THE CONNECTICUT RIVER BRIDGE.

Among the most prosperous railroads in the country is the Hartford and New Haven, running from the latter place to Springfield, and forming one of the connecting links of the oldest and most prosperous through railroad route between Boston and New York. It has a double track throughout, with the exception of a short distance near the station at Hartford and across the Connecticut River Bridge, and has an immense passenger and freight traffic. It is absolutely necessary that the road should be kept in the best repair, and have all its structures as permanent as possible.

Our American railroads have too often been hastily constructed to get them in running order at the earliest moment, at the lowest cost; trusting to future earnings to complete the road in a permanent manner.

Wooden bridges have often been erected at important points, where their destruction by fire has delayed the business of the road for weeks until they could at a great expense be replaced.

They are, aside from the danger of accident by fire, but temporary constructions. From railroad statistics it is shown as an actual fact that in the early days of railroads wooden bridges lasted on an average but ten years. They were at that time generally made too light to bear the loads that were put upon them. Latterly the average length of the life of a wooden bridge has been about twelve years.

Fully impressed with the importance of keeping up the traffic of the road without interruption, the Directors of the Hartford and New Haven road decided, as the first of a series of improvements, to replace the old wooden bridge at Warehouse Point by a structure of iron.