

CHAPTER XXI.

PROGRESS MADE, 1858.

The winter scaffold between the south abutment and No. 24 pier being completed in the early part of January, tube No. 25 was commenced, and finished the day previous to the spring shove. This scaffold was the first wooden structure exposed to the full force of the ice and stood the test remarkably well.

A different system for constructing the coffer dams was resolved on, from the circumstance of so much of the summer being over before they were in readiness for the masonry, as well as the great strength of the current, in the centre of the river, where they were now required. Mr. Hodges determined on sinking the cribs forming the upper ends of the dams, through the ice, and building them sufficiently high to be above summer water in spring. Mr. Chaffey was accordingly instructed to proceed with those for piers 14, 15 and 16, and Mr. John O. Hodges, to whom the contract had been given, with the ones for piers 12 and 13, on each side of the main channel. The two gentlemen at once commenced building the cribs in the strongest possible manner, and sinking them in place. They were generally 92 feet in length by 30 feet in width, with an average height of 18 feet. Six feet of the upper angle were taken off with a slope of 1 to 1, and planked over to furnish an ice-breaker. Each crib had about 9 feet in depth of field stones, with numerous hard-wood piles shod with iron driven down between the cross ties into the bed of the river. The upper surface of those cribs would be about 15 feet under the level of the water in the spring