GUIDE TO NIAGARA FALLS.

Nearest Route to the Falls.

If the visitor stops at the Cataract House, or International, and wishes to take the nearest route to the Falls, pass down Falls Street* to the Ferry-House, go through the Ferry-House, and you will have a fine view of the American Fall. Height, 164 feet; width to Goat Island, opposite, 900 feet. The distance from your hotel to the Ferry House is about a third of a mile, or say ten or twelve minutes' walk. The view from this point is grand and imposing. The American and Horse Shoe Falls, Goat Island with its stately oaks and dark, waving forest, the opposite iron-bound shore, the river below, with the ferry-boats dancing like things of life upon the agitated waters,—all render it a place of much attractiveness.

If you wish to pass from this place to Goat Island, proceed up the bank a short distance till you come

*Falls Street runs east and west. The north side of the International is on this street. The railroad depot and American Hotel are on this street.
to the Iron Bridge leading over the Rapids; cross over the bridge, and keep to the right.

The Route to Goat Island.

From Goat or Iris Island are obtained the best and most striking views of the Falls. If you are at the Cataract House, or International, pass westwardly down Bridge Street,* and two or three minutes' walk will bring you to the

Iron Bridge,

leading to the toll-gate, on Bath Island. The bridge is about fifty rods above the Falls, and is an object of interest. The inquiry is not unfrequently made, How was it ever constructed over such a tremendous rapid? The first bridge was thrown across this angry stream in 1817, near the grist-mill, above the present bridge, with much hazard of life and great expense. It was carried away by the ice the ensuing spring. In 1818, another was constructed, where Bath Island Bridge now stands, by the Messrs. Porter brothers, the proprietors of the island.

A suitable pier was built at the water's edge; long timbers were projected over this abutment the distance they wished to sink the next pier, loaded on

the end next to the shore with stone, to prevent moving; legs were framed through the ends of the projecting timbers, resting upon the rocky bottom, thus forming temporary piers until more substantial ones could be built.

Rapids.

The next thing that attracts the attention of the visitor, as he passes on his route to Goat Island, is the Rapids. These are grand and impressive; thousands, in the summer season, particularly when the sky is clear, stand upon this bridge, and gaze upon the angry flood as it rushes past them in all its wild and tumultuous fury, filling the mind with emotions of awe and indescribable grandeur. Let the visitor look up the Rapids as far as the eye can extend; the river appears very much like the ocean dashing upon the beach after a gale.

From the head of Goat Island to the grand cataract, a distance of three-quarters of a mile, the river falls fifty-one feet. It increases in velocity from seven to thirty miles per hour, before it makes the final plunge.

The Toll-Gate

stands on Bath Island. Here you pay twenty-five cents (carriages free), and if you register your name you will have the privilege of passing

* Bridge Street is the only street between the International and Cataract Hotels.
and repassing any time during the current year. The small islands to the left, above the toll-gate, are called Ship and Brig Islands. Formerly a bridge extended to the larger one of these; and it was then called Lover's Retreat. The large building to the right is a paper-mill, in which is manufactured the paper of the New York Weekly and Tri-Weekly Tribune.

Chapin Island.
This island is to the right of and below the bridge, within a few rods of the American Fall. A man by the name of Chapin, while working on the bridge, was thrown into the stream, and carried by the current to this island. Mr. Joel R. Robinson rescued him with a skiff, and at this time both are living in our village. Hundreds of ladies and gentlemen witnessed this bold and daring adventure, which few, at so much hazard of life, would have had the nerve to attempt.

Goat Island.
The next point of interest, after passing a small bridge, is Iris or Goat Island. A good carriage-road leads around the island; distance, one mile and a quarter. Here are three ways: the left leads to the head of Goat Island, the middle one across the island to the Rapids, about sixty rods above the Horse Shoe Fall. But most of the visitors do, and we will, if you please, take to the right, from the fact that we get the less impressive view of the Falls at first, and the more grand and imposing last, which, in the opinion of the author, gives the mind more time to appreciate the magnificent grandeur and awful sublimity of these mighty works. Eighty rods brings us to the foot or north side of the island. The small sheet of water nearest you is

The Centre Fall, which is between Goat and Luna Island,—a narrow and beautiful fall of water. A bridge passes over this to Luna Island. Underneath the centre fall is the Cave of the Winds.

Luna Island
is a favorite spot. It is a small island, containing about three-fourths of an acre, to the right and on the east side of Goat Island, reached by a foot-bridge. It is called Luna Island, not because it resembles the moon, but from the circumstance of a lunar bow being seen from this place more advantageously than from any other point. If the visitor's nerves are pretty steady, he can stand within one foot of the Falls, and see the angry stream dashing in all its fury upon the rocks below, impatient to try its power in making this fearful leap. The sheet of
water to the right is the American Fall; that to the left, the Centre Fall.

It has often been remarked by strangers that this island trembles,—which is undoubtedly true; but the impression is somewhat heightened by a nervous temperament.

It was at a point, after we pass the small foot-bridge, about twenty-five feet above the Falls, that young Miss Antoinette De Forest, of Buffalo, aged eight years, by some unaccountable casualty fell into the river, and Charles Addington, aged twenty-two, jumped in to save her, and they both went over the Falls together, June 21, 1849.

The body of the girl was found, much mutilated, the next day, and that of the young man floated four or five days afterward, when it was recovered. This was one of the most afflictive scenes that has occurred within our recollection.

Return by the same way to Goat Island. After resting a few moments, pass up the river to a sign on a tree,—"Biddle Stairs," which lead to the

 Cave of the Winds.

This cave is between Goat and Luna Island, under the Centre Fall, and is reached via the Biddle Stairs. It is seen to the best advantage from below. If the wind is blowing down the river, or from the American shore, you can stand with per-

fect safety upon a large, flat rock, within a few feet of the falling sheet, without inconvenience, or getting the least wet. In the afternoon, when the sun shines, there is always a splendid rainbow, between the sheet of water and the rock, within a few feet of you; and this is the only place on the globe, as far as the author can learn from history and from travelers, where a rainbow forming an entire circle can be seen. Two, and sometimes three, have been seen at once.

Width of the cave is one hundred feet; diameter, sixty; height, one hundred.

It is much visited both by ladies and gentlemen. The scenery is very fine.

The charge for going into the cave is one dollar; which includes the use of a suitable dress and the services of a reliable guide.

Sam Patch's Leap

is on the west side of Goat Island, near the Biddle Stairs. This celebrated person made two successful leaps in the year 1829, ninety-seven feet perpendicularly, into the river below. Question by the visitor: How was this done? A ladder was raised, the bottom resting on the edge of the river, the top of the ladder inclining over the water, stayed by ropes to the trees on the bank, on the top of which was a small platform. He stood gazing upon the multitude
who had been attracted to the place by a man—as it was said—"going to jump over the Falls." "One thing," said he, "can be done as well as another," bowed to the audience, stepped off the platform, and went down feet foremost. Q. How deep is the river where he went in? A. About fifty feet. Q. How deep did he go down? A. It is difficult to answer this question correctly:—probably not more than fifteen or twenty feet. Q. How long did he remain under water? A. Some said he was gone for good; others affirmed it was five minutes; but a gentleman holding his watch informed us it was just half a minute before he rose. Q. What became of the fool-hardy fellow? A. He made a jump at Rochester, Genesee Falls, the same year, which was his last. His body was never found.

Biddle Stairs

are on the northwest side of Goat Island; they were erected by Nicholas Biddle, President of the United States Bank. "Make us something," said he to the workmen, "to descend and see what is below." These stairs are spiral, firmly secured by heavy iron bolts fastened into the solid rock, and are, we believe, perfectly safe. Total number of steps, one hundred and fifteen.

At the foot are two paths leading in opposite directions: the one up the river leads toward the Horse Shoe Fall, but the path is so much obstructed by rocks which have fallen, and the bank is so steep, that it is extremely difficult to get within thirty rods of the Horse Shoe Fall. But by passing down the river a short distance the Centre Fall, or Cave of the Winds, bursts upon the astonished sight in all its terrific grandeur. The impending rocks sometimes fill the visitor with alarm lest they might fall; but they seldom fall in the summer season, and no accident has occurred since the year 1829.

On returning, proceed up the river about sixty rods to a small house built by the proprietor of the island, for the purpose of rest. Descend the bank, and cross a small bridge to the tower. This is called Horse Shoe Tower.

This tower is on the west side of Goat Island, within three rods of the Falls,—forty-five feet high, and two hundred feet above the river below, surrounded near the top by a portico and an iron railing. This tower has been called by some Prospect Tower, and by others Terrapin Tower, but is generally and best known as Horse Shoe Tower. Visitors of a nervous temperament, and especially old people, when stepping out upon this piazza, not unfrequently feel a kind of giddiness or tremor; but on looking up or around upon the green foliage, the
nerves generally become tranquil. We are then better prepared to appreciate the overwhelming grandeur of this magnificent scene. The view from this tower, in the opinion of the author, of the width of the river, the Rapida, the Horse Shoe Fall, and the angry, boiling deep below, is not surpassed by any other.

The river below, in its wild, tumultuous fury, produces a perfect foam.

The Horse Shoe Fall.

This is the entire circle from Goat Island to the Canadian side of the river. Its width, by calculation, is 144 rods; perpendicular height, 158 feet. It derived its name from its shape; but it must have altered much since it was first named, as large masses of rocks in the neighborhood of the Horse Shoe fall every year. This is sometimes called the Canada Fall,—which is a mistake: the Americans own one-half of it. The line between the two Governments runs in the centre of the river, through the point of the Horse Shoe, where it looks so green, following the deepest channel, and through the centre of the lakes.

Quantity of Water.

Professor Lyell says, fifteen hundred millions of cubic feet pass over the Falls every minute. Dr. Dwight, former President of Yale College, says, one
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hundred millions two hundred thousand tons pass over the Falls every hour. Judge De Veaux, in his Traveler's Own Book, says, five thousand eighty-four millions eighty-nine thousand eight hundred fifty-three barrels descend in twenty-four hours; two hundred eleven millions eight hundred thirty-six thousand eight hundred fifty-three every hour; three millions five hundred thirty thousand six hundred fourteen every minute; fifty-eight thousand three hundred forty-three every second. "I should think," says one, "that the river would exhaust itself." True, when the upper lakes, with their vast tributaries, run dry, Niagara will be no more.

Other estimates, by scientific gentlemen, have been made, arriving at nearly the same results.

Depth of Water on the top of Horse Shoe Fall.

It is estimated, by Sir Charles Lyell and others, to be twenty feet in the centre, or where the water looks so green. There is, however, a better datum whence to ascertain this fact than all the calculations, however learned. The ship Detroit, being condemned on the lake, was bought by a company, loaded with a live buffalo, bear, deer, fox, and other animals, and sent over the Falls in the year 1829. She was knocked to pieces in the Rapids, except about half of her hull, which was filled with water. It drew eighteen feet, and passed over the point of the
Horse Shoe, without touching. Hundreds saw her make this fearful plunge, and I have no doubt that the estimates are correct. This, then, gives a solid column of water on the top of the rock of at least twenty feet.

The visitor, after spending what time he wishes on Horse Shoe Tower, will return to the bank. If he wishes to reach his hotel by the nearest route, without going round by the head of the island, he will take a small path directly back of the building fronting Horse Shoe Tower. This is a pleasant walk leading to the bridge, and shortens the distance more than one-half. But we will suppose he wishes to continue his rambles around Goat Island.

The best point from which to get a correct view of the shape of the Horse Shoe Fall is about forty rods up the river, from the point where he ascends the bank from the tower, near a small stone monument, directly in his path, marked with a cross on the top, set by the surveyors to ascertain if the Falls recede. Let him step to the bank, and he will get one of the best views of the shape of the Horse Shoe there is, on either side of the river.

Three Sisters.

These islands are on the southwest side, and near the head of Goat Island. In the year 1841 a man by the name of A. P. Allen, in attempting to cross the river in a skiff, from Chippewa, unfortunately broke one of his ears; but, with a skill and coolness never surpassed, he managed to reach the outer island, and jumped ashore, while his skiff darted on like an arrow over the Falls. Though saved from immediate death, yet his situation was perilous in the extreme: the hope of rescue was extremely doubtful, and starvation was staring him in the face. Two nights and one day he remained upon this lonely spot. He struck a fire; the smoke wreathed in columns above the tree-tops. Great numbers of our citizens assembled, and heard his cries for help. At length a rope was thrown across from one island to the other, and by means of a skiff the same intrepid Robinson who had rescued Chapin succeeded in bringing him safe to shore.

Bathing-Place of Francis Abbot, the Hermit.

The bathing-place of Francis Abbot is on the west side of Goat Island, the first perpendicular cascade after leaving Horse Shoe Tower, near the three islands called the Three Sisters. He was learned, gentlemanly, and accomplished, pleasing in address, but could not be approached by a stranger. He lived nearly twenty months entirely alone. He was drowned below the ferry, in the year 1831. His body was found at Fort Niagara, fourteen miles below, recognized, brought back, and sleeps in our
burying-ground. This lonely spot was resorted to by this singular individual generally at night. The thunder's terrible sound, the lightning's blaze, mingled with the roar of the cataract, was the element in which he delighted to breathe. Very little is known of his history.

Head of Goat Island.

At this point, Navy Island, near the Canada shore, to the right, containing three hundred and forty acres, the scene of the McKenzie War in 1837–38, is in plain sight. It was occupied by three or four hundred Americans—a heterogeneous mass of all classes, without discipline, or any efficient means to carry on war. Chippewa, on the Canada shore but a short distance below, contained at the time four or five thousand British soldiers. The two Governments took no active part in this hot-headed enterprise, and it fell by its own weight. Grand Island is to the left, on the American side, resembling the main shore, containing seventeen thousand two hundred and forty acres, purchased by M. M. Noah, and, according to his fanciful visions, it was to be the future home of all the Jews on the globe. The visitor, in turning his eye to the right and left, will readily perceive how this island divides the river, the greater portion rolling to the Canada shore.

It would, while passing the bridge, be thought incredible that any person could have reached the island before a bridge was built. Yet such is the fact. As early as 1765, several French officers were conveyed to it by Indians in canoes, carefully dropping down the river between the dividing waters where the river for some little distance is calm; and Peter B. Porter, of Black Rock, with some other gentlemen, also made a trip to the island in a boat. They found but little trouble in descending, but their return was difficult and hazardous.*

It was effected by shoving the boat with setting-poles up the most shallow part of the current for half a mile, before making for the shore. Falling into the current within a mile of the Falls must be fatal. Several accidents of this kind have happened, and the unfortunate persons, as far as the author can recollect, were hurried on to destruction.

It is but a few years since an Indian, partially intoxicated, on attempting to cross the river in a canoe, was drawn into the Rapids. Finding all efforts to reach the shore unavailing, he took a good horn of whiskey, lay down in his canoe, passed rapidly over the Falls, plunged into the yawning vortex below, and disappeared forever. At this point, the head of Goat Island, where we are now

* Trees marked 1785 and 1789 were, until within a few years past, clearly to be seen.
standing, it can be more satisfactorily explained why it was called Goat Island. A man by the name of Stedman, about seventy years since, put some goats upon the island, which remained there nearly two years. He reached the island and returned the same way as the Indians and others had done.

The old clearing you notice at the left is part of an Indian burying-ground, but of the tribe to whom it belonged nothing definite is known. It is supposed by some they were the Iroquois.

Iris or Goat Island.

Iris or Goat Island contains sixty-nine and a half acres, is a fraction over a mile in circumference, and heavily timbered. Most of the smooth-bark trees are marked with initials bearing different dates. "In 1866," says Judge Porter, "there was a beech-tree on the bank near the Horse Shoe Fall, marked 1770, 1771, and 1772." The names of these early travelers are not recollected.

No sportsman is allowed to carry a gun on this island, as it would endanger the lives of those who are promenading through it. The cottage near the bridge is the only dwelling on the island. The island affords a wild and delightful retreat: in the hottest days there is always a refreshing and invigorating breeze from the river. There are three bridges connected with this island, and one tower.

The visitor will perceive that there is an excellent carriage-road entirely round the island, and, if he chooses, he can get a good carriage to carry a party of six or eight, at an expense of one dollar per hour.

Local Distances.

Local distances connected with Goat Island are as follow:

From the Cataract House to Goat Island ............... 75 rods.
From the International to Goat Island .................... 76 "
From Goat Island, where the road ascends the bank, to the foot .................................................. 89 "
From foot of the island and up the river to Biddle Stairs .............................................................. 15 "
From Biddle Stairs to Horse Shoe Tower ............... 65 "
From Horse Shoe Tower to the Three Sisters ........... 156 "
Head of Goat Island ....................................... 85 "
To the Bridge .................................................. 85 "
Circumference of Goat Island .............................. 376 "

The whole distance from the Cataract House, or International, around the island, is one and a half miles and a fraction over.

Spray.

Spray, like the smoke of a burning mountain, sometimes rises, forming dark, heavy clouds, tinged with the refulgent rays of the rising and setting sun, which have been seen, says Judge Porter, more than one hundred miles.
Rainbows.

There are two. One is always seen in the daytime, when the sun shines; the other at night,—called the Lunar Bow. The latter is only beheld once a month, when the moon is at the full and sufficiently high in the heavens, and the sky clear. And Niagara, as far as the author can learn from travelers and from history, is the only place on the globe where a rainbow at night can be seen with distinctness. At all events, the lunar bow is peculiar to this place.

View of the Falls at Night.

An evening view has a very different effect upon the mind of the beholder, from that of the view in the daytime. The moonbeams playing upon the agitated waters; the spray, like the smoke of a volcano, rising into the sky; the endless roar of the cataract, mingled with the heart's deepest impressions, give such an indescribable sublimity and grandeur, that language is but a poor vehicle to convey the impressions we feel.

View of the Falls at Sunrise.

This view is thought, by thousands, to have no rival in grandeur, sublimity, and interest. Every point of time, however, in getting a view is different, and has its different effect upon the beholder.

View of the Falls at Sunset.

When the sun has rolled onward in his chariot of fire, and thrown his last rays upon Niagara, bidding adieu for the night to the grandeur of the scene that so much in power resembles himself, the view is perfectly indescribable.

Roar of the Falls.

This depends much upon the wind, and the state of the atmosphere. Sometimes every door and window, the least ajar, for a mile around, will tremble, and the roar may be heard from fifteen to twenty-five miles. At other times our citizens would scarcely know that there were Falls in the neighborhood. In a few instances the roar has been heard at Toronto, a distance of forty-four miles.

First Impression of Strangers.

At first sight, strangers are sometimes disappointed: either their expectations have been raised too high, or the sublimity, grandeur, and magnificence of the scene far surpass every thing they could possibly have anticipated.

The second view is frequently more impressive than the first. The longer the visitor tarries, the more he enjoys and appreciates; the impression is
indelibly unstamped upon his memory, and for years infixed there, as with the imprint of a sunbeam.

The Falls, it is true, when seen from above, do not appear more than fifty or sixty feet high; but let the visitor go below, if he would get a correct impression of the stupendous work.

Else of the River.

Those causes which swell other rivers have no effect upon this. It never rises unless the wind has been blowing down Lake Erie from a westerly direction. S. Ware, Esq., who kept the ferry for seventeen years, says, "One foot on the top of the Falls will, by actual measurement, raise it seventeen and a half feet below." This is attributable to the river being pent up in a very narrow pass at the Whirlpool, and not being able to find its way out as fast as it accumulates above.

Fall of the River.

From Lake Erie to Lake Ontario (36 miles), 339 feet; from Lake Erie to the head of Goat Island (22 miles), 25 feet; from the head of Goat Island to the Main Fall (half a mile), 50 feet; perpendicular height of the American Fall, 164 feet; on the Canada side, 158 feet; from the Falls to the Whirlpool (2½ miles), 64 feet; from the Whirlpool to Lake Ontario (11 miles), 25 feet. Total in 36 miles, between the two lakes, 339 feet.