

his cavalry, had entered Moscow, they penetrated into that gigantic body, as yet untouched, but inanimate. Struck with profound astonishment at the sight of this complete solitude, they replied to the taciturnity of this modern Thebes, by a silence equally solemn. These warriors listened with a secret shuddering to the steps of their horses, resounding alone, amid these deserted palaces. They were astonished to hear nothing but themselves among such numerous habitations. Not one thought of stopping or of plundering. Either from prudence, or because great civilized nations respect themselves in enemies' capitals, in the presence of those great centres of civilization.

"Meanwhile they silently observed that mighty city which would have been truly remarkable, had they met with it in a flourishing and populous country, but still more astonishing in these deserts. It was like a rich and brilliant oasis. They had at first been struck by the sudden sight of so many magnificent palaces; but they now perceived that they were intermingled with mean cottages; a circumstance which indicated the want of gradation between the classes, and that luxury was not generated there, as in other countries, by industry, but preceded the latter; whereas, in the natural order, it ought to be its more or less necessary consequence.

"Here more especially prevailed inequality—that bane of all human society, which produces pride in some, debasement in others, and corruption in all. And yet such a generous abandonment of every thing demonstrated that this excessive luxury, as yet however all borrowed, had not rendered these nobles effeminate.

"They thus advanced, sometimes agitated by surprise, at others by pity, and more frequently by a noble enthusiasm. Several cited events of the great conquests which history had handed down to us; but it was for the purpose of indulging their pride, not to draw lessons from them; for they thought themselves too lofty and beyond all comparison. They were exalted by that which is second to virtue only, glory. Then succeeded melancholly; either from the exhaustion consequent on so many sensations, or the effect of the separation produced by such an immeasurable elevation, and of the seclusion in which we were wandering on that height, whence we beheld immensity, infinity, in which our weakness was lost, for the higher we rise the more the horizon expands, and the more conscious we are of our own insignificance.

"Amidst these reflections, which were favoured by a slow pace, the report of fire-arms was all at once heard; the column halted. Its last horses still covered the fields; its centre was in one of the largest streets of the city; its head had reached the Kremlin. The gates of that citadel appeared to be closed. Ferocious cries issued from within it: men and women, of ferocious and disgusting aspect, appeared fully armed on the walls. In a state of filthy inebriety, they uttered the most horrible imprecations. Murat sent them an amicable message, but to no purpose. It was found necessary to employ cannon to break open the gate.

"We penetrated without opposition, partly by force among these wretches. One of them rushed close to the King, and endeavoured to kill one of his officers. It was thought sufficient to disarm him, but he again fell upon his victim, rolled him on the ground, and attempted