

### 3.—Column of Vapor.

The mighty clouds of vapor which are thrown up from the Falls move with the wind, and descend in a misty shower like rain; they are seen from a very great distance, appearing like a pillar of smoke. When the sun and the position of the observer are favorable, they present a remarkably beautiful appearance, sparkling like diamonds, with occasional flashes of the most brilliant colors, and a splendid rainbow.

### 4.—Terrapin Bridge.

A singular bridge or pier, 300 feet in length, has been constructed upon what are called the Terrapin Rocks, where a single piece of timber actually projects over the edge of the Great Fall about 10 feet. Although the prodigious magnitude of the falling water is not so apparent as from below, yet, from the extremity of this bridge, standing, as it were, in the very midst of the mighty flood, the scene is terrific and appalling, and cannot be viewed without astonishment and awe, not unmingled with fear. A late writer says, "If the visitor is alone, and gives way to his feelings, he must fall on his knees, for the grandeur of the scene is overpowering."

### 5.—Rapids.

Before approaching the precipice, over which the water is precipitated, the river sinks, in little more than half a mile, 58 feet, and the stratum of limestone, which forms its bed, is intersected with seams and patches of hard, dark-colored chert. Through this channel of rugged rocks the water rushes with terrific and ungovernable impetuosity, a fiercely-raging torrent, converted, by the resistance with which it meets, into a broad expanse of foam, as white as snow, bearing a strong resemblance to the breakers on a rocky shore during a gale. The inhabitants of the neighborhood consider it as certain death to get once involved in the Rapids; not only because escape from the cataracts would be hopeless, but because the force of the water amongst the rocks would probably destroy life before the Falls were approached. Instances are on record of the melancholy fate of persons who have thus perished. In the summer of 1821, three men were removing furniture from Navy Island; the wind was high, and in the direction of the Falls; the current was consequently stronger than usual, and they thought it unsafe to cross so near the Falls. They fastened their boat, and went to sleep in it. By some means, it became loosened, and they discovered themselves already in the Rapids. No human power could save them; the boat was carried down, and in a few moments dashed to pieces. Some of the goods were picked up below, much broken; but a table floated ashore uninjured.

The celebrated Chateaubriand relates that he narrowly escaped a similar fate: he was viewing the Falls from the bank of the river, having the bridle of his horse twisted round his arm: a rattlesnake stirred in the neighboring bushes, and startled the horse, who reared and ran backwards towards the abyss. Not being able to disengage his arm from the bridle, he was dragged after him; the horse's fore legs were off the ground, and, squatting on the brink of the precipice, he was upheld merely by the bridle, when, astonished by this new danger, he suddenly threw himself forward, and sprang to a distance of ten feet, again dragging Chateaubriand with him, who was thus released from his perilous situation.

In February, 1827, two men, who embarked in a boat to cross the river, were forced into the Rapids by the ice, precipitated into the abyss below, and dashed to pieces.

In September, 1827, a schooner, called the *Michigan*, with a number of wild animals inhumanly confined on her deck, was towed to the margin of the Rapids, and abandoned to her fate. She passed the first fall of the Rapids in safety, but struck a rock at the second, and lost her masts: there she remained an instant, until the current turned her round, and bore her away. A bear here leaped overboard, and swam to the shore. She then filled, and sunk, so that only her upper works were visible, and she went over the cataract almost without being seen. In a few moments her fragments, which were broken very small, covered the basin below. A cat and a goose were the only animals found alive. In October, 1829, the schooner *Superior* was towed into the current, and abandoned; but she struck on a rock, about the middle of the river, where she remained a considerable time, and finally went over the Falls in the night.