

Egypt and Palestine, 1400 B.C.¹

PROF. MORRIS JASTROW, JR.

OUR knowledge of the early history of Palestine is still comparatively scanty, and this, despite the remarkable discoveries and researches of the past decades, which have so greatly extended our vista of antiquity. While we possess documents which enable us to follow the course of events in southern Mesopotamia from a period as remote at least as 2700 B.C., and the monuments of Egypt take us back, it is claimed, to a still earlier period, we know but little from native sources of the internal affairs of Palestine outside of the confederacy of the Beni Israel previous to the tenth century B.C.; and even in the case of this confederacy the sources become exceedingly vague, and finally uncertain, as we approach the border-line in its history marked by what is commonly known as the "Exodus." For the period previous to the Exodus, the pages of Genesis, though abounding in historical reminiscences of the greatest interest and value, are yet, even in the case of such chapters as xiv., xxxiv., and xxxvi., so obscured by legendary admixture and uncertain tradition that, without further light thrown upon the narrative from extraneous sources, it is hardly possible to do more than reconstruct general pictures of life in Palestine at this time. Fortunately, extraneous sources for this early period do not entirely fail us; and they have recently been enriched by a most important discovery in a quarter entirely unlooked for.

The Assyrian sources, indeed, for the history of Palestine, flowing so copiously for the ninth, eighth, and seventh centuries, cease ere we reach the Exodus. Before the ninth century we have a reference in Assyrian inscriptions to Palestine from the days of Tiglath-Pileser I. (ca. 1100 B.C.), who bounds his dominions on the west by the "great sea of the land of *Aharri*,"—a term which, no doubt, was intended to include Palestine in the proper sense, as well as Syria

¹ In view of the general importance to Old Testament students of the El-Amarna tablets which form the basis of this paper, it has been thought desirable to include in it some account of the bearings of the tablets on the history of provinces adjacent to Palestine proper.

and the Phœnician coast.² It is probable, also, that the grandfather of this king, Šalmaneser I., who, as we know, made extensive conquests in the East and West, already maintained a supremacy over Palestine.³ For the events related in the 14th chapter of Genesis, which certainly point to early political relations between southern Mesopotamia and eastern Palestine prior to the Assyrian supremacy, nothing has as yet been gleaned from Babylonian sources beyond some proposed, but still doubtful, identifications of names. Among these that of Amraphel with Hammurabi, first suggested by Schrader and Halévy,⁴ may be regarded as the most significant, because, if correct, it would approximately fix the date of the great conflict there described.

Egypt, however, has come to our aid in filling up a part of the gap between the days of Amraphel and the establishment of the Israelitish kingdom. During the XVIIIth and XIXth dynasties, covering, in a rough estimate, the four centuries from 1600 to 1200 B.C., Palestine was brought into close relations with Egypt. Shortly after the re-establishment of a native dynasty in Egypt, consequent upon the expulsion of the still mysterious "Hyksos" kings, the Egyptian monarchs began their famous series of Eastern campaigns. Under Thotmes I. Egyptian armies marched victoriously through Palestine and Syria, and passed within the confines of Mesopotamia. The work of conquest was continued with greater efficiency by Thotmes III., who, as a result of a large number of campaigns, succeeded in bringing under Egyptian control the cities lying along the Phœnician coast, as well as those in the interior; and, penetrating beyond the stronghold of the Hittites at Carchemish, claimed possession also of the northwestern districts of Mesopotamia, known to the Egyptians as Nahrain (or Nahrina) and Mitanni. Whether this king also reached the country of Ashur proper remains an open question, though it is certain that the Assyrian ruler paid tribute to the Egyptian, and it would also appear that Babylonia at this time or shortly thereafter acknowledged the supremacy of Egypt.⁵ Still,

² Inscription at Sebeh-Su; III. Rawl. 4, No. 6, l. 8; Schrader, *Die Keilschriften am Eingange der Quellgrotte des Sebeh-Su*, p. 7 sqq.; Schrader, *K.-B.*, I. p. 48.

³ See an article by the writer on "Palestine and Assyria in the Days of Joshua," in *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, VII. 1.

⁴ Schrader, *Die keilschr. Babyl. Königsliste*, pp. 25, 26; Halévy, *Revue des Ét. Juives*, XV. 168 sqq.; Zimmern, *Die Assyriologie als Hilfswissenschaft für das Studium des A. T.* p. 10, accepts the identification.

⁵ Wilkinson, *History of Ancient Egypt*, II. 242; Brugsch, *History of Egypt*, I. 374.

whatever may be the facts with regard to Assyria and Babylonia, they were not permanently affected by these Eastern campaigns of the Egyptians; and even northern Syria, between the river Chabor and the Mediterranean, only remained for a comparatively short time in a condition of real subjection to Egypt. On the other hand, along the Phœnician coast and in Palestine proper, the Egyptian control was more complete; and it may be said that here Egypt usurped the position for some time held by Assyria, appointing governors who were under her jurisdiction, and receiving tribute. But the successors of the great Thotmes experienced no little difficulty in maintaining this position. Egyptian garrisons appear to have been kept stationed at various points along the coast and in the interior, and expeditions had frequently to be undertaken for the purpose of quelling uprisings. Under the immediate successors of Thotmes, Amenophis II. and Thotmes IV., Egypt still managed to hold her own; but there are distinct evidences of a weakening of her grasp over these lands during the reign of Amenophis III., a decline which becomes more obvious when Amenophis IV. comes to the throne. It may be that the religious changes which began to make themselves felt in Egypt in the days of Amenophis III., and which, through the policy pursued by Amenophis IV., led to what has with some propriety been called a religious revolution,⁶ was in some measure responsible for this decline in political power,—the religious movement drawing to itself some of the vitality of the nation that might otherwise have been expended in the maintenance and increase of foreign possessions. But whatever the causes may have been, tribute from Nahrina ceases after the reign of Amenophis III.; the Eastern campaigns of the latter are few in number and indecisive in character, while Amenophis IV. does not appear to have conducted any expedition in person, and only a single reference to the tribute of Rutennu (as the Egyptians called the district that included Phœnicia, Palestine, and Syria) is found on the monuments of his reign. It was not until the XIXth dynasty had firmly established itself that the vigorous policy of Thotmes III. was again taken up, and in consequence of the decisive victory gained by Rameses II. at Kadesh, over the Hittites and their allies, the old régime in a measure restored; though it is significant for the altered political conditions that in the offensive and defensive alliance which Egypt made with the Hittites—then

⁶ See the account of the famous "heresy" in Wilkinson, II. 279–286; Brugsch, I. 492 *sqq.*

rapidly growing in power — she recognized the rights and claims of this people in a manner that led in the course of another century to a practical abandonment of her position.⁷

Naturally the Egyptian records, prepared by Egyptian kings, indicate only in a general way the decline of her control over her Eastern provinces that marks the period intervening between Amenophis III. and the accession of the XIXth dynasty; but these general indications can now be supplemented by details of a remarkably striking character. In the spring of 1888, some *fellahs*, rummaging the ruins at El-Amarna, situated about a hundred miles south of Cairo,⁸ and the site of the city founded by Amenophis IV. for the better execution of his ambition to raise the worship of the solar deity to a pre-eminent position in the Egyptian pantheon, came across several hundred clay tablets, of varying size, inscribed on both sides in cuneiform character of a somewhat peculiar type, though approaching the variety current in southern Mesopotamia. The bulk of these tablets, 181 in number, were acquired by the Berlin Museum, 54 found their way to the Bulaq Museum, 81 to the British Museum, and about 20, so far as known, passed into the hands of private individuals. These tablets proved to be a part of the official archives of Amenophis III. and Amenophis IV., embodying letters and reports, couched, with a few exceptions,⁹ in the language of Babylonia, and addressed to the Egyptian kings by their officials and by Eastern rulers having relations with Egypt. The Berlin and Bulaq portions of the collection, together with four in the possession of W. Golinischeff, of St. Petersburg, and one belonging to Professor Maspero, have now been published.¹⁰ Of the English collection the text of only four has as yet appeared, together with brief indications of the contents of the remainder.¹¹

⁷ Wilkinson, II. 319; Brugsch, II. 65, 66, 70 *sqq.*

⁸ On the authority of Maspero, quoted by Winckler (*Der Thontafelfund von El-Amarna*, I. Preface) there is no warrant for the form Tel el-Amarna, which Sayce (*Academy*, No. 1034) continues to use.

⁹ There is one in the Bulaq collection (No. 28,185) in the language of Arşapi; another in the Berlin collection (marked VA. Th. 422) in the language of Mitanni. Regarding the latter, see the valuable articles of Jensen and Bruennow, *Zeits. f. Assyr.* V. pp. 166–259, and also the attempt at decipherment by Sayce in the same number of the journal.

¹⁰ Winckler-Abel, *Der Thontafelfund von El-Amarna*, 3 vols., Berlin, 1889–90.

¹¹ Budge, *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, X. 540–579. Sayce also published in the *P. S. B. A.* XI. 326–413, transliterations of most of the Bulaq tablets, together with translations and short comments; in addition to this

The discovery of the tablets created at the time a profound sensation, which, now that at least the bulk of them is accessible in the magnificent and excellent edition of Messrs. Hugo Winckler and Ludwig Abel, turns out to be fully warranted by their contents. The correspondence in this publication, exclusive of some miscellaneous tablets, may be divided into two groups: (1) letters from rulers of Babylonia, of Assyria, of Mitanni (in the district of Naharina), Arşapi, Alashia, and one or more unknown kings; and (2) letters from officials of the Egyptian kings stationed at various places along the Phœnician coast and in the interior of the country, including Palestine proper.¹²

To the former class belong about forty. The letters are occupied chiefly with lists of presents forwarded to Egypt; assurances of good will; the desire of continuing amicable relations with Egypt; and a good proportion of them are taken up with the negotiations for marriages that were being arranged between royal households. Though full of interest and not bare of important historical data, particularly those from Dušratta, the king of Mitanni, the second class, as they constitute the bulk, are also the more interesting and more important. That the correspondents of the Egyptian king stationed in Phœnicia and Palestine should address their master in the language and script of Babylonia instead of in Egyptian, as we should have ex-

he has given transliterations and translations of 14 tablets in the possession of M. Bouriant (*P. S. B. A. X.* 488-525); but none of his translations are reliable. The same criticism applies to Sayce's translations in *Records of the Past*, New Series, I. and II. Far superior, and full of most valuable suggestions, though to be accepted with the reserve inseparable from the present state of our knowledge, are Halévy's translations of the entire edition of Winckler and Abel, now appearing in instalments in *Journal Asiatique* (Tomes XVII.-XVIII.). Delattre has published very good translations of a selection of the letters (*P. S. B. A. XIII.* Parts 2, 5, 6, 8). For a general account of the discovery and character of the tablets see Erman, *Der Thontafelfund von Tell-Amarna (Sitzungsbericht der Akademie d. Wissenschaften zu Berlin, 1888, pp. 583-589)*; Winckler, *Bericht über die Thontafeln von Tell-el-Amarna im Königl. Museum zu Berlin und im Museum von Bulaq* (*ib.* pp. 1341-1357). See also Lehmann, *Aus dem Funde von Tell-el-Amarna (Zeitschr. für Assyriologie, III. 372-406)*, who also publishes three of the Berlin tablets; and an article by the writer in *The Nation*, 1889, No. 889.

¹² Included in the collection are two letters addressed to a woman (Nos. 181 and 191); a letter from the king's daughter (No. 188); about ten from one official to another; and several fragments of mythological tablets, which, from certain indications found on them, appear to have served the Egyptian scribes as texts for acquiring a knowledge of the cuneiform characters and language.



pected, is in itself a remarkable feature which has been much commented upon. According to Sayce and others, it is an indication that Babylonian was employed in those days as the medium of diplomatic interchange, giving to the Babylonian the rank that French held until recently, and to a certain extent still holds, in European courts. But without entering upon a discussion of the question here, I should like to suggest that it points rather to a political supremacy exercised over the district by Babylonia prior to the Assyrian occupation above referred to, and for which some evidence is forthcoming.¹³ On the plausible supposition that Babylonian was introduced at that time by Babylonian officials, or officials standing under Babylonian supervision, its continued use through the later periods of Assyrian and Egyptian supremacy occasions no difficulty. Custom has always been a tyrannical taskmaster in the ancient as well as in the modern Orient.

Leaving this aside and coming to the tablets, we find the chief correspondents of the Egyptian king to be Rib-addi, a *ḥazānu* or governor, stationed at Gubla (O. T. Gebal), the Byblos of the Greeks, — modern Gebeil, — on the Phœnician coast, from whom there are some fifty letters; and Aziru, governor of the district of Amuri, with his seat apparently at Šumuri, which must be sought for in the neighborhood of Gubla. There are about ten letters from Aziru, among them two addressed not to the king, but to fellow-officials. By the side of Rib-addi and Aziru there are a number of others represented by a single letter or a small series of letters. Among these are Pitia of Aškaluna (Ascalon), Zimridi, *ḥazānu* at Zi-du-na (Sidon), and afterwards at Lakiša (Lachish); Jabni-ilu of Lakiša, Zatatna of Akka (Acre), and five letters¹⁴ from Abdi-ḥeba, an officer of the king presiding over the district of Urusalim, which is none other than Jerusalem. In addition to all these, there are quite a number of correspondents from whose letters it is impossible to say where they were stationed, or exactly what official post they held. Prominent among these are Suardatum, Milkil, Aršapi, Zitripira, Daganakala, Biridipi, one whose name is probably to be read Labá' and others.

All of these letters, as well as quite a number of others so fragmentary as to make it difficult to determine who the writers were, deal with the political situation during the reign of Amenophis IV.

¹³ See my article, above mentioned, in the *Zeits. f. Assy.* VII. 1.

¹⁴ But see below, p. 107, 116, for two additional letters.

along the Phœnician coast and in the interior up to northeastern Syria, the confines of the Hittite empire.

The general impression one gains from this correspondence is that Egypt experienced considerable difficulty at the time in maintaining her hold on the foreign provinces,—confirmatory of what was gleaned indirectly from Egyptian inscriptions. In addition to the cities of Phœnicia and Palestine already mentioned, there are references to a number of others, such as Beruna (Beirut), Arwad (Aradus), Şur (Tyre), Argatu, and some less easy of identification. Almost all appear to be threatened with an attack from some quarter, showing that a large part of the province of Rutenu, if not the entire province, was involved in the political turmoil. The difficulties and dangers arise mainly from three sources,—the Hittites, uprisings of the native population, and intrigues of the Egyptian governors among themselves. Thus, to take the letters of Aziru¹⁵ as an example, he tells us that he is threatened by an attack from the Hittites. The latter have already reached the land of Nuhašše, which Halévy has ingeniously conjectured to be ארם צוכא. Aziru stands in mortal fear of the Hittites; but still he is willing, in obedience to the king's orders, to proceed against them in company with Ḥatib. He makes the same statement in a letter addressed to Dudu, whom, apparently in official parlance, he calls his father, and one whom he addresses in the same way as his brother, Hai. In another letter he says that the Hittites are approaching the city of Dunip, or Tunip,¹⁶ and he is afraid lest the latter may join the general revolt against Egypt which the growth of the Hittite power is bringing about. We are in a position to follow the progress of the campaign; for another letter, evidently of later date, informs us that Tunip has been devastated, and that the princes of Nuhašše have joined issues against Egypt. Aziru expresses the opinion that he will be able to defend the city of Şumuri, but this, it would seem, also became a difficult task, for we find him afterwards appealing for protection. Aziru's fears of the spread of hostilities were being realized. But the Hittites and the princes of Nuhašše were not the only enemies against whom Aziru was forced to defend himself. There are certain individuals, personal opponents, who have spread damaging reports about him at the Egyptian court. Of what nature these reports were, we can surmise from the energetic protests of Aziru. It is clear that they

¹⁵ Winckler-Abel, II. Nos. 31-40; cf. Delattre, *P. S. B. A.* XIII. 215-234.

¹⁶ For a recent discussion regarding the site of Tunip, see *Academy*, Vol. XXXIX. (1891), pp. 65, 91, 164, 187, 236, 260, 284.

involved a suspicion of his fidelity to the cause of Egypt. He implores the king, Dudu, and other high dignitaries, not to place any faith in the statements made about him. The accuracy of his reports having been called in question, he asks the king to send an envoy so as to assure himself of their truth. He reminds the king that he furnishes as much revenue to the court of Egypt as any other governor, and he appeals to Dudu for confidence on the ground of gratitude. "Everything that I have," says Aziru, "I owe to you," and, moreover, "thou art my father, and I am thy son. The land of Amuri is thy land, and my house is thy house. Tell me thy desires and I will execute them, whatever they may be."¹⁷ Fortunately we are not dependent upon surmises, for among the documents is a letter, evidently from the king to Aziru, in which the charges against the latter are clearly set forth. The message is forwarded through an ambassador by the name of Ḫanni.¹⁸ Aziru is accused of having acted in bad faith against a fellow-governor stationed at Gubla, whom he drove out of the city. Moreover, a woman by the name of Mada, whom it would appear the king of Egypt was anxious to have,—probably a foreign princess for the harem,—is in the hands of the Hittite chief at Kidša (Kadesh), and Aziru is charged also with having brought this about. "Why," inquires the king, "does the woman Mada dwell with a man who is in revolt against Egypt?" In strong language Aziru is reproached for having played into the hands of the enemy, and he is threatened with death. "If for any reason thou contemplatest violence, and if thou carriest out the evil intent of thy heart, by the power of the King thou shalt die with thy whole family." Aziru had promised to hand over the enemies of the king who are under his control. Ḫanni is commissioned to redeem this promise. The letter concludes with a solemn declaration of the great power of the king, "inviolable as the sun itself." The governor of Gubla, against whom Aziru is accused of having intrigued, is in all probability the Rib-addi from whom we have so many letters. In confirmation of this conjecture it may be mentioned that Rib-addi in these letters makes frequent mention of Aziru, and in terms that show the latter to have been an adversary of his. He asks the king to station Buriḫta in Ṣumuri and recall Ḫatib, who, it would appear from this, was in league with Aziru. Besides Aziru,

¹⁷ Winckler-Abel, II., No. 40, obv. 14-19.

¹⁸ Winckler-Abel, II., No. 92; Halévy (*J. A.* XVIII. No. 1, p. 173) conjectures the letter to be written by the governor of Gubla, but this is very improbable.

there is his real father, Abdaširti, and the latter's sons, called "*mare Abdaširti*" (*mare*, 'sons'; equivalent to the Hebrew and Arabic *bené*), against all of whom Rib-addi prefers charges which explain the threat of the king in his letter to Aziru that he would wipe out the entire family of the latter. Rib-addi, however, as well as Aziru, had difficulties to contend with. Whether through indifference on the part of the king, or inability, the troops for which Rib-addi, in letter upon letter, with wearying persistence, asks, are not forthcoming. Time and again he declares that he is unable to hold out against his enemies, who are pressing upon him on every side, but apparently to little avail. From the earnest way in which he also declares his fidelity to Egypt, one is tempted to conclude that the king, though taking sides against Aziru, did not repose full confidence in Rib-addi, and for this reason may have declined to respond to the constant appeals for reinforcements. There is a third official, Yanhamu, more powerful than either Aziru or Rib-addi, who seems to control the situation and to have the ear of the king.

The letters of Aziru, Rib-addi, and others deal with affairs in the northern part of Rutenu, but they help us to understand the situation in the south. Here, too, hostilities threaten the power of Egypt; and here, as in the north, intrigues and quarrels among rival officials complicate the state of affairs. The clearest light upon the situation in Palestine proper during the reign of Amenophis IV. is thrown by five letters emanating from a certain Abdi-ḥeba, stationed at Jerusalem as a kind of viceroy over a considerable district. With the aid of this general view of Egypt's position in Palestine and adjacent districts as gleaned from the portion of the correspondence above outlined, the detailed examination of these five letters will be found to solve many a problem in the ancient history of Palestine, and, by way of compensation, suggest new ones that require further investigation. The announcement, first made by Professor Sayce,¹⁹ of the occurrence of the name Jerusalem on the El-Amarna tablets naturally aroused great interest. It was commonly held from the gloss (Jud. xix. 10 to *יבוס* viz. *היא ירושלם*) that Jebus was the older name, which clung to the place till the time of David; but 1 Chron. xi. 4, where, on the contrary, *ירושלם* is explained by the gloss *היא יבוס*, is sufficient to show that the two names were used interchangeably, and that there is no warrant on this score for assuming one to be older than the other. We now find, several centuries before

¹⁹ *Academy*, 1890, No. 937.

the events described in Judges, Jerusalem, but no mention of Jebus. Curiously enough, the locality is spoken of in the El-Amarna tablets as "the country (*i.e.* district) of the city of Jerusalem," twice, indeed, as a district, without the addition of the word "city"; and once we find "the districts of the city of Jerusalem." Moreover, a passage in the letters where a city Bit^{lu} Ninib is placed within the *mat Urusalim* leaves no doubt that in the days of Amenophis the name had a wider significance than in the later days of the Judæan Kingdom. The word *alu* (city) attached to *mat* (district), however, shows that it was originally a city; and the legitimate conclusion to be drawn is, that from the city the name came to be applied to adjacent parts, growing, by conquest or otherwise, until it seemed proper to speak of the *matati* of Jerusalem. Afterwards, in the days of Hebrew autonomy in Palestine, the name was once more restricted to the city proper, a different name being introduced to designate the district of which it formed a part; but in the meanwhile "Jebus" also having come into use for the same place, a confusion between the two terms ensues which ends with the abandonment of the name Jebus altogether. The question may be asked whether the Old Testament itself does not preserve a trace of the wider use of the term Jerusalem. This seems to be the case in 1 Chron. viii. 28, where, after an enumeration of a division of the tribe of Benjamin, embracing over sixty clans, the narrator or compiler adds, "these dwelt in Jerusalem." Here Jerusalem, it seems to me, must be taken in the sense of a district rather than a city, for it is difficult to suppose that so large a number of clans had room in a single town; and it may well be that the glosses above referred to in Judges and Chronicles are to be explained on a similar supposition; the addition **היא ירושלם** in the case of the former indicating that Jebus is a part of the district of Jerusalem, in the latter, the gloss **היא יבוס** calling attention to the fact that Jebus is included in (the district of) Jerusalem. The name in these tablets is invariably written *Urusalim*. The first *u* is significant, for it bears out the theory already advanced by the Hebrew grammarian, Ḥayyug,²⁰ and adopted by his successors, Ḡanāḥ and Ḳamḥi, that the pronunciation of the Shewa is in general regulated by the following vowel. *Urusalim* would tend to become *Ursalim*, and so in the inscription of Sennacherib,²¹ where he speaks of his attack upon Hezekiah, we actually find *Ur-sa-li-im-mu* (var. *ma*).

²⁰ Nutt, *The Two Treatises*, etc., of *Jehuda Hayug*, p. 4 (bottom), Ewald and Dukes, *Beiträge*, etc., i. 4.

²¹ I R. 39, 8, 20, 32. So also the Syriac form of the name is *Urishlem*.

Uru and *Ur* are related to one another, as אֲרִי to יְרִי , the latter two being variant spellings of the same word, only that in the case of אֲרִי the nominative termination *u* has disappeared. The etymology of the name is now beyond all doubt, *ur*, 'city,' and *Salim*, which is probably the name of the deity to whom the city was sacred. It is interesting to note that at so late a period as the composition of Ps. lxxvi., where, in vs. 3, שָׁלֵם (for יְרִי־שָׁלֵם) occurs in parallelism to צִיִּין , this etymology of the name was still traditionally current. One is tempted to conclude from this passage that it was at one time customary to abbreviate *Urusalim* in this way by throwing off the first element — a supposition which, if correct, adds force to the proposed identification of Jerusalem with שָׁלֵם of Gen. xiv. 8; though the existence of another שָׁלֵם (Gen. xxxiii. 18), in the district of Shechem, adds a permanent element of doubt to any identification of this kind.

Coming now to the letters themselves,²² it appears that Palestine proper stood in the same relation to Egypt as the Phœnician coast. By means of his lieutenants stationed at various points, the king of Egypt exercised a general control over the political affairs of the country. One of these stations was Lachish, where we find the above-mentioned Zimrida in control; another is Zilu — to be identified with the Benjamite *Ṣela*²³ — governed by Japti-addi; Jerusalem is a third, presided over by Abdi-ḥeba, and no doubt there were other centres. These officers stood immediately under the authority of the Egyptian king. We do not learn from the tablets whether an annual tribute was imposed upon the provinces; but from the frequent mention of presents in the tablets we may conclude that the allegiance to Egypt took the form of some tax, though probably not a regular one. Beyond providing this, the chief duty of these officers consisted in maintaining the authority of their lord. Constant communication with the Egyptian court was maintained. Egyptian troops were sent, as circumstances demanded, to quell

²² Winckler-Abel, Nos. 102-106. In the *Zeitschrift f. Assyriologie*, VI. 245-263, Zimmern publishes a transcription and translation of the letters with a valuable commentary. See an article by the writer in the forthcoming number of the *Zeitschrift* (VII. 3), on "The Letters of Abdi-ḥeba," proposing amendments to Zimmern's renderings, and discussing points connected with the letters. [Since this paper was read before the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, Dec. 29, 1891, Halévy's translation of the five tablets has appeared (*Journal Asiatique*, Nov.-Dec., 1891, pp. 517-30), and I am glad to see that some of the interpretations I proposed in preference to those of Zimmern agree with those of the distinguished French savant.]

²³ *Zilu* stands to צִלֵּל as *Ziduna* to צִדְדָן .

uprisings of the population and to protect the interests of Egypt against rival powers.

The terms in which Abdi-heba addresses the king show that his position did not differ materially from those of his colleagues at Zidon, Gubla, and Sumuri. His letters open with the salutation: "To the King my lord, thus speaks Abdi-heba thy servant. To the feet of my lord the King, I prostrate myself seven times and seven times."²⁴ No doubt such expressions are to a great extent pure formalities, but the servile tone in them may be regarded as genuine. To clinch the matter, we have the direct confession of Abdi-heba that he owes his position to the king. "Neither my father nor my mother put me in this place, but the arm of the mighty King"; and again, "As for this district of Jerusalem, neither my father nor my mother gave it to me, but the arm of the mighty King gave it to me."²⁵ One is tempted to conclude from this that Abdi-heba was actually a scion of a family that had exercised control over the "lands of Jerusalem," but that he now holds his post at the bidding of the Egyptian monarch. Viewed in this light, the assertion that he several times makes that he is not a *ḥazānu* but an *u-e-u*, i.e. (according

²⁴ The opening phrases differ somewhat in the case of different governors. It is interesting to compare some of these with one another. Aziru, in addressing his letter to Hai, a colleague, says simply "To Hai, my brother, as follows, Aziru, thy brother." He addresses Dudu, "My lord [*bēlu*], my father, as follows, Aziru, thy servant. To the feet of my lord I prostrate myself"; and once he adds, "I to my father, peace." In writing to the king he observes greater formality, "To the King my lord, my god, my sun-deity, Aziru thy servant; seven and seven times to the feet of my lord, my god, my sun-deity, I prostrate myself." Rib-addi usually begins, "To the King his lord, the King of the lands (or the sun-deity), the great King, the King of battle. To the feet of the King my lord, my sun-deity, seven times and seven times I prostrate myself. May the goddess, the mistress of Gubla, grant increase to the King my lord." Zimridi eclipses his colleagues by a wearying repetition of *epitheta ornantia*: "To the King my lord, my divinity, my sun-deity, the King my lord, speaks as follows, Zimridi the *ḥazānu* of Sidon. To the feet of the lord, my divinity, the King, who is my lord — to the feet of my lord, my divinity, my sun-deity, the King my lord, seven and seven times I prostrate myself." The comparative brevity of Abdi-heba's salutation is noticeable.

²⁵ No. 102, 9-12; 103, 25-28. Sayce in various articles (e.g. *Sunday School Times*, Dec. 13, 1890; *Records of the Past*, New Series, Vol. IV. p. 6 sqq., by falsely interpreting the "mighty King" to refer to a deity, has drawn conclusions from these passages as to the religious ideas prevalent in Jerusalem at this period that are totally erroneous. The "mighty King" can only refer to Amenophis IV. It is to be regretted that the distinguished English scholar should have been so hasty in spreading his conjectures through the medium of popular journals, thereby doing a mischief of incalculable extent.

to Steindorff, an Egyptian word meaning) 'officer' of the king,²⁶ becomes intelligible. Several times in his letters he pleads in general on behalf of the "*hazianuti*," i.e. 'governors,' of the king, imploring the king not to oppose them, but to place confidence in them;²⁷ and while, no doubt, he includes himself in this class, his tone is that of one who stands nearer to the king than others. It would appear, therefore, that as *u-e-u* Abdi-*heba* exercises a certain control over the *hazianuti* of districts adjacent to Jerusalem; and it may be that in this way the phrase, "the districts of Jerusalem," above referred to is to be understood. This superior rank of Abdi-*heba* as a kind of viceroy is particularly interesting as pointing to the importance which Jerusalem must have acquired at so early a period. That the Egyptian king should have retained as viceroy a native chief, the son of a ruling family, is quite in accord with what we know of the policy pursued by Egypt as well as Babylonia and other ancient powers; and that Abdi-*heba* was a native is sufficiently clear, apart from other evidence, from the name he bears. The first element might be read *ardu*, the ordinary Assyrian word corresponding to Hebrew '*abd*,' and so, in fact, Halévy and Winckler-Abel would have us read; but preference, I think, is to be given to *abdu*, which Zimmern adopts. In either case, the meaning is the same, and this element alone shows the name to be Semitic. As for the second part, *heba*, I should like to suggest that it is identical with the well-known אֶבָּא.²⁸ The loss of the initial *alef* when combined with *abdi*, is as natural as the loss of the second *alef* in the contracted form of the name, אֶבָּא, which is met with in Jer. xxix. 22, while the final *a* suggests that we have the Aramaic form אֶבָּא — a supposi-

²⁶ No. 103, 69, and 104, 10. See *Zeitschrift f. Assyriologie*, VI. 254, note 4. The phrase occurs again in No. 174, 6, — a very fragmentary letter. There are strong indications, however, that the writer of No. 174 is none other than our Abdi-*heba*. In support of this supposition, I would call attention to the following: (*a*) the salutation appears to be identical with the one employed by Abdi-*heba*; (*b*) the writer asks, as in the other five, "Why does the King my lord not send troops?" (*c*) line 14, ". . . *he-ba ardišu*," suggests the name of our 'viceroy'; (*d*) line 26, a phrase occurs, "may the King my lord have a care for them," etc., which is very characteristic of our series. See the article of the writer, "The Letters of Abdi-*heba*," in the forthcoming number of the *Zeitschrift f. Assyriologie* (VII. 3).

²⁷ No. 102, 18; 103, 13-24, etc.

²⁸ With אֶבָּא may be compared *ahat-abišu* occurring as the name of a female slave — probably of Hebrew origin — on a contract tablet of the time of Nebuchadnezzar (Strassmaier, *Inscr. von Nabuchodnosar*, No. 408).

tion which, if correct, would throw an interesting light upon the language current in Palestine at the time.

The five letters of Abdi-ḥeba are closely connected with one another. They all deal with the same situation, which may be summed up as follows: Abdi-ḥeba's position in Jerusalem has become exceedingly embarrassing from two causes. First, an obstinate enemy has appeared in a people whom he calls Ḥabiri, who, abetted by Šuardatum, Milkil, and Labâ', leaders of clans known as *mare Milkil* and *mare Labâ'*, and others, are pressing hard upon him; and, second, Abdi-ḥeba's good faith towards Egypt having been called in question, Amenophis fails to send troops to the aid of his viceroy.

It is difficult to determine a chronological order of the five letters with any degree of certainty; but from internal evidence I should be inclined to place the last in the order of Winckler and Abel's publication at the head of the list. This letter (No. 106), which may at the same time serve as a specimen of the style of the correspondence, reads as follows, — the translation being as literal as is consistent with an endeavor to illustrate at the same time the syntactical construction: "To the King my lord, speaks as follows Abdi-ḥeba thy servant; to the feet of the King my lord seven times and seven times I prostrate myself. See, the deed which Milkil and Šuardatum have done against the King my lord. They have hired the soldiery of Gazri (Gezer), Ginti (Gath), and the soldiery of Kilti (? Keilah²⁹). They have taken the district of Rubute. The province of the King has gone over to the Ḥabiri people. And now, also, a city of the province of Jerusalem, known as Bit-Ninib, a city of the King, has revolted, just as the people of Kilti have done. Let the King therefore listen to Abdi-ḥeba thy servant, and send troops³⁰ so that the province of the King may be restored to the King; but if no troops are forthcoming, the province of the King goes over to the Ḥabiri. This is the deed that Šuardatum and Milkil [have done]. . . ."

The letter unfortunately breaks off here; only on the margin of the tablet a few additional words may be read, "Let the King have a care for his province."

The trouble comes from the West. A combination of several cities

²⁹ Jos. xv. 44. So Sayce and Halévy.

³⁰ The word used here and frequently in these letters for troops is *pi-da-ut*, an Egyptian word, the plural of *pidte*, signifying literally "belonging to the bow," as Dr. Wilhelm M. Müller informs me. According to Erman (*Zeitschrift f. Assyriologie*, VI. 250, note 7) it is also the name for a species of troops that the Egyptians were in the habit of sending to foreign districts.

has been made at the instance of Milkil and Šuardatum, the front of which is directed against Abdi-ḥeba. Defection is spreading within the province of Jerusalem. Keilah, only twenty miles distant from Jerusalem itself, and another city belonging to Abdi-ḥeba's district, have joined the enemy. From the way in which Kilti is referred to, we may justly conclude that it formed part of the *mat Urusalim*; and it is more than likely that Rubute is also to be sought in this district. Still, the identification with the Judæan town רְבֻתָּה Jos. xv. 60, proposed by Sayce, is not satisfactory. *Rubute* might be the equivalent of a Hebrew *Rabbath*, but it is more likely to correspond to a רַחֲבֹת or Arabic *rahabeḥ*.

The reception accorded at the Egyptian court to the reports and demands of Abdi-ḥeba was not a favorable one. In all of the remaining letters, Abdi-ḥeba assumes a defensive tone, replying to charges of bad faith that have been preferred against him. Fortunately we know the precise nature of these charges, through a letter from the very Šuardatum whom Abdi-ḥeba denounces. In this letter (No. 100) Šuardatum turns the tables, and declares (lines 17-20) that Abdi-ḥeba sent envoys to the inhabitants of Kilti with the message, "Take money and follow me." He complains of the hostilities which have thus been aroused against him by Abdi-ḥeba's action. In another letter (No. 101) he specifies that about thirty cities are arrayed against him, and makes a demand for troops. Milkil, also, from whom we have three letters (Nos. 108-110), complains of many enemies pressing against him; and although no reference is made by him to Abdi-ḥeba, he protests his fidelity to the cause of Egypt, and incidentally, by the mention of Šuardatum, confirms Abdi-ḥeba's statement that Milkil and Šuardatum were in league with one another. Abdi-ḥeba's defence against the charges made against him, which, in addition to the direct one brought by Šuardatum, involved the general suspicion that he wished to use the Egyptian troops for his own purposes, forms interesting reading. He expresses himself with great force. Thus in No. 102, which seems to me to be the last in order of time, he says, after the customary salutation: "What have I done against the King my lord, that they should slander me in the presence of the King my lord [*sc.* declaring], 'Abdi-ḥeba has revolted against the King his lord.' See, as for me, neither my father nor my mother put me in this place, the arm of the mighty King brought me to the house of my father.³¹ Why then should I commit a wrong against

³¹ A figure of speech which, as the parallel passages 103, 27, 104, 15 show, can hardly mean anything else but that Abdi-ḥeba owes the power he enjoys to Amenophis.

the King my lord as long as the King my lord lives? I speak to the envoy of the King my lord, Why dost thou show favor to the Ḥabiri and oppose the prefects, whereas it is they [viz. the Ḥabiri] who plot against the King my lord? And furthermore I say, the lands of the King my lord are lost, because they plot against the King my lord. And may the King my lord know that when the King my lord did send garrisons, Yanḥamu took them." Here a break occurs; but it appears that he complains of the action of Yanḥamu, and emphasizes the fact that, in consequence, he has no troops at his command. He continues: "Therefore let the King have a care for his province, and let the King direct his countenance to his province. The cities of the King my lord have revolted, for Ilimilku⁸² has ruined the whole of the province of the King. Therefore let the King, the lord, have a care for his province. I declare that I will come [*i.e.* am ready to come] to see the tears (?)⁸³ of the King my lord, for the opposition is strong against me; but I cannot come to the King my lord, unless it be pleasing in the face of the King my lord to send garrison troops. Then I would come and see the tears (?) of the King my lord. As long as the King my lord lives, whenever his envoys come, I declare that lost are the provinces of the King my lord; and though thou dost not hearken to me, yet lost are all the governors. Not a single *ḥazānu* is left to the King my lord. May the King direct his countenance therefore to the troops, and may the King my lord send the troops. There are no longer any provinces to the King, for the Ḥabiri have destroyed all the provinces of the King. If the troops are forthcoming during this year, then the provinces of the King my lord will remain; but if troops are not forthcoming this year, then are surely lost the provinces of the King."

With this threat the letter closes, and there follows the subscription which sums up, viz.: "To the scribe of the lord my King, Abdi-ḥeba thy servant. Bring the plain message to the King my lord, 'Lost are all the provinces of the King my lord.'" Abdi-ḥeba, it will be seen, bases his defence upon the feelings of gratitude he entertains toward the king; but, as it would appear, to little avail. The condition of affairs has become desperate; and, making due allowance

⁸² No doubt identical with Milkil. The inversion is probably an error of the writer. Note also the form *milkilim*, 105, 11.

⁸³ Halévy (*Journal Asiatique*, 1891, p. 520) translates "cities," but that is quite out of the question. The ideograph used is AŠI with the plural sign; and some such meaning as 'grief' on the part of the king, through sympathy with Abdi-ḥeba's plight suits the context.

for the exaggeration implied in some of his statements, the refrain which runs through the letter, "All is lost!" certainly indicates that Abdi-ḥeba must have been in great distress. From the letter we also learn that the Ḥabiri constitute the real danger. Milkil and Šuardatum, of whom no mention is here made, are only the abettors of the Ḥabiri. They have made common cause with the latter and induced others to do the same. The letter of Abdi-ḥeba sounds like a last appeal, and in order to understand the allusions it contains, it is necessary to sum up the contents of the remaining four, which occupy, as I believe, an intermediate place between No. 106 and No. 102, and furnish additional details regarding the situation. So in No. 105, which I should be inclined to place immediately after No. 106, Abdi-ḥeba once more emphasizes the guilt of Milkil, and asks the king to send Yanḥamu in order to satisfy himself of the truth of Abdi-ḥeba's statements. "See," he says, "has not Milkilim (*sic*) revolted with (?) the sons of Labâ' and the sons of Arza' to turn over the province of the king to them. It is a *ḥazānu* who has done this. Why does not the King interrogate him?" Abdi-ḥeba then proceeds to specify the course adopted by Milkil, with whom his father-in-law Tagi is associated, after the capture of the city Rubute. Puru, too, he says, who is in Gaza, has cut himself loose from Abdi-ḥeba. "Therefore," the latter continues, "let the King be solicitous and send fifty (?) men as a garrison for the protection of the country, inasmuch as the entire province is in revolt." Abdi-ḥeba boldly challenges investigation, and adds, "Send Yanḥamu, that he may find out the condition of the province of the King."

As in the former case, Abdi-ḥeba adds a subscript to the royal scribe, by whom, it seems to me, is meant the one who reads the letter to the king, in which he asks him to give the king his "clear word," namely, "To the King, abundance of peace to thee, I thy servant." It would seem that, in part at least, Abdi-ḥeba's request was granted. Yanḥamu, who, it will be remembered, appears as a special commissioner of Egypt also in the struggle between Aziru and Rib-addi, is despatched to the seat of war with a detachment of soldiers. The result, however, was not favorable to Abdi-ḥeba, as is clear from the allusion to this Yanḥamu in letter No. 102. The latter came with troops, but, according to Abdi-ḥeba, took them for himself, by which statement we are probably to understand that the Egyptian commissioner, having found the viceroy untrustworthy, declined to transfer the troops to the latter's charge. It also appears from this letter that others were involved besides Milkil and Šuardatum.

The sons of Labâ' and of Arza' have been won over to the side of the Ḥabiri (to whom there was probably a reference in the portion unfortunately broken away), and a certain Pû'ru, whose seat appears to be at Gaza on the Phœnician coast, is also mentioned as in opposition to the hard-pressed viceroy of Jerusalem. The part taken by the sons of Labâ' is more clearly set forth in letter No. 103, which I place third in the list, and which is interesting also for the reference it contains to Pû'ru, as well as others associated in the political turmoil. The first part of the letter is unfortunately very badly preserved, and we can only distinguish enough after the introductory phrases to say that Abdi-ḥeba, as in No. 102, is appealing to the king not to believe the charges preferred, and is laying the responsibility for the situation on others. He continues: "See, the provinces round about are hostile to me. Let the King therefore have a care for his land. See, the district of the city of Gezer, of Ascalon and of Lachish have given them (the Ḥabiri?) assistance, inasmuch as they furnished food, oil, and various things. Therefore let the King have a care for troops, and send troops against the men that have committed sin against the King my lord. If the troops are forthcoming in this year, the provinces and the governors will remain to the King my lord; but if the troops are not forthcoming this year, there will be neither lands nor governors left to the King my lord. See, this district of the city of Jerusalem, neither my father nor my mother gave it to me, but the arm of the mighty King gave it to me. See, now the deed that Milkil and the deed that the sons of Labâ' have done, who have given over the land of the King to the Ḥabiri. See, O King my lord, be just towards me with regard to the *Kaši*. Let the King find out through the emissaries, that they have done violent acts and have committed a very grave offence."

At this point the tablet is again broken, and we are left to surmise from some indications, such as a reference to "much food, much food, much meal," that the *Kaši* too abetted the Ḥabiri in gaining possession of the country. "By the time that Pauru⁸⁴ arrived," he goes on to say, "Addâ' together with the garrisons had revolted." He implores the king, inasmuch as Addâ' also has deserted him, not to forsake him. "Send me this year garrisons, and send me an envoy." The number he asks for is not at all clear. Zimmern reads 5000, which is certainly too high; but whatever it was, it would appear that he wants the troops concentrated within the district of Yaluna,

⁸⁴ Pauru is evidently only a slight variation in method of writing of Pu-u-ru.

i.e. Ayalún. He closes with another appeal to the king that, inasmuch as he has placed his name over the districts (?) of Jerusalem, he should not forsake the districts of Jerusalem. In the usual postscript to the royal scribe, Abdi-ḥeba this time sums up the situation by saying, "An officer of the King am I. Abundance [of peace] to thee."

From the great emphasis laid in this letter, as in No. 102, upon the necessity of taking decisive steps "this year," we may conclude that the interval elapsing between the two communications was not very long. Pauru, who, it seems, is another emissary dispatched by Amenophis, has come too late, and the opposition to Abdi-ḥeba has been increased by the defection of Addá'. The reference to the Kaši is not altogether clear; but, as though Abdi-ḥeba felt this, he adds a paragraph about them after the subscript, asking the king, "Whatever evil thou decidest to inflict upon the men of Kaši, do not kill a faithful servant." The Kaši, he adds, are at present in his hands. So much is certain from this that the Kaši are now on the side of Abdi-ḥeba, and that the latter pleads in their behalf; but, placing his own safety above theirs, he asks the king not to allow himself to be influenced by this plea in the course he proposes to adopt towards them.

Though the interval between letters No. 103 and No. 102, as intimated, is probably not more than a few months, still I would place between the two the last one which we have to consider here, No. 104. It begins, after the ordinary salutation,³⁵ with a phrase rendered interesting by its Biblical associations: "See, the King my lord,—his name is fixed from the rising of the sun to the setting of the sun."³⁶ A shameful thing it is that they have done against me. See, I am not a *ḥazianu*, but an officer [*u-e-u*] to the King my lord. Indeed, I am a friend of the King, and I forward the tribute of the King." By this, it seems, he means to say that he sees to the proper collection of the tribute from the large district assigned to him. Again he urges, "Neither my father nor my mother, but the arm of the mighty King," brought him to his present position. Two envoys are spoken of as having reached him; one whose name is indistinguishable, and the other, Šuta. Both he claims to have sent back with distinguished captives as hostages, and with women for the king's

³⁵ Only that after the words, "to the King my lord," there is added, "the sun-god," as in the letters of Ribaddi and others above.

³⁶ Cf. Malachi i. 11.

harem. Abdi-ḥeba reminds the king of these facts, with the purpose, evidently, of increasing the confidence of his master in himself and in his fidelity. "Let the King," he goes on to say, "exercise judgment with regard to his land. Lost is the whole country of the King. Those who are hostile to me have taken possession of it, even to the district of Šēri [שְׁרִי] and Gintikirmil. It is all up with the governors, and the hostility is directed against me. If any one were to see [*sc.* my condition], he would see the tears of the King my lord at the hostility that is being carried on against me, as when a ship is [*sc.* cast about] in the midst of the sea."⁸⁷ Abdi-ḥeba rather cleverly appeals to the king's pride. "The hand of the mighty King," he says, "holds possession of the country Na'rīma [Nahrīna] and the land of Kapasi (?), and how shall the Ḥabiri hold in possession the cities of the King? Not a single *ḥazānu* is left to the King my lord. All have perished. See, Turbazu has been killed at the great gate of Zīlu [Šelā, near Jerusalem]. . . . See, Zimrida of Lachish, [his] subjects have captured him and put him to death. Yapti-addi has been killed at the great gate of Zīlu. . . . Therefore, let the King have a care for his land, and may the King direct his countenance [towards his land?], and send troops to the land [name of land broken away]; and if the troops do not come this year, then are lost irrevocably all the lands of the King my lord. Again I say to the face of the King my lord that lost is the country of the King my lord, and lost are all the governors. If troops are not forthcoming this year, then let the King send an envoy to fetch me with [my] brothers [*i.e.* brother officials], that we may die near the King our lord." With this forcible alternative the letter closes. The subscript reads: "To the scribe of the King my lord, Abdi-ḥeba, thy (?) servant. I prostrate myself. Bring those plain words to the King my lord; a faithful subject am I."

It might be a question whether we should regard this letter or No. 102 as the "last appeal," but the absence of any detailed references to the situation in the latter, indicates that there had been a previous communication to the king, and speaks in favor of making No. 102 follow No. 104. If the identification of Šēri with Mount Seir⁸⁸ be correct, we should have in this letter important data for determining the extent of the political uprising against Abdi-ḥeba's authority.

⁸⁷ So Halévy most ingeniously renders this passage, which is one of the most puzzling in the correspondence, and misled at one time Zimmern as well as Sayce to wrong conclusions.

⁸⁸ Halévy (*J. A.*, XVIII. 526) proposes שְׁרִי (Jos. xv. 36).

The coast cities, Ascalon, Gaza, Gezer, etc., would mark the eastern limit; the land of Edom the southwestern; Ginti-Kirmil,³⁰ as the second element, Carmel, shows, is to be sought in the north, and would mark the limit in this direction; while, if the identification of Rubute with Rehoboth of Gen. xxvi. 22 be admissible, we should have a boundary-point to the southeast. In this connection I should like to raise the question, without however entering upon it, whether these boundaries do not at the same time indicate, at least approximately, the extent of the district — the *matṭiti Urusalimi* — falling under Abdi-ḥeba's jurisdiction, direct or indirect? Next to this question, the important detail gleaned from this letter is the murder of the three governors, Turbazu, Zimridi, and Yapti-addi. Things are evidently approaching a climax, and Abdi-ḥeba is now in danger of his life, not merely in danger of losing his post. The Ḥabiri are carrying everything before them; new defections take place constantly, the *ḥazianuti* who remained on the side of Abdi-ḥeba are being put out of the way, and he is about to be deprived of the support rendered him by the Kaši, who appear to be a small group of people, a little clan. Of the murdered officials two, Zimridi and Yapti-addi, are known to us from other portions of the correspondence. Of Zimridi we have two letters (Nos. 90 and 123), one written as *ḥazdn* of Sidon, the other from Lachish. The former deals with the situation in the north. Sidon, which he calls the "spoil of the King my lord," he announces is safe; all the orders of the king have been fulfilled, and although enemies are still numerous, he has regained under his control some of those who had been the cause of the disturbance. In the second letter he speaks of himself as lord (*belu*) of Lachish, from which we are permitted to conclude — assuming the identity of the two personages — that Zimridi was transferred from a post in the north to one further south, the transfer being due, perhaps, to the dangers that threatened to disintegrate the province of Abdi-ḥeba. In this letter Zimridi simply announces the arrival of a messenger, and promises to carry out the instructions of the king. From Yapti-addi (whose name might also be read Yapti-Ramman) there are also two letters. One, No. 128, deals with the

³⁰ Zimmern (*Z. A.*, VI. 257) is of the opinion that Ginti-Karmel corresponds to a place גַּנְתִּי כִרְמֵל; but it seems to me that *ginti* is here to be taken as the feminine of גַּן, 'forest-garden,' and the compound simply a name for the forest range of Carmel. Halévy (*J. A.*, XVIII. 526) reads *gutikirmil* = גַּנְתִּי כִרְמֵל, and identifies with Jos. xv. 55; but the conjecture is not a happy one. Abdi-ḥeba clearly wishes to indicate the *extent* of the hostilities waged against him.

situation in the north, more particularly with the situation in Şumura, and is addressed to Yanḥamu, — the same of whom mention is made by Rib-addi, Abdi-ḥeba, and others, — whom he charges with hostile action toward Şumura. The second, No. 183, is unfortunately only a fragment; hardly more than half a dozen words can be read, and it is not even possible to determine whether it deals with the political condition in the north or in the south. Finally, there is a very interesting letter from Labâ' (No. 112), which is a reply to the charges brought against him and Milkil by Abdi-ḥeba. He declares in most positive terms that he has done no wrong. "See," he says, "I am the faithful servant of the King, and I have not committed sin nor have I transgressed. I have not withheld my tribute nor have I checked the plans of my emissaries (?)." The reports circulated about him he declares to be slanderous.⁴⁰ It is true, he says, that he entered Gazri (Gezer), as Abdi-ḥeba, in No. 106, implies; but he did it in good faith, and for his own salvation, as well as for the salvation of Milkil, for whom he seems to vouch. Agreeably to the king's orders, the soldiers who were with him were handed over to Addi (? Yapti-addi). The letter closes with a most forcible challenge on the part of Labâ' as a test of his fidelity: "If the King were to send to me [the order], 'Plunge thy bronze sword into thy heart,' I would die without fail."

There is a fragment, No. 199, which I do not hesitate, from internal evidence, to add as a seventh letter from Abdi-ḥeba. According to Winckler-Abel only the lower third is preserved. About twenty lines remain, from which the following may be gleaned, — details of no small importance: In the first line of which anything can be made out, traces of the name Jerusalem are quite clear. If, says the writer, this district belongs to the king, why is it that Ḥazati (Gaza) acts against the king? The city of Ginti-Kirmil, he continues, is in the hands of Tagi, and the men of Guti (Gath) are also in his power; while Labâ' has handed over certain districts to the Ḥabiri, and Milkil, abetted by others, has conspired with the men of Kilti (Keila) to bring about a revolt among the garrison of Jerusalem itself. Adda', it appears, is in Gaza.

To sum up the situation as it results from a study of these seven letters of Abdi-ḥeba and the correspondence supplementary to them,⁴¹

⁴⁰ The interesting Semitic phrase for slander, "akâlu karṣe," occurs here (l. 16) and also in one of Abdi-ḥeba's letters (No. 102, 6).

⁴¹ In the British Museum collection there are also letters from Labâ' (No. 74), Şuardatum (No. 19), Milkil (No. 50), Tagi (No. 25), which, when published, may be expected to cast additional light upon the situation.

we find a great danger menacing the viceroy of Jerusalem in the gradual encroachment of the Ḥabiri. The latter appear to come from the west. Assuming, as we are justified in doing, that they have passed through the places mentioned in the correspondence, we can trace them to the Phœnician coast, along which they proceed from north to south. After obtaining control of Gezer, Ascalon, and, no doubt, other coast cities, they advance to the interior; make themselves masters of Lachish; pass to the west, to Gath; continue in a southerly direction, taking in Keila; then to the west towards Šela; and finally come within the district of Jerusalem proper, capturing Bit-Ninib and threatening Jerusalem itself. Against this enemy Abdi-ḥeba is called upon to defend himself. Associated with him are a number of *hazianuti*; and arrayed against him are other subjects of the Egyptian king, who, according to Abdi-ḥeba, are aiding the Ḥabiri. Among these disloyal subjects the three prominent personages are Milkil, Šuardatum, and Labâ'. On the testimony of their own letters they are working hand in hand against Abdi-ḥeba, whom they, on their part, charge with treachery and falsehood. Of these, Milkil and Labâ' have behind them small bands known as the *mare Milkil* and the *mare Labâ'*. Gezer, Gath, Ginti-Kirmil, Keila, and other places, have fallen into the hands of the Ḥabiri through Milkil, Tagi, and Šuardatum (from which we may conclude that the two latter were leaders of clans, like Milkil); Ascalon and Lachish go over to the enemy through the intervention of Milkil and Labâ'.

Abdi-ḥeba in his distress calls upon the king of Egypt to send troops; but his reports being contradicted, and he himself held in suspicion of conniving to his own advantage, his request remains unanswered. He protests his fidelity to the cause of Egypt, and asks the King to send envoys, who may test the truth of his reports. Several envoys are sent, but, whether because they found the charges against Abdi-ḥeba true, or for other reasons, they were not of any service to the viceroy. Of one of these, Abdi-ḥeba says that he came too late, and of another that he took unto himself the troops that were sent up from Egypt. New desertions are reported by Abdi-ḥeba, and several officials who were on his side, Turbazu, Zimridi, and Yapti-addi, have perished at the hands of the Ḥabiri. The isolation of Abdi-ḥeba is approaching a critical climax, and he makes further appeals to the king for aid, declaring in most emphatic terms that unless troops are sent shortly, 'all the provinces' of the king will be lost. By this he means the provinces under his juris-

diction, which appear to be comprised between the Carmel range and the range of Seir. At this point our information fails, and we are left to conjecture what the ultimate fate of Abdi-ḥeba was, whether he was killed or deposed; nor are we in a position to say what was the upshot of this advance of the Ḥabiri upon Palestine, whether it was fraught with permanent results or was only transitory in its character.

A question that must be discussed before leaving the subject is, Who were these Ḥabiri who appear to have played so prominent a part at this juncture in the political fortunes of Palestine? Two conjectures have up to the present time been put forward with regard to them. Professor Sayce, rendering the word as "confederates" or "allies," is of the opinion that they represent a combination of various tribes or clans; but the addition of the determinative for country (*Ki*) after the word in one instance (199, 11), apart from other evidence, suffices to show that Ḥabiri is a proper name. Taking it as such, Dr. Zimmern and others are disposed to see in the Ḥabiri none other than the *Ibrim*, or Hebrews. The conjecture, it must be admitted, is tempting. The initial letter *Heth* does not speak against the identification, for it is a peculiarity in the orthography of the El-Amarna letters that the Hebrew *Ayin* is transliterated by the Assyrian sign *ḥa*.⁴² On the other hand, the initial vowel *a* of Ḥabiri raises a serious objection against an identification with *ibri* for which we should expect Ḥibri or Ḥibiri. Again, while the *ḥ* is used as the transliteration for the pointed *ḥ* of the Hebrew, as Ḥaziti for חַזִּי, *Ṭaḥa*, *ruḥi* for רוּחִי (cf. *n. pr.* פַּיְוּ = 'Payoû'), there is only one instance, so far as I know, for the use of it to represent the unpointed *Ayin*.⁴³

Apart from this, the proposed identification would have to be received with the greatest caution because of the many new problems which it would create. The term *Ibrî* and *Ibrîm* is not of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament, and its use is peculiar. Egyptians and Philistines so call the confederacy of tribes whose proper name is Bene Israel. It occurs only twice in the Pentateuchal legislation (Ex. xxi. 2; Dt. xi. 15), from which we may only conclude, since both passages involve foreign relations, that this name for the confed-

⁴² E.g. *ḥazilu* = Arab. *ghazl*, 'gazelle,' 169, 10; *ḥaziri* = חַזִּיר, 58, 131; *ḥaparû* = חַפְרִי, 203, 3; *Kinahî*, 92, 41, Delattre (*P. S. B. A.* XIII. 234) identifies with חַנְנִי; but in view of *Ki-na* (71, 76) this does not seem feasible.

⁴³ *ḥi-na-ia* (חִנְיָא) as a gloss to *ind-ia*, "my eyes," suggested by Winckler (*Z. A.* VI. 145).

eracy survived among surrounding nations. In accordance with this usage, Jonah (i. 9) described himself to the Phœnician sailors as an *Ibri*. As for the people itself, the fact that a subdivision of the priests in 1 Chr. xxiv. 27 is called *Ibrt*, shows how completely the notion of any connection between *Bene Israel* and *Ibrim* had in the course of time passed away. Now, the letters of Abdi-ḥeba may be placed at a period of about fifty years before the so-called Exodus; and whatever the real facts with regard to this Exodus may be, there can be no doubt that the time of Amenophis IV. is entirely too late for the first appearance of the *Ibrim* in Palestine. There is not a single indication in the letters of Abdi-ḥeba from which we are justified in concluding that the *Ḥabiri* differ essentially from the *mare Milkil* or *mare Labá'*, except that they are more powerful and manage to secure the co-operation of the latter and of other clans. Moreover, as above set forth, they advance upon Jerusalem from the west; whereas, if we suppose them to have entered Palestine for the first time at this period, we should look for their starting-point in the east. There is no reason to question the generally assumed fact that the name *Ibrt* originated at the time of the emigration of the Terachites from southern Babylonia, any more than there is reason for questioning that the immigration of the latter into Palestine took place about five centuries before the time of Amenophis and Abdi-ḥeba. The *Ḥabiri*, accordingly, whoever they were, were not newcoiners. On the other hand, the Hebrew tradition itself, in the important reference to the "mixed multitude" (Ex. xii. 38) that formed part of the Exodus, justifies us in regarding the Exodus as a general migratory movement of Semites and probably of others from Egypt into Palestine and the surrounding districts, superinduced, of course, by political and social conditions. While, therefore, there is no need for going to the length of Stade (*Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, I. 128 sqq.) and others, who question whether the Hebrews were ever in Egypt, there is, on the other hand, no necessity for supposing that all the clans that afterwards formed the confederacy of the Bene Israel were there, and still less all the *Ibrim*, since there are no substantial grounds for believing that the latter term was at this time limited in its application to those who afterwards formed the Bene Israel. The purpose of all this is to suggest that the correspondence we have been investigating introduces us to some of the very clans and tribes that afterwards formed part of the confederacy of the Bene Israel, or, in other words, that while the name *Ḥabiri* is not to be identified with *Ibri*, the

Ḥabiri and others mentioned as co-operating with them are actually Hebrews, not entering the country for the first time, but settled there, and now presenting a hostile attitude towards Abdi-ḥeba and others associated with him, who are likewise Hebrews in the wider sense of the word. Not so much in support of this suggestion, as in the hope of advancing the solution of the problem raised by this remarkable correspondence, I should like to direct attention to the following considerations :

The term Ḥabiri would correspond perfectly to a Hebrew חֲבִירִי or, with mutation of the vowel *Patah*, חֲבִירִי; for whether pronounced *ḥabri* or *ḥebri*, the Assyrian would transliterate *ḥa*, and as for the vowel between the *b* and the *r*, the slight sound between two consonants in juxtaposition, which was inserted in a great many more cases than the ancient or modern grammarians would have us believe (in *Ḥabiri*, *i*, on account of the following *i*), would sufficiently account for this.⁴⁴

Now, it is at least curious that in the genealogical lists of the Bene Israel we find in Num. xxvi. 45 two clans of the Bene Asher as follows: לְחֵבֶר מְשֻׁפְּחַת הַחֲבִירִי לְמִלְכִיאֵל מְשֻׁפְּחַת הַמִּלְכִיאֵלִי. Again, both in Gen. xlvi. 17 and 1 Chron. vii. 31, חֲבִיר and מִלְכִיאֵל occur side by side as subdivisions of Asher. Heber (or the Heberi) and Mēlkiel correspond perfectly to our Ḥabiri and Milkil, and the juxtaposition of the two in the Old Testament passages is, to say the least, remarkable, in view of the close association in which the Ḥabiri and Milkil (with the *mare Milkil*) appear in the El-Amarna texts. The seat of the Bene Asher, it will be remembered, is in the north of Palestine bordering on the Phœnician coast. As pointed out, it is from the coast that the Ḥabiri advanced upon Jerusalem. While we are unable to trace them back further north than Gezer, there is nothing improbable in the supposition that their starting-point is as far north as Tyre. As for the other clan associated with the Ḥabiri, the *mare Labâ*, it would seem to correspond to a Hebrew לְבוֹא or לְבִיא, and the *mare Labâ* would be a 'lion clan,' recalling as a parallel the famous *Beni Asad* of the Arabs. In Jos. xv. 32, among the cities belonging to the district of the Bene Sim'ôn, we find לְבָאוֹת, that is, the 'lion town,' or as it is called, Jos. xix. 36, בֵּית לְבָאוֹת; and the comparison of the Bene Jehûdâ to a lion (Gen. xlix. 10), and of the Bene Dân (Deut. xxxiii. 22), makes it at least possible that there

⁴⁴ If instead of *ḥabr*, the actual pronunciation was *ḥēbēr*, there is every reason to suppose that the patronymic form was pronounced *ḥēbēri*.

should have existed among the Ibrim a lion clan,⁴⁵ just as in Šim'ôn we have the 'hyæna clan' (Stade, *Geschichte d. Volkes Israel*, I. 152). Moreover, לבא occurs as a proper name in Phœnician inscriptions (*C. I. S.*, 147).⁴⁶ But are there any more direct traces of the existence of such a lion clan in Palestine? It is with all possible reserve, and yet as a suggestion worth considering, that I advance the following: The tribal name לוי is now ordinarily explained as a patronymic formation from לאה, and rendered the 'wild-cow clan.'⁴⁷ The derivation is not altogether satisfactory. The third radical being יוד, we should certainly expect לאי (from לאי). Moreover, the wild cow, with the exception of its occurrence in the name Leah, plays no rôle in Hebrew traditions or metaphors. I should like to raise the question whether, through a phonetic change of the aspirated ב into ו (see for illustrations, Wright, *Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages*, p. 66), or a species of phonetic confusion, לוי may not be another form for לב (from לבא), and the Bene Levi, none other than this 'lion clan' of the Hebrew confederacy? This supposition would fit in with the association of Levi and Šim'ôn, the 'lion' and the 'hyæna,' as well as their designation as קְלֵי חָמָם (Gen. xlix. 5). Placing, then, the *maré Labá*' by the side of the בני לוי, we should have in our correspondence the record of a third clan that afterwards entered as an element in the formation of the Bene Israel. While not offering this as more than a suggestion, let me, before leaving the subject, dispose of one objection that may be raised against this identification, as well as against the one proposed for Milkil. The Habiri are spoken of always as a clan, — the determinative *ameluti* being invariably prefixed, — whereas Milkil and Labá'⁴⁸ are individuals, and appear without the patronymic ending. It seems that we are confronted in these letters with a social condition where the leader of a band imposed his name upon the entire clan, so that one could interchangeably speak of a clan as the sons of Milkil, the sons of

⁴⁵ On totem-clans among Semites, see W. R. Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*, 194 sqq.

⁴⁶ It seems to me that in לבא we have the same name contracted from לבאנ, with the nunation. Compare the Sabaean לבאנ, which, according to Gesenius, *HWb.* p. 416 (11th ed.), is the name of a tower.

⁴⁷ Stade, *Zeitschr. f. d. A. T. Wiss.*, I. 112; *Gesch. d. Volkes Israel*, I. 146; Haupt, *Gött. Gel. Nach.*, 1883, p. 100.

⁴⁸ The ending á' suggests an Aramaic form of לבי or לוי, like לוי, just as we have in Abdi-heba, according to the explanation proposed, אבדיהבא instead of אבדיהב.

Labâ', or refer to it by the name of the leader alone. A direct proof is furnished by the latter. The individual Labâ' is not mentioned by Abdi-ḥeba, but only the *marē Labâ'*, and yet we know from letter No. 112 that such an individual existed. In the case of Milkil we know, and in that of Šuardatum we may infer, that their followers were known as the *mare Milkil* and the *mare Šuardatum*.⁴⁹ Professor John P. Peters informs me that the same conditions still prevail in southern Mesopotamia, where a large clan is frequently known only by the name of a powerful leader, and with a change in leaders it occasionally happens that a change in the name of the clan takes place. The point is important for the explanation of the genealogical lists in the Old Testament, particularly those of the clans of the Bene Israel. While many of the latter are distinctly collective or abstract terms, as Šim'ôn, Levi, etc., quite as many, if not more, bear the names of individuals, as Heberî and Malkielî, and with the analogy furnished by the El-Amarna correspondence before us, we are not justified in rejecting the derivation of a clan name from an individual as a mere fancy or an unreliable tradition—at least, not in all cases. If the clan of מלכיאלי is referred to an individual מלכיאל, there is every reason to suppose that such a personage existed; only the expression אבִי applied to the latter must be taken in the metaphorical sense of 'leader,' just as the *mare*, or בני, are the 'followers.'

As for the language of the letters, space prevents me from entering upon the subject here, and I must content myself with a few brief indications. Expressions, method of writing, and syntactical constructions occur that are as interesting as they are peculiar; and while it is hardly possible in the present state of our knowledge to draw detailed conclusions, there is sufficient evidence to show that the language in the El-Amarna texts is strongly influenced by the Semitic dialects current at the time in Palestine and Phœnicia, which, as the proper names indicate, must have been akin to, if not identical with, the Phœnician and Hebrew as known through later documents. As for Abdi-ḥeba, he (or his scribe) does not appear to be thoroughly trained in the handling of Babylonian. Hence he makes such blunders as putting the determinative sign before a word instead of behind it, or of turning a compound ideogram around. That the mother-tongue of Abdi-ḥeba and his people was Hebrew, or an Aramaic dialect closely allied to Hebrew, is shown by the frequent

⁴⁹ For Šuardatum I should like to suggest that the first element is שֹׁאֲרָ, as in שֹׁאֲרָ יְשׁוּבָה (Is. vii. 3).

use of *amur*, 'see !,' corresponding to the Hebrew אָמַר. He uses *amur* exactly as one would do in writing Hebrew, and the fact that the expression also occurs in letters written from officials stationed in the north, points to an identity of dialects. Neither in Assyrian nor Babylonian texts do we come across this use of *amur*.

Another interesting evidence of distinct Hebrew influence is the interchange between the phrase 'my lord the King' and 'the King my lord,' and the manner in which, in two instances, the latter is written. Abdi-ḥeba writes generally, 'the King my lord,' but once (102, 3), 'my lord the King.' He makes use of the ideograms for the two words (*belu*, 'lord,' and *šarru*, 'king'), adding the phonetic complement *ri* to the ideogram for king. In three instances, however (No. 102, 7, 15, 36), where *šarru* appears first and *bilu* second, the phonetic complement *ri*, instead of being attached, as in this case it ought to be, to the first word, is placed after the second word, as though the phrase were *beli-ā šar(ri)*. The error is accounted for if the Hebrew equivalent for the Babylonian phrase is recalled, namely אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ (1 Sam. xxiv. 8; xxvi. 17, 19, etc.), 'lord' always taking precedence of 'king.' In good Assyrian we find just as invariably, *šarri belī-ia* as the form of address,⁶⁰ and the inversion *beli-id šarri* must have been as shocking to the ears of an Assyrian or Babylonian as אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ would be to a Hebrew. But Abdi-ḥeba, or his scribe, thinking in Hebrew while writing Babylonian, is guilty not only of this inversion, but, the ideograms conveying nothing to his mind and being only arbitrary signs, he makes the additional mistake of attaching the phonetic complement to the wrong word. Finally, mention ought to be made, as further evidence for the language spoken by Abdi-ḥeba, of the interesting glosses which he adds to words which he fears may not be clearly understood at the Egyptian court. So to the Assyrian *katu* he adds (No. 102, 12; 103, 27; 104, 34) *zu-ru-u*, that is, the Hebrew זְרוּעַ, 'arm.' He does this, it seems to me, not because he does not know what *katu* means, but because he has in mind the Aramaic equivalent קָטַף, which is used only in the sense of 'handle,' not 'hand or arm.' Again (104, 53), to *ḥalkat* (3 f. sg. perm. from *ḥalāku* 'lose') he adds — since in Hebrew the stem has an entirely different meaning, and he is very anxious that the important word should not be mis-

⁶⁰ See numerous illustrations in Delitzsch's *Zur Assyrisch-Babylonischen Briefliteratur*, three articles in Delitzsch und Haupt *Beiträge zur Assyriologie*, Bd. I. and II.

understood — *abadat*, that is אָבַדְתָּ (or אָבַדְתָּ), the common Hebrew stem for 'lose.' It will be seen that *abadat* again points to an Aramaic form, and this with what has above been said with reference to *katu* and the proper names Abdi-ḥeba and Labâ' may be taken as another indication that the particular dialect of central Palestine at this period belonged to the Aramaic division, — a conclusion that falls in with the thesis recently strengthened by the famous Teima stele of central Arabia, as to the early predominance of Aramaic dialects throughout central and northern Arabia and Palestine.⁵¹

⁵¹ For further elucidation of the linguistic peculiarities of the El-Amarna texts the reader is referred to the remarks of Winckler, *Vorarbeiten zu einer Gesamtbearbeitung der el-Amarna Texte* (Z. A. VI. 145-6); Zimmern, *Kanaanäische Glossen* (Z. A. VI. 154-158); Zimmern, *Palästina um das Jahr 1400* (*Zeitschrift d. Deutschen Palästina Vereins*, XIII. 145 sqq.), and to the forthcoming notes of the writer (above referred to) on the "Letters of Abdi-ḥeba."