Methinks the sons of art would be too blest
Were there not men like these to prove their pest.
What! though this Bridge surpass all else before,
Should it be disbelieved e'er the more,
What finite man, to whom all skill was given,
That none beside should read the starry heav'n,
Or find a plan by which to pass the deep,
While blockheads and their follies rest in sleep;
Desery a continent, find out a land,
Mark out a shoal, make known where lies quicksand,
Or trace the magnet which to poles directs,
And, with the quadrant, all mistake corrects;
Or cast great guns, whose thunders loudly roar,
Or make silk ears, philosophers to soar,
Or Drake's dread fireships, that no quarters give,
But blast in sunder all, that none survive
To tell the dismal tale of dire despair,
That ship, and guns, and men, are blown in air;
Or excavate the earth, to float a bark,
To carry goods through rocks and mountains dark,
Propel a boat by steam, 'gainst wind and tides,
That in a calm by others swiftly slides;
That travels night and day, like a stage coach,
Which at the usual time make its approach:
Or make sweet sounds to soothe some savage breast,
Or link such words as poets deem the best,
Or carve some marble that shall stamp renown,
Or paint some golden scene that fame shall crown,