CRITICAL REMARKS.

REMARKS,*

ON THE BRIDGE AT BABYLON, PAGE, 36.

* This Bridge is the first that we have any account of in ancient history, as being erected with a single arc and of durable materials, and perhaps with some of our modern sceptics who agree to believe in nothing but what their eyes have seen a question like this may arise, namely, who gave the plan? or taught the sons of Noah, in those early days, to build a Bridge with a single arc? The answer with every wise man will be, as follows: He that set his Arc or Bow in the clouds, man's great Preceptor; he alone could furnish him with the most correct, and suitable plan for his Bridges.

Whether this be the first specimen of an arc being applied to a Bridge, it matters not; for although some mathematicians, since those days, have dreamed of such wonderful discoveries in the science of arcs of lateral pressure, whereby they have partly filled volumes with their bewildered notions and complicated rules, to find the arc of various forms, yet, there is no question but the arc of this Bridge, possessed all those requisites that are to be found in any that are built in the present day. For we naturally infer, that if it had not been erected upon correct principles, its extensive span would have procured so speedy a downfall, that the historians who furnished us, with the account of its erection, would also have added the time of its destruction.

The bricks wherewith the arc in question was built, we read, were of large dimensions, and, instead of the sorry stuff profanely called mortar, or cement, which our modern builders use in the present day for the setting of their brick and stone-work, these ancients had skill to prefer the bitumen, a glutinous slime, which as soon as it was set, became so united to the materials, that by the time the arc was closed, or keyed, the whole composed one solid mass of equal firmness.

The vast dimensions of this arc far exceed any built of brick or stone, in Europe, or America.