

fortress, inclosing and as it were beseiging him in it; spreading every moment among the neighbouring houses; and reducing him within narrower and narrower limits confirming him at length to the site of the Kremlin alone.

"We already breathed nothing but smoke and ashes. Night approached, and was about to add darkness to our dangers; the Equinoctial gales in alliance with the Russians, increased in violence. The King of Naples and prince Eugene hastened to the spot; in company with the prince Neaufchâtel they made their way to the Emperor, and urged him by their entreaties, their gestures, and on their knees and insisted on removing him from this scene of desolation. All was in vain.

"Napoleon, in possession of the palace of the Czars, was bent on not yielding that conquest even to the conflagration, when all at once the shout of "the Kremlin is on fire!" passed from mouth to mouth, and roused us from the contemplative stupor with which we had been seized. The Emperor went out to reconnoitre the danger. Twice had the fire communicated to the building in which he was, and twice had it been extinguished: but the tower of the arsenal was still burning. A soldier of the police had been found in it. He was brought, and Napoleon caused him to be interrogated in his presence. This man was the incendiary he had executed his commission at the signal given by his Chief. It was evident that every thing was devoted to destruction, the antient and sacred Kremlin itself not excepted.

"The gestures of the Emperor betokened disdain and vexation, the wretch was hurried into the first court where the enraged grenadiers dispatched him with their bayonets.

"This incident decided Napoleon. He hastily descended the northern stair case, famous for the massacre of the Strelitzes and desired to be guided out of the city, to the distance of a league on the road to Petersburg, toward the Imperial palace of Petaowsky. But we were incircled by a sea of fire, which blocked up all the gates of the Citadel, and frustrated the first attempts that were made to depart. After some search, we discovered a postern gate leading between the rocks to the Moskwa. It was by this narrow passage that Napoleon, his officers and guard escaped from the Kremlin. But what had they gained by this movement? They had approached nearer to the fire, and could neither retreat nor remain where they were; and how were they to advance? how force a passage through the waves of this ocean of flame? Those who had traversed the city, stunned by the tempest, and blinded by the ashes, could not find their way, since the streets themselves were no longer distinguishable amidst smoke and ruins.

"There was no time to be lost. The roaring of the flames around us became every moment more violent. A single narrow winding Street, all on fire, appeared to be rather the entrance than the outlet to this hell. The Emperor rushed on foot and without hesitation into this narrow passage. He advanced amid the crackling of the flames, the crash of floors, and the fall of burning timbers and of the red hot iron roofs which tumbled around him. These ruins impeded his progress. The flames which with impetuous roar, consum-