

down all this information. Such a feeling is now seen to be unwarranted. The picture of this aspect of the culture which Judges 8:14 gives, fits the archaeological ^{evidence as to the} ~~picture of the~~ common use of writing at that early date.

As far as knowledge of writing is concerned there is no need, as held by many scholars, to think ~~that~~ the five Books of Moses were formed by a combination of many documents, all of them written centuries after his time. The hieroglyphic writing of Egypt, and the cuneiform writing of Mesopotamia had both been in widespread use for centuries, and both would be well-known to a man "trained in all the wisdom of the Egyptians". Though the cuneiform system of writing wedge-shaped signs on clay tablets by means of a stylus was at home in distant Mesopotamia, it was known in Egypt, for numerous tablets have been found there, dating from the fourteenth century B.C., containing letters in this script between the Pharaoh of Egypt and the kings of ~~of~~ various Canaanite cities and of other lands. Both of these were rather involved types of writing, which never attained the simplicity of an alphabetic type of writing, such as ^{the} Hebrew script. It is interesting to note, however, that such a system also was available in the time of Moses, for before his time a type of writing originated in the Sinaitic peninsula which is considered to be the precursor of the old Hebrew alphabet from which our later Hebrew letters and also our Greek and Latin letters have been derived. This is the earliest alphabetic system of writing known, and all subsequent alphabetic systems of writing have been ~~either~~ ^{or indirectly} directly derived from it, ~~or have received their impetus from a knowledge of it.~~