

PREFACE.

words which have seemed likely to puzzle the beginner ; many of these have been separately arranged in their alphabetical order, but withdrawn a little within the marginal line ; thus for example the word كَيْبَةٍ may be looked for either under ك or under its root ك. The vowel of the aorist has been given where it is known ; I have generally added the *original* meaning, and where such meaning is not to be found in the Kor-ân the words are printed in Italics. I must here claim indulgence for the fault—if fault it be—of having given the English of the infinitive instead of the third person singular of the preterite, or grammatical root of the verb ; it seems more convenient and less roundabout to say that فَرَب means to strike, although no one would be likely to commence the study of the Kor-ân without being fully aware that the word should in strictness be rendered “He struck” ; while upon this point I may observe that although there is no true infinitive in Arabic, the abstract noun or noun of action frequently supplies its place ; the letters n.a. merely refer to the forms of the different nouns of action, not necessarily to their meaning ; this also applies to the participles, written part. act. and pass. ; these names have been retained for convenience sake, and mark the *form only* of the verbal adjectives, which, being constantly employed as substantives, are generally so rendered.

It is hardly necessary that I should offer any apology to my readers for the frequent references I have made to De Sacy’s Grammaire Arabe ; the study of the French language is now so universal, as almost to render a translation superfluous ; the letters D. S. Gr. etc. refer to the second edition.

I have not, as a rule, thought it necessary to notice the various readings of disputed passages, nor the numerous interpretations of the same passage which abound in the Commentaries ; those who may wish to extend their researches in this direction will find an ample field in the works of the two great authorities El Beidâwêe and Ez-Zamakhsharêe ; the Commentary of the former, as being the more grammatical, is the one I have generally consulted. Free use has been made of the Dictionaries of Freytag and Johnson, principally the former ; to them, as well as to Sale’s well-known translation, my acknowledgments are especially due.

From the many careful revisions the work has undergone, both previously, and also in passing through the press, I have good grounds for hoping that but few typographical errors have escaped detection ; entire freedom from such is hardly to be expected, but the short table of errata will, I feel confident, comprise the greater part ; for all other shortcomings I must seek the indulgence of my readers, trusting that my humble efforts may have provided for them in the words of my title “A clue of elucidation to the intricate passages of the Kor-ân.”