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VOLUME 1

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BY

CHARLES M. DOUGHTY.

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THE PREFACE.

WE set but a name upon the ship, that our hands have built (with incessant labour) in a decennium, in what day she is launched forth to the great waters; and few words are needful in this place. The book is not milk for babes: it might be likened to a mirror, wherein is set forth faithfully some parcel of the soil of Arabia smelling of sámn and camels. And such, I trust, for the persons, that if the words [written all-day from their mouths] were rehearsed to them in Arabic, there might every one, whose life is remembered therein, hear, as it were, his proper voice; and many a rude bystander, smiting his thigh, should bear witness and cry ‘Ay Wellah, the sooth indeed!’

Little was known to me, writing apart from books and in foreign countries, of those few old Arabic authors that have treated, more Asiatico, of tribes and towns and itineraries in the vast Peninsula. I was too weary to inquire of aught beside my path, and learned men encouraged me to leave them to scholars. The like must be said of the writings of the

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two or three Europeans [Wallin, Palgrave, Guarmani] that before my time visited Hâyl and Teyma; and which, when I sojourned in Arabia, were known to me only in A. Zehme's excellent treatise.

The first part of my work—the Inscriptions which I brought from Arabia—was published, at the charge of the French Government, by the Académie, in Paris. From thence, the first of these volumes is adorned by M. Renan's translation of the (Aramaic) epitaphs of Medâin Sâlih or el-Héjr. At the end will be found the Marquis de Vogüé's precious note of the hewn architecture of those monuments. To the second volume I have appended a notice of the geological constitution of Arabia. A third part of my work is the map, which is attached to these volumes.

And I rise now, from a long labour accomplished, with grateful mind and giving of thanks to those learned men who have helped me, chiefly in the comparison—no light task—of my Arabic words, written from the lips of the people of Nejd, with the literal Arabic. The learned Oriental scholar Prof. Aloys Sprenger strengthened my first endeavour; and he has continually furthered me, with many precious counsels. Professor Robertson Smith, Editor of the Encyclopædia Britannica, aided me, giving thereto much of his valuable time, in nearly 400 pages. Prof. W. Wright helped me in some parts out of his little leisure; and Prof. F. Lasinio in Italy. Then Dr Percy Badger has very kindly aided me to the end of the former volume. And what could be more generous than the friendly aid of Prof. Edward C. Sachau

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THE PREFACE.

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(now Rector of the Oriental Academy of Berlin, and himself author of a valuable work of travels in Syria and Mesopotamia) given throughout the second volume? And finally, with a like goodness, Prof. M. J. De Goeje in Leiden undertook the revision of the Arabic Index; which, so little being known in Europe of the Nejd speech, was a task of research and extraordinary learning.

PROSIT VERITATI.

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