

took charge of the Gloucester and Berkeley Canal, prior to its completion, in 1827, under the late Mr. Telford, and continued to be the resident Engineer of that work till within one year of his death, which occurred on the 20th October, 1863. For a large portion of his professional life he was, therefore, engaged on that navigation, as the superintendent as well as the engineer, and by arrangement with the Company, nearly the whole of his time was devoted to it alone. He was intimately acquainted with Mr. Chapman, Mr. Telford, Mr. James Walker, and Mr. (afterwards Sir W.) Cubitt, and he frequently met them from time to time in consultation, arbitration, &c., on a variety of works. He was consulted on many of the harbours of the South Coast, including Portsmouth, Littlehampton, Newhaven, Rye, and Folkestone, on all of which he reported. He was also employed by the Commissioners for the loan of Exchequer Bills to examine and report upon the harbours of Folkestone and Tralee.

He was a good practical astronomer, and he watched with much care the variation of the compass until it reached the limit of its westerly variation. He was devotedly attached to that branch of science, and in the last year of his life, when 79 years old, much of his time was occupied in various astronomical observations, and abstruse mathematical calculations upon them.

Mr. Clegam was elected a Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers on the 21st of February, 1832, on the nomination of his friend, Mr. Telford; but his constant residence in Gloucestershire prevented frequent attendance at the Meetings, though he ever took a lively interest in all that concerned the prosperity and well-being of the Society.

MR. RICHARD CARDEN DESPARD was born on the 21st of May, 1831; he was the third son of the late Captain Despard, formerly of the 53rd Regiment, and subsequently for some years a Government Magistrate in the County Meath, Ireland. Deprived of a father's care at an early age, Mr. Despard was articled to Mr. John Coode (M. Inst. C. E.), and spent some years in his office, &c., and on the works of the Portland Breakwater. About the year 1851, he became assistant to Mr. Beardmore (M. Inst. C. E.), and eventually had charge of the construction of the Old Ford works on the river Lee,¹ of which he presented a description to the Institution, receiving for this communication a Council Premium of Books. He was also connected with the Colne Valley and the Halstead railways, as well as other undertakings; having been for some years prior to his decease the faithful

¹ *Vide Minutes of Proceedings Inst. C.E., vol. xvii., p. 386.*

and confidential coadjutor of Mr. Beardmore. From his acuteness as a mathematician, and clear workmanlike mode of dealing with the practical business of an Engineer, Mr. Despard won the confidence and esteem of all with whom he was brought in contact. In his private relations to a widowed mother and a numerous younger family, his character was a model; and those who were acquainted with his affectionate and generous disposition, can estimate the void caused by his almost sudden and early death, on the 19th of March, 1863, in the 32nd year of his age.

Mr. Despard was elected a Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers on the 4th of February, 1862; but for many years previously he had been a constant attendant at the meetings, and had taken advantage of the other facilities for professional advancement afforded by the Institution. On all occasions he never failed to acknowledge the great benefits that he had derived from access to the library, and from the privilege of being present at the meetings.

Mr. JAMES FENTON was born at Dunkenny, Forfarshire, on the 29th of August, 1815, and after serving an apprenticeship at the works of Messrs. James Cook and Co., Glasgow, as a mechanical Engineer, and under Mr. Blackadder (M. Inst. C.E.) as a Civil Engineer, he, in June, 1837, received an appointment under Mr. I. K. Brunel (M. Inst. C.E.), on the Great Western Railway, which was then in course of construction. In 1841, he became the resident Engineer and Locomotive Superintendent of the Manchester and Leeds line, where he remained for nearly five years, and on retiring he was presented by the workmen with a handsome silver vase and drinking-cup, and by the two engine-drivers on the Halifax branch with a silver snuff-box. In 1845, he undertook the position of Acting Engineer of the Leeds and Thirsk Railway, for which the Bill had just been obtained; but after remaining in the service of that Company for about eighteen months, and previous to the completion of the works, he entered into an arrangement with the proprietors of the Railway Foundry, at Leeds, then becoming known as builders of locomotive engines. Among the various works he executed while in that position may be specially mentioned the 'Jenny Lind' class of engine, designed with the view of combining simplicity of construction, with steadiness when running at high speeds. So highly were these engines thought of on some lines, that they were adopted as the type for all passenger engines, until by increase in the traffic heavier engines were required. Mr. Fenton also, whilst at the Railway Foundry, constructed and launched one of the largest landing-stages in the kingdom, that at New Holland, where the passengers by the Manchester and Sheffield Railway cross to Hull. On leaving the Railway Foundry