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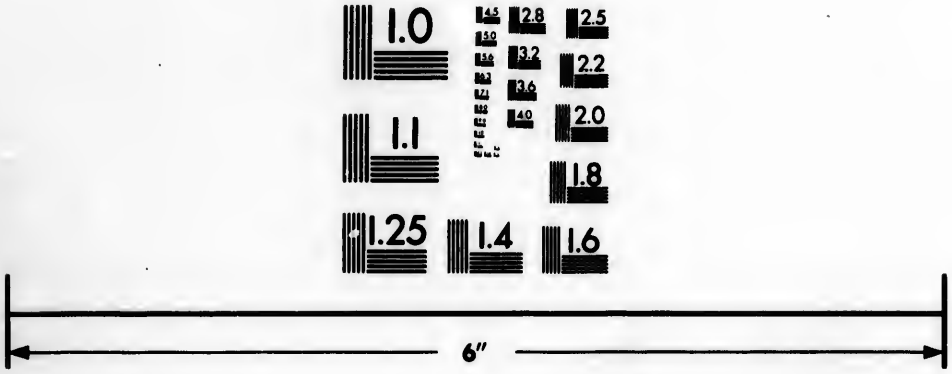

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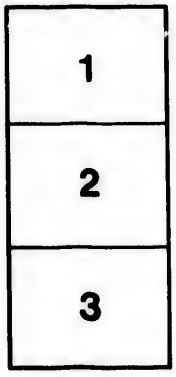

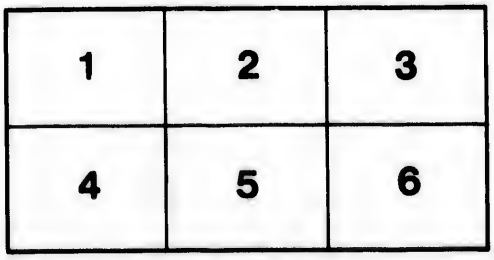

See "Old Lampas Aglow"
by L. M. Lande - Montreal -
1957 -

NIAGARA FALLS.

IN THREE CANTOS.

NIAGARA FALLS:

A POEM,

IN THREE CANTOS.

BY JAMES K. LISTON,
CLINTON.

TORONTO:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR.
1843.

J. H. LAWRENCE, PRINTER,
Guardian Office.

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NIAGARA FALLS.

CANTO FIRST.

ANALYSIS OF CANTO FIRST.

The Poem opens with an apostrophe to Niagara Falls, as a monument of Divine Power—No means of ascertaining their second cause—The vapours and rainbows—Goat's Island—The Table Rock—The ice thrown down in Spring—The stone tower on the edge of the cataract—The sublimity, complexity, and minuteness of God's Works—Picture of the Falls at sun-rise on a May Morning—The Water Fowls—An Eagle flies in sublime altitude above the Falls—Indians in their canoe, shooting Musk-Rats—Allusion to the Fall of Man, and its bloody consequences—The wicked policy of the United States, in aiding Bonaparte during the last war—Niagara's Cataract, unlike the stormy ocean, cannot be arrested by the firing of cannons—Minute description of the Battle of Lundy's Lane.

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NIAGARA FALLS.

—

CANTO FIRST.

—

NIAGARA FALLS! stupendous, beautiful,
Enduring monument of Power Divine!
Thy white-foam pillars ever moving stand,
And ever standing move harmoniously
To the rough music of the dashing spray,
And roaring tumult of thy boiling base.
How long has tuned this mystic minstrelsy?
When did thy swift but solemn march begin?
When wast thou first heaved o'er those heights sublime
That fringe, with green, Ontario's mantle blue?
How long hast thou been grinding down that steep
That frames the wonder of a wondrous world,
And holds thy silvery vestments to the sun?
No record of thy birth the rocks retain;
No number of thy years the shores reveal;
No living man thy second cause can guess;
Thou stand'st alone—unmatch'd, unrival'd Falls;
And ring'st the requiems of six thousand years!

Those vapours dense, which rise unceasingly,
With the rude noise, like man's artillery,
Proclaim the watery conflict, and point out
To distant passengers "Niagara Falls."
Thy self-claim'd arch, of many colours wove,
Embroider'd on thy awful front sublimely, seems
As if the currents of thy breathless speed
Required a second set of elements,—
Of elements exclusively thine own.
The foam-girt isle rests on the perilous edge,—
The awful edge of bending floods sublime,
Wheeling convulsively, by gravitation's force
Dragg'd down into the dangerous abyss,—
The foam-girt isle from age to age endures,
And braves the fury of the fitful waves:
Though not unharmed, it stands, and still shall stand
For many, many centuries to come;
And cut the hastening currents, ere they dash:
Till down at last it falls reluctantly,
Wash'd, worn, and wasted by the ruthless tide.
In peering dangerous eminence o'erhangs
The boiling gulf below—the Table Rock,
On which the curious traveller can stand,
To view the awful glories of the scene:
Before him moves a living liquid mass;
Beneath him boils Niagara's waters fall'n,
And whirling in ten thousand ways, convolved.
If in the vernal showers, after rough winds,
On perilous Erie's wave, what blocks of ice

Are thrown unceremoniously adown
The dreadful chasm!—and floating off again,
And whirling round and round, as driven about
By the uncertain undulating wave,
Which seems to stray, and search with care to find
Its channel; and at last, as if its waves
Found out their ancient and lawful course,
Bears them triumphant to Ontario's wave.

The perilous tower, raised on the quivering brink
Of waters crowding o'er, on waters fall'n,
Also o'erlooks that dreadful precipice,
And seems each moment ready to expire,
And take the fearful plunge, and watch no more
The parting glories of ten thousand waves
Sent headlong, foaming down resistlessly,
To grace the downfall of ten thousand more.

The rugged, ever-shaken, trembling steep,
Render'd accessible by wooden stairs
Of clumsy workmanship and structure frail,
Which lead down underneath the "Table Rock,"
Into the cavern, where you 'stonish'd see
One side a rock,—one side a liquid sheet—
A thick embowering sheet of watery foam,
Moving with ponderous force and deafening noise,
That shakes the trembling vault. It upward rains
Incessantly, a damp and drizzling shower.

Above, below, the vast impetuous floods,
With harsh, rough, boisterous, and continuous song—
Not well attuned to the fastidious ears

Of those who live in halls of pamper'd state,
Listening the silver songs of luxury,
But loathe the beauties of God's works sublime,—
Where awful grandeur rides upon the storm,
And the wild war of Nature, unadorn'd
By tinsel fopperies of man's device,
With rapturous accents tunes the Almighty's praise,
And pours contempt on proudest works of man.

How grand, how simple, how complete, how plain,
How manifold, how indivisible,
How bright, how dark, how luminously obscure,
How large, how small, how marvelously mixt!
Oh what a web of wondrous workmanship
Is God's creation visible to man!
In all the moving myriads propell'd
Swift down the gradual sloping of the stream,
And then thrown o'er Niagara's battlements;
Then sent to form Ontario's crystal curls,
Which weave themselves, and fall so gracefully
Into St. Lawrence (clear but rapid stream),
T'embrace the briny billows of the Main:
Each pliant particle of liquid pure,
That circulates, and forms this wondrous chain
Of lakes and rivers, cataracts, and storms,—
Each drop, each particle of watery foam
Must measure out its path's minutest winds,
Without a single needle's-point astray;
True to those laws of gravitation fixt
By irresistible decree, unchanged,

Extending to creation's farthest bounds,—
Sealing the fixt stars in the concave blue;
Marching the planets in their orbits bright;
Hedging the highways of eternity;
Holding the ocean in its hollow vast
Of deeps alike unknowing and unknown;
Whitening the pillars of Niagara's foam,
For ever whitening, yet for ever clear.
  How beautiful the contrast of the dark
Green foliage of those branchy cedars, round
This amphitheatre of milk-white spray,
Curtain'd by mists that never cease to curl;
And like a veil of modest gauze on cheek
Of virgin purity, on bridal morn,
Heightens th' effect of charms it fails to hide!
  How charming, too, in morn of vernal May,
When lighter shades of green betinge the slopes—
The rough, vermiculated slopes, which bound
And shade Niagara's sportive crystal stream—
To sit and watch, from sylvan promontory,
The opening wonders of this fairy scene!
The orient sun-beams caught upon the edge
Of the bright cataract's ensilver'd folds—
The awful edge of bending floods sublime,
Gilded and glittering, greets the rising morn,
And smiles benignant o'er th' impetuous waves.
  A numerous noisy tribe of water-fowls
Attend, and watch the surface of the abyss;
And oft traverse, and re-traverse, the clouds

Of the dense vapours, raised along the edge
Of the concussive downfall, where it meets
The smooth'd but undulating mass of spray.
Some say, these birds are drawn instinctively
To watch, and feed upon the carcasses
Of fishes kill'd by leaping o'er the Falls.
But far aloft, in altitudes unclaim'd
By second-rated wing, the Eagle soars
Along the re-illuminated vault—
The clouded azure vault, erewhile bestrew'd
With burnish'd points innumerous, but now
Extinguish'd in the floods of solar beams
Shot from the orient chambers of the morn—
Chooses his fortress inaccessible;
Selects his quarry borne on lighter wing;
Or lists the harsh tones of Niagara's song.
  Down on the margin of yon shaded bay,
Where brushwood branches thick o'erhang the stream,
Two tawny Indians, with their "squaws" and child,
Sit in their light canoe, and watch the flood:
With loaded guns, wait patiently,
Expectant of the musk-rat's morning play,
Across the mouth of a small rivulet,
That tributizes to Niagara's wave,
Parting the branches in a rill-worn glen.
Their bark canoes float light along the wave,
Propell'd by paddles rude, at which the squaws,
With labour sore, and much dexterity
Of hand, both guide, and urge along with speed

Incredible, and without sails or helm,
'Mong rocks and rapids, where no other craft
Would sail securely, or obey the hand.
The Indians watch the musk-rat's morning play;
Their smooth black locks uncover'd in the sun,
Uncropt, hang carelessly, shading the neck,
And reaching downwards past the shoulder-blades:
Their dress, tho' European stuffs, is strangely mixt,
A shirt and hose of dark-blue cotton stripe,
Both coarse and dingy, shapeless and uncouth;
And round their waists a leathern girdle bound,
Suspends the fatal tomahawk and knife;
Down from the neck, and straight upon the breast,
Hangs powder-horn, and balls of various mould,
For that more fatal tube, which savage men
Were taught to use by men polite and learn'd;
For Heathens learn from Christians to kill
With better grace, precision more polite;
To swear, and swallow alcoholic draughts,
That burn the blood, and "steal away the brains,"
And render savages tenfold more wild,
And make the civilized more savage still,
More brutal, more debased, and more accurs'd
Than the rude tenants of Arabia's wilds,
Where moral night has fix'd her "ebon throne,"
And Christian creeds are held in disrepute:
Their ears with rings and necks with beads are graced,
And on their feet are buck-skin moccasins,
To shield them from the brambles and the cold;

A woollen blanket white, with border blue,
O'erhangs their shoulders, and protects alike
Their bodies, arms, and implements of chase,
From the rude rain-drop and the scorching ray
That draws that rain-drop to the clouds again.
The chiefs, instead of blankets, wear an end
Of broad cloth, with a yellow fag attached;
And wear a hat of European mould,
With feathers, and fantastic fooleries;
Round their stout wrists bracelets of silver clasp'd,
Or ornamented much with colour'd beads,
And colour'd quills of the rough porcupine;
Or polish'd human bones of various shape,
With rings of bone or metal in the nose.
With much of mystery the moral world
Abounds; and as erewhile we sang the floods,
And the wild war of waters, pouring down
From fountains vast and inexhaustible,
With force that mocks the arm and art of man;
So now, the moral world presents to view
Scenes no less wonderful; a fall more grand,
With consequences flowing through the vast
Of days, and years, and centuries by-gone,
But pregnant with results immeasurable,
With destinies of millions of our race,
Through an unbounded and eternal scene.
Behold man's innocent and holy state,
As from God's hands; and with similitude
Divine impress'd upon his soul; with powers

Of body and of mind, to walk unharm'd,
And harmlessly, among the works of God,
To wield the sceptre and to wear the crown ;
And hold dominion in the threefold realm
Of Earth, with animals of various shape
And size, from the huge ponderous elephant
That shakes the forest and uproots the trees,
To things of microscopic magnitude ;—
Of Air, where, as we sang, the eagle soars,
And swallows flutter ; and the swarming clouds
Of insect tribes are borne along the breeze,
Which gently blows aside the scorching beams
Of mid-day ;—and the Liquid Element,
Where all the finny and disporting tribes,
Of every texture and of every size,
Incessant gambol 'neath the glassy waves,
And multiply the moonbeams thousand-fold.
  Oh what a glorious crown was given to man,
By delegation from his Maker wise !—
His Maker bountiful, who rules on high,
And from eternity has borne the sway
Of rightful and of boundless sovereignty ;
Ere second causes, and subordinate thrones
Of angel and archangel, or of man,
Had sprung to existence from his sovereign word !
  Oh what a glorious throne was given to man !
What dignities were heap'd upon his head !
From what a towering height of happiness
He fell, when from the fatal tree he pluck'd

The perilous fruit that poisoned all our bliss,
And made us slaves, instead of sovereign lords;
And made us tyrants of this lower world,
And, what is worse, tyrants and enemies,
And murderers of our fellow-fallen men!
  Historical remembrance of the scene
Wakes at the inspiring sight of Lundy's Lane;
The dreadful field, where hostile banners waved,
When self-styled friends of liberty conspired
To murder genuine freedom at one blow,
By aiding France's despot in his schemes
Of aggrandizement, and of sovereign sway
O'er humbled Europe, when but Britain's arms
Were raised for freedom's injured cause, and stemm'd
Successfully the hastening onward march
Of that foul monster, which first bore the name
Of liberty republican, as free
From the berated rule of kings and priests,
But which, like all the schemes which crafty men
Devise, to dupe the senseless multitude,
It promised fair, and flatter'd ignorance;
And men illiterate were taught to think
That they were born to rule, and not to obey.
It feasted cruelty on public shows
Of thousands guillotined for public good—
For "public safety," and for freeman's rights.
And after talking long, and boasting much,
And acting villanies of crimson dye,
To sweep from earth the hated name of kings,

And plant republics in their vacant thrones,
It quietly turn'd round, and bow'd the knee
To one who ruled for selfish ends alone;
And who the people's rights and lives held cheap,—
Their rights he trampled on without remorse,
And stepp'd to sovereign sway without their leave;
Lives by the hundred thousand fearlessly
He took, to feed the greedy cannon's mouth;
And on the burning sands of Egypt's shores,
On Nila's banks, on Russia's freezing plains,
At Austerlitz, and on the fertile vales
Of Italy, Alp-bounded; or beyond
The Pyrenees, where peninsulic Spain
And Portugal, with vine-clad purple vales,
Parts broad Atlanta from the encompass'd sea
Whose billows wash three quarters of the globe;
Where'er caprice or wild ambition led
He forced them on by millions to the fight,
And poured their blood in oceans where he pleased,
And left their bones to bleach along the plains.
  To stop the murderous march of guilty France,
Led by her despot, who had now subdued
All continental Europe by his arms,
Britain stepp'd forth alone, and undertook
The cause of genuine freedom to uphold;
And from the iron gripe of tyranny
To wrest a sceptre dangerous to man.
Britain stood forth alone! for none would help,
Or those who would have help'd had not the power;

For, trembling at the terror of his arms,
They soon fell prostrate at the despot's feet.
  Then was the time for democrats to show,
And prove, sincerity in freedom's cause;
And prove their liberty was something more
Than the mere cant of demagogues.
Then was the time to prove that liberty
Republican, and based upon the mob,
The chance majority of voices, fired
And heated up by passion or by pride,
Was better than the majesty of kings
And cool experience of instructed men
Chosen by the unerring providence of God.
  But oh! the inconsistency of men,
When once they throw aside the laws of Heaven,
And fill their place with human fallacies
Which Atheistic demagogues promulge.
The free Republic States, which erewhile rose
In grim rebellion 'gainst their lawful King,
Because he exercised his sovereign rights,—
The free slave-keeping States, without a sigh,
Saw freedom's cause expiring in the grasp
Of the fell despot, and, without a pang
Of sympathetic sorrow for the brave
Held down in bondage by the despot's arms,
They rose indeed, but not in freedom's cause,—
They rose, at once all freedom to destroy,
By aiding France 'gainst Britain's single arm
That strove for freedom 'gainst such fearful odds.

Long had they look'd on Canada askance
With jealousy, and sought for a pretext
And opportunity, which seem'd to smile :—
As Britain was engaged with half the world,
And Canada—with wide and open front,
And population thinly scatter'd o'er
A line far more than half the continent—
All uninstructed in the use of arms,
And striving 'gainst the oaks and pines which held
Erewhile possession of those fertile plains
Which now wave forth to the autumnal breeze
The golden treasures of all-bounteous heaven,—
With hellish heart they strove, by fraud or force,
To make the loyal men of Canada
A set of lawless rebels like themselves.
For two long years they thus had strove in vain,
With armies large, and well equipp'd for fight,
But fail'd most signally ; for neither threats,
Nor force of arms, nor promises, could move
The loyalty of Canada, but served
The more to show its genuineness, and fix
In every heart a deeper-rooted love
Of loyal freedom, and of hatred strong
Of the dark demon of democracy,
The Atheistic cant of demagogues,
And tyranny of uninstructed men.
Two years the war continued raging round
The frontiers, when, by force of numbers, Brown
Had driven the British troops within the forts

Of George and Missisagua, near the point
Where, after many a winding wave sublime,
Niagara disembogues his waters wild
Into Ontario's clear blue crystal curls:
In vain he tried to carry by assault
The British forts: though reinforced, he found
It prudent to consider how he might,
With show of honour, make a safe retreat,
And gain once more the Land of Liberty
Self-styled, without receiving from the hands
Of British and Canadians some stroke
Of vengeance, just retaliation due
For plunderous deeds committed by his troops,—
Yes, by his mob-made generals, upon
The harmless homes of such as dared oppose
The invading arms republican; or dared
To obey the call of honour, from the lips
Of him who justly held the reins of state.

Though in the midst of harvest work, which calls
With urgency, and brooks of short delay,
The British ranks were daily reinforced
By willing numbers, glad to bear a part
In work more urgent and more honourable,—
To drive the star-striped banners from their shores,
Or intercept their homeward march, and give
A parting blow, to make them recollect
That they had once been caught in Canada,
And dread again, uncalled, to cross the Lines.

The Field of Lundy's Lane was fought close by

The Cataract sublime of which we sang,—
The Cataract sublime, whose murmuring tones
And mighty moving mass of watery foam
Paused not, but hasted on with 'customed speed,
Unheeding of the carnage, or the din
Of men's proud thundering fiery engines, charged
With skill, and belching out explosive fire,
And round projectiles hissing through the air,
Speeding invisibly, and bearing death
And wounds incurable, unmaking quite
The human form's divine similitude—
Its fair proportions scattering o'er the soil.
'Tis said that when fierce Boreas rides the Main,
And sable clouds o'ercanopy the waves,—
Those shifting ridges of the watery waste,
Moved and expanded by his arctic blasts,—
That by the fire of cannon, or the shock
Of fierce contending fleets, embattled o'er
The briny surge, with loud continuous roar
Of fulminating tubes innumerous,
And indicating man's vindictive rage,—
'Tis said the elemental war will stop,
And Boreas with his blasts will cease to blow
The swelling ridges of the unfathomed Main,
Which, like an angry giant stunned, falls down
And swoons, or sleeps : So calm succeeds the storm.
Not so Niagara's ever-murmuring tones,—
His vast descending pillars never pause,
But move with unabated force sublime,

From age to age enduring and unchanged,
Unheedful of the cannon's roar—unmoved,
Unsilenced, and unstaid ; and ever o'er
These wondrous battlements he leaps unscathed,
With all his glittering robes resplendently
Bedazzling in the sun's uncloud-caught beams.
And in the dreary reign of Winter's frosts,
When feebler streams, locked in their iron grasp,
Lie still, and stay their murmuring tones awhile,
Niagara heeds not, but still downward moves,—
In swift but solemn majesty descends
The steep sublime ; nor gives a single rest
Or variation in the lofty tones
Of his rude song.
So when the battle groaned
At Lundy's Lane, close by the Cataract,
It paused not, but, unlike the stormy Main,
Which, as we sang, is tranquillized and smoothed
When man's proud thunders pour along the wave,
Niagara changed not ; but his murmurous notes,
Borne on the pinions of the evening breeze,
Were heard at intervals, between the peals
Of hostile engines, charged with nitrous grain,
And vomiting the messengers of death.
Brown, with his force, were slyly moving off,
In order to regain, unharmed, the land
Republican. Brave Drummond had arrived,
To head the loyal troops, who were cantoned,
In small detachments, o'er the lands which lie

Adjacent to Niagara's noble stream,
That forms the boundary-line, that separates
The loyal colonies of Britain's crown
From those who now the star-striped banner wave :
'Tis hard to name them, though they style themselves
Of North America, United States ;
A name ambiguous, which may well apply
To any power of plural sections, formed
With the immense terrene that separates
The broad Pacific from Atlanta's wave,—
From Darien's Isthmus to the Frozen Zone,
From Bhering's Strait to Baffin's crimson snows.
  Brown found his situation critical,
Though reinforced—as we have erewhile sung ;—
He found, that brave Canadian loyalty
Was more than match for his more numerous host.
The post of Lundy's Lane—now Drummondville—
Is on an eminence of small extent,
With gradual sloping plains on every side,
And to an army of invasive troops
Of consequence to be secured with speed.
  Brave Drummond's van had just approach'd the lane,
Led by the gallant Colonel Morrison,
When Brown, with force five thousand strong, began
To take possession of the rising ground.
Though of inferior force, the British troops
Were formed in line without the least delay,
And the loud peal of musquetry announced
That the dread contest had begun to rage ;

And the swift messengers of death began
To fly, and clouds of smoke to rise aloft,
And change the aspect of those lovely plains,
And partially conceal the work of death.
  Ten minutes' work of British bayonets fixt
Dislodged the star-striped banners from the hill.
The golden glories of the western sky
Proclaimed the downward march of Sol's bright car,
Which, like Niagara's currents, makes no pause
Since Joshua spoke, nor heeds the deafening din
Of man's proud thunders and vindictive rage.
  Again the British line was formed with speed,
And, in its centre, guns and rockets placed,
Which Scott attacked with glittering bayonets,
But was repulsed, with fearful loss driven back,
When, from the shelter of a copse which lay
Between the British and the Cataract,
The Star-stripes sent a well-directed fire
Upon the British crest, which stretched along
The road to Queenston and those heights sublime
That fringe, with green, Ontario's mantle blue.
  With desperate fury now the battle raged :
The British force, though few in number, fought
With purpose nerved, with valour obstinate,
And closed their ranks around their guns with haste,
Determined to maintain their ground, or lay
That night their bodies on the blood-stained soil ;
The Star-stripes, no less obstinate and brave,
Determined to dislodge them from the hill

By force of numbers; and with furious charge
And murderous fire assail'd the British crest,
Pouring in columns like the Cataract—
Sublime Niagara near the fatal scene.
With desperate valour rushing to the charge,
And many a brave but vain attempt, that night
The Star-stripes strove to force the British lines,
Which held their ground with Scythian obstinacy,
And, with a front impenetrably firm
And fierce recoil, roll'd back the waves of war.
  Night's sable curtains long had veiled the scene
With darkness; but, instead of making pause
Or least suspension in the work of death,
It seemed to arm the combatants afresh
With rage implacable and deadly zeal,
Which neither wished to give nor take repose,
Short of the slumbers of a glorious grave
Beside the windings of Niagara's stream,
And 'neath the echoes of his wondrous song.
And as the lightning's flash is brighter seen
In darkness, and the roar of thunderbolts
Invades with more alarm the stilly night,
When other sounds have died beneath its reign,
So the wild roar of cannon on these plains—
These peaceful plains, which seldom hear a sound
To drown the cadence of Niagara's chime—
So the wild war increasing, and the flash
Of hostile guns, seen through the pale blue smoke,
Borrowed fresh terrors from the blackened heavens.

So close and huddled grew the battle now,
That oft the British gunners were assail'd
When sponging out their guns; and hostile guns
Were often loaded, levelled, and fired off
At but a very few yards separate.
The Star-stripes for a season made a turn
Upon the left, where Rial, just returned
From dressing of his wounds, was captive made.
For three long hours and more the battle raged,
When both sides for a time a respite gave.
With ammunition then the British ranks
Were fresh supplied; the Star-stripes then brought up
Fresh reinforcements from the rear, and up
Upon the British left gave desperate charge,
But only made to mask a fiercer one,
With stronger force, upon the British right.
Brave Drummond saw, and understood them well,
And skilfully prepared to counteract
And foil them, and prevent the British troops
From certainty of being there outflanked.
He drew the British strength upon the right;
And as he saw the Star-stripes moving slow
Upon a field of grain, with silent steps—
With steps as silent, and more sly, he drew
A British line within that field with haste,
And gave command to kneel among the grain,
That, unperceived, they silently should wait
In ambush, till the Star-stripes' near approach
Should give the advantage of a certain aim.

Scarce had they gained the destined field, and made
The above arrangement, when the advancing files
Of hostile bands were seen quite close at hand;
One instant, and the British all at once
Sprung to their feet, and to the level brought
Their muskets, with a murderous discharge
Upon the opponent ranks, that fell in crowds;
Then instant to the charge of bayonets fixt,—
The dreadful charge of British steel far-famed,—
Which made them fly with speed, nor stop to look
For their poor comrades left upon the Field,
Wounded or dead, or in the British power.

Till midnight they continued to renew
Their fierce attacks upon the British troops,
Which held their ground, and gallantly repulsed,
And drove them back with greater loss each time.

The Star-stripes 'gan to think it time to go;
And hurriedly retreated to the Mills
At Bridgewater, and bravely burn'd them down,
To show that they had gain'd the victory;—
From thence they fled beyond the Chippewa,
And on the morrow threw their stores away:
Their tents, their baggage, and provisions too,
Were thrown into those rapids wild, which run
Down from the Chippewa, past the Foam-girt Isle,
And o'er Niagara's battlements sublime.

Next day, with speed, they fled within the Fort,
(Then in their power)—the Fort that guards the wave

Where perilous Erie pours his waters down
Into Niagara's perilous cascade wild.

END OF CANTO FIRST.

NIAGARA FALLS.

CANTO SECOND.

ANALYSIS OF CANTO SECOND.

Reflections on the "Corpse-clad Field" the day after a battle—The quick transit of souls into an eternal and unchangeable state—How strange must a Battle-Field appear to Angels—How strange the appearance of two men in the next world who had just been fighting in this—Military renown cannot follow them past "Death's door-posts"—The combatants insensible to, and heedless of, what is doing on the other side of the line between us and eternity—Death made a friend by submission to the influence of Religion—Death is not a leap in the dark to those who truly believe in God's revelation—Man's grovelling schemes prevent him from seeing his true interest—Temporal effects of war worthy to be sung also—Affecting story of Antonio and Francisco—Their character and circumstances described—Scene on the Atlantic on a Summer's morning—Conversation between Antonio and the Author—Safe arrival—Antonio and Francisco leave their wives to go on their lands, near Lake Huron—Affecting scene when their wives are informed of their being both drowned in Lake Huron, with reflections—The necessity of defensive warfare—Warning on the subject

to Rulers—to Demagogues and Rulers who seek popularity.

The Poem returns to Niagara and its attendant scenes —The river above the Cataract—Apostrophe to and reflections on the River Chippewa—Niagara traced from its source—Its rapid motion and dreadful pitch—Compared to Time marching its millions over Death's precipice—Niagara not a mere parade of useless splendour—The fine effect produced by contrast in the foregoing scenes—Sense of the insignificance of Man's physical powers produced by a view of the Cataract—Sinfulness of sending animals over the Falls—The conscience stript of its shield—Numbers can never remove individual responsibility.

NIAGARA FALLS.

CANTO SECOND.

How sad, how solemn, how instructive too,
Are thoughts suggested by the corpse-clad Field,
Where lie the relics of Death's ruffian meal!
The mangled forms that yesterday were men;
To-day but manure for the thirsty soil,
That drinks with greedy appetite the stream—
The crimson stream of life—that fills and paints
Innumerous purple conduits, ramified
And spread throughout the wondrous human frame.
But, Oh! how much more solemn to reflect
On the quick transit of immortal souls,
Dragg'd through the portals of eternity,
And made to pass the fearful scrutiny
Of God's most righteous judgment, and to feel
Their state forever fixt unchangeably:
Their immortality of bliss or woe—
Of bliss unbounded, pure, and unalloy'd—
At God's right hand; or woe immeasurable,

Unmixt, unmitigated, unassuaged,
And flowing in a stream of wrath provoked
By sins committed and by mercy spurn'd!
With awful certainty of retrospect,
To know and feel their life and character
As now completed; and, with vision sure,
To stretch o'er their existence yet to come,
Without the power to alter or amend
Their lives, or seek to change the sentence just,
Or for one moment mitigate the doom
Which puts at once their hopes and fears to death;
And in their stead puts certainty of joy—
Unmixt, immaculate, and endless bliss,—
Or certainty of woe unutterable,
And shoreless floods of unavailing tears.
How strange to minds Angelic must the fields
Of battle seem, if privileged to view
Both sides at once of that mysterious line
That separates eternity from time,
And forms the edge of Death's huge precipice
Invisible,—of which we soon shall sing,
As emblem'd in Niagara's mystic Falls!
How strange they'll think is such a bloody strife,
With waste of lives probational and short,
And hanging on such hair-breadth turns of fate,
Is such a bloody strife of men 'gainst men—
All candidates for immortality;
With feeble pinions fluttering o'er the brink
Of boundless, bottomless eternity,—

And every moment liable to fall
Transfixt by Death's rude shaft, and finally
Determined both in character and state!
  How strange the appearance, in the ghostly throng,
Of two fierce combatants from Battle-field
Arrived, where each had sought most greedily
The other's life, and each had lost his own!—
Or hostile chiefs, as Wolfe and Montcalm,
Or Broke and Lawrence on Atlanta's wave!
Will "bubble reputation" follow them
Past Death's dark door-posts, or befriend beyond
The frontiers of Life's bounded territories?
Will countless millions, who have erewhile pass'd
His threshold, since just Abel fell with wounds
Inflicted by a brother's hand, assign
The palm of victory, or the blasts of fame,
To him who conquer'd, or who died renown'd
On earth, and was on earth bepraised and famed?
Ah, no! another standard there shall fix
Their destinies; for there the naked soul,
Bestript of every thing that could not pass
The scrutiny of Death's "refining fires,"—
As sung the youthful sage whose heaven-toned lyre
Roll'd mighty numbers o'er the "Course of Time"—
Bereaved of every thing but that which bears
The eternal signature of holiness,—
Must stand or fall, and take eternal hold
On its just portion and reward assign'd
In the unerring registry of Heaven.

How strange to view the conflict raging still
With fierce vindictive clamour, and to think
How little do the combatants attend,
Or calculate the ultimate results
Of their fierce contest, or the comrades who
Lie stiffening on the sod, and oozing out
Life's crimson currents; but whose spirits fled
Behind Death's ramparts, never to return,
Or take a part again in quarrels just
Or unjust, but with friends and foes to stand,—
And stand without a possibility
Of flight from Judgment,—having their retreat
Cut off forever; and, if unappeased
By Mercy's proper blood, through faith shed down
Upon the soul, producing holy love
To God and men, with corresponding deeds
Of piety and charity unfeigned,—
To feel throughout eternity the wrath
Of an Almighty foe with justice arm'd;—
To stand without the possibility
Of hopeful opposition or retreat
From such a foe, arm'd with vindictive fire
Omnipotent to punish, as erewhile
He was to save, while life's warm currents ran,
And Mercy beckon'd with beseeching tears.
How little do the combatants attend,
Or e'en conjecture, what is going on
On further side of that most narrow line
Between the visible and unseen worlds!

Or think that they themselves are tottering round
Death's dreadful precipice, unfenced, unfear'd,—
Though here with certainty view'd by effects
In numerous instances, and close at hand,
And in the midst of life.
Though Death's a foe
'Gainst whom 'tis vain to guard—yet still, whilst life's
Warm currents circulate and Mercy pleads,
He's woed successfully, and made a friend,—
A welcome friend, to ease us of our woes,
And heave the portals of immortal bliss.
Nor is the passage o'er the fearful edge
Of Death's most dreaded battlements a leap
Into the dark, as some have vainly said:
Ah, no! Since Revelation pour'd its light
O'er this dark world, and chased the night away—
The hopeless, cheerless, mental, moral gloom
Which overspreads the soul of man unlearn'd
In God's most holy oracles of truth—
There is reveal'd, unto the eye of Faith,
A world of light and love, and holy joy;
Where optical illusions have no place;
Where things and persons seem just as they are;
And all disguises dropt, and masks unmask'd;
And shades unshaded, and dark doubts resolved;
And mysteries made plain, and knotty points
Of speculation clear'd; and the dark night
Of wild conjecture, or of trembling trust,
At length succeeded by eternal day.

'Tis here the darkness lies,—but there the light
Shines with unclouded lustre, and dispels
And dissipates at once the clouds which hang
O'er time, and fate, and providence, and man.
'Tis here the paths of providence,—entwined
And intersected by man's grovelling schemes
Of mad ambition, stretching out beyond
The future probable, and far above
All sober calculation, and beyond
The usual time allotted here to man,—
So oft misleads the mental powers, and blinds
Man to his real interests, and shuts out
All thought of God, and care about ourselves—
Ourselves immortal, but in darkness pent,
Till Death shall ope the portals, and we bound
Forth in the sunshine of immortal bliss;
Where no more in a glass we darkly view
Those things which most concern our future weal,
But then "shall know as we ourselves are known."
Nor are the temporal effects of war
Unworthy of our song, or widows' tears
Unfit to move, in plaintive strains, the lyre,—
Whose strings have just rung out the lofty peal
Of the loud death-blasts in the battle storm
That drown'd Niagara's solemn tones a while.
Of war-made widowhood I do not now
Remember of a case to suit my song;—
But, O, I do remember of a case
Of double widowhood, and women's tears

Shed piteously,—the prime of wedded bliss
Blasting at once,—and with the orphan's cries
Distorting childhood's cheek, and cruelly,
With prematurity of sorrow's wail,
Filling the cot where love and virtue reigned.

STORY OF ANTONIO AND FRANCISCO.

Antonio and Francisco were two friends—
Not brothers, nor by kindred near allied,
But link'd in friendship's bonds, which often bind
Two kindred spirits with a tie more firm
Than aught but that which binds the wedded pair.
Their beauteous partners shared their friendship too,
And loved each other, and like sisters lived,
And shared each other's toils and joys betimes.
Of sorrows they, as yet, had tasted few
But such as with a careful hand, and eye
Of watchful assiduity, in wedded life,
Are weeded from Love's garden, and enhance
The clustered sweets that there luxuriant grow.
  To cross the Atlantic wave both pairs design'd
At once, and, with their little ones, embark'd
In the same ship which bore me o'er the deep.
  They had design'd, with industry and skill,
To purchase an allotment, and improve

And form a peaceful, independent home
For their fair partners and their lovely babes.
  In prime of manhood both, and in the flower
Of womanhood their lovely partners bloom'd.
Amanda and Narcissa, matrons young
And lovely, and to virtue's toils inured
From infancy, sought not the unmeaning praise
Of fools and fops, but in their husbands' loves,
Content and happy, sought domestic bliss,
Nor sought in vain; for love reciprocal,
Bound by the ties which in Love's garden grow,
Feeds on the sweets, which in that soil alone
Are nourished to perfection and assuage
The healthy appetite of chaste desire.
  How little did they dream of the fell stroke
So near at hand, which levell'd to the dust
Their fondest hopes terrestrial, and brought tears
Of bitterest sorrow to succeed the joys—
The virtuous joys, connubial, which, erewhile,
Had bless'd the tranquil tenor of their lives!
How little did they think of parting soon,
Or that the cruel spoiler, Death, was near,
To sever ties which seem'd so natural;
Which seem'd to wind insensibly around,
And interlace the fibres of those hearts
Whose every throb beat in full unison,
Responsive to affection's harmony,
And beating in the prime of manhood young,
With prospects fair, and swelling hopes, urged on

To the pursuits of honest industry
And rural bliss, untarnish'd by a tear!
Oh, I remember well Antonio's look
And cheerful smile of hopeful fondness, mixt
With grave parental care and sober thought,
As, on Atlanta's wave, he walked the deck
With me, and talk'd of future prospects fair,
And in his arms bore infant loveliness,—
And childhood's prattle follow'd us along
The gently-heaving deck with mirthful smiles.
We watch'd with eagerness the grampus huge
And whale, which dash'd aside the dark-green surge,
And squirted briny foam incessantly,
Besprinkling, without need, the waves around.
The flocks of porpoises we'd sometimes watch;
With well-filed regularity of march,
Gamboling along the waves, they headlong pitch'd
And rose alternately, and beat the surge
With head or tail, in sportive motion timed
To the light music of the morning breeze
That gently fill'd our canvas, and urged on
Our western course, and clove the briny waves
With pointing timbers of the vessel's prow.
We talk'd with fondness of the land we left;
We hoped with fondness that the land we sought
Might yield us joys of more exuberant growth,
With less expense of culture, as the soil
Had not been overwrought, and seemed
New and inviting, and to enterprise

And industry held out incentives strong.
And he (fond soul) talked hopefully the while
Of his dear babes,—the pledges of his love
To fair Amanda,—and their prospects too
Of better fortune, and more happy life,
In the new land, where honesty and toil
Had fewer rivals, and were better paid.
All things then prosper'd well. We reach'd the land
Expected; and Antonio and friend
Francisco, with their partners and their babes,
Were safely lodged in a snug cot beside
Lake Simcoe's smooth and glossy waves, which halve
The continent between Ontario
And boisterous Huron, where they purchased lands;
On which they soon intended to erect
Fit habitations, and in Spring remove.
It was a day of calm and aspect mild,
And indicated calm and passage safe
To those two friends who parted from their wives.
It was no parting in which sorrow reign'd;
For smooth-tongued Hope gave promise of a quick
And safe return. They left for Huron's shore,
To carry thither and embark their stores
And implements of husbandry, and raise
Their habitations and prepare some land
For tillage, and return without delay.
They talked with usual glee, and toyed awhile
With their fair babes; and jested with their wives,
Who back return'd, and to their household toils

Retired, to sing the lingering hours away;
And gaily hoped, and toil'd with cheerfulness,
And fondly hoped, perhaps, that absence short
Would but enhance the joys of safe return.
  Few days had passed, nor had uneasiness
The least disturbed repose, or dimm'd their joy,
When, as they sat, a neighbour call'd, whom well
They knew, and thought not singular
That he should call; but still, his lingering,
And other neighbours hovering round the doors,
And something sad and tremulous in his looks,
Raised a suspicion of some sad mishap.
A pause ensued, and not a word was spoke.
For a few moments each on other look'd,
And look'd inquiringly. Then came the stroke:
The stroke that erewhile hung on falt'ring lips
Now fell on ears forlorn: "Their husbands both
Were dead!—both dead!—and 'neath the boisterous
Of greedy Huron sunk to rise no more!" [waves
  What tongue of eloquence, what pen of fire,
Could speak or write the sorrow that ensued?
What pencil, dipt in living colours, held
By Raphael, could on canvas dash the scene?—
Or represent the strong convulsive throes
Of mental agony which in the looks
Of fair Amanda and Narcissa shone?
Amanda swoon'd—Narcissa shriek'd and cried,—
And to the babes the sad contagion spread,
Whose plaintive cries and piteous looks gave point

And zest and sharpness to the scene of woe.
What lyre of plaintive or of dolorous strains
Could ring, with numbers just, the widows' wails
And orphans' sobs and moans, which echoed round
These walls which lately heard the song of mirth
And peaceful joy, and Love's responses mild ?
How sad the change that cot of humble worth
Then underwent; and how inadequate
Are words to show the sadness of those hearts
Bereaved of those who bound their finest chords,
And in a land of strangers, far from home
And friends, and destitute of wealth or means
To gain an honest living, or improve
The unclear'd land on Huron's ruffian shore!

This is a picture of such woes as War
Most certainly inflicts upon our race;
For widows' wails and orphans' cries are sure
To follow in the wake of martial deeds
Renown'd in history; and sometimes, perhaps,
'Tis hard to judge the motives which induce
Princes and Potentates; or to condemn,
In general terms, all hostile policy
In States or Statesmen;—for, assuredly,
Without some principle of right and wrong,
And law to mark it and define its bounds,
With nations, as with individuals,

No intercourse secure could long subsist;
And law implies a right,—and right
That is not lawfully defensible,
And that by force, if otherwise denied,—
Is a mere bug-bear, and of no effect:
Therefore, so long as human nature stands
In an imperfect state, the force of arms
Must be, in some degree, allowable
And necessary. But the point in hand
To be determined is,—when this takes place—
When this necessity arises, so
That suffering patience, from a virtue, falls
Into a weakness,—nay, a specious vice;—
For if man's character and actions ought
To be remodelled on that image fair
Of God, which is displayed throughout the plan
Of Man's Redemption, and the grand results
Of God's most wise and holy government,—
Vengeance there follows, as a consequence
Most necessary, when the love of God,
And grace and mercy of the Saviour, fail
To wake repentance in the guilty breast,
And make men throw their sin-stain'd weapons down.
If Man is to be so remodelled, then
It cannot be that such a principle
As non-resistance to injustice, or
A flat and foolish giving-up of right
For sake of peace, is virtue of the least
Account at all in God's just reckoning.

So, in the Scriptures, we find Kings empowered
To be a terror to the evil men,
As well as friend and patron to the good.
And evil men who break the laws of Kings
Are only to be terrified by force.
To terrors of God's laws they're inaccessible,
And long since threw the laws of God aside,
And often disbelieve professedly
In the existence of a God at all.
Such principle of non-resistance, too,
Would tend to make us equally to love
Those who befriend and those who injure us,—
Not mentioning the blessed ties of blood-
Relationship, or bonds connubial;
Which, by the principle of equal love
To all, would be but nullities,
And charity itself would be resolved
Into mere words, quite undefinable.
For such a thing as flat equality
Is no where to be found, and contrary
To God's procedure, and exists alone
In the foul brains of demagogues and fools
Who suck the poison of their well-spiced cant
Of liberty, equality, and right
Of men to be what, in the laws of Heaven,
Is no where found, and would its plans unhinge.
But, Oh, let those who bear the keys of State
Think on the dread responsibility
Which on them lies before they go to war;

And have assurance of a quarrel just,
Without the milder means of just redress,
Before they bring about a state of things
Which sends so many to the Bar of God
Untimely, and which multiplies such woes
As we have erewhile sung ;—such woes as those
Which fair Amanda and Narcissa felt ;
For war-made widowhood is no less sad,
And no less sudden, than the case we sang.

And, Oh, let worthless demagogues reflect
On the just doom that must o'ertake them soon,
If they continue o'er the senseless mob
To blow the coals of factious discontent,
And cause the ignorant to spurn the laws
And just authority of kingly power
For theories on paper, which look fair,
But, when reduced to practice, bring forth nought
But anarchy, confusion, and dismay ;
Which only can be cured, if cured at all,
By despotism and military rule.

Such men as fan the passions of the mob
Should recollect that they must soon appear
Before the Bar of God. How different
Will demagogues appear when there they view
The multitudes deluded by their lies,
Or murdered in the quarrels which they fanned !
And rulers who seek popularity
Should often think of Pilate's case, and learn
To rule according to the laws of God,

And utterly to disregard the wish
Of hot-brain'd multitudes, who know not what
They do; and one day cry with vehemence,
"Hosannah, blessed is the man who comes,
In name of God, to save!" Another day
The self-same mob will howl most vehemently,
"Away! away! and crucify him now!
And let his blood, if innocent, stain us,
And all our children—only crucify!"

Again we'll to Niagara Falls sublime,
And strike the lyre again, in harmony
With the rude march of floods of ponderous force,
Impell'd by gravitation to the edge
Of the dire precipice; which once, perhaps,
O'er Queenston Heights abrupt, held colloquy,
And gave responses rude to the wild waves
Of blue Ontario, in those fitful blasts
Which agitate the Lake, and weave his locks
In coarse plaits adown St. Lawrence wave.
And as erewhile we, from below the pitch
Of the bright Cataract essay'd to pour
Our numbers rude along the mist-wreath'd edge
Of the concussive downfall, and beneath
The vast enfolded sheet of falling foam;—
So now, from heights which overlook the Falls,
And, farther up Niagara's noble stream,

Command a view of Chippewa's silent wave,—
Grand Island, and the placid bay on which
Stands Schlosser, Tanawanta, and the shores
Of those who now the star-strip'd banner wave—
How beautiful the prospect, and how calm
Niagara here appears!—a limpid pool
Of glassy, pure, unruffled liquid, still
And calm;—a waveless lake wherein the moon
Might see her image bright, and count the stars
Of midnight. Here again the canvas swells
To gentle breezes: and with commerce fraught
From perilous Erie, and, with steam propell'd,
The smoking chimneys o'er the limpid flood
Pass and repass, and enter Chippewa's wave.

Too gentle Chippewa! in thy stagnant sides
The reptile tribes infest thy weed-bound shores;
And musquitoes in swarms are hatch'd, take wing,
And o'er adjacent woods innumerous spread;
And when night's curtains shade thy mirror stream,
After strong sunshine in meridian power
Of Midsummer, such vapours dense arise,
Surcharged with noisome matter dangerous,—
Producing tremulous agues, which, with heat
And cold alternate, vex the human frame.

Too gentle Chippewa! when the mid-day breeze
Has gone to rest, and left thy margin clear
To bask in summer sunshine, where the reeds
And water-lilies deck the muskrat's den;
The bellowing bull-frog hosts incessant roar

To chirping swarms of grasshoppers, and bees
Who murmur on the wing of industry ;
With aërial songsters perch'd beside the wave,
Of plumage red or green, with golden grains
Besprinkled much, and dazzling in the rays
Which vertically strike the stagnant, smooth,
Unruffled surface of the weedy bays
And winds of Chippewa's solemn waters, bound
By sylvan banks of towering oaks and pines ;
These sylvan songsters with the notes of Heaven,—
Not pitch'd, perhaps, to man's harmonic skill,
But mingling with the harsh notes, down the flood,
Of bellowing bull-frogs, grasshoppers, and all
The varied tribes of water, earth, and air,—
Make melody most sweet ; and, with the swell
And deep-toned diapason which the breeze
Bears from Niagara's organ, makes a choir
Complete, harmonious, solemn, well-attuned—
Responsive to the melodies of Heaven.

Too gentle Chippewa gravitates adown
A level and indulgent channel deep,
And winding round the sugar-maple groves
Of Wainfleet, Gainsbro', and the rugged hills
Of Pelham, down 'tween Crowland and the knolls
Of broken Thorold's banks, o'er the Canal
Which joins the Lakes in navigation, where
Niagara's freaks sublime had raised a bar
Insuperable heretofore, but now
Obsequious to the force of human skill.

Here gentle Chippewa forms a boundary 'tween
Thorold and Crowland, and 'tween Willoughby
And Stamford's plains, on which the bloody field
Of Lundy's Lane was fought, and where the Falls
Sublimely murmur day and night unchanged.
  Too gentle Chippewa sluggishly descends
Till rough Niagara seize him in his arms,
Leaps down the precipice with foaming speed,
And seeks with many a wind Ontario's waves.
  Sublime Niagara! thy wild waters drain
The largest part of this wide continent,
From where the Red Deer enters Winnepeg,
With swamps most dismal to the Lake of Woods;
Thence to Superior Falls, through Rainy Lake;
Thence down on Michigan and Huron, which
Entomb'd Antonio and Francisco 'neath
Its boisterous billows; then adown St. Clair,
Whose waves are caught by perilous Erie's strand;
From whence is fill'd the limpid pool, of which
We erewhile sang as catching Chippewa's wave.
  But not at once from limpid stream it leaps
Into the boiling gulf, but, for a space,
Sublime Niagara round Goat Island whirls,—
(The Foam-Girt Isle of which we erewhile sung)—
Much agitated, and in rapid movement bounds,
With undulating march, o'er rugged rocks
A rough but sloping channel hastens on.
The crowding waves with noisy flight descend
With dreadful force,—accelerated speed,

As they approach the quivering edge sublime,
Where the stone tower o'erlooks the whiten'd sheet
Of foam immense, agravitating down
With force far greater—noise proportionate
To the vast weight of waters, and the slope
Of the rough channel, and the height sublime
Of awful battlements which stretch athwart
The river's bed; but not rectangular,
But to the opponent banks, in an oblique
And somewhat curved descent abrupt it pours
Its whiten'd mass towards the British banks;
Which thus command a fuller view direct
Of the vast Cataract's descent sublime,—
Dividing thus the fallen from unfallen floods,
Forming in each an angular acute
And stormy bay. The Foam-Girt Isle itself
Divides the whiten'd mass, and naked shows
Its barren basements, rocky, stratified,
And strong contrasting with the whiten'd sheets
Which move unceasingly while it stands still.

Oh! what an emblem of the flight of Time
Marching his millions down the steepy slope—
The slope of life, where none can retrograde
A single step, but must each moment live;
Live but to move right onward to the brink
Of Death's huge precipice invisible,
Unfenced, uncharted in the maps of life
Because of its most strange ubiquity
From heedless infancy to helpless age.

Nor are Niagara's waves a mere parade
Of useless splendour. In the Foam-Girt Isle
Are Mills, wherein, transformed, the useless rag
Becomes a vehicle of human thought
Conveyed thereby to Earth's remotest bounds;
And on the British side stands Bridgewater,
With Mills of various kinds driven by the force
Of currents borrowed from the slope-sent flood
Before it plunges in the dire abyss.
Nor are we sure but in some future age
The vast descending sheet itself may not
Lend power immense to some vast engine formed
By human skill, and useful to the race
Of then existing men, whose views enlarged
By science, with its still progressive march
Of vast improvements, shall demand more power
From Nature in propulsion of machines
Of bulk and power exceeding far the bounds
Which limit now the extent of man's designs.
How grand the combination and effect
Of such a scene as this! How various
The objects which by contrast magnify
And to advantage show each other off!
The placid surface of the limpid pool,
Green-shaded, and with emeralds adorn'd,
With Grand and Navy Islands, and the shores
On either side, alternate green and gold,
Contrasting with the surgy mass which runs
Around the Foam-Girt Isle, and then o'erleaps

The cave by foam embower'd, of which we sang;—
In whiten'd foam o'erleaps the battlements
Into the boiling gulf, whose waves, impelled
By compound influences much confused,
Its rippling, whirling, smoking currents move;—
Contrasting waves above, which, in direct
And bold and hurried march, to the bright pitch—
The awful edge sublime, where bending floods
Are whiten'd instantly, and in the form
Of marble pillars white;—contrasting, too,
With the dark basements of the Foam-Girt Isle,
Which firmly stand in centre of the shock
And loud continuous roar of falling floods;
The green woods, too, around, which clap their hands
And shake their plumes in honour of the march—
The everlasting promenade sublime
Of continental reservoirs impell'd
By gravitation's force—the force which moves
Unseen the springs of nature, and at once
Upholds, impels, and regulates the speed
Of smallest particles throughout the vast
Of matter's mixtures, and the wheels immense
Of nature's engines, variously formed
With symmetry exact and skill divine.
  What sense of little insignificance
Is forced upon us by the view of powers
So much transcending physically
The puny arm of man, which bears no more
Proportion to these falling waters wild

Than they to that which constantly propels
Earth in her circuit motion round the sun!
  How does it show the deep depravity
Of man, to see him sporting wantonly
With the sublimities of Nature's grand
And awful works, or feasting cruelty
By sending harmless creatures o'er the edge
Of the great Cataract in the Lake's crafts
Disabled, and how sad to view the crowds,
Both male and female, who enjoy the scene!
Oh, how deceptive is the principle
Of a divided 'sponsibility
With which each member in a numerous crowd
Can lay a flattering unction to his soul!
  "Yes, it is cruel to embark a bear
And send him o'er the Falls, to feast the eyes
Of idleness and cruelty combined;
I would not do so for a thousand worlds,
And could I stop the exhibition, sure I would;
I only mean to go just now
To spend an idle day and meet my friends,
And, like my neighbours, see the vessel thrown
In fragments by the swift concussive pitch
Of the dread Cataract; and sure, such crowds
Of people cannot individually
Be made to answer for the single act
Of cruelty committed by these men
Who catch the bear and send him o'er the Falls."
Alas! how often is a plea like this

Urged 'gainst the qualms of conscience, and how vain
Is such a plea when weigh'd in the just scales
Of Scripture and of reason! Let us see:
The deed is not done rashly, but with shrewd
And certain calculation of a throng
Collected thereby, and a profit, too,
To Innkeepers, who are the principals
And fore-front actors in the tragedy.
If every one would, therefore, stay at home
And leave the deed unwitness'd and unpaid,
Such things as these would die a natural
And speedy death. And those who, drawn aside
From sober duty in their younger years
By means of such alluring baits, would be
Preserved from many a snare to vice and crime
Which meet them in such large, mixt multitudes
Assembled cruelly to see God's brutes
Irrational in suffering made a sport
For God's brutes rational to look upon;
And scenes where God's omnipotence, display'd
In awful grandeur, fearfully held forth
Polluted with a cruel butchery
Committed on an unoffending brute.
And has not God most solemnly decreed
That they who are partakers of the crimes
Of others, equally shall share their doom?
And if the plea of crowds could aught avail,
Why are the nations knowing not their God
And Saviour sentenced to the burning glooms

Of hell ? from whence His grace and favour 's barr'd
For ever. But the conscience of a mob—
If conscience in a mob resides at all—
Is sear'd by the array of numbers, and
The retrospect of what is done in crowds
Collectively can never come to bear
Upon the conscience with an equal force
With smaller crimes committed unsolaced
By dint of partners in a deed of shame.

END OF CANTO SECOND.

NIAGARA FALLS.

CANTO THIRD.

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ANALYSIS OF CANTO THIRD.

Niagara at Evening and Moonlight—Appearance of the Falls as the darkness increases, and when it is quite dark —The Heavens become unclouded, and the Moon and Stars reflected on the waters, &c.—The Bridges, &c.

The Moral Fall of Man—The Probation of Man explained, and its reasonableness demonstrated—Hymn supposed to be sung by Angels on Man's Creation—Messengers arrive in Heaven with the news of Man's Fall—Its effect upon the Angels—Hymn sung in Heaven on Man's Fall —God the Father declares his plan for Man's Redemption by the substitution of his Son—God the Son declares his acquiescence therein—Its effect on the Angels—Hymn on Man's Redemption—The Fall of Man has brought to light new glories in God's character.

A Winter view of the Cataract—The ice descending is caught below the Falls, and covers a part of the boiling gulf—The slopes around, moistened by vapours and frozen over, are thereby rendered slippery and dangerous —Snow caught in the shelving basements of Goat Island —A mount of snow accumulated before the farther sheet— A solitary rock above the Falls surrounded and guarded by

the currents — The descending snow-flakes — Departure from the Falls—Winter evening sky—Absurdity of supposing such beautiful order produced by chance.

The Author's prayer—Some things which proclaim constantly and regularly the existence of God—Address to the Sceptic—His mischievous and dangerous companionship for youth painted in its true colours.

NIAGARA FALLS.

CANTO THIRD.

Now Evening draws her veils around the scene,
And, lengthening across the Cataract,
Throws fainter lines adown the whiten'd mass,
And smoothes the roughness of the steeps sublime
Of various-shaded green, and hides the shelves
And rocky basements of the Foam-Girt Isle;
Which now appear a dark and square-shaped mass
Beside two squares of white. The flood below,
Still undulating, shows short streaks of foam
Upon a dark-green ground, and changefully
Alternate green and white, till near the edge
Of the concussion, and around the wreaths
Of vapours thence upborne it grows apace
In uniformity of white; and all around
At last is whiten'd as the sheets of foam,
Which lose their colour in the dire descent.
Niagara's limpid pool is seen no more,
Nor Chippewa's wave: nought now remains undrown'd

In darkness, save the Cataract immense,
With its attendant shades of darker hue,
Which serve to show its whiteness and preserve
Its form and size in glory unimpair'd
Upon the wearied optics which have borne
The burden of inspection o'er its grand
And varied lineaments throughout the day.
  The edge sublime of awful bending floods
Can still be traced; and, like the perilous tower,
A darken'd speck is seen upon the brink
Of whiten'd streams immense; and all along
The upper floods are curling specks of white
Innumerous, and all in motion timed
To the deep, deep diapason murmurs down the Falls,
Both day and night tuned to the march sublime
Of continental floods, sent to the Main
In order various, like a numerous host
Of warriors in invasive march urged on
To conquest of some hostile territory.
Sometimes in broad compacted mass it pours
Across the plains; but, where the mountains meet,
Defiles in narrow columns. So the march
Of continental floods takes now the form
Of wide-extended lakes, and then inclosed
By steep embankments, narrow'd for a while
In pebbly channels of the rivers' beds.
  But now the changing heavens betoken change
Upon the aspects of the watery mass,
Which, still reflective, beautifully bears

Responsive images upon its waves,
And with responsive splendours mocks the heavens,
Which now, unclouded and bestarr'd, look down
Into Niagara's limpid mirror mild,
Which waits the fall of Chippewa's solemn wave.
  Once more the finer lineaments are seen
Of the bright Cataract. And all around,
And o'er the vast transparent floods above,
And in the crystalline and moving waves
Above and far below the Cataract,
The Moon's majestic mildness pours adown
Upon the glittering surface of the stream,
Which variously responds, but faithfully
Reflects the glories of the vault bestrew'd
With burnish'd points, and tinged with gold along
The galaxy. The woods, with green once more
Of various shade, with blacken'd tints behind
And underneath their branchy canopies,
Wave to the breeze benighted. In the bays
And promontory-shelter'd pools along
Niagara's coasts, the finny habitants
Bolt upwards from the floods upon the flies
That skim unwarily upon the smooth
And placid surface of the liquid mass.
  O, how beneficent the grateful change
Of night! and O, how beautiful the flow
Of the white foamy Cataract as seen
Under the glimpses of the gorgeous moon,
Which, with majestic silence, swims along

The dark blue vault of heaven, begilt and strewn
With glittering isles innumerous, which pour
Their gentle glories on the mirror pools
And silvery sheets of foam that each return
Responsive splendours, and the image fair
Of Heaven's bright arch bestarr'd upon the smooth
Elastic surface paints so faithfully,
Doubling the glories of the solemn night.
  The Foam-Girt Isle, with sable verdure crown'd,
And resting on the upper level, shows
Once more its basements, and the bridges, too,
Which overleap the hurried downward march
Of slope-sent floods of foamy currents wild
Swift-rushing down upon the precipice.
Bridges o'erleaping floods of frightful force
Conduct the curious traveller across
More than half-way, and first upon the isle
Re-lands him safe, and then upon the tower,
Which now is visible once more, and throws
A moon-beam shadow down the dire descent,
And awfully o'erhangs the hastening waves.
  Thus have we day and night Niagara's waves
And dreadful Cataract traversed; and whiles
Adown or far above the pitch sublime,
Or o'er the quivering edge where bending streams
Immense are whiten'd and precipitated,—
We've roll'd our numbers rude to the rough noise—
The boisterous music of the wild cascade—
Which, even at midnight serenades unchanged,

Under the glittering lattices of heaven,
Its various splendours awfully displayed
In the rude fall of continental floods,
Where their grand march is broken suddenly,
And with continuous thunders falls abrupt
Into the vortex which, in stormy mood,
Receives the shock sublime, and sends up mists
Of drizzling spray, which in the moon-beams dance
Like golden dust, and o'er adjoining groves—
Besprinkling day and night throughout the year.
Thus, as we've hinted, in the moral world
A Fall more grand took place—a moral fall,
When, from the innocence of Eden's bowers,
Man fell from holy intercourse with Heaven
And sweet communion with the Deity,
And lost at once the image which impress'd
Upon his soul resemblance fairer far
Than ought created else; the image plain
Of Godhead in his holiness and truth,
And love disinterested, with knowledge large
Enough to know his God, and know untaught
His duty to his God, himself, and Man.
Father of countless millions who should stand
In good and in the love superlative
Of God throughout eternity—should grow
In holiness proceeding from their head,
Their federal head,—who, had he stood the test
Of fair probation, would be bless'd throughout
Eternity, by millions from him sprung,

Inheriting his virtues and the fruits
Of firm allegiance to the laws of Heaven.
O, how exalted was that place he held
Among the works of God! How honourable
And happy while he stood! With opportunity
Of rendering happiness perpetual
To unborn myriads of his progeny,
How easily he could have kept the sole
And reasonable negative command
Which bade him not "do this," but just forbear
To do this harm, and all shall ever stand
In holiness secure throughout the vast
Of broad eternity, both thee and thine.
He had no task to do to gain the crown
Of life which God had placed upon his head,
But only to refrain from giving up
The post assign'd him by the will of Heaven.
Though he was free to fall, his will at first
Was much inclined to holiness, and could
Be only circumvented at one point,
Which, had he guarded well, he would have stood
And gain'd the eternal prize for all his race.
No wonder, then, the morning stars sang joy,
And that the sons of God, with rapturous notes,
Sang praises when they saw a glorious world
Created—with such blooming prospects crown'd
Of a secure succession, and a line
Of holy beings beautified in soul
And body through the bounty of their God,

And shortly to be sealed for ever up,
Through the obedience of their federal head,
In holiness complete for evermore ;
For let it not be for a moment thought
That Adam's standing could have left a door
For others falling in the shoreless vast
Of broad eternity, or left the risk
Of state probational to any one
Of his vast race. No ! such a thought
Makes the Almighty cruelly unjust
To risk us both in Adam and ourselves ;
For if in justice we must fall through his
Most foul rebellion against the law of Heaven,
So equal justice rightfully requires
That in his standing we should also stand.
The scale was poised with nice equality,
Most scrupulously exact, without a hair
Of difference but would soon preponderate
On either side, according to the will—
The free, but holy will—of our grand Sire
And Representative, by whose life held
By fair probation tried, we all should live,—
Or, lost by fair probation, all should die.
And was there not a greater probability
Of Adam's standing than there could have been
In any one or each of all his race ?
What motives had he not which on his sons
Could never have been brought to bear at all ?
He was the first and great progenitor—

The father of the whole embryoed world;
And, holy, must have loved the will of God,
And must, whilst holy, tenderly have felt
The dread responsibility he held
To guard the welfare of his future race,
As well as personally to secure
The favour of his God. He, too, was made
A man complete at once, and not like us
From childhood rising up by gradual steps
To the maturity of Man's estate.
He was a man complete at once, and armed
With knowledge certain of the dreadful point
On which his duty hung; a simple point
Most plainly taught him, too, in simple words
By God himself in language which could not
Be twisted to a meaning different.
Thus, armed at every point, our Sire was form'd,—
Most admirably fitted for the task,
The easy task, of letting but alone
The fatal Tree of Knowledge, better hid
Since knowing was to know himself undone,—
By knowing good by contrast, which sometimes
Is a good teacher; but the lesson learn'd
Was fatal to the pupil, who that day
Should die a spiritual death, and all his race
Should die in him,—though, being born corrupt,
Would not, like him, be sensible of change.
  But, Oh! how strong the inducement was to stand
When standing was so easy, and a world

Was thereby to be thrown beyond the reach
Of evil influence, and confirmed in good
Without the possibility to fall!
  Here was a fountain inexhaustible;
A fountain of immortal life from whence
Might flow, more numerous than the grains of sand
Upon the briny shores around and 'neath
The Ocean's brim, a race immortal all,
And all in holiness completely clad,
Array'd in robes of righteousness most fair,
Unworn, untorn, unstain'd, unstainable,
Which never could wax old; woven by their Sire,
And handed down as an inheritance
Most rightful and divisible throughout
The endless generations multiplied
Throughout the earth, immortal each and all.

Thus was Man formed, and thus might Angels praise
The Father Infinite on Man's account:—

HYMN ON CREATION.

Ye everlasting Lyres, sing praise to God
The Father Infinite, whose bounty pours
Around Him new existences throughout
New realms created, and this creature, Man,
Has form'd of dust similitude divine,
To bear his bounty forth and multiply
Indefinitely these lovely beings form'd
With beauty exquisite; and in their Sire,
No doubt, shall all be soon confirm'd in good!
Ye heaven-toned Lyres, respond and sing sublime
The wonders of creating power and love,—
Disinterested love which thus o'erleaps
Once more Creation's bounds; and not content
With blessing everlastingly the throngs
Which day and night surround His sovereign throne,
And blessing, too, those myriads which swarm
Innumerously throughout the vast, vast worlds
And varied realms which own His sovereign sway;
But for the bounteous, overflowing stream
Must ever thus create new channels wide,
And new recipients for His gifts unearn'd!
These beauteous beings soon confirm'd in good,
For evermore confirm'd shall multiply
By millions, and shall fill that lower realm

With worshippers whose love intense shall burn
Unquenchably,—whose happiness shall grow
Proportionable to their knowledge of the plans
And character and government of Heaven,
Till, crowding o'er the puny ball not large
Enough to hold their increase, they shall rise
And be promoted in the gradual scale
Of loyal worshippers, and reach at length
This last ascent of virtue where we dwell.
With what delight we'll own the brotherhood
Of millions of these beautiful young sons
And daughters of a covenant-keeping sire!
  Sing loud, immortal bards, in joyous strains
The praises of creative power divine,
Of loving, life-imparting goodness infinite,
Which ever thus adds to the hosts of heaven
By wise extensions of its empire grand
Throughout the vast of space; and in the world,
The moral universe's vast extent,
Beneficent arrangements oft transpire
By which progressive being rises up
Throughout infinity's ascending scales,
And while eternity's bright horologe
Shall measure out its endless cycles vast,
Which never terminate but vary still
The endless song of praise for ever new;
Because new realms and beings spring to life
Of various character and form and state,
To witness new evolutions in the plans

Of Wisdom which no error knows, but seeks
Ends most beneficent by means untried
Before, and oft, to finite minds like ours,
Mysterious and perplexing; but the scheme
Of Man's probation is so simply laid
That no suspense o'erhangs our vision there,
But all at once our songs unite to praise
Once more the Power creative and the Arm
Omnipotent which still sustains untired
The ponderous burden nicely poised, and holds
Each link secure in being's endless chain!

But now along the balmy breeze which blows
Aside the embowering foliated arms
Which everlastingly embrace the towers—
The blissful towers and terraces of Heaven—
Where varied songs of heaven-learn'd melody
Resound unceasingly,—but while the hosts
Of Heaven's great King require the dutiful
Attendance of these happy spirits bright
On errands to the farther provinces
Of Heaven's broad empire,—on the balmy breeze
Were heard the hasty strokes of seraph's plumes,
And messengers of speedy wing fast rose
O'er distant horizontal battlements

Which skirt and guard the blissful palaces
Of the bright, grand, and throng'd metropolis
Of universal empire. Near the throne
The messengers approach, and reverently
Upon its steps they kneel with folded wings,
Which veil'd their faces from the glory bright—
Too bright for eyes created to behold:
They spoke, and told with modesty and grace
That they had done their errand, but that Man,
Tempted by felon spirit in the shape
Of serpent, had presumed to eat the fruit
Of knowledge of contrasted good and ill.

A sudden silence seized the harps of Heaven:
Fingers that sprung the gold melodious wires
Were stay'd, and voices that but now had hymn'd
In holy harmony with Angel harps
Were silenced; for the seraph throng, amazed,
Though not dismay'd, stood still, and in the face
Of fellow-spirits for a moment gazed,
And gazed with sympathetic wonderment.
Though Angels never for a moment lose
Their faith in God's foreknowing providence,
Yet stand surprised, and wonder at the fall,—
The dreadful Fall of Man from height sublime
Of happiness entire, from holiness unstain'd.
And down the gulf of everlasting wrath
They saw, in sure conjecture, men descend
By millions, when their lyres but recently

Had rung their welcome to the bowers of bliss.
They stood not long amazed, but to the songs
Of everlasting love once more attune
The lyres of melody, which thus resound :—

HYMN ON MAN'S FALL.

Ye everlasting Lyres, sing praise to God,
The King eternal, holy, just, and good,—
The Arbiter of right and wrong, who holds
The even scale of justice, and who gives
To each his due, nor ever can remit
The penalties most certain which ensue
Upon a single act of disobedience ;
Nor can, one moment's space, relax the laws—
The wise, the just, the holy laws—which bind
The creature, and declare his loyalty
As due to Him who rightfully holds sway
Over the Universe his hand has form'd !
This creature Man, who of the gifts of Heaven
Bestow'd so lavishly makes small account,

And casts them at his feet so carelessly,
Must now be doom'd to feel God's justice arm'd,
Most justly arm'd against the soul that sins,—
To prove beyond the reach of controversy
The evil and the bitterness of sin,
When one offence committed by the sire
Of unborn millions arms the hand of Heaven
Against them all; and, rather than relax
His law most holy in so small a point
As eating of an apple, He condemns
A world of beings to the endless curse
Of everlasting death that never dies.
  Sing loud, Immortals! let the organ peal—
The deep-toned organ of Eternity—
The solemn thunders of God's wrath provoked
And justice justly arm'd against a race
Hereditary enemies of God,
Who bountifully placed their federal head,
Their sire and representative, above
The reach of want, and gave him a large choice
Of bounty to fulfil his just desires.
Ungratefully he must that small command
Infringe, and seek to rise above the state
Which God had given him by a way forbid
With awful threatenings of eternal death.
Let Justice take its course, and glorify
The God of Justice. Sing, Immortal Lyres,
The awful grandeur of the Fall of Man
And dread inflexibilities of God's

Most holy law, which cannot quit its grasp
Upon the meanest thing intelligent
That stands amenable to the Great King
Eternal, Uncreated, Infinite,
Whose word so sure is our security
Of future blessedness; whose righteousness
Is pledged to righteous, holy beings, but
Is also pledged to punish those who sin.

They sang, and watch'd to see the Ministers
Of God's unsparing vengeance move direct
Upon that guilty world and guilty man
To banish to the penal provinces
Of Heaven's vast empire. Now the voice supreme
Of God the Father in mild majesty
Sounds solemnly upon the Angelic throng:
One instant, and the millions infinite
Of Heaven's inhabitants are bending low
Upon the golden streets and in the towers
And terraces of glory unreveal'd;
And every wing, with glittering plumage clad,
Is clasped across their foreheads, while the voice
Of the Omnipotent thus holds their ears:—

"Angels of Light and Spirits which my word
Created holy, and have kept your first
And holy state! Right have ye sung the praise
Of Justice and of Holiness and Truth,
And right your songs apply the precepts just
To Man's lost state; and well ye've sung the wrath
Of this right hand provok'd and thundering
Upon that guilty world of creatures stain'd
And tainted in their great progenitor.

But other counsels, heretofore unnamed
In Heaven, shall move our policy towards
This new-found province of our vast domains.
My law, which cannot pass transgression by,
Shall be upheld, yea, honoured, magnified;
And Men—these guilty men your songs have doom'd,
And justly doom'd, to lie beneath the stroke
Of this right hand eternally provoked
And unappeased throughout Eternity
By millions dying in a living death
For one offence committed by their sire—
For them I've found a Ransom, for I give
My only Son, the image most express
Of Glory Infinite; on Him shall fall
My wrath, and not on Man. The stroke, most just,
Shall fall on One more able to bear out
The penalties which Justice arm'd demands."

He said; and paused not long, when, from the cloud
Which veils eternally the Godhead Three,
The voice of filial Deity, with calm
And love-responding accents, thus replies:—

"My Father, lo I come!—to do thy will
I take delight, and from this throne on which
Eternally I've sat by heritage
I will descend a season. And from songs

Of saintly Seraphs and of Angels bright,
And lyres of everlasting melody,
I will descend a season, and put on
The garb of manhood and obey thy law,
And work out righteousness complete, unstain'd,
In place of Man, and bear thy wrath provoked
Against this race, and let thy justice fall
With fullest weight upon my head,—and let
Thy Law's most rigorous demands be paid
Without the least remission; only save
All those of human race who hear the sound
Of this glad message and believe the same
With living Faith, that for Repentance meet
Brings forth the fruits of genuine piety
From love to God, arising from this Faith
In God's disinterested love to them.
Those who reject this message I give up
To the full weight of all those penalties
Which thy unbending law demands, unsoothed,
Unmitigated, and unsolaced by a hope
Of any future remedy throughout
The shoreless ocean of Eternity."

He said; and, while he spoke, the seraph-plumes
Which veil'd their saintly faces prostrated
Were often waved as strong emotion moved
The millions infinite who audience gave
To the love-mandates of the Deity;

And, when he ceased, Heaven's tuneful bands immense
Sprung all at once erect, and to the harps
And lyres of everlasting melody
Added new chords and wires of sound unstrain'd
Before in Heaven, and for a space gave twangs
Of jarring notes discordant as they toned
Anew the eternal instruments of song
To melody of depth unheard before :
And thus Heaven's concave, echoing, resounds :—

HYMN ON MAN'S SALVATION.

Ye everlasting Lyres, with added chords
And wires of melody untuned till now,
Sing praise to God Jehovah, and let themes
Of various song cease through the vast, vast realms
Where love and holiness forever dwell!
Let every song but this be set aside,
And sing the awful mystery sublime
Of Man's Salvation and Redemption wrought
By substitution of the innocent
Eternally-begotten Son of God.
O flame of love unquenchable, which braves
The terrors of the Arm Omnipotent
Provoked with justice, with vindictive fire
Arm'd 'gainst a world of enemies to God!
Thou awful organ of Eternity,
Peal forth in strains more solemn than e'er heard
By oldest of the sons, the tuneful sons
Of glory, and give praise to God with tones
Of deep solemnity unheard before!
Sing praises to the terrors of that Law
Which cannot quit its grasp on God's own Son,
Though in Himself most innocent and pure,

And thinks not robbery to sit here supreme,
In glory of his Godhead Infinite,
Upon the throne of everlasting state :
Yet, standing in the room of guilty Man,
He for a season lays aside his crown,
And from the highest seat of glory goes
Down to the abodes of sin-stain'd creatures vile,
To save them from the Father's wrath, and bring
Millions of beauteous creatures to the realms
Of everlasting life and love and joy.
  Sing praise of Justice, and sing Mercy's praise!
Sing Holiness and Truth, with Wisdom joined!
Sing Love unquenchable to guilty Man!
Sing Hate unchangeable to sin's vile stains!
Sing the strict Law which never can remit
The penalties for least transgression done!
Which thus condemns a world for single act,
And thus holds fast the Son immaculate
Of God when He stands in the sinner's place.
Sing Mercy which thus pours its plenteous streams
Upon a world of enemies! and thus
Mercy and Truth with open arms embrace,
And Peace and Righteousness forever smile
And kiss each other in this wondrous plan,
Which shows at once God's everlasting hate
Of smallest sins, but shows His love the while
To worlds of sinners by this act severe
Of justice, and this generous giving up
His only Son to die for guilty Men.

Sing, welcome millions of immortal men
Redeem'd from peoples, kindreds, tongues, thro'out
The earth! Sing welcome to the realms of love,
To songs of boundless love, to endless songs
With love-enraptured tones melodious,
Which cease not day and night around the throne—
Messiah's throne of glory evermore!
  To Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God
Three One, and One in Three, for ever praise
And glory everlastingly return'd
From worlds unending through Eternity,
For evermore we'll sing, Amen! Amen!

Thus was the Fall of Man a foul, uncouth,
Abrupt declension in the glorious march
Of Providence, which made the streams to bend—
The copious streams of Love divine to turn.
But as Niagara's Cataract sublime,
When view'd too near, is dangerous, and seems
A rough, uncouth, and violent descent,—
Yet view'd connectively with scenes around,
It sheds a grandeur on the landscape's face
Peculiar ; so the Moral Fall of Man
From height sublime of holiness unstain'd,
And happiness which flow'd in limpid stream
Exhaustless from the Fount of Life, and pure,
Without admixture of the least alloy ;—
The Fall of Man when view'd too near, or view'd
Apart from other things reveal'd throughout
The glorious Revelation God hath given,
Presents a fearful picture of the state
In which we stand, and fearfully presents,
In moral grandeur thrillingly sublime,
The strictness of the unbending laws of God,
Which, for the eating of an apple, dooms
Unnumber'd millions to eternal death.
Yet view'd as giving rise to the great scheme
Of Man's Redemption by the sacrifice

Of God's own Son, who, rather than let go
A single small, small province of his vast
And rich domains, descends in humble garb
Of manhood, and with voice beseechingly
Entreats his rebel subjects to return
And build their hopes of pardon on His blood;
And for Man's sake, and for God's law which Man
Had rashly broken, and could never mend,
Endures the Father's curse and braves the storm
Which threaten'd on our guilty heads to burst,
And leave us deluged everlastingly
Below the surges of a sea of wrath.
It brings to light new glories, and it pours
A fresh, sublime, and awful radiance o'er
The character of God; and, while it gives
A sure foundation for a sinner's hope,
It also gives him fearfully to see
The deadliness of sin, which took no less
Than blood Divine to wash its stains away.

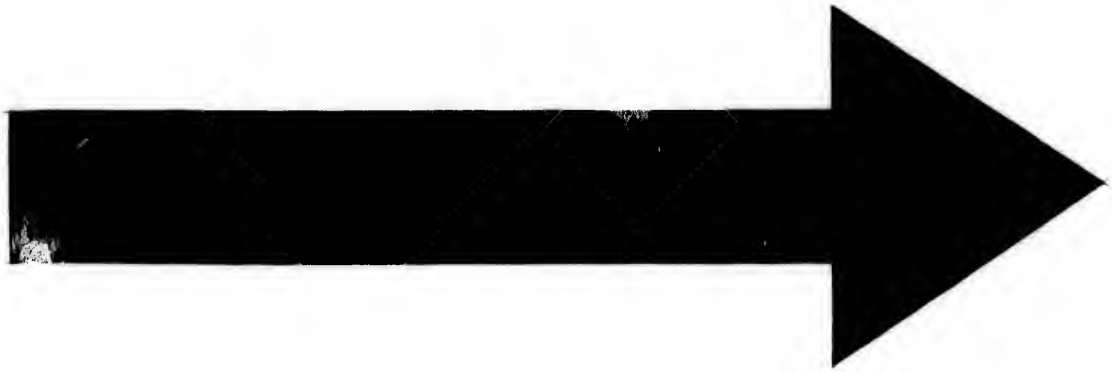
Again the Lyre-strings ring with numbers rude :
From the soft strains of moral wonders grand
It pours abrupt back to Niagara's pitch,
Which chimes with notes commingling with the storms
Of Winter, which have clad surrounding plains
And slopes, and scenes around, in livery white.
The Cataract descends spite of the frosts
Which now have seized and bound th' adjacent streams ;
The ice in pieces large descends the steep
And dire abrupt and awful pitch sublime,
And floating 'neath the mist which still surrounds
The fell concussion of descending streams :
Emerging from the mist it floats again
Adown Niagara's noble course till caught
In some near winding sinuosities
Of the steep banks which long have bound the flow
Exhaustless of Niagara's winding waves.
The boiling gulf, o'ersheeted, partly hid
By a huge bridge of ice in pieces join'd
By frost cemented, forms a wintry way
Both rough and dangerous to the opponent shores.
Below the perilous tower the icicles
Hang down and point quite perpendicular
To the rough waves below, which still breathe forth

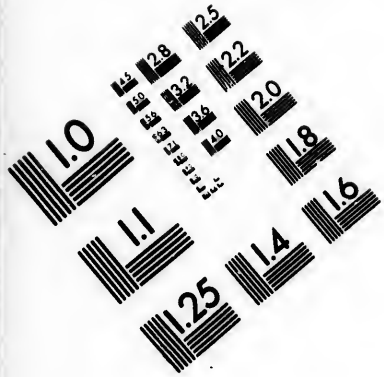
Ascending mists which veil the Cataract,
And with perpetual moisture bathe the slopes,
Which frozen o'er by the keen air which now
Attends the march of Winter's wasteful train,
And makes the paths around unsafely smooth :—
And now with wary steps we must survey
The white-robed grandeurs of Niagara Falls.

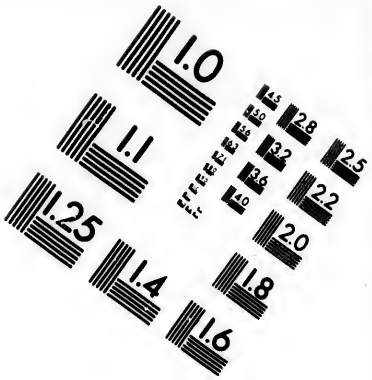
The shelving basements of the Foam-Girt Isle
Have caught in heaps the snow which lately fell,
And a huge mount of which has gathered close
Before the further sheet, and hides its fall
Upon the boiling mass of foam immense.

Upon the upper floods the ice-blocks borne
With rapid force and floated to the edge,
And thence precipitated o'er the Falls,
Unseen among the foam they plunge and sink,
But soon re-float among the fallen spray,
And then move on with slow and winding march
To join the arrested mass which lies across
The waves conceal'd, which still pursue their course
Below the frozen bridge, and wind away
To blue Ontario and the dangerous Main.

Far out upon the upper floods is seen
A solitary rock which stands unmoved
Among the rushing waves above the pitch :
It stands alone, but firmly bears the shock
Of currents rude, which crowd continuously
And press its solid sides with ruthless force.
It never was approach'd by human tread—







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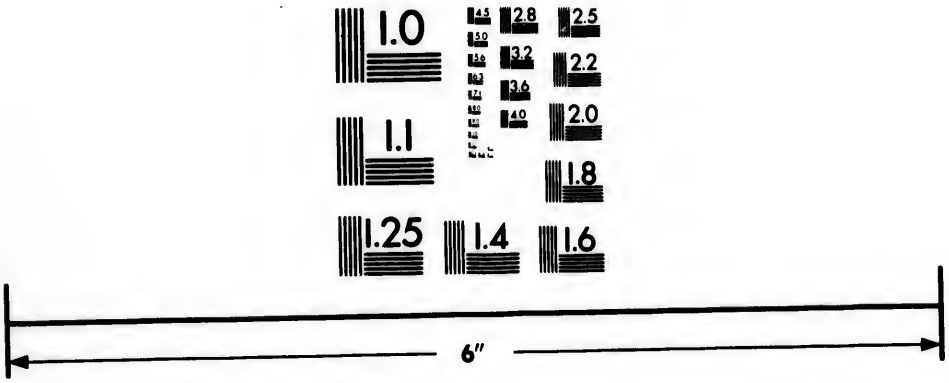

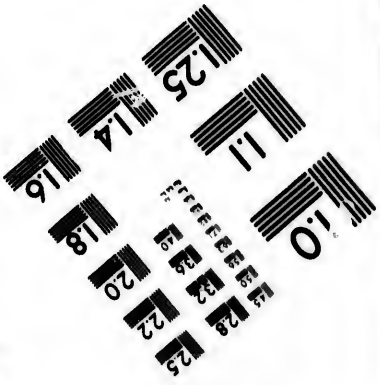

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The waves from age to age are rushing past,
And guard its sacred precincts awfully,
And loudly roar around before they plunge.
  Niagara's awful song with cadence wild
O'ertones the rudeness of the wintry winds,
Which play among the cedars on the slopes,
And on the isles, and o'er surrounding heights.
The snow-flake streams descend upon the scene,
And aid the darkness of ascending mists
Which tower aloft and kiss the lilac clouds,
And bear Niagara's incense to the sky.
  But now the Evening draws her curtains round,
And we must leave these dangerous ice-bound slopes
And home to muse upon this wondrous scene;
Our steps retrace the Field of Lundy's Lane,
Where sleep the heroes of the age by-gone.
  How varied are the changes which are poured
Upon this varied world! How well-attuned
Is Nature's organ! Now the Evening breeze
Sings soothingly the snowy storm to rest.
With cadence mild it plays upon the wires
Of silver'd branchlets, and the sky grows clear.
It mitigates the rigours of the storm,
And Evening paints the partly-clouded vault
With beautiful vermilion as the Sun
Has gain'd his chambers in the glorious West.
  And can Man dare to doubt this vision grand
Of Nature's glorious harmonies sublime?
Or throw away the moral lessons taught

By ever-moving miracles of power—
Of power exhaustless which thus guides the wheels
Of Nature in a march so sublime round
His doubting eye-balls? or enthrone weak chance
Upon a scene so glorious as this?
  His fond imagination paints, 'tis true,
A miracle far greater, for he sees
Effects without a cause—the elements
Of Nature tamed to harmony, and made
To move with regularity exact
By what his fancy justly deems the while
Suppler than air and feebler than a fly!
  O Thou whose Spirit speaks in every breeze,
Whose breath invigorates the rolling spheres,
Whose pencil paints the ever-changing hues
Of Nature's vestments!—Write upon my soul,
In "rosy characters of love," Thy name,
And lull my warring passions into rest.
If Fancy wander o'er the endless wastes
Of wild imagination, where the tracts
Of thought bewilder and confuse the brain,
Let the soft image of a God enthroned
In boundless love beam on my straying thoughts,
And give me peace of mind and pillow'd faith
Securely resting on that Word which call'd
The light from darkness, and illum'd the heavens
With the bright Lamp of Day, and bade the mild
And crescent Moon with spangles bright betrain'd
Peep through the black robes of the solemn night!

Let consecrated thoughts of Love Supreme
And Power that walks upon the whirlwind's crest,
And regulates the ravings of the storm,
Fill up my fancy and shut out the fears
Of superstition wild, or dark despair;
And ever let me watch and shun the shoals
Where lie the wretched wrecks of blasted minds
Who dared to deify that phantom strange
That bars Divinity from human thoughts!

"A God there is!" the howling blasts proclaim:
Hear it, ye Nations, and adore that Power
That fiercely rides upon the troubled deep
And marks the bounds of Ocean's sentry-march
Along the winding shores, with tides each day,
He passes not his bounds; but though the storm
Howls fiercely o'er its ridges, still it hears
The voice of God say, "Hitherto thou shalt,
But farther than thy destined bounds go not."
The obedient sea retires, nor sends a wave
Across the line prescribed, but quick returns
Back to his caverns in the boundless deep.

"A God there is" the rising solar beam
That falls upon the Ocean's mirror vast
Proclaims each morning—solemnly proclaims
And wakes a slu[illegible]ering world, and calls our thoughts
From airy visions of the curtain'd glooms
Of night's repose, and regularly calls
To sterner duties of the restless day.

Look on yon varied tints! ye Sceptics, look!—

Could sightless Chance paint so exact the lines
And shaded colours nice which serve to show
So exquisite the elemental folds
Of heaven's habiliments? Could Chance direct
With certainty the stream of solar light,
And heat that re-creates and re-illumes
Each morn the darken'd world, and pours around
Life's quickening essence on the sprinkled locks
Of Nature's beauty, and enthrones in smiles
The wakening glance of Earth's extending scenes?
Ten thousand varied voices ever cry,—
And had not moral deafness seized his brain,
The Sceptic, too, would hear the lovely tones
Of Nature's organ, and believe in God.
O what a direful sight of moral woe
And pestilential poison, dark as Death's
Untomb'd and putrid loathsomeness, revolts
My sicken'd senses when I'm doom'd to see
The serpent Infidel with fiendish glare
Pour out his venom-stream upon the shoots,
The infant shoots of warm immortal life
That withering lie beneath its deadening power!
Yes, I have seen the Sceptic, and I've tried
To burn his venom with the vials full
Of God's vindictive wrath; I've tried the power
Of Mercy's love-notes, and with reason calm
I've vainly tried to antidote the spell
Of his mysterious venom as it wrought
Upon himself with fearful throes which sent

Around his dragon-breath upon the place
Where he long lived. Like Upas, forth he threw
Incessant streams of poison'd atmosphere;
But, much unlike the Upas, he was fear'd
By few, for a delusive kindliness
Play'd on his lips. With jesting sly he wrought
And twisted doubts on souls of heedless youth,
And flatter'd when he chain'd them down for Hell.
He argued not, but jested at the Cross—
O hideous blasphemy of blasphemies!
My memory be still: paint now no more.

FINIS.

THE BEREAVED FATHER:

A POEM.

AUTUMNAL Heavens, with placid looks of love,
That morn smiled down upon the new-shorn locks
Of Earth's exuberant plenty; and the air
Was cool, and clear, and bracing; and the Sun,
In brilliant beauty, climb'd from out the East,
To dry the dew-drops from the lingering flowers,
Which, with wild loveliness, still deck'd the edge
Of the Two Mountains' Lake, on which his beams
Of morning rested. Beautifully still
The bright reflective mass, in level smooth,
Welcomed the eye, and with inverted curves
Of stolen loveliness pictured the skies.
Baizar's large Isle in harvest beauty smiled,
As, stretching west, it form'd a southern shore
To the still Lake. The smaller isles above
All form and beautify innumerous forks
Of Ottawa's flowing to the clear blue waves
Of broad St. Lawrence, where the commerce winds
From out this continent to Europe's shores.
But down the Lake is beauteous Jesu's Isle;
With a small islet by its upper point,
Between Isle Baizar and the continent,
A smaller Lake on lower level shines;
And, in responding mirror, day and night
Reflects the ever-changing hues of heaven.
Between this and Two Mountains' Lake there run
Two streamlets, between which the Islet stands;
The one circuitous from Jesus' Isle
Divides it, and is shallow, almost dry.
The other, short, but deep and rapid, falls

Upon a dangerous tournant, formed below
The Islet, and disturbs the calm which else
Pervades the surface of the little Lake ;
And, close beside it on the continent,
The Mill-wheel's clack invades the silence round.
  The "Little Lake" is beautifully deck'd
With many islets green, and verdant shores
Encompass it around ; and here and there
The "maisonettes," and rural sheds and barns,
Spread their wash'd shingles in the morning rays ;
And down the Lake the tin-clad papal spires
And roof, both shining with a silvery glow,
Surmount a Roman edifice of prayer.
  Two Mountains' Lake in mirror purity
Shines, and the Mountains conical are seen
Pointing to heaven and pictured on the Lake,
With Indian villages around their base.
The wood-raft fields of forest spoils afar,
Floating adown upon a lovely bay,
Are there unbound and broke in smaller cribs
To pass 'tween Baizar's rocks and Jesu's Isle.
A dangerous, angry rapid, o'er a rock,
Called the "White Horse," demands the pilot's skill ;
And human lives are often sacrificed
To float the timber down the dangerous foam.
  The forest crowds around in livery green,
And shades the margin of the Lakes and streams ;
St. Eustache, beauteous village, near the spires
Of shining tin, peeps through the wood's green robes
Varied irregularly and overlooked
By tallest "tamaracs," with branches short
And rudely formed. The opening day draws forth
The fragrance of the woodland flowers, and culls
From various plants, and scents the groves anew,
As the sun walks the azure vault on high.

Could sorrow rise in such a scene as this,
Where rural loveliness seems deck'd for joy
Alone, and the blithe bridal robes
Of Nature's beauty court the ravish'd eyes
Of those who meditate on Nature's God?
But Man is fallen, and sorrow Man attends,
Even in the sweetest sublunary scenes;
And happiness secure, unmixt, and full,
Is never to be found, till, past the gulf
Of Death and on the Heavenly shore,
The blest soul enters those abodes sublime
Where sorrow cannot enter, and where tears
Are wiped away and from their fountains dried.

The aged Seigneur of St. Eustache, clothed
In sorrow's black, with trembling steps surveys
His carpenters constructing bridges o'er
The streamlets, which we said flow'd down between
Two Mountains' Lake and the small Lake which lies
Between St. Eustache and the Jesus' Isle;
And waiting on his aged steps were seen
Two lovely maids in weeds of sorrow clad,—
Young, fresh, and blooming in that buoyant age
When first the heart to Love's bewitching tones
Wakes all its sympathies unfelt before.
Two moons had not increased and waned away
Since the sad scourge of Asia had consign'd
Their aged mother to the sacred ground
Near by the village-spires of shining tin.
The aged Seigneur with his daughters fair
Pass'd slowly down the Islet's woody shore;
With filial care they walked on either side,
And propp'd his trembling steps till, 'neath the shade
Of a tall tree, to rest he felt inclined,
And sleep upon his eye-lids gathered fast;

And the young Ladies stroll'd about the banks
Of the short, rapid streamlet sung before.
  The carpenters, who lodged about the mill,
Had laid a plank across the torrent stream
For their convenience; and the Ladies thought
To cross it and inquire the family's health,
And quick return to watch their reverend sire.
The younger nimbly stepped upon the plank,
But, looking down upon the torrent wild,
Was seized with dizziness and screamed and fell,
And down the torrent floated helplessly;
Her sister shriek'd and ran into the stream,
And tried to catch her; but the current's force
Soon threw her down, and hurried both with speed
Into the dangerous "tournant" on the Lake.
  Meanwhile the shrieks had brought the Miller out,
Who saw them floating down the rapid fast;
But succour was in vain. The waters closed
Above them both, and hemm'd them out from help
Of man.
  The Father waked, and heard the noise
Of many voices mingling with the din
Of rippling rapids; called his daughters' names,
And slowly walk'd alone, untended now;
And soon he learn'd the sad and awful truth.
His aged cheek grew pale—and down he sunk
Upon the sod, and rose again and cried,
And raved and leapt, in agony convulsed,
Till from the scene insensible they bore
And forced him off. The boats were mann'd the while,
And dragg'd the tournant o'er and o'er again.
For two whole days the bodies were unfound,
Till, cannon fired upon the waves, at length
Both rose at once; and O, how dismal now
The Seigneur's home!

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