

# MODERN SERMONS

The truly modern preacher  
Discusses every fad  
That comes to public notice  
If it be good or bad  
He speaks with graceful accent  
On "Should Our Hair Be Dyed"  
Or "The Proper Way to Ride"  
"The Proper Way to Ride"  
He wails "The Curse of Checkers"  
Or "Why We Leave the Farm!"  
But none has used this topic,  
"Turn In a Fire Alarm."  
He talks on "Modern Writers,"  
Of "Can Our Votes Be Bought,"  
And sometimes he's just lovely  
On "Thoughtlessness of Thought."

Some day an innovation  
Will suddenly be sprung—  
Some conscientious preacher  
Will turn his silver tongue  
To words of hope and heaven,  
And grace his voice will fill  
And we'll get more religion  
And less of vaudeville.  
—Chicago Times-Herald.

## The Clutch of Circumstances.

BY E. C. WALTZ.  
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When the wind swept the boat across the waters, tossing it to and fro in a mocking and mad glee, Carter Starr had only the one thought—to save his companion and himself. The boatride was a mad escapade on the part of both—a daring defiance of the old quarrel between her uncle and adopted father, Belden Storms and his own family. But when the fates threw them together for a fortnight's sojourn at the seaside hotel, the two saw a humor in the situation that drove them into follies and pranks undreamed of before.

He knew that she was pretty and an heiress. He knew that his own fortunes depended upon the caprice of his grandfather. She admired him with a woman's admiration, because he was forbidden to her by every tradition of the Storms family.

Introduced by accident and among strangers, the two laughed into each other's eyes and defied fortune and tradition. They met afterwards by those strange accidents that seem arranged for such cases, in the early morning dip in the sea, in the nooks of the long porticos, at night during the pauses of the dance—and, on an island party over the bay, in the dance itself because it was safe enough. But this afternoon had been utterly without precedent. He had strolled away in his flannels for a smoke and to read while the hotel people napped after luncheon. And, in the shade of a great rock, he had chanced upon Eloise Storms awake, alert, saucy and magnetic. An hour later they went out for a sail over to Idle Rock. That was the story—only they had not counted on what might happen.

What did happen made them helpless, their boat disabled in a few moments, at the mercy of a wild sea. Then was the dreadful darkness of the tossing waters and a blinding rain. Eloise's red parasol went to and fro toward the shore like a gay buoy at the first gust. And after it went her pique cap and his own soft felt, mere links in a chain of evidence in after hours.

It was hard to say which was the paler face in the first realizations of the moment. But Eloise recovered herself with the courage of her race.

"We shall be carried out to sea,"

He looked at her with trembling lips



"We shall be carried to sea."

"I should have known better than to have brought you."

She smiled bitterly.

"And I should not have come. We are even. Can we get through the storm?"

He looked out to the infinite, omnipotent sea. His reckless moods fell from him. The wind blew the girl's brown hair about her shoulders. He could not see her face. He tried to keep a control of the rudder for a long time but gave it up as useless. Out, out into the darkness and tossing waters they went with the receding tide. Finally he crept along close to her and took her hands.

"You have been very brave—I think

I will tell you that the boat may break up—later. It is an old one and leaking horribly. Here is a rope. I will tie it about you and myself as well as I can and to the mast and deck piece. Believe me, I will do all I can to save you."

She put her hands on his shoulders and looked into his eyes.

"Forgive me."

"For what?"



They were both stern and choleric.

"Folly. I knew better than to dare Fate so."

"So did I. You must forgive me a man should be wise."

"And a woman discreet. What would my uncle and aunt say now?"

He was knotting the rope about her.

"We may never know. Now we cannot be separated. If one drowns, the other will. It is just, is it not? And it makes chances."

"I would not have it any other way. Who wants to go into the Unknown alone?"

He rose up suddenly.

"Eloise, the worst is coming. Give me your hand, no, hold to me. See!"

She looked seaward and saw that which made her shriek and cling to him.

Two hours later they lay somewhere on the sand, still in a terrible darkness and the storm raging about them. That they were alive seemed a miracle. When consciousness returned to him the sea was washing their bodies. He had dragged her higher onto the sand and discovered that she was not dead. Now her head was pillowed on his shoulder and her face hidden on his breast.

"Where are we?"

"I do not know. We must wait for light. It may be an island—it may be the shore."

She laughed bitterly.

"It does not make much difference. I shall never go back."

"Why? O, I know, I know!"

"You do not know the Storms. I am forever disgraced in their eyes. I would rather be dead. I shall never go back. Get me away somewhere and let me disappear. I will work, anything, anything, rather than face my uncle."

Her voice was scornful and dreary enough. He smoothed her wind-roughened hair.

"Do not think that I do not know. I cannot see that my own case is very different. I, too, have offended against the unwritten laws. I also must bear my punishment."

"Which will be—"

"My grandfather never forgives."

"I know that well."

After a long silence during which the wind seemed somewhat less terrible, he said, in a low tone:

"But I will make it up to you."

"How can you?"

"I can at least save you from the worst."

"The worst," she shuddered.

"I can make you my wife."

"You? And I was to make such a great marriage?"

"So was I. Perhaps this is one. We can call it so."

She wrung her hands. "I cannot go back alone. I cannot. But nothing

could be worse than the return. I see no other way. Can you brave it?"

He smoothed her hair from her forehead.

"We know the world and we see the situation. We were saved together and are known to have been out on the sea by this time. I will take you back as my wife. That will be the only thing now—as I see."

"But marriage—marriage is a solemn, a sacred tie."

"So it is. We will try to do our duty. I think death has purified our souls tonight. So be comforted and we will see what the light brings us. It may solve the problem of what to do next."

In the faint gray dawn he awoke from a troubled sleep. They were on a long sandy beach. Clear across the bay were the buildings of the great hotel. Beyond and above them was a small village and the cross of a tiny stone church showed over the trees.

"The way is found," he said, calmly, "come, we will go yonder."

The news of their rescue went by telephone to the great hotel and the whole house, excited by their disappearance and survival, waited on the piazzas and at the wharf for their return on the coast steamer.

The people at the village had given them some clothing but they presented a strange appearance as they stepped on shore. At the gang-plank stood a white-haired old man and a red-faced middle-aged man. They were both stern, and choleric, their great relief finding vent in hot anger. The culprits came together. Carter Starr held his head high and his lips were as set as his grandfather's own. Eloise was wet and clung to his arm. There was a loud huzzahing of the passengers and a dash forward to shake hands.

"Wait," he cried, "and I'll give you something to halloo for. Miss Storms and myself have been very near Death and have come back as we were saved, together. We were married this morning at St. Stephen's across the bay."

The old man's eyes at once met those of the red-faced man's in a look of intense relief. He caught his grandson's arm.

"And you did right, you scamp!" he roared out. "You are always a gentleman."

And Eloise felt her uncle's wet cheek against her own.

"The proper thing," he sobbed, "the proper thing—and, under the circumstances, the only thing."

## FIND WATER IN THE DESERT.

Pleasant Flow Is Struck in Mojave Desert by Prospector.

The Mojave desert, located in the southeastern portion of the state, has long been regarded as dangerous to life and valueless for any purpose, says the San Francisco Argonaut. True, it was known that the arid land could be rendered fruitful by means of irrigation, but there was no water there and none could be obtained without a heavy expenditure. The only plan proposed that promised relief was the construction of immense reservoirs in the mountains to retain the storm water for a long distance during the summer. This meant a heavy initial outlay and neither the state government nor the federal government has as yet expressed a willingness to incur it. Life on the desert when not positively dangerous, is crowded with hardships, but hardships have no deterrent effect upon the searchers for gold, and lately the waste places of the desert have been invaded by an army of prospectors for oil. The theory upon which they proceeded was that the Kern river oil belt extends through the Mojave desert. Whether or not there is any virtue in this theory, the facts so far developed have not justified it. No oil has been found, but water in considerable quantities has been struck and at the present time this is more valuable than the oil would have been. Artesian water, if a sufficient quantity can be found, is much better than the retained and ditched storm water would have been, since there is less expense for handling and less loss from evaporation. Three wells have been developed already. The third struck the water at a depth of 185 feet, which is much more shallow than would be required for an oil well. All of them are said to be "gushers," and the latest flows 215 miner's inches. If the water belt should prove to be permanent and extensive a rush to this region and something very like a land boom may be looked for.

## The Kaiser's Church-Building Fad.

The Kaiser of Germany has many hobbies; the Kaiserin only one, the building of churches, says the New York Times. As, however, she is constantly indulging her taste for ecclesiastical construction, the matter is, financially at least, of some importance to those who pay for her piety. There is, therefore, a certain good-natured dissatisfaction with her extravagance in this line. Taxpayers comfort themselves with the thought that she might spend their money in less praiseworthy objects. The feeling on the subject was recently given expression to in a comical manner at the unveiling of one of the groups of the statues with which the emperor has decorated the alley in the Tiergarten in Berlin, known as the "Siegerallee." At the close of the ceremony came the national hymn, "Hell Dir im Siegerkranz," whereat every one, of course, uncovered. Among the number was a totally bald man, seeing whom one of the street urchins present called out: "Hey, there's another vacant spot for the Kaiserin to build a church on!"

# AMERICAN BUILT BRIDGE IN BURMAH.

A steamship recently arrived at New York with a little group of men browned to a copper color by exposure to the tropical sun. As they reached the dock a number of people waiting to meet them gave each a hearty handshake and extended congratulations. In the engineering world this group will be long remembered as the men who put up the greatest railroad bridge in the world in a country none of them had ever seen, amid trials and troubles which might be expected to discourage anyone but a Yankee engineer.

Two or three years ago the surveyors of a railroad line in Burmah came

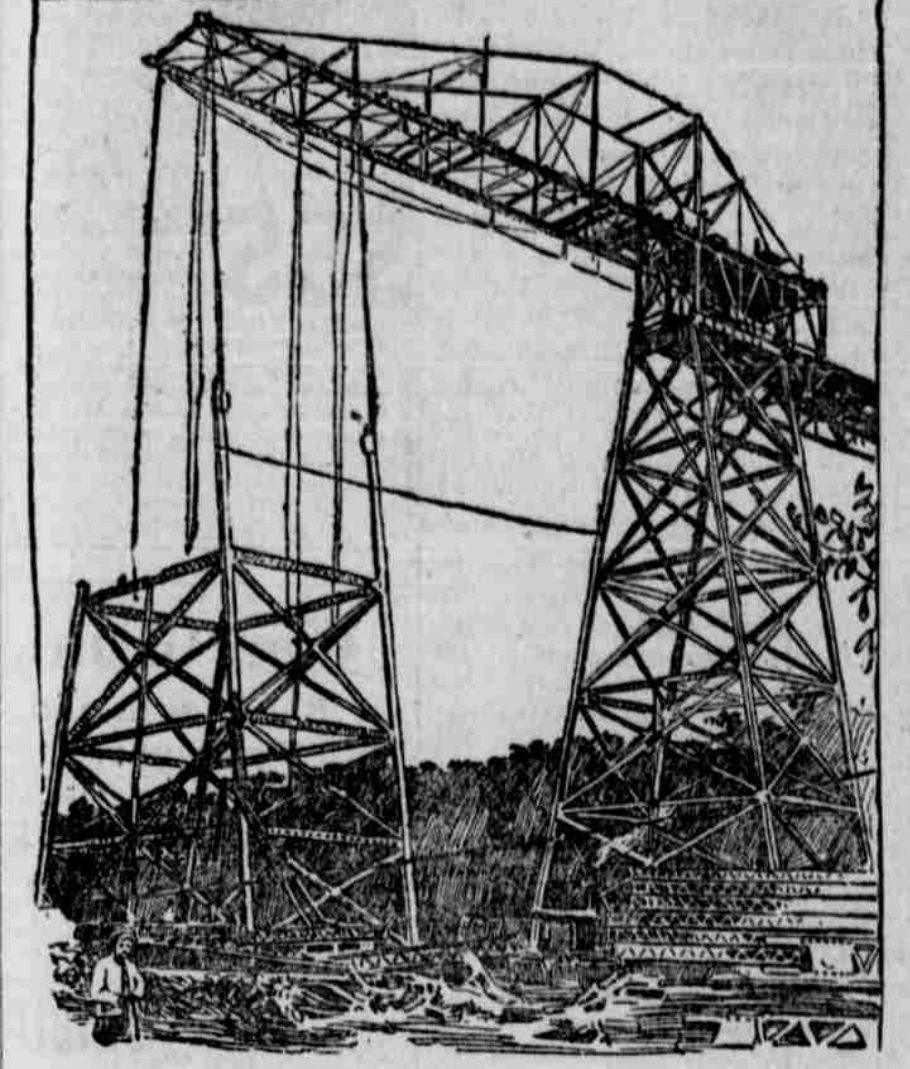
As soon as the cablegram came from the Burmah railway company accepting the American bid a special force of workmen was selected to turn out the material as rapidly as possible, and the bridge department worked day and night.

The work, particularly in its initial stages, was performed amidst various perils. In the depths of the gorge, matted with underbrush and scattered with huge rocks, lurked the deadly snakes of India. Some of the coolies were bitten and died. Poisonous vegetation also affected the men, and vapors arising from the depths of the ravine bred low fever in American bones.

which formed its lower portion were 219 feet in length, and from its top to the railroad track was 40 feet. To keep this immense weight from toppling over, a counter-weight of seventy-five tons was loaded upon the rear portion, which was mounted on wheeled trucks so that it could be rolled along as the bridge was erected.

The little band of thirty-five Americans put the mammoth bridge together from eight months after the work was commenced. The bridge is so strongly built that it will support a train of loaded freight cars reaching its entire length, in addition to four locomotives weighing fifty-four tons each. Owing to its great height, it must be strongly braced to withstand the force of the gales which sweep down the valley at a velocity of sixty or seventy miles an hour. The engineers had to calculate upon these and other delicate points, but tests made after completion show that they calculated to a nicety. It was expected in building the bridge to have the aid of compressed air in boring holes through the steel and fastening the rivets, but when the 500 natives who were employed as laborers heard the hissing and noted the effect of the unseen force, they believed it to be something supernatural and not one of them could be induced to touch the compressed air tools. As a result, all of the bolts and rivets, nearly two hundred thousand, were fastened in the old-fashioned way by hand hammers. This delayed the work about one month.

The work was done under the supervision of J. C. Turk of New York, an engineer for the Pennsylvania Steel company, under the general direction of Mr. J. V. W. Reynolds, general superintendent of the bridge department, who prepared the drawings for the structure. The bridge cost \$700,000, or \$310 a foot. Of the little band of Americans who went half way around the world to do this work, every man came back alive and hearty, but with the memory of one of the most trying tasks ever completed by Yankee pluck and ingenuity.



BUILDING A 200-FOOT COLUMN POINT.

to a hole in the ground which was so deep that it seemed as if a balloon would be the only way to cross it. This was the Gokteik gorge. To go around it would require twenty or thirty miles more of track, and the question arose whether it could be spanned by a bridge. The general officials of the company thought it could if the right men could be found to undertake the work. Several American firms were invited to put in bids, and one of them, the Pennsylvania Steel company, secured the job. It was a case of hurry from start to finish, for the work must be done within a year from the time the contract was let. The steel for the towers, girders and other work had to be turned out of the works, shipped to New York, loaded on board vessels, carried to Rangoon, loaded on cars and then transported 450 miles to this hole in the ground. Special machinery had to be built to put the bridge together and to raise the different pieces and hold them in position. In all, about 5,000 tons of metal alone were required for the work, the bridge itself taking 4,852 tons alone.

From one side of the valley to the other was nearly half a mile. For two-thirds of this distance the railroad track had to be laid at heights ranging from 100 to 250 feet above the ground.



THE GIANT TRAVELER.

Then came a drop of 320 feet to the top of a bridge nature had thrown across one of the mountain rivers of Southern Asia. Upon this natural bridge, just wide enough to form a safe support, heavy steel towers were riveted together to such a height that the men working upon them at the top looked like insects to the observer from below.

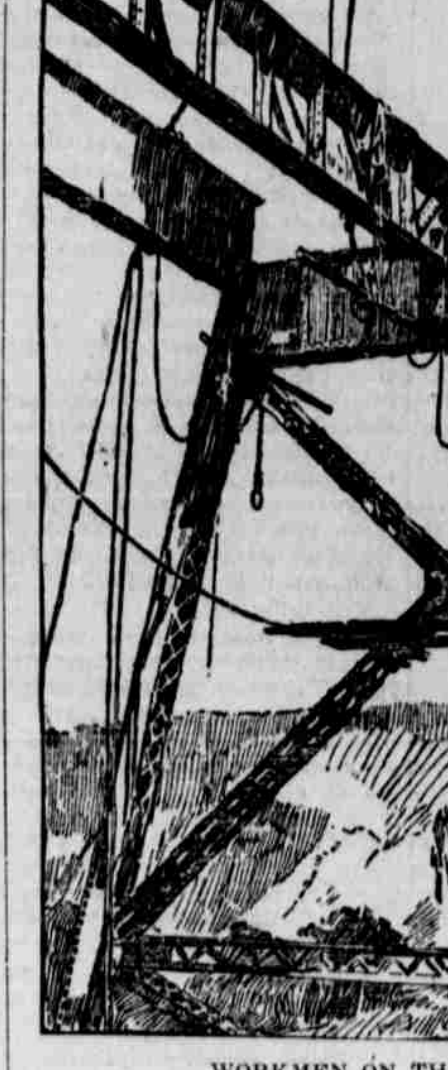
## PALMS FOR ARID PLAINS.

Trees From the Nile May Solve the Waste Lands Problem.

The department of agriculture seems to entertain the belief that the date palm may solve the problem of what to do with the arid and alkali lands of Arizona, California and other western states. Experiments have been made in the past by the department and experiment stations, but renewed interest is being taken by the section of plant introduction of the department of agriculture, and Professor D. G.

There were beasts of prey, too, but although they were seen and heard prowling about the camp at night the bridge builders suffered nothing from their depredations except the loss of some live stock. The incessant rains turned the ground into liquid mud, and the masons laying the stone foundations for the towers were held back ten weeks. At last these were completed, and then the "traveler" was put in position.

This was a mechanical giant, the largest by far ever used in bridge construction. It lifted and lowered the



WORKMEN ON THE HIGHEST PIER.

tons of steel and held them in its grip while the men fastened them into place. Although in the photographs of the work the traveler looks to be only 20 or 30 feet in length and to weigh perhaps four or five tons, it extended from its support on the end of the railroad track a distance of 165 feet over the gorge and contained ninety tons of metal alone. The beams or trusses

## Living Stones of South Sea.

The visitor to the Falkland Islands sees a number of what appear to be weather-beaten, moss-covered boulders of various sizes scattered here and there. On attempting to turn one over he is surprised to find that it is anchored to the ground by roots of great strength. These are not boulders, they are trees! No other place in the world can show such a peculiarity of "forest" growth. The Falkland Islands are exposed to a strong polar wind, which renders it impossible for trees to grow in the proper form; nature has consequently adapted herself to the prevailing conditions and produced this strange form of plant life. These "living stones," as they are called, are quite devoid of "grain" and it is next

## A Thickly Populated Parish.

Islington is the most thickly populated parish in England, having 112 persons to the acre. Bolton comes next.

## Blue blood is one of the things that "runs in the family?"

It is impossible to cut them up and utilize them for fuel.—New York Press.

## Blue blood is one of the things that "runs in the family?"

partment believes, to raise all the dates needed in this country. The date palm, although grown profitably only in arid and semi-arid regions, is not in the proper sense of the word a desert plant. It requires a fairly abundant, and, above all, a constant supply of water at the roots, and at the same time it delights in a perfectly dry and very hot climate. The date palm is able to stand much more cold than an orange tree, but not so much as a peach tree.

## A useless life is but a living death.