

DOWN THE RIVER TO THE SEA.

CHAPTER I.

NIAGARA.

THE brilliant sunshine of a July day lighted up the great cataract and the rich verdure of the surrounding landscape, bringing out all the wonderful variety of hue in the surging mass of falling water, the snowy clouds that perpetually veiled and unveiled it, the iridescence that floated elusively amid their ever-shifting billows, and the deep emerald of the islands that nestled so confidently among the foaming, seething rapids that swept down the slope above, in order to take the fatal leap. The Clifton House veranda had its usual complement of lounging groups of guests, most of them so absorbed in gossip, flirting, or the