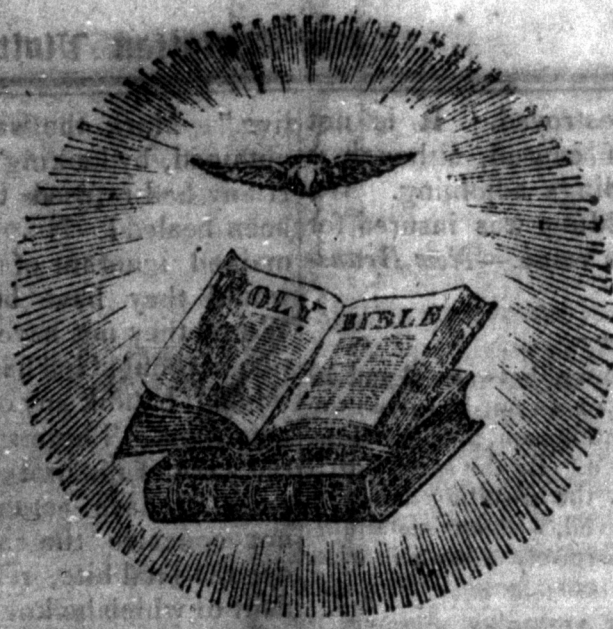


# CHRISTIAN



# VISITOR.

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REV. E. D. VERY,

"BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED."—ST. PAUL.

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## THE MARTYRS CREST.

Lines sent to a descendant of the martyred Bishop Hooper, with a seal, upon which was engraved the Bishop's crest—a lamb in a burning-thicket; and the motto, "Per ignes ad cœlum"—"through the flames to heaven."

BY J. EDMESTON.

'Tis a lovelier crest than the blood-stained blade,  
Or the hand stretched out to slay;  
Than the oak-twined wreath, or the laurel braid,  
Or the bird or beast of prey:  
It was proved by deeds more lofty, far  
Than the shields of war and victory are!  
'Twas nobly done,—to fear not kings,  
To dare their feeble ire,  
To smile at all terrestrial stings,  
The rack, the scourge, the fire;  
Now to a cold damp dungeon driven,  
Then rapt in thought on things above,  
Gazing upon a Saviour's love,  
Pass through the flames to heaven!

Sly aged warrior when thy breath  
Was struggling with the grasp of death,  
When every tortured nerve was rending,  
And death with lie,  
In bitter strife  
And agony contending,  
Wert thou not borne in soul away  
Far from the weak consuming clay?  
And o'er thy calm unruffled soul  
Did not celestial visions roll?  
The martyrs stake is strewn with flowers,  
And earthly and infernal powers  
May try their little force in vain  
To plant a thorn or cause a pain!

'Tis true we are not called like thee,  
To dungeon cells and martyrty;  
But yet the spirit is not dead,  
Through which the saints of Jesus bled;  
For, though 'tis bound with many a chain,  
It would resist to blood again.

And now perhaps a surer snare  
For spirits that might even dare  
The stake, and all the terrors there,—  
The deep laid sophism of the school,  
The curling lip of ridicule,  
And taunt of skeptics bear.

Yet rapt in thought on things above,  
Gazing upon a Saviour's love,  
We still may firm endure;  
Though smiles or frowns contend the way,  
Despise—defy them all—and say,  
"Your worst! my hold is sure!"

[From the New York Observer.]

## THE MODERN SAMARITANS.

CONCLUDED.

### Worship and festivals.

Their worship is complicated, consisting of both public ceremonies and private practices. Their chief priest is now a venerable old man, familiar with the Pentateuch and who enters readily into conversation with strangers. He has a high idea of his sect, pretending that Samaritanism is the only true religion in the world. He regards himself as the legitimate successor of the patriarchs, Moses, Aaron, Levi; but he listens patiently to objections that are made, and tries to reply, according to the measure of his learning.

The Samaritan synagogue, at Naplous, is large and conveniently arranged. It is divided into several apartments. The priest and his sons alone have the right to approach the altar. Admission to the synagogue is not easily allowed to strangers. Before entering, they must submit to certain formalities; special

seats are appointed for them, and they leave after the reading of the Law, when the prayers begin. These restrictions come doubtless from ancient usages. It is well known that pagans or profane persons were not allowed to enter the interior of the temple at Jerusalem, and the Samaritans have borrowed this custom from the Jews.

They have a deep veneration for the Sabbath. More strict than the rest of the children of Israel, they do not kindle a fire on that day, and do no work whatever, saying that they conform faithfully to the commandments of God by Moses. They pronounce three special prayers during the Sabbath, and do not leave their house, except to go to the Synagogue. Their scruples are so great in this respect that a young Samaritan, who had formed the design of visiting England, changed his purpose, when he learnt that the vessel would be at sea, and pursue her voyage upon the Sabbath-day. This opinion of the Samaritans is certainly extravagant and founded on too literal an interpretation of the Scriptures; but might not Christians learn of them to observe better the Lord's day?

Mount Gerizim continues to be the holy place for these sectaries. They go there three times yearly with great pomp and make solemn sacrifices. When they pray in their houses or their synagogues, they turn towards the sacred mountain. It is on the top of Mount Gerizim, in their view, that the Lord makes his special abode; there he listens with most pleasure to the prayers of his people; there, he is most disposed to grant them evidences of his mercy. Mount Gerizim is as important for them as is the temple of Jerusalem for the Jews. Poor, deluded people! Will they never know that God is a spirit, and that they who worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth. Eighteen centuries have passed since this word was brought to the world; it was uttered in the very country of Samaria; and these wayward Israelites still persist in supposing there is a special sacredness in a mountain! Alas! are there not thousands of persons who bear the name of Christians, deluded in like manner? What are the places of pilgrimage of Romanists, but so many mount Gerizims, where the devotees fancy that they are better listened to by God? Superstition is inherent in the heart of man; it changes its form, but in substance it is the same.

The festivals of the Samaritans are very numerous; 1st. The feast of Passover, at the beginning of which they sacrifice the pascal lamb; they eat unleavened bread for seven days, and at the end of this time they go to mount Gerizim; the priest gives them the blessing from the top of the holy mount; 2d. The feast of Pentecost, or feast of harvest, which they celebrate fifty days after the passover; they read the law constantly day and night; 3d. The feast of the first-born; they still go to mount Gerizim, to give glory to God for the blessing which he has shed upon their marriage; 4th. The feast of the seventh month, which begins with the blowing of trumpets; 5th. The feast of expiation or propitiation; then, men, women, and children all fast; they read the law, praising and thanking God in psalms and prayers; 6th. The feast of Tabernacles; they go anew upon the holy mount, holding branches of trees in their hands; there, they prepare tents, under which they pass seven days in mirth, and on the eighth day, the whole ceremony ends with singing. 7th. Lastly, on the twenty-second day of the seventh month, they celebrate a feast which is a summary of all the rest. The Samaritans are persuaded that all these minute ceremonies are prescribed by God.

### Marriages.

As to their marriage customs, they cannot

take wives except from their own small flock. Divorce is allowed among them; but they do not designate clearly what are the legitimate causes of repudiation. It is rare that they use this privilege. What is curious, at their first marriage, they may espouse two wives. But if one of these two wives dies, the husband cannot take another. If he loses both, he may marry again, but only one wife. Strange medley of bigamy and monogamy! They allege the examples of the patriarchs to justify these usages. The other Jews, living among Christian nations, all respect the law of monogamy; but the Samaritans do not meet with any opposition in this respect from the Turks, who are themselves polygamists.

### Funerals.

The funeral practices in this sect date back probably to very ancient times. "You ask what are our usages respecting the dead," writes a Samaritan priest to Mr. de Sacy; "they are as follows: Before the soul's departure, we read to the dying some extracts from the Law, and we offer prayers upon mount Gerizim. After death, we wash the body with pure water, and we recite further texts of the Law. When the funeral begins, we suspend our reading, and when the body is brought to the grave, we follow the bier, continuing to read the Law to the end of the book. Our sepulchres belong to ourselves alone, and no others are buried there; the bodies are placed in front of mount Gerizim. We observe all the rules concerning impurities, as the Law commands. We recite songs and prayers in order that Jehovah may pardon the dead.

### Expectation of a Messiah.

What is the Samaritans' opinion of the Messiah? First, as regards Jesus Christ, they make honourable mention of him, and speak always of him with respect though they do not admit his quality of Messiah. They do not declaim against Christians; on the contrary, they show them marks of affection. This is owing perhaps to their enmity against the other Jews. Not having taken part in the crucifixion of the Saviour, they are more free in their judgment, and more equitable in the manner in which they appreciate the religion of Jesus.

Next, they expect still the coming of a Messiah, as their fathers did in the times of the Gospel (John iv. 25). They represent to themselves the Messiah or Christ as a great prophet who will deliver them from tyranny, restore the authority of the law, and subject all nations to the power of Jehovah. They found their hope on these words of the Lord to Moses. The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken, (Deut. xviii. 15). They designate this prophet under the name of Hathab, that is to say he who turns or who converts. "This Hathab to come is a great mystery," writes one of the priests. "We shall know him by certain prodigies, when he shows himself. We know his name. . . . He must be king and prophet; he will live a hundred and twenty years, like Moses, and from Naplous he will reign over the whole world. Those who will not receive him shall be destroyed by the sword. Our doctors announce that all nations will obey him and believe in him, that the Messiah will put honor upon the book of the Law, mount Gerizim, the religion of Moses. This prophet will die, and will be buried near Joseph, after he shall have restored the tabernacle upon the summit of mount Gerizim."

The Samaritans, as you see, have no distinct notions of the Messiah. They attribute to him the office of founding a kingdom at once spiritual and terrestrial. They think that he will effect a religious renovation, but that he

will have recourse, to obtain his end, to carnal weapons.

The famous prophecy contained in Genesis, chapter xlix. 10, where mention is made of Shiloh, to whom the gathering of the people must be, is not interpreted by the Samaritans in the same manner as by Christians. They believe that Shiloh designates, not the Sent of God, but on the contrary an enemy, a destroyer of the true religion; and they add that this destroyer is already come in the person of king Solomon, who, in their opinion, turned the nations from obedience to the law of Moses.

### Concluding remarks.

Such are the principal facts collected respecting the modern Samaritans. In one word, their political and intellectual condition is sad. They have always been enslaved to other nations, and they are so still. Their religious state is somewhat less deplorable; but along with some truths, they admit many and great errors.

Compared with the rest of the Jews, they exhibit three characteristic differences: 1. They receive only the Pentateuch as of divine authority, as the infallible rule of their faith, and reject the other historical or prophetic books of the Old Testament, saying that they were written (except those of Joshua and Judges) in favor of the house of David; 2d. They despise and condemn the traditions of Jews, whether oral, or written, the Talmud, the books of rabbins, &c. 3d. The holy place in their view, is upon mount Gerizim, in opposition to Jews who attribute a particular sanctity to the city of Jerusalem.

When will the day come, that these poor Samaritans will open their eyes to the light of the Gospel? God alone knows. But Christians must remember them in their prayers and their missionary efforts. Jesus Christ announced his divine word to the Samaritan woman and other inhabitants of this country: we should imitate his example.

### Revolutions.

By Dr. Adams in the Christian Review.

"In the last year of the last century, Napoleon crossed the Alps, and conducted his brilliant campaigns in Italy. Though not crowned as Emperor till the year 1804, yet, as the century opens, he was certainly the most remarkable personage in the world. His name was a terror in every English nursery. When politics ran high in our own country, in 1812, he was the 'rock of offence,' against which the waves beat and divided. A distinguished divine in New England, in a public discourse from the pulpit, designated him as the 'first-born son of the devil.' We have now reached a point of time when we can pronounce with some deliberation upon the general effects of his extraordinary career, and of that great revolution in the midst of which he emerged. There was too much of terror and of mystery in those events, at the time of their occurrence, to allow men to judge with calmness. There was then scarcely one honest friend of liberty whose ardor was not damped, and whose faith in the high destinies of mankind was not shaken. It is now our deliberate opinion that the French Revolution, in spite of all its follies and crimes, its atrocities and sacrifices of human life, was a great blessing to the world. Deliverances were wrought, though amid plagues, and signs, and wonders. Demons were exercised, even though they did rage and foam, rendering and tearing their miserable victims. We pronounce no eulogium upon the Colossus of war who bestrode Europe, when we speak of the changes which God has wrought by his wrathful and ambitious agency. He was as a rod of iron, by which the Almighty dashed in pieces the old despots of the world, like potters' vessels. Nations were lifted up from