

## PREFACE.

The following work has grown out of the author's desire to gain an answer for the question: Who are the Samaritans? He publishes it in the expectation that the same question may be of interest to the intelligent public, while withal he hopes that the collection of material here presented may be of use to the scholarly world.

In large part this work is a digest of the labors of many scholars for over three centuries; in so far it is the result of painstaking investigation in a widely scattered and recondite literature. At the same time, while he has made no pretence at original hypotheses, the author believes that he presents ampler treatment of the subject as a whole than has yet been attempted. The difficult problem of the origin of the Samaritan sect has been here discussed in the light of modern criticism as a preliminary to the subsequent history. Their own Chronicles have been carefully explored for historical data, illustrating or adding to the foreign sources which up to within fifty years have been almost the sole means of information. The Jewish, Christian, and Muslim references have been collated, and a digested treatment of the Talmudic references is offered. The Samaritan theology has been treated formally and at some length, with a full apparatus of citations to the literature, especially the Liturgy, the theological importance of which has hardly yet been recognized. The Chapter on the Literature seemed a necessary supplement, although it can give only an outline of the results of the many specialists who have worked in this field. In fact, Samaritan study still lies in the primary stage of manuscript investigation, and the student who has

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not access to the original material must recognize that at best he can be only an encyclopædist in the subject.

It is hoped that the constant references to the literature, and especially the Bibliography at the end of the volume, will be of use to students. The history of Samaritana gives many instances where first-rate scholars have entirely ignored the labors of other specialists in the same lines.

My thanks are due to Professors Hilprecht, Jastrow, and Clay, of the University of Pennsylvania, for their great and unfailing kindness to me in my course for the Doctorate in Philosophy, the first Chapters of the present work containing the material presented as my thesis for the degree. I have also to express my deep sense of obligation to the Committee of the Bohlen Lectureship, for the dignity they have conferred upon me in appointing me as Lecturer on that honorable foundation. To my friends, Prof. W. Max Müller and the Rev. Dr. Julius H. Greenstone, my thanks are due for much kind assistance, and I am deeply indebted to Newcomb B. Thompson, Esq., for his critical reading of both MS and proof.

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