NIAGARA RIVER
FROM LAKE TO LAKE.

Original Etchings
By Amos W. Sangster.
Remarque Copy.
REMARQUE EDITION.
LIMITED TO 1,000 COPIES.

NIAGARA RIVER AND FALLS.
FROM LAKE ERIE
TO LAKE ONTARIO.

GUARANTEE.
To whom it may concern:
The engravings of this work are printed by Mr. J. H. Daniels, Boston, Mass., direct from the copper plates.
Etched by Amos W. Sangster from his own drawings.

THE PUBLISHER.

Section No. II.
INDEX

To Section No. II.

Niagara River from Lake to Lake.

Plate No. 5. Interior Old Fort Erie—Looking Across River to Buffalo.

1. Fort Porter—American Side.

2. Fisherman's Cottage—American Side.

3. Canada Shore—Above French Creek.


13. South Side.


15. River Bank—Near Fort Erie.

16. The River Road—Canada.

17. Elevator—Buffalo Harbor.


19. Old Bridge—River Road—Canada.

20. Garrison Road to the River—Canada.


23. River Road, below International Bridge—Canada.

The 5 Large Plate Etchings of Section 3, will be Winter Views of Niagara Falls.
From so many occurrences and surprises of life, the results are concealed. Even Nature, says some one, in her first hour of creation does not foresee what her offspring may become. What a distance, of conjecture and suspense, from a tree-fern to a block of anthracite; what a progress from a singing tea-kettle to a Holly steam-engine; what an aesthetic evolution, from a scrabbly copy of a stumpy figure-head to the finished canvas of the consummated artist; what a brilliant expansion, from a drowsy steamboat to the present imposing fleet engaged in the immense commerce of the Lakes. It is always so throughout existence; in art and science, in all the efficiencies and instrumentalities of life, the process of civilization, unhindered by the interference of charlatans and the obstructions of the vicious, is ever a ripening one. So, if I remember Tennyson rightly—

* * * “through the ages still one purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened
With the process of the suns.”

So, also, in the changes and evolutions of Nature, and on a grander scale—under any existing conditions, who can give us assurance of stability, or predict the possible vicissitudes of future ages. Here on the storied margin of the Lake, see what revelations lie at our feet. What mean these long parallel grooves and deep furrows, scratched and ploughed by the prolonged action of some stupendous agency into the polished surface of these broad flat stones, over which we are wandering? Whence come, and when deposited, this long line of boulders and fragments of rock, of species not known to be indigenous within a thousand miles of this locality; and what has caused these hummocks and undulating ridges of clay and gravel, the curving trend of which may be traced over the continent, from the Lakes to New Jersey, and from the Atlantic to the Rocky Mountains? Evidently the history of our River and its adjacent territory, does not begin with a paddling steamer on its waters, or a village clearing on its banks. In these rounded stones and heaps of rubbish are records of ancient times, so far back in the past, that the chronological distance must be reckoned by scores of millenniums; and it is curiously interesting to be assured, that we have here in these stones, for ready reading, the record of the frigid conditions that prevailed, and the mighty work that was being done, when the region now occupied by the Lakes, and their outlet, lay creaking and groaning under the weight of glaciers and ice-crags, a thousand feet in height, and miles in extent.
BUFFALO BAY, situated at the outlet of Lake Erie, where it pours its compressed waters into the comparatively narrow stream, that becomes, as it speeds down its rocky bed, the River Niagara, presents to the eye of one approaching the city from the Canada side, or from the open Lake, a view of unexpected loneliness. It lacks boldness and grandeur, it is true, and derives its quiet impressiveness from quite other characteristics. But there are several special and ever pleasing features that contribute to the general picturesque effect. The beautiful translucent green of the water, with its marvellously blended shades, and its ever moving and changing blotches and streaks of sunshine and cloud shadows, weaving and gliding across the broad ripple-sprinkled surface, like the gleams and flashes of the Auroral light. This effect is always one of exquisite beauty. Then comes the prolonged girdle of the low encircling shore, with its bits of wood and beach, and cove and hamlet, and hillock and city—with its frequent shady knolls and rock-strewn inlets; including also the picturesque, slender-looking but strongly woven International bridge, which spans with its airy trestles the fast-flowing River,

"That joins the regions it divides;"

and the high grassy bluff known in the park-system of the city as the front, adjoining which lie the fortress and buildings of Fort Porter, a military station, the rebuilding and improvement of which, in a style demanded by its history and importance, has recently been undertaken by the War Department;—all this presents an attractive succession of scenic groups,
and attractive points of beauty, many miles in extent. No one can view this serene, harmonious cyclorama without a thrill of pleasure, due in reality to the very simplicity and tranquility that characterizes the prospect. It is nature unadorned. Allusion has already been made to the tumultuous change that comes over the scene, when the storm-blasts struggle for the mastery with the infuriate and impetuous waters,

"Waved like the raging sea."

But the city at the foot of the bay, has also its harbor of entrance, well protected by sea-walls, break-waters and piers of great solidity, affording secure anchorage and spacious riding for the largest vessels in even the stormiest weather; the whole constituting a work of great magnitude, and necessarily also, one of slow and gradual completion. The result is a fine harbor, provided with numerous docks and basins, and substantial river-side improvements—capacious storage houses, coal pockets and slides, saw-mills, manufactories, railroads, transfer derricks, and, more strikingly noticeable, immense stationary, and floating grain elevators, that afford a storage capacity for about 10,000,000 bushels of grain, and a transport power of over 3,000,000 bushels per day; enabling Buffalo to transact its very large share, not less than one-third, of the entire grain handling and produce forwarding business of the United States; thus exhibiting in the most conclusive manner the activity and importance of the city’s commercial enterprise, the figures and details of which enter so conspicuously into the statistical summaries of the annual business of the country.

This harbor, was seen to be a necessity in the earlier days of the city, and its desired construction, on a scale of permanency commensurable with the prospective requirements of a growing commercial city, was for a long time despaired of. But its beginning was fortunately in the control of able and determined hands, and step by step the work has since been progressed with persevering energy.

The wisdom of its projectors is thus justified by their successors; and the names of Samuel Wilkeson, Charles Townsend and George Coit, and their colleagues in the Buffalo Harbor Company, will always be associated with this great protective work; on the efficiency of which the very existence of the city depends. But its best position, with reference to the wave-washed shores of the head of the River, was not always considered to be self-evident.
The question, indeed, was once held to be fairly debatable. In fact, it seems to have come into the heads of the wise ones of the early days of Buffalo, that the notion of permanently establishing a commercial port for the eastern terminus of the Lake, upon the sandy dunes at the shallow and sloppy mouth of Buffalo Creek, was manifestly a rejection of what was held by many to be a really safer and less exposed point. And the impression is not yet, by some, quite given up, that the sheltered anchorage, and deep wharfage that has only been obtained at the present site of the City, at great labor and cost, could have been secured naturally and more economically at Black Rock; not considering other topical advantages, claimed for the lower and more elevated locality, as a place of residence. But the metropolitan aspirations of the occupants of the lands lying on the flowery banks of the meandering Scanjaquada, subsided under the pressure of inevitable events, and the over-ruled citizens of the Rock, though not denied some show of reason in their pretensions, resigned their hopes, and biding their time, soon joined with their more prosperous rivals in the well-devised purpose of extend-
documents of the last century, was chosen by its residents, and duly confirmed by legislative charter in 1810. It is curious, that down to Washington, they still only know the place as the village and Port of Buffalo Creek. Visibly and steadily, ever since he finished and signed his survey, and by virtue of industry, foresight and pluck, Ellicott's little plat, enlarged and extended by frequent and judicious annexations, has spread itself out along the shores of Lake and River, and stretched itself back into the country, till it now presents a water frontage six miles in length, and covers with its eight hundred acres of open Park system, its two hundred miles of public streets, its wide avenues of elegant residences, its compact blocks, and crowded thoroughfares of business, and its entangled net-work of railroads—an undulating plateau, gently rising towards the north, thirty square miles in territorial extent. A city, in appearance, in activity, in wealth, in enterprise—in fact; a city of mark, the home of nearly 250,000 people, who, with well-guarded taste, and an enlarged pride of domicil, have surrounded themselves with all spiritual and social facilities and benefactions—with all material appliances of convenience, comfort and refinement—with all the instrumentalities and resources, in a word, of a successful, harmonious and robust community. Whether it be, or be not, a requisite of a Queen, that she should be handsome, may be a disputed question; if not, then Buffalo's qualifications in this respect would be a redundance over its other merits, not here to be insisted on. But this may excusably be said, with all fit pertinence—if there is a more comely, fairer featured city in the United States, where is it to be seen? It should make its claims more conspicuous:

For beauty in seclusion, or forget,
Loses that honor which is beauty's lot.
On a small green hillock, on the Canadian shore, a short distance from the pebbly margin of the Lake, and nearly opposite the City of Buffalo, in a direction from its south shore which the mystified traveller by the upper ferry-boat, towards what he excusably supposes to be the southern shore of Ontario, can never quite reconcile with his perplexed ideas respecting the bearing of the points of the compass in that locality—stand the gray, shattered remains of the dilapidated and long abandoned Fort Erie; a battered relic of a period of peril and prowess, surpassed in interest and scope of incident and result, by few similar memorials in the history of our country.

This grim sepulchral wall, in the silent shadows of which one walks and muses in reverential regret, is a fast crumbling memento of the dark and bloody days of Niagara frontier life, now interesting only for the dire and tumultuous events of which it was once, in the remembrance, perhaps, of some still living participants, the centre and distracted arena. It is a conspicuous feature of the now peaceful and pastoral landscape of which it rather obtrusively forms an incongruous part. It has of late years been divested of much of its structural interest as an historic ruin, by the transfer of a large quantity of the cut stone from its ramparts to the walls of the picturesque little church at the village of Fort Erie, about three miles below the site of the Fort. An proceeding more excusable for its provident intention, than commendable for its temerity, in view of the ill-advised demolition of so large a portion of this rude but none the less unique international ruin. But all disasters have their compensations, and the reflection is not without its pleasurable significance, that these blood-stained stones, now consecrated to gentler human influences, that once trembled with the crash and clamor of pitiless war; which echoed only the weary moans of the dying, and the hoarse shouts of defiant and impetuous combatants;—are now sweetly resonant with the soul-lifting harmonies, poured forth, by voice and organ, in the service of the Prince of Peace. May no harsher sounds than these—no discordant or seditious
note—no heedless word of contention and offence—no brutal renewal of the infuriate clamor of by-gone days—ever again disturb the grateful harmony that now reigns over the fraternal shores of the Beautiful River. Nor would they, so mutual and concurrent are the interests that unite the two lands, were it not for the evil intent of turbulent and marauding spirits of mischief that pester and prowl about otherwise contented and order-loving communities, enticing the inconsiderate and confiding, as well as the corrupt and depraved, into leagues and enterprises of lawlessness and pillage, as often as they can provoke occasion. Men with nothing to lose, and of no responsibility, whose only motive is plunder, and the result of whose work is devastation and disorder. The border lands of adjacent nations are always the tramping grounds of these lawless brigands, and the fair shores of outraged Niagara have not escaped the infliction. But the danger for the future is lessened by the declared intentions of both governments to crush out all such filibustering enterprises hereafter, at the very beginning.

The territory we are now traversing has had its periods of terror and disaster, due to events of a more legitimate character. Every mile of our route from the ruined Fort near the outlet of Lake Erie, to the mouth of the River where its turbulent and flying waters come to rest in the bosom of gentle Ontario, and back again along the eastern shore to the City of Buffalo, has been the region of bloody conflicts, and often prostrated by the desolation and havoc of intermecine war. Every step for fifty miles is over blood-stained and historic ground. Every field and lane recalls the honored name of many a gallant soldier, who though afterwards more especially distinguished on more extended fields, first tried his metal and won his first laurels on the banks of Niagara, and often in hearing of the deep roar of its mighty cataract, and with an enemy of equal intrepidity and valor. There are many to whom such prominent names as Symmes, and Carr, and Van Rensselaer, and Harrison, and Gaines, and Scott, and Wool are familiar, who will only indistinctly recall the fact, that it was on the bluffs and plains that border these historic waters, and in the days of their youthful vigor and enthusiasm, they first exhibited that ability and military tact that laid the foundation for the eminence and distinction that now glorifies their memory. Evidence of this will appear in the sketches to be given of some of the memorable events that took place at various points on the River during the brief war of 1812; in which, also, there will be occasion to refer to the names of other military leaders, of equal celebrity with the few just alluded to; but who, by reason of local residence and kindred, have not so easily been disassociated from the recollection of occurrences in which they were more naturally and more continuously responsible actors. It may be stated here, that anything like a consecutive narrative of the memorable period referred to, will, of course, not be possible, in the limited scope of these necessarily brief notes. But some reference to the more important events that give historic interest to the River, seem to be required, and will be attempted; at least so far as to provide a string on which, (in some connected fashion), to hang Mr. Sangster’s illustrations of the present scenery of the world-renowned River.