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**A tour in South Africa: with notices of Natal, Mauritius, Madagascar, Ceylon,
Egypt, and Palestine.**

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London:
John Snow, 35, Paternoster Row.
1851

(p. 467...

I went this morning to see the Samaritan synagogue, and on my way was shown a large room or house, *said* to be the residence occupied by Jacob when he heard of the death of Joseph, as related by his brethren who had sold him, and where the fond father wept so bitterly. There is an ancient inscription on a stone in the wall of the syna- (p. 468) gogue, said to be as ancient as the building. I wished I could have taken a copy of it. I named it afterwards to Mr. Nicolayson, and begged him to endeavour to procure it. There is a very ancient copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch in the synagogue, which the rabbi showed me, after some little coy reserve. Its age is not known.

One of the most delightful and refreshing things to be seen in Nablous, is the abundant supply of water. It rolls through many of the streets in large streams, and might be made to keep the place as clean as Regent-street itself, instead of leaving it, as it actually is, dirty as the dirtiest part of the east of London in November weather.

A fine view is obtained of the two mountains, Ebal and Gerizim, from the court of the Samaritan synagogue. These mountains of "blessing" and "cursing" run parallel to each other, north and south—Ebal on the north, and Gerizim on the south. Sychar is built in the valley between them. See Deut. xi. 29; and xxvii. 11—13.

There stands a place of worship on Gerizim still. The Samaritans have an annual procession there for religious worship. To this mountain the Samaritan woman referred in conversation with the Saviour at the well. The old rabbi told me there were Samaritans at Paris, and that they had a synagogue there. Nablous seems a busy place for a Syrian town; it has an air of industry about it that is gratifying. Many of the people are employed in the manufacture of cotton cloth.

We started for Jenin about eight o'clock, and proceeded first to the *well* of Samaria. The upper part is choked up, but by going down a little distance, and removing a stone that covers the mouth of the well, it is still found there, and is deep. There is a good deal of masonry near the well, indicating some buildings in former times. This is all on the road from Jerusalem in coming to Sychar, and near to the spot where that road winds round the foot of Gerizim, in turning up the valley towards Sychar.

It was impossible to visit the spot—still retaining the (p. 469) ancient name of Bir Jacob, the "well of Jacob"—without thinking much of the visit, and scenes and conversations so beautifully and graphically described by John, chapter iv. Near this spot

is shown Joseph's tomb, probably the real site of the interment of Jacob's beloved son. See Joshua xxiv. 32.

For a long distance our route continued amidst cultivated land, and where figs and olives abounded. Our direct course was to *Sebaste*, the ancient Samaria, and chief city of the kings of Israel, after the revolt of the ten tribes under Rehoboam. It is now a poor village, occupied by a few of the Fellahin; but it was once great and noble. It had splendid buildings and a large population; but it is overthrown, and presents a scene of dreariness and desolation, just according to the prophecy of Micah i. 1—6. Lord Lindsay says, " he was never so forcibly struck with the fulfilment of prophecy, as when walking over the hill of Samaria."

The two things that chiefly attracted my notice were, the remains of an old church, of considerable architectural beauty, some pillars, cornices, and part of the dome of which yet remain tolerably perfect; and some pillars, standing in the form of colonnades, forming part of the two sides of a quadrangle. These are supposed to be the work of Herod, to whom the country was indebted for many magnificent works.

We passed on to *Jenin*, and found accommodation in a native house, which was empty, and swept, but not " garnished;" and left by the owner entirely for my accommodation, and it answered its purpose perfectly well.

The Rev. Mr. Nicolayson and his daughter were there, on their way back to Jerusalem, from a visit to the north. They had just come from Nazareth. I took tea with them, and much enjoyed the hour's intercourse I had in their society. Mr. Nicolayson is very familiar with the country. It is twenty-five years since he first came to Jerusalem, and he has been resident there nearly twenty years, in connexion

This reference is not located in *A Bibliography of the Samaritans, Third Edition, Revised, Expanded, and Annotated*, by Alan David Crown and Reinhard Pummer, ATLA Bibliography, No. 51, **The Scarecrow Press, Inc.** Lanham, Maryland, Toronto, Oxford. 2005

Comment from the book:

PREFACE.

IN the Autumn of 1848, I was requested by the Directors of the London Missionary Society to proceed to the Cape of Good Hope, with the view of visiting their numerous Missions in South Africa ; and from thence to proceed to the Island of Mauritius, to visit the Missions there; and particularly to institute inquiries respecting the Native Christians in Madagascar, and the prospects of that still afflicted country.

Having accomplished these objects, I preferred to take the Overland Route on my way home, instead of returning by the Cape; and I accordingly proceeded from Port Louis to Ceylon, where I embarked for Suez. Having passed some little time in Egypt, I Visited Palestine, and returned from Beyrut to England, by way of Alexandria and Malta.