

Literature. &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

THE WINDS.

BY T. WESTWOOD.

The winds are abroad to-day,
Over the hill tops flying;
Shouting aloud in their stormy play,
Blast unto blast replying;
Bowling the woods 'neath their tyrant sway,
The stubborn and strong defying.

They have taken the old oak tree,
Whose gnarled boughs unbending,
Have seen a thousand tempests flee,
And mock their vain contending.—
They have dashed him to earth in their savage
glee, his mighty roots up-rending.

And away, and away they fly,
Stern desolation's minions,
They pierce the mists that round them lie,
With keen, sky-cleaving pinions;
They scatter the wreathed clouds on high from
the great sun's blue dominions.

Aha! old Ocean roars,
As he hears their far-off shrieking,
And his billowy legions forth he pours,
As if to meet their seeking;
While the cavern-echoes from his shores, give
back his stormy speaking.

The winds and the waves have met!
Woe, woe to the bark outlying!
And winds and waves, a mightier yet
To join your strife is hieing;
Ere you pale-visaged sun hath set, lo Death
shall claim the dying.

Rage on, it is yours to-day
To mock man's weak endeavour;
We shrink before your fierce array,
We yield, but not for ever—
Oh, winds and waves, your vaunted sway, your
linked strength shall sever.

And thou, Oh crowned King,
Who laughest to scorn our weeping,
The fiat of the eternal word,
Stern watch is o'er the keeping—
Thou too shalt be a chained thing, no more
thine harvests reaping.

MATED AND CHECKMATED.

AN ORIENTAL TALE.

'I will presently tell you a story to make
your wine relish. Drink, then; and so to the
purpose * * * Though you be-
lieve it not, I care not much. But an honest
man, and of good judgment, believeth still
what is told him, and that which he finds writ-
ten.'—RABELAIS.

A tale of the times of old,—a passage of the
reign of the Shah Jehan, recorded in the chro-
nicles of Persia.

The hour of early evening prayer had long
since passed, and darkness came down like a
cloak upon the royal city of Ispahan. The ca-
ravansaries and bazaars had been closed some
time; the coffee-houses were shut up; the
mosques deserted; and the solitary lamp, glim-
mering here and there like a star upon the
lofty minarets, had disappeared. The hum of
that mighty ant-nest had sunk into the low
murmur preceding the utter stillness of the
city's night-rest. No life was in the streets,
save an occasional passenger, in the chief
thoroughfares, creeping cautiously homeward
from his evening revel, with a few stray dogs
scouring the stones of their offal. The guard
had just finished making its round, and now
came to report to their chief station at the
Tehran gate that, thanks to Allah and the
Shah Jehan, all was peace and safety in Per-
sian's capital.

The commander of the watch this night
was Ali Mohammed, a smart young officer of
the royal guard, as careless of principle, beyond
the strict letter of duty, as most other Per-
sians. In his splendid military accoutrements,
he was now lounging in the guard-house with
three or four other equally wild spirits, throw-
ing dice, and at intervals passing round a ves-
sel of some sort of drink much resembling wine
of Schiraz, to judge from the gusto with which
each man bathed his moustache by turns in the
pitcher. The keys of the outer gate of Ispahan
lay before Ali Mohammed, as denoting that
upon this occasion he was chief in command.
Some torches of a peculiar description lighted
the interior, and a party of soldiers stood around,
gazing attentively, but not daring to break in
upon the conversation of their superiors.

'May I be your sacrifice!' said a young gholaum
of the troop: 'but this week's watch is
ill requited. No fish come to net. I drink to
better times.'

'True, boy,' replied Ali Mohammed; 'too
true. Time was when a night on guard to the
head officer was worth gold upon gold; but
now none wish to leave the city ere cock-crow,
beyond some fanatical dervise without money in
his purse or beggarly hadji on a pilgrimage
to the tomb of Korm. May thy marrow be
dried up! And Ali Mohammed took a lusty
pull at the jug. As he spoke, a deep-toned
voice outside asked for egress at the Tehran

gate; and the party pricked up their ears like
sportsmen when they hear the foot-fall of an
antelope.

The stranger was introduced, and confronted
the commander of the post; who, with an air
of careless haughtiness glanced at him from
head to foot, treating with supercilious indif-
ference his renewed demand to be permitted to
go forth from Ispahan. The new-comer was a
powerfully formed, fine young man, verging
upon thirty; and his free step and bearing de-
noted a life passed in active and hardy pursuits.
On his head was the common black cap of the
Astracan lamb's wool, and his person was
wholly enveloped in a heavy cloak of coarse blue
cloth.

'And whither are ye bound, O friend of
light brains?' asked Ali Mohammed, throwing
the dice. 'Why go forth at this late hour
from beneath the shadow of the king of
kings?'

'My business is my own,' replied the stran-
ger calmly. 'I go to the camp without the
walls, and I also am in the service of the shah,
on whom be blessings!'

'Some robber of the desert,' whispered the
young gholaum to his chief. Give thy people
the word, O my soul! and let us strip him.' In
truth, the soldiers looked upon the stranger
with the eyes of hungry wolves; evidently re-
garding him as a waif, stray, or windfall, to be
converted, according to law and precedent to
their own especial property.

'No man leaves Ispahan this night by the
Tehran gate without a pass,' drawled out Ali
Mohammed.

'What is thy name, O dark one?'

The stranger's lip curled at the impertinent
tone of the query, and he appeared with diffi-
culty to suppress his feelings.

'I repeat that I am of the army, though, it
may be, the least of the servants of the shah.—
Delay me at your peril!'

'Oh! then you belong to that advanced de-
tachment of the troops without the city, return-
ed but now from the dealing with those sons
of Jehanum who worship fire on the rocky
mountains. Be their graves accursed! if a sol-
dier, you know military law. You may have
stabbed some one in the city, and I am
responsible to the shadow of the universe. In-
shallah! why should I not, too, speak of the
rule of the guard? These poor men will have
red gold ere they uncloseth the gates,—ay, and
search thy person, lest thou bear treason
forth.

The stranger thrilled with passion. He half
uncloseth his cloak, displaying beneath, the uni-
form of a subaltern officer, and wearing in his
sash a short but very heavy sword, besides
which reposed a long straight handjar of Dam-
ascus steel, bearing on its hilt a large brilliant
curiously carved. He handed this dagger to
Ali Mohammed, saying,—

'On the shah's secret service! Let me
pass! And he returned the handjar to its
sheath.

'By the head and the eye, pass!' cried Ali
Mohammed, with an expression of the deep-
est respect; casting a look anxiously at the
same time upon the dice, and the flasks of grape
juice.

The stranger marked his deprecatory
glance.

'I am a soldier,' said he, with a smile turning
to go; 'and I tell no tales of my brethren.—
Peace be around ye!'

'Why is not the gate opened, O sons of
dogs!' roared Ali Mohammed, as the porta's
were hastily flung apart. The stranger passed
without the wall of Ispahan and the commander
of the watch remained watching his receding
form till lost in night. He then relieved his
breast with a deep sigh of mystery and as-
tonishment, and replaced himself among his
party.

'Tell us, by Allah! who was that?' asked
the young gholaum eagerly; while the soldiers
disappointed of their unexpected prey, looked
like leopards robbed of a meal.

'Mashallah! who is that, O inconsiderate of
speech?' was the response. 'God is great, and
so is Ali Mohammed when on command; and
biddeth thee, boy, to hold thy tongue, and pass
the pitcher!'

And so the revelry went on the live long
night in that happy guardhouse; we ourselves
quitting Ispahan by the Tehran gate, in com-
pany with the unknown wanderer.

The stranger proceeded upon his silent path,
with the same air of unconcern as though five
hundred men had formed his escort, although
alone in the darkness, beneath the walls of a
city famous for those midnight plunderers, who
dwelling mostly in the adjacent tombs, come
forth to work in their calling at fitting season.
The night was warm; the air balmy as the
zephyrs wafted from the rose-fields of Georgia;
and the plaintive cry of the distant jackall came
upon the winds like the moan of a wailing spir-
it. Our wanderer appeared to be deeply lost in
thought, and passing through an avenue of lofty
cedars, struck into that path which, winding
among the gardens and villas of the suburbs,
would conduct him by the nearest way to the
camp.

'Yes, I was right in my resolve, so ran the
current of the stranger's thoughts; 'the voice
of Persia can only be fairly heard in her public
places,—in her khans, her baths, her coffee

houses, her streets and shops; and I will hear
what she there says in her wild free speech.—
Mine own ears shall listen, mine own eyes shall
behold; and thus shall the truth be known as
to the feelings of this mighty people for the
plans of their rulers. Yes; by the tombs of
my race, it is alone worthy of a free man to act
by himself. The army arrives not yet for three
days; during that time, at least then, I conti-
nue to look on Ispahan in hidden form. Yes-
terday a mirza,—to-night a soldier,—to-mor-
row, it may be, a merchant. By Allah! Nour-
jehan, thou art playing a strange part! My
life has been latterly almost wholly passed with
the armies of the shah, on whom be blessings!
None hardly, therefore, can recognise me in
the capital. All without the realm is at peace.
The Curd and the Fireworshipper humbled to
very dust, the bow of the Arab broken—the
lance of the Turcoman shivered. Persia is
white in the eyes of Frangistan and India.—
The day of arms is passed; let the people
have rest and quiet. The throne of the shah is
strengthened for his line, and the arts of peace
be it now mine to cultivate. Tired am I, O
prophet, of blood! confirm, then, my present
determination. Yes; well saith the sage, 'it
is better to build up one cottage, than to burn
a hundred palaces.' To war I go no more,
unless the peace of the realm demand it. Too
much time have I already passed, under the
camel skin tent of the soldier,—too little have
I devoted to the study of the laws between man
and man as laid down in our blessed Koran, and
the writings of the wise and virtuous. Be my
future path that of the sage and the philoso-
pher. Hollow and unsound are the glories of
military conquest. Away with that dream for
ever. Mighty destinies are before me; and if
life be spared I swear—but, ha! what have
we here?'

An Antique portico leading to a garden had
caught the eye of our night-wanderer; the lat-
ticed gate itself swinging invitingly open, a
most unusual thing in the suburbs of Ispahan.
The bright eastern moon had risen in its splen-
dour, and its rays fell pleasingly upon the tuft-
ed shrubbery. Nourjehan involuntarily paused
and looked within upon the garden. The mur-
mur of a full flowing fountain caught his ear,
and the orders of the varied parterres of shrubs
and flowers chained him momentarily to the
spot. Nourjehan was young, and his heart
beat high with an undefinable feeling, rese-
mbling the romance of the chivalrous days of the
west. He stepped lightly over the tempting
entrance and stood within the portico.

The garden was small, but picturesque as
fairy-land. Shrubs of every variety, trees of
every foliage, were grouped in fanciful masses.
There were the tamarind and the tulip, the
myrtle and the cistus, the laurel and the jessa-
mine, mingled with the rose, the heliotrope, and
the cypress, in tufts of impenetrable obscurity.
The spot appeared as though sacred to beauty
and to peace: the world beyond was a void.
Nourjehan advanced with the caution of a prac-
tised warrior, and sighed as he contrasted that
graceful scene with the blood-dyed plains of what
men term victory. A silvery light, like the
twinkling of a newly-born planet, shone through
a clump of richly scented almond trees; and,
yielding to the unaccountable caprice of the
moment, our wanderer yet further followed the
mysterious beckonings of the finger of destiny.
He found the light proceeded from a latticed
apartment on the basement of a small house, the
jalousies of which, shaded partly with drapery,
were thrown widely open to court the cooling
breeze. Nourjehan stepped upon the brink of
a marble fountain, whose waters played 'soft
as lovers' sighs;' encircled by myriad clusters
of golden orange-blossoms, and his bold eye
was enabled to penetrate to the interior of the
chamber.—The scene within transfixed him to
the spot as if by enchantment.

Seated upon piles of silken cushions, placed
for the sake of the air near the window, an
aged man and youthful maiden were playing
chess; while a female slave watched the pro-
gress of the game from a distant corner, with
her arms crossed on her breast. The apartment
was lighted by several old-fashioned silver cres-
sets, and its walls were curiously ornamented
in arabesque. Vases of porcelain containing
cut blossoms of the rarest flowers added their
odors to the fragrance of the garden, and per-
fumed the atmosphere so as to be hardly endur-
able by aught but an Oriental. The whole in-
terior denoted the graceful taste of the possess-
ors of the dwelling, while a certain plainness in
its decorations spoke of moderate habits rather
than of great wealth. The windows were open
to the ground, and the bubbling of the foun-
tain had contributed to render the advance of
Nourjehan unheard. The tenants of the cham-
ber demand an especial paragraph.

The aged man's countenance beamed with
that expression of patriarchal affection which
instantly denoted that he was the parent of
that fair being before him. His beard and
hair were white as snow, his features regular
and placid, his brow high and wide. His whole
look was that of a venerable sage, teaching phi-
losophy to one of his most chosen neophytes.
A warm-hearted smile played on his lip, as he
pored earnestly over the chess board.

The beautiful being—for beautiful she was—
who contended with the elder in the mimic
war, struck Nourjehan at once as something

superior to all he had ever looked on. The
long dark auburn hair hanging, after the Persian
fashion, in two enormous curls upon her bosom,
—the delicately pencilled eyebrows, meeting in
the centre,—the long kohl-stained lashes,—the
pearly teeth,—the transparent skin,—all these
charms were here united in the rarest degree of
loveliness. The taper fingers of the maid, be-
tipped with henna, hovered over the chess board,
fancied Nourjehan like the angels of delight
when they visit the pining heart of the captive.
Her veil was quite thrown back, in the privacy
of the anderson,—so that our loiterer's gaze
fell deep and enduring. He could only liken
the fair form of the maid to some celestial es-
sence; and held his breath lest the slightest
sound should break the spell, and resolve the
peri back into her native element of air.—The
dress of the lady was chiefly of shawls, dispo-
sed with elegance around her finely moulded
form.

A quarter of an hour flew by like a moment.
Nourjehan was chained to the marble fount by
which he rested. The players conducted their
chess with a placid earnestness which betokened
skill. Nourjehan was himself a passionate ad-
mirer of the game, and this gave a feature of
additional interest to the scene. Not a word
had yet been uttered by either of the two high
belligerent powers, but the coral lips of the
bright-eyed beauty at length parted in gentle
speech. The tones of her voice were sweetly
musical, and with a deep sigh the heart of the
excited Nourjehan surrendered itself for ever
captive.

'The chess is in great force to-night, O my
father! Well was the word spoken but yester-
day of thy skill by the learned Mirza, Eben
Timuri.'

'And what was that word, O flatterer?'

'The talk ran, my father, upon the gardens
of the Mirza, with their roses and running wa-
ters; and Eben Timuri made answer and said,
'Truly the garden is beautiful: but Al-Suli's
game of chess is yet more beautiful.'''

Al-Suli laughed with complacency at his
daughter's sally. Nourjehan recognised the
name as being that of the first chess-player in
Persia; though personally unacquainted with
him himself, our eavesdropper having been so
long absent from the royal city, and Al-Suli
having but recently come from Meshed to re-
side in Ispahan. After a pause, the conversa-
tion was renewed, as a sort of running accom-
paniment to the game in progress.

'Yes, my loved Zelica, great is my skill, and
the day of my brightest hope is dawning. The
army of Persia returns in triumph; and the son
of our shah, on whom be reverence as there is
glory, will doubtless deign to measure himself
in chess with the aged Al Suli.'

'Does the prince play well, then, O my fa-
ther?'

'According to report he does; and that,
notwithstanding the lying spirit of flattery,
which so darkly veileth truth from kings. The
prince is wise and learned; may his shadow
never be less! I mate thee, O my child?'

'Pardon, dear father, my sense is dim. The
night wears, and the midnight hour of prayer
is close at hand. And Zelica hung pensively
over the now tranquil chess-field.

'Thou art sick in health. I fear, if not in
heart, O my daughter! Dull is our solitude
for thy trusting and hoping youth. I doubt me-
thou sighest for a household to govern, more
exclusively thy own, O my fair lady Ban-
nou!'

'Not so, O my parent!' answered Zelica,
blushingly.

'Yet such is nature, and often do I regret I
have not earlier wedded thee; but I have
sworn by the Caaba that none may take thee
from me but a fine chess-player, and the vow
of a father for his child is a holy thing in the
sight of Allah.'

'All men, but thee, to Zelica are naught;
and this thou knowest, O my father. With
my birds and flowers, how tranquilly floweth
life!'

'Tranquilly, it may be; but the heart echoeth
back stronger words, I fear, in secret. Well,
God is great; and what is written to be, is
written! Chess may yet give me a son; and
thee, girl, a spouse.'

Hardly could Nourjehan forbear challenging
the old man to encounter him in chess upon
the spot. In one half hour he had loved away
his life. The cold West cannot appreciate or
understand the feelings of the East in this res-
pect; since it is fairly on record, that men in
Persia and Arabia have fallen doatingly in love
with the mere impress of a woman's fingers on
the wall—nay, have sat down and died for the
feelings thus germinated. A strange heart is
that of man! Nourjehan felt a profound con-
viction that his future happiness was for ever
inextricably bound up with the fate of the lov-
ely being before him. There acquaintance seem-
ed already to have been of twenty years dura-
tion. Nourjehan was fascinated like the gas-
zelle before the bright eye of the mountain
panther. His breast throbbled with the most
intense and painful emotions, and it was only
by a mighty effort at self-command, that he
was enabled to overcome the strong temptation
to go forward and speak. 'But she shall learn
to love me for myself,' thought he, 'and shall
know me but as that which I appear to be. Al-