THE ACADEMY. [June 30, 1885.—No. 552.]

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ABU SIMBEL INSCRIPTION.

Sittingbourne Rectory, York: June 30, 1883.

Mr. Paley's paper read before the Cambridge Philological Society, and reported in the Academy of June 16, compares the unam- 

ified inscriptions to the supposed date of the Abu Simbel inscription, which has hitherto been regarded as the fixed starting-point in its chronology.

Mr. Paley has apparently abandoned the opinion expressed in his Bibliographie Graeca, that the inscription is a "haur," but he still refuses to admit that the King Piemomakhtes mentioned in the record can be one of the two well-known Egyptian kings of that name (560- 

550 B.C.), and "confidently affirms that the writing is not earlier than the Ptolomæan war," (431-404 B.C.), putting forward the starting theory that it refers to some hitherto "unknown" origin, and who also bore the name of Piemomakhtes.

The possibility of the existence of any such unknown Egyptian monarch who reigned while the Persians were masters of Egypt I will leave to professional Egyptologists to discuss. But, as Mr. Paley bases his theory upon the character of the writing, I should like to call his attention to some palaeographical facts which bear upon the question, and which seem to have escaped his notice; one of which is that the earlier date is "totally at variance with everything previously known about early Greek writing."

The salient characteristics of the alphabet of the Abu Simbel inscription are the use of the letters of the closed "eta," the sigma with three bars, the primitive theta with an interior cross instead of a dot, the sigma with alpha and okha, the use of o to denote all the three sounds o, e, and a, and the survival of kappa as a phonic sign.

As the Abu Simbel inscription is written in an Ionian alphabet, it must be compared with dated inscriptions from Ionia. A fixed point of comparison is afforded by an inscription from Halicarnassus, written by the tyrant Lygdamis, the contemporary of Herodotus, circ. 540 B.C. In this record the above-named characters have completely disappeared, showing that the Abu Simbel inscription must be very considerably earlier than the middle of the fifth century, when the Lygdamis inscription was written.

This conclusion is confirmed by the inscriptions from the Sacred Way leading to the temple of Apollo at Trachia, near Mytilene. None of those inscriptions can be later than 494 B.C., when the temple was destroyed by the Persians. Mr. E. W. Sellar believes, with good reason, to range over the greater part of the sixth century. In one of the latest, the inscription of Hesitaeus (circ. 590 B.C.), eis is used, and the form of kappa, omega, has made its appearance. These tests are also found in the somewhat earlier inscrip-

When, and without seeking answers? Oh, many a cup of this forbidden Wine May drown the memory of that Incestive Vice;

This "Incestice" is Suff to the narrow. And
d'Hercule is so far right that the Tent-maker, by the law of contraries, has won a maunor of reputation for sanctity.

Mr. Wilson has already made his name as an Oriental, especially a Persian, scholar; and he began, if I remember aright, by assisting the late Hermann Bicknell on a monitory, but sadly prosaic, version of Hafiz. The translation of the forty pages of Chotoo, Chatto and Windus is daintily dressed in trying and gold. After a Pause giving a short sketch of the post, we deck upon the "Story" and the "Character." The latter we must at least as the oldest of acquaintances; and their chief value purely genealogical. For instance (Jest ii., p. 6).

"Baibuli, being asked to count the feuds of Dervish, replied: They are without the confines of com-

putation. If you ask me, I will count the wise men, for they are no more than a limited few." 

Baibuli, the "madman" with the btring tongue, thus proceede Carlyle by a thousand years. In 

Jest iv., we have a most venerable "Irish boy" in "Jest xi.": Diogenes Bolivius; and so forth.

If we were Mr. Wilson I should omit the story of "Stibix" and "Jest," and leave the reader to labor for them by himself. As it is, "Jest ix." should be bodily cut out. As far as I am aware, Persian contains no single book of the category "Cit-for-placing-upon-the-drawing-room-table." Even the Gulistan, which Jami attempts to rival, would, in literal version, make many a British patriarch stare with all his eyes, 

and the choice of two devices; either storm exixion of the pleasant part, or preserving the entirety, which must confine it to the inner study. Latin, 

classical or canonic, is but a melancholy com-

promise.

Mr. Wilson deserves success: the language is well chosen, and the version is doubtless accurate. I hope that we shall soon see the whole Bahustain, which, he tells me, is ready for the press.

RICHARD F. H. BENTON.

PHILOLOGICAL NOTES.

Mr. William Gunion Butterford, who has just been appointed head-master of Westminster School, received the following letter from Prof. Cobet, of Loyou:

"Ea animo praemia sum quin praeclaris praebendum habens, in eorum scrupulis, vituperatus est ; sed quod velut animadversionem et angere possit. Itaque si mea voce in Britannia audi vi posset, lubenter diuicem erullit Britannorum, qui subjectum est obsequi semel methodam administratur: 'En, habita virum, qui volis absque forsitan et Beinum redditis..."

Among foreign scholars, Mr. Rutherford had also testimonials from MM. A. Chassang, E.