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THE WOMAN AT THE WELL.

ANCIENT Shechem, rendered famous in Old Testament history by a variety of deeply interesting circumstances is in the 4th chapter of the Gospel by St. John known as Sychar. This name seems to have been a nickname, perhaps from *shaker*, 'falseness,' spoken of idols in Hab. ii. 18; or from *shukkar*, 'drunkard,' in allusion to Is. xxviii. 1-7—such as the Jews were fond of imposing upon places they disliked; and nothing could exceed the enmity which existed between them and the Samaritans, who possessed Shechem. Stephen, however, in his historical retrospect, used the proper and ancient name.—Acts vii. 16.

"Not long after the times of the New Testament, the place received the name of Neapolis, which it still retains in the Arabic form, Nablus being one of the very few names in Palestine which have survived to the present day. It had probably suffered much, if it was not completely destroyed, in the war with the Romans, and would seem to have been rebuilt by Vespasian, and then to have taken this new name; for the coins of the city (of which there are many) all bear the inscription, Flavia Neapolis, the former epithet, no doubt, derived from Flavius Vespasian.

"There had already been converts to the Christian faith, under our Saviour, and it is



JESUS AND THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

probable a church had been gathered here by the apostle. Justin Martyr was a native of Neapolis. The name of Germanus, Bishop of Neapolis, occurs in A.D. 314, and other

ground Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now, Jacob's well was there. * * * There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink."

bishops continue to be mentioned down to A.D. 535, when the bishop, John, signed his name at the Synod of Jerusalem.—K T T

The Moslems, the Crusaders, and the Saracens have each, in turn, been its masters. It was finally taken from the Christians in A.D. 1242, by Abu Ali, and has remained in Moslem hands ever since.

"There is no reason to question that the present town occupies the site of the ancient Shechem. The town itself is long and narrow, extending along the N.E. base of Mount Gerizim, and partly resting on its declivity. The streets are narrow, the houses high, and, in general, well built, all of stone, with domes upon the roofs, as at Jerusalem. The population of the place is estimated by Dr. Olin, at 8000 or 10000, of whom 500 or 600 are Christians of the Greek communion, and the rest Moslems, with the exception of about 150 Samaritans, and one-third that number of Jews."

In the Gospel by John, we have one of the most interesting of the New Testament narratives. And he must needs go through Samaria. Then cometh he to the city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near the parcel of