

enlarged on the continent, while the called and not voluntary sons of Ham, have endured a servitude, in the wide stretching vallies of the tents of Shem.*

Such are the facts which lend their interest to the early epoch of our history. They invite the deepest study. Every season brings to our notice some new feature, in its antiquities, which acts as a stimulus to thought and inquiry. It is evident that there is more aliment for study and scrutiny in its obscure periods, than has heretofore been supposed. Vestiges of art are found, which speak of elder and higher states of civilization, than any known to the nomadic or hunter states. And the great activity which marks the present state of antiquarian and philological inquiry, in the leading nations of Europe, adds deeply to our means and inducements to search out the American branch of the subject. Man, as he views these results, gathers new hopes of his ability to trace the wandering footsteps of early nations over the globe. There is a hope of obtaining the ultimate principles of languages and national affinities. Already science and exact investigation have accomplished the most auspicious and valuable results. The spirit of research has enabled us to unlock many secrets, which have remained sealed up for centuries. History has gleaned largely from the spirit of criticism; Ethnology has already reared a permanent monument to her own intellectual labors, and promises in its results, to unravel the intricate thread of ancient migration, and to untie the gordian knot of nations. Shall we not follow in this path? Shall we not emulate the labors of a Belzoni, a Humboldt, and a Robinson?

* Genesis, 9. 27.