

## Persia.

Persia possesses a peculiar interest for students of Christian missions, inasmuch as it was from that country that the first Gentile worshippers of Christ—the three wise men—came, bringing offerings of gold, frankincense and myrrh. They were not idolators, but followers of what Dr. Murray Mitchell calls “the best and purest of all Pagan creeds, Parsiism.” Parsiism was the ancient religion of Persia, but it has been crushed out under the iron heel of Mohammedanism, which has long been the national faith.

The population of Persia has never been actually enumerated, but is estimated in round numbers at about 8,000,000 ; consisting of Moslems, who are the predominant class, and including Kurds, Turks and Arabs ; nominal Christians—Armenians, Nestorians and Catholics ; and the Jews, who are quite numerous. Mission work is carried on among all these classes by the American Presbyterian Board in the north of Persia, and by the Church Missionary Society of England in the south ; the latter having their centre of operations at Isfahan.

The work among the Nestorians, founded by the A. B. C. F. M. in 1836, and transferred to the American Presbyterian Church in 1871, and since continued by them, has been very successful. Showers of blessing have repeatedly fallen upon this mission, and much precious fruit has been gathered in. It was in connection with the Nestorian mission in Persia that the saintly Fidelia Fisk gave fifteen years of devoted, loving service for her Master.

At a jubilee celebration in Oroomiah in 1885, commemorating half a century of missionary labour among the Nestorians, there were present about 2,000 persons, nearly one-half of whom were women and girls. It was stated then, that fifty years before there were only two women in the entire Nestorian nation who could read, and the request was made that all the women present who could read the New Testament would rise to their feet. “Imagine our gratification,” writes one who was present, “when 800 arose.” It was a sight never to be forgotten by those present, who saw those daughters of the East, with intelligent and beaming faces, rise up *en masse* and remain standing until they were counted. And these were only representatives from