

**THE PERSIAN FLOWER: A
MEMOIR OF
JUDITH GRANT PERKINS
OF OROOMIAH, PERSIA**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649180509

The Persian flower: a memoir of Judith Grant Perkins of Oroomiah, Persia by Judith Grant Perkins

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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"THE FLOWER FADETH." Isaiah 40: 7.

BOSTON:

JOHN P. JEWETT AND COMPANY:

CLEVELAND, OHIO:

JEWETT, PROCTOR AND WORTHINGTON.

LONDON: LOW AND COMPANY.

1858.

P R E F A C E .

THE young stranger, to whom the kind reader is introduced in this brief Memoir, will, it is humbly believed, awaken more than a passing interest, both from the many natural and acquired traits of loveliness which she possessed, and from the circumstances of her birth and residence, as well as her sudden and sorely lamented death, in a far off missionary land.

The beautiful "Persian Flower" indeed soon faded; but it was spared long enough, not only to shed a sweet and lasting fragrance upon the dear circle of missionary and numerous other friends among whom it was graciously permitted to blossom, but also to unfold those richer beauties, which shall bloom, we trust, in immortal verdure, on the "banks of the river of life."

That little Judith, as she will often be designated, (though at her death, she had nearly attained the stature and maturity of womanhood,) was, in the strongest sense, a very remarkable character, will not be urged. Nor is it believed, that the light of her youthful example and loveliness would

have been in any sense more sacred and valuable, had she possessed more precocious and unattainable endowments. But that she was a highly gifted and very amiable, as well as dearly beloved, child, will, I think, abundantly appear from the following narrative. Indeed, as is there suggested, Judith was rather remarkable for the beauty and symmetry of her entire character, than for the striking development of any one trait, or any dazzling peculiarity.

And as this fair "flower" may have owed something of its sweetness to the mild and sunny skies of the balmy East, which gave it existence — a land to which the lines of Bishop Heber would not be unaptly applied,

"Where every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile,"

so will its loss, from the family and peculiar circle, from which it was so suddenly snatched away, awaken a deeper and more melancholy interest. Under any circumstances, we deeply mourn the premature "nippings of those bright blossoms;" but the heart can but be touched with a more tender sorrow, when the breach is made in the family and circle of missionaries, exiled from the society and congenialities of home and kindred, and subject to the vicissitudes and trials of a residence among a foreign people and in a distant clime.

And as none have perhaps been more fondly cherished, than the few cultivated, exemplary, and pious children of missionaries, who have been providentially allowed to share the fellowship and hospitalities of the churches, so no class, it

is believed, will be counted more deserving of prayerful regard and of sacred remembrance, than these precious exotics, reared as they are, amid the corruptions of surrounding ungodliness and depravity. And it is in no small degree with the hope of contributing to a better acquaintance, and a more lively sympathy with these dear offspring of the servants of the churches, that this sketch, interesting peculiarly, as it will perhaps be, to the circle of missionary acquaintances and the numerous friends of our beloved and deeply stricken brother and sister, so often previously bereaved, is given to the public.

There is another consideration, which will give peculiar interest to the following sketch. It is *the memoir of a missionary child*; and as such, gives a glimpse into the interior of missionary life. The family hearth, the private and social endearments, and the every day pursuits and concerns of the missionary's *home*, with which there is a strong and almost universal desire to become acquainted, are here presented, as they cannot well be in the records of general missionary labors, as they appear in our periodicals; or in the memoirs of the more public services of adult missionaries.

It is believed, also, that the numerous notes of condolence, addressed to the bereaved parents, which are introduced towards the close of the volume, will be read with deep interest, as illustrating, in an incidental but affecting manner, the fraternal relations and fellowship existing among missionaries of the same and of different missions.

It is proper to add, what will doubtless occur to those familiar with the productions of the respected father of the

deceased, that a large proportion of the matter has been prepared by him. The labor of the writer of this preface has been trifling indeed; and he would only remark in conclusion, that whatever aid he may have furnished, has been most heartily and spontaneously given, as he cannot doubt will also be, the tribute of interest and sympathy felt by the kind reader.

It only remains that we briefly state the history of the larger portrait which accompanies this memoir. The parents had no likeness of the dear child at the time of her death, the rude state of the fine arts, in the land of their missionary sojourn, rendering it difficult to obtain such mementos. In their anguish, after the death of their greatly beloved daughter, with not even the solace of a likeness of her, one of their associates applied to H. A. Churchill, Esq., a very talented young Englishman, who had visited Judith's home about a month before her death, as secretary of the British Commission, under Colonel Williams, for settling the boundary between Turkey and Persia; who was known to be a remarkably skilful artist, and was now at Constantinople, thirteen hundred miles distant from Oroomiah. Four months had elapsed, after Mr. Churchill's very brief acquaintance with Judith, when the application that he should attempt to furnish a likeness of her, reached him. Notwithstanding the difficulties of the undertaking, he kindly and promptly applied himself to the task; how modestly, his own language in the letter accompanying the likeness may best tell: "I have tried to bring together my faint ideas of poor Miss Judith's features, and I herewith forward to you a sketch, which, ac-

ording to the members of the two commissions, [the British and the Russian,] looks very much like the poor girl. You conceive that it is a very difficult thing; and if you, who have seen more of her, find that the sketch does not in reality resemble her, you will naturally excuse me."

While the portrait, taken under such peculiar disadvantages, bore a strong general resemblance to the original, it had some points of dissimilarity, more easily detected, of course, from recollection, by those long and familiarly acquainted with Judith, than by a stranger. In these circumstances, Mr. Stoddard, one of her parents' associates, applied his skilful hand, (before unpractised on portraits,) and made some slight modifications in Mr. Churchill's picture, the result of which was so successful, that even the Nestorians, who were acquainted with Judith, would instantly weep when that picture met their eyes, though uninformed that it was intended as the portrait of the loved departed one, except by the likeness itself.

A MISSIONARY ASSOCIATE OF JUDITH'S PARENTS.

Oroomiah, Persia, Jan. 1853.