Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society

<http://journals.cambridge.org/JRA>

Additional services for *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)

'Omārah's History of Yemen— Observations

Henry C. Kay

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society / Volume 25 / Issue 02 / April
1893, pp 218 - 236

DOI: 10.1017/S0035869X00022383, Published online: 15 March 2011

Link to this article: [http://journals.cambridge.org/
abstract_S0035869X00022383](http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0035869X00022383)

How to cite this article:

Henry C. Kay (1893). 'Omārah's History of Yemen—
Observations. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 25, pp
218-236 doi:10.1017/S0035869X00022383

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

‘Omārah’s History of Yemen—Observations by HENRY
C. KAY.

Professor Robertson Smith, in his paper on my version of ‘Omārah’s history, concerns himself with two points. He deals with my treatment of the Arabic text, and he enters into certain observations upon the brief sketch I have supplied of the author’s life.

These last do not call for more than a few words of explanation. It will be seen that the particulars I have placed before my readers, scanty as they are, really sum up all the leading facts of ‘Omārah’s life that are known to us. As to the sources of Ibn Khallikān’s biography, the writer himself tells us that he drew his materials from one of ‘Omārah’s works, and Prof. Robertson Smith is no doubt right in pointing out that I was in error in supposing the history to be the work referred to. Indeed, the information that the latter affords us touching ‘Omārah’s career in his native country is actually somewhat in excess of the meagre details supplied by the biographer.¹

It is no doubt true that in speaking of the last years of ‘Omārah’s life, which were spent in Egypt, I might have entered into an examination of several points of a controversial character—into an attempt to pronounce upon the precise nature of ‘Omārah’s relations with the Fatimites and Ayyubites, upon the question of his guilt or innocence of the crime for which he suffered, and upon the literal genuineness of the verses which, by general consent, bore an important part in bringing about his death. But such an enquiry would have led me somewhat far from the

¹ The particulars contained in the history may easily be found (s.v. ‘Omārah) by means of the Index I have added to my translation.

actual objects of my task, to the fulfilment of which, I still venture to think, I was not wrong in confining myself.

Passing on now to Prof. Robertson Smith's criticisms of my treatment of the MS., I must, in the first place, confess to some degree of doubt as to the nature of the course which he would have had me adopt. He fully endorses all I have said concerning the numerous errors of all descriptions, omissions, and corruptions with which the text is disfigured, and he admits that they not unfrequently render it all but impossible to apprehend the author's precise meaning. He is of opinion that I ought to have given a correct and readable, in other words a purified, text wherever that was possible. This, he perceives, would have necessitated deviations which he would have had me indicate by brackets and marginal notes. I find it difficult to make a distinction between such a course and an attempt at that complete recension which Prof. Robertson Smith elsewhere admits would involve an amount of conjecture indistinguishable from mere guess work. A line of demarcation, it will perhaps be said, could have been established, but it would in practice be found very difficult to determine where the line should be drawn. The course I adopted was that to which I was naturally, I may almost say insensibly, led. The variants given in the footnotes, and derived from Janadī, Khazrajī, and other writers, frequently yield a satisfactory sense which the corruption of the text denies us, and in some cases, as I have pointed out, the subsequent writer has copied the words of the original author almost verbatim. The difference between Prof. Robertson Smith and myself seems chiefly to be this, that I have more particularly regarded all attempts at restoring the text, not as an end of itself, but simply as the means to an end.

Professor Robertson Smith remarks that I have not sufficiently availed myself of the help to be derived from the laws of metre. Such help, it is quite true, may be of the greatest value when we are dealing with poetical works by writers of some reputation, but it cannot be safely applied to every scrap of verse quoted, as is usually

the case, from memory, and seldom quite correctly. The greatest caution in such case must be used before we can venture to subordinate the sense to metrical regularity. What I have said on the subject receives a not unapt illustration from what Prof. Robertson Smith himself says of a line as given by Khazrajī (p. 261), that it is "against metre," and of another introduced by Dayba' (p. 326), that it is not verse at all. It will be noticed that whenever one of the Arab classics is quoted, I have looked up the passage and given the correct reading.

Of the emendations proposed by Professor Robertson Smith, some are very good and a useful contribution towards a restoration of the text. Such are his reading of the line of verse at p. 15, l. 7,¹ so also at p. 34, l. 17, حامل المذبة. His comments upon p. 46, l. 1 *sqq.*, are both useful and suggestive, but the proposed amendment at l. 8 I think is somewhat doubtful, having regard not only to the fact, so far as I am aware, that the verb لطم is exclusively used to signify a blow dealt with the hand, but also to the construction of the sentence. The proposed reading at p. 53, l. 5, is good, but I should prefer علىّ to لى with the word ثم understood. ثم at p. 61, l. 8, may indicate an omission, but Prof. Robertson Smith is not improbably right in proposing to expunge the word. His emendation of the last line of the page is a very probable one, and so also that at p. 66, l. 3, عليه for غلبه, which indeed is practically that given by Khazrajī as shown in the footnote, and adopted by myself. Again, at p. 69, l. 8, استقبلوا for استقلوا. At p. 82, l. 4, احدى in the feminine must, of course, be substituted for احد, and his rendering of l. 2, p. 91, is no doubt correct.

¹ My references are, like Professor Robertson Smith's, to the pages of the Arabic text. The numbers of the Arabic pages being printed in the margin of the English version, the corresponding passages in the latter will easily be found.

But Prof. Robertson Smith's emendations and interpretations are not all of equal value. In not a few cases they are very doubtful, and in others they are unquestionably erroneous. I may here add that I propose dealing with specific statements only, excluding those of a general character.¹

As an example of the latter, I may refer to his remarks upon 'Omārah's elegy on the Fatimites. Prof. Robertson Smith says that I have translated a few lines, "but not quite correctly." This might possibly signify no more than that my abridged rendering is not a literal translation, which is true. But he makes his meaning quite clear when he goes on to say that I am especially wrong in my reading of one particular line, the real signification of which is, he adds, that "ofttimes the ransom of the world lay with the Fatimites, and that through them it was loosed of its bonds." Here I must simply say that I am quite unable to follow my critic. A close translation of the line is, according to my judgment, as follows :

"Perhaps the world [an it please God] will return to its former condition. Its place of refuge and protection is derived from you, and through you it will be released of its bonds."

It is not I think without significance that the expression *معادل الارض*, *the refuges of the land*, was, according to the Tāj al 'Arūs, as quoted by Lane, applied to the kings of Ḥimyar.² What, it may further be asked, were the occasions on which it could be said of the Fatimite Khalifahs, that they submitted to the humiliating necessity of ransoming their people, and to whom was the ransom paid ?

It did not escape my notice that Ibn Khallikān writes

¹ I shall also pass over some other passages, though not altogether devoid of interest, since they show the effects which my mistakes, whether real or imaginary, produced on the Professor's mind.

² Professor Robertson Smith seems to have somewhat misapprehended my own words. The line, as I read it, expresses a hope and wish for the restoration of the Fatimite dynasty.

the name of the Wazīr Talāi's father رُزَيْك, *Ruzzik* (*supra*, p. 184, footnote). The *Ḳamūs* writes *Ruzzayk*, which, even on inferior authority, would have seemed to me the preferable form. This I accordingly adopted, but through an accident which I did not discover in time, it has been printed *Ruzayk*. Abu'l Mahāsin, I may add, writes *Ruzayk* (vol. ii. 421).

I now proceed to an examination of Prof. Robertson Smith's detailed criticisms. I pass over some paragraphs, chiefly out of consideration for the space I can fairly ask to be allowed to occupy in the Society's *Journal*, but also because it seems unnecessary to do otherwise. Such, for example, is the first paragraph, in which Prof. Robertson Smith, by the alteration of a word, slightly alters the sense of a passage, but concerns himself chiefly with 'Omārah's intentions when he began his book. That on p. 2, l. 8, of which I can only say that Prof. Robertson Smith renders the word امانى in a sense which seems to me very doubtful. That at p. 4, l. 1, is a disputable contention on a small matter, over which I gave myself a considerable amount of trouble, without being able to arrive at a better solution than that offered by Janadī. In his remark on p. 5, l. 4, Prof. Robertson Smith is no doubt right, but the exaggeration on the one side is hardly less than that on the other.

p. 5, l. 7. Prof. Robertson Smith, when saying that this passage ought "certainly to be amended with the aid of Yāḳūt," has failed to notice that Yāḳūt is here exceedingly inaccurate, and is himself in great need of correction. 'Omārah, we may feel sure, never said that Aden La'ah stood on Mount Ṣabir.

p. 11, footnote 6. فبنى in the active can readily be understood as meaning "he caused to be built," but after what follows, unless ختم be read in the passive, it would be plainly implied that Nafīs built the wall and closed the aperture with his own hands.

p. 12, footnotes 8 and 10. *لبنى* or something equivalent is absolutely necessary. Prof. Robertson Smith is in error in regarding *بنو أصبح* as the subject of *تغلب* (l. 14). The verb has been repeated (last line), owing to the interruption of the sentence by a digression, but the subject of the verb is in both cases the same, namely, Sultan Abu 'Abd Allah. The Banu Aṣḥab occupied the valley of Ṣahūl and probably owned the land, but they were not the conquerors spoken of in the text. They were, on the contrary, subject to the family of Kurandi. The word *عليهم* must be read in the plural, not in the dual.

On account of its bearing upon another fact of Arab tribal history, and one of some importance, it seems proper to refer here to a statement by Hamdāni, which I have had occasion to quote in note 3 (p. 214), and which Prof. Robertson Smith has likewise referred to in his "Kinship," p. 9. But he has misunderstood the true meaning of the passage. Hamdāni does not say that it was a practice with obscure desert Arabs to call themselves by the name of some more famous tribe, but that when they happened to bear the same name, they frequently asserted a false claim to identity of lineage.

p. 15, l. 18. We have an express statement that the words quoted were those of al-Mutanabbi. The narrator would without doubt have said so if both words and sense had been purposely altered. It seems equally improbable that 'Aly, the Sulayhite, would be represented as gratuitously offering so gross an insult to a man who was about to load him with benefits. But Prof. Robertson Smith's reading no doubt deserves consideration.

p. 16, l. 14. The lines are in the *Khafif* metre. According to De Sacy the last syllable of the second foot may

be read short. Anyhow the next syllable must be long, and the word may be adapted to the necessities of the case by reading it in the plural, *simāti*. I was never well satisfied with the word ذرى, and, on reconsideration of the line, it strikes me that ذرى brilliant, is almost without doubt the true reading. The word is particularly used when speaking of a star, and the probabilities in its favour are, I think, strong. It goes, of course, to confirm my interpretation of the line. I could wish that Prof. Robertson Smith had explained his reasons for reading سميت in the passive, and *simāḥ* rather than *samāḥ*. But a similar wish has more than once occurred to me in the course of his paper.

- p. 16, l. 19. The emendations here proposed are, for the most part, good and useful; but they do not altogether relieve us of the difficulties presented by the text. That the bond in question was in favour of the oil-presser and a reward for the exchange of dress, is, of course, pure conjecture. The oil-presser, in that transaction, must indeed have had the best of the bargain. Prof. Robertson Smith's translation عدى عنه, *he discharged before the Kāḍi*, seems not only grammatically doubtful, but inconsistent also with what is indicated in the narrative, that no third person took part in the interview with the Kāḍi. Prof. Robertson Smith cannot guess, he tells us, how I came to make a new personage of 'Aly, the Sulayhite, Kāḍi of Ḥarāz. That arises from his failure to observe that 'Aly never was Kāḍi of Ḥarāz, whilst the name 'Aly ibn Muḥammad, which appears in the text, is, to borrow the remark of Queen Asma, a very common one among Arabs. The intended meaning is probably 'Aly, son of the Kāḍi of Ḥarāz, Muḥammad. (Cf. Ibn el Wardi, ii. 368.)

- p. 18, l. 17. Prof. Robertson Smith's reading of فنى in the sense of *exhausted*, instead of the more usual one *perished*, is good. Also his emendation اعهد instead of اعقل. But the difficulties we have to deal with are not exhausted. The singular قصر, l. 17, Prof. R. Smith pronounces to be right, but he omits to tell us what then becomes of the words عدّة قصور, which require the affixed pronouns in l. 19 to be in the plural, not to mention the word قصور in l. 18.
- p. 19, l. 11. Prof. Robertson Smith, instead of مَبْجَل *honoured*, would read مَبْخَل *accused of being avaricious*, a charge which, it is true, is seldom undeserved in the case of an Arab, but one which would be fiercely resented in that of a great and powerful chief such as 'Aly the Sulayhite. As to l. 12 *sqq.* Prof. Robertson Smith unnecessarily changes the order of the sentence. If we read the next words وَإِنْ مِثْلَتْنِي as he seems to do, the natural sense would be "and if she resembles me." Had the author intended the conjunction to signify *although*, he would surely have made his meaning plain by writing وَمَعَ أَنَّهَا, or words to that effect. If we read مِثْلَتْنِي, as I have proposed, the sense undoubtedly is, "if I compare myself."

Prof. Robertson Smith, as it seems to me, accepts far too readily the boastful language in which Arabs are in the habit of attributing to themselves a variety of heroic virtues, a scrupulous sense of honour, generosity, profuse liberality, disinterestedness, etc. If an individual affect a self-depreciatory tone, we may freely suspect his sincerity, but he will seldom hesitate to do so, as an indirect mode of flattery, provided it can be of service to him.

As to the Arab who would feel or confess to feeling humbled by favours bestowed upon him, least of all by favours proceeding from a brother or sister or sovereign Prince, that Arab, I will venture to say, must be a very exceptional character. We have an example before us, among others, in 'Omārah, who never shows the slightest symptom of the kind.

p. 20, l. 6. *ولا أخضر من أمواله* is to my mind better than *أخضر من أحواله*. I do not think that *حال* or its plural *أحوال* can be used in the sense of *business*. *أخضر*, as written by Prof. Robertson Smith, is, I presume, a clerical error.

p. 21, l. 6. If Prof. Robertson Smith means that the lines in our text were written by the author of the *Urjūzat al-Hajj*, he ought to read *راجز أرجوزة الحج*, or words to the same effect. But the lines are not to be found in the *Urjūzah*, nor does the route it describes come anywhere near the place mentioned by 'Omārah.

p. 22, l. 3 from foot. The reading here proposed would require the verb to be in the plural.

p. 26, footnote 3. *الرجل* as in the footnote is, in my opinion, undoubtedly better. "The man, by Allah, who took his mother from Zabīd, and on her account slew 20,000 Abyssinians, he, by my life, was truly a man."

As to Prof. Robertson Smith's proposed corrections of footnote 5 and l. 3 from foot, they are clearly erroneous. The meaning is not that Aḥmad paid the money to As'ad, but that, on the contrary, he received it for conveyance to their master at Ṣan'ā.

p. 28, l. 12. My rendering of the words *كانت بك* is perfectly right, as may be seen by reference to the

very passage in Wright's Grammar, to which Prof. Robertson Smith appeals. A correction is perhaps, however, required in the words that follow, which, it may be, ought to read "and beheld thee, O fair-complexioned, after thou hadst swept away," etc.

p. 33, footnote 2. There is good reason, I think, for adopting Khazrajī's rather than Prof. Robertson Smith's somewhat fanciful reading. The excessive summer heat in Tihāmah and scarcity of pasturage at that season are sufficient reasons for the departure of the mountaineers, and it is quite in accordance with Eastern practice to harass a retreating enemy, if it be possible to do so.

p. 35, l. 3. I feel quite unable to accept Prof. Robertson Smith's reading. It is not possible to conceive the Khalifah writing of his own or of the Queen's subjects as obliged to live in concealment from their (and his) enemies. The word *kahf*, moreover, signifies *asylum*, *refuge*, as well as *cave*. To call the Queen a cave would sound no less odd to Arab than to English ears.

„ last line. Prof. Robertson Smith somewhat exaggerates the unbending pride, as he represents it, of an Arab, and at the same time fails to observe that he contends for a reading which does not perceptibly differ from that to which he objects. In the one case, "he felt humbled in his own estimation and perceived that his reputation was dimmed"; in the other, "he saw that his own reputation was eclipsed." I feel quite at a loss to understand how the Professor arrives at the meaning he attributes to the message Saba sends through the slave girl. The words, to my mind, were simply meant to convey to the Queen, perhaps with some slight sarcasm, that she had not succeeded in deceiving him.

p. 37, l. 10. Prof. Robertson Smith omits to take into consideration the word *ل* in the tenth line. Following

thereupon we must, I think, necessarily read *للتعكر* in the last hemistich.

p. 38, l. 2. The phrase, my rendering of which Prof. Robertson Smith condemns, is a very common one. His interpretation is erroneous, and it misrepresents the relations between the Queen and her Wazīr. The phrase is fully explained in Wright's Grammar, vol. ii. p. 154.

„ footnote 2 and l. 11. Prof. Robertson Smith's emendation, with its meaning, "from this day forth I owe thee no obedience in my castle," is too improbable to be accepted. No Arab courtier would have expressed his wishes in such undiplomatic language.

Prof. Robertson Smith's proposed substitution of *قلت* for *عاد* is not only, to my mind, unnecessary, but it misleads him in his interpretation of the passage. The words *فيما عاد* signify "in that (*i.e.* in my treatment of you) which has been habitual (with me)." The verb may in certain cases, as is shown by Lane, be used simply in the sense of *كان* *was*. *خرج مني* must be rendered in the sense of *restriction*, *hindrance*, "*prohibition*," etc., "*on my part*."

p. 40, l. 4 from foot. *برمى الشعر* must, I think, signify "mixed multitudes of Arabs, dwellers in tents." I have an imperfect recollection of having met with the word *شعر* used as *وبر* (*wabarīyah*, *ahl al wabar*), but I can only say so under every reserve.

p. 42, l. 3 from foot. Prof. Robertson Smith's proposal to substitute *Karami* (or *Kazami*) for *Kāzim* deserves consideration. But I should prefer to leave the subsequent words untouched, and to read: "He was met by a member of the family of al-Karam, who came from Aden (namely), Muhammad, son of the Dā'y Abu'l-'Arab, and a descendant of Sā'id ibn

Ḥamīd ad-dīn." But the reading, whichever way we take it, remains very doubtful.

p. 43, l. 1 *sqq.* "He asked them about such hidden things" is not a good translation. غوامض is here used as a substantive, and means "the hidden, or deep, or mysterious signification of these things." The identical word is used by Nuwayrī and Makrīzī in their account of the process of initiation into the Ismailite sect (Makrīzī, p. 391, l. 32; 392, l. 5). De Sacy translates أمور الغامضة by "matières qui présentent beaucoup d'obscurité et d'incertitude" (p. lxxv.), and at p. lxxix. علم خفى غامض by "science abstruse et profonde." I venture to think that my note, despite the sentence which Prof. Robertson Smith passes upon it, will retain its place.

„ l. 5 from foot. I do not find the word in the dictionaries in either sense, but the Kamūs gives الزوطة, signifying "the place trodden by the feet." See the Tāj al 'Arūs, i. p. 144. I think the rendering I have adopted, both here and for p. 77, l. 15 (translation, p. 105), is the more probable one.

p. 52, l. 4. يمسك must, to my mind, be rendered *to repress, restrain*, etc. Fire is repressed (controlled, mastered, etc.) only by him that kindles it. The words that follow form a natural sequence: "Do not therefore trust to your allies, but bear the fierce heat of battle yourselves." The version adopted by Prof. Robertson Smith, "Fire only catches the man who kindles it," does not convey a satisfactory or even a clear meaning, and it ignores the words فاصطلوها بانفسكم.

p. 55, l. 6. It is true that Janadī describes Anīs as a eunuch, but there is nothing to that effect in our text, and Khazrajī, who here copies 'Omārah very closely, uses the word استاد. It is to be observed that Anīs seems to have been entrusted with the defence of the castle.

p. 56, footnote 3. I hardly know what precise sense Prof. Robertson Smith intends to convey by the words, "I took his mark." The expression **اصاب جصله** is to be found in all dictionaries, and signifies, "his shot hit the mark and he won the prize." 'Omārah confesses that he appropriated his neighbour's arrow (*i.e.* the verses he had composed), and its real owner was thus deprived of the prize that ought to have been his. I am at a loss to understand how **اصبت** could be better than **اصاب**.

p. 60, l. 5. The propriety of Prof. Robertson Smith's proposal to substitute **عدم** for **عزم** is, I think, very doubtful. Whatever may be said of negroes, the Abyssinian type is far from displeasing to Easterns, whilst Abyssinian women are greatly and justly celebrated for their beauty. See the account given by 'Omārah, himself a pure Arab, of the Abyssinian Princes of Zabīd, of whom he says that no Arab king surpassed them in merit, etc. (p. 96 of translation). Again, at p. 104, his description of Muflih, whose handsome presence is particularly mentioned, and the account which both he and Janadī have given of Surūr (note 94).

„ l. 5 from foot. Even with the omission of the word "of course," Prof. Robertson Smith's interpretation of the word **نفق** is here inadmissible, and it is not confirmed by the passage in the *Kitāb al-Aghānī* to which he appeals. What the author says is that the Queen showed Kūsayr a hole in the ground beneath her throne, and she told him that it had an outlet into another similar hole beneath the throne of her sister on the further side of the Euphrates.

The typical Arab dwelling consists of two, three, or more separately built apartments, some of which may, or may not, adjoin and communicate with

one another. The piece of open ground upon which they stand (عرصة) is enclosed within a wall or fence, and is used for various purposes. It is sufficient to add that the word بين signifies *among* as well as *between*.

p. 62, l. 9. If we read, as I have proposed, (or قباء (جبة) , that is to say, the mailed kilt forming the nether part of his chain armour, a probable solution is, I think, arrived at.

„ l. 16. The version which Prof. Robertson Smith puts in the man's mouth involves too high a compliment to his enemies and is too depreciatory of his own people. The word رخيس , when applied to a person, is used in a contemptuous sense.

„ last line. 'Omārah has himself given us a sufficient explanation of Asma's appearing in public with uncovered face. See translation, p. 35.

p. 67, l. 7. The text has يسعنى , for which Khazrajī, as I have indicated in the footnote, substitutes يسمعنى . Prof. Robertson Smith gives the preference to the latter, but, to my mind, without good reason. From the word in the text a perfectly consistent meaning is derived. Jayyāsh, after what had occurred, felt that the only course open to him was to withdraw. But Ibn al Kūmm sprang after him and brought him back. The proposal to read سواهما in the dual is inadmissible, since we are distinctly told that no one but 'Aly and Husayn was present.

„ l. 10. If we adopt the reading proposed by Prof. Robertson Smith, we should have to render it, not one of Sulayhi's family, but al Agharr, his son. No such person is ever mentioned throughout the book, and the course of 'Omārah's narrative everywhere points to the conclusion that 'Aly, the Sulayhite, had

no other son but Aḥmad al-Mukarram. The place of which Jayyāsh took possession on the following morning was not the palace, but the *dār al-imārah*, the seat of government.

- p. 67, l. 20. I am not able to follow Prof. Robertson Smith in his substitution of *يَوْمُنَا* (more correctly *يَوْمُنَا*) for *يَوْمَنَا*. There is an ellipsis of one word in the sentence, but one which no reader could fail to supply.

In what follows As'ad makes use of a well-known phrase *الحرب سجال*, and it is not without obvious reason that he substitutes *أيام*, literally the *days*, for *حرب* war. It cannot for a moment be supposed that he uses the word in the sense of "Ayyām al 'Arab," on an occasion when he has offered no resistance, and when he can hope for nothing better than the somewhat humiliating generosity of his enemy.

Prof. Robertson Smith's translation of the phrase *الحرب سجال* is not correct. Its meaning is clearly explained in the *Ḳamūs*, and the word *siḡāl*, it must be observed, is applied to *full* buckets only.

- p. 68, l. 6. *مستضيفين*, *seeking hospitality*, is to my mind a less suitable word than *متضعفين*, *scattered*, or even than *مستضافين*, *receiving hospitality*, that is refuge.

- p. 72. One could wish that Prof. Robertson Smith had mentioned why he would read *للمنصور*, governed by *وزر* (it makes a rather awkward sentence), why he wishes to substitute *سلمت* for *تسلم*, and *عذر* for *غدر*, which gives a perfectly good reading. As to the title *ḥurrah*, it is generally applied to any respectable woman.

- p. 78, l. 7. *بامر ينقد*. The phrase is of the same construction as that at p. 46, l. 11, *بفصلين*, and is, I think, perfectly good.

- p. 78, l. 13. "He cleft the staff" signifies he parted from those with whom he had been associated, a final rupture took place. It cannot here be taken to mean that Othmān was about to renounce his allegiance (consequently to become a rebel). What is signified is that he was about to submit to the Wazīr's orders, which he was not able to resist, and to leave Zabīd. The Wazīr would thus have gained his ostensible purpose, but his real object would have been defeated.
- „ l. 15. I ought to have said that a slave who has borne a child to her master is *practically* free. She is, with only the rarest exceptions, treated as a free woman, even though not formally manumitted.
- p. 79, l. 1. The general sense of the passage, notwithstanding its many corruptions, is plain enough, but verbal emendations can be little better than "sheer guess work." The word *هى* in l. 2 is no doubt not the tree (no one could suppose so), but neither does it refer to the valley.
- p. 60, footnote 6. I cannot agree with Prof. Robertson Smith in regarding this passage as signifying that the Wazīr's soldiers looted the remains of the banquet. It must be observed that the words *ثم فترق* *على حواشى الوزير* are repeated twice. The words that intervene are, with scarcely a doubt, due to the carelessness of the transcriber, *انهب*, no doubt, suggested by *امهرة*, and *سکر* by *عسكر*. The omission of the sentence by Khazrajī is thus fully accounted for. We might, however, retain the first words of the interpolation, reading say *five* for *five hundred*. The sentence would then be "Othmān distributed five (roasted) sheep, and three buhārs of sweetmeats." The interpolated words would thus be reduced to four, including the two mentioned above.
- p. 85, l. 7. Prof. Robertson Smith's reading is ingenious, but I think that here, as in some other places, he is too absolutely sure of having solved the difficulties

of the text. The education given by dealers to their slaves is not despised in the East, but, on the contrary, is much valued. As to merchants in general, they are rather a favoured class. It is never forgotten that trade was the special occupation of the tribe of *Ḳuraysh*, and that the Prophet himself was engaged in it at the commencement of his career. Avarice is not regarded as the special vice of the trader. Finally, let it be remembered that the words are reported as spoken by *Himyar*, himself a slave-dealer, and an educator of slaves.

- p. 90, l. 15. The purpose for which *Surūr* went forth is stated in the text.
- p. 99, l. 5 from foot. I can see no reason for the emendation here demanded.
- p. 101, l. 6. I have taken the word as it stands in the text, and I suspect it is capable of being defended.
- p. 140, l. 6. I should prefer reading اغتار rather than اغتاظ, proposed by Prof. Robertson Smith.
- „ l. 9. I do not think that دنيا can properly be interpreted *riches*, synonymous, that is to say, with مال. The word ذكاء occurs to me as by far the most probable reading, and it of course justifies the feminine of the subsequent affixed pronouns. It makes no change in my translation.
- p. 141, l. 12. No *alif* is required. The words as printed are quite correct. أَنْ لَكُمْ بَلَدٌ.
- p. 144. The right reading, I take it, is قُدْسَتْ not قَدَسْ, and the former, as it seems to me, suits both metre and sense better than قَدَسَتْ, but I must confess that I find the lines so full of irregularities, that it seems to me the metre can hardly be taken into account. They can only just be said to be better than *Dayba's* line, which Prof. Robertson Smith pronounces is “not verse at all.”

- p. 145, l. 2. I cannot see the grounds for the emendations here proposed, nor the objects they can serve.
- p. 146, l. 7. The proposal to read *أسرة* is good. As regards Prof. Robertson Smith's remarks on my note 141, I do not think that much or rather any importance will be attached to Ibn Fadl's reported words. But the actual question between us seems to hinge rather upon an interpretation of French than of Arabic.
- „ l. 16. The word *فائش*, when read as a geographical name, and not in its ordinary sense, I apprehend is derived from the name of *ذو فائش*, the Himyarite, and ancestor of the tribe of *Yahsub*.
- p. 149, l. 1. Prof. Robertson Smith's reading is one, which, as our French friends would say, *saute aux yeux*. My objection to it is that the fugitive would surely not encumber himself with a laden ass, when about to travel a comparatively short distance, say to *Zabid*, through a fertile and well-watered country, full of Ibn Fadl's bitter enemies. His ass, be it added, would compel him to keep to the beaten track. The emendation I have proposed, does not, I confess, altogether satisfy me, but it seemed to me worth submitting to my readers. *هدارة*, I must add, is a misprint. It ought to be *هدادة*, as in the text.
- p. 256, l. 9. The metre is *ṭawīl*, and the last hemistich might be so read that the asseverative *lām* would correspond with the first syllable of the second foot, which is short. Of course we should have to read *jadabi*, not *judbi*. I am not, I confess, prepared to insist upon that reading, but I can with difficulty bring myself to adopt Prof. Robertson Smith's version. A country in which the wolves are on the point of extermination has surely a redeeming point in its favour, and the author can hardly have been willing to allow it even that.

p. 261, l. 6. Prof. Robertson Smith's objection on the score of the metre is a fair one. But I feel unable nevertheless either to drop the word *'urwah* or to adopt that which he proposes to substitute. The word عَزَّتْه is objectionable, because it inverts the signification of a well-known phrase. مَمْتَسِكٌ signifies clinging to a thing for protection, and it is explained as synonymous with مَعْتَصِمٌ. We have the phrase اَعْتَصَمَ بِاللّٰهِ, "he clung unto God, or to his religion." In the Kūr'ān we have (Ch. xxxi. v. 21) اَسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَى, "He has clung to a sure and firm handle or support." See also Ch. ii. v. 257. It is, I think, in the highest degree unlikely that the poet would venture to tamper with the phrase, and a question whether we may even read the word in the dual. The proposals to read اَقْلٌ and يُولُ are good.

The subject of these notes could easily, perhaps with some advantage, have been treated at greater length, but I think I have said all that is really necessary. I have never imagined that I could guard myself against all error, nor have I flattered myself that a critic, and one especially of Prof. Robertson Smith's distinguished abilities, could not show that I have failed to do so. And, indeed, he has been able to point to certain errors of elementary Arabic grammar, which I must confess are difficult to excuse. But I am able, nevertheless, to claim that nothing has been established that can detract from my translation as a faithful and trustworthy version of 'Omārah's history. And I have, I think, sufficiently shown that Prof. Robertson Smith's own Remarks stand in need of reconsideration and correction.