

excavation; and, by the same calculation, it will require at least 30,000 to reach Lake Erie; but when the river was confined to a narrower channel, the operation might have been much quicker. The distance from the mouth of the ravine is nearly seven miles, the average breadth 1200 feet. Up to the period when Goat Island divided the Fall, the whole force of the water would have been exerted on this surface; since that time, the operative power of the water has been extended to nearly 3500 feet: this diminished action would necessarily be attended by a retardation in the retrocession of the cataract. The Fall has also reached a point where, in addition to the thickness of the limestone beds, numerous layers of chert give additional strength and durability.

A communication has within a few years been opened between the western lakes and the sea, by the grand Erie Canal, from Lake Erie to the Hudson, and by the Welland Canal, between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. The Welland Canal commences at Port Colburn, in Gravelly Bay, passes the river Chippewa by means of a noble aqueduct, and enters Lake Ontario at Port Dalhousie. The work was commenced in 1824, and was completed in five years; it is 43 miles in length, 58 feet in width, and 8½ feet in depth; it admits vessels of 125 tons burden; the whole descent is 342 feet, which is accomplished by 37 locks. At the Deepcut, about 8 miles from the Falls, 1,477,700 cubic feet of earth were removed; and at the Mountain Ridge, where the descent is made, 70,000 cubic yards of rock. The idea originated with Mr. W. H. Merritt, of St. Catherine's, and the work was planned and accomplished, with the assistance of the British government, by the Canada Land Company, at the expense of £200,000. This canal is now the property of the government.

Little was known of the Falls of Niagara previous to the commencement of the last century. They were described by Father Hennepin in 1678, and by La Fontaine in 1687. In the latter part of the last century, they were visited by several travellers; but it is only within a few years that they have been a fashionable place of resort. The number of visitors is now probably from 20,000 to 30,000 annually; and each successive year greatly outnumbers its predecessor.

The immediate neighborhood of the Falls, and the banks of the strait, have been the scenes of a succession of actions, attended with the horrors of civil war, between the British and American troops in 1812—1814, particularly four desperate encounters in July, August, and September, of the latter year.

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NOTE.—For most of the data in this Description, we are indebted to the valuable "*Manual for the Use of Visitors to the Falls of Niagara*," &c., by Mr. JOSEPH W. INGRAHAM, of Boston; which we have been kindly permitted by the author to use for this purpose; and to which we would refer for a more full description of this great wonder of the world. Mr. Ingraham has been engaged for four years in preparing an extensive work descriptive of these Falls, and the country adjacent to them, which is expected soon to issue from the press, and which is to be accompanied by copious Maps, Plans, Elevations, Profiles, Views, &c.

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