Wearmouth Bridge.

Constructed of Cast Iron.

The second iron Bridge of importance, erected in Great Britain, was that over the river Wear, at Bishop Wearmouth, near Sunderland, the chief projector of which was Rowland Burdon, Esq. M. P. As this is the most considerable structure of the kind, it may be proper to give a brief sketch of its history. In consequence of the increasing trade and population of Sunderland and the two Wearmouths, the ancient ferry, which was almost in the middle of the harbour, had become very insufficient and unsafe, so that, besides frequent delays and disappointments, several instances had occurred of the loss of lives.

About the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety, in which Mr. Burdon was returned to parliament by the county of Durham, some gentlemen interested in the welfare of the town and neighbourhood of Sunderland, united for the purpose of removing the evils arising from the ferry, and Mr. Burdon was appointed one of the committee. Conceiving at first that a stone Bridge would be proper,