

falls, a dozen wooden ones do the same thing. One very decided advantage which an iron bridge has over a wooden one, is that we can make sure of good iron in the beginning, and that we can also be sure that it does not decay ; while, however good our timber may be in the beginning, we never can be entirely sure of its condition afterwards. There are wooden bridges now standing in this country, all the way from sixty to eighty years old, which are apparently as good as ever ; while there are others, not ten years old, which are so rotten as to be unfit for use. It will not do to assume, that, because no defects are very evident in a wooden bridge, therefore it has none. When a wooden bridge, originally made of only fair material, has been in use under railroad trains for twenty-five or