

For to-day we have bridges that cross streams at least 1,600 feet wide with a single span.

All bridges at first were constructed from wood, but as untreated wood, exposed to the air, is only a temporary material, steel, stone, and concrete were gradually substituted. Now when a bridge was finished, man being both a social and warlike being, he was free to cross back and forth whenever he pleased, whether bent on a peaceful mission or a warlike and pillaging errand. In either case the bridge always carried him safely across.

The bridge has therefore done its part in perfecting commerce, prosecuting war, affording means of inter-communication, thereby advancing civilization. It has also made itself felt in forming our Traditions, History, Customs and Literature. Julius Caesar in his commentaries in fighting the Gauls, makes a special mention of constructing a bridge across a Gaelic stream in record-breaking time. Sad to relate in time of war a bridge is one of the first things an enemy desires to destroy. Destroy an enemy's bridge across an important stream, on his line of communication, and nine chances out of ten his army is without food. The history of any nation is replete with the offices that their bridges have performed. This is so true that the character of bridges that a nation builds is a good means of telling what kind of a civilization that nation enjoy.

In the English language the bridge has furnished us many figures of speech. For example:—A man always praises the bridge that carries him over. Again,—Man's character is like a bridge for the strength of a bridge lies in the strength of its weakest member.

What a magic name has the bridge in the measures of Poetry and in the annals of Romance.

Who has not been saddened when reading Tennyson's immortal poem entitled the "Bridge." Who has not read with marked attention Robert Burns' account of the Old Bridge looking down with scorn upon the New.

There is scarcely a sleeping hamlet in any country without a Lovers' Lane or a Lovers' Walk. Did you ever see a Lovers' Lane complete without a bridge? Who has not stood upon an old bridge spanning a sylvan stream at twilight and mused and mused? Small wonder then that even the most prosaic of us stand in awe and reverence when gazing at a large and imposing bridge. And well we may for the average layman has no idea of the amount of nerve force, energy and brains that has been used in planning, fabricating and erecting the finished structure. Besides there are very few bridges of any magnitude that have been erected without exacting a toll on human lives, and very few in-