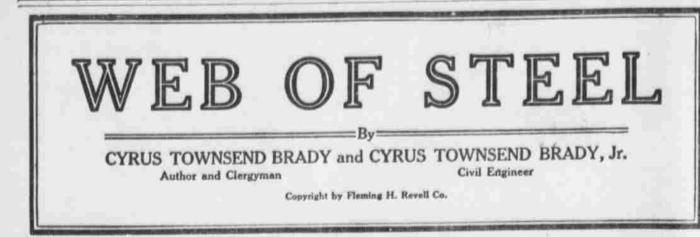
THE SEMI-WEEKLY TRIBUNE, NORTH PLATTE, NEBRASKA.



TRY AS HE WILL TO CONCEAL HIS EXPERT KNOWLEDGE OF ENGINEERING, MEADE FAILS AND PROMOTION COMES TO HIM RAPIDLY AT THE DAM

Following the collapse of a great bridge which his father, a noted engineer, had planned, and the old man's sudden death from disgrace and shock, Bertram Meade takes the blame for the disaster which cost many lives and disappears from his home in New York. He goes to the Southwest, gets a job under the name of Roberts on an irrigation dam project and makes good. Meanwhile Helen Illingworth, Meade's sweetheart, and Rodney, an old friend, are quietly working to clear the young man's name and to learn his whereabouts. They are particularly anxious to get possession of a letter written by the elder Mende to assume responsibility for the accident. This paper is secretly held by Shurtliff, who had been the old man's devoted private secretary for many years.

CHAPTER XII-Continued.

Meade, so suddenly reduced to the ranks, would have chafed against the

portant work with zeal and care. It

It was not because Meade was un-

smoking and laughing, exchanging ex-

himself. What he wanted above ev-

The dam itself was, perhaps, an

earth with a clay core extending from

side to side at the narrowest part of

the valley. When completed it would

be 125 feet high above the old river

bed, with a roadway 20 feet broad on

top of it. Below the slam and on the

low ground between the mess and

Baldwin's knob the camp, with its gal-

halls, kitchens and officers' quarters,

had been erected. The configuration

of the ground was such that, although

it was unusual to put them there, con-

ventence had rendered it desirable in

It was intended to complete the dam

this case.

fully

vanized iron shops, bunkhouses, dining

ney, leaning back in his chair and have resented the humble duties with ley below it. staring at her through his glasses. "If | which he was charged. But Meade we can only make him speak- But was happy to be following, even in this extremely modest way, the profession

where is he?" "Working for my father."

"What do you mean?"

the first, and as there was an opening most efficient of the junior engineering for a private confidential man, who un- force on the dam. derstood engineering-a vacancy made by the promotion of my father's pri. social that he kept to himself-not at vate secretary-I prevailed upon him aft. From his own galvanized-iron ther hates the name of Meade, but he the men grouped around the big campworships efficiency and he knows that fires, for the nights were growing chill, Shurtliff is the very incarnation of the particular kind of ability that he de- periences and telling stories. Nothing wires, so he is with my father constantly and I have him always under have joined in, and he could have told he goes along."

"What are you going to do?" "Win his confidence, his affection if I can, appeal to him, and-"

"By Jove," said Rodney, "I believe you can do it. You can't drive that old man."

"I know it," said the woman. "You haven't told him that you

thought it was his fault?" "No.'

"I couldn't do anything with a man In honor again means to you. You can to whom he had been kind on occasion.

been only partially excavated. Now, earth dam may seem a temporary exoverflow an earth dam it would not last had as yet been done on the dike. longer than it takes to describe its utter giving way. A flood would sweep it out of the way at once.

The device whereby possible floods are controlled and such dangers avert- and left his instrument. Vandeventer ed, consists of a broad channel at one called Meade before him. side of the dam, and at such a distance below its crest that if, through any mischance or natural happening, such as the failure of the sluice gates, excessive rains, cloudbursts, or floods, the height of the water is increased until it promises to overflow the dam, this opening will carry off the surplus harmlessly. An earth dam without a spillway would presage almost certain "I believe you are right," said Rod- position of subordination and would destruction to all who lived in the val-

In the case of the Picket Wire dam, the spillway had to be cut and, in part, blasted out of the mountain side-that that he loved. And he did his unim- is, through the spur of the mesa, which reached down from its high wall "I mean that I suspected him from is not much to say, but he was the towards the narrows. There had been a series of blunders and mishaps, which included the explosion of a shipment of dynamite on the railroad, with very disastrous consequences to accompanying rock crushers and mixers, and to give the position to Shurtliff. Fa- quarters he used to stare longingly at other machinery. The spillway hid not been completed. Its opening should have been about twelve feet below the level of the dam. Vandeventer was not responsible, of course. The chief englwould have pleased him better than to neer had fumed and protested, but had been directed by headquarters to go my eye. When we go away in the car, stories and related experiences that ahead with the other work and tackle would have been unique even in that the spillway later. There was, indeed, gay crowd of young adventurers. But little reason to hold up the building of he did not dare. He feared to betray that particular dam because of the

noncompletion of the spillway. erything was to preserve his incognito. That was a country, so the most de-It would be fatal to his chances of ever voted inhabitants freely admitted, in working up to anything worth while which it was always safe to bet that

if they found out who he was. it would not rain, no matter how And he had a tremendous pride to threatening might be the appearance sustain him. They respected him now. of the sky; for in ninety-nine times out As a matter of fact, they put his with- of a hundred the negative would win drawal of himself down to vagarles of the bet. Said inhabitants did not say temperament or causes they could not the hundredth time might compensate like Shurtliff. You can. You can win imagine, and they grew rather to like for all the other failures. The weather 1t. his devotion, you can let him see how him even as they left him alone. And was like the little girl with the promuch the reinstatement of Bert Meade a few of the men of the humbler sort verbial curl-when it did rain there was no doubt in anybody's mind as to and helpful, were stoutly devoted to the fact. Sometimes the fountains of the great deep, which, in Holy Scrip-

holiday to go out and inspect the hogback and ascertain its elevation with relation to the dam. Of course the ention works had done that, but he wantwhere the 'distance between what of the dam, might be called the edge of the valley and the head of the ravine was narrowit that it measured not over twenty

the dam. When he returned to the office, he found on examining the construction planned to run along the hogback so to those ignorant of engineering. an that the top level should be higher wager."

rounded earth crest was slightly lower

than that of the dam. This dike would pedient, although most of the great ir- be only a hundred and fifty feet long out here?" rigation dams of the world are of that and a few feet high, and could be built character; and everybody knows that in a few days' time. Work on the main if the water should rise high enough to dam being more important, nothing down and out and wants to begin again, and can't do anything but this.

> the end of the fall and in a rather unusual way. One of the transit men, a young engineer, got a better job

The Former and the Latter Rain. "Roberts," he said, "there's a va-The work on the dam was progresscancy for a transit man. You've done ing splendidly. Vandeventer, driving such good work so far and shown such his men hard, shared in all their furifamiliarity with fieldwork, that I'd ous efforts. He was not only their give it to you if I had any idea that leader, but their inspiration. He had you knew anything about handling insurrounded himself with a body of struments." able assistants, and his teamsters and

"I think I may be trusted with one, workmen had been culled until they sir." answered Meade, his eyes brighthad become a small army of picked men of which to be proud. ening

"Yes, perhaps; but I have watched Among all these Meade stood very you in odd hours. The young men high. In the four months he had been around here are constantly practicing with Vandeventer he had shown such with the transits. I've never seen you a grasp of things, such an ability to put a hand to one. How about it?" handle men, in one or two instances

"I'm not exactly a youngster, Mr. when, with intention to try him, the Vandeventer," returned Meade, "and resident engineer had given him I really didn't think, it necessary to practice, but if you trust me with one I belleve I can manage it."

Old Vandeventer leaned back in his chair in the office and looked carelessly away from Meade to all appearances. He clasped his hands back of his head and seemed lost in thought. Suddenly he began humming a little scrap of verse about another college which Cambridge men sing with zest:

I'm a physical wreck, From the grand old Tech', But a h- of an engineer!

He stopped abruptly, whirled about in his swingchair, and shot a quick glance at Meade. It was a trap. And as he sprang it Vandeventer surprised the ghost of a smile, repressed quickly but there, on Meade's lips. The chief engineer was satisfied. Before this, little things had betrayed a fellow alumnus, or at least a fellow student of the old Lawrence Scientific school. Vandeventer was pleased at his adroitness. He did not, however, refer to

"There's a new transit in that box on the floor there," he said, resuming 110 his indifferent manner. "Tve had the

for a month and a half yet. That "Good; the instrument is yours." That was the first step and the next would give him ample time to comstep came very shortly after, when, plete the dam and the spillway. This gineers who planned the great irriga- having further demonstrated his ca- year, however, there had been some pacity in other ways, Meade was giv- very unusual rains during the fall and ed to do it for himself. At one place, en charge of the work on the east end, the water back of the dam was now 98 feet deep, which made it 22 feet below "I don't care who he is," said Van- the level to which the dam had risen

"Oh, it's the old story, I suppose;

CHAPTER XIV.

deventer to his chief subordinate, "he and 20 feet below the spillway. This est-indeed, he estimated after pacing knows what he's about, and if you was much more water than anyone watch him you'll see. He's keen on had dreamed would be in the reserfeet across-he discovered that the handling men. The other section fore- voir at that time, and was perhaps more than should have been allowed. men will be hard put to keep up with than the intended level of the top of him. He keeps watch on himself. He's Still there was a safety margin of got some secret he won't betray. He 22 feet, which Vandeventer was sure would be ample. The financial promodoesn't mingle with the crowd, but every once in a while something slips ters of the project were very anxious drawings that an earth dike was out. What he doesn't know about en- to have the reservoir full when the gineering nobody needs to know, I'll irrigating senson opened, and the en-

gineer's judgment had been influenced "How do you account for his being by their eagerness to get it working,

The broad sheet of water ran back into the valley for many miles. In he's come a cropper somewhere- fact, the dam had transformed the country into a beautiful lake. Sometimes it rained in the mountains when Meade had been promoted toward It's not our business, Stafford; he does it did not rain down in the valley, good work for us and we're satisfied." and there was a constant, if very small, rise in the level. Vandeventer personally carefully gauged the water every day. Naturally he had noted that it rose gradually, but as the dam rose proportionately more rapidly, he was not uneasy. Yet, as a good engineer, he was watchful and largely because of the unfinished spillway he urged the men to the very limit.

> The weatherwise from the town, who sometimes rode up to inspect the work, assured Vandeventer that It could not possibly rain before March. and the mere fact that so much water had fallen rendered it more improbable that any more would come down. But at three on the afternoon of January sixth it suddenly began to rain hard without warning and with no premonition on the part of anybody, It was not one of those terrible downpours known as cloudbursts, but it was an excessively hard, steady rain, The heavens over the range were black with clouds and so far as any. one at the dam could see, it was rain . ing from the crest of the mountains down. There were some anxious discussions in the dining room of the resident engineer and his American assistants.

At four o'clock it was decided to open the undersluice gate about halfway, but when this was done the vok ume of water it was capable of discharging was too small to help very much, and on opening it to its fullest extent the velocity of the water rushing through was so great that the river bed was rapidly scoured out. For fear of undermining the toe of the dam it was necessary partially to close the sluice once more.

The water was rising, first at the rate of three or four inches an hour, then half a foot, and finally nearly a foot. By six o'clock that night if had risen two feet. It was still raining hard at that hour, although not quite so furiously as it had been. If it did rain until morning at the presnt rate, there would still gin of safety of perhaps fourteen or fifteen feet at dawn. Although the situation required watchfulness and was somewhat alarming, it was not him in any emergency. He actually desperate. The men were advised to found himself consulting Meade on put in all the time in their bunks so as to be good and ready for the hard battle which might come in the morning and as they were all tired out with their day's work the little group soon broke up and each man went to his quarters. Vandeventer, however, could not sleep. The rain kept up steadily all night. The resident engineer finally got up and dressed himself, and protected by high rubber boots and a cowboy slicker and a sou'wester, left his quarters and went out to inspect the dam. He carried a lantern, of course, for it was pitch dark and, if possible, the rain dropping from the black sky made it more difficult to see. He was surprised when he got to the dam to see on the other side another lantern. Closing the slide of his own lantern to prevent observation, and being on familiar ground, he went straight toward the other side. The noise of the rain subdued any sound that he made, and he was able to come quite close to the other light without being noticed.



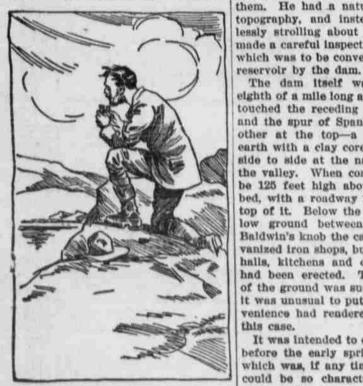
do it."

"Meanwhile you will help me, won't him. you?"

"In any way, in every way. Do you know where he has gone?

"I haven't the slightest idea. He might be in Africa, or South America, or out West, or up North. Do you see those flowers?"-she pointed to a great a man, so vigorous and buoyant a to be. bunch of American Beauty roses, which had been forced for her apparently, and which she had received on that very day-"Dards, you know, the Madison avenue florist, sends me a box of the art about which he did not know of magnificent blossoms-roses, violets, orchids, always different-every week. They speak to me of him."

"Have you ever tried to trace them?" "No. I know whence they come and that is all. We will hear from him some day, somewhere, somehow.



He Had a Natural Instinct for Topography.

Meanwhile we will work, work, work !' except when an occasional freshet had "And you will allow me to say bebeen allowed to pass the undersluice. fore I go that since I have had this It was known that the run-off of the conversation with you I do not see river in the rainy season of some years how even love for his father or his was so small as scarcely to fill the resfamily name would have led Meade to ervoir, and it had been decided to store do it."

"Don't say anything against him," said Helen Illingworth quickly, "He were deficient, the beginning of the next summer would find the reservoir was mad with anxiety, shame, regret. Whatever he did, I love him just the full and the new irrigation system could commence operations successwame."

CHAPTER XIII.

Working Up.

The autumn went by as a dream. Winter, warm and mild in that far suthern clime, was at hand before partially accounted for by the fact it carefully. On another occasion, havende realized it. An ordinary engi- that the spillway, which should have ing said nothing to anyone about his acer of half the ability of Bertram occupied their attention, had as yet excursion, he took advantage of a half- "Til do my best, sir."

The idleness of an aimless life did ture at least, extended overhead, would not appeal to him even in his off-duty be broken open and the violence of the periods. Doing nothing had no attracfall and the quantity of it, and suddention. He could not get relief that way. ness of it, would be such that the West-Even rambling alone about the hills erners would graphically call it a would not serve. So quick and active "cloudburst," which, indeed, it seemed spirit, so strong a body and mind were

Outside the rainy season cloudbursts not calculated for aimless wandering. were unheard of, and even in that sea-Meade was a very accomplished enson extremely rare. For the valley gineer indeed. There was no branch of the Picket Wire and in the plain beneath carefully tabulated reports of a little, although hydraulics and structhe rainfall for years had been considtural steel were the things that most ered by the engineers. They had choappealed to him. He got relief in the sen the right season for the building duality of his affections for these of the dam, but when its crest began branches of his profession. Neither one to rise above the designed level of the of them ever palled on him because he spillway the delay in opening the chandid not work monotonously at either of nel gave cause for some alarm. It is them. He had a natural instinct for not the probable or certain that is topography, and instead of purposefeared. An old version that, of "omne lessly strolling about the country, he ignotum pro magnifico"-it is only the made a careful inspection of the valley unknown of which men are afraid, or which was to be converted into a huge only the unknown to be feared ! Still there was nothing Vandeventer could

do but obey orders and go ahead. The eighth of a mile long at the bottom and danger, after all, was trifling. Another touched the receding hill on one side consequence of the waiting was that and the spur of Spanish mesa on the in his inability to work on the spillother at the top-a huge mound of way, he had more hands to devote to the dam and it rose the quicker.

> The shape of the country behind it was such that when the Picket Wire flowed with sufficient volume to fill it, a long lake going back through the valley, or canyon, and twisting among the hills for some miles would result. In other words, the dam would make a beautiful artificial sheet of water bordered on one side by a high range of instrument out quickly, accurately, hills, on the other by the dam, and on the third by the hills and the low hogback above Spanish mesa, which separated the Picket Wire valley from the Kicking Horse gorge up which the railroad ran.

before the early spring of next year, Buried in his own thoughts, comwhich was, if any time in the country could be so characterized, the rainy lessly his position, dreaming of the season. Of course, just as soon as the woman he loved, planning a new cadam had begun to rise, the flow of the reer, Mende yet explored every foot of Picket Wire below it had been stopped, the valley and ravine. He climbed to height the whole country clear up the valley to the main range was visible deep ravine of the Kicking Horse, and all the flow of the autumn and winter note the marvelous beauty and airiness to himself. so that even if the spring rainy season of the arch bridge for all it so solidly carried the heavy freight trains of the rallway.

He could see far up and around the

Vandeventer, like the lost Abbott of and treeless hogback, that ran from the International, was also a driver, the upper end of the stone island of who spared neither his men nor him- the mesa was equally visible to him. self. The work had proceeded with as- As it was the low tide of the new restonishing rapidity, although this was ervoir, he descended to it and studied

case opened, but I haven't taken it out. He Get it, and we'll go outside and see what you can do with it."

Now a transit, for all it is used in rough fieldwork, is one of the most expensive and delicate of instruments. It is capable of the most accurate adjustment, and if it is to be of any real use, the refinement of these adjustments must not be impaired in any degree by unskilled and reckless packing. The boxes in which the instruments are shipped are very carefully constructed in accordance with the principles which experience has shown to be necessary, and each one is especially fitted to the particular instrument to be contained therein. The box is a complicated thing and the transit cannot be taken out or replaced except in one way. With a knowledge of the combination, so to speak, it is comparatively simple to take a transit from the box; without that knowledge, which none but an expert transitman, or the packer himself can have, it is rather difficult without running a risk

of ruining the instrument. This command was another of Vandeventer's tests, therefore. Meade knew this as well as his superior. In spite of himself, he would have to betray his familiarity. Well, he had brought himself to the conclusion that he could not continue his work without very soon disclosing the fact that he had been an engineer. And in case of the inevitable, the sooner the better. So long as he had to betray himself, he would have all the advantages as well as the disadvantages. He unlocked the door of the box, slid the on the tripod. Vandeventer's eyes sparkled.

"Come outside," he said, leading the way to the side of the hill, "and set it and level it."

Beginners have been known to take ten minutes to get a transit set up, leveled and centered. It is good work seconds is very fast. In forty-five seconds Meade reported, "all ready, sir."

"Look here," said Vandeventer, "you can't pull any more bluff on me, Roberts; you're an engineer, all right."

"I know something about the practiguestions and what he would learn. But the engineer was a man.

into your antecedents. It's enough for of its designed depth. me if you do good work for me here."

Had Accompanied the Younger Man on One of His Rambles.

charge of some special work, that Vandeventer unconsciously looked to occasion.

He had accompanied the younger man on one of those rambles which he had hitherto taken alone. He had not broken down Meade's reserve, but he had won his admiration and regard. Vandeventer was not unknown in engineering circles. In earthwork he was by way of being an authority. His experience had been varied and extensive. Meade's reserve and reticence rather hurt the older engineer. He had invited confidence and had even given his affection. He intimated delicately that if the other were under a cloud Vandeventer might be in a position to help him.

It was fortunate for Meade's purpose of concealment, for his incognito, that most of his engineering work had been done abroad and that he had been out of touch with American engineering for practically the whole of his career. Vandeventer was a Harvard man, too, and that made it especially hard for Meade to keep from betraying himself. As a matter of fact, the younger man actually longed to make a clean breast c. it, but he could not quite bring himself to do it yet. That might come later.

Three months ought to see the com pletion of the dam and the long canal, which was to carry the stored water to the irrigation ditches below. Vandeventer was already making plans without a moment's hesitation, and for another big job, and he had derapidly unscrewed the head from the cided, in his own mind, that among the slide-board, and screwed it carefully subordinates whom he would take with him the newcomer should have the first chance. Vandeventer felt

proud and satisfied when he surveyed the work that had been accomplished muning with himself, considering cease- up there over the tack in that stake in the six months of labor. To be sure the delay in the completion of the

spillway disquieted him a little. The dam had reached the spillway level a fortnight before, and had now the top of Spanish mesa, and from its if it is done inside of a minute; thirty passed it. Indeed, on the fifth of January the dam builders were within five feet of the top; that is, the crest to him. He could look down into the He could have done it in less, but he of the dam was 120 feet above the was a little out of practice, he said level of the valley. They ad planned to run the spillway around the east-

ern end of the dam. The rock drills and dynamite which had been ordered had finally arrived in December, and

by putting as many as possible to crooked course of the Picket Wire. The cal side of it, sir," answered Meade, work on the spillway Vandeventer had big grass-covered, but otherwise bare turning a little pale and wondering succeeded in opening it for its entire other all evening. No one noticed it how far Vandeventer would press his width to an average depth of about seven feet below the intended top of the dam; that is, it was now about "Practical, yes, and theoretical too, two feet deeper than the actual crest Til be bound, but I don't seek to pry of the dam, but it still lacked five feet

> The rainy season, an inspection of the records had shown, was not due ers."

How young Roberts, the mysterious engineer, uses his talents and knowledge to good advantage is told in the next installment-he gets the opportunity to wipe out all disgrace, real or fancied.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Alexandria.

There are few cities that can look back to a past like that of Alexandria, and fewer still with such a past that can contrive to keep up with the times and look forward to the future. The relics of 25 dead centuries of Alexandrian history have to be looked for in the guide books. In the city itself they are covered up by the latest modern improvements. A few erudite Alexandrians may argue about the real nationality of Cleopatra, but most of them are talking about the price of cotton and the latest project for dredging the harbor.

Wanted Joy Distributed.

Marion was given a beautiful ring Christmas eve. She was overjoyed, but changed it from one finger to the that evening, but she kept it up the next morning. Her mother, fearing Marion would lose the ring, said: "Why don't you put your ring on one finger and keep it there, Marion?" "Well, I don't like to be mean. When

I keep it on one finger I pity the oth-