

with all the waters of the Baltic, whenever the south-west wind should blow a gale eight-and-forty hours, with a climate of polar severity, and a soil as barren as an iceberg—was not Petersburg a bold *impromptu*? We never could look at this capital, with its imposing though monotonous architecture, its colossal squares, its vast colonnades, its endless vistas, its spires and minarets, sheathed in barbaric gold and flashing in the sun, and remember the magical rapidity with which it was built, and the hundred thousand lives that were sacrificed in building it, without recalling Milton's description of the building of Pandemonium:

“ ‘ Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
 Rose like an exhalation,
 Built like a temple, where pilasters round
 Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
 With golden architrave ; nor did there want
 Cornice or frieze ; with bossy sculptures graven ;
 The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon
 Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
 Equalled in all their glories, to enshrine
 Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat
 Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
 In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile
 Stood fixed her stately height; and straight the doors
 Opening their brazen folds discover, wide
 Within, her ample spaces o'er the smooth
 And level pavement.’ ”

“ Still he continued his conquests. ‘ It is not land I want, but water,’ exclaims the Czar, as he snatches the whole southern coast of the Caspian, the original kingdom of Cyprus, from the languid hand of the Persian, without the expenditure of the blood, time, and treasure which it had cost him to wrest the frozen swamp of Finland from the iron grasp of Charles. Peter's conquests are now concluded. The Russian Colossus now stands astride, from the ‘thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice’ on the Baltic, to the ‘fragrant bowers of Asterabad’ on the Caspian, with a foot upon either sea. The man who had begun to gratify his passion for maritime affairs by paddling a little skiff on the Yausa, and who became, on his own accession, only the barbaric sovereign of an inland and unknown country, now finds himself the lord of two seas, with a considerable navy, built almost by his own hand. It was upon his return to Petersburg from his Persian