

BOOKED for TRAVEL

"WATER ON THE BRAIN"

THIS being June, a month of love and honeysuckle, we've been gathering a portfolio of information about Niagara Falls, the lovers' lodestone between New York and Eastern Ontario. Niagara Falls, N. Y., and Niagara Falls, Ont., face each other across the Niagara River. New York's Niagara is the larger city, but for a full-face view of the falls, you'll have to cross over into Canada. Looking at the cataracts from the American side is like trying to get a view of your house from your own living-room window.

All the excess water of the upper Great Lakes accumulates at Niagara, and splashes over two cliffs 160 feet high. Day and night, year after year, the flow amounts to 1,500,000 gallons every second. In manageable figures that's enough water to hand a glassful to every other person in the world once every minute.

The passageway through which the Niagara River runs on its way to Lake Ontario was worn into a gorge over a period of some 35,000 years. Every year another five feet is filed off the falls, and the gorge becomes five feet longer. Sometimes, as in the case of the rockslide of January 1931, the front of the falls collapses in wholesale pieces. There is no reason to

hurry, however, inasmuch as scientists figure the falls won't eat their way back to Lake Erie for another 20,000 years.

Even if you've never been to Niagara, word must have reached you that there are two sets of falls. The American Falls are 1,400 feet across, and drop 162 feet, and the Horseshoe Falls, part Canadian and part American, measure 2,600 feet around the horseshoe, and drop 155 feet. Every night in the year a battery of twenty-four searchlights in Queen Victoria Park on the Canadian side throws a billion and a third candlepower in colored lights on the cascading waters.

Doubtless the most romantic spot to view the spectacle is the Rainbow Room high atop the General Brock Hotel, where every table has a view of both falls. King George VI and Queen Elizabeth were given a banquet at the Rainbow Room in 1939, and that night occupied suites 906, 907, and 908. New tower suites were added to the top of the General Brock a year ago Easter. Each tower suite has a terrace and picture windows which permit guests a view of the falls without ever leaving their room, a handy arrangement in Niagara.

One of the pleasantest places to eat on a warm day is the open-air terrace

of the Park Restaurant just opposite the falls. While lunching under the broad awning you can watch yellow-clad figures, like platoons of Martians, apparently walking right under the American Falls. They are tourists visiting the Cave of the Winds, which as a tourist attraction is nothing if not unique. In the dressing rooms on Goat Island you buy a ticket and exchange your clothes for a cotton suit, fabric slippers, and yellow oilskins. An elevator, descending through 174 feet of solid rock at the same rate as the falls drop into the river, takes you to the river level. From there a guide leads the way over a network of catwalks into the teeth of the spray as it bounces up from the base of the falls. Maybe that's the hard way to escape heat prostration, but in summer it is twenty-degrees cooler under Niagara Falls.

Unless you want to seal yourself in a barrel and go tumbling over the top, the closest you can get to the Canadian falls is aboard the steamer called *Maid of the Mist*, which churns its way up to the Horseshoe several times a day loaded to the gunwhales with sightseers.

The *Maid* is named for a beautiful but vacillating Indian girl who couldn't bring herself to decide between two suitors. The competing braves met in combat, and when one battler had been mortally wounded she realized—ah, too late—that it was he whom she had truly loved all along. When her love staggered to her and died in her arms she was overcome with grief. Jumping into a



—Culver Service.

Niagara Falls—"...enough water to hand a glassful to every other person in the world once every minute."

handy canoe, she paddled herself over the falls to be dashed to oblivion. Now if you look into the mist at the base of the falls, they say you can see the Indian girl reaching up after her dead lover in exquisite supplication. You have to have 20/20 vision, and of course it should be a clear day.

—HORACE SUTTON.

TRAVELERS' TALES

GUMP'S TREASURE TRADE, by Carol Green Wilson. Crowell. \$5. Gump's is a San Francisco art house which has become as much a center for sightseeing tourists as it is a center for trade. Mrs. Wilson writes the story of Gump's, a house known for the Oriental, the exotic, and the unusual, in the form of a biography of A. L. Gump. Nearly blind from the age of eleven, A. L., second-generation member of the art-dealing Gumps, had weathered three crashes when he established Gump's as a store of international repute. He died in 1947. A. L.'s successful commercial life and sad private life, while of interest to art connoisseurs, is written as an untechnical, popular biography, and suffers only slightly from the artificial construction of a few quotes.

IT'S AN OLD CAPE COD CUSTOM, by Edwin V. Mitchell. Vanguard. \$3. If I'm keeping the box score correctly this is the fifth entry in the American Custom Series. Since there has also been an endless string of books on the Cape's lore—including the eminent work of Thoreau—everyone ought to know by now that the land grows cranberries, people live in Cape Cod houses, and everybody's blood is mixed with sea water. In 1829 Provincetown had 1,800 inhabitants and one horse. When the horse was hitched to a wagon one sea-minded youth was surprised to see how straight the wagon could be driven without a rudder. There is interesting news about antiques, the Cape's Indians, and the mooncussers—local landbound pirates who posted false lights and induced ships to founder on the reefs.

WASHINGTON: CITY OF DESTINY, by Alice Rogers Hager and Jackie Martin. Macmillan. \$3.50. This big picture book enriched with short accompanying text is not only a travel book and a souvenir, but a painless lesson in civics for any student. Most of the photographs were taken by Jackie Martin when she was on the staff of the *Washington Times Herald*. The workings of Washington, therefore, are pictured in the terms

of embassy parties, the Eisenhowers, living Senators, and Washington hostess Pearl Bailey.

SWITZERLAND, edited by Dore Ogrizek and J. G. Rufenacht. Whittlesey House. \$5. Thirteen writers, seventeen artists, two coordinators, a translator, and two editors have combined talents to produce this second book in the World in Color Series. The first, "France, Paris, and the Provinces," which came out last year carried beautiful illustrations but suffered perceptibly from a vague translation. The text of Switzerland deals agreeably with the historical and geographical background of the land, depending upon fine color illustrations and an occasional anecdote to keep things light. The local gastronomy is dealt with rather carefully, and there is some news of the winter sports situation, alpinism, and fishing. About all that is left out is specific data about restaurants and hotels, rather significant intelligence, it seems to me.

Circle in Red

A list of events the world over, compiled mostly from "What's Doing in 1949," by M. B. Schnapper, Public Affairs Press, \$2.

- July 1-9 National Iced Tea Week
- July 4-10 National Marbles Championships
- July 21 Loyal Temperance Union Day
- July 23-30 Save the Horse Week
- July 26 Liberia's Independence Day
- July 28 Auction of wild ponies at Chincoteague, Va.
- Aug. 1-6 Welsh National Eisteddfod
- Aug. 20 Jousting tournament at Natural Chimneys, Va.
- Aug. 27 2,500th birthday of Confucius
- Aug. 30 56th anniversary of the birth of Huey P. Long (Louisiana legal holiday)
- Sept. 1 Thirtieth anniversary of Unitarian Laymen's League
- Sept. 1-30 Child Foot Health Month
- Sept. 9 Bulgaria's Liberty Day
- Sept. 11-17 National Tie Week
- Sept. 15 Felt Hat Day
- Sept. 16 Cherokee Strip Day in Oklahoma
- Sept. 30 103rd anniversary of the first use of ether
- Oct. 12 Vijayadashami Day (in Nepal)
- Oct. 16-22 National Posture Week
- Oct. 28 Thirtieth anniversary of passage of Volstead Act

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