

WOMAN AND THE GOSPEL IN PERSIA

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649438686

Woman and the Gospel in Persia by Thomas Laurie

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

THOMAS LAURIE

**WOMAN AND THE
GOSPEL IN PERSIA**

SECOND EDITION.
MISSIONARY ANNALS.
(A SERIES.)

WOMAN AND THE GOSPEL
IN PERSIA.

BY

REV. THOMAS LAURIE, D. D.

FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY,
NEW YORK: 30 Union Square: East. | CHICAGO: 148 and 150 Madison Street.
Publishers of Evangelical Literature.

KD 55545

HARVARD
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY
JAN 10 1957

Jackson

COPYRIGHT, 1937, BY THE
WOMAN'S PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF MISSIONS
OF THE NORTHWEST.

CONTENTS.

- CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTORY.
- " II. THE NESTORIANS.
- " III. THE BEGINNINGS.
- " IV. THE SEMINARY.
- " V. EARLY LABORS FOR WOMEN.
- " VI. REVIVALS.
- " VII. FIRST FRUITS.
- " VIII. DARK DAYS.
- " IX. PRAYERFULNESS OF NESTORIAN CONVERTS.
- " X. THE MOUNTAIN NESTORIANS.
- " XI. CONCLUSION.

NOTE.

THIS book is an abridgment of "Woman and her Savior in Persia," by Rev. Thomas Laurie, D. D., and has been generously prepared by him and presented to the Woman's Presbyterian Board of Missions of the Northwest, for this series.

Necessarily much of the larger work has been omitted, and it is hoped that the perusal of these pages will induce many to read the original work (303 pages, Congregational Publishing Society, Boston, Mass., price \$1.25). That volume contains, among other things, the best map yet prepared of the Nestorian country, a number of illustrations, prepared by a missionary, among them views of the Seminary where Miss Fiske taught, many interesting letters from Nestorian women and several compositions by the pupils, (pages 242-262), one of them the Bible story of Hannah, from an Oriental stand-point, together with many details of missionary history for which this pamphlet has not room. That same want of room has led the writer to try to strike out every superfluous word from these pages.

W. P. B. M. OF THE N. W.

Woman and the Gospel

IN PERSIA.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

MAY 1, 1816, in the quiet hill town of Shelburne, Mass., Fidelia Fiske began her earthly life. July 12, 1831, she became a member of the church there. In 1842, she graduated at Mt. Holyoke Seminary, and had just begun her work as teacher in that institution, when she sailed for Persia, March 1, 1843. For fifteen years she was principal of the Girls' Seminary at Oroomiah, and of more than a thousand missionaries whom he had known, Dr. Anderson said that none left a brighter record than hers. He adds, "It seemed as though she spoke and acted just as I would have expected the Saviour to speak and act in the same situation."

A returned missionary felt that some written record should be made of her labors, and as he could not induce her to make it, made it himself from materials furnished by her. It was reward enough to have her write to a friend. "I feel that God sent him to do it." It was done none too soon for on July 26, of the following year, she entered into rest.

CHAPTER II

THE NESTORIANS.*

THIS people are Syrians. They speak a modern dialect of the Ancient Syriac which is the language our Saviour spoke when on earth, and ecclesiastically belong to the ancient Syrian Church. The Patriarch always bears the name of Mar Shimon (Lord Simon) as the successor of Simon Peter. Their country commences on the banks of the river Tigris, occupies the western slopes of central Kurdistan and reaches down to the Eastern declivities to the lake of Oroomiah. For centuries they have been oppressed by the Moslems. They have not been allowed to be merchants, only the coarsest kinds of handicraft have been open to them, and a decent garment has been safe on a Nestorian only when hidden under rags. Mohammedan law gave the property of the family to any member of it that became a Moslem, so when Moslem noblemen seized Nestorian girls for their harems, they claimed the entire possession of the outraged family in the name of their victim at the same time. Their language had no word for home. Several generations eat, slept and did all household work in a single room. This was lighted by a hole in the earthen roof that served for chimney, so that the interior glistened with smoke as though coated with black varnish. The earthen floor was partly covered with coarse straw mats, and in dry weather the earth sifted down from the ceiling of

*There is no country of Nestoria as some speak of it. The name Nestorians is ecclesiastical, not geographical, derived from Nestorius the Patriarch of Constantinople in A. D. 428.

rough sticks, or, after rain, poured down in the form of mud. In the mountains some houses are half under ground, and occupied by herds and flocks as well as men, so as to utilize the animal heat, for wood is scarce, and dried manure is often the only fuel. The influence of such abodes on neatness and morality need not be told. Yonan wrote in 1858, "Widow Hatoon tries to have family prayer, but it is very difficult. To use her own words, 'we are all in one room and our beds are very near each other. When we retire, as there is no separate chamber, I gather them behind a quilt and talk and pray with them.'" Truly where there is a will there is also a way, but how many would follow Hatoon's example? Vermin of all kinds abound. Mrs. Grant burst into tears the first time she detected a certain insect on her clothing, but it was not the last one, for contact with the natives renews the supply, however thoroughly the pests may have been destroyed. Did not the Master suffer in the same way in His seeking for that which was lost? If such houses are full of discomfort in health, what are they in sickness? Mothers often have no better sick-room than Mary found in Bethlehem. Many are born and many mothers die every year among the cattle. Mothers also labored in the field, carrying their babes as well as their rude hoes and other tools. Then at night they cook for their husbands and wait on them at table before they eat themselves. The birth of a daughter was mourned over, nor were they reckoned in counting the family. It was deemed dishonorable to enquire after the health of a wife, nor might she speak to her husband before his parents, who, it will be remembered, lived in the same room. There was scarcely a husband who did not beat his wife, and such treatment yielded the natural fruit of bitter hate.

The change wrought by the grace of God appears in an inci-