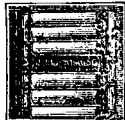


Passage under the American Fall—Road round Iris Island.

THE AMERICAN SHEET.



HERE, between the Central and American Falls, there is a vacant space, immediately at the foot of Prospect Island ; it is roofed by the tumbling cascade. Let us enter and rest awhile. Oh, what a view have we here !

Come now, we will ramble to the American Fall, and pass under it as far as you dare. There is no doubt of there being a passage clear through, but who is he who would dare to pass it? How overwhelming is the majesty of this place—how awe-inspiring, yet sublimely beautiful !

We will now ascend the **BIDDLE STAIRCASE**, and resume our dress. Here we will rest, before we take

THE TOUR OF IRIS ISLAND.

The road runs entirely round the Island, and presents many attractions. Here you perceive the road has been carried away by the constant encroachments of the ceaseless flood.

The Mad Rapids—Remains of the flag-ship Detroit.

See those trees that are now trailing in the water. They were once flourishing on the firm bank. Look from this point at the mad rapids, as they career along to their awful boundary.

Those timbers which you observe amongst the rocks are the remains of the *Detroit*, the flag-ship of Captain Barclay, which was captured together with several other vessels, in the memorable battle of Lake Erie, when Commodore **PERRY** gained a decisive victory over the British, September the 10th, 1813.

The *Detroit* was brought here from Buffalo in the autumn of 1841, with the intention of sending her over the Falls. Great numbers of spectators assembled, but were doomed to be disappointed, for the *Detroit*, striking against one of those ledges of rocks in the rapids, was at once dismasted, and became a wreck ; part of her went over the Falls in the night time, and parts have been going over at intervals since, until now the few sticks which remain, are all that may be seen of the once gallant ship-of-war.

Moss Island—The miniature Cataract.

MOSS ISLAND.



HIS lovely Island is so called from its being covered with a lovely velvet-like moss. It presents one of the sweetest spots that eye can rest upon.

Here that eccentric character called "The Hermit of the Falls," proposed to build a cottage in the rustic style, with a draw-bridge to the island, by which he might be alone when he pleased. It is a pity that permission was not given for the erection of this hermitage, as it would have added very much to the romance of the Falls.

The islands outside Moss Island are called the Sisters. It would be a vast addition to the interest of this locality, if these beautiful islands were united by bridges.

Between Moss and Iris Islands, there is a miniature cataract, which is inexpressibly beautiful. This the Hermit of the Falls was in the habit of using as a shower-bath, and certainly a more delightful

Head of Iris Island—The Hermit of the Falls.

one could not have been enjoyed by any prince or potentate.

We are now at the head of Iris Island. Here, before the formation of the bridge, the stranger was compelled to gratify his curiosity at the peril of his life, by navigating to this point between the rapids on either side—a daring venture.

See, here is the far-famed



HOUSE OF THE HERMIT.

Here is the spot where resided the eccentric and unfortunate FRANCIS ABBOTT, commonly known as the HERMIT OF THE FALLS.

He was a young Englishman, who, coming to visit the Falls in 1829, became so overpowered that he could not withdraw himself from the romantic spot, but remained week after week, and month after month, until at last his love of the wild scene became a mono mania, and he shunned all society, save that of nature. He was learned, highly ac-

The Hermit's last resting place.

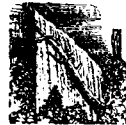
complished, gifted with a most attractive person, and a finished elegance of manner, which at once bespoke him of high origin. But, as to his real name or history, all is secret.

In June, 1831, he was bathing in the river below the Falls, when, it is supposed, he got into the current and was drowned. His body was picked up some ten days after at Fort Niagara, and buried at his loved Niagara Falls. He was about twenty-eight years of age when he perished. But years and centuries will pass away before the memory can be obliterated of

THE HERMIT OF THE FALLS.

The Graves—Bridge at Bath Island.

THE GRAVES.



EAR this spot on an elevated sand-bank some mounds existed, which, on examination, proved to be graves. Human remains were discovered in them; each mound containing a body in a sitting position. None of the Indian tribes now in existence can account for these remains, although it is highly probable that they were of some of the aboriginal tribes, who here worshiped the Great Spirit within the sound of his almighty voice, sent up from the fathomless depths of the waters!

We have now gained the bridge which leads to Bath Island.

Point View—The ferry-stairs.

THE CANADA SIDE.



HAVING now seen all that is worthy of notice on the American, let us cross to the British shore.

Here is Point View, from whence we took our first observation of the Falls; and here close at hand is the ferry-stairs. Let us step into the cars, which an overshot water-wheel when loosened, will cause to descend, and at the same time bring up the return cars on the next track to ours. This water-wheel is turned by a branch of the cataract itself. In the spring of 1850, the rocks here gave way and impeded the course of this railway for a time.

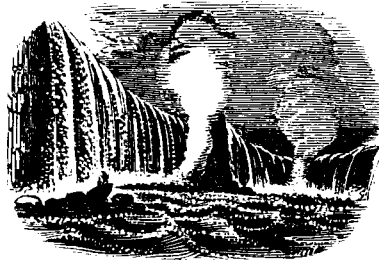
Some persons walk up these stairs for exercise or amusement; but, as there are some 700 steps, the operation is very fatiguing. There is no additional charge made for descending in the cars to those who intend to cross the ferry; all is paid for at the head of the stairs.

At the bottom of this railway is a platform, and

The ferry-boat—The brawny boatman.

an easy flight of stairs, to the right of which brings you at once into the presence of the Falls.

This view is very grand. But, muffle yourself up, and enter the ferry-boat, that we may cross to the Canada side. There is no view more comprehensive or grander than the



VIEW FROM THE FERRY

Over to the other side, is but a distance of a little over four hundred yards, in a straight line. But, to humor the current, this brawny boatman of ours pulls up towards the Falls, and is by it borne back towards his landing, which he has to pull hard for, lest he be carried past. There has been no accident to record at this apparently dangerous passage, within the memory of any one living.

Crossing the river—View from the Canada side.

Now view the whole panorama of the Falls. Can any thing equal that? Look above, around, and beneath you. How awful is the might of that Supreme Being whose work this is.

The boat begins to toss, but don't be alarmed, it is the agitation of the current, and the skill of our experienced boatman will soon bear us into still water.

Gaze on that amphitheatre of Cataracts, and listen to their roar. Extensive as they seem, we have but a perspective view of them—the beautiful Horse-shoe being a considerable distance from us.

Now we are nearing the Province of Queen Victoria, where a circuitous road leads to the lofty height above.

As we ascend, let us pause at intervals, and look back upon the rushing Niagara, which we have just crossed, and as we ascend still higher, and the road winds, we behold the glorious Falls in all their sublimity.

But let us advance up this easy-ascending road, for the formation of which we have to thank MESSRS. STREET and CLARKE, to whom, as a compensation, the Canadian Government granted the

View from Table Rock.

sole right to the ferry for twenty-one years, from the completion of the road in 1827.

Now, that we have reached the upper world again, let us proceed towards the Falls and gaze on the view from Table Rock.

Table Rock, less in extent than formerly.

VIEW FROM TABLE ROCK.

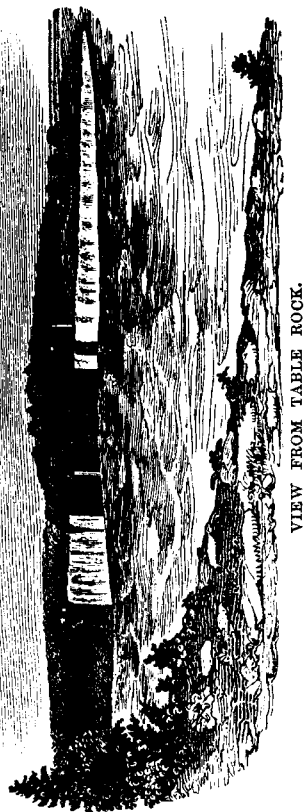


NIAGARA FALLS here stretches out before us in matchless might and grandeur.

This Rock, which derives its name from its flat surface, stretching over the chasm like the raised leaf of a table, is on the same level with the Falls, and belongs to the great ledge over which the Horseshoe falls.

Cautionously approach the edge, and look down. Is it not thrilling! Look not long, lest your head grow dizzy.

Table Rock was of much greater extent than it is at present. Very large portions have from time to time fallen away. In the year 1818, a piece nearly one hundred and sixty feet long, and forty feet wide, broke away at midnight, arousing and terrifying the inhabitants for miles round, with the mighty crash, which they conceived to be an earthquake. In 1828, and the following year, other portions came away, and from existing appearances,



VIEW FROM TABLE ROCK.

Staircase under the rock—Table Rock from below.

it is evident that another crash may soon be expected. Let us now return to the staircase that leads under the rock.

Here we will procure the apparel necessary to protect us from the effects of a wetting, which we may surely expect.

These spiral stairs were erected by a Mr. For-syth, several years ago, and afford a great facility for viewing one of the most astounding sights that can be presented to the mind of man, namely:

TABLE ROCK FROM BELOW

Here is a temple of the living God! Here is the sanctuary of His awful greatness. Here the incense of air and water, rising in endless mist to heaven, amid the humid thunder which roars and roars eternally.

Where may the ambitious, the proud, and the arrogant so perfectly judge of their own excessive littleness, as in the giant presence of this sacred shrine?

Come, let us press on our way behind the sheet. The spray beats hard in our faces, and with thick mist almost prevents our progress. But, remember thousands have pursued this course before us, and why not we?

The Ledge—The Rock—The Cavern.

Here we halt. The clouds of driving mists are thinner. Let us look around. The spot on which you stand, is but a ledge some three feet wide. The Rock is ninety feet above our heads, and beneath our feet, it is seventy feet down to the boiling cauldron where the tumbling waters fall.

See that vast cavern, which, like some mysterious recess of Nature, stretches out in seeming safety before us. We dare not venture more than a few feet towards it, and that at the extreme peril of our lives.

You have now seen Termination Rock. Let us return and change our wet clothes—register your name, take a certificate of your visit to this wonderful spot, rest, view the curiosities of the Museum, and return to the ferry.

Again we view from the tossed boat, the awing grandeur of the scene, and, with the details fresh upon our mind, what can be more thrilling than the great frontispiece before us?

Now we are landed once again on the soil of the United States. We ascend the railway, and are once more in the village of Niagara Falls.