

out vegetable remains, unless some fucoids may have decomposed in the same strata. The invisible gas makes its way in countless bubbles through the clear transparent waters of the Niagara. On the application of a lighted candle, it takes fire, and plays about with a lambent flickering flame, which seldom touches the water, the gas being at first too pure to be inflammable, and only obtaining sufficient oxygen after mingling with the atmosphere at the height of several inches above the surface of the stream.

At noon, on a hot summer's day, we were tempted, contrary to my previous resolution, to perform the exploit of passing under the great sheet of water between the precipice and the Horse-shoe Fall. We were in some degree rewarded for this feat by the singularity of the scene, and the occasional openings in the curtain of white foam and arch of green water, which afford momentary glimpses of the woody ravine and river below, fortunately for us lighted up most brilliantly by a midday sun. We had only one guide, which is barely sufficient for safety when there are two persons, for a stranger requires support when he loses his breath by the violent gusts of wind dashing the spray and water in his face. If he turns round to recover, the blast often changes in an instant, and blows as impetuously against him in the opposite direction.

The Falls, though continually in motion, have all the effect of a fixed and unvarying feature in the landscape, like the two magnificent fountains in the great court before St. Peter's at Rome, which seem to form as essential a part of one architectural whole as the stately colonnade, or the massive dome itself.