The connecting-blocks used with this chord, sustaining only the horizontal action of diagonals, may be considerably lighter than those used with links, especially in Arch trusses. For their connection with the chord, J. M. W. suggests that mortises be made in the plates, as seen at m, F. 60, (not wider than the smaller rivets used in splicing,) to receive tenons of wrought iron, cast in the block.

As to the merits of the Plate, as compared with the Link Chord; assuming two splices to be sufficient for any truss less than 100′ long, and, allowing for splice-plates and rivets, equal to 4′ extra length of plates, or 5 per C. upon a chord 80′ long, to which we have to add 14 per C. for extra section, on account of rivet holes; it shews about 19 per C., of iron lost in forming connections.

Links require about half as much extra material, to be taken up in bends and lappings; shewing about 10 per C. less iron for the Link, than for the Plate Chord; or, about 400lb. for two trusses of 80′, with links of 1½′ iron. But this is nearly or quite balanced by 500 or 600 pounds of castings, which may be saved in the weight of connecting-blocks.

The merits of the question, then, seem to depend mostly upon the relative cost of manufacture, of the two chords, and their relative efficiency in use.

I am strongly inclined to the opinion, that the Plates would make the better and more trust-worthy, if not also the cheaper Chord.