

WILLAMETTE RIVER BRIDGE AT PORTLAND.

MORE than sixteen years ago, Stephen Maybell, then a young and untutored bard of some native genius, who resided in East Portland, ventured the prediction, that, among the early achievements of the progressive spirit of enterprise, a bridge would be constructed across the Willamette river, at Portland. This theme he duly celebrated in verse, and it has passed into the permanent literature of the vaporous land of Webfoot. Once upon a time, when suddenly seized with the glow and fervor of poetic inspiration, Mr. Maybell dashed off a poem, many lines in length, in which the prediction was breathed (in fact, it was repeated at the close of each stanza) that the romantic Willamette would be spanned by a bridge, and that we should all "see it yet." The opening verse ran in soft, mellifluous numbers, as follows :

Behind the pines had sunk the sun,
And darkness hung o'er Oregon,
When on the banks o' Willamette
A youth was seen to set and set,
And set and sing unto the moon
A wild, yet sweet, pathetic tune—
"They're going to build, I feel it, yet,
A bridge across the Willamette."

What once only existed in the dreams of the young bard's imagination, and took the shape and form of impassioned song, has now become, after the lapse of years, a palpable reality. In all truth, the doggerel, which, by common courtesy, may be dignified by the appellation of "poetry," was indited in a serio-comic style, and reads much more like a satire than a sincere prediction; nevertheless, the poet has, thoughtlessly or otherwise, written himself down a genuine proph-

et. After encountering almost numberless impediments, and waging a long, expensive legal warfare, the enterprise and determination of a few men of means have overcome every obstacle, and the project of constructing a bridge is now, virtually, an accomplished fact.

As these lines are being penned, the bridge, while not completed and ready for actual public service, is rapidly approaching the finishing strokes. Four of the spans are already in position, the roadway and walks on each side of the structure have been laid, and the other parts are being pushed toward an early completion. What principally remains to be accomplished, is the putting together and placing in position of the huge draw. It is thought that ten days will be required to complete this work, after all the necessary materials have arrived. The greater part of the draw is being manufactured in the East, and when the sections reach this city it will be a comparatively small task to put the work together. The material is expected to arrive about the twentieth of February. By the first of March, or during the early part of the month, at the very latest, the Morrison street bridge will be completed and ready for travel. This is the present expectation of the company, should no unforeseen obstacle arise. It is confidently believed that the application for an injunction, now pending before the United States court, will not result in any serious interference with the operations.

Column upon column has been written on the subject of the bridge which is so soon to span the Willamette river,