

1849—1876.

*The Arabic Lexicon.*

LANE returned to Europe in 1849 the acknowledged chief of Arabic scholars. As the author of "The Modern Egyptians" his fame as the authority upon Egypt had been established; and his translation of the Arabian Nights had gained him the well-earned repute of accurate scholarship. But when it became known on what work he was now engaged and when specimens had shown how thoroughly that work would be done, all who had a care for learning were eager to offer their homage. As early as 1839 the Egyptian Society had enrolled him among their honorary members. In 1846 the German Oriental Society elected him a corresponding member, and in 1871 raised him to their highest rank, that of Ehren-Mitglied; and the example of Germany was followed, at a distance, by England, in the elections to the Honorary Membership of the Royal Society of Literature (1858) and of the Royal Asiatic Society (1866). In 1864 a vacancy occurred in the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres of the Institut de France, by the promotion of De Witte, and Lane was unanimously elected a Correspondent in his place; and in 1875, on the occasion of its Tercentenary Festival, the University of Leyden accorded to him the degree of Honorary Doctor of Literature (Philosophiæ Theoreticæ Magister, Litterarum Humaniorum Doctor)—the only University degree he ever accepted, though not the only one offered to him. Those singular decorations, chiefly of military origin, which learned men are sometimes pleased to receive from their Sovereign, were by Lane decidedly though respectfully declined.

It was not, however, only in the matter of diplomas that a strong interest was shown in the great work my Uncle was preparing. So soon as the immense cost of the production was known, and before Lord Prudhoe had taken upon himself the expense of printing it, efforts were made, though not by the author, to obtain for it the support it needed. The Chevalier Bunsen exerted himself in a most friendly manner to gain the help of the English Universities: but it need hardly be said in vain. On the other hand, Germany was anxious to obtain the distinction of supporting it. At the instance of Bunsen, Lepsius, and Abeken, seconded by many others, it was agreed to offer to publish the Lexicon at the joint expense of the Prussian Government and the Berlin Academy of Sciences; and in 1846 Prof Dieterici was sent by the King of Prussia to Cairo to consult Lane's wishes. There were, however, conditions named to which Lane "could not willingly accede"; and moreover the arrangements for publishing in England were, by the zealous exertions of his brother Richard, nearly completed. In 1848 Lord John Russell, then Premier, made the first of a series of annual grants from the Fund for Special Service, which Lord Aberdeen continued in 1853; and in 1863 the grant was changed into an annual Pension on the Civil List.

On his return to England Lane soon settled down into his old routine of work. The composition went slowly on, and the manuscript of the *Tāj-el-'Aroos* was gradually completed and sent over. At last, when he had been twenty years at the work Lane felt he might begin printing. In 1863 the First Part appeared, and in two years' time the Second followed. The Third was published in 1867, and the Fourth was printed in 1870, but the whole edition of one thousand copies was unfortunately