

toward the sea. From Carthage toward the river we get into older creation as we go. The late deposits that mark the sandhills did not reach so far toward the interior, so the rocks of the Deep River are not covered by the sands. The Deep River country probably shows what we would find if we scraped away the sand and clay to the depth of many feet out in the Sandhill country.

After a little of the sandy land it is a change to get over into the rocky country, and as the Deep River territory is on the boundary it is not altogether sure until you get right down into the valley of the stream, just whether it is actually a rocky mountainous section, or still clay, sand and gravel. This doubt adds to the interest as the journey progresses, for it brings a succession of novelties. Old gold mines, talc deposits, shales, silica enough to suit all purposes, stones to throw at the dog that comes out to bark at you, and when you think of it that is one of the draw backs of the Sandhills, isn't it? Too many dogs for the number of stones you find to throw at them. All of Moore County has more or less gold, some of it possible, some of it mighty delusive. The county has produced a lot of gold in its day, and will produce more. Yet it is my guess that it will produce other things that will pay better for the effort. Over near the river are enormous deposits of talc, a mineral that is coming into more prominence every day, for it is a genius among minerals. It lacks grit. It is in demand by the women for putting on their faces, for the inner tube of the automobile tire to keep from chafing against the casing, by the papermakers to give weight to paper, and for countless other uses. Enough to meet the possibilities of consumption has never been mined yet. Fact is people do not know yet how much they might use, for it seems to find new uses every time the supply begins to catch up to the needs of the world. Nobody seems able to guess how much talc is over in the north corner of Moore County, and as enough seems to be there to indicate great developments no reason is apparent why anybody should undertake to guess. Somebody will open a big mine there some day and dig out the stuff and put it on the market in big quantities and sell it and run the business for years and may be generations, and that is far enough into the future for all purposes of a trip to Deep River. Down the river toward the Chatham County line talc mines are now in operation, and they are turning out a lot of the stuff. You will need some of it if you happen to go that far in your car.

Prosperity bridge is a pleasing place to strike. Down the long hill you wind, and almost without notice you break out into a valley, with an old-fashioned covered bridge in front of you, hanging high up above the river. Deep River is a real river, and it is set in the proper surroundings. It runs over a rocky bottom between rocky hills, and it is as riotous as a suffragette demonstration. It is pretty hard to separate the sublime from the utilitarian. Once, years ago, a tailors' picnic took a lot of the knights of the goose to Niagara Falls. One of the practical fellows of the bunch looked over the great cataract from Prospect Point overwhelmed with the spectacle. Another approached him and asked what he thought

of it. ¶ "Lord, what a place to sponge cloth," he ejaculated. ¶ I would like to have two or three lazy companions and two or three days to fool away in just following my toes and the opportunity to start there at the Prosperity bridge and drift around like a boy whithersoever the inclination led. First I would go under the roof of that old covered bridge, the kind we used to have in boyhood days, and watch the river run down below the high spans as it can be seen through the cracks. Then it would be in order to climb down the bluffs to some difficult point under the bridge and make a pretense of fishing. After that would tire it is possible a climb along the bank would suggest itself, for the bank is steep enough and rocky enough and bothersome enough to make any man want to prowl down along the stream a ways until he finds that he has no occasion in the world to do such a thing. Places there you can fall off the bluff probably fifty feet down into the drink if you happen to slip. Not that you want to fall, but you know you want to creep out to the edge of the bluff and see what it would look like to fall. What fool notions actuate us every once in a while. Or, we could cross the bridge and on the other side follow the wagon road. Or go down on the rocks and work our way out from one to another into points in the middle of the river, and then wonder if we are ever going to get back without slipping in.

Up the road are farms, and back over the hills and two or three miles up stream is a cotton mill, and a dam across the river. It is a dam worth looking at. You can walk out along the breast of it, built of big rocks hoisted into place with an engine and a derrick, almost broad enough on top to drive a wagon if there was any sense in driving a wagon in such a place, and a fine big pool two or three miles long above the dam, and rocky rapids below. On up the river are more dams, and down the river are still more. You begin to figure on what a place this would be to sponge cloth. You begin to forget that you are out here to dawdle, and you want to know what power that thing is developing, and what is the fall, and what is the water flow, and if this stream is like this much of the way. By and by you catch a glimpse of some boys drawing a net, and jimminetty, when they pull out a lot of fish, some as much as a foot and a half long, you want to get down and wade in the river with them and help drag the net. You feel the primitive savage joy of living. Broadway is a piker alongside of this thing, and the sacred codfish of the Boston State House is a delusion. ¶ You get back again to that water power. You look at the bluffs on the banks. High enough to build a dam as big, it seems to you under the spell of proximity, as the far-away dam at Assouar on the Nile. You get to figuring. Well, figure all you want to. It is out of your limit and out of mine. Possibly that stream has been pouring over those rocks for a million years. I have no account of when it was turned loose there but it has furnished enough power since it commenced to run down this rocky valley to turn more wheels than would make the cloth for all the people now alive. And in doing that it

(Concluded on page eight)



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