

Literature. &c.

NEW WORKS.

THE BEAUTIFUL.

BY MRS EDWIN FRENCH.

How beautiful, how beautiful is this bright world of ours,
With waving trees, and warbling birds, with sunshine and with flowers;
The sky above is beautiful with pure celestial blue,
That leads unto that far-off land—the spiritual, the true?

The very breeze is beautiful, methinks I feel it now!
It sports among the glossy curls, and fans the feverish brow;
Whether in gay or sullen mood, in storm or gentle hour,
'Tis beautiful—'tis wonderful—in calm or frantic power!

And, oh! how sweet the silvery ways that dance in joyous glee,
And dash upon the pebbly shore so beautiful and free,
And vessels with their spreading sails sweep on in stately pride—
God grant they may in safety stem that world of waters wide!

How beautiful the balmy air, with countless flow'rets sweet,—
The bright stars gleaming overhead, the dew drops at our feet;
The warbling of the joyous bird, the holy vesper bell,
All these to me are beautiful, more sweet than tongue can tell.

But, oh! I love to see the child—the infant at its play;
For childhood's joyous echoing laugh will banish care away;
But should a gloomy presage rise for their impending fate,
Then lead them in the righteous path, and teach them ere too late.

For beautiful, most beautiful, is the maiden free from guile,
Kneeling before her Maker's throne with pure and holy smile;
With white hands joined, and meek low tone in humble fervent prayer,
Asking that all and every one God's richest grace may share.

But, oh! it is a holy sight, the aged man of years—
With bending form and silvery locks, yet no complaining fears,
To wait God's own appointed time without one lingering sigh,
And when he's called by will Divine, lies calmly down to die!

All, all is very beautiful: for Nature's lavish hand,
Hath filled with useful gifts the air, the ocean, and the land:—
But man is still an ingrate for each proof of heavenly love:
Alas! the soul is chained below, nor thinks of God above!

Life is but short: then while we live let kindness mark our way,
Let sweet compassion soothe the heart that grieveth day by day;
Let praises flow to God above for gifts so kindly given:—
When earth shall pass, oh! may we then be found with him in heaven.

From Glimpses of Life and Manners in Persia.
By Lady Shell.

The Shah of Persia may with some show of reason be called the father of his subjects, for judging by the following description of the royal progeny, he has added pretty considerably to the population of Persia:—

A LARGE FAMILY.

'Suleimaneeya is an extensive palace or hunting seat, built by the present king's great grandfather, Fetteh Ali Shah. It contains courts and apartments innumerable for lodging the ample harem of that monarch, who seems to have made Solomon his prototype. The number of inmates of the anderoon belonging to the sovereign is estimated at several hundred. His majesty's sons were reckoned at upwards of eighty, but his daughters were too numerous to admit of calculation; though why the ladies should exceed in such proportion the gentlemen of the family was never explained. It is an idea among the Persians that women are considerably more numerous than men; and this delusion they all allege as a proof that wives should be in excess to husbands. His majesty's sons followed his example, with the result of many among them having forty or fifty children; and the total of his descendants is estimated at some thousand persons. Some among them are constantly in a deplorable state of poverty. I have heard of one prince, a son or grandson of Fetteh Ali Shah, who used to go himself to the bazaar to buy bread for his family; and I know more than one who begged a member of the mission to give them two or

three sovereigns to relieve them from actual want. The princesses are many of them greatly to be commiserated. They have been forced by destitution to marry persons of very inferior condition; and one lady in particular had taken for her husband a man who had been a cobbler, but who had raised himself above that station.'

The Russians exercise great influence at the court of Persia. The Persians, however, once resented Muscovite insolence in a somewhat summary manner:

MURDER OF A RUSSIAN MISSION.

The minister was M. Gruhoedoff who came to Teheran not long after the war was concluded. His demeanour to the Shah was said to have been rude and overbearing. A Georgian slave, deeply in the confidence of Fetteh Ali Shah and of the chief ladies of his harem, claimed the protection of the mission as a subject of the Czar, and was received by the minister under his roof. On the same plea, several women in the harem of either the Shah or of the principal nobleman in Persia, the Azof Uddouleh, a near relation of his majesty, was demanded and removed against their own consent to the Russian mission. Various other acts, reminding the Persians of their being humbled to the dust, took place. The indignation of the populace was aroused; perhaps it was fostered by the monarch himself. In some accidental brawl a Persian was killed. His body was carried in procession to one of the chief moollas, who issued a fetwa, a religious decree, that the Kafirs should be slain, and that the people should march to the Jihad (war to the faith.) Next morning several thousand persons assembled in arms at the various mosques, and proceeded in solemn array to the house of the unfortunate Russians. The Shah was terrified at the tumult which had been raised, and which he now wished to quell, but could not. He was told that his own life and throne were at issue if he dared to interfere. The attack proceeded. The Russians closed their gates and doors, but offered, it seems, no resistance. The people mounted on the flat roof of the house, into which they made openings, and fired on the Russians below; they were all slain, thirty-six in number, I am told, excepting one attaché, who gave some of the assailants a sum of gold to spare his life; they thrust him into a small room, and told the mob that women were lying there concealed, on which they retired.'

A Persian Funeral is certainly a sight to be avoided:—

TRANSFER OF CORPSES.

Not long after our arrival in Teheran, when riding outside the town, on the road to Hamadan, which leads to Bagdad, we were interrupted and detained by a large caravan proceeding to the former city. A number of the mules were laden with long narrow boxes attached upright, one on each side of the mule. A most dreadful and almost unendurable smell proceeded from the caravan. On inquiry I found that these boxes contained corpses which had been collected from various towns for a length of time, and were now on their way to Kerbella for interment. It is a revolting practice. The boxes are nailed in the most imperfect manner, admitting of the free exit of the most dangerous exhalations. One of the gentlemen attached to the mission, travelling between Hamadan and Teheran, arrived late at night at a village where he lay down to sleep on the sakoos of a large stable, very much fatigued by a long day's journey. A sakoos is a raised platform at one extremity of the stable, where travellers repose, while their animals feed around them. During the night he awoke exceedingly unwell, having passed a harassing time in fever, tormented with frightful dreams. On striking a light an unpleasant cause of his illness was discovered. He found that while he slept a caravan had arrived with a cargo of corpses, some of which, emitting a horrid effluvia had been placed on the sakoos close to his head. A person of weaker nerves than this gentleman would have been scared on discovering who his neighbours were.

We shall conclude our notice of Lady Shell's amusing work with the following description of the punishment of

THE BASTINADO.

'Not a single incident occurred to vary the monotony of the read, except a trait of Persian manners. Our camp was joined by a Persian gentleman, who had formerly held a very high post in the Shah's service, but who was now in disgrace. Late one night we heard at a considerable distance a noise resembling deep moaning, accompanied by a heavy, sustained sound, at short intervals. These unpleasant symptoms of distress having continued some time, we found on enquiry that the Khan, our travelling companion, a stanch disciple of Bacchus, had quarrelled with his cook, whose feet he had put into the fellek, and was now giving him a sound bastinado. It is hard to say how long the punishment would have continued, whether one or two hours, had not we caused it immediately to cease. The fellek is a long stout piece of wood, each end of which is held by a ferash; the culprit's ankles were attached to two loops in the middle, and he is thrown on his back, by which means the soles of his feet, are turned towards the sky. Two ferashes

then flog him on the feet with long thin wands which are renewed from time to time. The punishment inflicted in this way is sometimes most dreadful, lasting for hours it is said, but no one dies in consequence, though the patient often faints under the infliction. Some years ago no rank was exempt from this punishment. The Shah constantly caused it to be inflicted in his own presence on delinquent governors. In the last Russian war a noble of the highest rank and a cousin of the Shah, suffered this punishment in the public square of Teheran, for having sustained a defeat from the Muscovites. As a homage to his rank, a carpet was spread on which he was placed, and the first blow was struck by the Shah's son Abbas Meerza, the heir to the throne.'

The following description of a disgraced minister's end is no inducement for people to accept office in Persia. The Ameer Meerza had married a sister of the Shah, but, being driven from court by the intrigues of his opponents, sought shelter in the company of his wife whose chamber was considered a sanctuary to all. Lady Shell thus describes his fate:

MURDERING A MINISTER.

'He remained for several months in confinement at Cashan with the Princess. As a security against poison, that lady made it a rule to partake first of all the food presented to the Ameer. In the meantime his enemies had not been idle. They feared lest he should one day be restored to favour. The Shah's ear was daily filled with the danger of leaving alive a man like him, who only waited for an opportunity either to destroy his sovereign, or ruin the kingdom. Who the murderers were I shall not disclose, but at length the fatal order was sealed, and despatched in charge of the Shah's Ferash Bashee, a man whom the Ameer had raised from the dust, and a party of Meerghazabs. For some reason, which no one but a Persian can understand, recourse was had to guile. A lady of the harem was sent to the princess, telling her to dry her tears, for that the Shah had relented, and that the Ameer was to return to Teheran or go to Kerbella, the usual haven for Persians who have lost court favor. 'The kheit or coat of honour,' said she, 'is on the way, and will arrive in an hour or two; go, therefore, to the bath, and prepare to receive it. The Ameer all this time had not ventured to quit the safety afforded by the apartment of the princess, and of her presence. On hearing the joyful news, however, he resolved to take the advice of this woman, and indulge in the luxury of a bath. He left the princess, and she never saw him more. When he reached the bath the fatal order was revealed to him, and the crime perpetrated. The Ferash Bashee and his vile crew presented themselves, and the choice of the mode of death was given to him. It is said he bore his fate with patience and fortitude. His veins were opened, and he at length expired.'

From the Sorrows of Gentility. By Miss Jewsbury.

An interesting story, conveying an excellent moral lesson. Miss Jewsbury writes in easy, fluent, agreeable style, and her sketches of character are forcible and lifelike. The purport of this tale is to show the folly of people aiming to become that for which nature had not intended them, and leaving their own sphere of life for another to which they are strangers. Miss Gertrude Morley is the daughter of parents 'well to do in the world;' her father being the host of a thriving inn, known as the Mettingham Arms. Instead of giving their child a good plain education, she was sent to Miss Le French's fashionable 'finishing' academy, where, of course, the young lady soon learned to despise the 'vulgar' occupation and habits of her parents. After she left school Miss Morely returned home:—

OUT OF PLACE.

'After she had been at home about a week, as she was one morning preparing to retire, as she usually did, to her own room, her mother said 'Come Gertrude, you must not always be playing, I want you to take my place in the bar a little while; you must begin to give your mind to something useful after all the money spent on you. I can tell you that your father went into one of his passions when he heard what the last bill came to—I must say I think Miss Le French has charged shamefully—but I pacified him by saying what a good girl you were, and how useful you would be to me.'—The passionate indignation with which Gertrude heard this terrified her mother who would have yielded the point and allowed her to employ herself as she pleased; but when her father found how matters were he declared with an oath that she should help her mother or go out to service, for he would harbour no child who thought herself too good to keep company with her own father and mother; and then he vented the remainder of his wrath upon his wife, declaring it to be her fault for breeding up her daughter to be a fine lady, and giving her a new fangled education above her station. He declared that if he heard of any more nonsense or saw any sullenness, he would lay his whip across her shoulders and turn her out of doors. Gertrude was terrified at his violence and completely subdued—henceforth she took her ap-

pointed place at her mother's little table, made out the bills, kept the books, and did everything that was required of her. She saved her father the expense of another servant—which was all he cared for—her mother thought that so long as she was not too much confined, and had plenty of handsome clothes, trinkets, and pocket money, that she could not help being happy. She was very proud of her, and secretly cherished the hope that she would make a great match and ride in her coach. Poor Gertrude was very much to be pitied; her position at the best, was seriously objectionable for any young woman; but she had been so completely unfitted for it by the absurdly unsuitable education her mother's vanity had bestowed, that the door was open to many more dangers than would otherwise have beset her.'

The young lady being invited to a friend's house, made the acquaintance of a dashing spendthrift named Augustus Donnelly, with whom she eloped. This young gentleman's mother afterwards received her daughter-in-law with chilling stateliness; for the family although exceedingly poor, was excessively proud. The extravagance of the son soon plunged them into pecuniary embarrassments; but, for the sake of 'keeping up appearances,' they submitted to many domestic privations, which, although unseen by the world, are keenly felt by those who endure them. In such a condition was the Donnelly household when Mrs Morley, having forgiven Gertrude, visited London for the purpose of seeing her.

GENTEEL POVERTY.

'Gertrude wept long and passionately upon her mother's bosom; the conflicting feelings of joy, and sorrow, and remorse, all the pent up speech of years, were resumed into one chaotic emotion of which tears were the only utterance. Mrs Morley, who herself was much affected by this first sight of her daughter after so long a separation, began at length to be alarmed. 'Come, my dear child, don't take on in this way! What is it that's ailing you? See, you are frightening baby, who cannot tell what to make of it all!—'O mother! sobbed poor Gertrude, 'how ungrateful you must have thought me. The sight of you makes me feel how ill I have behaved towards you; I shall never forgive myself—I was beginning to think you had turned me off, as you never took any notice of my letter—and now I almost wish you had, the sight of you hurts me so!—'I would like to see the person who dared to say you had behaved ill,' said Mrs Morley, indignantly. 'You were always the best, the kindest, and most industrious creature in the world; and if you did run away to be married, it is only what many a girl has done before, and will do after you. God help them! so don't let that lie on your mind. I would have come to you long since, only your father was contrary and would not let me; and you have found out by this time that a husband is a master when he once takes a thing into his head. Your father is a hard man, but he does not want for goodness; and after a bit it came out that you had not mentioned him in your letter, except just once at the end and he felt hurt you did not think him worth speaking of. So then I talked to him, and coaxed him, and when he saw how I took on and was fretting after you, he softened, and told me I might come up to London to see you, and that I might bring you back with me if I liked: and when he did come round, nothing could be more condescending than he was. He knew that I had never travelled alone, so he spoke to 'Fat Sam,' who drives the 'Dart,' to take care of me, and see me safe here. This is his off-day, and he would have brought me to the house himself, but I thought he might not just be the person to introduce amongst your grand people, for though he has a kind heart, he is a rough one to look at!—' Gertrude interrupted the torrent of her mother's discourse, to ask her how long she had been there, and whether any refreshment had been offered to her. 'Oh, I never once thought of refreshment. I thought I should have dropped when they told me you were out; but I asked to see the baby, and told who I was. The footman who opened the door seemed afraid to let me in, but however he did, and I waited on the mat whilst he went into the parlour, and he came back followed by an old lady as high as a duchess in her manners. I told her I was your mother, and said I came to see you. She looked at me as if I were the dirt under her feet, and at last said that you were gone out, but that if I chose to go out into the nursery I might wait there till you came back, though she could not say how long that might be. As I said I should wait, she bid the housemaid show me the way, and walked off, leaving me standing there. I might have been come to see one of the servants by the way she spoke. But I was too thankful to be so near seeing you to feel offended. Who is she? Does she live here? The man called her his 'mistress.'—'It was old Mrs Donnelly; my husband's mother. She is very haughty in her manners. I wish I had been at home!—Oh, I don't care for her, not I, though she is the first, calling herself a lady, who ever showed any pride to me, and I have had to speak to some of the first ladies in the land.'—'But,' said Gertrude, anxious to turn the conversation, 'it is a long time since breakfast, let me get you