

difficulties. Naturally wilful and wayward, her mother's firm but loving hand taught her to submit her will to authority, and as she became old enough to apprehend her relations to God, it became comparatively easy to transfer her obedience to His higher authority. In 1831, at the age of fifteen, she publicly professed her faith. She no sooner began to "follow" Christ, than she became a "fisher for men." Eight years later she came under the influence of that most remarkable teacher that America has yet produced—Mary Lyon—a woman who combined in herself many of the best qualities of Abelard, Arnold, of Rugby, and Pestalozzi. There Fidelia felt the sway of the imperial intellect and seraphic love of Mary Lyon. There she learned how that invisible Power which we call the Holy Spirit, could convince of sin and teach penitent souls to pray, believe, and in turn become teachers of others. There she learned, what she never forgot, that conversion is a phenomenon which can be accounted for on no mere philosophy of naturalism, but is plainly the work of God! During this time she came so near to death with typhoid fever that she looked over the border-land into the awful august world of spirits, and henceforth the reality of that unseen world she never doubted. She had gotten a glimpse of those light-crowned Alps that lie beyond the clouds of our human horizon.

While she was teaching at Holyoke, that seminary was marvellously pervaded with a missionary spirit. Fidelia's uncle, Rev. Pliny Fiske, had gone forth to the sacred city of Jerusalem, when she was but three years old, and had died shortly after, and the impressions made by his consecration she had never lost. When Dr. Perkins came to Holyoke to find a missionary teacher for Persia, Fidelia Fiske was ready, and she told Miss Lyon she would go. Those two, the great teacher and her scarcely less great pupil, drove thirty miles through snow-drifts to the mother's home, and at eleven o'clock at night awoke a sleeping household to ask whether Fidelia might obey the Lord's call to Persia. There was little more slumber that Saturday night, and before the Sabbath sun set the devoted mother bade her daughter follow the Lord's voice. "Go, my child, go!" said she, and that precious daughter went. Before she arrived at Oroomiah she received word that sixty young ladies, unconverted when she left, had but *six* who still remained unbelieving. It was a prophecy and a foretaste of what was before her as the head and teacher of another Holyoke Seminary in Persia!

The people among whom she was to labour presented no hopeful field. The Nestorians had a form of godliness without its power. The Koords were fierce and lawless. The Mohammedans were bigoted and intolerant. The habits of the people were unspeakably repulsive to a delicate and refined nature like Miss Fiske's. One room was the Nestorian house. Cleanliness and decency were alike impossible. The vermin were so thick upon the children that it was well they were nearly nude, since the vermin had fewer hiding places. Woman in Persia was unwelcome at birth, untaught in childhood, uncherished in wifedom and motherhood, unprotected in old age, and unlamented in death—the tool of man's tyranny, the victim of his passions, the slave of his wants. Lying, stealing, and profanity, were common vices among them. They were coarse and degraded, passionate and quarrelsome, and, like birds in a cage, content with their slavery. They laughed at the absurdity of a woman's being educated.