

Toronto is a convenient place from which to visit Niagara, and of course I went to see the great Falls. We took a lake steamer, and landed at the point where the Niagara river opens into Lake Ontario. Thence the Michigan Central Railway took us to the falls themselves, through a rich country where vineyards, peach, pear, and apple orchards, and fields of Indian corn abounded. Niagara has been so often described, and yet is so indescribable, that I may spare myself any lengthened account of it. I had made up my mind to be at first disappointed. Many people are, and I thought it best to modify my expectations. But my disappointment was quite the other way, thanks, I think, to the intelligent guide, who showed us the various points of interest in such an order as to make the grandeur grow upon us. The River Niagara is the stream by which Lake Erie pours its surplus waters into Lake Ontario. It is about 36 miles long, but all the interest of it is confined to about four miles of its course. Above the Falls it is several miles wide, broken by rocks and rapids. Then leaping over the Falls, it turns sharp at right angles down a deep gorge with perpendicular sides, clothed with almost sub-tropical foliage. For a mile and a half it is comparatively placid, and a small steamboat plies on it. Then for about an equal distance it rushes through a narrower channel, and along a steeper bed, at a terrific rate, the underlying rocks twisting and contorting the torrent into grand and angry forms. Every now and again, great waves will splash up in foam, and the deep-blue water become all white. These are the well-known Niagara Rapids, and it was in the foolhardy attempt to swim them that Captain Webb, the great swimmer, lost his life. The river then suddenly turns once more at right angles, but the force of the stream has scooped out at the angle a huge basin covering some 60 or 70 acres, in which it swirls itself round, and partly seems to cross its own track. This is known as the Whirlpool. Here the river seems to recover its equilibrium, and to prepare itself to flow on less madly. Here, too, in the constant circling of the water, the drift-wood carried down the stream comes again to the surface. And here, again, the bodies of the numerous suicides for which, alas! Niagara is