



TUMBLE-DOWN FARM

CHAPTER XX.—(Continued.)

Vanity did not care for the soldier's admiration, which she had soon enough perceived; but the cause of her complete indifference was beyond Maud Neville's ken. Vanity was infatuated about Willie Snow, in spite of his misconduct she loved him more than ever. This was silly and weak of Vanity, but consider, reader, how few stories would be written if a few people were not silly and weak; and remember how frail is the heart of woman. Her madness was at last sincere. Vanity thought nothing of the handsome dragon for whose admiration several girls of rank and fortune were sighing, all because her heart was full of Willie Snow, weak Willie Snow, the man whom she still called her own, and whom she believed had been given to her in a solemn and tender hour beneath the soft stars, and to the music of the dying evening wind.

Miss Maud Neville was prompted by a humane desire to keep the heart of her brother in safety and to guide his affections aright. This desire frequently possesses active and high-minded persons, and from it unspeakable benefits accrue to humanity. After one of these morning encounters between grass-plot and balcony, when Vanity had retired— "Sit down here, Tom," said Maud, indicating a garden seat; "what a pleasant cigar you are smoking this morning! Now, Master Tim, have you counted up the hearts you have broken since you came down here?"

"Oh, I don't know about that," the dragon replied. "I really don't give my mind to it—not much, you know, Maudie."

"I suppose you will marry, Tom, and I suppose," Maud went on, "Arabella Hardcastle will be the woman?"

"Can't say," Tom replied diffidently. "But, Tom," Maud said, with an admirable air of surprise, "have you and the Hardesties fallen out? You did not speak in this way a few days ago."

"At which our dragon's blush, just receding, broke out most visibly."

"In one word," Maud said, looking him full in the face, "there is a newcomer. I think I can guess."

In this way Maud contrived so skillfully that there and then her brother confessed that he admired Vanity Hardware, and she, like the tactician she was, received the intelligence with perfect composure, not protesting. This only said:

"She is very handsome, good, kind; and then, Tom—"

"I know what you mean," Tom remarked, seeing she hesitated. "Ought we to visit her?"

"Well, you see, Tom, we have to ask such questions."

"If you had to choose for me, and the choice lay between Arabella and my newcomer—"

"Really, Tom, I should not know what to do."

That may seem strange enough, but Maud could not bear the idea of having Arabella Hardcastle for sister-in-law. Her dislike was not a recent affair. Mrs. Hardcastle had brought her up from infancy, and had managed to make her, a child, girl and young woman, cordially detest her guardian. Arabella, too, had always been puffed against Maud, but that potent old lady had managed to get Maud and Tom Pembroke, for Tom was easily misled.

Accordingly, when Tom told his sister that he had really taken a fancy to Vanity Hardware, that sensible and straightforward young woman was in a fix. Perhaps of the two she might have preferred Vanity; but all lady-like ideas will see that there were very grave objections to a marriage with this brave, beautiful, but certainly most nondescript heroine.

"Which of the two would it be, Maud?" Tom saw his advantage, and pressed his question. Maud traced a pattern on the gravel with her foot, raised her eyebrows, as if to signify that she was in an unfair position; but she made no answer.

"Of course," said Tom, "I am now talking on the supposition that I felt such a step to be desirable, and also that—Miss Hardware would have me."

"Oh, Tom, ridiculous! Of course she would!"

"How do you know?" he rejoined. "I am not so sure of that."

And he spoke so seriously that Maud felt he must have some reason for his thought, and she was greatly astonished. Fancy wealthy, handsome, dashing, good-humored Tom Pembroke, the prize for an earl's daughter, asking poor and pretty Maud Neville to be his wife! And fancy her saying No! Here would be materials for a novel indeed!

CHAPTER XXI.

At last the little patient was discharged from her hospital; and, all danger from infection being over, so the doctor said—Maud Neville was able to thank her benefactress in person. That energetic young matron could not but feel that Tom needed no excuse for being smitten by Vanity Hardware. Maud felt a secret respect for the young actress, and could not but utter her thanks with the sisterly warmth which she desired to express.

And yet Maud had never had Vanity's secret! The actress was possessed with an idea which Maud would not so easily have called wicked, if not mean. Her soul was concentrated upon her purpose of wayward affection and merciless revenge. Her calculation was that Nancy's attractions would be about used up by this time. Vanity judged her just the woman to fatigue a man soon. Willie had known her spell, and she knew exactly how to captivate him. This wicked, reckless purpose made Vanity grave and calm and superior as she talked with Maud Neville.

Maud poured out her thanks, praised Vanity's bravery, and said what her occasion suggested. Vanity heard her with an air of condescending interest, as one listens to the thanks of a grateful child.

"I am glad I risked it," she said, speaking to her own heart while appearing to answer Maud. "If I had died I should not have cared. But I am alive!"

"Alive!" repeated Maud Neville. "But suppose your beauty had gone?"

Vanity shuddered. Then she remembered her own former thought.

"If God or Fate had wanted my beauty, it would have been taken. Now I am twice my own."

This was Greek to Maud; but she had something to say herself. Vanity was standing at the window, looking into the garden. At a sight of the soldier outside Maud saw a sarcastic smile upon the

country, and one Sunday morning I went out for an early walk. Since my sorrows I had never gone to church, and I heard the bells ringing in the village for an early service. The idea struck me that I would go in and see if there I could calm my mind. As I entered the churchman was reading the sentence, 'Come unto Me, all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

"Now, let me tell you a fact. As I knelt there it seemed to me that an invisible hand was put into mine. I did truly and actually feel as if a hand clasped me. I looked up. No one was near me. The clergyman was some way off. Then I seemed to hear a voice saying: 'Are there no sorrows beside your own? No breaking hearts but yours? No sickness? No hunger? No nakedness? Then for the first time I realized that I was only one in a great fellowship of grief. I was overwhelmed, but with a blessed sorrow now. When the cup came to me I could scarcely hold it. The clergyman saw my agitation, and kindly helped my trembling hand, and I saw my own tears running down into the wine I tasted. But from that moment there was a new life before me. And I have been happy ever since in my own way. People say all sorts of things about religion; I only know what religion has been to me. A new life—a new life when the old one was withered and blasted and dead! All that was twenty years ago."

"What became of him?" Vanity asked.

"He read his way and prospered. He is married now, with a large and happy family."

Courage, energy, tenderness, and rare knowledge of the heart were shown by Sister Catherine. She never lost patience with Vanity; she never shrunk from her reckless notions, and she never lost sight of the method by which she must lead this wandering child of Nature into the way of peace.

Sister Catherine gradually gained ground. She never lost an opportunity, and she read Vanity's character with rare insight. In spite of all the sick actress would pour forth in her passionate broken-hearted way, the sister kept repeating that life was love, and that there was a life open to Vanity. At times, with accents of scorn, she would contrast this with Vanity's old ideal; and at last Vanity fairly confessed that the sister's conception of life was higher than her own.

Vanity's full heart emptied itself now.

"I have been so wild and sinful, and my life is so broken up, and everything has gone to smash, and I feel as if I were left with nothing but a heap of ruins. Tell me, if you will help me, I will do as you tell me, and not be afraid, and try to do the best I can."

A little incident then sealed Vanity's resolution. She felt her hand drawn gently toward the sister, who clasped it fast, after which the girl felt as if she were falling down upon it like rain. And Vanity knew that these were tears of love and joy, and all that the sister had said to her about goodness became a reality in a moment; and from that hour her feet were set upon the way to life.

(To be continued.)

Flowers in the Philippines.

Nearly every traveler in the Philippines finds much interest in the prodigious growth of flowers. There are over thirty varieties of orchids in the forests, and dozens of lilies of mammoth proportions that are never seen outside of the tropics. The Malapalila is the largest. Its leaves are often six feet long and two feet wide, while its stems are three inches in diameter. It is in bloom five months in the year, and its blossoms are as large as a peck measure.

Carnations grow in phenomenal variety all over the rural districts, and frequently cover an acre or more, while geraniums, whose luxuriance excites exclamations of surprise from nearly every beholder for the first time, grow like trees and great clumps of bushes.

Geraniums that have grown up the trunk and along the limbs of frequently forest trees are to be seen from time to time. Along the rural roads there are everywhere wild poppies of the most delicate yellow flowers and large stems. From the trees in the forest there are hundreds of vines and parasites of the most brilliant blossoms, and in the spring season the air all over the several islands is for a time fairly heavy with floral fragrance.

Both the Tagals and the Boclals have no taste for the superb flora of the Philippines, and one seldom sees any kind of a flower or vine cultivated at the home of a native. The tropical luxuriance sometimes causes a beautiful wild geranium or a species of chrysanthemum to spring up at the side of a bamboo hill, and because the natives are too lazy to do what is not absolutely necessary to comfort or life, it will not be torn up or molested.

Lincoln Believed Himself Ugly.

Mrs. Benjamin Price's paper at the Woman's Literary Club told in a racy way two anecdotes of Abraham Lincoln. In one of them she said that her father-in-law had at one time been appointed to a government position in place of Mr. Addison, who was a most polished man, but notably plain-featured.

The two gentlemen went together to call on President Lincoln, who received them cheerfully in the midst of the somewhat embarrassing operation of shaving. His face a lather, say, he extended a hand to each, and upon Mr. Addison enumerating the good qualities of his successor, and congratulating the President upon securing so eminent an officer, Mr. Lincoln exclaimed:

"Yes, Addison, I have no doubt Mr. Price is all that you say, but nothing can compensate me for the loss of you, for when you retire I shall be the homeliest man in the employment of the government."—Baltimore News.

Bedclothes of Turkey's Sultans.

Take the quilt of a wide bed, and cover it with pearls of all sizes, from those as big as a pin to some as large as the fattest chestnut. String thousands of such pearls into all shapes, so that they will cover the quilt with embroidery, and you have some idea of the kind of bedclothes under which the most famous Sultans of the past have slept.

Fruit Aids Digestion.

Fruit is not a complete dietary in itself, but it is excellent to accompany a meat diet. The acid contained in the fruits assists digestion, and it is for this reason that apple sauce should be served with roast pork or goose, the fat of which is rendered more assimilable by it.

In a recent magazine article John Morley says: "There are probably not six Englishmen over fifty whose lives need to be written or should be written."

THE BAROMETER FROG.

A Creature Which Tells You What the Weather Will Be.

New York has a frog that is a weather prophet, and he follows the ups and downs of the mercury with unerring regularity.

This frog, which is probably the only one of its kind in America, was recently imported from Germany. It is known commonly as the "barometer frog."

Its present home is in the office of Dr. W. S. Berkman, on Third avenue.

This peculiar faculty for forecasting the weather is an accredited scientific fact. The encyclopedia defines this curious visitor as a "batrachian reptile of the tailless order, embracing the group of phaneroglosses found in Central Germany."

The weather frog has been comfortably installed for the last two weeks in a glass globe. There is a rocky island in the midst of the watery ocean contained in the glass globe. When the barometer is a set fair, the frog swims himself upon this rock. He devours enormous quantities of roaches, purchased by the bagful and fed to him by his owner. When the small boys in the neighborhood fail to collect a sufficient number of these delicate and toothsome morsels, which the batrachian declares in its native tongue, in quality to anything in its native swamps, a fine breakfast, chopped fine, keeps his majesty alive. So far, his digestion has not been known to interfere with the prompt performance of his duties as weather prophet to the population of southern Third avenue.

The weather frog is a comparatively rare animal. It has not taken long for his fame to spread, and a great number of visitors have found it necessary to pay a visit to the dentist for the pleasure of listening to the mournful voice which comes in soul-stirring chorals from the deep, solid red chest.

If that green-backed, red-chested and brown-throated batrachian is fanning himself on the summit of the island upon a fine Saturday afternoon visitors go away rejoicing. It will be a fine and perhaps hot Sunday. On the other hand, should the frog slide into the water and begin to sink, though the sun may be shining that day, they know it will rain ere morning. If the frog drops quickly, they look out for squalls. If he remains persistently at the bottom, it is an augury of long-continued rain or disagreeable weather.

The movements of this long-legged reptile are so carefully adjusted to the small variations of the weather that it has been suggested to his owner that a graduated glass introduced into the globe would give daily readings which might be posted outside the building for the public benefit.

Dr. Berkman has watched his movements very closely during the past fortnight, and is prepared to say that he compares more than favorably with the man on Broadway. It has been suggested to him that it is not right to keep his weather prophet hidden at the bottom of a tank in a dentist's office, but should request the government to appoint the frog to the present official staff.

The weather frog is valued at \$25—a price at which it is not likely to become popular in this country. His hind legs are abnormally long, and his front legs exceedingly short. He is slow in motion, but makes up for any deficiencies in this way by being extremely sensitive to sound. He can hear the approach of an enemy even if he has not the ability to get out of the way very quickly. As for his voice, it is unlike anything heard even in the bull-frog region, and must be listened to carefully before a musician can form any estimate of its beauty.

How the Last Juror was Won.

Dr. Robert D. Sheppard, business agent of the Northwestern University, relates a story of how he once won a law suit which illustrates the manner in which lawyers sometimes adapt themselves to their juries.

"There was no question," said Dr. Sheppard, "but that I was in the right of the case. The evidence was conclusive, the law was on my side, and when my attorney arose to make his opening address he thought he had the case won. He briefly reviewed the evidence, stated the law in the case, and was about to close his argument when he noticed that one of his jurors, a stout old farmer, did not seem to be with him. The other eleven men had already decided the case in their own minds, but the farmer had a sly, set expression on his countenance which boded no good for me or my case."

Again my lawyer reviewed the evidence, addressing his remarks entirely to this one man, but no impression was made. The same stolid expression still occupied the man's face, and he seemed as little likely to be moved as the courthouse in which the trial was taking place. The attorney tried all kinds of arguments, and finally, when he was about giving up in despair, a happy thought struck him. He repeated again the bare facts, and when he came to a place where the person opposing me had made an egregious error in judgment he leaned over to the old farmer and said:

"And I want to tell you, my friend, that there's where he dropped his watermelon."

"The old farmer's face lighted up, and from that moment the case was won. The jury was out less than five minutes, and brought back a verdict for that I had lost."

A Blood-Red Lake.

Lake Morat, in Switzerland, has a queer habit of turning red about two or three times every ten years. It is a pretty lake, like most of the sheets of water in that picturesque country, and its peculiar freak is attributed to a disposition to celebrate the slaughter of the Burgundians under Charles the Bold on June 21, 1476. But the French say it blushes for the conduct of the Swiss, who, in that battle, gave the Burgundians no quarter. This year it was redder than ever, and had a sinister appearance, when the setting sun illuminated its waves.

The phenomenon, of course, has its legend. The old fishermen of the lake, who catch enormous fish called silures, that weigh between twenty-five and forty kilograms, say, when they see the waters of the lake reddening, that it is the blood of the Burgundians. As a matter of fact, some of the bodies of the Burgundians killed in the battle

were thrown into the lake, while others were tossed into a grave filled with quicklime. This historical recollection angered the Burgundian soldiers of the victorious armies of the Republic in 1798 so much that they destroyed the monuments raised in honor of their compatriots who fell heroically in that battle, and Henri Martin very justly reproached them for that piece of vandalism.

It would hardly do to attribute the reddening of the waters of the lake to the blood of the soldiers of Charles the Bold. The coloring is due simply to the presence in large quantities of little aquatic plants, called by the naturalists, scyllasteria rubescens. The most curious thing about it is that Lake Morat is the only lake in which this curious growth is developed, and this peculiarity is beginning to interest scientific men.—Boston Transcript.

Four Trees in One Trunk.

Four miles from Pinedale, McDonald County, on the grounds of J. L. Parish, is a freak of nature so curious that if I had not seen it with my own eyes, I could scarcely have believed it possible.

On the bank of the Elk River rises a large tree that towers high above the neighboring trees. At the ground a solid buttressed trunk appears from eight to ten feet in diameter. A little higher than a man's head this trunk divides into four lesser trunks, the two smaller of which are in themselves fair-sized trees, while the other two are far above the average size. Here comes in the queer part of the story.

Of these divergent trunks the two large ones are respectively an elm and a sycamore, while the two smaller ones are an oak and a sycamore. Above the union of the common trunk each tree in leaf, branch and bark is normal to its type. The trunk itself seems a homogeneous whole.

One does not presume to say that close examination would not show in the bark from different sections of the trunk those peculiarities that distinguish the bark of one tree from that of the other, but certainly these characteristics do not appear on cursory examination, nor are there lines of jointure visible where the four trunks coalesce.

I doubt if any one can point to a stranger growth than this—two sycamores, an oak and an elm, all growing from one common trunk. This meeting together of four youthful tree trunks as they thickened with age is occasionally seen, but this is an unusually fine illustration. Each tree must, however, form its own bark—that is to say, no one of them has been wholly enveloped by another. Hence a careful investigation ought to disclose a slight line where the incipient bark of each original tree meets.

Small Fruit Farms Pay.

"Contrary to the general opinion," said Mr. Russell Stephens, one of the largest fruit growers of the Sacramento valley, "it is the small fruit farms in California which pay the best. The big fruit farms are very expensive to manage, and as every person about them seems to be hired, there are many leaks and weak points. The transportation feature is, perhaps, more important than all things else combined, for unless the fruit can be shipped, and properly shipped, there is no money in the business. In the end the big growers will pay, but at present the small growers have the best of it, for they can handle their fruit better. It is strange to us that people in the east pay twenty-five cents per pound for Malaga or Tokay grapes, when out there we are glad to sell them for \$15 to \$17 per ton, or less than one cent per pound. The railroads and middle men get all the money, and what is worse, the consumer has to pay such high prices that he does not feel able to buy all the fruit he should."

Experiments in Flying.

The first experiments of Herr Otto Lilienthal in flying were made with a single cloth-covered, wing-shaped framework, which, after a run from the top of a hill, supported him in the air for perhaps a quarter of a mile as he gently slid down the slope. He has since made it easier to keep his equilibrium by using two smaller frameworks, placed one above the other. This apparatus can be kept in position in a wind of twenty miles an hour, and with a total wing surface of eighteen square meters he has sailed in a nearly horizontal direction against a wind of fifteen miles or more without the need of the start, even being lifted by the strong winds higher than the starting point, and sometimes coming to a standstill in the air. Such experiences convince him of the possibility of sailing in a circle. As the apparatus would shoot rapidly toward the ground on coming into the wind, it must have sufficient height to complete the turn before landing, and the flapping of small wings may help to gain this.

A Marvel in Railroading.

A problem in railroad engineering has received considerable attention from a certain class of inventors has been to devise a scheme whereby two trains may pass each other, going in the same or opposite directions, upon a single track, and thus save half of the expense now necessary to lay a double track.

Less than a year ago patent No. 535,360 was granted for a method of accomplishing this result without the usual sanguinary circumstances that accompany it. The proposed plan is to place a long level plane at each end of one of the trains. Upon these inclined cars, and along the roofs of the other cars is laid an ordinary track of standard gauge.

When a second train desires to pass this all it has to do is to crowd on steam and climb over it. This it can do with equal facility headed in either direction and whether the first train is stationary or moving at a high rate of speed.

The Gregorian Calendar.

The Gregorian calendar, first substituted for the Julian calendar in 1582, allows the ordinary year 365 days, the leap year 366 days, and drops three leap years in every four centuries, only those centuries which are divisible by 400 being leap years. The mean year of our time-reckoning by this system, while sufficiently accurate to satisfy most individuals, is still twenty-six seconds longer than the true astronomical year. This has led a learned member of the French Academy of Sciences to propose a further correction of the calendar by considering every year divisible by 3200 as an ordinary instead of a leap year, thus reducing the error in our mean year to one day in 500,000 years. If the change is adopted, the first departure from the Gregorian rule will not occur for more than 1200 years.

A Curious Lake.

A curious lake has been found on the island of Kilauea, North Sea, which contains salt water under the surface, in which sponges, codfish and other marine animals flourish. The surface of the water, however, is perfectly fresh, and supports fresh-water creatures and vegetation.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

New Jersey has had a collateral inheritance tax a little more than three years, but its State Treasury has been enriched to the amount of \$368,086.59 by the tax during the time.

The United States Postoffice Department now uses over 3,000 railway cars on 150,000 miles of road, and keeps 6,000 clerks on the move, traveling in crews 140,000,000 miles a year, during which time 9,000,000,000 pieces of mail matter are handled.

St. Louis has organized war against the new woman. Her most exclusive feminine club is responsible for the crusade. A tendency to revolt against the restrictions of conventionality has been observed, and although nothing definitely monstrous has been done, it is deemed wise to meet the emergency at the start.

A new field for feminine energies is always a theme of interest. Miss Mattie Louise Burns, of Chicago, deserves the congratulations of the business world, and the thanks of woman-Gem, womanly and devoted to pretty kind. Gentle, womanly and devoted to pretty gowns, she is still actively engaged in the hotel business, and is making of it a success.

The annual waste of the British army is about 34,000 men—more than the entire army of the United States! There has been much talk of reserves. England has over 80,000 reserves, all supposed to be mature and experienced soldiers. The Duke of Wellington, when asked what his reserve would be in certain eventualities, said, "The people of England!" Our reserve is the people of America.

One of these days, warns the New York Tribune, under the stimulation of British enterprise and British capital, Burma may be a serious competitor of the United States and Russia in the petroleum markets of the world. Oil wells have been worked there for 2,000 years, but in a rude and primitive manner. Now they are turning out many millions of gallons a year, and the quantity is increasing in a startling way. The quality of the oil is also very fine. Evidently the ancient realms of the East are by no means yet "worked out."

According to official statistics the public domain of the United States originally consisted of 1,815,000,000 acres of land, of which all but 539,000,000 acres have been disposed of. Of the land remaining undisposed of Arizona has 55,000,000 acres, California 45,000,000, Colorado 40,000,000, Idaho 46,000,000, Kansas 941,000, Minnesota 5,000,000, Montana 73,000,000, Nebraska 10,000,000, Nevada 61,000,000, New Mexico 58,000,000, Oregon 37,000,000 and Wyoming 50,000,000. These immense tracts include great mountain areas which will be forever worthless for cultivation, but they include also millions of acres of arid land which can be made fertile if money enough is spent in irrigating them.

In the British Medical Journal a Paris correspondent says at least 2,500 physicians in France are battling with starvation, and he adds that physicians themselves are largely responsible for this state of affairs. They "have taught lady patronesses of different societies to diagnose diseases, to dress and bandage wounds, to vaccinate their own children and those of their neighbors. Medical science is vulgarized in every way. Doctors writing in important daily papers explain how bronchitis and cramps of the stomach are to be cured, and in fashion journals they teach how to cure pimples and avert headaches. Five hundred thousand gratuitous consultations are given yearly in Paris dispensaries, and in this way a large amount of fees is diverted from the medical profession."

Speaking of women in the professions, a writer in "The Congregationalist" says: "The advance in medicine may be gauged by a few salient facts. When Harriet Hosmer, a sculptor of whom Massachusetts is justly proud, wished to study anatomy, she knocked in vain at the doors of medical colleges in New England and New York. Crossing the Mississippi she went to Dr. McDowell, dean of the Medical College in St. Louis, who said to her, with true Southern chivalry: 'You shall study anatomy in my college, and if anybody interferes with you we will interfere with me first.' Yet in her own State, not long after, the first medical school in the world for women was opened. This was in Boston, November 1, 1848, with twelve students. In the same city to-day are two hospitals, the New England Hospital for women and children and the Vincent Memorial Hospital, which were started and are managed by women."

A factory for the employment of ex-convicts will be planted in Chicago if the plans of the bureau of charities of the Civic Federation are carried into effect. The proposition is that the work of the Illinois Industrial Association, represented by A. C. Dodds, shall be taken up in a larger way. He has conducted a broom factory in which convicts were employed. It has been a failure. It is proposed that an organization be formed to take charge of this factory as a philanthropic and charitable institution. It will be run whether it pays or not. It will be conducted by a board of directors of an association instead of a single person. The gentlemen interested in the scheme do not deem the reformation of convicts a hopeless task, even after hearing the experience of Mr. Dodds, who has for years made the problem of the convict his special work. In the old home, under his management, there had been posted up a set of rules. It was the chief pleasure of the men to break these rules. They succeeded in breaking all of them. It was not uncommon for them to sally out of this philanthropic institution to "crack a crib" and bring the plunder back to the house. Once two of them had gone down into the kitchen and manufactured counterfeit money.

A new bridge to be erected over the Tennessee River at Knoxville, while not to be of unusual size, will be, the engineer in charge says, a wonder in the engineering and architectural world. It is to be built entirely of pink marble, quarried in Knox County and

within a few miles of the site. It will be 1,600 feet long from "out to out" of abutments and will be 240 feet long in the main spans of arch, which, it is claimed, is twenty feet longer than the longest arch in the world. It will rise at the crown of the channel spans 105 feet above water, with four largest chieftain impost structure. It is to be a solid masonry bridge from side to side, with a fifty foot roadway over 100 feet above water, with four largest spans in the world. The immense arches will be eight feet deep at the keystone, fifteen feet at the skewbacks, or spring lines, and will spring from piers thirty feet high and forty feet wide. The piers go to solid rock, the substructure limestone, twelve feet below the water surface at the bridge site. The arches and spandrel filling will be constructed of concrete. The parapet walls will be constructed of sawed marble slabs, with heavy blocks on pilasters every fifteen feet, projecting above the wall proper and giving what might be called a semi-castellated effect.

A correspondent of The Youth's Companion sends a suggestive clipping from a local paper. The idea is advanced that one reason why the farmers of the country cannot have free postal delivery is that roads are so hard to travel. If the roads were good, postmen on cycles might deliver the mails everywhere. The Companion thinks the thought is one which dwells in the country will do well to ponder. The increasing interest in the subject is attested by the space given to the discussion of the question in the daily newspapers and other periodicals. In a recent issue of the New York Independent Prof. Shaler, of Harvard University, and several other experts, fill eight pages with their contributions respecting the need of better common roads, the best methods of construction, and the obvious value of highways convenient for travel. Massachusetts sets the example for the rest of the country, and Prof. Shaler, who is a member of the Highway Commission, gives an account of the method adopted by that commonwealth to promote the building of good roads. Under this system three-fourths of the expense is met by the State, and the rest of the cost by the counties in which the work is done. The Massachusetts plan of State aid has been tried two years without showing serious defects, and Prof. Shaler regards it as a practical method of dealing with the road-building problem. An important suggestion in these articles concerns the proper technical training of civil engineers who wish to make highway construction a specialty. The highest skill in engineering is required to exemplify the best methods in highway work. The study of materials to be used and of their proper disposition is a necessary preparation for expert treatment of the road question. The Companion concludes by asserting that the old theory in rural districts, that any one who could order workmen about vigorously and make animals do their best was fit to be a highway constructor, is giving place to the sensible conclusion that careful training is needed for work which is designed to increase the convenience and prosperity of the community."

A CONGRESSMAN'S COMPLIMENT.

And the Way It was Accepted by the Pretty Mountain Maid.

A somewhat gay and gallant member of the House, unusually handsome, even for a member, was telling to a small group of listeners, of which a Star reporter was one, some of his campaign experiences.

"On one trip to the mountains," he said, after narrating several good ones, "I was riding along a road up a picturesque valley with my campaign companion, when we met a buxom, pink-checked, good-looking country girl on foot. As I spoke to her after the custom of the country, she stopped us."

"Have you seen anything of a red-headed, freckle-faced fellow down the creek?" she inquired.

"We have met three or four men in the last hour," I replied, "and one of them was red-headed. How old was he?"

"Bout my age, I reckon."

"So young as that?" I asked with all my courtesies.

"That ain't so powerful young," she said, without the slightest apparent comprehension of my compliment.

"He's twenty-one and so'm I."

"The man we met with the red-head was twice that old. He couldn't have been the one you were looking for, could he?"

"I reckon not. The man I'm lookin' for and me wuz to git married yistiddy, an' when the time come he wazn't there. Pap started up the road for him with a gun this mornin' an' I come this way."

"This made it interesting and I at once felt it to be my duty to offer my assistance."

"Tell me his name," I said, "and I'll make inquiries along the road."

"Sim Johnson, and I'd give a ten-acre farm to git him out here."

"Her anger heightened her color, and put such a brightness in her eyes that she was positively handsome, and I just couldn't help trying another delicate compliment on her."

"You must excuse me," I smiled and bowed and sent forth my softest glances, "but with such a pretty girl as you are after me, I'd like to be Sim Johnson."

"This time it was a ten-strike."

"Wall," she responded, as she looked me over critically, not to say admiringly, "I ain't no objections."

"It was the only time I ever laid down before a bluff," concluded the member, "but that one knocked me flat and I never did know how I got away."

—Washington Star.

A Missouri Curiosity.

In Nevada, Mo., a young catalpa tree, about twenty feet tall, is growing with a section of a coal-stove grate firmly attached near its roots. The tree has grown through the bars of the grate from the seed, and as it increased in diameter, the wood lapped over and under the bars, holding it as in a vise. The grate was lifted off the ground several inches as the growth of the tree progressed.