

nola's excavations at Cyprus exhibit it in the Cypriote syllabary as late as the fourth century B.C. The Cypriote syllabary also carries forward to the same date the letter *yod* or *y*, which, at a much earlier era, had become quite lost to the Hellenic alphabet.

In archæology the most trivial 'find' often involves far-reaching issues. An iron nail, or even a rust-stain, implies an epoch in civilization. The wall-scribblings and etchings of ancient loafers at Pompeii have thrown new light on old Roman life; and thus these idle *graffiti* on the crumbling stucco have come to rank with solemn treatises on bronze or marble. About the middle of the seventh century B.C., Greek soldiers were serving under the king of Upper Egypt, Psammetichus, or Psamaticus, as they spell him oft. Once they beguiled an idle hour by scrawling five or six lines of Greek on the leg of a colossal figure that stands near the modern Abu-Simbel. This ancient *graffito* exhibits by no means the oldest alphabetical forms, and the really archaic Greek writing may have long preceded. Modern opinion has generally settled down to the belief that Homer's poem *MUST* have been preserved by professional reciters who handed down these treasures from one generation to another for between two and three centuries. By the discovery of this inscription the entire controversy has been re-opened, and many other disturbing facts have followed in quick succession. The student will thank Professor Mahaffy for his artistic *coup d'œil* of the general Homeric question, and for his *résumé* of the great discussion that has now in various phases lasted through more than twenty-three centuries. German criticism, from Wolf's famous *Prolegomena* down to the present, has for the most part been consistently destructive, but sometimes mutually destructive: it has, of course, denied the unity of authorship in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* conjointly, or even singly: it has even challenged the poetic merit of Homer's most admired passages. The parting scene of Hector and Andromache—the most famous passage in any literature—has in all ages

touched the heart and extorted admiration; but, in our day, a German critic declares it the interpolation of an inferior hand! Mr. F. A. Paley has in some points outrun even German scepticism; but English criticism has sometimes been too conservative. Colonel Mure contended for the unity in authorship of the whole of each poem, while Mr. Gladstone stoutly affirms the personality of Homer, his historical reality, and his authorship of both poems. Dr. Schliemann's realism laughingly offsets the prevailing German scepticism: on the one hand, the very existence of Homeric cities is disputed; but Dr. Schliemann would show us now actual Troy and Mycenæ; he can scarcely refrain from identifying the very necklace of fair Helen and the sceptre of lordly Agememnon. Our present author adopts Grote's Homeric theory, but with important modifications. Thus viewed, the *Iliad* known to us encloses much of the original Achilleis, but several heroic lays have been, if we may so say, grafted on it at various points, openings being effected by some severe pruning. These grafts have seriously altered the form and foliage of the original poetic growth. In the original plan, Hector and Patroclus must have had places of high courage and renown, one as the formidable antagonist, the other as the honoured companion of Achilles. In the present *Iliad*, they have receded to the second or third place in heroism. Hector has been humiliated to exalt the pedigree of certain Greek families, which, in the historic period, affected to trace their descent from Diomedes, Ajax, or Agememnon.

The personality of Homer being surrendered, our Author awards the place of honour in Greek literature to Æschylus, whose language he finely characterizes as "that mighty diction in which the epithets and figures come rolling in upon us like Atlantic waves."

The chapter on the Greek Theatre is especially valuable. It notices the inscriptions recently disinterred at Athens, and edited by Komanudes; it also embodies the author's personal explorations at the sites of ancient theatres where the acoustic and