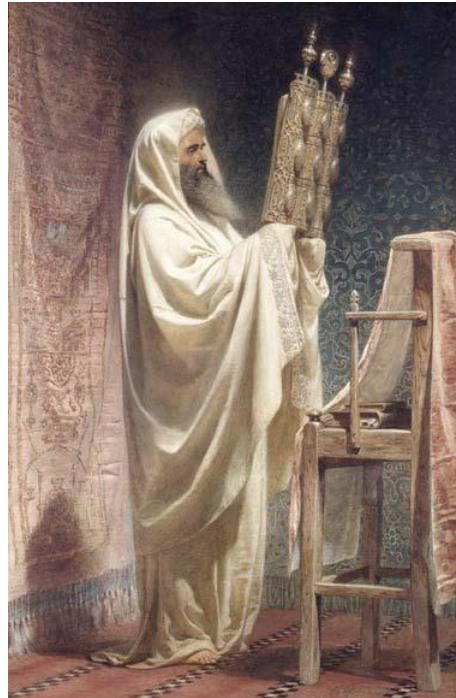


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Kaheen Amran- The High Priest of the Samaritans (1869)
By **Carl Haag** RWS (1820- 1914)
(Photo added by this Editor)

The Sunday Magazine
For Family Reading
1875

London
Daldy, Isbister, & Co.
56, Ludgate Hill
1875

(p. 154)

The SAMARITANS

By the Late **James Finn**, Formerly Her Majesty's Consul for Jerusalem
And Palestine.

I.

There is before me at this moment, framed and glazed, a bold print from the painting of
Carl Haag, representing the Priest of the Samaritans in the act of reading the Manuscript

Roll of the Pentateuch to the congregation in the Synagogue—a picture of remarkable exactness, except in the personal likeness of the priest himself: dignified it really is, but the face is not the face of 'Amran ben Shalmah.

The picture is, however, to me, one of peculiar interest, bringing up, as it does, reminiscences of familiar persons and events. With the mind's eye, I see the poverty of the walls and the special physiognomy of the small congregation beyond what the picture gives of the cheap mat upon the floor, and the rudely constructed, unpainted deal chair, placed so as to serve as a reading-desk, but over which hangs a strip of silk embroidery. There is also the large veil, concealing the *masbah*, or sacred recess in which the "perpetual lamp" is burning, and where the rolls of the sacred law are kept; that veil is embroidered with texts from the law, in their peculiar alphabet, and was the handiwork of 'Amran's great-grandmother; lastly, the gilded ornamentation above the embossed silver-gilt case, in which the exhibited manuscript is contained.

But my recollections of the Samaritan people are not limited to festal celebrations as here represented. I have dwelt in their dwellings, taken knowledge of their family sorrows and their general humiliation, and, thanks to our Government at home some years ago, been able to procure for them relief from the pressure of local tyranny.

Just now, before taking up the pen, I have spent some time in the perusal of old letters received from Samaritans, with date from 1852 to 1863, upon a diversity of topics, not, however, of extensive range, and they seem to represent old friends speaking, telling out their wishes or necessities. In each letter there start up scenes and characters surrounding the letter-writer himself, and even the dates and seal signatures are suggestive of further matters still.*

Such being the nature of my relations to the Samaritan community, it would be beside my object to follow in the train of our Kennicott, or De Sacy of Paris, Juynboll of Amsterdam, or Gesenius of Germany, or any others, for investigation of their literature or theology; mine is a task of more humble aim than theirs; all the relation I can hold to (p. 155) De Sacy lies in the circumstance of having seen and conversed with old Salamah the priest (Shalmah, as he was called among his people), who had been his correspondent, and who, at the time of my interviews with him, was too feeble from age to officiate in the public service beyond pronouncing the Aaronic benediction; the other functions were delegated to his eldest son, 'Amran. 'Amran became my most frequent correspondent in affairs of the community.

It is here taken for granted that the reader knows already there are a few families living together on the skirts of Mount Gerizim, at Nablus, under the name of the sect⁺ (or community) of Samaritans; the small relic of a much larger people of ancient date—a people who, in the Apocryphal books, in Josephus, and in the New Testament, are represented as living in a state of perpetual hostility to the Jews of Judaea and Galilee, between which two provinces they had and have their station;— also that this people have the law of Moses, and live according to its precepts as near as circumstances permit, but reject all other books of the Bible; that they keep up a line of priesthood from ancient times, derived, as they claim, from Aaron, and have their sacred books in the Hebrew

* The seal of 'Amran contains a motto alluding to his father's name as well as his own, "Salam 'aln ch'l 'Amran."

⁺ The word sect is employed in no disparaging sense; it is the corresponding word for *Tayifeh* in common Arabic use.

language, though written in an alphabetic character different from that of the Jews, closely resembling that of the Phoenicians of old, one copy of which is affirmed to be in the identical handwriting of Abishua, grandson of Aaron; that they never intermarry with other nations or religions; that they believe themselves to be the true unmixed children of Israel, whatever the Jews may be; and that the enmity between them and the latter remains in force to our times.

In all these respects they cannot but excite peculiar interest among the learned of every degree in Europe, whether Jew or Christian, with a desire to know more about them. For many ages they and their books were lost to observation; but, from the commencement of the seventeenth century, copies of their Pentateuch have been in Christian possession and subjected to our criticism, and the last forty years have brought numerous travellers into their country and city; yet there remains much room for inquiry regarding the Samaritans.

Surely so strange a people, with so remarkable a history, must form an important link in the chain of evidence for the verity of the law received on Mount Sinai, and recorded by Moses the lawgiver. It is difficult to conceive the effect likely to be produced on so primitive and conservative a community by telling them that profound thinkers and great scholars in Europe have now discovered that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses, but is a compilation of the Jews made near the end of their national history; what would they think of our "free handling" and "higher criticism?"—they, dissevered as they are from both Jewish and Gentile erudition, and with just sufficient copyist variation in their Pentateuch from ours to show that they were not taken from modern or even what we should term ancient editions.

But what is the history of this community? According to the Jews they are mere descendants of the remote heathen colonists placed in the country by the Assyrian conquerors, to fill up the place of the ten tribes of Israel deported into Assyria, but who, after undergoing much trouble and suffering, were instructed in the religion of the old Israelitish owners of the land by a priest sent back for the purpose, and he taught them from his settlement at Bethel. These incidents are recorded in 2 Kings xvii.; but whether they are sufficient to account for all the circumstances that we know of is still a question at issue.

A great reformation of religion must have taken place among them, not only by means of the priest at Bethel, but also when Josiah, the-king of the neighbouring realm of Judah, invaded the country, and forcibly destroyed all the public remnants of idolatry at Bethel and in the cities of Samaria. Thenceforward we hear no more of the golden calves of Jeroboam, or of Succoth-benoth, or Nergal, or Ashima, or the rest of the trans-Euphratic idols, and indeed of no animosity between them and the kingdom of Judah during the hundred and thirty years preceding the captivity of the latter by the Chaldeans. On the return of these under the Persians, the Samaritans even offered to help in rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem: to this, however, they had no right according to the imperial edict; besides that, they had acknowledged themselves to be colonists brought in by the Assyrians (Ezra iv. 2). No doubt the proposal was made in unfriendly craftiness, for we know that political rivalry led them to put obstacles in the way of rebuilding the city; but still there must have existed an outward conformity in religion. Since that time we find only dissension and hatred between the Jews and Samaritans.

(p.156) The Hellenist Jews, prior to the Christian era, speak of the latter as "that foolish people that dwell in Sicheim" (Ecclus. I. 26), and Josephus calls them in a body without distinction, "apostates from the Jewish nation" (Ant., xi. 8, 6) when they were dealing with the conqueror Alexander.

On the other hand, the Samaritans take up high ground, and assert themselves to be the true Israelites of the ten tribes, under the presidency (Hegemony is the modern political term) of Ephraim, from whom the two tribes seceded, and set up a rival kingdom and temple under David and Solomon, and who, in the course of time, have written their own party history to favour their schismatical conduct. They affirm that they have never been entirely dispossessed of the mountains of Ephraim, where they have held fast to the Mount Gerizim, which was sanctified by so many events of old—the mountain whereon Noah's ark rested; where Abraham led Isaac his son for a sacrifice; and which was Jacob's Bethel, with the vision of angels' where also the divine law was written on great stones (which are still buried there), and rehearsed in the audience of all the nation; where the blessings, also, that are pronounced for obedience were recited by Joshua—that being the place which the Lord did choose to set his name there from among all the twelve tribes of his peculiar people—from all which premisses it must needs follow that all sacrifices or divine worship made elsewhere have been schismatical, and the priestly succession invalid ever since the holy ark was removed out of the ten tribes from Shiloh at the death of Eli.

It is not necessary here to reply to the arguments given above, however tempting; but very much of the merits of points in dispute depends upon what may have been the amount of preponderance in the composition of the Samaritan nation of old, whether the Cuthaeon or the Ephraimitic element prevailed, yet, as Christians, we can have no hesitation in saying that they were two thousand years ago a mixed people; seeing that, without argumentation, we have our infallible Teacher declaring of the Samaritan leper that was healed (Luke xvii. 18), that he was ἀλλογενής, a word signifying "of alien race." But one thing is certain and noteworthy, that both Jews and Samaritans are *now* free from the practice of idolatrous worship, both being of one mind in the exclamation, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One Lord." Still they will be unable really to coalesce until both have learned the true doctrine contained in the fourth chapter of John's Gospel, the doctrine which breaks down all walls of partition between nations under the spiritual Fatherhood of the God of all. Some unlearned Samaritans have been known to stigmatize the Jews as Cuthaeans; and one of their number replied to a question of mine as to whom he supposed the modern Jews to be, that he thought they were an offshoot from among them at some unknown ancient period. And, on the other side, I remember a conversation with some Jews on the beach of the Lake of Tiberias, when Rabbi Jacob Abulafia, one of the most learned of that place, told us that he had often spoken with the Samaritans in Nablus, and had taken pains to read their books. He gave some ridiculous mimicry of their pronunciation of Hebrew in reading the law, and added that the Secretary 'Abd es Samari, having spoken irreverently of Solomon's Temple, and of King David having deliberately planned the schism of his two tribes beforehand by writing poems to make people believe that the Lord had chosen Zion for his dwelling-place, and had a delight in her, "Then," said R. Jacob, "I could bear it no longer, but, starting on my feet, I cried out, 'If you dare to speak another word against King David and Solomon and the Psalms, I will pull that beard out of your face, depend upon it.'"

Being myself one day a guest in a room full of Samaritans, all seated on the divans, and 'Amran presiding, I asked, "Are you on friendly terms with the few Jews living here in Nablus?" and was answered, "Yes, pretty fairly;" whereupon, a man near the door stood bolt-upright, and said, "No; we are only friends from the teeth outwards—we hate them, and they hate us." And it is to be observed that, whenever brought to Jerusalem for either purposes of trade or for local business with the government, the Samaritans lodge with the Karaite Jews; no others would receive them: but these being a small and hated sect, can so far sympathize with the Samaritans as to give them hospitality.

As a Christian, and not unacquainted with the history and relevancy of such controversy, I felt of course a lively interest in meeting with such a people, and it was truly startling at first to find oneself leaping over a gulf of many centuries, and to be on speaking terms with both parties at issue on the very matters which they passionately argued two thousand years ago; as, for instance, the supremacy of Jerusalem or of Gerizim, which (p. 157) they both staked their lives upon in presence of Ptolemy Soter in Alexandria (Josephus, Ant., xiii. 3, 4); and who, under such circumstances, could be unmindful of the conversation of the Divine Saviour with the Samaritan woman at the well-side of the patriarch Jacob under the very shadow of Gerizim? "The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

The Samaritan census is not a burdensome one to collect. They count themselves at one hundred and fifty souls, comprised in but a few households, and for many years the number has remained stationary. By the latest account, however, we learn that they had an increase of one. It would be unnatural in them not to lament their decline, or not desire an increase; in fact they do so, notwithstanding an argument produced to me by 'Amran upon my mildly suggesting that the blessing promised to Abraham was an extension of number, and the evident fact that the Jews are still a numerous people. 'Amran pointed out Deut. xxxiii. 4, "The congregation of Jacob," where the word "congregation" can mean nothing but a single community, few in number, who can assemble in one place. "And this," he added, "we are beyond all doubt." He did not see that this argument would not apply to them when they were in a state of prosperity, and forming colonies in various places as formerly. Under the Ptolemies, when the Jews were many and affluent in Egypt, the Samaritans were there too; and I myself, when in Gaza, was told that the house of the Samaritan synagogue is still standing, for there was a congregation of them there in the last generation. Besides, what then becomes of their boast sometimes made, that there are large numbers of them still in India, in London, and in Paris, as they have erroneously imagined from the fact of De Sacy and Walton reading their books and inquiring about their welfare?

Their paucity of numbers necessarily causes close intermarriage, and the effect of this is apparent in the family likeness which prevails among them. They are a handsome people, generally taller than their neighbours, with a pale, refined complexion, and I hope I am mistaken in the idea that in proportion to their whole number, there is an undue amount of feeble mental expression, in some instances verging on idiotcy, although at the same time they can show good specimens of personal appearance.

From the circumstance of their fewness and near relationships, questions of polygamy or of divorce do not arise among them; and a death among them, by diminishing their congregation, is a serious loss, while a birth is a corresponding gain to the whole body. In

1852 the death of old Abu Shelaby was greatly deplored, he being the best man of business in the Samaritan sect.

They are a quiet, sober, and orderly community. Their habits of life are remarkably cleanly, in person, in dress, and in the interior of their households. From having lodged in a house of theirs in the very midst of the Samaritan quarter, I can bear witness to their tidiness in these respects. Few indeed are the strangers who have had that opportunity. And this character of cleanliness is favoured by the copious supply of water in the town and around it. I have even heard them ridiculed on this account by Jews elsewhere as spending so much time in crying out אטט "unclean, unclean," and consequently by over-employing themselves in washing and scrubbing. Here I may remark that, as far as I could see, every room-door had some Samaritan inscription on the lintel-stone, usually some of the Ten Commandments, or some text referring to these. A much more rational way of obeying the law of Mezuzoth (writing the words of the law on the door-posts) than the semblance of so doing practiced by the Jews.

On one of the occasions of my earliest acquaintance with them, after attending their divine service (and, by-the-bye, the governor of the town, Suliman Bek Tokan, would obtrude himself upon me, and behaved uncivilly to the people, among other things by reciting the "Fathhah," and lecturing us on the truth of the Mahommedan religion, a conduct which he never afterwards repeated), we repaired to the house of 'Abd es Samari, one of the elders of the community, and holding an office as one of the clerks in the local seraglio, and no imagination could exceed the propriety of that Samaritan Sabbath. The house so clean, and the principal men robed in white, with white turbans (on other days of the week they wear them red), with the pale faces and white beards of the old men; and the room was filled with their own people.

The following notes of the conversation taken down on returning from them may be interesting.

They begged for direct protection of the English consulate, which, of course, could not be given, as they are Turkish subjects, (p. 158) and nothing else. They then asked for the establishment of a school under a Samaritan teacher, and to have Pentateuchs printed for them in England in their Samaritan character, the school at least to be under consular protection like that of the Protestants of Nablus; but they soon understood that the English people could not be expected to find money for instruction in their antichristian religion. As for the Pentateuchs, I promised to forward any petition that they might write to that effect. This, however, they never wrote. They showed me some certificates recommending them to the notice of travellers, given by Rev. Dr. Wilson, of Bombay, who visited them many years before, by Bishop Gobat, of Jerusalem, and by Dr. Kayat, the English Consul at Jaffa.

At my request they, brought me the Pentateuch volume of Walton's "Polyglott," which had been sent them long ago. It was carefully wrapped in a cotton envelope; the book had suffered some damage in the beginning and end leaves. The man who had been sent to fetch it, at first excused himself, for the reason that he had with him no lawful shoes, and it was explained that the shoes lawful for use in going to the synagogue are such as are made of skins of the lambs from the Passover sacrifice; but surely this must only mean for use there while no service is going on, because during the time of worship they wear no shoes, none from the least to the greatest.

As to the Passover sacrifice on Mount Gerizim, they said it had been perforce omitted for about fifty years before the coming of the Egyptian Government, and the celebration was confined to their houses. The opposition arose, not so much from the Turkish Government, as from the bigotry of the inhabitants; and, after revival, it was again discontinued in the year of Dr. Wilson's visit. This year (1850) the ceremonial was renewed, at which they were very happy.[#]

They declared that in the Ark of the Tabernacle, which was stolen away by the Jews, and placed in their temple at Jerusalem, there are numerous copies of the law, all written in the Samaritan character, and buried somewhere still in Zion. I inquired, "Where is Zion?"; They said, "Do you not know it is near the gate of Neby Davod at Jerusalem?" And in the Pentateuch there is a passage which says, "There shall come forth a law out of Zion" (which is the antique copy above referred to), "and it will reconcile both Jews and Samaritans" (namely, by demonstrating which is the true text when it is found). They could not exactly tell where that passage is written,[⊗] but "as to the Jews," they continued, "and their altered edition of holy law, by their own account they lost all the ancient copies, until Ezra, their scribe, accidentally found one; whereas we have never been without the law, and have still in our hands the roll in the very handwriting of Abishua, son of Phineas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron."

"We are the true Israel, a fact which has been attested as certain by a Firman of Mohammed, sealed, according to his custom, by stamping ink from the fingers of his hand."

This stupid appeal to the false prophet of the Arabs, utterly at variance with real time and place, was made during the presence of a certain person in the room, and a narrative of whose painful history was given when he left us. He was a tall man, wearing a green turban, but had a decidedly Samaritan physiognomy.

Some dozen years before he was a child in the street of the town, when a Mohammedan taught him to repeat the few words of his creed—"There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is the apostle of God." Two witnesses were present; they three went straight to the Kadi, making deposition of what they had heard and claimed possession of the child as a Moslem believer, and therefore no more belonging to infidel parents. On finding the turn that affairs were taking, the boy was horrified, and vowed he was no Moslem, but a Samaritan. At first they tried the effect of bribes suited to childish taste, but in vain; then threats, and waved a sword over his head, but still without effect, and he only gave way when they held his head to the mouth of a cannon. They then gave him the name of Asad instead of Naaman, in due time also a wife, and he was believed to be leading a most unhappy life as an exile from his religion and family. His two brothers were in the room with us, and they, with the other persons present, asked most piteously if there was no remedy, no means of recovering the involuntary apostate.

[#] Note.—The 'author has here, -with his usual modesty, omitted to mention the fact, that it was through his exertions that the Samaritans had been enabled to resume in safety their Paschal Sacrifice on Gerizim.

[⊗] This is according- to my notes; but I can hardly think that they meant the Sepher Torah; it must be some other book.

"We are a suffering people," said my venerable host, "and although a secretary to the government, I am always liable to insult, and any Moslem, child in the street is at liberty to beat me."

(p. 159) Samaritan public services are only held on Sabbath days, and the few festivals prescribed in the law. The building is usually termed by Europeans a synagogue, and perhaps no name is more appropriate as commonly understood, on account of the partial resemblance of Samaritans to Jews. They both use the same Hebrew word for it, though pronounced somewhat differently, the Jews calling theirs the Beth ha *Keniseh*, while the others call theirs the *Kanshah*³ This word, as well as synagogue, signifies "the meeting house," as we may call our churches.

It is approached by a dark lane with some risk of hurting one's head against huge old stones; and during the service, the chanting of the congregation can be heard at a considerable distance, so loud is it as to deserve the name of ranting.

My first visit was made in 1850, and on entering we had to take off our shoes. The congregation consisted of men only, rather above twenty in number, each wearing a white scarf over the shoulders, not as the Jews have the Tallith, often of rich materials, with blue border and fringes, but plain white calico, which they fold up after prayers, and leave in the synagogue. On their heads they had turbans of white, or white with yellow stripes.

The room was lower than the level of the street, and of exceedingly humble pretensions, having no window, but a hole near the roof, through which strangers were looking down from outside; and the old priest, Salamah, stood leaning on a long staff. 'Amran came out from within the veil of the recess (*masbah*) after the public prayers were ended, and we conversed on subjects of interest to us. He caused one of the people to read a passage of the law, that I might judge of their pronunciation. He read some verses out of Leviticus, then the Ten Commandments, on which all the congregation stood up. I told them that we read them also in our churches, but the people kneeling. 'Amran said, "Standing is better." One of the party asked to see *the* peculiar old MS. of the law, and one was produced, very old, and much worn with use. I suggested in whisper to 'Amran that that was not the true one, to which he replied, with a squeeze of the hand, "Another time," probably not wishing to make it too common a show for the strangers present. The roll which we saw had a covering made of green silk, with words woven in golden thread, over the embossed silver case, which also had Samaritan writing upon it. This case was much battered, and that injury was, he said, done by a certain Yusuf Pasha long ago, when he stole the jewels from it, after having bastinadoed the priest to make him surrender them. Within the case the sacred roll had still another silk cover, but of crimson, with a gold inscription.

Near the veil there was a bunch of green leaves and a citron, remaining, as they said, since the Feast of Tabernacles.

Next day (Sunday) was a great celebration, but I neglected to ask what it was. However, from what took place, it must have been the Day of Atonement, when alone in

³ In books or correspondence they call it the Beit Allah (House of God).

the year all the ancient rolls, including the peculiar one, are produced to the congregation. On entering we found 'Amran holding up to view the venerable MS. in its ornamental case above his head, and. "the people standing reverently with their hands folded before them. This was the Abishua Sepher Torah.

During service, in plain chant, at the commencement of every fresh period or paragraph, the congregation all stroked their hands over the face and beard downwards. This was probably equivalent to our *Amens* at the end of short collects. It was a strange observance; but I have since, though very rarely, seen Moslems do the same in their devotions.

After some time the roll was shut up in its silver case and the silk covers, and all the elders, in rotation, came up and kissed the outer cover, then touched with their fingers the spot which had been kissed, and stroked those fingers over the beard.

The venerable Salamah stood all the time like the rest, but leaning upon his staff.

Then the congregation sat upon the ground, and proceeded with chanting the prayers.

The great roll of Abishua was then brought up for my inspection, and I remarked that it was evidently in a different handwriting from the copy shown the day before, but in a better state of preservation. The silken envelopes of this were green inside and crimson outside the silver case.

'Abel es Samari requested Salamah to have brought out also another copy of the law, said to be nine hundred years old. On the appearance of this the people rose likewise, and stroked their beards. It was kept in white cotton wrappers (more than one) within a box of cedar.

(p. 225)

The SAMARITANS

By the late **James Finn**, formerly Her majesty's Consul for Jerusalem
And Palestine.

II.

THE Samaritan service of most interest throughout the year (at least to us) is the public sacrifice of the Passover on Mount Gerizim, at its appointed season, with the ceremonials required by the law of Moses. After many years of abeyance it was now renewed, as before described. I shall simply narrate what I witnessed in 1853. Year by year I had been duly notified by formal letters of the day for the celebration, but had not been able hitherto to leave Jerusalem for the purpose of attending it.

That year it was held on the 22nd of April, but on the 21st—supposing it possible for the sacrifice to take place that day at sunset, *i.e.* the beginning of the 22nd—we rode off in haste, and, to save time, ascended Gerizim from the south, on the Muknah plain, through the village of Kef'r Kalil—an arduous climb, which made our backs ache for days afterwards, and hurt our horses as much.

On the summit, near to their sanctuaries, we found the Samaritan sect, with their families, encamped in the fresh air upon the fragrant mountain, with a wondrous panorama around, which comprised the Mediterranean to the west, and mountains and plains to the east, north, and south, backed by the hilly land beyond Jordan, with that

Moab mountain on which Balak had offered sacrifices for the cursing of Israel; Hermon also in sight, snow-topped, and Jacob's well and Joseph's sepulchre in shadow at our feet. As we were mistaken in the day, and it was now late, I merely visited Selameh in his tent, and the Prussian consul (who was there, like myself, as a visitor) then descended to the town for the night.

(p. 226) On the way down, by the steep and rough path which passes the copious fountain at Ras el Ain, and the Samaritan cemetery (which, by-the-bye, is unenclosed, and where they never place memorial stones, or even heave the ground to mark out the graves, but, on the contrary, take pains to level the ground), we met numerous Samaritans in holiday attire, conveying on asses firewood, jars of water, narghilahs, food, &c., themselves walking on account of the steepness; and among them was; Amran, with one attendant.

The women, of whom one usually sees very few, were quite as careful in veiling the face and turning the back as Moslem women are.

Next morning upon Gerizim, two hours before noon, I found the oven already prepared—namely, a round pit of seven feet -deep by four in diameter, lined with large stones, and the fire of brushwood had been already burning in it for two hours; prayers having been first said over it. All the community were there, except a few ceremonially kept away.

The site of the oven, and of the intended, sacrificing, was not at the highest spot of the mountain where all the holy places meet together, but at ten minutes' walk westward from them. The reason is that true sacrifices can only be offered there by a priest of the lineage of Aaron, and only in a time of national freedom, not while the land is defiled by Mohammedan rule. Sacrifices of the highest importance, under legal conditions, have not been offered for many generations. A Passover sacrifice partakes very much of a domestic character, and therefore may be made anywhere in Gerizim—the place which the Lord did choose, as they believe—and, in fact, had long been performed inside the houses, until the period of its restoration to the summit of the mountain.

'Amran accompanied us to the peculiar sanctuaries of the mountain, and there walked barefoot, as it was "holy ground," Of these -there are several close together, namely—

1. The place of Abraham's intended sacrifice of Isaac.
2. The stones immediately adjoining, on which Noah offered sacrifice on coming out -of the ark.
3. The Bethel, or place where Jacob slept and had the vision of angels. This is the most sacred spot of all, and on it the altar of the tabernacle was laid. It is a sloping, flat surface of rock, with a hole opening into the earth at one end of it, through which, they say, the blood of the sacrifices flowed away into a cavern. This aperture had also some connection with the Holy of Holies and the high priest's entrance, which I could not comprehend, and found it difficult to inquire into with any appearance of reverence.

Near this is a row of huge stones, placed so close together as to seem one ledge of rock. These are about twelve in number, and it is believed that beneath these are the twelve great stones which Joshua had brought up from the river Jordan, and which, when placed here, were inscribed with the law of Moses.

The popular name of this place is The Ten Stones—possibly from an idea that the law so inscribed was only the Ten Commandments of Sinai.

Here 'Amran did not think it obligatory to walk barefoot.

I preserved as serious a countenance as possible while this strange medley of Moriah, Ararat, Luz, and Gerizim was being gravely detailed, not by the ignorant populace, but by the acting priest himself, the teacher of his nation.

We turned towards the encampment, and there I was made to observe the three necessary points for the day's observances.

1. The tents to be close together.
2. The oven-pit to be fifty yards east of them.
3. Between these a rude kitchen trench in the ground, in one half of which were huge caldrons of water boiling over fires; the other half was covered with hurdles of firewood.

And so we rested for a time, till at noon we all left the tents.

Salamah and his son 'Amran, with the elders in new robes, had *sejjadeh* (small prayer carpets) spread for them in a spot in front of the tents; they arranged themselves in three rows behind Selameh, who had a carpet to himself. Their faces were turned towards the Beth-el, *i.e.* eastwards, most of them holding books in their hands.

The slaughterers, eight or nine in number, approached the long trench, wearing white drawers and jackets, knives in hand. Several youths, similarly dressed, came up as assistants, and then five lambs were brought there from a flock on a rising ground at a few hundred yards distance, all washed clean; and, under circumstances that our poet never dreamed of, we saw them feeding upon the grass as they approached.

"Pleased to the last they cropp'd the flowery food."

Then the lads laid down the lambs and kept them down; the *skocketim*, meanwhile, testing (p. 227) the sharpness of their knives, one of them by actually drawing its edge across his tongue, to ascertain, by the most delicate of sensations that could be used for such purpose, the possible presence or absence of a notch.

The prayers of the elders continued, but on arriving at a certain word, in a moment all the throats of the lambs were severed at one stroke each, and blood was seen sprinkled upon the men's white dresses. The reading, however, continued for a time without interruption, till Salamah turned himself to the people, and, mounted upon a stone, he addressed his elders or heads of houses for about ten minutes, not in the vernacular Arabic, but in their wondrous ancient tongue. What an imposing spectacle was that of the feeble old priest, with his white beard waving in the mountain breeze, recounting (however he might be mistaken) the great events of their deliverance from Egypt, about fifty-five centuries before, by the Lord's "mighty hand and the stretched-out arm!"

In Jerusalem I have since been present at the Jewish Passover celebration with the conviction that the Jews were the true Israelitish people, and have sympathized with their rejoicing in the reminiscences of so miraculous an event, with the full moon of Nisan glowing over the Mount of Olives and Mount Zion (I am omitting now the Christian consideration of the types of the Old Testament law); but though the latter festival excited more warmth of feeling, this celebration on Gerizim, as much as the other, printed deep into my heart the solemn truths that there had been such a deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, with its attendant signs and wonders; that there was really a law given on Sinai by the ministry of Moses, and that we have it to this day in exact detail. Fifty-five centuries of truth were there as fixed before my eyes, unaltered as the course of the stars in the heavens, perpetuated by more than five thousand four hundred and forty annual repetitions, among human families, aliens in other matters. What is truth, if this is not?

At the conclusion of the oration all the men came up and embraced the priest by kissing him, and then each other, commencing with 'Amran, his eldest son and representative.

Then the sacrifices and their assistants proceeded to flay off the skin from the lambs, to assist which operation ladles of boiling water from the caldron were poured, from minute to minute, upon their work. The scene was enlivened by merry talk and smiling countenances; all was hilarity about us.

That being completed, the stakes were brought up, of new clean wood, pointed at one end. Each lamb had then one of these inserted between the two bones in each hinder leg, and this stake or bar was raised by one man at each end of it, and held upon his shoulder. The carcass being thus suspended with the head downwards, the throat was cut again, but this time perpendicularly, which released some blood that had not escaped from the prior horizontal cut, although that had been sufficient to deprive the animal of life. Then the intestines were removed, and thrown upon the hurdles which lay over the second half of the trench, there to be consumed by fire. Also the sinews of the hinder legs (Gen. xxxii. 32). The right forelegs were next cut off and thrown there too, which I supposed to be the heave-offering for the priest (Exod. xxix. 28); but as there was no Aaronic priest to receive it, it was not lawful to be eaten, but consumed as a burnt-offering.

Here I may explain, as perhaps ought to have been done before, that though by courtesy styled priest, as representative or head of the religious community, Salamah was not a veritable descendant of Aaron, even according to their own creed, for the last of them died without issue in A.D. 1625, and then the succession to the official headship was vested in the next best line, that of the Levites. To the outside world, however, there can be no harm in the present representatives assuming the title of *cahen*, or priest, and so, accordingly, 'Amran signs himself in his correspondence.

The carcasses were then washed with pure water brought from the spring, and gashes having been made in various parts of the flesh, salt was inserted into them, and 'Amran quoted to me in Hebrew, "With all thy offerings thou shalt offer salt" (Lev. ii. 13). At every stage of the proceedings, the sacrificers ejaculated short verses or prayers.

One of the lambs, upon inspection internally, was found to be not "without blemish;" it was accordingly thrown away whole among the intestines of the others, to be burned, and another was sacrificed in its stead, but without renewal of prayers or reading.

At this time, all our party removed out of the hot sunshine into the Moslem Wely, near at hand, called *Shaikh Ghanem*, for a luncheon (it would almost seem that this name, signifying as it does in Arabic "a sheep" or "a flock," was in some way identified with the Samaritan sacrifices of old times), as we were told there would be no more proceedings in the duties of the day for some time.

(p. 228) 'Amran was with us, and his people brought us oranges and rosoglio (of course not wine; that, being a fermented liquor, is prohibited during the week of the festival), and thin unleavened bread (only think of eating Samaritan *matsoth*, or, as they pronounce the word, *masat*), in the form of thin cakes, soft and fresh, not like the delicate crisp biscuit of the Jews. To these we Gentiles added stores of our own. The languages spoken within that small chamber were English, German, Arabic, Turkish, and Hebrew—the religions were Christian, Moslem, and Samaritan.

We then returned to the principal scene in time to see the lambs placed in the oven.

By this time, long spits of wood had been driven through the full length of the carcasses; but I did not then notice, neither can I now remember, whether the other spits across the

hind-legs, as mentioned above, still remained in their places, so as to complete the fanciful symbol of a wooden cross, as noticed by Justin Martyr, and cited by him as an argument against the Jews for the truth of Christianity. The men held up the lamb perpendicularly around the oven-pit, during a recitation of prayers. The firewood which had been kept burning within for about six hours was all now removed, leaving the oven clean from ashes, and exceedingly hot. Then, at a signal, all were placed perpendicularly into the place with shoutings of joy, there to remain till the due time for eating the lambs with bitter herbs, and in haste. These wooden spits being of uniform length, and previously measured for the purpose, their ends just reached the level of the outside ground, and a hurdle of fresh wood was spread over them, over that again a layer of green grass, and over the grass a layer of moistened earth, the object being to confine the heat to the interior.

At the same time, the "purtenances" on the hurdles of the long trench were consumed by fire.

Then, to my great regret, I was detained by business with the governor of the city from witnessing the ceremony of eating the lambs about sunset, which I was afterwards told was conducted strictly according to the ritual of the Book of Exodus; the "eating in haste," however, seemed to the bystanders to be somewhat irreverently done. Of course that operation was performed with the fingers only, as is usual among all Orientals; but the persons snatched the morsels, not only from off the spits, but also out of each other's hands.

The following observations occurred to me:

1. No European had witnessed this rite of the sacrifice on Gerizim for many centuries before.
2. We were told that formerly the lambs were killed at midnight. This, however, would not seem to meet the precept of time, that it should be done "between two evenings," *בין הערבים*. On this occasion, the day, however, being Friday, it was done at the hour of noon, on account of the approaching Sabbath at sunset, when the labour of even sacrifice could not be allowed.
3. The Samaritans have no idea of any typical meaning attached to this service; it is with them as with the Jews, a simple obedience to a commandment for a commemoration.
4. The peculiarity of this observance lies in the circumstance of its being carried on as an ordinance of the law of Moses, and within the land of Israel. The Abyssinian Falashas made this sacrifice at Passover according to the law of Moses, in the quality of being either Jews or Jewish proselytes, but they are out of the Holy Land.

The Mohammedans slay lambs in Ramadan on Mount Arafat, near Mecca, with religious formalities, or anywhere else, as I have seen done with pompous ceremony by the troops on a certain occasion near Jerusalem, in accomplishment of a vow to that effect; and the lambs, when roasted, form a feast. But besides this having no divine authority, it is but the fulfilment of a voluntary vow, as done by heathen idolaters in India and elsewhere. All these cases are different from the Samaritan sacrifice.

5. The number of the lambs that we saw sacrificed was five as representing one for each principal head of family.
6. Although Justin Martyr, being a native of Nablus, saw the Samaritans in the second century use unintentionally a wooden cross on these Passover observances—and it was a wooden cross for the sacrifice of a lamb—yet that cross was not used in the act of

sacrifice, it came after the death for the roasting only. It fails, therefore, to be a Christian emblem; and as for the mere form of a cross, even if intentional, he must have seen many such among heathen symbols. His argument is worth nothing for reasoning with a Jew of his period.

Thus much concerning the Samaritan Passover on Mount Gerizim.

After the subjects of synagogue worship and the Passover (some would even give it the preference), must be reckoned that of the ancient MSS. in their possession. They have no printed books.

(p. 229) I need not say more than others have said about the precious roll of Abishua (as believed), or about the two others which I saw in the synagogue, as I do not profess to be a competent critic for the purpose; let us take up another branch of the subject.

It was soon understood by the Orientals that Europeans, in their perpetual search after antiquities and rarities of all kinds, would desire to know more about this little sect with such high pretensions. The people themselves understood that we already knew somewhat about them and their religion, but thought that, like the Druzes, they could maintain their reserve further by secreting their books. Indeed, I believe that prior to the date I have been speaking of, books in their own language, except the Torah or Pentateuch, were almost unknown in Europe, and the work which they have as a substitute in some respects for the Book of Joshua, has never been known but in the Arabic language: that had, however, been translated and commented on by Juynboll in Holland. But in proportion as the sect came under the semi-official care of the English authorities, their affairs became better known to European scholars in Jerusalem—not much, however, among the English residents—and certain Samaritan persons, less scrupulous than the rest, began to offer us books for sale; particularly Asad, the Mohammedan pervert.

On learning this, priest 'Amran took alarm, and both wrote to me and came for an interview on the subject, asserting that the books had been stolen from the synagogue, although those who brought them to us always assured us they were family property of deceased relatives. 'Amran made vehement protestations of the sacredness of all property of that nature, as being the inheritance of the sect as a body; he therefore demanded to have them restored, or, if unfortunately out of the country already, to have the prices which they fetched given to the public chest. But this lay beyond our jurisdiction. He said that forty-two volumes, large or small, had been stolen and sold. My inquiries, however, never could find that more than a quarter of that number had reached Jerusalem, and therefore, if any large number were really missing, they must have been taken to Bayroot, or disposed of to travellers passing through Nablus.

I acknowledged having myself bought some on behalf of the British Museum, viz., a vellum Pentateuch, and some small liturgical services for the festivals.[±] He, being most desirous of conciliating the favour of our Government, then said that he had no objection to the books being placed in public libraries for the advantage of our learned men, but

[±] I have since given two small volumes of Samaritan festival services to the University of Cambridge.

thought he ought to have the price of them given on behalf of the community, which was well known to be in a condition of extreme poverty.

There the subject dropped, but the agitation of the question had the effect of somewhat enhancing the value of such books as were afterwards brought for sale.

I hear that of late years several more books have been purchased from the Samaritans, and so eager have the poor people been to turn them to money account that they have not seldom torn up these rare manuscripts, and sold a few pages at a time to such travellers as have been more ambitious of acquiring bits of things, because they are understood to be rare, than erudite enough to perceive the mischief done by thus dissevering a connected work, and concealing mysteriously those fragments in their private houses of England, Germany, or America.

In 1854, our Vice-Consul of Caiffa, going on leave to England, took with him a Samaritan who was entrusted with a petition from the community, addressed to the Government and people of England, written in both Arabic and Samaritan. This person was made much of beyond what his mere message required, and in September of that year I gladly received from Lord Clarendon, in the Foreign Office, a donation for these people, and directions to employ good offices with the local government on their behalf on all practicable occasions. The directions were repeated in the April following, with an intimation that the same instructions were given to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe in Constantinople.

In 1860, upon a special matter, the embassy forwarded to the consulate a Vizirial letter for the benefit of the Samaritans.

The favours thus conferred proved of inestimable value to the poor people for several years, and were gratefully acknowledged; but a time came when the Turkish rule set itself to consolidate its recently shaken domination, and, in the provinces, the old fanaticism revived, particularly in such a place as Nablus.

Even that Vizirial letter was turned to their disadvantage, for did it not show that the Samaritans had been guilty of detailing their grievances to the English consulate, that is to say, to foreigners, asking for help?

At that period, 1860, there was a sad story of injustice and oppression exercised upon a Samaritan family of three brothers, (p. 230) sons of one named Joshua; after several months of imprisonment in chains for debt (this was illegal for debt), a Mushirial letter from Bayroot had them released, but their cause was talked over privately by a few members of the Mejlis, instead of being heard in court—no evidence was called, but so heavy a fine was laid upon the brothers, that a daughter of one of them was taken by force, and sold in the public market for about £25 on account; fortunately, one of the sect was able to buy her, instead of a Moslem.

Neither Lord Palmerston nor Lord Clarendon was then in the Foreign Office, nor Lord Stratford de Redcliffe at Constantinople.

On the return of peace after the Crimean war, a Russian bishop had been sent to Jerusalem for the first time, and in his train came Dr. Basileus Levisohn, Professor of Hebrew, and also of Metaphysics, in the University of St. Petersburg. This gentleman was by birth an Israelite, from Saxony, but his parents having taken him in early childhood to Russia, and died there, he was educated by the clergy, after baptism, in the national orthodox Church.

He had not been long in Jerusalem before conceiving a plan for action, that of thoroughly investigating the subject of the Samaritans.

He went and resided for a considerable time, then afterwards at intervals, among them in Nablus, won the good-will of their leading men, learned to read their books with ease, and gained access to the most intimate secrets of their manuscripts; in fact, after some time he became, as I believe, an honest advocate of their claim to be the remnant of the Israelite tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.

At length he purchased from them a vellum manuscript of the Pentateuch, one which he held in nearly as high veneration as the Abishua roll itself (to the claims of which, by-the-by, he gave the fullest credit, so much so, that in reading it entirely through for the purpose of comparing the text, he did it always on his knees). This MS. was a work of beautiful writing, with a note at the end stating that it was one of several copies which had been subjected to an ordeal of fire in a dispute of veraciousness against some copies held by the Jews about the time of Zerubbabel, from which it issued in triumph—I think I am repeating the legend as it was told to me—but his own belief was that it had been one of the deposits in the first temple of Jerusalem, and that certain marks upon it, seemingly produced by fire, were tokens of the conflagration by the Chaldeans, from which it had been rescued. This manuscript, also, Dr. Levisohn never approached, or even mentioned, without crossing himself as a devout Christian in regard to a relic of "the former house." It was not in the form of a roll, but like many other extremely ancient manuscripts, had the pages separated, and the whole bound into a square book.

Levisohn went to Paris to learn the art of lithographic printing, then returned to us with press, stones, and complete apparatus, his object being to print off fac-similes from that and other precious manuscripts. I am now in possession of several specimens of his work in various oriental languages, chiefly in Samaritan, and have before me a portion from one of the pages of his deeply cherished MS. lithographed in gold letters (and suspended by the side of Carl Haag's picture, mentioned at the commencement of this paper), of which the character is more delicate than that usually printed for us in European books as specimens of Samaritan writing.

Death has now taken away both Bishop Cyril and Dr. Levisohn; what has become of the annotations of the latter, or other proceeds of his industry, it is now difficult to discover. A good deal was published by him in St. Petersburg, and I am not sure but that some was also given to Germany; but there must be much of unprepared material remaining somewhere.

This, however, is a matter aside of our object; it is more within my scope to mention that in 1860 a letter was addressed to our friend by 'Amran, of which he gave me a translation, representing their recent persecutions by the Moslems for having made known their griefs to the "consul of the uncircumcised," and praying for the kind intervention of the Russian bishop with the "king of the nations at Constantinople, on behalf of the sons of Joseph, the Samaritans of Sichem ;" adding that they were now prohibited from conducting their worship but in a subdued voice, and that the writer was living in extreme terror even of life for himself and his people. It was signed "Your servant and brother, 'Amran, priest in Sichem."

With regard to the appellation "brother," observe that Levisohn valued his own descent as a Levite, and the Samaritans respected the office of that tribe as common to both the kingdoms of Israel. 'Amran himself was also a Levite.

Nothing is known to have resulted from this petition, but with the fortunes of everything Oriental, the sect still survives through all its tribulation, arising from a corrupt oligarchy of the city and the turbulence of the (p. 231) "Jerdeh Nablus," as the peasant population is designated.

The community does not exceed one hundred and fifty souls, and the time is not known when they possessed a man of more than average talent among them, scarcely even that. Most of them subsist upon the pettiest shop-keeping in the bazaar, or as agents between their town and the merchants of Jaffa. It is always, however, an aim of theirs to keep one at least of their people employed in the Seraglio, that is to say, as scribes or tax-collectors, and 'Amran himself the representative of them all in the local council, where each sect has its representative, called its "Khoja-bashi."

As a people they are even more timid than the Jews, having not even numbers to keep each other in countenance, and no advocate of their own in Constantinople. Notwithstanding a similarity of many of their customs to those of the Jews, the differences are yet so great as to preclude the recognition of them as brethren of the latter: they have neither the force of mind nor the varied adaptation of intellect, neither, as I think, the persevering industry of the Jews. What can we say of an Israelite claim for a people who have not one musical instrument, and no secular music, and only a few variations of the most meagre chants for their public worship?

As for their Hebrew language, it has been long remarked by their adversaries that they do not pronounce the guttural letters, which are the most obstinate fixtures in any language; and this is the more remarkable, as perforce of circumstances they speak good Arabic in common, which has strong gutturals; and not only these letters are omitted in their pronunciation of Hebrew, but also the ך and צ . Is it possible that the ten tribes of Israel were unable to pronounce the word, familiar to every child of the Passover, unleavened bread, but must call it *masat*? or of the altar, but must call it *masbah*? Their Hebrew is thus the traditional attempt of an alien race in speaking the holy tongue.

But information respecting their literature and theology must be sought among the researches of profound essayists and learned travellers, such as Wilson and Robinson. The best and latest knowledge of such subjects is to be gained from a work expressly on the Samaritans by the Rev. J. Mills,[†] who has twice visited them, on the latter occasion residing three weeks among them; a competent scholar for making inquiries, and he well employed his opportunities.

Before conclusion I must mention the places not on the summit of Gerizim held sacred by the Samaritans.

Within the town, and near the synagogue, are some remains of their old synagogue, which was a much better edifice than their present one, and was taken from them by the Mohammedans a few generations ago. These converted it into a *mezar*, or *makam*, *i.e.* a pilgrimage station, supplying it with a niche (*kebleh*) for indicating the direction of Mecca when prayer is made, and a lamp continually burning. They name it "The Grief of Jacob IX (*Hhez'n Jaakoob*) giving out that there the patriarch dwelt, and there he

[†] "Three Months' Residence at Nablus, and an Account of the Modern Samaritans," London, 1864, Murray,

bewailed his son, believing him to have been devoured by wild beasts, until he heard of Joseph's being found "the ruler of all the land of Egypt;" and an almond-tree is shown which pined away as he did, but revived as he did, and has blossomed and borne fruit ever since. The fiction is somewhat poetic and not ridiculous, as are some traditions of theirs and of Christians in Palestine.

A Wely at the foot of Gerizim is called the Wely el Amood (of the pillar). The origin of the name is unknown, but the Samaritans say it is named from the pillar in Shechem which Jacob set up, but they pay no special honours to it.

The most venerated of sites not on Gerizim is of course the sepulchre of Joseph at the foot of Ebal, he being the father of Ephraim and Manasseh, and whom, in reference to the blessings promised by his dying father, they designate "Joseph ben phoret," *i.e.* "Joseph the fruitful bough" (Gen. xlix. 22), and some one has planted a vine cutting within the enclosure which runs "over the wall."

The large plain eastward of Ebal and Gerizim called the Mukhnah is certainly the Moreh of Gen. xii. 6 and Deut. xi. 30, and which proves, as the Samaritans say, that Gerizim is Moriah, the place of Abraham's intended sacrifice. The Arabic name Mukhnah must be the Hebrew name Makh'nah, "a host" or "camp," a traditional commemoration of some scriptural event such as the encampment of Abraham, or that of Jacob on his arrival from Padan-aram (Gen. xxxiii 18), near which he bought the "parcel of a field" and where his well now remains. The Shalem of that time is the Salem of to-day, in full view from that well. Jacob pitched his tent "before the city," namely, in the Makh'nah, which may well have been the place where Israel "encamped" under Joshua. The Samaritans, to be consistent, make this to be the Salem of Melchizedek.

(p. 232) I rode to this village in November, 1852, in one hour slowly from Nablus, the well being about half-way. It lies shortly up the valley of Saju', which is the bed of a winter stream, in a continued line with the valley of Nablus across the plain. Near the village are ancient cisterns and sepulchres hewn in the rock; the approach is bordered by rows of good stones. The land around is fertile in grain produce.

Jacob's well we know to have been venerated by the Samaritans when our Lord was there.[∅] That it was the same as that now shown under that designation cannot be doubted, for there is none other in the vicinity; it is very deep, and formed of good ancient masonry within. The Christians name it the "Well of the Samaritan Woman." The Samaritans call it the "Well of Jacob," and the Moslems name it after a ruined village adjoining that site, and which was formerly a town named Balata.

From the latest accounts it appears that this well is now filled up with stones, as it was indeed when I was last there; but when I first saw it, in 1850, there was a broken dome over it, round which was an accumulation of overthrown masonry, so as to render it somewhat of a task to stoop under it. (That dome is, now entirely gone.) I did enter and even descend to some depth into -the shaft of the well, and thence sent down lighted papers, which fell in gyrations very much lower, showing in the circles the nature of the masonry all the way, until the light was extinguished, and there was water lower down

[∅] Nothing can be more positive than the assertion, "Our father Jacob gave *us* the well and drank thereof, himself and his children, and his cattle."

still, as ascertained by throwing of pebbles; all this was in keeping with the history of Dr. Wilson's Bible falling in there several years before, and being afterwards fished out almost in a state of pulp. It is now, we are told, placed in a public museum in Scotland.

This well is said in the New Testament to be "near to a city of [the province called] Samaria which is called Sychar," and the idea has been long and commonly entertained that this Sychar is Sichem or Shechem (Sychem in Acts vii. 16), which is Nablus, grounded on what seems to be a similarity of name; many attempts have, therefore, been 'made to obviate difficulties arising therefrom —such as that of Sichem of itself abounding in running spring water, besides another spring, the Daphne, between the two sites.

I believe that Sychar is now represented by the little village of 'Asker not far from that well. The Arabic letter *'ain*, with which that name begins, is no hindrance to this etymology, seeing that the Greeks and Samaritans were unable to pronounce it. The present pronunciation is its primitive one, earlier than that of the Grecian era, and transmitted through a Shemitic people, always continued on the spot, who can pronounce it.

In 1855 I visited the sepulchre of Eleazar the priest, the son of Aaron, at a village called 'Awarta, near the southern end of the plain of Mukh'na: this is kept in repair and cleanliness by the Samaritans. It is a handsome building, covering the actual tomb, with some fine old trees about it, both terebinth and karoob. Among the names written upon the outer walls in scratches or with charcoal I noticed some in Hebrew square characters, others in Spanish - Jewish or Polish-Jewish current hand, besides those in Samaritan and Arabic. Had my time allowed it, I should have been glad to visit the sepulchres of Joshua, his contemporary in entering the promised land, and other Old Testament worthies among the hills of Ephraim, which are probably known to the Samaritans.

Josephus, in Wars, iv. 8, i, says that in his day Neapolis or Sichem was called Mabortha by the people of the country; and this name has given rise to some learned speculation, as it is" nowhere else known (only Pliny, a foreigner, who was never in the country, spells it Mamortha). Reland conjectures it to be a corruption of "Moreh," but, with Olshausen and Mills, I consider it to be M'abarthā, remembering that Josephus, writing in Greek, had to omit the 'ain, and that *tha* is the Syriac feminine termination, signifying a " pass or passage "—the city and its district lying on the direct highway between Judaea and Galilee, as shown in John iv. 4—"He must needs pass through Samaria" to avoid a long journey aside, either westwards upon the plain of Sharon or eastwards.

And here I conclude with the scenes of Gerizim and Shechem vividly pictured before the mind's eye, and the individual objects about them permanently impressed—struck as it were like those of a coin by its die by the archaic associations of the Old Testament—the land fertile and picturesque, the population restless and turbulent, so that to read the Book of Joshua in the Arabic language is like reading a chronicle of the last year or the last week; and we seem to look upon Jotham standing on the hill to deliver his parable to the men of Shechem, and pointing with his hand to the olive-trees, the fig-trees, and the vines, in the valley below.