works, general and special, of this period, are the "'Eyn," commonly ascribed to El-Khaleel, who died in the year of the Flight 160 or 170 or 175 (aged 74); the "Nawádir" of El-Kisá-ee, who died in 182 or 183 or 189 or 192; the "Jeem" and the "Nawádir" and the work entitled "El-Ghareeb el-Muṣannaf" of Aboo-'Amr Esh-Sheybánee, who died in 205 or 206 or 213 (aged 110 or 111 or 118); the "Nawádir" and the "Loghát" of El-Farrà, who died in 207 (aged 67); the "Loghát" of Aboo-'Obeydeh, who died in 208 or 209 or 210 or 211 (aged 96 or 97 or 98 or 99); the "Nawádir" and the "Loghát" of Aboo-Zeyd, who died in 214 or 215 or 216 (aged 93); the "Ajnás" of El-Aṣma'ee, who died in 215 or 216 (aged 92 or 93); the work entitled "El-Ghareeb el-Muṣannaf" of Aboo-'Obeyd, who died in 223 or 224 or 230 (aged 67); and the "Nawádir" of Ibn-El-Aạrábee, who died in 231 or 233 (aged 81 or 83): all mentioned near the close of the 1st Section of the Muzhir. From these and similar works, either immediately or through the medium of others in which they are cited, and from oral tradition, and, as long as it could be done with confidence, by collecting information from Arabs of the desert, were composed all the best lexicons, and commentaries on the classical poets &c. The most authoritative of such works are the lexicons; and the most authoritative of these are, of course, generally speaking, the later, because every succeeding lexicographer profited by the critical research of his predecessors, and thus avoided or corrected errors committed by earlier authors. The commentaries on the poets and on the Traditions have contributed largely to the lexicons. They often present explanations that have been disallowed or questioned by eminent lexicographers; and therefore their statements, when unconfirmed by other authorities, must be received with caution: but in many cases their explanations are unquestionably accurate, and they afford valuable aid by giving examples of words and phrases of doubtful meanings. The danger of relying upon a single early authority, however high that authority may be, in any matter of Arabic lexicology, will be shown by innumerable instances in the present work. I here speak of errors of judgment. In addition to these, we have mistranscriptions. A word once mistranscribed is repeated in copy after copy; and at length, from its having been found in several copies, is confidently regarded as correct.* The value of the larger and later and more esteemed lexicons cannot, therefore, be too highly rated.

The first of the general lexicons is that which is commonly ascribed to El-Khaleel, entitled the "'Eyn" (كِتَاب العَيْن); and this has served in a great measure as the basis of many others. In it the words are mentioned according to their radical letters, as in all the best lexicons; but the letters are arranged, with the exception of ا and ى, which are classed with و for obvious reasons, nearly in the order of their places of utterance, as follows; commencing with ع (whence the title):

ع ح ه خ غ ق ك ج ش ض ص س ز ط د ت ظ ذ ث ر ل ن ف ب م و ا ى

Under each of these letters, in the foregoing order, except the last three which are necessarily classed together, are mentioned all the words of which the roots contain that letter without any letter of those preceding it in this arrangement: first, the biliteral-radical words: then, the triliteral-radical; of which are placed first the sound; secondly the unsound in one letter; and thirdly the unsound in two letters: next, the quadriliteral-radical: and lastly, the quinqueliteral-radical. Thus, under the letter ع are mentioned all the words of which the roots contain that letter: under ح, all the words of which the roots contain that letter without ع: under ه, all of which the roots contain that letter without ع or ح: and so on. For instance, in the section of the letter ل, we find, in the first division, first, لن; then, لف and فل; and so on: and in the second division, first, نفل

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* For instance, M. Fresnel quoted (in the second of his "Lettres sur l'Histoire des Arabes avant l'Islamisme," in the "Journal Asiatique," 3rd Series, vol. iii. pp. 330 et seq.,) an extract from the "Kitáb el-Aghánee," as containing, in the phrases ما حملت واحدا منهم تصعا ولا ولدته تينا, two words supposed by him, and by his and my learned friend the sheykh Moḥammad 'Eiyád Eṭ-Ṭanṭáwee, (see pp. 324 et seq. of that letter,) to be wanting in all the Arabic dictionaries. One of these words is written تصعا, as above, in one of M. Fresnel's copies of the "Kitáb el-Aghánee," three in number; in another copy, تضعا; and in the third copy, قضعا: the other is in all the copies تينا, as above: and they are explained in that work, on the authority of Abu-l-Yaḳẓhán El-Joạfee, as meaning ان تخرج رجلاه قبل راسه and فى دُبُر الطُّهْر وَقُبل الحَيْض. The former word is correctly تُضْعًا or تُضُعًا, both infinitive nouns of وَضَعَتْ. The other word is a mistranscription for يَتْنًا. My lamented friend M. Fresnel was always glad to receive and admit a correction of any of his own *rare* mistakes; and in his "Fourth Letter" he announced that the sheykh Moḥammad had afterwards rectified these two errors.

• كَفَى المَرْءَ نُبْلًا أَنْ تُعَدَّ مَعَايِبُهْ •