

not the *genuineness* of the book (a matter of no importance except as affecting the reputation of the seyyid Murtaḍā\*), but, its *authenticity*. I was therefore obliged to make a most laborious collation of passages quoted in it with the same passages in the works quoted: and in every instance I found that they had been faithfully transcribed. Thus the authenticity of the *Táj el-'Aroos* was most satisfactorily established. But in comparing large portions of it with the corresponding portions of the *Lisán el-'Arab*, I made the unexpected discovery that, in most of the articles in the former, from three-fourths to about nine-tenths of the additions to the text of the *Ḳámoos*, and in many articles the whole of those additions, existed verbatim in the *Lisán el-'Arab*. I cannot, therefore, acquit the seyyid Murtaḍā of a want of candour, and of failing to render due honour to one of the most laborious of compilers, by not stating either that the *Táj el-'Aroos* was mainly derived in the first instance from the *Lisán el-'Arab* (which I believe to have been the case) or that the contents of the former are mainly found in the latter. This circumstance has induced me very often to compose articles of my lexicon principally from the *Lisán el-'Arab* in preference to the *Táj el-'Aroos*, comparing the contents afterwards with the latter; and when they agreed, giving the latter as my authority in most instances (though not always†) because I could only undertake to have the latter transcribed. The only copy of the *Lisán el-'Arab* known to me is that which I have already mentioned. It was lent to me, in successive portions, from the library of the collegiate mosque called "the *Ashrafeeyeh*," in Cairo. It is written in several different hands, nearly resembling one another, of a peculiar cursive kind, which none can correctly read without studying sufficiently to understand thoroughly; for which reason, if I had been able to obtain any copy made from it (for it bears statements of its having been several times partially or wholly transcribed some centuries ago) I could not have placed much reliance upon it. Since the time of the seyyid Murtaḍā, it has suffered much injury, chiefly from the rotting of the paper; in many places, the whole of the written portion of a page having fallen out, the margin only remaining.

Having fully satisfied myself of the authenticity of the *Táj el-'Aroos*, as well as of its intrinsic value, my next object was to cause a careful transcription of it to be commenced without delay, although, while I remained in Cairo, I made use of copies belonging to the libraries of mosques. The following are all the copies of that work, or of portions thereof, respecting which I have been able to procure any information.—1. The copy made use of by 'Aṣim Efendee in writing his Turkish Translation of the *Ḳámoos*. This belonged, according to his own statement, made to me, to Yahyà Efendee the *Hakeem*, who for many years composed the annual Egyptian Almanac published by order of the Government. He said that it was in the handwriting of the author, in two very large volumes; which, though hardly credible, is not absolutely impossible; for the handwriting of the seyyid Murtaḍā was small and compact: that the Grand Vezeer who was in Egypt during the contest between our own forces in that country and the French borrowed it of him, and sent it to Constantinople without his permission: and that he had caused many inquiries to be made for it there, but never learned any tidings of it.—2. A copy believed to have been in fourteen folio-volumes, in the handwriting of the author. Of this, the last volume and the last but two are in the library of the *Riwāk* of the Syrians in the great mosque *El-Azhar*. The rest of it seems to have been lost. It may be a portion of a copy which the author retained for himself. When he died, his family kept his death secret for two days; after which, the officers of the Government Treasury plundered his house of much property, among which, perhaps, was this copy; and if so, it may have fallen into different hands; one person taking a portion; and another person, another portion.—3. A copy sent by the author as a present to the King of *Ṣan'à*. So I was informed on the authority of a person living in Cairo, who asserted that he conveyed it for the author, and who must have attained to manhood some years before the author's death. He may perhaps be mistaken as to the work that he conveyed; but this is not probable.—4. The copy in the library of the mosque of *Mohammad Bey Abu-dh-Dhahab*, before mentioned; said to be in eight thick, full-paged folio-volumes;‡ not in the author's handwriting,

\* By various other works, he earned a high reputation for learning; and I believe that his ability to compose such a work as the *Táj el-'Aroos* was never called in question.

† In the articles of which the last radical letter is *ṣ*, and in those of which the last is *ṣ*, I have generally deviated from my usual plan by

indicating the authority of the *Lisán el-'Arab* rather than that of the *Táj el-'Aroos* in order to convey some notion of the value of the former work.

‡ I was informed that the number of its volumes is eight; but I was never allowed to see the whole copy, and, in the course of transcription, I neglected to note where each volume ended.