

# **INTRODUCTORY**

# HISTORY OF THE COLLEGE AND SEMINARY OF OUR LADY OF ANGELS

(NIAGARA UNIVERSITY)

NIAGARA COUNTY, N. Y.

**T**HE entire region surrounding the site on which the College and Seminary of Our Lady of Angels (now Niagara University) is located is replete with historic, scientific, and poetic interest. The cataract, the river, the lakes, the adjacent country within a radius of thirty miles, are redolent of memories, some of them of national import, involving the fortunes of war, the results of extensive scientific explorations, or the triumphs of genius over nature. Some, again, are merely poetic, subjective, sentimental, having to do more with the life of the individual than with society in the concrete. Yet are they all rich in material, affording the scientist, historian, relic hunter, and dreamer abundant scope for their respective themes, so that it is no wonder if the literature exploiting Niagara's greatness is found to be both copious and excellent.

The present compilers, however, have no ambitious intentions in dealing with localities in the neighborhood of our institution. Indeed, we feel obliged to pass by historic spots in our vicinity, except in so much as they have had bearing on the career of Niagara students since the foundation of their college home by the waters of our turbulent river. If the battleground of Queenston Heights, for instance, receives notice in these pages, it wins that distinction more because Brock's Monument is a student's landmark than because it notes the spot near which the British general of that name fell while leading his forces against the Americans in the War of 1812. Lundy's Lane may not go unmentioned, for through that historic pass many a footsore student trudged behind his Prefect in quest of exercise and Canadian relics. The "Devil's Hole" may get a chapter, not because it names the place where in 1763 the English were massacred by the Senecas, but because of student explorations conducted by that ever vigilant mentor, the Prefect, in the deep and tangled ravine.

And who would think for a moment that our memoirs could be complete without extended reference to Lewiston, a town which has

figured in song, story, and varied experience, as far as Niagara boys are concerned? Lewiston, which a local writer once denominated a "mausoleum of defunct energies," which another preferred to Irving's "Sleepy Hollow," but which an energetic alumnus of the '90's resurrected through a stone church and a zealous congregation, will be sure to claim our deepest attention — when we get to it. But as even the Falls, Suspension Bridge (now a misnomer, for a steel arch bridge has replaced it), Lewiston, or any section of the region about us, has enduring interest for us only because our "College Home" is to us at least the focus of these attractions, we had better begin by telling how our institution came to be situated on the highest point of Mont-Eagle Ridge.