

valley, ascended again, and soon reached the barriers of the town. Having now attained the frontiers of the Russian empire, we deemed it most prudent to conceal both our drawings and papers, as we had hitherto met with several strict examinations, and were compelled to write the account of each stage in the carriage, when on the road: by these means all suspicions were lulled.

Grodno is situated on the east side of the Niemen, five hundred and eighty-two wersts east of Smolensko, or six hundred and eighty-seven English miles from Moscow. It is irregularly built, and exhibits a number of large churches and square towers. In the form of the churches, it somewhat resembles a town in Russia; they have each two spires, and niches in the walls, with figures. The religion is that of the Roman church. The centre of the town is built with brick, and the suburbs of wood; the streets are badly paved, and excessively dirty. In various parts of the town are the ruins of some magnificent palaces and gateways, and other remains of fallen splendour, which evince the ancient grandeur of this spot. Here the Diets of Poland formerly assembled,

bled, with the representatives from Lithuania,—and here Stanislaus, the last King of Poland, resigned his crown, and dragged on a wretched life in a foreign land.

Next to Wilna, Grodno is the largest town in Lithuania: the population is about eight thousand persons, but seems to consist of a mixture of different nations, who have settled here. Their employment consisted in manufacturing linen, cotton and silk; but, from late events, they have been reduced to idleness and poverty. We were detained three days, in the examination of our passports, and before a new order could be given us for horses to Warsaw: and here we were compelled to part with our faithful Prussian, who had acted as our interpreter; but, as we were to enter into Prussian Poland, where the German language was generally spoken, we felt the less loss: however we could not part from an individual, though in so humble a station of life and one who had gained so much of our esteem, without the deepest regret.

At the time we were at Grodno, large detachments of Cossacks, Baskirs, and other Russian troops, were quartered
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in the town, so that it presented a most varied picture. They were stationed partly as out-picquets to the grand army, which were marching about in every direction, to form a cordon of observation round the present frontier of Russia, to watch the ingress and egress of all strangers, and to be constantly hovering about in case of alarm.

Having now completed the extent of our investigations through a part of the Russian empire, and being on the eve of entering a new kingdom, we could not but contemplate the vastness and immensity of this unwieldy empire, to support whose overgrown size, the natives of the most distant, and untrodden regions, are called in. Hither flock the savage tribes, which prowl along the dens of the Caucasus, or the banks of the Oby—the wandering Samoide, and the houseless Tartar, here find a home and employment. The vastest bounds of the vastest empire in the world, pour along their contents, like a sweeping torrent—all tend to one point, all flock to one centre, and, under the wide waving banners of their mighty mother, all are enlisted, all are to serve.

Russia,

Russia, as a whole, must be, more or less, weak from its expansion; it is too immense to be healthy. It wants the vigour of concentration—there is a kind of morbid bulk about it, which impairs its proper functions, and may one day put it out of breath. This is a remark, which must strike every traveller in this country; he will see it evinced in various features, and in many circumstances.