

document and of an ignorance of the real history of the past; but we now find that it is the critics who have been guilty of ignorance, and that the employment of the name takes us back to the age of Babylonian influence in western Asia, that is to say, to the age before the Exodus.

The Egyptian monuments have shown us what the Amorites were like. Like the Libyans of northern Africa, who are anthropologically allied to the so-called Red Kelts, they were a tall, blond race, with fair skins, blue eyes, pointed beards, and reddish hair. They thus formed part of a race which was spread along the northern coast of Africa and extended through western Spain and France into the British Isles. As in Africa, so, too, in Palestine, they lived by preference in the mountains; the hot and enervating air of the plains did not suit them. Between the Amorite and the Canaanite there was an essential difference of race.

The Canaanites were Semites, and "the language of Canaan," as Isaiah (xix. 18) calls it, was what we term Hebrew. The fact was first made clear by the Phœnician inscriptions; the cuneiform tablets found at Tel el-Amarna in Upper Egypt have carried back the history of the language to pre-Mosaic days. A large part of the tablets consists of letters in the Babylonian language from the Egyptian governors and vassal-kings of Canaan, and in some of them the Canaanitish equivalents are given of Babylonian words. In all such cases we might substitute "Hebrew" for "Canaanitish."

It is true that in one or two points the Phœnician or Canaanitish differs from the Hebrew dialect. Hebrew, for example, has developed of itself what is called the *waw conversivum*, and has borrowed the article from a north-Arabian dialect. But otherwise between Hebrew and the Canaanitish language, which we can now trace back to the century before the Exodus, there is substantially no difference. How it came about that the "language of Canaan" was also the language of the Israelites we can not at present fully explain. But the early contract-tablets which have been discovered in Babylonia throw some light on the question.

A century or two before the birth of Abraham, his birthplace Ur, now Mugheir, was the capital of a dynasty which claimed rule over the rest of Babylonia, and made military expeditions against "the land of the Amorites." On its fall, Babylonia was divided into more than one state, the rulers of which were independent one of the other. One of these states was Babylon, where a dynasty from southern Arabia had mounted the throne. They bear names that are not Babylonian, but are found in the inscriptions of south Arabia, and, it may be added, in the Old Testament as well. The sixth king of this "First Dynasty of Babylon," as the native chroniclers entitled it, was Khammurabi or Ammirabi, who eventually succeeded in overthrowing his rivals and making himself supreme master of Babylonia.