The butments' built of stone, where stone is found,
For nought can last so long or keep so sound;
But if the place should timber only grant,
Then stone and iron the builder will not want.
The length of butments' not, as men have told,
So long to cut a city in two-fold;
For rivers North and East may have a Bridge,
And streets call'd South and West may bound their ridge.
If half the arc a thousand feet demand,
One hundred is enough upon the land,
To form the butment and the steelyard's prop,
Which balances the power, lest it should drop.
This butment must more gravity possess
Than flying arm by weight can furnish stress;
Consolidation of a mass of stone,
Or towers erect, like those which China own;
But best when butments form a group of stores,
To house the treasure brought from distant shores:
The rent they furnish pays the building's cost,
Which in all other Bridges must be lost.
The stones that first compose the fulcrum's base
Are large and massy, but of even face,
Well bonded by their square and equal form,
So closely plac'd to leave no room for worm,
Or spurious matter of a worthless kind,
That oft is fill'd, in walls, in hopes to bind
The unconnected parts, which ne'er did rest;
These make but cobweb-structures at the best.