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THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH.

SAMARIA was captured, and Israel carried into captivity, about the year 721 B. C. Colonists from the east were sent to supply their place, probably by Sargon. The country was still insufficiently peopled, and another colony was sent by Ezar-haddon, about 678 B. C. The first colonists, perhaps at the suggestion of a friendly Israelite, obtained from the Assyrian King the services of a priest who re-established the ancient sanctuary at Bethel, and taught the new inhabitants of the country how they should fear Jehovah. But they still retained their own national gods. This mixture of Jehovism and idolatry subsisted for at least a century and a half. In the long run, however, the worship of Jehovah prevailed over the paganism with which it had been associated. There was probably a considerable remnant of Israelites, especially in the more remote and inaccessible parts of the country. Being poor, scattered and defenceless, they would naturally be willing to enter into friendly relations with the new settlers—trade with them, earn wages by cultivating their lands, intermarry with them, and to ultimately coalesce with them into one people. Religious differences would present no serious obstacle, because the religion of Israel was already tolerant of the ancient cults of Canaan and Phœnicia. As the community became more and more homogeneous, the intrinsic superiority of the religion of Jehovah seems to have gradually asserted itself. One external advantage was in its favor. It was the one religion common to the whole community, Jehovah being recognized by the immigrants as the God of the