

THE IRISH BUILDER.

[OCT. 1, 1869.

NEW DOCKS AT QUEENSTOWN.

THE ceremony of laying the foundation-stone of these docks took place on Wednesday last. The following is a correct description of what they will be when completed :—The entire area of the new works, measured within the outer limits of the establishment, will be 56 acres, or nearly three times the area of Haulbowline, from which it will be separated by a camber, running north and south, and spanned at two points by bridges. The general outline of the yard will be nearly a right angle parallelogram, its longest sides running north and south. The embankment which will enclose the whole will have an average depth of 40 ft., and breadth of 100 ft. The outer face of the embankment will be sea-paved, sloping outwards from the top of the foundation. The embankment will, of course, vary in width at some places, and its upper edges will be cooped with cut limestone. At what may be described as the north-west angle of the area the embankment is penetrated by an entrance 82 ft. wide, closed with a double floating caisson. The depth over the sill will be 32 ft. 8 in. at high water ordinary spring tides. This entrance opens into a magnificent rectangular basin, having an area of 12 acres. The length of the basin will be 900 ft., by 600 ft. wide; its greatest depth at low water ordinary spring tides, 25 ft.; and at high water ordinary spring tides, 37 ft. The embankment enclosing it will be faced with cut limestone on the inner side. This basin will be one of the largest, if not the largest, in the world. It is actually more extensive than the great basin at Portsmouth. From the southern end of the basin two entrances will be open into the dry docks, each of which will be 426 ft. long, the floor 42 ft. 6 in. wide, and the width at the level of the coping stones 108 ft.—the sides of the dock extending outwards and upwards, and built in the usual manner with altars. At present only one of these docks, the western one, will be executed. The depth over the sill of each will be 3 ft. 8 in. at high water ordinary spring tides. The embankment on the western side of the basin will be 300 ft. wide, and between the western edge of the western dock and the camber, 450 ft. There will be a width of embankment between the two docks of nearly 200 ft., and the southern end of each will be 160 ft. from the outer edge of the embankment. Of the total area of proposed work (56 acres) 36 acres have been executed. This includes the entire of the western and northern sides, the greater part of the southern, and portion of the eastern. The principal work now actually in progress is the completion of the embankment walls, for which purpose enormous coffer dams have been constructed, furnished with powerful pumping engines. Upon the embankment at west of basin will be erected extensive stores, and at the wider part of the embankment near the western dock a factory, the present design of which is 400 ft. long by 200 ft. wide. This part of the establishment will be devoted to the repair of ironclad ships and other such works. There will be, within the area of the embankment, 20,000 feet of wharfage accommodation, with all the requisite appliances of powerful cranes, &c. The works have been progressing in a manner to elicit the hearty commendation of the Lords of the admiralty on the occasion of the present visit. The only engineering difficulty which has yet presented itself is, that in excavating beneath the mud, the rock has been found fissured in some places, from which water rises. A powerful steam pump is at present employed in checking this source of inconvenience, which is not likely at any time to prove so serious a difficulty that it may not be coped with success

fully by pumping. This work will be executed by a great engine, for which a house 100 ft. by 60 ft. is being erected between the sites of the stores and the factory. The same engine will drive all the machinery of the factory. The works have been erected under the constant supervision of Mr. Wm. Joyce, Clerk of the Works, subject to Colonel Clark's direction and occasional inspection. It only remains to be stated on this part of the subject that vast quantities of material prepared and stacked, including 133,000 cubic feet of limestone cut and dressed for the facing and coping of the embankments. The present rate of expenditure in wages at the works is about £125 per week.

The "foundation-stone," laid on Wednesday, is a limestone block, weighing six tons, containing 79 cubic feet, 12 ft. in length, 4 ft. wide, and 1 ft. 8 in. deep. It bore the following inscription—

“This stone was laid by
Earl Spencer, K.G.,
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,
September 29th,
1869.”

In a cavity beneath the stone was placed a leaden box containing a plan of the works, and a parchment bearing the following inscription

"EXTENSION OF THE NAVAL YARD AT
HAULBOWLINE".

The construction of dry docks having been recommended by Committee of the Imperial Parliament, in the 28th year of the reign of her most gracious majesty Queen Victoria, and the naval administration of Edward, twelfth Duke of Somerset, it was commenced in 1866: and those of Sir John Pakington, Henry Corry, and Hugh Culling Eardley Childers, First Lords of the Admiralty, continued those works, when, on the 29th September, 1869, this stone was set by John, fifth Earl Spencer, K.G., Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in the presence of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, the Right Worshipful the Mayor and Corporation of the city of Cork, the county and city Members, the Flag Officers and Captains of the Channel Squadron, &c."

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