

**MISSIONARY ANNALS.  
LIFE OF REV. JUSTIN  
PERKINS, D.D.: PIONEER  
MISSIONARY TO PERSIA**

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**HENRY MARTYN PERKINS**

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SECOND EDITION.

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MISSIONARY ANNAIS.  
(A SERIES.)

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LIFE OF  
REV. JUSTIN PERKINS, D.D.

*PIONEER MISSIONARY TO PERSIA.*

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BY HIS SON,

REV. HENRY MARTYN PERKINS.

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## PREFACE.

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The object of this volume is to reflect the character and work of my honored father, the late Rev. Justin Perkins, D.D., pioneer missionary to Persia.

This work is attempted in response to the desire of many friends in the United States, as well as in Persia. Friends of missions in England, Germany and elsewhere will be glad to renew their memories of the subject of this biography.

Not long ago the Jubilee of the mission to Persia was observed. While there is cause of rejoicing over present results, a tribute to the memory of the earliest member of that mission becomes the more appropriate.

It is my hope that the following chapters will serve to increase interest in the cause of missions, and especially as carried forward in Persia, where thirty-seven years of an earnest life were consecrated to the Master's service.

H. M. P.

REV. JUSTIN PERKINS, D.D.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

SPECIAL interest is always felt in the work of a pioneer. Some are pioneers with the purpose of seeking a fortune. Others to aid some military project. Others to open avenues for commerce. Others that they may add to the rich treasures of science. Greater than that of any or all of these combined, is the purpose of him who goes to open paths of fresh conquest for the kingdom of Christ and to carry the message of salvation to nations that for ages have not felt the throb of spiritual life.

A glance at the missionary field in Persia will give the reader an impression of its present prosperous condition.

The work begun and for years successfully carried forward by the American Board, was in 1871 transferred to the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church. The missions of this Board in Persia now comprise five stations and several outstations.

In the Western Mission, at Oroomiah, are Rev. Messrs. John H. Shedd, D. D., J. E. Rogers and their wives; Joseph P. Cochran, M. D. and his wife; Mrs. D. P. Cochran, Miss N. J. Dean, Miss M. Morgan, Miss E. Cochran, Miss M. K. Van Duzee. At Tabriz are Rev. Messrs. J. M. Oldfather

and S. G. Wilson and their wives; Dr. G. W. Holmes and wife; Miss M. Jewett, Miss G. Y. Holliday, Mrs. L. C. Van Hook. At Salmas are Rev. F. G. Coan and his wife, Miss C. O. Van Duzee and Rev. J. N. Wright.

In the Eastern Mission, at Teheran, are Rev. Messrs. J. L. Potter, S. L. Ward and their wives; W. W. Torrence, M. D., and his wife; Misses S. J. Bassett, Cora Bartlett and Annie G. Dale.

At Hamadan are Rev. J. W. Hawkes, Mrs. Hawkes and Miss Annie Montgomery.

It will thus be seen that there is access to a much larger territory than when missionary effort was begun about fifty years ago. Christian work and influence have been extending from the Nestorians to the Mohammedan population.

Our interest in any place may depend somewhat on our knowledge of the way to reach it. Making America the starting point, a traveler to Persia can take passage by steamer from New York or other Atlantic ports to Liverpool or other ports in Great Britain or on the Continent. A variety of routes are then open to Constantinople, some by steamer and others partly by railway and partly by steamer. Those sailing from Constantinople land at Batoum. Those sailing from Odessa land at Poti. From both these ports of the Black Sea, there is a railway eastward to Tiflis. Missionaries for western Persia leave the cars here, go by carriage to the Aras river, the boundary between Russia and Persia, and from thence by horseback. Missionaries for eastern Persia proceed by cars from Poti or Batoum to Baku, on the Caspian Sea, from thence by boat to Enzelli. Some parties recently making the trip to or from Persia avoided the Black Sea entirely, continuing the carriage ride two days' journey north of Tiflis and reaching the railroad at Vladicofkas.



When in 1833 Justin Perkins accompanied by Mrs. Perkins first entered Persia, the route taken was somewhat different. The facilities for traveling were far less. There were more dangers and delays. Six months elapsed before reaching the place of destination. So unusual was it in that day to undertake such an enterprise, we cannot wonder the friends of those pioneers in bidding them farewell, never expected to meet them again on earth.

Justin Perkins was well fitted by his earnest consecration, strong faith, Christian tact and constant purpose, to be the pioneer of missionary work in Persia. Had he merely laid the foundation for future labors and opened the resources of that field, this alone would render his service of great value. But his mission did not end with the important work of a pioneer. He continued in that land for years, to take part in nearly all the branches of missionary effort and to witness great changes. Second only in the order of time to what he did as pioneer, was the great task of constructing a modern Syriac literature. He thus gave the Nestorians of Persia what they had never before enjoyed, books in their own spoken language. By his scholarly tastes, he was not only enabled to promote the cause of Christianity in Persia, but to co-operate with those who were engaged in Biblical research elsewhere. He had the ability to discover and obtain manuscript treasures for Europe and America through the personal regard with which the Nestorians were inspired for him. This shows indirectly the influence he had as a missionary, directly, his character for integrity and brotherly kindness. It also shows the influence he had on the ecclesiastics of that region, together with the general confidence and esteem in which he was held, even among Persian officials and Koordish chiefs. Those who knew him felt that he desired their

highest good. His personal intercourse among the Nestorians especially, might be characterized by the words of the Apostle: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."

## CHAPTER II.

## BIRTHPLACE—BOYHOOD AND STUDENT LIFE.

LIKE many who have made their lives significant of good to the church and the world, Justin Perkins was born and reared in a country home. This was near the Connecticut valley, and in the vicinity of Holyoke and Tom, two of New England's classic mountains. He was the fourth son of Mr. William and Mrs. Judith Perkins, and was born March 12, 1805, in the northern part of West Springfield, now a part of Holyoke, Mass.

His advantages of early education were limited to a primary school. When out of school much of his time was occupied with farming. From his parents he had the advantage of Christian instruction. He was thus early guided to the love of what is good and true, and led to see the need of taking a decided stand for Christ. At the age of eighteen, and during the progress of a revival, serious thoughts were awakened in his mind. Conscience henceforward became a faithful monitor. His feeling of need increased, and he was led to a personal and hearty acceptance of Christ as the Savior. In his experience, as in that of many others, the absorbing question became this, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do." He was desirous of knowing in what manner of life he could best promote the glory of God. To him it appeared very plain that God was honored in the salvation of men, and that the preaching of the gospel was the special method by which men are brought to repentance. He thus