



The Literary Gem.

THE FALLS AT NIAGARA.

We are going to say a few words about the beautiful and sublime Falls. It may be called a thread-bare subject; but with us it is one that we are never tired of reading or thinking of.—In it we behold a picture of the mighty power of nature. A picture at once sublime and beautiful, and an earthly representation of Eternity. We behold a mighty cataract of waters that have for thousands of years poured their unceasing floods in mighty thunder over a mountain of rock. The most ancient Pyramids of Egypt are as to them infants in years. We begin by inserting the following beautiful lines on the mighty Falls, seldom have we seen lines more appropriate:—

ON NIAGARA.

BY THE EARL OF CARLISLE.

There's nothing great or bright, thou glorious Fall!
Thou may'st not to the fancy's sense recall—
The thunder-riven cloud, the lightning's leap,
The stirring of the chambers of the deep,
Earth's emerald green and many untold dyes,
The fleecy whiteness of the upper skies,
The tread of armies thickening as they come,
The boom of cannon and the beat of drum,
The brow of beauty and the form of grace,
The passion and the prowess of our race,
The song of Homer in its loftiest hour,
The unresisted sweep of Roman power,
Britannia's trident on the azure sea,
America's young shout of liberty!
Oh! may the wars that madden in thy deeps
There spend their rage, nor climb the encircling steep,
And till the conflict of thy surges cease
The nations on thy banks repose in peace!

FALLING OF THE HORSE SHOE ROCK.—The Niagara *Iris* says a portion of the rock at the Horse Shoe Falls on the Canada side, fell with a tremendous crash on Tuesday the 27th ult. The part which fell was about ten rods wide. It carried with it the canal boat which had been lodged upon it for some time. Had the fall occurred in the Summer, undoubtedly some one would have been killed by it, as it was much frequented by visitors.

The above account of the fall of a portion of the rocks at the Falls was taken from the *Iris* in December last. Thus from generation to generation has the cataract been wearing its way through the rocks. Nothing can be more interesting and at the same time truly sublime, than the constant progress made by the waters of this great and awful Fall in wearing away the solid rock over which are poured an everlasting avalanche of angry waters! Thus for countless ages past, probably long before the days of

Abraham, bath this mighty cataract worn its winding furrow through the rock. So it has continued to do down to our time; and so it will continue to do, until it reaches Lake Erie; going slower or faster in proportion, to the hardness of the substances, with which the waters come in contact. Mighty picture of passing death and the decay of earthly grandeur! Yard after yard and mile after mile of the mountain rock, have given way to the power of the mighty waters in past ages, and near thirty miles more will have as surely to give way to the same power; before it reaches Lake Erie, in ages to come! So falleth the race of man! One by one we go to the grave until the whole now rising generation shall be no more. So the mightiest works and temples of Thebes, Nineveh and Babylon have yielded by degrees to the ravages of time and of man. The spectacle is of all others the most sublime to contemplate or muse on. A mighty canal now seven miles long, but yet to be thirty miles longer; one hundred and fifty feet or upwards deep, worn and dug out of the solid rock!! One ceaseless and eternal rush of mighty waters, whose quantity and power are measureless and countless as the stars of heaven, tumbles in solemn thunder over the precipice.—So it has done for centuries past; and so it will do when the present time will be as the days of Nimrod and Babel!! Fit picture of the Deity! Eternal and omnipotent! Who can stay its course or who can measure its power? Within the memory of living men the position of the Falls has changed but little. Probably since the days of father Marquette the Jesuit, they have not shifted more than a hundred yards.—This traveller visited the Upper Lakes and western rivers near two hundred years ago. The progress of the waters of course must depend on the nature of the rock, and in some respects probably upon the frost. One in connection with this subject is led to enquire what would be the effect of the waters wearing their way to the body of Lake Erie. This lake is known to be very shallow as compared with the other great lakes. Lakes Ontario, Huron and Superior, are in many places almost fathomless. Erie is probably not half the depth of the Lakes above it. In many places it is only sixty feet deep where one would suppose it much deeper. The lake being shallow would not of course precipitate upon the low lands bordering on Lake Ontario so much water as if it were very deep. A partial overflow of the lands lying inland from the banks of Ontario and the St. Lawrence for thirty miles or less would for a short time take place; but in the end this overflow would subside; and Lake Erie would be turned into a wide River, and the Falls would be of much less height than

at present. It may be doubtful too, if as they approach Erie, they would not be gradually turned into a succession of long sloping rapids instead of remaining as they now are one perpendicular fall. Such subjects are curious to speculate on but cannot affect the present or countless generations of men to come. We intend to return to this subject again, and will give an account of proofs, that the Falls have worn their way for many miles. Among facts relating to the Falls, we would mention that Professor Lyell, when examining into them, found in a bank of green sand stone, sea shells, & harks teeth, and what was considered the remains of a seal; proving that the great sea once laved the heights of Queenston. In conclusion we insert the following surprising and perilous adventure of three young men, who last fall periled their lives to save a human creature from the awful leap. It appeared in the papers some months ago; but is worthy of repetition in this article and of remembrance forever.

PERILOUS RESCUE.—On Friday last a son of Mr. A. Kirkwood, aged about 8 years, was playing in a skiff near the mouth of Chippawa Creek, and by some means it became detached from shore and floated out into the Niagara River. The strong current seized upon the light craft and hurried it down towards the cataract, each moment adding to its velocity and to the peril of the child. Three young men, named Burnham, Lyon and Huff, took a light skiff with a pair of oars and a paddle, and put off in pursuit of the child at the imminent hazard of their lives. With their oars and strong current, they sped on with the swiftness of a projected arrow and were soon over the first reef and fast approaching the little mariner, whose boat was well nigh upon the great breakers, as they are termed where they overtook him and bore him to the shore in safety, near the burning spring, about a mile below Chippawa. One minute more would have borne both boats and their crews into the breakers, from which recovery is impossible. This act of benevolent heroism is entitled to a meed of praise.—*Buffalo Express.*

THE WHITE WINGED GRIFFIN, THE FIRST VESSEL THAT EVER SAILED ON THE UPPER LAKES.

The earliest pioneers of the wilderness, of the great North American lakes, were the Jesuit missionaries in the seventeenth century. Their great knowledge of mankind and of the customs and prejudices of the red men, enabled them to escape the tomahawk and scalping-knife, when ordinary men would have suffered. Their tact—apparent sanctity—suavity of manners and cunning, led them harmless through Indian countries, never before visited by white men. Various tribes of Indians lived on the lakes, as far up as the head of Lake Michigan. Among them the most numerous, was the tribe of the Iroquois. A great tribe lived also in Illinois, called the Illinois Indians. Amongst the earliest of these travellers, were fathers Lasalle and Marquette. There are towns and counties called after them in Illinois and in the west. They visited the