

Such a man was the Sheykh Ed-Dásookee; ill-tempered and avaricious, but still the right man for the work. Lane at first hoped to obtain the loan of at least large portions of the manuscript from the Mosque of Moḥammad Bey. The Páshà himself, Moḥammad 'Alee, was anxious to further the work by any means in his power, and the Prime Minister, Arteen Bey, called upon Lane with the view of discovering in what manner the Government could assist him. But the loan of manuscripts from the Mosques was a request beyond the power even of Moḥammad 'Alee to grant; and Lane had to submit to the tedious process of borrowing through his Sheykh a few pages at a time, which were copied and then exchanged for a few more. Thus the transcription went on; and much of Lane's time was occupied in collating it with the original and in reading and annotating it in the company of the Sheykh Ed-Dásookee. But meanwhile there were other materials to be collected. It is true the main basis of the coming work was to be the *Táj-el-'Aroos*: but this was founded upon many other lexicons, and Lane determined so far as might be possible to verify its quotations and to take nothing at second-hand which could be obtained from the original source. Hence it was a matter of great consequence to gather together any manuscripts that could be bought in Cairo. Fresnel gave him three most valuable manuscripts, Mr. Lieder another; and by a careful watch on the book-market, by means of his old ally Sheykh Aḥmad, he was fortunate enough to accumulate more than a dozen of the most renowned lexicons; and thus he was able to test the accuracy of the *Táj-el-'Aroos*, and to add greatly to the perfection and authoritativeness of his own work.

After a preliminary study of Arabic lexicology,—a science complicated by technical terms of varying meaning,—and so soon as a portion of the *Táj-el-'Aroos* was transcribed, Lane began to compose his own Lexicon from the *Táj* and from the other dictionaries he had collected. Thus from year to year the work went slowly on; collating, collecting, composing filled each day, each month, each year. At length the materials were gathered, the *Táj* was transcribed up to a sufficiently advanced point, and Lane felt he need stay no longer in Egypt. So leaving Mr. Lieder to keep the Sheykh to his work of copying,—which, now it is finished, fills 24 large volumes,—Lane and his family bade farewell to the friends who had risen around them, and reaching Alexandria on the 5th October, 1849, sailed on the 16th for England, where they arrived on the 29th.

Such is the brief account of Lane's third visit to Egypt, and the beginning of the Lexicon. It was a time of unremitting exhausting labour: but it was a happy time. Lane had his wife and sister with him, and his home was brightened by two young faces, full of the excitement and delight of their new and marvellous surroundings. A cloud had fallen upon them, indeed, in 1844, when they heard of the death of the eldest brother, Theophilus Lane; and some days of deep anxiety had befallen Lane when both wife and sister lay dangerously ill with cholera and typhus fever. But on the whole the seven years had been years of happiness. His sister had gained for herself a place in literature by her "Englishwoman in Egypt," his two nephews had each marked out for himself a career as an Orientalist; he himself had accomplished his purpose and gathered together the materials and begun the composition of the great work of his life.