

THE SAMARITANS IN 1910

A TALK WITH THEIR HIGH PRIEST, WHO CLAIMS TO BE DIRECTLY DESCENDED FROM AARON THE PROPHET

(Special Correspondence.) NABLOUS, Palestine.—I had just had an interview with a lineal descendant of Aaron, the brother of Moses. I refer to Jacob, the high priest of the Samaritans. He belongs to the tribe of Levi, who in ancient times were of the head of the priesthood, and claims to have a genealogical tree which reaches from then until now. His family has lived here for more than 3,000 years, and high priest has succeeded high priest until this man took the position at the age of 15, his child uncle, the high priest, having died. That was 62 years ago, and Jacob has been high priest ever since. He is now almost 80, and he looks, I imagine, as Adam or Moses once have looked in the latter part of their lives. Over 6 feet in height, he has the face and form of a prophet. His long beard falls down upon his chest, and his scholarly face is refined and spiritual looking.

THE OLDEST BIBLE MANUSCRIPTS.

I met Jacob here at Nablos, on the site of old Shechem, within a stone's throw of the well where Christ talked with the Samaritan woman. It is not far from a farm which Abraham owned, and about the spot where Joshua gathered the tribes of Israel together and read them the law of Moses. Our conversation took place in the heart of the city in the synagogue of the Samaritans. I had an interpreter vaulted passageways and cave-like streets to reach it. I had an interpreter with me, and as we talked together the high priest showed me the original parchments and the five books of Moses as they were written by Abou, the son of Ben Hassan, the son of Eleazar, who, you remember, was one of the two sons of Aaron by Elisheba, his wife. The high priest tells me that these five manuscripts were written only 12 years after the Israelites came into the Holy Land, and that they are now 3,575 years old. They are the oldest Bible manuscripts in existence. They were written in the Hebrew of the times of Moses, upon long sheets of parchment about two feet in width. The scrolls are rolled upon three rods, each tipped with a silver knob as big as a teacup, and they are so arranged that they can be rolled and unrolled as they are read. The ink is still plain, and the letters distinct although the parchment is yellow with age. The manuscript is treasured by the Samaritans, being kept in a brass case inlaid with gold. It is said to have been dug up about 300 years ago, and it has formed a subject of controversy among oriental scholars. The Samaritans believe that it was written by the grandson of Aaron, as the high priest here claims, but the Jews reject it as false, denouncing the Samaritans as pagan outcasts from the children of Israel.

THE SAMARITANS OF 1910.

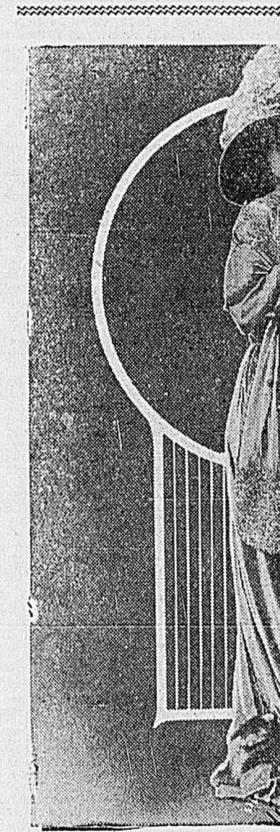
I was surprised to find that there were any Samaritans living. I supposed that they had been swallowed up by the Mohammedans, and other Syrians who have absorbed everything but the Jews, excepting the Jews. I find, however, that there are about 200 in Nablos, and that they practise the same religion as they had when Christ came. They annually celebrate the feasts of the Passover and Pentecost on Mount Gerizim. These feasts are different from those of the latter-day Jews. At the time of Christ the feast of the Passover was eaten reclining and as though at the end of a journey rather than at the beginning of one. The Samaritans eat their Passover with their shoes bound upon their feet and staves in their hands as though ready to start out on their wanderings in the wilderness. They dress in white garments, and they kill the animals which are burnt according to the meta-lics which were in use when Aaron lived. The sacrifice consists of a lamb, each of which is carefully examined that it may be without wound or blemish. At a given signal the throats of the animals are cut, and at the same time some of the blood is caught in a tin cup and smeared over the altar. The blood flows the people shout out the words: "There is but one God," and they repeat this sentence again and again. At the same time there is a service, beginning with a hymn praising Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and followed by a prayer of thanksgiving. The meat for the sacrifice is cooked over a fire in the earth. As soon as the animals are killed they are skinned and the wool is pulled off. The entrails are removed and salted. Then a pole is laid through each lamb, and it is laid on the hot stones of a fire made in a trench. The meat is then covered with brush and earth. The people continue to pray as it cooks and keep on praying until the sunset approaches. At 10 minutes after sunset they begin to eat the meat, throwing the bones into the fire without breaking them.

AT JACOB'S WELL.

It was at Jacob's well, not far from Nablos, that Christ met the Samaritan woman and told her of the water of life, which, if one drinks, he said shall never thirst, but there shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. You will find the story in the fourth chapter of St. John. "This well is one of the holy sites of Palestine, about which there can be no doubt. The village of Sychar corresponds to the village of Askar, which stands on Mount Ebal, perhaps a thousand feet away from the well where the Samaritan woman lived. The well itself lies just below the new carriage road from Jerusalem. I went through an olive orchard to reach it. It is surrounded by a wall, and is in the heart of a garden now owned by the Greek church, which has made it a resting place for pilgrims. They had built a stone chapel over the well, and services are held there several hours every day. Some of the priests went with us down the steps to the well. It lies eight in the floor of the chapel. It is about three feet in diameter, built up with stones which are laid in the shape of a cube, being smoothly cut. One of the monks brought a pan which was tied to a rope in such a way that it remained level. Upon this he placed a lighted candle, and then slowly lowered it down into the well. It descended perhaps 60 feet before it came to the water. The sill of the well is of marble, and shows the marks of the ropes which for ages have been lowered into it. The sill is some distance above the floor, and it may have been the original stone upon which Christ sat at that weary hour of noon. Jacob's well has been known and visited by pilgrims for many years. It was probably once even with the surface of the earth, but the debris and earth washings from the mountains nearby have filled up the valley, and it is now considerably below the country about. Within the past year excavations have been made in the garden and the remains of a church which was built over the well some fifteen hundred years ago have been discovered. I found immense quantities of urns and also many pieces of

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stone walls of the church. I persuaded the Greek priest who lowered the pan with the candle upon it into the well to come into the sun and be photographed. THE UNSATISFIED AMERICAN. While I was at the well a party of travelers, conducted by one of the great tourist agencies arrived. They were Americans, doing the Holy Land at so much per day, and they were bound to get the worth of their money. One I shall never forget. His zigzag frame was such that I shall call him Goliath. When the party went down to the well the services in the chapel had just begun, and after pointing out the hole in the floor the guide brought them out. As they came into the churchyard I heard Goliath remark: "I ain't satisfied." "About what?" asked the guide. "I ain't satisfied about that well. How do I know there's a well there?" "Yar say," he said, the guide. "Now, I saw only a hole in the floor. How do I know there's a well? How do I know it has water? I tell you I ain't satisfied. Here I've come 5,000 miles to see Jacob's well, and how can I prove that I've saw it?" In short the man so protested that the guide took him back, stopped the service and had him let down the candle. Further than that he brought up some of the water which Goliath drank at the

ground picnic stone and painter's hard oil. "The result is a beautiful polish, through which all the beauties of the rich, old fashioned wood stand perfectly revealed."

TO CLEAN THE CHIMNEY.

Instead of throwing away potato peels, dry them and burn them in the stove. Those who burn soft coal will find this a great help. The potato peels burn with such a fury that they carry the soot out of the chimney.

FOR PILLOW SLIPS.

Make pillow slips of outing flannel for winter use; also wear bloomers made of outing or real flannel instead of so many heavy skirts. They are warmer and more comfortable.

REPOLISHING OLD FURNITURE.

"No one gets the full measure of joy out of a 'fud' who does not set it up in a large work-room in some sunny ambly of his house and there, for himself, to do the work. It is a hobby. The processes given below are employed by an expert cabinet-maker."

COLLEGE LIFE BROADENS A GIRL'S SYMPATHIES.

Slightly more than one-half of the Co-ed college girls believe, from their own observation, that more marriages turn out happily than unhappily, while four-fifths of the woman's college girls hold this comforting and reassuring doctrine, says Robert Haven Schuller in "Success Magazine." As girls are apt to generalize from the few cases nearest at hand, these beliefs may possibly throw some

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light on the conditions of their their home environment. But let us put aside these glaring contrasts with their inevitable comparisons and try to see the "X" and Co-ed fused into the College Girl. How has college affected her attitude toward life? Most of all it has broadened her. "College makes a girl far more sympathetic," said an eastern girl. "She thinks of more things, more generalities, understands men and girls, too, far better; has, in short, more poise." A California girl, with the radiant enthusiasm of youth, said: "College is a huge telescope pointed at the world." Next in order, college "makes life fuller," it "broadens you morally." ("I used to be very narrow about people—a regular 'snob'—and now I'm a southerner. 'Now I can't seem to blame any one for anything, because no one can possibly understand another's temptations.") Further, college "gives you more sympathy" and "a standard by which to judge men," "makes life more serious," "humbles you." "It makes you take more notice of human nature. You see things you never saw in high school—how small you are, for instance." "College gives you presence of mind," "more individualism," "more independence." "It makes you more sympathetic to your future husband," "unfits you for a career." Last of all, it "makes you more domestic," "slower in judgment," "develops your sense of humor."

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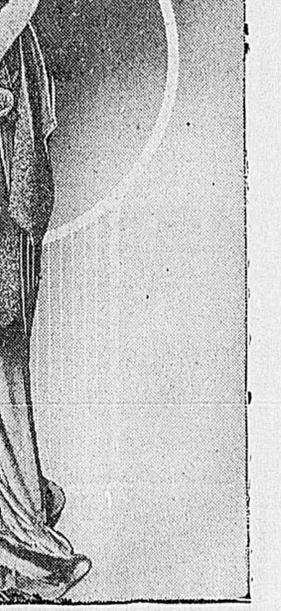
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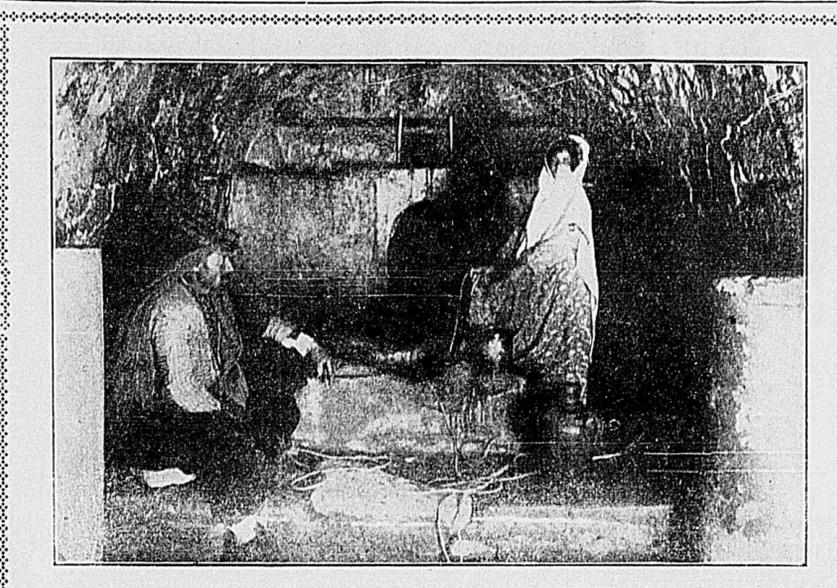
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Photographed for The News by Frank G. Carpenter.

JACOB'S WELL, WHERE CHRIST MET THE SAMARITAN WOMAN. IT LIES UNDER THE FLOOR OF THE CHAPEL.

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ON THE ROAD TO GALILEE.

The road which we took to Samaria was the one over which the boy Christ and the holy family came when they traveled up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. It is one of the highways of the Holy Land, and is still traveled by thousands. About 16 miles beyond Mount Scopus we stopped at Bethoth, a stone village surrounded by green orchards of figs and pomegranates. This is one of the "Journals" from Jerusalem, and tradition says it is where Joseph and Mary, as they were returning to Nazareth, discovered their 12-year-old boy was not with them and they went back and found him teaching the scribes in the temple. A little farther on we came to Bethel, where the Benjaminites lived, where Abraham reared an altar and called on the name of the Lord, where Jacob had his dream, and where Herod the Great owned a royal mansion and entertained his guests. Bethel is now a village of about 500 people, with a ruined tower and a church.

TRAVEL IN THE HOLY LAND.

I am surprised at the caravans which are continually crossing these Palestine mountains. There seems to be a great trade north and south, and the roads are full of strange characters. On my way here I saw crowds of men and women on donkeys coming up to Jerusalem. Some were from Galilee, others from Damascus, and not a few from the mountains of Lebanon. One crowd told us that its people were Mohammedans, and that they were making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the tomb of Moses. There were many women among them. They sat astride upon donkeys, some carrying babes in their arms.

TRAVEL IN THE HOLY LAND.

We passed many camels. Some were loaded with white building stones slung in a network of rope on each side of their humps. They were taking them to Jerusalem. Others were ridden by women and men. I saw one which had two veiled women clad all in black on its back, with two boxes below them, each box holding a baby.

TRAVEL IN THE HOLY LAND.

Another party was composed of Samaritan women on their way to a Moslem festival. They were red-haired and straight a royal palm trees. They carried their baggage in bundles on top of their heads and walked single file.

TRAVEL IN THE HOLY LAND.

Nablos has about 30,000 people, and it is the center of a considerable trade. It is made up of stone houses and stone bazars, roofed with galvanized iron. Many of the houses are built over the streets, and going through the town is like going through catacombs. Some of the streets are so narrow that you can stand in the middle and reach both walls with your hands. Others are wide, but all are dirty and filthy.

TRAVEL IN THE HOLY LAND.

Behind them were women from Lebanon walking barefooted and singing in Arabic. They were tattooed on lips, chin and cheeks, and their faces were trowly and dusty. They were nothing on the head and their bodies were clad in long cotton gowns embroidered with red. Only a few were good looking and all seemed prematurely old.

TRAVEL IN THE HOLY LAND.

I am now living in my tents outside this old town of Shechem, my camp facing Mount Ebal and above me Gerizim, the only hill of the Samaritans. It is very near the spot where the laws of Moses were read by Joshua. The assembled children of Israel, the country being the shape of a great amphitheater of which the hills form the bowl. These hills are, it is said, a natural sounding board, so that one can talk on one mountain and be heard on the other, and for this reason the place was chosen for reading the laws.

TRAVEL IN THE HOLY LAND.

The town is one of the oldest in history. It was founded long before Jerusalem and before Jacob's time. It is within about six miles of the city of Samaria, where Abub had his ivory palace and where Herod the Great owned a royal mansion and entertained his guests. Bethel is now a village of about 500 people, with a ruined tower and a church.

TRAVEL IN THE HOLY LAND.

Shiloh, which lies just off the road a little farther on toward Samaria, is now called Sella, and, as Jeremiah prophesied, it is nothing but ruins. Where it stood is a mound covered with debris, broken columns and rubbish, so that the prophet, "I will make this city a cause to all the nations of the earth," has come true.

TRAVEL IN THE HOLY LAND.

Nevertheless Shiloh is one of the most interesting spots of the country. It was there Eli dwelt and there Hannah came every year with a new calf for her little son Samuel, whom she had gotten up to the Lord. It was there that Joshua divided the land, and there the Philistines stole the ark of the covenant.

TRAVEL IN THE HOLY LAND.

I took me just one day to come from Jerusalem to Shechem. My outfit was a three-horse team to which an American doctor was harnessed. The horses were good, and we drove up hill and down on the trot. We started at Jaffa gate, past the place of the Skull, where Gen. Gordon thought the Savior was crucified, and then crossed the valley of Kedron. We climbed Mount Scopus, which joins Olivet, and rode under the hill on whose top was Mizpah, where Samuel was buried, and Saul anointed king of the Jews. There is a mosque on that spot and the place is holy to Jews, Christians and Moslems alike, all of whom worship at Samuel's tomb. Mizpah lies on a peak about 4,000 feet above the Mediterranean, and is one of the highest of the Judean mountains. It is where an army of crusaders stood under Richard the Lion-hearted and got their first sight of Jerusalem. As they looked King Richard knelt down and thus prayed: "O Lord God, I pray Thee that I never may again see Thy holy city if I

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Advertisement for Colman's Mustard, featuring the brand name in a large, stylized font and the text 'DRY GOODS STORE 222-224 MAIN ST.'

Advertisement for 'An Old, Old Wish' featuring the headline 'A Happy New Year to you all' and 'And to show our sincerity, we're going to publish some of the best news you ever had in the Monday evening paper—Read it'.

Advertisement for Denver & Rio Grande R.R. featuring a detailed 'TIME TABLE' for departures and arrivals between Denver, Pueblo, and other stations.

Advertisement for 'The Glass Point' featuring the headline 'The fitting of glasses is our profession' and 'SEE US AND SEE BEST'.

Advertisement for 'Cold Stormy Weather' featuring the headline 'Has no horrors for the man who has a supply of our celebrated "HAWATHA" COAL'.