

and to permit us to retain the plank which supported the carriage.

After a day's labour we reached Novogrodec; the country is partly cultivated, and its surface is finely undulated into gentle swells and plains: the prospects are boundless. Novogrodec is a district town. It stands on a high ridge of ground, and is seen from a considerable distance. As in all the towns in Lithuania, it has a large square, from which a number of dirty lanes branch off. In the centre of the town are a few mean brick houses, also the remains of an old castle, or citadel. The people are coarse, mean, and dirty, and consist chiefly of Jews; the women however are more attentive to their dress, and have the most pleasing countenances of any of the Lithuanian females we had seen. There is little or no trade carried on beyond the traffic of the Jews.

The scene of our entering Novogrodec, with the carriage supported on a plank, and with only three wheels, was a source of infinite amusement to the inhabitants. As usual we were surrounded with Jews. After a delay of two days, we luckily met with a German, who sold us a wheel; and  
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though two inches lower than the other, we were contented to take it. Here we were most severely examined by the officers of the police, as to the nature of our journey, what reason we had to carry maps, &c. with us, and what were our professions. Every foreigner who travels through Russia is considered as a merchant; and why we should pass through this part of the country, which offered no commercial interest, was more an object of astonishment. The idea of a foreigner travelling for amusement and information, was, to them, an inexplicable circumstance. We concealed our papers, satisfied their doubts, and were permitted to proceed. We engaged a Tartar to drive us, with one set of horses, to Grodno, a distance of one hundred and forty-eight wersts.

From Novogrodec we entered an extensive forest of very old rotten fir trees. The road is merely an irregular track of deep ruts and wet sand, full of decayed trunks and stumps of trees. Twenty miles from Novogrodec, the forest terminated on the banks of the Niemen, which we crossed on a floating raft. The river is here about eighty yards wide, deep, and rapid. From the river we passed over a most extensive and  
dangerous