

OPENING OF THE CORK AND BANDON RAILWAY.

IN our Journal for Sept. 27, 1845, we illustrated the commencement of this line of railway, by the Earl of Bandon formally cutting the first turf; and we have now much pleasure, by aid of our correspondent at Cork, in recording the opening of the line from end to end.

Few railways have had so hard a struggle for existence as this Bandon line; yet, notwithstanding the period of the famine, the total prostration of the speculative energies of the country, and the disagreements between the contractors and the company, the directors have every cause to congratulate themselves upon the way in which they have executed the arduous trust reposed in them, their whole aim and ambition having been from the commencement to encourage local industry, at the same time that they were laying a line of railway surpassed by few in the country. The works were of no ordinary description, having to be made along the face of the highest range of hills in the district; thereby entailing the necessity of one continued series of cuttings, embankments, tunnels, and viaducts, the nature of which will be well understood from the accompanying Sketch of the Chetwynd Viaduct, which rises from the level of the Bandon road, over which it passes, to within a few feet of the same elevation as the Great Tubular Bridge; and shows the masterly manner in which Mr. Nixon as engineer, and Messrs. Fox and Henderson as contractors, have executed their work. This vast structure, considered the largest of its kind in Ireland, measures 500 feet from abutment to abutment, and is about 100 feet above the level of the valley; it is divided into four spans of 100 feet each by two abutments and three massive outline stone piers, 70 feet high; the ornamental pilasters and bold projecting cornices giving the whole structure an appearance of great strength and solidity. The upper portion is composed of wrought and cast-iron, and weighs about 1000 tons. Each span consists of four cast-iron arched ribs, three feet in depth, 110 feet span, with a rise of 20 feet in the centre, and running right across from pier to pier. They are retained in their places by cast-iron braces and wrought iron tie-rods, and connected on the top by the roadway formed of cast iron covering plates, flanged and bolted together; the whole finished by a neatly-cast handrail and projecting cornice.

The works throughout the line are now in such a state of forwardness as to have elicited the warmest praise from the Government inspector, who went over the line on Wednesday fortnight, and declared it fit for public traffic.

On Saturday week the deferred excursion to the shareholders, the directors, and their friends took place; and, were the loudly-expressed opinions of those favoured with an invitation to be taken as a guarantee for the welfare of the company, little doubt can be left of its ultimate success. There are two classes of people to whom this railway must be a great boon: these are the widely spread people of the western district of the country whose business or pleasure may lead them into the city, and the tourist who seeks to enjoy the beauties of the west: to the latter it opens up a new district of country; whilst it at once takes them from a road heretofore looked on as one of the most unattractive, leading for some fifteen or sixteen miles out of the city. The excursion was made in and out in capital style, and much to the enjoyment of those who partook of it. The journey outwards; owing to the directors' wish to allow their friends to see the country, occupied about three hours; but home the speed was at the rate of over forty miles per hour.

We have to express our thanks to Mr. Ronayne, one of the resident engineers, for his obliging attention to our Artist.

[Taken from *Illustrated London News*, Vol. XIX, 1851, p.733]