed with the historical, is of absorbing interest, for it seems to be the crowning glory of the work of the Almighty, designed to lift man's soul out of the terrestrial into the realms of the celestial. Here omnipotent generosity seems to have exhausted itself. The surrounding pavilion holds the most beautiful and magnificent creation in all the earth. Standing on the deck of the "Maid of the Mist," within the vestibule of the falling
and thundering cataract, man is impressed as nowhere else with his own comparative insignificance. He is within the "Holy of Holies," in the presence of the Infinite.

From the remotest domains of the earth pilgrims have come to visit this shrine of enchantment, and have returned, overwhelmed, as never before, with a sense of the surpassing power of nature in perpetual motion. Many return again and again, as has the writer, to catch new inspiration from this wonderful scene of grandeur and sublimity. The glory of it is inexhaustible, and daily shows some new beauty which awakens a vast variety of emotions. It is the enchanted ground of eternal goodness. It speaks to the soul of joy, love and fear; of life, death and immortality. The Three Sister Islands represent Faith, Hope and Charity. A deep tide of reflection solemnizes and absorbs the mind on contemplating it. It can only be compared to the cataract of mind, of soul, emanating from the Infinite, from age to age, through every channel of human existence, sometimes enveloped in fog, then revelling in sunshine, then subdued by moonlight; sometimes wandering in darkness and uncertainty; but at last, let us hope, emerging into the valley of Hope and Gladness, destined to flow onward forever, till entering at last the River of Life,

"All cleansed in its pure waters, to the land, where, joyful, they shall all be moored at last."

The ever-revolving crystal sea of falling waters, viewed from the Canadian side, presents the appearance of carded wool hanging from the loom of nature's greatest scene of energy and unconfined
activity. It is the chronometer of God measuring his ages backward. The gorge, its dial-plate, records correctly its past centuries. Man would fain compute them, but, so far, has only learned the alphabet of Niagara's creation. Sir Charles Lyell says:

"Niagara teaches us not merely to appreciate the power of moving water, but furnishes us at the same time with data for estimating the enormous lapse of ages during which that force has operated."

Many poets have attempted to describe Niagara, but always with a feeling of their utter inability. The human mind gets beyond its orbit of limitation in attempting the task; language is inadequate.

Without a doubt, the most beautiful and graphic poem ever written on Niagara is that composed by Brainard, and, strange to say; he never saw the cataract. While editor of the "Connecticut Mirror," of Hartford, in 1823, it is said that one day, while the printer's devil was calling for copy, Brainard was admiring a picture of Niagara. Its inspiration was on him, and he told the boy to return in fifteen minutes, within which time he dashed off the nineteen lines which made him famous.

The next two in order of merit were written by Mrs. Phoebe A. Hanaford and Mrs. Lydia H. Sigourney, the former a Universalist clergywoman, and it voices the sentiments of her beautiful faith. The latter wrote her celebrated poem in 1834, while sitting on Table Rock, which fell in June, 1850.
The author of "Lalla Rookh," in 1804, was moved to write the first poem on Niagara of which history makes mention, the following lines being a fair example:

"There, amid the island sedge,
Just above the cataract's edge,
Where the foot of living man
Never trod since time began,
Lone I sit at close of day," etc.

José Maria Heredia's Spanish poem, translated by Bryant, is a beautiful contribution laid on the altar of Niagara. The best collection of poems on the subject is found in "Poems of Places," edited by Henry W. Longfellow, 1879. With the exception of Mrs. Hanaford's, all poems of note on Niagara known to the writer are contained therein, and blank verse is the prevailing form of versification. It is a question among critics which is the better poem, Brainard's or Mrs. Hanaford's, though the latter is little known.

Among the comic and witty rhymes about Niagara, the following is a fair example. The author of these lines evidently had a practical turn of mind:

"To view Niagara Falls, one day
A Parson and a Tailor took their way.
The Parson cried, while rapt in wonder,
And list'ning to the Cataract's thunder,
"The white crest of breaking surf."
‘Lord, how thy works amaze our eyes,
And fill our hearts with vast surprise!’
The Tailor merely made this note:
‘Lord! what a place to sponge a coat!’"

Prose writers without number have essayed descriptions, but the full majesty of the "cyclopean torrent" has never been made manifest. Charles Dickens was among those overpowered with the wonders of Niagara. He writes:

"The golden arches which the changing rainbows make glow like molten gold when the sun is on them, but always does the mighty stream appear to die as it comes down, and always from its unfathomable gorge arises that tremendous Ghost of mist and spray which is never laid."—American Notes.

The artist's pencil must delineate and assist the poet in depicting the salient beauties of Niagara, otherwise the attempt is futile. The theme is indescribable, though not unapproachable. This is one more added to the many attempts to describe Niagara in prose and verse, pardonable, perhaps, because it is historical and illustrative as well as descriptive. How far the effort has been successful is left for the reader to determine. It is a labor of love, but is given to the public with a feeling of regret that it is not more worthy of the subject.

R. L. J.

Washington, D. C., May 1, 1898.
HISTORY OF NIAGARA FALLS.
FAC-SIMILE OF A VIEW OF NIAGARA FALLS, BY FATHER HENNEPIN, 1678.
THE HISTORY OF NIAGARA FALLS.

DISCOVERY.

STRICTLY speaking, Father Hennepin was not the first European to discover Niagara (with apologies to the cyclopedias, to the contrary), but he was the first to transmit to us, by the "art preservative of all arts," the first vivid description of it. On a map attached to his voyages, published in 1613, Samuel Champlain indicates the position of the Cataract, calling it merely a waterfall,

"So very high that many kinds of fish are stunned in its descent."

In 1648, the Jesuit Father Ragueneau, in a letter to the Superior of the Mission, at Paris, refers to a "Cataract of frightful height" between Lakes Erie and Ontario.

Father Hennepin's exaggerated account of it is accompanied by a sketch which, in its principal outlines, was at the time undoubtedly accurate, though its perspective and proportions are quite the reverse. He says, among other things, referring to Goat Island:

"From the end of this island it is that these two great falls of water, as also the third, throw themselves, after a most surprising manner, down into the dreadful gulph, six hundred feet and more in depth."
Baron La Hontan, in the autumn of 1687, wrote a more exaggerated account of it than did Father Hennepin. He says:

"As for the waterfall of Niagara, 'tis seven or eight hundred feet high, and half a league wide."

We must remember, however, that these grand and brave old explorers were men who were little accustomed to estimating distances, especially heights; therefore, exaggeration was excusable in them. A view from below the Falls will, even to-day, produce an exaggerated impression of its height.

MAGNITUDE.

What are such vast structures as the Pharos of Alexandria, the Tower of Babel, or the Pyramids of Egypt, (the latter the only specimens of the cyclopean age of architecture left standing to this day), to Niagara? If the term cyclopean has been properly applied to them, to indicate their vastness, how much more appropriately can it be applied to Niagara, of which Father Louis Hennepin, on discovering it in the winter of 1678, wrote:

"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."
American Fall

"That dizzied sea
hurling itself from the
high summit."

From Prospect Point.
VOLUME.

If we contemplate the vast avalanche of falling waters rushing over the precipice, estimated by the U. S. Lake Survey at 280,000 cubic feet per second, or in weight one hundred million tons per hour, or if we consider that all the coal mined in the world, each day, would be required to generate steam sufficient to operate pumping machinery to pump back the water that flows over the Cataract, it will not tax the mind very much to imagine Niagara quenching the most violent volcano in a few hours. It certainly would be a terrific and tragic contest of the elements—fire and water. Who would question the result?

DIMENSIONS.

The river, 30 miles in length, is the channel through which the waters of Lake Erie and its three sisters flow into Lake Ontario. The total fall of the river is 334 feet, the greater part of the descent being confined to the distance of eight miles. Three distinct waterfalls form a tri-unity of wonders. The Horse Shoe Fall, the largest, in the direct course of the river, has a descent of 154 feet, and is 3,010 feet across the curved line, or 1,230 feet across the chord, according to U. S. Lake Survey. The American Fall is 1,060 feet wide, including Luna Island and the Central Fall beyond, each of the latter Falls having a cadence of 163 feet. The two latter are separated from the Horse Shoe Falls by Goat Island, formerly and more appropriately named Iris Island.—See chapter on Goat Island.
CHANGE OF FORM.

The general form of the Falls is slowly changing from age to age. When good Father Hennepin, with his portable chapel on his back, saw them 220 years ago, they presented little of that curved and indented outline which now forms their most striking peculiarity. The Horse Shoe Fall extended in nearly a straight line from the head of Goat Island to Table Rock, which terminated in a bluff that turned a portion of the water from its direct course, forming another cataract which fell to the east. A century later, this projecting rock had disappeared, but the spot which it occupied is distinctly traceable to-day. From the character of the strata through which the water has slowly worn its way back, we learn what must have been the appearance of the Fall at any period of its history. Whether it overcame the descent of 350 feet at Lewiston at a single leap, or by three cataracts separated by intervening rapids, is a question which geologists have not determined. When the Falls occupied the position of the Whirlpool, three miles below their present site, the descent was greater than at any period before or since. But there could never have been a period when their beauty equalled that which is presented to-day. The immense breadth of the sheet of falling water, its graceful sweep of curves, and the picturesque islands above that stud the brink, belong solely to our present cataract.
SECTION OF HORSE SHOE FALL.
RETROCESSION AND AGE.

Sir Charles Lyell, the eminent English geologist, says:

"Mr. Blackwell, son of the eminent geologist of that name, who made the first attempt to calculate from observations of forty years' residence, 1790-1830, at the Falls, and who had been the first settler there, says that the Cataract had, during that period, gone back about a yard annually. During my visit to the spot in 1841–2, I came to the conclusion that the average of one foot a year would be a much more probable conjecture. In that case it would have required 35,000 years for the retreat of the Falls from the escarpment of Queenston to their present site. At some points it may have receded much faster than at present, but, in general, its progress was generally slower, because the Cataract, when it began to recede, must have had nearly twice its present height, and, therefore, twice the quantity of rock to remove."—Prin. of Geology, Lyell, 1875, Vol. I., pp. 354-6.

Mr. George W. Holley computed that from 1678 to 1853, 12,000,000 cubic feet of rock had fallen away. This would cover a surface of 1,000 feet by 160 feet to the depth of 76 feet. At this rate the required time to cut back 6 miles would be 72,000 years; a mere shadow of time compared with the age of the coralline limestone over which the water flows. From other data Doctor J. H. Spencer computes the age of Niagara at 32,000 years. Mr. Warren Upham, with the same facts before him, thinks 7,000 years a more reasonable estimate, and this is the most conservative estimate ever made. Mr. B. F. Taylor is of the opinion that Mr. Upham's figures should be multiplied by a number consisting of tens rather than units. Geologists have lately estimated, after a careful figuration, that the annual recession taking place now is two and one-tenth feet.
The age of Niagara, like that of a woman, is a very interesting question; God only knows how old it is. Yet, seeing that it was discovered less than 250 years ago, in comparison with its great age, it is but as yesterday that the white man first saw it. According to Profs. Agassiz and Elie De Beaumont, America is the old world rather than the new, and this section of the American continent was one of the first portions of it to be lifted into the genial light of the sun. Prof. Lyell says:

"The Alps, the Pyrenees, the Himalayas, have not only begun to exist as lofty mountain chains, but the solid materials of which they are composed have been slowly elaborated beneath the sea within the stupendous interval of ages here alluded to."

Long before the Pyramids of Egypt graced the valley of the Nile, Niagara existed, resplendent in glory, thundering with irresistible power, within a short distance of where it stands to-day.

UTILIZATION.

This is a utilitarian age; an era of trusts and combines of various types, the great majority of which are fostered by avarice and promoted for gain. The question of power is one of the greatest problems of to-day. To acquire power in the financial world some will sacrifice honor and integrity to secure it. To procure power in the realm of the physical, some are willing to sacrifice and even mutilate the most beautiful thing in nature. Abundant proof of this latter statement is to be found at the Falls to-day. For many years mechanical engineers have had their eyes centred on the energy wasted by the Cataract. Capitalists have been casting covetous eyes upon it, and the result of this
concentration of vision and interests is that the grandest spectacle on the American continent, "Creation's Masterpiece," is being slowly but surely destroyed by the greed of gain.

Mechanical ingenuity, backed by millions of dollars, has started this, the greatest power plant the Almighty ever put in motion, to work, to earn its daily bread; not by the sweat of its brow, but by the loss of its very life-blood. Leeches, in the form of pen stocks and sluice gates, are sucking at its very heart. True, at present, it shows no visible sign of impending collapse or loss of beauty, but only increase the number of leeches to any great extent, and the Cataract will be a thing of the past, the bare stage only left, its grand and picturesque curtain rolled up forever. From the standpoint of the naturalist, as well as of the poet, it seems a sacrilege to divert any part of the rushing, roaring and leaping waters from their divinely appointed destiny to bound the precipice and plunge headlong to the world below. We cannot tolerate or view with composure the indignity of turning Niagara into a slave of commerce. This International Gem seems to be the ideal birthplace and natural home of liberty. It is to-day free and unconfined, and unornished by extortion of any kind. The Cataract, her cradle, should be protected from the destroying hand of the iconoclast even if he does come in the garb of the Prince of Progress.

"* * * Amazement, terror, fill,    Lie open and revealed. Himself far less—
Impress and overcome the gazer's soul.    Kneeling before thy great confessional—
Man's schemes and dreams and petty littleness    Than are the bubbles of the passing tides."

25
NIAGARA IN WINTER.

Visitors who have seen Niagara in summer only, have but half seen it. In winter the accessories to its grandeur and sublimity are numerous and varied, and greatly enhance its beauty. Stalactites and stalagmites, surpassingly beautiful, hang from or apparently support the projecting rocks along the walls of the deep chasm, white caps and hoods form on the rocks which fill the river above the brink of the Falls. Fanciful statuary, and all kinds of imaginable forms, gather on and around the trees and bushes, which are robed in white vestments of frozen spray too beautiful for description. Clusters of ice apples hang from the branches of evergreen trees, and, under the pale beams of the queen of night, glisten like moonstones. In the pure white congealed spray the sunlight has been caught and frozen, and where an angle or a curve is thrown into shadow, one can see where a rainbow has been caught, caged and frozen. Fringed ice moss, frost spines, opalescent ice cones, translucent ice columns in all the most bewitching forms are to be seen at every angle of the compass. The ice bridges and mountains are something wonderful. In 1856 the ice formed on the rocks and at the brow of the American Fall to the height of ninety-five feet. During any exceedingly cold winter the ice will form and fill the whole of the chasm from the railway Suspension Bridge up to and past the American Fall. The almost omnipotent power of the hydrostatic press is forcibly displayed in the spring when the ice breaks up and commences to move. Invisible though its motion appears, its force is invincible. The stupendous weight of moving ice, sometimes exceeding 100 feet below the water line, grinds to
WINTER FOLIAGE AT NIAGARA.
powder huge bowlders weighing hundreds of tons. No wonder the river keeps its channel clear of the chips that fall from its great workshop at the cataract.

CAVE OF THE WINDS.

The Cave of the Winds is a phenomenon never to be forgotten by any one who has ever passed through it. Travellers pass behind the sheet of water hemmed in between the American and Horse Shoe Fall, under Luna Island, where they enter it. Nowhere else in the world are the prismatic hues of the rainbow exhibited in such profusion, variety and surpassing brilliancy as here. Rainbow dust, bars and arches are forming and flashing, breaking and reforming, dancing and swimming around the beholder in all the most delightful confusion of figures imaginable. It is probably the only place in all the world where a complete rainbow circle can be seen, but here they are in profusion. The water in front falling from heights above with terrific force to depths unfathomable beneath, speaks to the soul of the beholder as the voice of God. In old ocean’s storms deep calleth unto deep, but not so powerfully as here, or with a voice so continuous and awfully majestic.

FREED FROM EXTORTION.

Imagination carries us back to the time when Niagara was in its primeval state before the advent of the white man, when its banks were inhabited by the aborigines, who named it Ni-ag-ha-ra, meaning the Great Thunderer. It had not yet become a place where extortion was practiced, but
subsequently did when the white man got possession of the property and taxed his neighbors and the pilgrims of distant lands who came to view this cynosure. Lord Dufferin, while Governor-General of Canada, 1872–78, viewed with abhorrence the extortion practiced at Niagara, and started the movement which at last made it free to visitors forever, by purchase. The New York State Park comprises 107 acres. Queen Victoria Park, 154 acres. These two constitute the International Park which was established by the governments of the United States and Canada in 1885–87, at a total cost of $1,870,242.74.

**BRIDGES AND STEEL TOWER.**

Two suspension and one cantilever bridge span the gorge of Niagara at short distances below the Falls, and lately a magnificent steel tower about 300 feet high has been erected adjacent to Prospect Park, from the top of which a bird's-eye view can be obtained of the whole valley of the river from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario. Queenston Heights, about seven miles below, from whence Niagara started to cut its way backwards to its present position, can be seen crowned by the beautiful monument erected to the memory of General Sir Isaac Brock. We can fancy that Hennepin would have been delighted with this view could he have seen it in his day.

**GOAT ISLAND.**

This beautifully wooded island stands in the middle of the Falls. In 1678, when Hennepin first saw the Falls, it is said to have contained about two hundred and fifty acres of land. At the present
NIAGARA RIVER.
date it contains about seventy acres. In 1815 General Porter, who acted as Commissioner of the United States at the Treaty of Ghent, named it Iris Island, and it was so printed on the boundary maps of that period. The boundary line between Great Britain and the United States on the Niagara frontier was located by the Treaty of Ghent to run through the deepest water along the river courses, and through the center of the Great Lakes. As the deepest water at Niagara Falls is through the center of the Horse Shoe Fall, this and other adjacent islands became the property of the United States.

Mr. John Stedman, one of the earliest American settlers on this wonderful frontier land, brave, fearless and seemingly enamoured with dangerous undertakings, crossed the Rapids and settled on the island in 1779, made a small clearing and set up farming. Amid the rapids and falls, on this primeval mist-wreathed and evergreen isle, he placed a few domestic animals. The lord of the family was a venerable goat, whom the dwellers on the mainland often saw clambering over the rocks and wagging his hoary head at them. The following winter being extremely cold, and all access to the mainland having been cut off, the unfortunate "monarch of all he surveyed," hungry and lonely, perished, and left his name, like Juan Fernandez, to his water-bound island home. Notwithstanding it had been named Iris Island, the people still adhered to the old, and refused to adopt the new and appropriate name. Notwithstanding this perpetuation of an inappropriate name for the "Sacred Grove Beside the Fall," the heathen goddess is daily seen in her gorgeous hues, and she will never be altogether supplanted by the goat of the Revolutionary period, as long as the island remains.
The moonlight views observed on this island, particularly the lunar bows, are indescribably weird, delicate and apparently the most unreal novelties on the earth. They are formed by the reflection of the moon and the spray, and can be seen by the visitor only when between the moonbeams and the spray. Solar bows, during the day, can be seen, when the spectator is similarly situated.

Eminent botanists, Dr. Asa Gray, Sir Joseph Hooker, Prof. J. Hayes Panton, Prof. Daniel Cady Eaton, and Hon. David F. Day, testify to the wonderful variety of plants, flowers and ferns which cover the island in great profusion. No equal area in the world produces such a variety of vegetation. The Hon. David F. Day, of Buffalo, enumerates 909 species of flowers and ferns found by him on this island, many of them rare and uncommon, not seen elsewhere in America. Beautiful elms, stately beeches and maples crown the island grove, some of which are quite ancient. Initials carved on some of the beeches were found by Judge Porter when he first visited the island in 1805. The earliest date he discovered carved on a rock was 1645. On the beech trees he found initials cut with the dates 1765, 1771, 1772, 1779.

Nature has healed, and is still healing, these prehistoric wounds made by bygone brave adventurers, while countless birds twitter from the limbs of the grand old trees, perpetually baptised by the incessant spray of the great Cataract, whose continual monotone is echoed and re-echoed through the aisles of this primeval forest.
VIEW OF OLD TOWER, TERRAPIN BRIDGE AND HORSE SHOE FALLS IN 1837.
TERRAPIN TOWER.

Church's painting, "Niagara Falls," shows the old stone Terrapin Tower which stood on the brink of the Horse Shoe Fall near Goat Island, but was removed, being considered dangerous, about 1874. It was built by Judge Porter in 1823; was forty-five feet high, and twelve feet in diameter at the base, and, in the opinion of the writer, the finest view in the whole world was obtained from the top of that old tower. The surging billows could be seen taking that awful leap into the boiling caldron below.
POETRY ON NIAGARA.
Goat Island from Prospect Park.

"The sacred grove beside the fall."
APOSTROPHE TO NIAGARA.

By R. L. Johnson.

Cyclopean torrent, this thy throne,
Which man but yesterday hath known,
Through all thy countless ages flown,
Creation's masterpiece.

How wonderful and vast thou art!
Grand Pantheon of Omniscient art!
Thy flood-gates demonstrate thou art
"Without a parallel!"

Awe-struck I hear the passing crowd
Of heaving storm waves thundering loud,
And see them writing here the proud
Grand Autograph of God.

A thousand waves on dress parade
Urge on the crowding cavalcade,
Which pauses on the brink, afraid
The awful plunge to take.

See yon gigantic wave command
The myriad troopers, as they stand
Erect, with flashing sword in hand,
To charge the host below!

Adown they charge, that mighty force,
Resistless in its downward course;
The rider and the foaming horse—
Brigade Victorious!

* * * *

Thy grand façade, with curtains down,
Presents no monster's ugly frown,
But, like a maiden's bridal gown,
A robe of beauty is.

Its elevation reaches high,
And fain would touch the changing sky,
Its falling waters ever cry,
Rejoicing as they leap:
"Majestic fleets that float their flags,
And brave Old Ocean's rocky crags,
Dare not approach our rugged snags,
Nor Titan-fashioned front.

"Some noble bards have done their best
To praise Mt. Etna's blazing crest,
Yet, we could flood the monarch's nest
And crop his golden curls,

"And challenge heaven's bright sentry stars
To find beneath his lavic bars
A spark, to light their gilded cars,
Before the blaze of morn."

* * * *

Primeval tribes no more shall roam
Thy banks to pitch their tented home,
Whose fairest daughters made thy foam
Their willing sepulchre.

For here they gathered once a year,
With festive dance and savage cheer,
And sacrificed, without a tear,
The fairest of the tribe.

* * * *

Thy organ notes with thunderous roar,
Sound the Creator's lofty score
Of Love and Mercy evermore,
In grand diapason.

Beyond this temple vast and dim,
Methinks thy anthem, psalm, or hymn,
Floods in sweet melody to Him
Who waits the grand Amen!

* * * *

Sheets of sunfire blaze and quiver
On thy waves, O boist'rous river,
As they leap to foam and shiver,
Adown this gulf of death!

Deep undercurrents night and day,
An everlasting power display,
Exhaustless, unconfined, they play,
Unfathomed, unrestrained.

Take in the sight around—about.
And know, Vain Man! beyond a doubt,
God's power is here past finding out—
Eternal mystery.
HORSE SHOE FALL IN WINTER.
Oft have I sat, in quiet hour,
Beside this emblem of God's power,
And fancied Eden's sacred bower
No symbol had like this.

Emotionful our souls should know
He placed that graceful radiant bow
To span the hurricane below,
In token of His love.

Thou Sacrilegious Man—go hence!
How futile is thy vain pretence
To scoff and doubt Omnipotence,
Arrayed in glory here!

* * * *

Ere Cheops' Pyramidal pile
Stood reared upon the classic Nile,
Was cut thy rough, rock-ribbed defile
By ante-glacial flood!

From yonder tower view Queenston's height,
Hennepin was denied the sight,
From whence thou struggled in the night
Of the primeval dawn.

The windings of thy crystal shoe,
Church faithfully portrayed, 'tis true,
The canvas shows a bygone view.
Pride of the "Corcoran."

* * * *

When Winter steps upon the stage,
White-cowled and solemn as a sage,
Thou dost display an ample page
Of glistening ice-moss bright;

Then icy apples moonlit shine
On evergreens at midnight time,
And then thou seemest most sublime,
In snowy satin robed.

Translucent columns, purest white,
Glisten in the morning light;
Prismatic scene of rare delight,
Of hues Elysian;

Here snow-capped mountains block thy flow,
While crystal diamonds crown the show,
And icy bridges form below,
To span a Paradise.

* * *
The flower is pledged unto the bee,
The tidal wave unto the sea;
Our northern floods are pledged to thee,
Thou thundering watersheet!

And yet, O Thunderer, what art thou
To Him with iridescent brow,
Who guides thy grand retreating prow,
That whispers of His might;

And notches on these walls of stone
His hieroglyphics, yet thine own,
To make thy soundless ages known,
Through glyptic monographs.

Who wrote his name, “The Unseen God,”
In burning letters, fiery shod,
On Terrapin Tower, once trod
By bold adventurers;

When lo! 'twas hurled from heaven to hell,
The tottering, grand old sentinel,
Where oft I went to view the well,
Above thy plunging floods.

* * * * *

God gave thee queenly sisters three,
Faith, Hope and glorious Charity,
And placed the Iris Isle to be
A brooch to pin thy veil.

He sent the morn with rustling wings.
And filled the vales with babbling springs,
And gave the birds their color'd wings
And sweetly charming notes,

To praise thy cascades most sublime,
Thro' every land, thro' every clime,
Whose opalescent rainbows shine
To prove His promise true.

He heaved the snow-clad mountains up.
To fill old Erie's vine-clad cup,
With waters sweet for thee to sup,
Majestic Orator!

He listeth in thy cave sublime,
And speaketh in that voice of thine,
And rideth on the storms of Time,
Which lash the Island's home.
ICE APPLES.
A spectacle personified,  
May here be seen at midnight tide;  
And lovers with the greatest pride  
May view a modest beau.

He courts the Queen of Night by day—  
At Ev’n song he tints the spray;  
At peep of dawn he fades away—  
The opal lunar bow.

For the lost Eden, search no more,  
In myth or prehistoric lore;  
That question’s settled, evermore,  
On this, the Sacred Isle.

Whose ferns and mosses scent the breeze,  
Where east and west each soul agrees,  
The Tigris and the Euphrates  
Flow swiftly, gladly on.

How bright and grand to thee did seem  
This world arrayed in living green,  
While Luna, robed in silvery sheen,  
Her nightly vigils kept,

With gleaming light and lunar bow,  
Thy phantom flood of joy and woe,  
A milky stream of ceaseless flow,  
A phosphorescent dream;

’Till paler man, with selfish soul,  
Held in his hand a parchment scroll,  
And taxed his neighbors, ev’ry soul—  
Infinite Oracle!

Who came to list thy voice so true,  
And view thy waters, green and blue,  
And marvel at thy emerald shoe  
Whose hoof an empire is!

Seated on the “Rock of Ages,”  
While musing o’er the sacred pages,  
Indited by inspir’d sages,  
I heard a spirit say:

“Let lions roar and people sing,  
And eagles flutter on the wing,  
While all the bells in steeple rings  
For thee, Niagara,
"A jubilation loud and grand,
   From frigid zones to torrid strand.
For Dufferin ope'd, with lordly hand,
   Thy flood-gates tribute free.

"Now may thy incense heavenward soar,
And thy tempestuous billows roar
Their solemn protests, o'er and o'er
   Thy crest, Niagara.

"'Till Justice, with concordant wand,
And Liberty with outstretched hand
Shall welcome pilgrims as they land
   On Freedom's happy shore.

"And guard with zealous care for aye,
Thy mighty organ, night and day,
That all the world may hear it play,
   With unvexed harmony.

"Until discordant war's alarms,
And conflicts of contending arms,
Are silenced by thy mad'ning charms,
   Plunge on, Niagara!

"Nor let thy eyelids ever close,
In Neptune's arms in sweet repose,
'Till all the nations shall disclose,
   Like thee, Niagara,

"A charity as broad and deep
As is thine own encircling steep,
Or as thy vortex where we peep
   Thro' azure mists to heaven."

* * * *

In thee alone, Niagara,
Whose vast foundations seamed and knit
And bound by adamantine bars;
Methinks the Grecian bard would find
Meet inspiration for his noblest song,
And not in Trojan wars;
   For here dwells Liberty.

While myriad sunlit, liquid pearls
Obscure thy bubbling pools and whirls,
Our goddess stoops, with golden curls,
   To sip thy hydromel.
"The Broad Swift Stream, where it ran smoothly before breaking into the Rapids."
Proud Bedloe's Isle may sound her horn—
Bartholdi's gift her coast adorn;
But till her birthday's final morn,
Here dwelleth Liberty.

In search of gain and worldly pelf,
The robber here hath shown himself,
And like the ox amid the delf,
He would this figure break.

Alas! Niagara, what are we
Frail creatures when compared to thee?
Yet, what art thou to Deity?—
But Insignificance.

NIAGARA.

By Henry Howard Brownell.

Henry Howard Brownell was born at Providence, R. I., in 1820; died at East Hartford, Conn., in 1872. An American poet, whose works include "Poems," "Lyrics of a Day," "War Lyrics and Other Poems," is the author of the following lines.

Has aught like this descended, since the fountains
Of the Great Deep broke up, in cataracts hurled,
And climbing lofty hills, eternal mountains,
Poured wave on wave above the buried world?

You tides are raging, as when storms have striven,
And the vexed seas, awaking from their sleep,
Are rough with foam, and Neptune's flocks are driven
In myriads o'er the green and azure deep.

Let press and voice at once condemn
The spoiler who would steal a gem
From off the glittering diadem
Of this majestic stream.

Though "Hope's bright star" is sometimes pale,
Let Hope, not Fear, in man prevail:
The misty Ghost within the veil
Proves life's resurrection.

Ere yet they fall, mark (where that mighty current
Comes like an army from its mountain home)
How fiercely yon wild steeds amid the torrent,
With their dark flanks, and manes and crests of foam,

Speed to their doom—yet in the awful centre,
Where the wild waves rush madliest to the steep.
Just ere that white unfathomed gulf they enter,
Rear back in horror from the headlong leap,
Then, maddening, plunge—a thousand more succeeding
Sweep onward, troop on troop, again to urge
The same fierce flight, as rapid and unheeding—
Again to pause in terror on the verge.

* * * * *

Oft to an eye half closed, as if in solving
Some mighty, mystic problem—half it seems
Like some vast crystal wheel, ever revolving,
Whose motion, earth's—whose axle, earth's extremes.

We gaze and gaze, half lost in dreamy pleasure,
On all that slow majestic wave reveals,
While Fancy idly, vainly strives to measure
How vast the cavern which its veil conceals.

* * * * *

Whence come ye, O wild waters? By what scenes
Of Majesty and Beauty have ye flowed,
In the wide continent that intervenes,
Ere yet ye mingle in this common road?

The Mountain King, upon his-rocky throne,
Laves his broad feet amid your rushing streams,
And many a vale of loveliness unknown
Is softly mirrored in their crystal gleams.

They come—from haunts a thousand leagues away,
From ancient mounds, with deserts wide between,
Cliffs, whose tall summits catch the parting day,
And prairies blooming in eternal green;

Yet the bright valley, and the flower-lit meadow.
And the drear waste of wilderness, all past—
Like that strange Life, of which thou art the shadow,
Must take the inevitable plunge at last.

Whither we know not—but above the wave
A gentle, white-robed spirit sorrowing stands,
Type of the rising from that darker grave,
Which waits the wanderer from Life's weary lands.

How long these wondrous forms, these colors splendid,
Their glory o'er the wilderness have thrown!
How long that mighty anthem has ascended
To Him who wakened its eternal tone!

That everlasting utterance thou shalt raise,
A thousand ages ended, still the same,
When this poor heart, that fain would add its praise,
Has mouldered to the nothing whence it came;
When the white dwellings of man's busy brood,
Now reared in myriads o'er the peopled plain,
Like snows have vanished, and the ancient wood
Shall echo to the eagle's shriek again,
And all the restless crowds that now rejoice,
And toil and traffic, in their eager moods,
Shall pass—and nothing save thine awful voice
Shall break the hush of these vast solitudes.

AVERY.

1853.

By William Dean Howells.

This poem is copyrighted, and first appeared in "Their Wedding Journey," 1872.
It is reprinted here with the kind permission of the author, and of his publishers, Houghton, Mifflin & Company, Boston, Mass.
William Dean Howells, born at Martinsville, Ohio, 1837, is an American novelist and poet. His writings have that indefinable charm which is the enduring note in all good literature. Added to this charm is the broad outlook and the deep ethical interest manifested by him in all social problems, as the meaning of socialism, the relations of labor and capital, the mystery of poverty and human suffering, and all such burning questions of the day.
In that he has made his presentations with fidelity to a high ideal of artistic excellence, the world of letters owes him a lasting debt of gratitude. He says what he means in unmistakable language, never sacrificing lucidity to effect, or indulging in mere word-painting for its own sake. His fidelity to the facts in the story or incident is ever apparent, as the following lines conspicuously attest.

I.

All night long they heard in the houses beside the shore,
Heard, or seemed to hear, through the multitudinous roar,
Out of the hell of the rapids as 'twere a lost soul's cries—
Heard and could not believe; and the morning mocked their eyes,
Showing where wildest and fiercest the waters leaped up and ran
Raving round him and past, the visage of a man
Clinging, or seeming to cling, to the trunk of a tree that, caught
Fast in the rocks below, scarce out of the surges raught.
Was it a life, could it be, to yon slender hope that clung?
Shrill, above all the tumult the answering terror rung.

II.

Under the weltering rapids a boat from the bridge is drowned,
Over the rocks the lines of another are tangled and wound:
And the long, fateful hours of the morning have wasted soon,
As it had been in some blessed trance, and now it is noon.
Hurry, now with the raft! But, O, build it strong and staunch,
And to the lines and treacherous rocks look well as you launch!
Over the foamy tops of the waves, and their foam-sprent sides,
Over the hidden reefs, and through the embattled tides,
Onward rushes the raft, with many a lurch and leap—
Lord! if it strike him loose from the hold he scarce can keep!
No! through all peril unharmed, it reaches him harmless at last,
And to its proven strength he lashes his weakness fast.
Now, for the shore! But steady, steady, my men, and slow;
Taut, now, the quivering lines; now slack; and so, let her go!
Thronging the shores around stand the pitying multitude;
Wan as his own are their looks, and a nightmare seems to brood
Heavy upon them, and heavy the silence hangs on all,
Save for the rapids' plunge, and the thunder of the fall.
RAPIDS ABOVE THE AMERICAN FALL.
But on a sudden thrills from the people still and pale,  
Chorusing his unheard despair, a desperate wail;  
Caught on a lurking point of rock it sways and swings,  
Sport of the pitiless waters, the raft to which he clings.

III.
All the long afternoon it idly swings and sways;  
And on the shore the crowd lifts up its hands and prays:  
Lifts to heaven and wrings the hands so helpless to save,  
Prays for the mercy of God on him whom the rock and the wave  
Battle for, fettered betwixt them, and who, amidst their strife,  
Struggles to help his helpers, and fights so hard for his life,—  
Tugging at rope and at reef, while men weep and women swoon.  
Priceless second by second, so wastes the afternoon,  
And it is sunset now; and another boat and the last  
Down to him from the bridge through the rapids has safely passed.

IV.
Wild through the crowd comes flying a man that nothing can stay,  
Maddening against the gate that is locked athwart his way.  
"No! we keep the bridge for them that can help him. You,  
Tell us, who are you?" "His brother!" "God help you both! Pass through."  
Wild, with wide arms of imploring he calls aloud to him,  
Unto the face of his brother, scarce seen in the distance dim;  
But in the roar of the rapids his fluttering words are lost  
As in a wind of autumn the leaves of autumn are tossed.
And from the bridge he sees his brother sever the rope
Holding him to the raft, and rise secure in his hope;
Sees all as in a dream the terrible pageantry,—
Populous shores, the woods, the sky, the birds flying free;
Sees, then, the form,—that, spent with effort and fasting and fear,
Flings itself feebly and fails of the boat that is lying so near,—
Caught in the long-baffled clutch of the rapids, and rolled and hurled
Headlong on to the cataract's brink, and out of the world.

NIAGARA.

By Thomas Gold Appleton.

Thomas Gold Appleton, an American prose writer, poet, and amateur painter, born at Boston, Mass., 1812; died, New York, 1884, is the author of this contribution.

Though the dusk has extinguished the green
And the glow of the down-falling silver,
In my heart I prefer this subdued,
Cathedral-like gloom on the water:
When the fancy capriciously wills,
Nor loves to define or distinguish,
As a dream which enchants us with fear,
And scarce throbs the heart unaffrighted.

With a color and voice of its own
I behold this wondrous creature
Move as a living thing,
And joyous with joy Titanic.
Its brothers in sandstone are locked,
Yet from their graves speak to it.
It sings to them as it moves,
And the hills and uplands re-echo.
AMERICAN FALL IN WINTER.
The sunshine kindles its scales,
And they gleam with opal and sapphire.
It uplifts its tawny mane,
With its undulations of silver,
And tosses through showers of foam,
Its flanks seamed with shadow and sunshine.
Like the life of man is its course,
Born far in some cloudy sierra.
Dimpled and wayward and small,
O'erleaped by the swerving roebuck;
But enlarging with mighty growth,
And wearing wide lakes for its bracelets,
It moves, the king of streams.
As man wears the crown of his manhood.
It shouts to the loving fields,
Which toss to it flowers and perfume;
It eddies and winds round its isles,
And its kisses thrill them with rapture;
Till it fights in its strength and o'ercomes
The rocks which would bar its progress.
The earth hears its cries of rage,
As it tramples them in its rushing,
Leaping, exultant above
And smiting them in derision;
Till at length, its life fulfilled,
Sublime in majestic calmness,
It submits to death, and falls

With a beauty it wins in dying,
Still, wan, prone, till curtains of foam enclose it,
To arise a spirit of mist,
And return to the Heaven it came from.

As deepens the night, all is changed,
And the joy of my dream is extinguished:
I hear but a measureless prayer,
As of multitudes wailing in anguish;
I see but one fluttering plunge,
As if angels were falling from heaven.
Indistinctly, at times, I behold
Cuthullin and Ossian's old heroes
Look at me with eyes sad with tears,
And a summons to follow their flying,
Absorbed in wild, eerie rout,
Of wind-swept and desolate spectres.
As deepens the night, a clear cry
At times cleaves the boom of the waters;
Comes with a terrible sense
Of suffering extreme and forever.
The beautiful rainbow is dead,
And gone are the birds which sang through it.
The incense so mounting is now
A stifling, sulphurous vapor.
The abyss is the hell of the lost,
Hopeless falling to fires everlasting.
ODE TO NIAGARA.

By José Maria Heredia.

José Maria Heredia, the author of the following widely known poem, was a Spanish-American poet and soldier, born at Santiago de Cuba in 1803. He lived successively in various parts of Spanish America, was banished from Cuba in 1823 for taking part in an attempted insurrection, took refuge in Mexico, where he died in 1839. He is considered the greatest of the Spanish-American poets. The translation from the Spanish is by William Cullen Bryant.

Shoots onward like the irresistible course
Of Destiny. Ah, terribly they rage—
The hoarse and rapid whirlpools there! My brain
Grows wild, my senses wander, as I gaze
Upon the hurrying waters; and my sight
Vainly would follow, as towards the verge
Sweeps the wide torrent. Waves innumerable
Meet there and madden—waves innumerable
Urge on and overtake the waves before,
And disappear in thunder and in foam.

They reach, they leap the barrier—the abyss
Swallows insatiable the sinking waves.
A thousand rainbows arch them, and the woods
Are deafened with the roar. The violent shock
Shatters to vapor the descending sheets.
A cloudy whirlwind fills the gulf, and heaves
The mighty pyramid of circling mist
On Goat Island.

"A pleasant vista of smooth foliage,
with a mere gleam of the foaming river beyond."

A. W. Howland

From Trout and Salmon Fishing.

(1894)
To heaven. The solitary hunter near
Pauses with terror in the forest shades.

What seeks my restless eye? Why are not here,
About the jaws of this abyss, the palms—
Ah, the delicious palms—that on the plains
Of my own native Cuba spring and spread
Their thickly foliaged summits to the sun,
And in the breathings of the ocean air,
Wave soft beneath the heaven’s unspotted blue?

But, no, Niagara—thy forest pines
Are fitter coronal for thee. The palm,
The effeminate myrtle, and frail rose may grow
In gardens, and give out their fragrance there,
Unmanning him who breathes it. Thine it is
To do a nobler office. Generous minds
Behold thee, and are moved, and learn to rise
Above earth’s frivolous pleasures; they partake
Thy grandeur at the utterance of thy name.

THE CATARACT ISLE.

By Christopher Pearse Cranch.

Christopher Pearse Cranch, an American landscape painter, poet and translator, a Virginian by birth, having been born at Alexandria, Va., 1813, died at Cambridge, Mass., 1892; in addition to this production on Niagara, he is the author of "Poems," published in 1844.

I wandered through the ancient wood
That crowns the cataract isle.
I heard the roaring of the flood
And saw its wild, fierce smile.

Through tall tree-tops the sunshine flecked
The huge trunks and the ground,
And the pomp of fullest summer decked
The island all around.
And winding paths led all along
Where friends and lovers strayed,
And voices rose with laugh and song
From sheltered nooks of shade.

Through opening forest vistas whirl’d
The rapid’s foamy flash,
As they boiled along and plunged and swirled,
And neared the last long dash.

I crept to the island’s outer verge,
Where the grand, broad river fell—
Fell sheer down mid foam and surge
In a white and blinding hell.

The steady rainbow gayly shone
Above the precipice,
And the deep low tone of a thunder groan
Rolled up from the drear abyss.

And all the night those sheets of white
Gleamed through the spectral mist,
When o’er the isle the broad moonlight
The wintry foam-flakes kissed.

Mirrored within my dreamy thought,
I see it, feel it all—
That island with sweet visions fraught,
That awful waterfall.

With sun-flecked trees, and birds and flowers.
The Isle of Life is fair;
But one deep voice thrills through its hours,
One spectral form is there—

A power no mortal can resist,
Rolling forever on—
A floating cloud, a shadowy mist,
Eternal undertone.

And through the sunny vistas gleam
The fate, the solemn smile.
Life is Niagara’s rushing stream;
Its dream—that peaceful isle!
HORSE SHOE FALL FROM CANADIAN SIDE.
POEM BY COLONEL PORTER.

Of all the poems indigenous to the locality, the following, from the pen of Colonel Porter, is the most graceful, and is, at the same time, somewhat historical. It was written in a playful mood in a young lady's album, in which he drew a sketch representing the Falls in the distance, Father Hennepin, the priest, La Salle, the explorer, and an Indian chief in the foreground.

"An artist, underneath his sign, (a masterpiece, of course),
Had written, to prevent mistakes, 'This represents a horse';
So ere I send my Album Sketch, lest connoisseurs should err,
I think it well my Pen should be my Art's interpreter.

"A chieftain of the Iroquois, clad in a bison's skin,
Had led two travelers through the wood, La Salle and Hennepin.
He points, and there they, standing, gaze upon the ceaseless flow
Of waters falling as they fell two hundred years ago.

"Those three are gone, and little heed our worldly gain or loss—
The Chief, the Soldier of the Sword, the Soldier of the Cross.
One died in battle, one in bed, and one by secret foe;
But the waters fall as once they fell two hundred years ago.

"Ah, me! what myriads of men, since then, have come and gone;
What states have risen and decayed, what prizes lost and won;
What varied tricks the juggler, Time, has played with all below:
But the waters fall as once they fell two hundred years ago.
"What troops of tourists have encamped upon the river's brink;
What poets shed from countless quills, Niagaras of ink;
What artist armies tried to fix the evanescent bow
Of the waters falling as they fell two hundred years ago.

* * * * * * *

And stately inns feed scores of guests from well replenished larder,
And hackmen drive their horses hard, but drive a bargain harder;
And screaming locomotives rush in anguish to and fro:
But the waters fall as once they fell two hundred years ago.

And brides of every age and clime frequent the island's bower,
And gaze from off the stone-built perch—hence called the Bridal Tower—
And many a lunar belle goes forth to meet a lunar beau,
By the waters falling as they fell two hundred years ago.

"And bridges bind thy breast, O, stream! and buzzing mill-wheels turn,
To show, like Samson, thou art forced thy daily bread to earn;
And steamers splash thy milk-white waves, exulting as they go,
But the waters fall as once they fell two hundred years ago.

"Thy banks no longer are the same that early travelers found them,
But break and crumble now and then like other banks around them;
And on their verge our life sweeps on—alternate joy and woe;
But the waters fall as once they fell two hundred years ago.
RAPIDS AT THREE SISTER ISLANDS.
"Thus phantoms of a by-gone age have melted like the spray, 
And in our turn we too shall pass, the phantoms of to-day: 
But the armies of the coming time shall watch the ceaseless flow 
Of waters falling as they fell two hundred years ago."

POEM BY LYDIA HUNTLEY SIGOURNEY:

Mrs. Lydia Huntley Sigourney, an American poetess, of Hartford, Conn., wrote the following contribution to Niagara, while sitting on Table Rock in 1834. It is one of the most beautiful poems ever laid upon the altar of nature's greatest oracle.

Flow on forever, in thy glorious robe 
Of terror and of beauty. Yea, flow on 
Unfathomed and resistless. God hath set 
His rainbow on thy forehead; and the cloud 
Mantled around thy feet. And he doth give 
Thy 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. 

Ah! who can dare 
To lift the insect-trump of earthly hope, 
Or love, or sorrow, mid the peal sublime 
Of thy tremendous hymn? Even ocean shrinks 

Back from thy brotherhood, and all his 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 to 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, 
Heard thy deep anthem; and those wrecking fires, 
That wait the archangel's signal to dissolve 
This solid earth, shall find Jehovah's name 
Graven, as with a thousand diamond spears, 
On thine unending volume.
Every leaf,
That lifts itself within thy wide domain,
Doth gather greenness from thy living spray,
Yet trembles at the baptism. Lo!—yon birds
Do boldly venture near, and bathe their wings
Amid thy mist and foam. 'Tis meet for them
To touch thy garment's hem and lightly stir
The snowy leaflets of thy vapor wreath.
For they may sport unharmed amid the cloud,
Or 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 with the tablet of a song,
Were profanation.

Thou dost make the soul
A wondering witness of thy majesty;
But as it presses with delirious joy
To tread thy vestibule, dost chain its step
And tame its rapture, with the humbling view
Of its own nothingness, bidding it stand
In the dread presence of the Invisible,
As if to answer to its God through thee.

POEM BY A. S. RIDGELY.

The late Mr. A. S. Ridgely, of Baltimore, Md., interprets the grandeur of Niagara in the following lyric.

"Man lays his sceptre on the ocean waste,
His footprints stiffen in the Alpine snows,
But only God moves visibly in Thee,
O King of Floods! that with resistless fate
Down plungest in thy mighty width and depth.
* * * * * Amazement, terror, fill,
Impress and overcome the gazer's soul.

Man's schemes and dreams and petty littleness
Lie open and revealed. Himself far less—
Kneeling before thy great confessional—
Than are the bubbles of the passing tides.
Words may not picture thee, nor pencil paint
Thy might of waters, volumed vast and deep;
Thy many-toned and all-pervading voice:
Thy wood-crown'd Isle, fast anchor'd on the brink
Of the dread precipice; thy double stream,
Divided, yet in beauty unimpaired;
Thy wat'ry caverns and thy crystal walls;
Thy crest of sunlight and thy depths of shade,
Boiling and seething like a Phlegethon
Amid the wind-swept and convolving spray.
Steady as Faith and beautiful as Hope.
There, of beam and cloud the fair creation,
The rainbow arches its ethereal hues.
From flint and granite in compacture strong;
Not with steel thrice harden'd—but with the wave
Soft and translucent—did the new-born Time
Chisel thy altars. Here hast thou ever poured
Earth's grand libation to Eternity,
Thy misty incense rising unto God—
The God that was and is and is to be.”

CREATION'S PRIDE.

By Wilhelm Meister.

The following contribution is from a German poet, signed “Wilhelm Meister.”

Niagara's canon, swept by waters grand!
No gorge like thine, nor depths, the mighty hand
Of time hath wrought.

A whirlpool deep within thy walls doth hiss,
And, raging 'round, sinks down in dark abyss
To unknown depths.

Thy cataract stupendous is, and fierce;
No human voice or sound can ever pierce
Its deaf'ning roar.

Around Ontario's blue and wide domain,
No mountains check, nor lofty barriers chain,
Thine outlet vast.

Thy seething currents rend with awful might
Great rocks, that nature in chaotic night
Did rear on high.

In the great ocean's infinite expanse
Thy volumes rest, and with their powers, enhance
The vasty deep.
POEM BY JAMES SILK BUCKINGHAM.

James Silk Buckingham (born at Flushing, near Falmouth, England, 1786; died at London, 1855), a celebrated English traveler and man of letters, wrote the following lines at the first sight of the Falls, August 13, 1837:

Hail! Sovereign of the world of floods! whose majesty and might
First dazzles, then enraptures, then o’erawes the aching sight;
The pomp of kings and emperors, in every clime and zone,
Grows dim beneath the splendour of thy glorious watery throne.

No fleets can stop thy progress, no armies bid thee stay,
But onward,—onward,—onward.—thy march still holds its way;
The rising mists that veil thee as thy heralds go before,
And the music that proclaims thee is the thund’ring cat’ract’s roar.

Thy diadem’s an emerald, of the clearest, purest hue,
Set round with waves of snow-white foam, and spray of feathery dew.
While tresses of the brightest pearls float o’er thine ample sheet,
And the rainbow lays its gorgeous gems in tribute at thy feet.

Thy reign is from the ancient days, thy sceptre from on high;
Thy birth was when the distant stars first lit the glowing sky;
The sun, the moon, and all the orbs that shine upon thee now,
Beheld the wreath of glory which first bound thine infant brow.

And from that hour to this, in which I gaze upon thy stream,
From age to age, in Winter’s frost or Summer’s sultry beam,
By day, by night, without a pause, thy waves, with loud acclaim,
In ceaseless sounds have still proclaimed the Great Eternal’s name.
For whether, on thy forest banks, the Indian of the wood,
Or, since his day, the red man’s foe on his fatherland has stood;
Whoe'er has seen thine incense rise, or heard thy torrents roar,
Must have knelt before the God of all to worship and adore.

Accept then, O Supremely Great! O Infinite! O God!
From this primeval altar, the green and virgin sod,
The humble homage that my soul in gratitude would pay
To Thee whose shield has guarded me through all my wandering way.

For if the ocean be as nought in the hollow of thine hand,
And the stars of the bright firmament in thy balance grains of sand;
If Niagara’s rolling flood seems great to us who humbly bow
O Great Creator of the Whole, how passing great art Thou!

But though thy power is far more vast than finite mind can scan,
Thy mercy is still greater shown to weak, dependent man;
For him thou cloth’st the fertile globe with herbs, and fruit, and seed;
For him the seas, the lakes, the streams, supply his hourly need.

Around, on high, or far, or near, the universal whole
Proclaims thy glory, as the orbs in their fixed courses roll;
And from creation's grateful voice the hymn ascends above,
While heaven re-echoes back to earth the chorus—“God is love.”
POEM BY JOHN GARDINER CALKINS BRAINARD.

The following poem on Niagara was written by the American poet, John Gardiner Calkins Brainard, while editor of the "Connecticut Mirror," 1822-1827. The editor of "Littell's Living Age," in 1874, pronounced this the finest poem ever written on the subject, yet, strange to say, Mr. Brainard never saw the great cataract.

The thoughts are strange that crowd into my brain
While I look upward to thee. It would seem
As if God poured thee from his hollow hand,
Had hung his bow upon thine 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 rang
From war's vain trumpet, by thy thundering side?
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 mountain? A light wave
That breaks and whispers of its Maker's might.

APOSTROPHE TO NIAGARA.

By Phoebe A. Hanaford.

Mrs. Phoebe A. Hanaford, of New Haven, Conn., born in Massachusetts in 1829, is the author of the following lines. Her volume, "From Shore to Shore," gives evidence that she is a poetess of a very high order. It contains many gems of poetry on a wide range of subjects.

She is an extensive miscellaneous writer and a prominent Universalist clergywoman, and the first of her sex admitted to the ministry of her denomination. She draws inspiration from Niagara to teach the lesson of her beautiful and beneficent faith, The Larger Hope, as she reads it in Revelation and Nature. (I reproduce the poem from memory, as it is not at hand on going to press.)

Awe-struck I stand
Beside this avalanche of waves, and hear
The voice of God from out these watery depths.

Emotion-full, my soul in vain attempts
To speak the thoughts that by this scene have birth.
Hark! to the sound of many waters here!
RAPIDS ABOVE HORSE SHOE FALL.
Like that great voice in Patmos, heard by John,  
It speaks of power, restless energy,  
And mighty purpose unconfined by man.  
To me it speaks of God Almighty's love,  
Forever surging round the human soul;  
The rocks of sin, the shoals of ignorance,  
But bid those waves of love in tumult rise,

In rapids like old ocean's storm waves, or, as here,  
In one vast watersheet the cataracts plunge.  
Thus shall it be till time shall be no more,  
And every soul is borne upon its waves,  
All cleansed in its pure water, to the land,  
Where, joyful, they shall all be moored at last.

NIAGARA FALLS.

By Lord Morpeth.

George William Frederick Howard, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland from 1855 to 1864, better known as Lord Morpeth, wrote the following lines in one of the Table Rock Albums. His lines abundantly prove that he was poetical, if not a poet.

"There's nothing great or bright, thou glorious Fall!  
Thou mayest not to the fancy's sense recall.  
The thunder-riven clouds, the lightning's leap,  
The stirring of the chambers of the deep;  
Earth's emerald green, and many-tinted dyes,  
The fleecy whiteness of the upper skies;  
The tread of armies thickening as they come,  
The boom of cannon and the beat of drum;  
The brow of beauty and the form of grace,  
The passion and the prowess of our race;  
The song of Homer in its loftiest hour,  
The unresisted sweep of human power;  
Britannia's trident on the azure sea,  
America's young shout of Liberty!  
Oh! may the waves which madden in thy deep  
There spend their rage nor climb the encircling steep;  
And till the conflict of thy surges cease,  
The nations on thy banks repose in peace."
GOAT ISLAND.

By Thomas Gold Appleton.

Peace and perpetual quiet are around.
Upon the erect and dusky file of stems,
Sustaining you far roof, expelling sound,
Through which the sky sparkles (a rain of gems
Lost in the forest’s depth of shade), the sun
At times doth shoot an arrow of pure gold,
Flecking majestic trunks with hues of dun,
Veining their barks with silver, and betraying
Secret initials tied in true love knots;
Of hearts no longer through green alleys straying.
But stifled in the world’s distasteful grots.
The silence is monastic, save in spots
Where heaves a glimmer of uncertain light.
And rich wild tones enchant the woodland night.

POEM BY THOMAS MOORE.

Written from the banks of the St. Lawrence, and addressed “To the Lady Charlotte Rowdan.”
The famous Irish poet and writer of songs visited America in 1804, and thus described Niagara Falls as it appeared in the winter of that year. He was the first of the poets to write a poem on the Cataract of which history makes mention.

* * *

“I dreamt not then, ere the rolling year
Had filled his circle, I should wander here
In musing awe; should tread this wonderous world,
See all its store of island waters hurl’d
In one vast volume down Niagara’s steep,
Or calm behold them, in transparent sleep,
Where the blue hills of old Toronto shed
Their evening shadows o’er Ontario’s bed;
Should trace the grand Cadaraqui, and glide
Down the white rapids of his lordly tide
Through massive woods, ’mid islets flowering fair,
And blooming glades, where the first sinful pair
For consolation might have weeping trod.
When banish’d from the garden of their God.
Oh, Lady! these are miracles, which man,
Cag’d in the bonds of Europe’s pigmy span.
Can scarcely dream of,—which his eye must see
To know how wonderful this world can be!”
On Goat Island.

"The charm of Primeval Loneliness."
"I longed for Andes; all around and Alps,
Hoar kings and priests of Nature robed in snow,
Throned as for judgment in a solemn row,
With icy mitres on their giant scalps,
Dumb giants frowning at the strife below.

"Veiled in soft mists and cinctured by the bow,
Thy pastoral charms may fascinate the sight,
But have not power to set my soul aglow,
Raptured by fear and wonder and delight."

NIAGARA.

"I longed for the sublime. Thou art too fair,
Too fair, Niagara, to be sublime!
In calm, slow strength thy mighty floods do flow
And stand a cliff of Cataracts in the air,
Yet all too beauteous, Water-bride of Time,

POEM BY MARTIN F. TUPPER.

Martin F. Tupper, D. C. L., F. R. S. A British author; born 1810, died 1889. The "Proverbial" philosopher gives his estimate of Niagara in these lines.
POEM BY WILLIS GAYLORD CLARK.

Willis Gaylord Clark, American journalist, formerly chief editor of the “Philadelphia Gazette,” born 1810, died 1841, thus describes the Great Oracle:

“Here speaks the voice of God—let man be dumb,
Nor with his vain aspiring hither come:
That voice impels the hollow sounding floods
And like a Presence fills the distant woods.

“This groaning rocks the Almighty’s finger piled;
For ages here his painted bow has smiled,
Mocking the changes and the chance of time—
Eternal, beautiful, serene, sublime.”
INCIDENTS OF INTEREST.
MAID OF THE MIST.
INCIDENTS OF INTEREST.

A REMARKABLE PHENOMENON.

"Truth stranger than fiction."

Niagara Falls fifty years ago a strange spectacle presented itself. On the morning of March 29, 1848, the river had run dry, and its channel was desolate; the rocks were bare, black and mournfully forbidding. It is difficult to imagine such a catastrophe as that which had occurred the night before. It reads like fiction to all who have seen this tremendous avalanche of falling waters pouring over the crest of the great cataract, but its recital only proves the old adage, "Truth is stranger than fiction," literally true in this narrative. As far back as tradition and history reach there is no account of a similar previous occurrence, nor is there any record of one since, and such a phenomenon may never occur again. This singular cessation of the waters was due to the following causes:

The winter of 1848 had been intensely severe, and the ice formation on Lake Erie was unusually thick. This great crop of ice was loosened around the shores by the warm days of a prematurely early spring. During the previous day a strong easterly wind drove the great mass of ice up the
lake. In the evening of the 28th of March the wind suddenly changed around and blew a veritable hurricane from the west, and the vast field of ice was brought down with terrific force to the neck of the lake, and the inlet of Niagara River was completely choked up by a prodigious jam of ice.

It required but a short interval of time for the Falls to drain off the water left in the river below Buffalo, and in a short time the river ran dry, or was reduced to a wide but shallow creek. The Horse Shoe Fall was smitten with palsy, and the paroxysms of death appeared in its fast ebbing tides. The pulse of the American channel had ceased to beat; it was as dead as if an Egyptian pestilence had passed over it, and its grand curtain seemed to be rolled up forever. The roar of Niagara had subsided to the dismal moan of an autumn wind. The requiem of the dead was heard in its deep abyss and resounding down its desolate aisles.

From the head of Goat Island, looking out towards the Canadian rapids, no water could be seen. The wonderfully beautiful jet of water, which visitors have admired shooting up from what is singularly termed "Leaping Rock," a paradoxical expression, had vanished. This beautiful leap and dash of the waters can be seen any day springing over this rock situated about 650 feet from the outer Sister Island.

Above this point many persons passed in vehicles from the American to the Canadian side and returned again. Mr. George W. Holley, an author of considerable note, who resided at that time at the Falls, went lumbering with a log cart and four horses just above the brink of the Horse Shoe
Fall. He also led an exploring party up the bed of the river for a considerable distance. The people of the vicinity went out exploring recesses, cavities and rocks, never before or since exposed to the eye of mortal man. The bivalves, univalves, turtles and shell-fish were in a sorry predicament. The turtles were in despair, and many found their way into the soup bowl, as the result of this singular swooning of the waters. The novelty of the scene would have been desolate and gloomy in the extreme had it not been known beyond a possibility of doubt that a change would soon come over this sudden suspension of the waters. The shades of night gathered over the strange drama of that day, but before daylight dawned the thundering waters were heard rushing and roaring with maddened fury, hurrying on to leap the barren precipice to the world below, and the beautiful and majestic Niagara was restored to its former grandeur. Its glorious curtain was rolled down once more; its magnificent robe un tarnished, its voice undiminished.

TRADITION.

Tradition tells us that the Indians living near the Falls annually held a war-whoop dance and festival, and offered up as a sacrifice to the Great Spirit of Niagara, the fairest daughter of the tribe, sending her over the Horse Shoe Fall in a canoe filled with fruits and flowers. The honor of being selected as the heroine of this sacrifice was eagerly coveted by the dusky maidens. On one occasion, the daughter of the chief was selected; her father, a widower, betrayed no feeling, though
she was the only treasure he had left, but as her canoe glided over the rapids he leaped into another and nearly overtook her as she bounded over the brink of the Cataract, and he met his death with her in the same boiling crater a few moments afterwards. According to the legend, this was the last sacrifice of the kind ever offered by the Indians.
THE INDIAN'S SACRIFICE TO NIAGARA'S GODS.
BLONDIN AND THE PRINCE OF WALES.

AT NIAGARA IN 1860.

BLONDIN, the celebrated French rope-walker, first visited Niagara in the spring of 1858. He was a unique compound of bones, brawn, muscle and unlimited nerve. He immediately expressed a desire to put a rope across the chasm of the river from Goat Island to the Canadian shore opposite for the purpose of walking across it and exhibiting upon it. He was looked upon as a fool and received little encouragement, but by indomitable perseverance he finally obtained the authority to stretch his rope just below the railway suspension bridge, and which was, if anything, the most dangerous part of the river. A rope about two inches in diameter, well and evenly twisted, was stretched across the river at this point as taut as it could be drawn. Stays of small rope were made fast to the cable: these he placed about ten inches apart. They ran parallel to each other from the center outward to the ends, which were anchored to the shore. People who saw Blondin traveling back and forth over the catenary curved cable adjusting the guy ropes to it, soon made up their minds that he knew no danger would happen to him unless something very unusual should occur. He was as nimble as a kitten, and it seemed to all that nothing but a cyclone could cause him to fall off the rope into the rapids below. His first performance astonished everybody. He exhibited various
gymnastic feats on the rope, stopped in the center of it, sat down, rolled over and over, and, finally, let down a cord to the little steamer “Maid of the Mist,” from which he drew up a bottle and took a drink.

He continued giving such performances during that entire season, and in 1860 exhibited before the Prince of Wales. Never before, and probably never since, has such a double attraction drawn such immense crowds to Niagara Falls (the grand opening of Niagara in 1885, free to the world, excepted). The whole world seemed to Milwaukee, and the tickets were sold from these points at a great reduction. Blondin received a
percentage of all receipts, and made a snug sum. He never disappointed his audiences by any failure to fill the bills as advertised. August the 24th, of that year, he crossed the rope bound hand and foot, and returned carrying a stove to the middle of the chasm, made a fire and, turning cook, made an egg omelet and lowered it to the little steamer, "Maid of the Mist," to the captain. In September he crossed with his feet in bushel baskets.

The French rope acrobat could do anything on the rope with perfect impunity, but the novelty finally wore off at the end of a two-season performance. His greatest feat was considered to be the carrying of his manager on his back. The latter afterwards said he would not take the whole of the United States and repeat the adventurous ride.

The Prince of Wales shook hands with him after one of his performances, gave him a fat purse, commended his courage and nerve, and had quite a chat with him.

After three years of sojourn at Niagara, Blondin sold his home which he had purchased there and went to London, England.
NIAGARA FALLS' BRIDGES.

THE BOY WHOSE KITE FIRST CROSSED THE CHASM.

Orrin E. Dunlap, in Leslie's Weekly.

The second steel arch bridge across the Niagara gorge is in course of construction, to replace the upper suspension bridge close to the Falls.

The signing of the contracts for the new arch was practically an order for the destruction of the last of the famous great suspension bridges at Niagara, so far as their original location is concerned, and the last of the structures traversed by thousands of tourists in an admiring mood will live in memory only. All arrangements for the building of the first bridge over the gorge were completed early in 1848, and the contractors set about finding a means of establishing communication between the cliffs at the narrowest point near the whirlpool rapids. The idea of overcoming the difficulty by a powerful rocket was conceived. But this did not work, and some schoolboys flying their kites on the river bank gave the suggestion that the desired connection might be made by allowing a kite to settle on the opposite bank.
The most adept of the boys in flying their kites was little Homan Walsh, and the contractors invited him to try his skill. The prevailing wind at the Falls is from the southwest, and after waiting some days for a favorable wind, young Walsh walked up stream two miles to the ferry, and crossed to the Canadian side, reaching which he proceeded down stream to the site of the bridge. The wind was blowing strong, and he soon had his kite, named the Union, flying heavenward. The cord went out rapidly, but the gale was too strong to allow the kite to settle. Night came on and Walsh and boys who had gathered built a fire on the bank to keep warm, awaiting a lull in the wind towards midnight. The anxious watchers on the opposite shore also built a fire. Walsh knew then that his program was understood, and that there would be a close watch kept for the kite.

The wind went down as expected, and about 12 o'clock increased tension and jerking on the kite string told him that his kite had landed and that the cord was safely across the gorge. The distance and roar of the rapids prevented verbal communication, therefore they were uncertain as to each other's movements. Suddenly there came a heavy jerk on the cord and then it fell loose in Walsh's hands. So much sag had been given it that it had reached the river below, in which a vast amount of ice was flowing, and the cord was broken in two. Disappointed, Walsh wound up his end of the cord and started for the ferry. Reaching there he was told the river was so full of ice that the boats dared not venture out. For eight days he was ice-bound on the Canadian shore.

When finally he arrived home he found his kite uninjured, and after waiting again for a favorable
wind to fly it from the New York State bank, he again crossed to the Canadian side. The wind was favorable and in thirty minutes he had landed his kite, and the desired connection between the cliffs was established. The cord was used to draw a heavier cord across the river, and this was followed by a rope and a wire cable. Other cables followed, and a cable-way on which an iron basket ran, now in possession of the Buffalo Historical Society, was operated in building the bridge. Walsh received $50 for his work. He is still alive and resides in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Other cables were strung and placed on towers. From these cables were suspended two bridges, each about three feet wide and forty feet apart. Between them the cable-way was operated. The second of these bridges had been carried out about 250 feet from the New York State bank and about 150 feet from the Canadian bank, when a terrible tornado swept down the gorge from the southwest. The unfinished bridge was parted near the towers and the cables were displaced. Far out over midstream, 200 feet above the water, six men were at work. For a short time all seemed about to be lost. Back and forth the bridges swung at the mercy of the gale. Two of the men made their way to the bank, but four were left on a broken extremity. The rain came down in torrents. As soon as the storm subsided a little, the iron basket was let out on the cable with one man in it. He carried a ladder with him, and when he reached the wreck he used it to make a bridge, over which the men passed into the basket and were pulled ashore safely.

The steel arch now being built will be the fourth bridge erected on the site. Connection at
this point was made between the cliffs by carrying a rope across the river on an ice bridge. The first bridge was a wooden structure, opened to the public, January 2, 1869. In 1887–88 it was rebuilt in steel. On the night of January 9–10, 1889, the new structure was wrecked by wind and turned bottom up in the gorge. A portion of this bridge still lies beneath the waters of the river. The last man to cross it was Dr. John Hodge, of Niagara Falls, who went to the Canadian side to visit a very sick patient. On his return he had a frightful experience, and narrowly escaped being blown into the gorge. The suspension bridge was rebuilt in 1889, and it is this bridge that is now to give way to the latest steel arch.

With the building of the arch the present suspension bridge will be taken down and carried down stream seven miles, where it is to be rebuilt on the site of the old Lewiston bridge, which was wrecked by wind on April 16, 1864, under remarkable circumstances. In March and early in April of the year mentioned the ice came down the river from Lake Erie in great and unusual quantities. An immense gorge was formed below the bridge, and the ice piled up about the anchorages of the guys to such an extent that it created alarm that when it moved it would carry the guys away. The gorge broke and the owners of the bridge congratulated themselves that their care had resulted in saving the structure. Nice weather followed, but the bridge men did not think to replace the guys. A fierce storm came down the gorge and the bridge was swept away. It was never rebuilt, but over the gorge to-day, from cliff to cliff, the cables swing, attracting much attention from passers
through the now popular route of travel, and affording, it is said, in the past a means of criminals escaping from the United States into the Dominion.

HOW TO SEE THE FALLS ARIGHT.

The writer, having visited the Falls of Niagara about forty times, thinks he knows what to advise visitors to do who wish to view it aright and get the best impression of it.

After arriving, the tourist should select his hotel, a list of which is given at the end of this article. After washing off the dust of travel, we presume he will want to start out sight-seeing. Avoid hacks and carriages by all means, unless your time is very much limited. It is never undignified to walk “where God has put His seal.” Every step is crowned with glorious visions of His power, and you will want to linger too many times to suit carriage-drivers, no matter what their terms may be. The American Fall is not more than ten or fifteen minutes’ walk at most from any hotel on the American side. First wend your way to Prospect Point, at the brink of the Cataract, and from the corner of the stone wall let your eye catch and at one glance take in the grand panorama before you. The Horse Shoe Falls can be seen in the distance. Now center your eyes on one of the waves just in front of you, following it as far down the brink as possible, until it ends in a million opalescent white bubbles, as it disappears out of sight. Waves follow waves; onward they travel like troopers; you may watch them for hours and find no two alike, as they leap
THE THREE GRACES.
to their destiny, 163 feet below. At the farther side of the Fall you will observe Luna Island, beyond which is the Central Fall. To approach it you follow up the river and cross the bridge over the rapids leading to Goat Island. On this bridge you will gaze in wonderment at the rapids, the sublime and fit portal to the American Falls. As you gaze on this mad rush of waters whirling down the incline slope, you will feel that your most imperial fancies have fallen far short of the great reality. You had placed the sublime wholly in extent, giving that the ascendancy, not anticipating, and forgetting entirely the more potent elements of motion and velocity now for the first time presented to your gaze. The ocean stretching beyond reach of vision, or swooping down upon the sternest lee-shore, is a feeble emblem of power than is the inevitable and despairing rush with which these tortured waters leap and plunge onward to the brink you have left behind. You will wish to linger at this enchanted sight, but you cannot, and you cross the bridge; a sign will direct you to the right to Luna Island and Falls.

As you wander through the wooded isle, and approach these objects, your eyes fix upon a special white crest of foam, and you turn to the right, pass down the stairs over the rushing stream until you are on Luna Island. From the center of the descending waters, a pillar of spray floods calmly up, and, if the sun is shining, it will be crowned by numerous rainbows rising above the verge of the abyss. You are now 1,060 feet across from where you obtained your first view. Retrace your steps and follow the road parallel to the river until you come to the Biddle Staircase, down which you wind to the foot of
the precipice. You are here close upon the fragments of rock that fell from just in front of the tower in February, 1852. The water at this extremity of the Fall descends in light, feathery forms, contrasting finely with the solid masses in which it plunges down the center of the sweeping curve. The old stone Terrapin Tower was perched upon the very brink of the precipice above, so close that the next fall of rock would carry it along with it; hence it was, in 1874, removed. The path to the right, to the foot of the staircase, leads to the Cave of the Winds, which lies behind the Central Fall. As you enter it amid the blinding spray, you will find it truly "a dismal roaring of wind and water." You are across, and stand secure on the bottom of the cave. Now look up and see what a magnificent arch is formed by the solid rock on the one side and the descending mass of water on the other. Which is the more solid and firm you would hardly venture to say. If it is time for the sun to set you are most fortunate, for you shall see what you can see nowhere else on earth—three
rainbows, one within the other, not half formed and incomplete, as is the record of our daily life, but filling up the complete circle, absolutely perfect.

Retrace your steps, ascend the Biddle Staircase, turn to the right to the Horse Shoe Falls, and by descending a series of steps, and crossing the Terrapin Bridge, where formerly stood the old Tower, you get within a few paces of the precipice of the cataract. Here is the grandest and most terrible sight on earth, equalled only by the view from the vestibule below when on board of the “Maid of the Mist.” Linger here. Ever and anon lift your eyes from the curving crest of the Horse Shoe to the innumerable avalanche of waters that sweep around the circumference of that majestic curve, and you will feel that Niagara is bearing inspection and growing upon you. You will not wonder that Jenny Lind, the Swedish singer, twice commissioned an artist to paint this scene for her, or that Brainard, the poet, so beautifully described it in these words:

THE THREE SISTER ISLANDS.
"The thoughts are strange that crowd into my brain
While I look upward to thee. It would seem
As if God pour’d thee from his hollow hand
And hung his bow upon thine awful front," etc.,

or as Ridgely graphically describes this particular view:

"Here hast thou ever poured
Earth's grand libation to Eternity,
Thy misty incense rising unto God—
The God that was and is and is to be."

Retrace your steps and get some one to direct you to the Three Sister Islands, or, after ascending the steps, turn to the right, follow the direction of sign-posts, and you will soon reach them, connected one with the other by bridges. From the third Sister Island you will obtain one of the most terrific and lasting scenes in Nature. The maddened, roaring and leaping waters defy the pen of man to describe their awful power and sublime magnificence displayed here; it is not attempted. Now return to the bridge over which you crossed the first (American Falls rapids). A short cut across Goat Island will bring you to the bridge, upon which you pause a second time to view the restless waves, and see them coming afar off, apparently out of the deep blue sky, in one great sweep, multitudinous, illimitable, foaming and eddying around the rocks, and rising in great swells of unparalleled beauty, rushing onward to take the final leap.
Next descend the incline plane to the foot of the American Falls. What a sight greets the eye, never to be forgotten! After returning to the top of the inclined railway, the next view should be taken from the top of the steel tower, reached by safety elevators, where you get a bird’s-eye view of the river from Lake Erie to the Falls at your feet, and of the gorge onward to Lake Ontario. After
descending the tower, go over the suspension foot bridge to the Canada side, and view the cataract in its entirety.

The American Fall and a part of the Horse Shoe Fall lie directly parallel with the Canada shore, and its whole extent can be taken in at a single glance. It is this oneness of aspect which renders the prospect from the Canada side so very impressive, and no doubt it will give you the best view yet obtained, for here you have a strong, sharp outline, which may afterward be filled up at leisure. This was Charles Dickens' favorite view. To secure the most striking view of the Horse Shoe Fall you should descend to the bottom of the cliff at a point near the ferry landing. You will notice the current nearest the Canada shore runs up stream, as though seeking an outlet in the direction from which it came. If you can manage to work your way up to the edge of the precipice, or rather to the foot of the Fall, you will observe that the descending sheet of water occupies the entire field of vision, and it descends in a mass, apparently as solid as though carved from marble. It is only now that you begin to comprehend the height of the Fall. It makes you dizzy to look up to the upper edge of the rushing column. You are standing just midway between the top and the bottom, on the ruins of Table Rock, the last part of which fell in 1887. It was from this point, before Table Rock fell, that Mrs. Sigourney wrote her beautiful poem on the rock in 1834. The seething whirlpool you now look down upon with terror as you watch the waters writhe and eddy as though frenzied with its fearful leap. Round and round it goes in solemn gyrations, bearing with it whatever floating object may have plunged into its vortex. From this point of view the lines of Mrs. Hanaford on Niagara will be recalled:
"Awe-struck I stand
Beside this avalanche of waves,
And hear the voice
Of God from out these watery depths."

No words could be more appropriate or significant to describe the emotions in this upward look.

After ascending the bank of the river the visitor may enter the stone building known as the Museum, from the top of the tower of which a magnificent view of the Falls can be obtained. Other points of interest connected with the Falls are the Whirlpool Rapids just below the Railway Suspension Bridge, where the gorge is exceedingly deep and narrow in comparison with other portions of it, and the water is forced through at the speed of 45 miles an hour. The tourist who can fail to be impressed by the grandeur or beauty of the gorge at this point, or the terrible impetuosity of the plunging waters, sometimes swelling and leaping to the height of 30 feet, must be absolutely unimpressionable; but so is he that does not feel the awfulness of the scene.

The famous Whirlpool, two or three miles below the rapids, is a place that no one who visits Niagara should fail to see. The new electric cars that run down the valley of the gorge on the American side will take the tourist to these places. An excursion on this line will be found to be one of the most romantic in the world. The electric line on the Canada side has charms of its own, and the patronage of it pays a big dividend. It will take you to Brock's monument, one of the most beautiful
shafts ever erected by a grateful country to the memory of a gallant soldier. The three bridges that span the gorge are wonderful pieces of architecture, and will be admired by all who visit them.

Those who descend the winding staircase on the Canada side, and wend their way over piles of rocks that have fallen from above, should advance towards the Falls under the lee of the curvated banks. Breathing here will become difficult, but there is an opportunity afforded to contemplate the Cataract in all its grandeur. We feel more sensible of the vast height and immense weight of the waters from this than any other position. The cavern formed by the projecting rocks extends for some distance behind the sheet of water, and were not the difficulty of breathing great, its entrance would be easy. Proceed onward and you finally reach the interior of the watery cave. The difficulty of breathing will diminish after passing the outer edge of the Fall. Now look upward, and the lucid stream will appear curved overhead, illumined to phosphoric brightness by the piercing sunbeams, and sustained at the very point of intersection upon the dark, rocky pile which completes the cone at its base. Immersed in awful sublimity, we pace the recesses of this gloomy abode, both real and fanciful—subterraneous, aerial and aquatic, over a floor of shelving fragments, and without any other dream than that of being crushed by falling rock or precipitated into the boiling abyss. After imprudent curiosity is satisfied, every visitor will retrace his steps, and will never forget the impressions made by this subterranean exploration.
PRINCIPAL HOTELS.

In the list of hotels given below no preference is given in this article to any one of them. Some are more beautifully situated than others, but they are given here in the order of their capacity only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotel</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imperial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cataract House</td>
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<td>International Hotel</td>
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<td>Salt's New Hotel</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clifton House (Canada side)</td>
<td>350</td>
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