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The Marriage of Near Kin
Considered with Respect to the
Laws of Nations, The Results of Experience
And the Teachings of Biology
By **Alfred Henry Huth**
Second Edition, Revised
London
Longmans, Green, and Co.
And New York: 15 East 16th Street
1887

Printed by Spottiswoode and Co., New Street Square, London

(p. 172)

There is some doubt whether the old Samaritans were a half-bred race, or whether they were a pure race, removed to Samaria by Esarhaddon in place of the captives of Shalmaneser. If they were a pure race they were probably an Assyrian colony, on whose fidelity the king was able to rely. If a mixed race they may have been remnants of the ten tribes, or a fusion of these, Phoenicians and Syrians, or a colony from a great distance placed there by the Assyrians. But whatever their origin, they were, by the force of circumstances, a peculiarly isolated race. Like the Chosen People, they spurned all connection with the neighbouring races, and were spurned in their turn by the Jews themselves. Stung by this contempt—a contempt which naturally followed from the exclusive ideas and laws which clung to the Jews even in their bondage—the Samaritans arrogated to themselves that title which the Jews refused to share with them, and thenceforward a hate burned between them, only possible between neighbouring nations holding different and bigoted religious views. They were exclusive then, they are an exclusive family now. Though they had been slaughtered in thousands by Alexander, by Pilate, and by Vespasian, Epiphanius in the fourth century considered that the Christians had more to fear from the Samaritans than from all their other adversaries. In the fifth century they justified this prediction by an outrage on the Christian population, which was so severely punished that they sank into an obscurity scarcely broken until the sixteenth century.¹

In 1855 there were sixty-five men and boys, and about 130 women and girls.² In 1872 they were reduced by constant ill-treatment and persecution to 135, of whom eighty were males. About the same time Jacob-esh-Shallaby was excommunicated and retired with his family, thus reducing the total to 130. Lieutenant Conder, like all previous observers, extols their beauty and physique highly. 'The beauty of their priestly family,' he says, 'is remarkable; the aquiline nose, the lustrous brown eyes, the thick under lip, the crisp hair, the peach-like down of the complexion, are pre-eminently Jewish.'³ In 1881 he again

¹ Smith, *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. 'Samaria.'

² Rogers, *Notices of the Samaritans*, etc. p. 51. London, 1855.

³ Conder, *Tent Work in Palestine*, 1878, i. 35, 36, 54.

observes: 'The Samaritans appear (p. 174) to be prospering, as their numbers have increased from 135 to 160 souls; and I was much impressed with the fine physique and handsome countenances of the men, which seem to contradict the idea that the race is dying out, as does also the fact that the number of males is considerably in excess of that of the females: 98 to 62.'⁴

Comments on this section from the Editor of theSamaritanUpdate.com

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

⁴ Conder, *Reports to the Palestine Exploration Fund, 1881*. The risk of a wrong proportion of the sexes, owing to the limited numbers of isolated communities, is the great difficulty, as also in the case of breeders of animals.