

## RAILWAY INSPECTION. OPENING OF THE NEW STATION

C.T. May 29, 1886.

As most of our readers are aware, the increase and advance of the locality has compelled the railway company to make many improvements and alterations to accommodate and facilitate the traffic. The line between Christchurch and Bournemouth has been doubled, a large station has been erected at Christchurch, and a station is being built at Pokesdown; besides which a new central station has recently been opened at Bournemouth, and a double main line is being constructed (and near completion) between Bournemouth and Poole. On Monday afternoon, Major F. A. Marindin R.E., of the Board of Trade inspected the widened part of the railway line between Christchurch and Bournemouth, prior to its being used for traffic. Arriving at Christchurch by special train shortly before one o'clock, the Major walked down the line to the Stour bridge, which was first of all tested. Four of the largest engines belonging to the company had come down for the purpose, and these were slowly driven on to the bridge, and subsequently travelled backwards and forwards over it at various speeds. We believe that the deflection was about five-eighths of an inch, which was considered as very satisfactory, the pressure upon the bridge being estimated at about 300 tons, one of the engines alone weighing upwards of 70 tons. The bridge, the span of which is 95ft., is of iron, resting upon four massive brick abutments erected on concrete foundations, the height of the abutments from the base being about 40ft., half of which is under ground. The bridge has three openings, and although substantial, has a light and airy appearance from a short distance. The contractors for the iron work were Messrs. Eastwood, Swingler and Co., of Derby. The foundations and brickwork were commenced by Messrs. Kellett and Bentley, and completed by Mr. Firbank, the present contractor of the new direct line to Brockenhurst. Considerable difficulty had to be encountered by both firms because of the treacherous character of the sub-soil, but by the employment of several high-pressure pumps, the work was safely accomplished, after a period of nearly two years. The bridge has a complete wooden floor, and the metals are run upon baulks of timber affixed to longitudinal iron girders from end to end of the structure. The contractors for the excavations of the permanent way were Messrs. Mowlem and Burt, of Swanage. The Inspector then proceeded to inspect the smaller bridges over the roadways at Tuckton and Pokesdown lane, the deflexure of which was scarcely an eighth of an inch; and having noticed the lay of the metals the Major returned to Christchurch and inspected the new station, and the working of the points and the signals. After partaking of luncheon in the saloon carriage, a journey was made over the new line, and the special train returned to London shortly after three o'clock. Rain fell heavily most of the time, but notwithstanding that, a large number of people gathered around the bridge to witness the testing. The Major was accompanied by the following officials of the railway company: Mr. Wm. Jacomb, chief engineer, Waterloo; Mr. E. W. Verrinder, traffic superintendent, Waterloo; Mr. W. Adams, locomotive superintendent, Nine Elms; Mr. F. Higgs assistant locomotive superintendent, Nine Elms; Mr. J. Drage, resident district engineer, Bishopstoke; Mr. Hunter, local district superintendent, Southampton; Mr. Annett, superintendent of signals, Bishopstoke; Mr. Holliday, district traffic superintendent, Dorchester; Mr. J.C. Baines, superintendent of permanent ways, Rinnwood; and Mr. Morgan of the locomotive department, Bournemouth. There were also present: Mr. Howard Rich, resident engineer, Bournemouth; Mr. Leyland, local inspector, Christchurch; Mr. Throstle, general manager for Mr. Firbank; Mr Elliott, local

manager for Mr Firbank; Mr. Burt, of the firm Messrs. Mowlem and Burt; Mr. Wm. Rowell, engineer, Wimbledon; and Mr. Burleigh, of the firm of Messrs. Stevens & Sons, signal manufacturers. We understand that the line was passed by the inspector, who expressed himself thoroughly satisfied with the line, which he considered to have been substantially constructed. The new station—which is approached from the Stour Road,—which, by the by, is well appointed, and said to be one of the best on the company's system—will be open on Sunday next, on and after which day, the new line will be used for traffic. The station at Pokesdown—which bears the name of Boscombe—will be opened on the 1st of July; and it is confidently believed that the new line to Brockenhurst will be completed in time to be opened in February next.