PORTABLE BRIDGES.

Under this article of Bridges we may also mention portable Bridges, easily taken asunder, and put together again. M. Couplet mentions one of this kind, two hundred feet long, and which forty men may carry. See Du Hamel. Hist. Roy. Acad. Scienc. C. iii, S 5, C. 4.*

In the middle ages Bridge-building was reckoned among the acts of religion; and a regular order of hospitalizers was founded by St. Benezet, towards the close of the twelfth century, under the denomination of Pontifices or Bridge builders, whose office was to assist travellers by making Bridges, settling ferries, and receiving strangers in hospitals or houses built on the banks of rivers. We read of a hospital of this kind at Avignon, where the hospitalizers dwelt under the direction of their first superior, St. Benezet. The jesuit Raynalbus has a treatise expressly on St. John the Bridge-builder.*

BRIDGE OF AVIGNON,

CONSTRUCTED OF STONE.

The Bridge of Avignon was begun in the year one thousand one hundred and seventy-six, and

* Dr. Rees's New Cyclopaedia.