



### An Easter in Samaria.

MR. WILSON, late United States Consul at Jerusalem, has sent us an account of a remarkable visit which he made to Shechem while a resident of the Holy Land. The Samaritan Jews have never passed beyond the Pentateuch in their religious ceremonies, and still offer the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb. They accept no prophet after Moses:

"It was the fourteenth day of the month of Nisan, the 23rd of April, and as the next day was the Sabbath, the Passover ceremonies had to be over by sundown, which, at the Orient, is twelve o'clock, or the close of the day.

Our camp was at the foot of Mt. Gerizim, and at ten o'clock on Friday we made the weary ascent, which required nearly one hour. The High Priest was clothed in a silk robe of light gray, or Quaker-drab, with an overdress of white, when engaged in ceremonial duties.

An oven had been prepared in the ground, eight feet deep and four feet in diameter, for roasting the lambs. A furnace also was prepared for heating the water for fleecing the animals.

At twelve o'clock the congregation assembled around the furnace, and after a brief ceremony of blessing, the lambs were slain—there were seven—and fleeced and dressed, and transfixed, each one, with a spit in the form of a cross, a pin driven through a pole, to sustain the carcass when placed in the oven. The animals, as dressed, were placed on a bundle of withes, or poles, a square frame-work, and carried to the oven and deposited, the heads downward, the oven having been heated by brush-wood of a sweet-scented shrubbery, but very combustible. The High Priest had lighted the fire, after appropriate ceremonies.

The bundle was placed over the oven and covered with green grass, and then was covered with earth and water, or mud—a coarse kind of cement—and closely packed. Psalms and hymns were chanted prior to depositing the lambs in the oven, and the services were solemn and performed for the most part in a graceful manner.

The most barbarous feature of the ceremonies was, that the members of the congregation crossed their foreheads with the blood of the quivering, bleeding animals, and then, as if in an ecstasy of joy, embraced and kissed one another. Blood was also put upon the tents, over the doors, or places of entrance. The wool and the offal of the lambs were burned with fire in the furnace, so that nothing was left, and after the feast, the bones also were to be burned.

Half an hour before sundown the whole congregation, led by the High Priest, chanted a hymn around the oven, which was then opened, and the flesh was distributed in seven baskets. There were then numerous prayers and chants and genuflexions and prostrations, with their faces upon the earth; sometimes prostrate, sometimes kneeling, sometimes standing; at all times intensely interested apparently ending with a triumphal chorus and a delirium of joy, and the benediction when the bread and flesh were distributed, and the feast began, and the empty plates, which had been sent from the tents, were loaded with flesh for the women, who do not, it seems, participate in the regular public ceremonial.

In prayer and in the chants the faces of the congregation were turned towards the highest point of Gerizim, near by, on which I traced the ruins of a temple, a castle, a town, or city and many rock-hewn cisterns, or wells, from one of which I found the native Arabs drawing water.

The ancient Samaritan temple was, as I suppose, a splendid building, rivalling even that of the Jews at Jerusalem. The Samaritans are a

mixed race of Chaldeans and Jews, with a predominance, perhaps, of the appearance of the Mesopotamians. Under the teaching of the Hebrew priests and people, who remained after the captivity, the Chaldee colonists renounced their idolatry, and adopted the Hebrew faith; and for centuries they have continued to observe the Law of Moses, and to look for the coming of the Messiah and the rebuilding of the Temple on Gerizim, and with a sublime faith in the "impossible," they are waiting and expecting the consummation of the ages in the fulfilment of their hopes, when the world shall be subjected to their standard and be made converts to their faith."

### Hints for Housekeepers.

Odor of onions left on the hands after peeling, may be removed by rubbing the hands with celery or mustard.

Save broken and crooked tacks to clean

bottles and jugs, they are preferable to shot; the sharp edges scrape off the adhering particles and stains.

Polish a piano that has grown dim from exposure to damp air by rubbing it over with chamois skin to which has been applied a few drops of sweet oil.

When darning woolen hose make the threads one way of stout thread, with the cross threads of woolen yarn. The result is a fine, smooth darn, which looks and wears well.

If hard soap is taken from its wrappings and stood edgewise on a shelf in a warm room, or put in a bag and hung behind the kitchen range for a few weeks, it will last decidedly longer than otherwise.

Every ounce of suet, fat, cold meat and bones should be saved and utilized for making croquettes, hash-soup, drippings, or soap-grease. Break the bones before stewing them for soup, so that the marrow may escape.

