



CORRESPONDENCE.

I. AKKADIAN AND SUMERIAN.

*Leiden.**February 3, 1900.*

DEAR SIR,— In his interesting article in the January number of this Journal, "Sumerian or Cryptography," Mr. T. G. Pinches refers to several tablets on which the Sumerian language is mentioned (p. 94). Among those there is a small fragment which might as well be called "tantalizingly incomplete," as Mr. Pinches says of another fragment quoted by him a few lines earlier, and it is not less interesting than this one. The fragment belongs to the Tablet K. 14,013 (1413 is a misprint), and is given thus in Bezold's Catalogue, p. 1354 :

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Mr. Pinches proposes to translate: "(below was) Akkad, above (was) Šu(mer)," but admits himself "that the disposition of the adverbs may, in reality, be the reverse one, namely, 'Akkad is above, Šu(mer below),'" which, he adds, "would, perhaps, be better according to Assyrian syntax." I think so too. Thus, we ought to combine *čūš* with *Akkadû* and ANTA with the lost non-Semitic equivalent, as being the most probable. If so, what can then be meant by the sentence? Not, of course, what Mr. Pinches supposes, namely, a statement of the relative situation of the 'districts' Akkad and Sumer. In that case a D.P. or

S. for 'land' could hardly be missed. Besides *Akkadâ* could never signify the country of Akkad. If we consider that the lines belong to a bilingual religious text, they can only have the object of informing the reader that the upper lines are written in Akkadian, the lower in Sumerian, and we may then supply a verb, let us say *šatru*, SAR at the end, and perhaps the word *Lišânu* before *Akkadâ*. And the consequence would be that the non-Semitic language of Babylonia was called Accadian, the Semitic language Sumerian, and that the grand old Hincks was right after all, at least as to the first name.

I know that my hypothesis has no great chance to be at once accepted by the great majority of Assyriologists, but this is no reason for me to keep it to myself. Long before my attention was drawn to the above fragment I had come to the same conclusion on other grounds, which cannot be explained in this letter. I hope to be able to do so elsewhere. What I now only wish to state is, that Mr. Pinches, though I agree with him in the main, was wrong in thinking that our tablet refers, not to languages, but to countries.—I am, dear Sir, yours truly,

C. P. TIELE.

To the Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society.

P.S.—After the above was written, I remembered that Dr. Weissbach, in his "Die Sumerische Frage" (Leipzig, 1898, p. 174, n. 2), is also of opinion that the fragment K. 14,013 refers to languages, though he thinks the lacunae must be filled up in this way:

[KITA EME TILLA-KI] ANTA EME-KU
 [Šapliš] ak-ka-da-a e-liš šu[meri] . . .

and so comes to the conclusion that the non-Semitic language was called Sumerian, the Semitic Akkadian. But, then, why did not the scribe write *akkadâ* just under EME TILLA KI, for which there was plenty of room? Let us hope that the discovery of a more complete text referring to the two languages may help us out of the dark.