

THE opening of the new bridge over the river Lee, connecting the northern quarter of Cork with the central part of that city, took place on St. Patrick's Day, the 17th of March. There was no great ceremony on this occasion; but at nine o'clock in the morning the Mayor, accompanied by the civic officers, removed the board fixed at one end of the bridge, then walked over it, and declared it open for traffic. We have engraved a sketch of the new bridge, which is of handsome proportions, and an ornament to the pleasant city in which it is built. The whole work was designed and superintended by Sir John Benson; Mr. Barry McMullen has the credit of its execution. The contractors for the iron arch were Messrs. Rankin and Co., of Liverpool. Its span is 106 ft., clearing the width of the river. The road, which is nearly level, its incline being only 1 in 20, is carried over strong iron plates, resting upon eight cast-iron ribs, which are embedded in solid masonry, the stones of the abutments being 8 ft. long. The foundations, at one end, are upon the rock, and, at the other end, composed of blocks of stone, 6 ft. by 4 ft., laid on a bed of cement concrete 2 ft. thick. The carriage-way is 24 ft. wide, and there is a footpath, 8 ft. wide, on each side, flagged with granite. The bridge is ornamented with mouldings upon its, external ribs, which define the outline of the arch. The railings, too, springing from moulded and fluted cornices, are of an ornamental design. After passing the bridge they extend, with graceful curves, 12 ft. across the quays on each side, and terminate in stone posts, surmounted with lamps, and inscribed with the date of the erection of the bridge. In the centre of the balustrade are two other ornamental lamp-posts. The arch itself is further decorated with medallions in the cast-iron flanges set in the spandrils at each end. The medallions looking westward contain busts, in relief, of the Queen and Prince Albert; while those looking westward display similar busts of Daniel O'Connell and the poet Moore.

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