

CHAPTER VI

THE GREAT DIVIDE

SO far as we have been able to find from authentic records, this was the first time that Father Lynch had seen the Barrens, but he knew and loved all its hallowed past. Eight years before his advent it had housed the academic, collegiate, philosophical and theological departments of students for the Vincentian priests as well as those for the diocesan clergy of St. Louis; and, besides, housed the academic and collegiate departments of students for secular pursuits. But in 1842 all the diocesan students moved to St. Louis. There in the new seminary the Vincentians taught the philosophers and theologians; and in another seminary, the priests of St. Viateur's taught the academicians and the collegians. But in the next year the Vincentians opened a new college at Cape Girardeau, some thirty-five miles south of the Barrens; and thither transferred all their secular academicians and collegians from the Barrens, and welcomed back to the latter place the diocesan students from the priests of St. Viateur. So that, at Father Lynch's coming there were in the buildings these two departments of students for the diocesan clergy, and all the departments for the Vincentian clergy. It was a life quite different from that of the mountains and the prairies.

He must have recuperated quickly; and as quickly the Provincial, Father Ryan, must have seen his worth; because in the next year we find him President of the institution and pastor of the parish. What a change from the rough and tumble life of the years preceding! From soldiers, cowboys and Indians to the quiet of a monastery! But the vision of the Falls never left him. Meanwhile, he must get back to his books—try his hand at, not guiding mules through the

prairies, but men to the priesthood. Let the Falls stay there! No one would walk away with them! He would see them some day. The invitation of the Bishop still lasted: "Come; and you will have not only a seminary, but a church, too." But the Provincial did not seem so enthusiastic; and he would, naturally, be the one to represent the project to the Superior General. They were losing too many men to the episcopacy—and their best men. The Community was forced into too many works. Caution, not enthusiasm, spelled strength. Try too many things, and you will do not one thing thoroughly. A battle line is not strengthened by lengthening it. Rubber is not strengthened by stretching. Wait till our ranks are filled with more vocations. Make haste as you make hay—by allowing time to mature the harvest.

About the following May (1849), Bishop Timon visited the place, and turned the invitation into a request, an urgent request. He must have priests, and provide for the future of his diocese by beginning a seminary. His confreres must help him. He could give them an example of what he himself was obliged to do. At Smith's Mills, for instance, he had heard confessions from early morn till nearly two o'clock in the afternoon, and then preached. Preaching on an empty stomach, after a fifteen hours' fast, is conducive neither to strength nor suavity. He began Mass at two o'clock; preached again at the Gospel; after Mass, confirmed forty-one people; and breakfasted at five o'clock. On another day, he is due to confirm in Rochester at Pontifical Mass. After singing Pontifical Mass, preaching and dedicating a church in Canandaigua, he drives the thirty miles to Rochester, and reaches it, all tired out, two days before he is due. At eight o'clock in the morning previous to his engagement, he is called on an emergency sick call to Portageville, a fourteen hours' journey; and when he reaches there, ten o'clock at night, he finds the call was not urgent, after all. He turns right around, drives back through the night and morning the fourteen hours, reaches Rochester in time to sing the Mass, preach in German, and

confirm one hundred and ninety persons. In the afternoon, he goes to the adjoining church, St. Mary's, preaches in English, and confirms one hundred and sixty-seven; and at night he gives a lecture in still another church. No man can keep up work like that: he must have help. Will his confreres help him?

We feel quite sure that Father Lynch's first question was, "What about helping the Catholics around Niagara Falls? Many there?" And the Bishop would inform him with "Only a handful; and Father John Boyle lives at Lewiston and tends to the Catholics there, Youngstown and the Falls. But there is no church there yet. They used to be tended by Father McMullen from Lockport; but for the last two years Father Boyle is getting them into line. I was down there last June. Confirmed twenty-four persons at Youngstown. After that I went to Lewiston. The Universalists promised me the use of their church; but when I arrived there the Methodists blocked me by holding services, and would not vacate. Mr. Kelly of the town came to my rescue. His house was as yet unfinished, but he was only too willing to have the little congregation come there. We went, heard confessions, said Mass and confirmed. Mr. Kelly started subscriptions for a church; and before I went away he had collected \$250. At the Falls, I could get no place to say Mass or confirm but a little old dilapidated Methodist church. Confirmed seventeen there. A Colonel Peter Porter was very, very kind to me. We wanted to get a lot for a church there. Another Mr. Porter, a judge, had just the place we wished, but did not wish to sell it to us. We had great difficulties in getting the lot. The Colonel championed our cause, and pleaded till we got it. The Catholics along the river will be cared for all right; but we should do some work with the Indians.

I went to the reservation near Olean, gave them a talk and to each one presented a crucifix. They were very polite; took it, thanked the Great Spirit for sending me, said that they belonged to the "National religion," but would think over

what I had said. From there I went to the Tonawanda Reservation. The chief named "Blacksmith" said that he belonged to the "National religion," and that of the six hundred Indians fifteen were Baptists. When I had finished my talk he said:

"White Brother, your talk is good. Now I will make mine. The Great Spirit made His red child and His white child. He put the white child on the other side of the great waters, and the red child on this side. It was not right for the white child to come to this side and take the land from his red brother. The Great Spirit gave a religion to His white child. We say it is very good for the white child. He gave a religion to His red child; and it is good for him, and *he will not change.*"

I replied: "Brother, you have said much that is true. It is very true the Great Spirit made His red child and His white child. We are brothers. It is true He gave to the red child and the white child a religion. But that religion was only a bud, and it was the same for both. But the white child held it lovingly in his open hand, and let the light of heaven and the summer's sun shine on it, and the dews from above water it. And it grew. And the bud gave leaves and flowers and fruit. And the white child ate of the fruit and grew strong. But the red child held the bud tight in his closed fist. The light could not shine on it. The sun could not warm it. The dews could not water it. It stayed always a bud. It never had fruit. That is the reason that the red child has grown weak beside his white brother."

"White Brother," said he, "what you say I like. I will think it over." Something must be done for those Indians. Something must be done for the whites. I must have priests. Will my confreres give me some priests?

We judge that the meeting of the Bishop with the priests was held immediately before the Provincial Assembly which every six years calls in its delegates from the various houses scattered throughout a province for the election of two delegates to accompany the Provincial to the International Assem-

bly held in Paris. The Parisian Assemblies generally occur in July. The Twentieth International Assembly was to be held in July, 1849. To it the delegates from all over the world would present the resolutions formed in their Provincial Assemblies. We presume the Bishop reasoned that there would be more hope of getting the seminary if a province wished it than if one man wished it, even though that man were the Provincial. That is the reason we are inclined to place his visit to the Barrens in the spring of 1849 at about the same time as the holding of the Provincial Assembly. He would be assured at least of one voting for it and eloquently speaking for it.

We have not a transcript of the minutes of that Provincial Assembly, nor any memorandum of the conferences between the Bishop and the priests; but we fancy that we can give the general line of arguments. Father Lynch would feel like getting up, and putting on his hat with "Come, let's go! Let's begin the seminary, and get the Superior General afterwards to ratify the move." But Father Ryan who would have to shoulder the chief responsibility of the move would be more cautious. The experiences of Bishop Timon in accepting seminaries without being assured of a sufficient number of men to maintain them, or of sufficient number of seminarians to warrant them, would make the Provincial slow to champion the cause. He would want more time for prayer and reflection. The difficulties that Provincials of other orders, and that other Bishops had met must make him wary of the future. If only death would stay its hand. There were DeAndreis and Paquin, dead in '20 and '43—both superiors. If he only could be assured that the future held a sufficient number of vocations to warrant making the start now! If he only could be assured that the Community would lose no more men to the episcopacy. There was Rosati—lost when he was most needed. Five years afterwards, De Neckere. Then, after thirteen years, Odin goes; to be followed in five years by Timon. Now there is talk of Amat going to Monterey. If he is taken, I may have to withdraw all our men from the Philadelphia

Seminary. Three of our best men taken in eight years! Five in twenty-six years. (Had he been able to see the future, and had seen that in the following eighteen years three more leaders would be lost to the episcopacy, and that he and Father Lynch would be two of them, he would have made up his mind immediately, we judge; and more quickly, perhaps, had he foreseen that in four years the Superior General would order Father Maller to go to Brazil, and in seven years order Father Masnou to Spain; and had he foreseen that the year before the latter should depart, the Pope would "request" that Father Penco return to Italy.) When the Superior General protested to the Pope about taking so many American Confreres for bishoprics, the Pope replied, "It is for you to plant the garden: for me to pluck the flowers." Yes, once that the Pope has commanded, we shall gain more by our obedience and the sacrifice of our leaders than we should by disobedience and selfishness. The Community should be glad to make the sacrifice; must consider the interests of the Church before its own; must consider the good of the greater number. The Community must be Catholic before it is Vincentian; and it is Vincentian only in proportion as it is Catholic. All that is true; but, on the other hand, God must expect us to take all human means to protect our life as a Community; and you cannot expect it to live in this country if episcopal swords keep chopping off its chief members or obedience pulling its shepherds to other countries. It is all right to say that with God's blessing the body will eventually improve after such major operations; but if it is not all God's work the body will die of "improvements." We cannot expect God to work miracles in raising vocations for the Community: we must use all human prudence; and ask Him to bless our energy, not our rashness. The whole question reduces to this: in view of our experience and the experience of others, is it prudence or rashness to take up another seminary?

Between 1842 and 1847 the Bishops of New York, Philadelphia, Louisville and Cincinnati asked Bishop Timon here

when he was Provincial to take over their seminaries. The Superior General made him give up Cincinnati because of the paucity of men and the lack of accommodations. We had to refuse Louisville for the same reason. Four years ago we had to give up the New York Seminary at Fordham: same reason. True, there was the discussion about allowing the theological students to teach those in the preparatory departments. Neither the Bishop nor we wished such an arrangement; but there was no other practical arrangement till we should get enough priests to do all the teaching. And when some of even those priests were called back to their native lands after the governments had made peace with the church, the situation became even more acute. But there would have been no discussion and no acute situation if we had secured only a sufficient number of priests. That same discussion and situation are now present in the Philadelphia Seminary. And if Father Amat has to go to Monterey as Bishop, and other priests are called back to their home lands, what can I do but withdraw all the men?

The seminaries in St. Louis and here are comparatively prosperous. Of course, there is a struggle in both places; but the priests are of enough strength and energy to make the struggle. The situation in New Orleans suffers from another reason: we have enough priests there, but not enough seminarians. We cannot be expected both to bring all the apt young men to the seminary as well as to train them: to provide the vocations as well as to preserve them; to have a greater number in the faculty than in the student body. The priests are content to teach without salary, but not without pupils. After these eleven years of effort, the lack of vocations to the secular clergy is discouraging. What Bishop Connolly of New York wrote to the Propaganda thirty-one years ago regarding the youth of the whole country seems still to be true regarding Louisiana: "They have an invincible repugnance to the ecclesiastical state."

Father Lynch might easily rebut with this: "You will

admit that God has blessed the sacrifice and faith that accompanied the beginning of the seminary at the Barrens. If De-Andreis and Rosati and Bishop Timon here for fear of making a rash move had wished to see more clearly into the future we would not have what we have today. While Bishop Connolly was making those pessimistic remarks about the youth of the country, we were in a log cabin here. And now, 'Master, what buildings are these!' And listen to all the heartbeats of those young men downstairs who are with joy preparing for the priesthood, and happy to make the sacrifice it entails. It is hardly half a century since John Dubois fled from Robespierre, his former fellow student, and came to the Blue Ridge Mountains of Maryland. Then he was the only priest between Baltimore and St. Louis. It is only forty-one years ago when he sat on a rock outside his log cabin, and on white paper traced a picture. Day after day he sat there. Farmers driving along the road would ask him what he was drawing. A seminary? A place to make priests? Here in the woods? In these mountains? Why, where are the Catholics? They called him a mad man. Some priests in Baltimore called him so, too. His first seminary was a log cabin. His log cabin antedated ours by ten years. And now look at Mount St. Mary's!

"The Philadelphia Seminary is, undoubtedly, going through a crisis; but the crisis cannot all be attributed to the scarcity of vocations, as seems the case with New Orleans; nor to the poverty of the people. A great part of the difficulty seems to be the effect of the lack of proper financing fifteen years ago. Father Hughes, now the New York Bishop, was then stationed there. He said then that its needs were not brought sufficiently to the attention of the people; that not twenty per cent of the people even knew that there was a seminary to be supported; that dear Bishop Kenrick wished the people to help him, but organized no plans for the help. The New York seminary had struggles peculiar to itself. When Father Dubois went from the Mount to New York to succeed Bishop Connolly, and tried to start his first seminary at Nyack he found

that in the disorganized condition of the diocese it was harder to run a diocese and build a seminary than it was to build a seminary without the trouble of running a diocese. When eleven years ago Father Hughes followed him and built his St. Vincent's seminary at Lefargeville near the Thousand Islands and resolved that more than twenty per cent of his people should know there was a seminary to be supported, he found he had made a mistake in having the seminary three hundred miles away from the episcopal city. People like to see what they are supporting; and many boys that may have vocations to the secular clergy have not the heroic virtue that moves a boy to go to a foreign land; and to many boys around New York City to go three hundred miles away from home would seem like going to China. That missionary spirit would come later with the strengthening of the Catholic spirit in the States. Consequently, there was found in Lefargeville a condition similar to New Orleans: sometimes more teachers than pupils. A year after the opening Father Guth, the Superior, wrote the Bishop: 'We have only a handful of children . . . We are like a stagecoach drawn by four horses—and no passengers.' When the following year the Bishop removed the seminary to Fordham and Father McCloskey became its president, the fewness of diocesan priests made it imperative that they get help from other sources. Then when we took it over, why Father Villanis and after him Father Penco seemed to expect too much from a missionary country: they should not have expected to run a seminary here as they would run one in Europe—especially, when the institution was only beginning, and the country is not Catholic. Until priests should multiply they should have been content that theological students teach somewhat in the preparatory departments. Teaching helps to form the mind of the teacher as well as that of the pupil. If you need to be convinced that you do not know a subject thoroughly, the best way is to try to teach it. The conviction will overwhelm you and will drive you to renewed study till you have mastered it. Sometimes a man never really

learns how to study till he has learned how to teach. If Fathers Villanis and Penco had understood the country better they might not have insisted upon applying European methods immediately to American seminaries. Those methods will come with time. Now with Bishop Timon's seminary it will be different: we understand his struggles; he understands the number of men we have. Let's begin now. Wouldn't Niagara Falls be the best place for the seminary?"

But Father Ryan would not have been convinced. Experience is a stern teacher: we should profit by its lectures. The appeal to Mt. St. Mary's would have been inapt. It was not yet out of its age of struggling any more than we are now at the Barrens. It was only twelve years ago since Bishop Eccleston asked Father Timon to send his men thither. And look at Father Nagot's efforts at Pigeon Hill, Pennsylvania, in 1807. It had lasted only a year when it had to bring its students to the Mount. Consider Bishop England's titanic struggle with his seminary in 1822: where is it now? In 1842 the seminary at Bardstown had to give up. It would seem that the hierarchy of the country was multiplying seminaries too fast. Better have one well-supported than twenty ill-supported. He would be only too willing to help Bishop Timon in this venture if assurance could be given of its permanence, even at the cost of heroic sacrifice. But until the Provincial could be assured of having a sufficient number of men to maintain it he would consider it unwise to begin it. To begin and then be forced to desist would be to the Bishop not a help but a hindrance. No, he could not conscientiously champion the cause before the Superior General. However, he would, of course, have no objection to Father Lynch's pleading the case before the General. If the latter said "Go ahead!" the responsibility of the movement would not be his, and he would do all he could to further it.

When at the Provincial Assembly Father Lynch was elected delegate for Paris to accompany Father Ryan the Bishop knew that the cause was in the hands of an ardent attorney. When

they sailed about, we suppose, the middle of June, the heart of the enthusiast was beating on all eight cylinders; but the heart of the Provincial must have been "missing" a stroke or two. It was a contest between the caution of responsibility and the enthusiasm of youth—the heart of a boy still beat in the man of thirty-three. And the Bishop went to Europe the next year; and, no doubt, gave evidence corroborative of his attorney. So far as we can gather, at both meetings the Superior General suspended his decision; and both sides came away hopeful. The enthusiast came back to the Barrens and resumed his duties as President of the Seminary. Months wore into years and no decision came; but he had learned well his Texas lesson: When you're riding to a fall, never let go the bridle. And so he held on. The Bishop was anxious, the priest was tenacious. They both must have encouraged each other. Six years went by, and we read of no decision of the General. The Niagara University Annalist of twenty-five years ago states that Father Lynch was again chosen for the General Assembly of 1855. He may have been chosen; but there was no General Assembly in 1855, possibly on account of the disturbed condition of the country: Napoleon III was beginning his Crimean war. But, no doubt, the priest went to Paris anyway. What was a little war in the Crimea compared with the hope of living at Niagara Falls? This time he comes back with the permission of the General to build a seminary in the diocese of Bishop Timon. To the Bishop that meant Buffalo; but to the priest it meant the Falls. He had never seen them; but if a diocese held a cataract like that, there, of course, could be no other place for the seminary. The Provincial appointed him for the work. Oh! what a glorious feeling! After more than thirty years of praying and dreaming, here at last the prayer was to be answered, the dream to be realized!

But in the meantime, in the October preceding Father Lynch's last visit to Paris, the Bishop had gone again to Rome to be present for the Proclamation of the Immaculate Conception on December 8th. We know not if again he visited the

Superior General. But we do know that he went to the General of the Franciscans in Rome. He had learned that a Nicholas Devereux of Utica had offered them a tract of land in Allegheny County for a monastery, and they had intended to accept the offer and to come in 1857. He begged them to come immediately. God was blessing his efforts beyond all deserving: his little diocese would have two seminaries for the secular clergy, taught by two religious communities. In this blessing his diocese has remained unique in the country for seventy-five years. The sons of St. Vincent and of St. Francis would work hand in hand for Catholic education of the laity and the sacerdotal training of the clergy. What more proper than that the Vincentian Bishop should welcome Franciscan Friars? Was it not the Franciscans that had given St. Vincent at Dax his first four years of schooling? These Franciscans of the middle of the nineteenth century would be but continuing the work begun by another Franciscan in the beginning of the seventeenth century—De la Roche D'Allion.

In 1855, after nearly a six months' stay in Europe, the Bishop reaches New York, April 6th. On the following May 27th a boy, fifteen years of age enters the Barrens as a novice and records in his diary under date of May 20th, 1855, that when he entered the novitiate on May 27th, 1855, Father Lynch was still Superior. The boy became the great missionary, Thomas O'Donohue, the Boanerges of the pulpit. On June 9th, 1855, the Franciscans reached Ellicottville. It must have been the following July that Father Lynch was again in Paris to attend the International Assembly that was not held—that was postponed to 1861. We infer that the General's permission to build the seminary was not given till this July, 1855, from the fact that after Father Lynch's return to the States (possibly, September) he had not as yet collected a cent for the seminary. We know that he had not collected a cent because when he left the Barrens to come to Buffalo (maybe in that same month of September) he had to borrow \$100.00 from the Barrens for his carfare and other expenses. Had he been col-

lecting he would have borrowed from his fund. So he reached Buffalo at the beginning of October or the end of September with a million dollar dream in his head and a hundred dollar debt in his pocket. But what is there worrisome in a petty debt like that when you are within thirty miles of Niagara Falls!

The Bishop gave him a warm welcome. There had been many hours of anxiety in these six years of waiting. What may have been for the priest the most anxious hours were those of four years ago when Bishop Eccleston of Baltimore had died. Bishop O'Connor of Pittsburgh and Bishop McGill of Richmond and Bishop Francis Kenrick of Philadelphia had written the Pope begging him to appoint to the Archiepiscopal See Bishop Timon. Most of the priests of the province joined in the petition. But in the preceding year New York had been raised to a Metropolitan See; and Archbishop Hughes strongly opposed the move. He wished not to lose Bishop Timon. There was another bishop who opposed it more strongly: he lived in Buffalo. If the mitre of a bishop is a crown of thorns, that of an archbishop may be one of red hot needles. He would not desert his work of four years for needles heated red or for even "hats" colored red. Yes, he would prefer a change; but a change back to the Barrens. But those four months of waiting till the Pope told Bishop Kenrick to go to Baltimore had been months of torture both for Bishop Timon and Father Lynch. At the command to go, the Bishop would be saying, "Here goes all my serenity!" And the priest, "There goes all my seminary!" Now the Buffalo Bishop could devote all his energy towards the outcast and the orphan of his diocese, the Catholic education of the laity and the training of the clergy.

So far, his efforts for charity and education had been constant, though discouraging. In 1848 he had opened the Sacred Heart College in Rochester and four years afterwards had to close it: lack of teachers, lack of funds. In 1849 he had in Buffalo opened a school to be taught by the Madames of the

Sacred Heart, and now he had to transfer it to Rochester. In 1849, too, he had opened in Buffalo St. Joseph's College, to be run by his own priests. It hopped about the city from place to place; and finally he had to locate it in his own house. There it had wobbled for some time, till he asked the Oblate Fathers to come steady it. He removed it to Prospect Hill where, because of lack of funds, it fell. He had gathered young men into his own house and had tried to train them himself for the priesthood. But how could he train them when he was busy running through sixteen counties hearing confessions, confirming, trying to rescue Catholic orphans from civic homes where the priest was not even allowed to enter, interdicting churches whose congregations would not conform to Catholic discipline, defending the church in these days of Know-Nothingism when even United States Senators would in the nation's Capitol harangue their colleagues with inflammatory bigotry on the evils of "Romanism," and on the evils of the Dark Ages when Popish armies trampled on democracy and slew all learning wherever it raised its head? Was it not only two years ago that he had to tell the blatant Senator Babcock: "When Luther began his sad work, there was not a despotic government nor a standing army in all Europe: all Christian governments were either republics or limited monarchies?" But happier times are coming now. The Sisters of Charity are running a hospital. The Madames of the Sacred Heart have come. The Nardin Sisters and the Good Shepherds are here. The Franciscan Fathers and the Vincen-tians and the Oblates are here. The Christian Brothers are coming. A new era is dawning.

But the priest was thinking of Niagara Falls: what of it? There was little to tell. There was a church now at Lewiston and the Falls. Father Stevens in 1851 had removed his residence from the former place to the latter. All one parish still.

If the Bishop could have foreseen the future he would have told the priest of things that already had happened there; but, naturally, he could not see how the past would affect

the priest's future. He would have told the priest about the tavern a-top the Gorge on the highest point of Mount Eagle Ridge. In the last six years business at first had boomed, then seemingly had lost itself in echoes down the Gorge. To the rear of the tavern there was now at right angles a bowling alley with its entrance flush against the bar. In 1850 a suspension bridge stretched across from Lewiston to Queenston. A guidebook of that year says it is "the largest in the world;" and tourists have always as much faith in guidebooks as they have in epitaphs. But that bridge meant volumes of business from the throngs that drove past the tavern. A new sign swung to the breeze: "The Half Way House." Many a belated traveler up from Lewiston upon reaching the inn congratulated himself that he was "half way;" and after ten minutes there did not care about the other half. Not even the most eloquent real estate agent could sell him the Falls for a farthing. There were several commodious rooms on the second floor where the soundest sleep in the state could be had for a dollar. Try as he would to listen to the bewitching song of the rapids and of the wind soughing through the oaks, the duet of winds and the waters would soon pull down tired eyelid on tired eye. The tinkling of glasses downstairs and the loud guffaws would to the sleepy brain trail off into tinkling of cymbals and distant kettle drums. If in the morning the bulging head did feel as though the rapids had missed their channel, had found their way into the brain but could find no channel out, and the swelling floods were stretching and stretching the skull till surely the next minute it would explode, "mine host" might suggest a few little games in the alley before breakfast; "Bowl hardt for vivteen minuidts! Vork ub a sveat—headtache all ist gone!" Business was certainly brisk up to 1851. If only "mine host" could get the railroad in the rear to build a station!

But in that year a new railroad company bought up the Niagara Falls and Lockport Railroad. The new company was called the Rochester, Lockport and Niagara Falls R.R.; and it

first abandoned the road to the rear of the tavern; and afterwards removed the rails: the abandoned roadbed became another highway. The stage that ran from Niagara Falls to Lewiston could now, if it wished, turn off Portage Road after passing the Devil's Hole, drive past the tavern to the rear, and come back to the main thoroughfare some hundred and fifty yards further on. The tavern thus found itself almost in the center of a large ellipse: roads to the right of it, roads to the left of it wobbled and wandered. Was there a man dismayed? There was; and he was "mine host." He recognized that the railroads had overreached themselves; that the traffic through the region did not warrant so many railroads. Across the river another railroad ran along the Canadian side of the Falls to Queenston; but what good was that to him? He could not hand the steins across the rapids!

But in the next year (1852) hope returned: the new railroad company seemed to think that it had abandoned traffic prematurely, and was again running its trains from Rochester as far as Lockport. Maybe it might extend the tracks from Lockport to the Falls via the rear of the Half Way House? Maybe they had been going through a panic only temporary? The New York Central was doing great business from Albany to Buffalo: you could make the journey in five hours; and the journey from Buffalo to the Falls (so a guidebook of the year says) "usually" in an hour. And along the latter division the number of trains each way increased from two to three. And still another cause for hoping high came from the fact that in that same year another brand-new railroad company was organized with a brand-new idea: the Niagara Falls and Lake Ontario R.R. Its new idea was to use the abandoned roadbed for some distance outside the station at Suspension Bridge, then to lay a new bed cutting northward towards the river, and to come out on the Gorge, in full view of the river, some hundred yards north of the Devil's Hole. Then the engineers were to scarp an inclined ledge out of the solid rock, a ledge that would begin nearly four hundred feet above the rapids,

and, clinging to the mountain side, would gradually descend and worm its way for three miles till it met water level at Lewiston. It would be popularly known as the Observation Road. It was one of the most daring engineering attempts of the age. A full view of the Rapids could be had for three miles. To a tourist riding for the first time it would seem that if the train should succeed in holding on to the ledge as it neared and neared the seething waters, it surely must end by plunging into them head first at the bottom—the train could never make that curve!

With characteristic American energy the labor on the road began the year the company was organized; and in three years the trains were running. They passed the Half Way House about a hundred feet below the level of its front yard; but they did not stop. Why would not the company listen to the proposition of placing a station there? Mine host would provide the steps to the upper level and a guide that would announce the beauty of the view from above. Once the tourists were on top, his home would stand right there with both arms welcoming. But it was exasperating to stand at the front door, listen to the grinding brakes of the train down grade, or the grunting of the engine up grade, see a column of smoke glide along the fringe of your lawn, and not a passenger in the train to know that within fifty yards was the cosiest little inn of the state.

The year that the trains on the incline began to run, the New York Central bought up the rights of the railroad whose abandoned roadway ran to the rear of the tavern; and bought up, too, the Observation Road in front, and discontinued the trains. That meant better prospects for the inn: people coming now would have to travel along Portage Road and jolt at every rib of the corduroy highway. They would feel like resting by the time they had reached the "Great Divide."

But four other events in these years gave "mine host" much hope. In 1852 the Falls was advertising as a health resort. A sulphur spring near Suspension Bridge, to help along the idea,

was busy giving baths internally and externally. No doubt, the proprietor of the Half Way House reasoned that any invalid, after drinking "dot stuff" would have need of adjournment to his place for a real cure. Then on the same estate, but a mile away, a big institution was coming. A Mr. De Veaux, a merchant in the town had died. His great grandfather had been a Huguenot who had come from France to New York City. The great grandson had in the Falls amassed a fortune. When he died he left \$175,000 for the maintenance of a benevolent institution for orphans and destitute children. The Episcopal church became the executor of the will. In 1853 the De Veaux College incorporated, and started to build about a mile below the Devil's Hole. That fact would bring tourists to come for a visit or a view of the place. The next year's sensation galvanized into life the seemingly dead business of the place. Thousands lined on both sides of the river from the Falls to Lewiston. The "Maid of the Mist" that plied the comparatively still waters immediately below the Falls was heralded to sail through the Whirlpool and Rapids. It would carry a crew of two. Wagers were laid that it would not start; that if it started on its foolhardy journey it never would get through the Whirlpool safe; that if it did get through, it never could escape the rocks that like jagged teeth stuck out from the white jaws of the Rapids in front of the Half Way House. Those teeth would gnash that frail craft as a crocodile gnashes the bones of a pompano. But, strange to say, it did make the journey, in just seventeen minutes: at a speed of about twenty-five miles an hour. Looking down today upon those rapids one might understand what that boat was doing for seven of those minutes; but what was it doing the other ten? Circling the Whirlpool?

And the last thing that might have given hope was the fact that the Canadians had built a new monument to the memory of their beloved Brock, as massive as it was beautiful. From the Half Way House it looked like a "Cleopatra's Needle" piercing the sky. Yes, it was on the other side; but tourists

that came to view it would not stay on the other side, he hoped. If they did, well, he did not know what he would do. Maybe take up subscriptions to build on his front lawn a bigger monument to the memory of Cooper's "Spy" that fell at Lundy's Lane, even though he didn't. Possibly, mine host might advertise the rumor that on the way to Lundy's Lane the hero had at the Half Way House stopped for a drink. Then again, maybe that would not be a good idea: someone would say cruelly that perhaps the hero was "half shot" before he had entered the battle! "I dunno! But something must be done to awaken business!"