

NIAGARA FALLS.

In order to proceed regularly in our task of preparing an efficient Guide, we place in order of interest the various scenes generally visited here—the Goat Island Group coming first in the category, as it is indisputably the finest piece of property in the world as a summer or winter scene.

On arrival, visitors will find at the depots a number of vehicles, free busses and other means of conveyance, by which they can be transferred with their baggage to any hotels they may have selected. Those who do not intend to remain, however, cannot do better than engage



BRIDGE TO GOAT ISLAND.

a carriage at the regulation price given in the latter portion of this book, or "*foot it*," as they may be inclined, and proceed at once to make their acquaintance with Niagara by finding their way without delay to "GOAT ISLAND." The Islands are within a few minutes' walk of the depot, and those who prefer to walk should leave that building on the Falls street side and go down Falls street as far as the Soldiers' Monument, after seeing which they will find they are near the Goat Island Bridge.

The "*Goat Island Group*," so called, is an estate consisting of a large island standing on the verge of the cliff over which the Cataract

pours, and dividing the river in such a manner as to form from its waters two Falls—the one being known as the "*American*" and the other as the "*Horseshoe, or Canadian Falls*," and includes several other smaller islands, notably Bath Island, Luna Island, Terrapin Rocks, Three Sisters Islands and ten others not yet accessible by bridges, the entire estate covering sixty acres. Although this is really private property, and commands the finest views of the Falls, its owners have allowed it to be visited by the public and have even built bridges and other means of access in order to facilitate the inspection of the works of Nature from this point. But, with a conservatism which will be appreciated by all lovers of the real in nature, they have as yet refrained from making their splendid property a mere mercenary scheme. Thanks to this, the Goat Island Group is found to-day covered with virgin forest and almost in a state of nature. Had this property been owned by such men as those who control Long Branch and other well-known summer resorts, there is no doubt it would have been now covered with palatial hotels and other money-making establishments, and it would, if properly advertised, have succeeded in that respect.

It is to be hoped that it will be left during many years to come as a *souvenir* of what the country was at the time when Cooper wrote his romances of Indian lore, and as, what it now is, a place in which he who possesses what Byron calls a mind to understand the Universe, can commune with the beautiful and grand in Nature without interruption from the workings of sordid motives.

Goat Island presents, from the Canada side, an appearance similar to that of the cliff of the south coast of England—it being, near the ledge, about 160 feet in height. It is entirely composed of hard stone, slate and marl.

Originally the first man who had any right to name the "*Goat*" Island, called it very properly "*Iris Island*," and it ought to be known under that appellation. It owes its present singular name to a local fact. In 1779 a Mr. John Stedman, having cleared a portion of the upper end of the Island, placed some goats upon it and afterwards neglected to care for them. During the ensuing winter they were killed by the coldness of the temperature, and the inhabitants named the Island after one of their favorite representatives of the flock "*Goat Island*," a cognomen which has ever since adhered to it.

Goat Island was, in ancient times, one of the favorite burying-grounds of the Indians, and yet preserves traces of their funeral rites.

To fully appreciate all the grandeur of its surroundings, to witness the unique spectacle of Rainbows forming a complete circle, to walk through that halo of light, to pass behind the tremendous torrent of water, and stand between it and the living rock in the very "grasp of the giant," but unharmed, and to experience the peculiar sensation of the novelty of viewing the green translucence of such an enormous body of water as that which falls obliquely from the cliff-edge—these are but a few of the attractions of this spot of which poets have written in verse, which, however, all feel to be inadequate to the subject. But they are experiences which no other locality on earth can duplicate.



APPROACH TO GOAT ISLAND.

is an up-hill road to the Island proper. To get the best and most expeditious survey of the scenery, they will thereafter take the road leading to the right and will remain awhile at the places described below.

Following those attractions on this Island, are the splendid views of the Rapids and the Falls from many stand-points, to say nothing of the artificial aids to enjoyment which have been permitted to be established, without breaking the harmony of the natural scene, in the way of stores stocked with articles of *bric-a-brac* and *bijouterie*, appreciated by those who come to see the Falls as *mementos* of the event, and which are hence carried to all parts of the world, and *petites restaurants* where refreshments suitable to the occasion can be obtained.

After passing the second bridge from the street, visitors will emerge upon the scene here depicted, which

First. At the foot of the main Island, where a stairway descends to the edge of the river, and from whence a handsome foot-bridge connects with Luna Island, which is described further on. From this

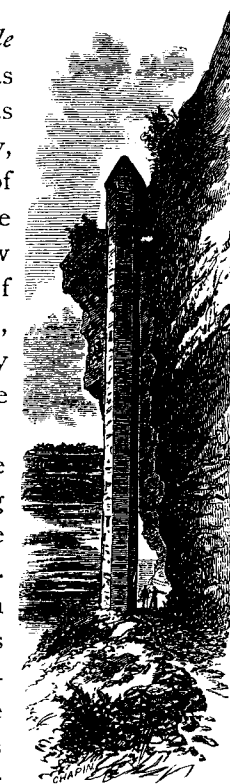


BIDDLE STAIRS FROM ABOVE.

point of vantage we see the most desirable, *near* view of the American Falls and Rapids, which, from here, are so close that it would be possible to dip the hand into the rushing tide passing over the verge, and also of the *debris* of rock and shale deposited by the action of the torrent at the foot of the American Fall, and including a fine perspective of the Gorge below the Falls.

Second. At the "*Biddle Staircase*." This flight was constructed in 1829, and was greatly assisted, pecuniarily, by Mr. Nicholas Biddle, of Philadelphia, Pa., hence the name. Our illustrations show the general appearance of the stairs, which are spiral, 80 feet in height, and firmly anchored to the rock by the most approved methods.

It was from a scaffolding near the foot of these stairs that the well-known Sam Patch, whose diving propensities made his name a household word, made his famous leap of 100 feet into the river in 1829. No charge is made for the use of the stairs, although the exercise of mounting by their sinuous form is desirable to those sufficiently robust to avail themselves of it. Reaching the foot of the Fall, the dressing-rooms of the "*Cave of the Winds*," or, as it is sometimes called, "*Aeolus Cavern*," attract our notice. During the past 40 years this curious but splendid cave has been the chief charm of the locality. It is 100 by 160 feet in dimensions, and 100 feet in height. Having been excavated by the action of the falling water, it forms a natural chamber through which, with suitable dresses and guides, which can be secured



BIDDLE STAIRS FROM BELOW

for a dollar, we can pass between the Cataract and the rock, and see the ever-changing effect of the light passing through the descending mass of water, take a bath in the mist and spray of old Niagara, pass through the rainbows, and secure a delightfully novel and strange sensation of commingled terror and safety from which we can emerge after a few minutes as free from any other effect of the water as when we entered. This alone is well worth the cost of admittance to the Island, which is fifty cents for the day, or one dollar for the season, while children are admitted at half-price, and a printed directory of the principal points of interest is handed to each visitor by the gate-



THREE SISTERS FROM BELOW.

keeper, who will be found to possess accurate knowledge of every circumstance connected with the place.

Third. Our readers who may have occasion to refer hereto should particularly notice the Terrapin Bridge and Terrapin Rocks, to which latter a stairway descends from the cliff.

The bridge, being so near the Fall as to be affected by the spray, requires that those who pass over it should avoid exposure. It is a matter of history that in 1852 a gentleman from West Troy, N. Y., while crossing to the Tower, which formerly stood on Terrapin Point, fell into the current and was carried to the edge of the Fall, from which he was almost miraculously rescued from apparently inevitable

destruction by life-lines passed to him by the citizens. Such was the effect of the shock on his nervous system that he remained speechless several hours after being taken to his hotel.

From this point the best view of the general shape and magnitude of the Falls can be obtained, as well as an idea of the manner in which the action of the waters has modified its appearance.

The most noticeable of these changes was in 1852, when a section of the rock, 125 by 60 feet in size, fell with a terrific report. On the following day another piece, of triangular shape, 40 feet at base, broke off immediately below the Tower. This Tower was erected in 1833, by General Porter, and was for many years the most advantageous



BRIDGE TO THIRD SISTER.

point from which to view the scenery hereabout. But, in 1873, concluding it was unsafe, as it stood so near the brink of the cliff, its proprietors removed it by means of gunpowder. (Table Rock, which fell in 1850, was directly opposite on the Canadian shore.)

Fourth. The south side of the Island is specially mentionable from the fact that it affords unsurpassed views of the Canadian Rapids, which run at the rate of 28 miles per hour.

Fifth. The Three Sisters Islands, which we show pictorially, form a remarkable feature of this property. They offer, from their location in the midst of the rapids, an unchangeable, cool retreat in the warmest days of summer, with enchanting views of the scenery, the Cascades under the bridges, formed by the current passing over the ledges of rock, being amongst the chief attractions of Niagara Falls.

Sixth. A prominent and memorable scene is presented at the head of the Island, from whence the formation of the Bar, which divides

the river into two channels, is clearly traceable. It extends up stream about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, and has an average of only 3 feet of water over its crest. Those who take interest in the geology of the place will here find much to occupy their attention.

The "*Goat Island Bridge*," to which we have already alluded, is remarkable from the fact that it spans one of the most turbulent of any known rapids. It was first built as a wooden structure in 1817, by Judge Porter, but was destroyed and rebuilt in 1818. The present iron bridge is said to be the largest and most costly owned by private parties. It is modeled after the plan of Whipple's Iron-arched



VIEW FROM THIRD SISTER.

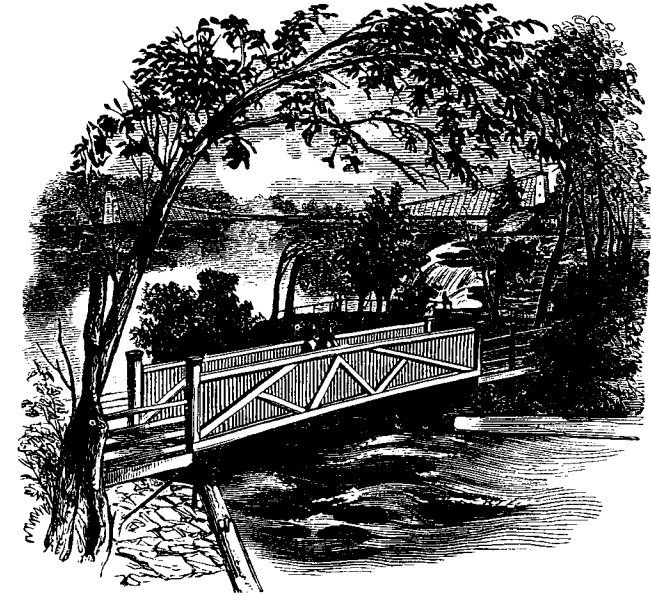
Bridge and is 360 feet in length, having 4 arches of 90 feet span each. It is 27 feet wide and embraces a double carriageway of $16\frac{1}{2}$ and 2 foot-paths of $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet each. It and the Islands which it connects with the shore are owned by the Porter family of this village.

LUNA ISLAND.

Luna Island is one of the most enjoyable of the many picturesque spots in this vicinage, and is part of the Goat Island Group.

It is reached by a pretty and substantial bridge, and is well worthy

of a visit. It is assumed that its name came to it in connection with its weird and pleasing appearance by Luna's light, the moonlight effects here noticeable being prominent in the list of Niagara's wonders.



BRIDGE TO LUNA ISLAND.

HERMIT'S CASCADE.

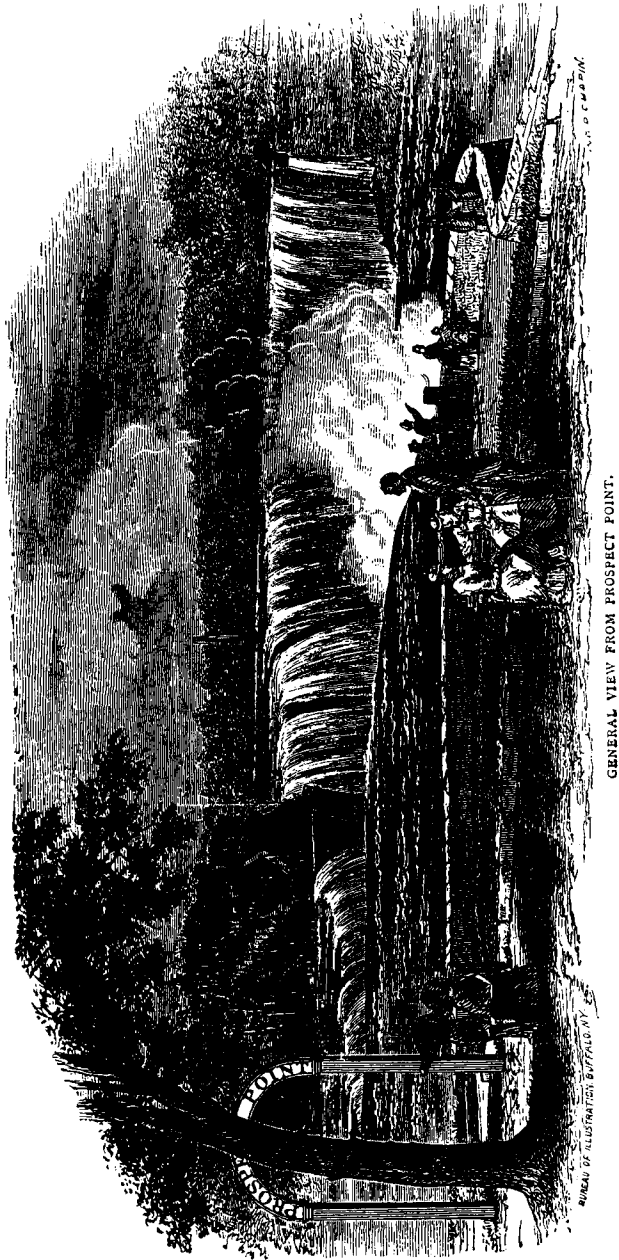
The "*Hermit's Cascade*" is best seen from the *First Sister Island Bridge*, by which it is spanned, and is a rare and attractive Fall.

Taking the Goat Island Group as a whole it may be said that these essentially form what is understood as "*Niagara Falls*," as they adjoin both cataracts and afford all the most desirable views here.

PROSPECT PARK.

This excellent resort is mentionable next in order, and, besides being one of the best positions from which to view the cataracts in full line, with all their glories of constantly-changing colors and sunlight, moonlight or artificial light effects, it is worthy of record as the successful effect of a great effort of capital to establish here a park worthy of its location.

This park occupies the land formerly known as "*Ferry Grove*" and "*Point View*," which was purchased by the present company in 1872. It is found by following the course of the river from the Goat Island



GENERAL VIEW FROM PROSPECT POINT.

Bridge towards the cataract, and is within a few minutes' walk of the group of islands last noted.

The entrance of the park is a tastefully constructed gateway, which we here portray, and through which visitors are admitted to a near view of the Falls for 25 cents. This park contains about 11 acres of land, and is located on the extreme edge of the American Fall, commanding full views of all the Falls in line as well as the most interesting features of this locality presented together. From "*Prospect Point*" in the Park one can stand so near to the cataracts as



ENTRANCE TO PROSPECT PARK.

almost to reach them by the hand; while, from below, the Ferry to Canada affords a means of crossing the turbulent river for 25 cents. One of the greatest attractions of this place is the Inclined Railroad, by which the visitor may reach the foot of the cliff and gaze skyward at the Cataract, apparently pouring from the sky; for the use of the Railroad a charge of 25 cents is made. The Ferry is a system of row-boats, which ply between the two countries at this point, and has been in operation without accident during the past 40 years. Here is a space at the end of the American Falls next the park appropriately named the "*Shadow of the Rock*," where suitable dresses are provided and persons can pass between the sheet of water and the cliff. Hurricane Bridges on which to stand near the foot of the fall, and a covered house from which to see through colored glasses the effects of prismatic light on the Cataract, are also portions of the facilities of the Park, the charge for dresses and guide being \$1.00.

On the Table-land above, which forms the Park proper, every conceivable aid of science has been used in preparing the means of passing time pleasantly, a handsome Art Gallery and Pavilion, Theater, Ball Rooms, and Restaurants, forming features of the *menu*, while the beautiful Electric Light, thrown through colored glasses upon dancing fountains of water, give at night a magical effect seldom witnessed elsewhere. For the Electric Light exhibition an extra charge of 25 cents is made. The officers of this company are Hans Neilson, Prest., and D. J. Townsend, Treasurer. Although mainly the result of artificial aids to the natural scenery of the Falls it is a most enjoyable park, and as such well worth a visit.