

have never said or held that the Hittites spoke Akkadian, I think it will prove that Akkadian is the most valuable guide we can follow in decipherment.

As regards the subject of the texts, it has been disputed that they are likely to be charms or magical sentences. On this point I have at present only to point out the frequent repetition of the names of deities and the occurrence of the peculiar heads with horns or long ears and protruding tongues, which appear to me certainly to be intended to represent demons. Among the Chinese, we have representations of demons often with protruding tongues and with short horns on the head. The "Gorgonian heads" in Etruria have a protruding tongue, as has the head of Medusa in archaic Greek representations. The protruding tongue is common to the Indian infernal deities, to the Mulge of Phœnicia, and to the Egyptian Bes. The Etruscan infernal deity, Charun ("the evil god") is represented with open mouth and huge square ears. It appears, therefore, that among Turanian peoples the idea of a demon is commonly denoted by horns or long ears and a protruding tongue. It does not seem very evident what other idea can be presented by such an emblem. The text in question must, therefore, bear reference to gods and to demons.

In conclusion, I would note that pigtailed came to China from the Tatars, and that the ordinary representation of a Chinese shoe is not unlike the Turkish, Etruscan, and Hittite curly-toed shoe, which has been called a "snow shoe"—a somewhat misleading term. The true comparison with the shoe of Asia Minor has been suggested by Sir C. Wilson. The two-headed eagle has been regarded as one of the most distinctive of Hittite emblems—occurring in Cappadocia; and it is, therefore, important to note that Etruscan representations of this curious fowl may be found figured in Dennis' Etruria. If the eagle alone were sufficient evidence, its testimony would be that the Hittites were an Altaic people like the Etruscans.

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## SAMARITAN CUSTOMS.

THE first answers yet obtained to the "Questions" as to the natives of Syria come from Shechem (Nablus), and relate to one of the most interesting of the mixed nationalities of Palestine, viz., the Samaritans. The Rev. C. Fallscheer, to whom I wrote, is on very friendly terms with the present Samaritan High Priest, Jacob, and I attach the more value to his notes because they are in great part derived from the best Samaritan authority.

Some of the most interesting replies are here detailed, with an occasional note, showing relative value or due to personal observation.

*Feast of Tabernacles.*—"Is celebrated every year, on the 15th day of the seventh month. On the first day of this feast every Samaritan father

of a family ornaments his room (see Levit. xxiii, 40) with boughs of palm, pomegranate, lemon, orange, and some kinds of grass, all the branches being hung from the ceiling. They dwell in this room seven days, and remove the adornment on the eighth day."

**NOTE.**—Among the Jews, I believe, the booths are never made inside a room but in the open court (*cf.* Neh. viii, 15), or on the roof. Booths on the roof are commonly used in Palestine for living in in summer.

*Fast of the Atonement.*—On the 10th of seventh month. From sunset on the 9th till sunset on the 10th all the congregation, except sucklings, fast. There are special prayers for the day, and during the night they repeat the Books of Genesis and Exodus by heart, no lights being allowed in the houses. After sunrise they use books for the prayers, and read Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The Pentateuch is completely read during the twenty-four hours. During these two festivals, and at Pentecost, special prayers are said on Gerizim for the restoration of the Temple on the mountain.

*Circumcision.*—Takes place in the father's house on the eighth day after the child is born. Special prayers are said, and passages in the law concerning the rite are read; an ancient hymn invoking blessing on parents and child is sung.

"In this hymn they pray for a certain Roman soldier named Germon, who was placed as sentinel over the High Priest's house by some Roman Emperor; because of his kindness in not preventing the rite of circumcision. They offered him money, but he would not accept, only asking to be remembered in their prayers for the future."

*Talith.*—The Samaritan High Priest wears a talith (or sacred scarf) on his head, when raising the Roll of the Law for the congregation to see during the service.

*The Red Heifer.*—In answer to the question, how impurity can be removed in absence of the ashes of the Red Heifer, it is remarked that these ashes purified only after contact with a dead body. As there is now no Temple, the Samaritans never touch a corpse; even when a Samaritan mother sees her child about to die she leaves it, and the dead are washed and prepared for burial by Moslems.

*The Water of Jealousy.*—This is not now used, since the destruction of the Samaritan temple.

*Loosing the Shoe.*—This ceremony is still practised by the Samaritans.

**NOTE.**—It also still is practised by the Jews, but I am informed that the woman does not spit in the man's face, but only "before his face."

*Divorce* is said to be uncommon. The number of women is comparatively very small. When a woman is divorced for misconduct the dower is forfeited to the husband.

*The Poor.*—The Samaritans are said to be very charitable to their poor.

*Kabbala.*—The Kabbala is still in existence among them, as shown by the following story: The missionary, having urged that the law alone was not sufficient for salvation, a priest replied:—

“ You know that the first letter of Genesis in our language is *Ba* and the last letter of Deuteronomy is *Lam*. These two letters make the word *Bal*, meaning ‘enough,’ and also *ba* in arithmetic is ‘two,’ and *lam* is ‘thirty,’ or together thirty-two ; and thirty-two is the perfect number of the teeth of man. Therefore the Pentateuch is sufficient for salvation.”

*Charms*.—The Samaritans prepare charms, but say that these are forbidden by the law, and not to be used by their own people, but by strangers. The charms are written by the priests to heal sickness, to make women conceive, to promote love, &c.

*Alexander the Great*.—The Samaritans relate the same story of his visit to Gerizim which Josephus relates of his visit to Jerusalem.

NOTE.—If I remember right, not having the book by me, this comes from the Samaritan “Book of Joshua,” which some writers have confused with the Samaritan Chronicle.<sup>1</sup>

*Complexion*.—A few are red-haired with blue eyes ; the majority have dark eyes and black hair.

NOTE.—I have seen some handsome specimens of red-haired Jews (with blue eyes, I believe) among the North African Jews in Jerusalem.

*Language*.—The commonly spoken language is Arabic, but the priests can still speak Samaritan.

*Dress*.—The women are veiled in public. They arrange the hair in ten or twelve plaits or pigtails. There is no difference of dress between married and unmarried, and the children’s dress is much like that of adults—the ordinary Oriental costume of Syria. The distinctive mark is the red turban (a fine crimson) of the men ; unmarried women do not wear gold ornaments, rings, ear-rings, necklaces. The Samaritans do not wear the “lovelocks” of the Pharisees.

*Cutting the Hair*.—When first cut the priest cuts off the first lock, the barber finishes the work.

*Trades*.—The men are merchants, clerks, weavers, tailors, carpenters. The women are engaged in household employment.

*Education*.—Reading in Samaritan and Arabic, writing, and arithmetic ; also singing the old hymns without any instrumental music.

*Taxes*.—In addition to other taxes they pay the *Askeriah*, or exemption money from military service, about 10 fr. a year per man.

*Amusements*.—The women employ a female Muhammadan singer who beats a drum ; they join in in the song, but sing badly. The men sing by themselves in Hebrew (Samaritan ?) and Arabic. They relate Bible stories to the children or stories of their forefathers, but the priests say the law forbids them any games. They read no books but their own, and some Arab newspapers from Beirut.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Robertson Smith has spoken of the Samaritan Chronicle as a tissue of absurd fables. Evidently he confuses this matter-of-fact work with the Samaritan Book of Joshua. (See my paper on Samaritan Topography Survey Memoirs, Vol. Special Papers.)

*Birth.*—Salt water is poured on a child when born, and it is then swaddled.

NOTE.—The rubbing with salt is a very old and widely observed custom.

*Marriage.*—The men at the age of sixteen, the women of fourteen. A few have more than one wife. The eldest son inherits two parts, the other sons one part; the daughters each a half part of property.

*Burial.*—All the law is read up to Deut. xxxii before leaving the house and the rest at the tomb. The family mourn seven days, during which the priests read the law in the room of the deceased. Both men and women follow the corpse to the grave. During the year after death the family visit the tomb once every month.

*Genealogy.*—They claim to possess the genealogy of the High Priests from Aaron to the present day.

Nothing new has yet been elicited concerning Samaritan literature beyond what is already well known to scholars.

*Music.*—They appear not to have any instrumental music.

There are many other answers which I have not yet been able to compare with the questions.

C. R. CONDER.

## BOAT-SHAPED GRAVES OF SYRIA.

IN passing through the Anti-Lebanon District of Syria I noticed that at some of the villages the graves possessed the form of a boat or skiff. The fact appeared remarkable, in a district far away from the sea, away from navigable rivers, and among villagers whose daily occupation is not connected with boats at all. I asked myself what could be the intent of the boat, and after comparison with the graves at other villages I asked whether the prow and stern of a boat may not be represented in the head and foot stones of ordinary graves?

At Cairo I had noticed the tombs of the Mohammedans with two stelæ or upright stones towards the head and foot, though far from being uniformly *at* the head and foot. These are sometimes flat stones, but very commonly rounded, in either case tapering towards the bottom, while a turban or cap or other head-dress is carved on the top of the head-stone, to indicate the rank or class of the deceased. Such a grave is figured in Mr. Lane's "Modern Egyptians," p. 524. On the meaner tombs the upright stones are smaller, often roughly formed and almost shapeless; and are so far from looking like head and foot stones that inquiry was prompted as to their meaning. I was told that they represented the good and bad angels of the deceased. Probably the reference was to the two angels, *Munkar* and *Nekeer*, who are supposed to visit the dead person on the night following his burial, and examine him concerning his soundness in the faith.