

stream (Fig. 115). Such *pot-holes*, as they are termed, vary in size from mere cup-like depressions to huge caldrons or pools. As they often coalesce, by the giving way of the intervening walls between two or more of them, they materially increase the deepening of the river-bed.

That a river erodes its channel by means of its transported sediment and not by the mere friction of the water, is sometimes admirably illustrated in the course of streams filtered by one or more lakes. As the Rhone escapes from the Lake of Geneva, it sweeps with a swift clear current over ledges of rock that have not yet been very deeply eroded. The Niagara supplies a still more impressive example. Issuing from Lake Erie, and flowing through a level country for a few miles, it approaches its falls by a series of rapids. The water leaves the lake with hardly any appreciable sediment, and has too brief a journey in which to gather it, before beginning to rush down the rocky channel toward the cataract. The sight of the vast body of clear water, leaping and shooting over the sheets of limestone in the rapids, is in some respects quite as striking a scene as the great falls. To a geologist it is specially instructive; for he can observe that, notwithstanding the tremendous rush of water which has been rolling over them for so many centuries, these rocks have been comparatively little abraded. The smoothed and striated surface left by the ice-sheet of the Glacial Period can be traced upon them almost to the water's edge, and the flat ledges at the rapids are merely a prolongation of the ice-worn surface which passes under the banks of drift on either side. The river has hardly eroded more than a mere superficial skin of rock here since it began to flow over the glaciated limestone.