Studies in a mosque

Lane-Poole Stanley
Title: Studies in a mosque

Author: Lane-Poole Stanley

This is an exact replica of a book. The book reprint was manually improved by a team of professionals, as opposed to automatic/OCR processes used by some companies. However, the book may still have imperfections such as missing pages, poor pictures, errant marks, etc. that were a part of the original text. We appreciate your understanding of the imperfections which can not be improved, and hope you will enjoy reading this book.
STUDIES IN A MOSQUE.
STUDIES IN A MOSQUE

BY

STANLEY LANE-POOLE

Author of the Life of Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe; Cairo: Sketches of its History; Monuments and Social Life; The Art of the Saracens of Egypt; The Moors in Spain; The Barbary Corsairs, etc.

SECOND EDITION
ENLARGED.

EDEN, REMINGTON & CO
LONDON AND SYDNEY
1893
PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

A common subject binds these essays together: they all treat of Islām in its manifold phases, from its humble birth at Mekka to its apotheosis in the Persian Miracle Play; even the Sabians may be called in a sense a Koranic sect. The treatment is doubtless slight, and many important developments of the Mohammadan religion are scarcely touched upon; but the general reader, for whom the essays were written, will probably pardon the lack of learned elaboration. The chapters on Islām in China and on the Mohammadan conception of Hell have been added in this edition.

Chapters IV., VII., VIII., and IX. are reprinted by permission from the “Edinburgh Review;” Chapter V. from the “Saturday Review;” and Chapter X. is reproduced from a collection of eschatological essays published in America, under the title of “That Unseen Country,” by Messrs. Nichols, of Springfield, Mass. The first three Chapters originally appeared as an introduction to my edition of Lane’s “Selections from the Kur-ān” in Trübner’s Oriental Series, and that on the Brotherhood of Purity was first published in the present work.

S. L.-P.

Athenæum,
1 Nov., 1892.
CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.
THE ARABS BEFORE ISLAM.

CHAPTER II.
MOHAMMAD.

CHAPTER III.
ISLAM.

CHAPTER IV.
THE KORAN.

CHAPTER V.
AN EASTERN REFORMATION.
El-Ash’ary’s Speech in the Mosque of El-Basra—Stages in the Growth of Mohammadanism—Influence of Greek Philosophy—El-Ash’ary’s Argument—Orthodox Dialectics 169
CONTENTS.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF PURITY.


CHAPTER VII.

THE PERSIAN MIRACLE PLAY.

Scene in Moharram—The Play of Hasan and Hoseyn—Realistic Acting—Origin of the Shi'ı Schism—History of the Family of 'Alı, and its Idealisation—The Atonement of Hoseyn—Shi'ı Fervour—The Moharram Festival—Theatre and Properties—The Drama—Analysis of the Scenes—Last Ceremonies .......................................................... 208

CHAPTER VIII.

SABIANS AND CHRISTIANS OF ST. JOHN.


CHAPTER IX.

ISLAM IN CHINA.

Revival of Mohammadanism—Connexion between Arabia and China—The First Muslim Missionary—Subsequent Colonies—Character of Chinese Muslims—Distribution in the Provinces—Tolerance—An Imperial Edict—Conflicts with the Chinese—The Panthay Insurrection in Yun-nan—The Emperor Sulaymān—Embassy to England and Turkey—Fall of Ta-li-fu—Suppression of the Panthays .......................................................... 289

CHAPTER X.

THE HELL OF ISLAM.

STUDIES IN A MOSQUE.

CHAPTER I.

THE ARABS BEFORE ISLAM.

Oh, our manhood's prime vigour! No spirit feels waste, 
Not a muscle is stopped in its playing nor sinew unbraced. 
Oh, the wild joys of living! the leaping from rock up to rock, 
The strong rending of boughs from the fir-tree, the cool silver 
shock 
Of the plunge in the pool's living water, the hunt of the bear, 
And the sultriness showing the lion is couched in his lair. 
And the meal, the rich dates yellowed over with gold-dust divine, 
And the locust flesh steeped in the pitcher, the full draught of 
wine, 
And the sleep in the dried river-channel where bulrushes tell 
That the water was wont to go warbling so softly and well. 
How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to employ 
All the heart and the soul and the senses for ever in joy! 

—Saul.

Between Egypt and Assyria, jostled by each but yielding to neither, lay a strange country, unknown save at its marches even to its neighbours, dwelt-in by a people that held itself aloof from all the earth—a people whom the great empires of the ancient world in vain essayed to conquer, against whom the power of Persia,
Egypt, Rome, Byzantium was proven impotence, and at whose hands even the superb Alexander, had he lived to test his dream, might for once have learnt the lesson of defeat. Witnessing the struggle and fall of one and another of the great tyrannies of antiquity, yet never entering the arena of the fight;—swept on its northern frontier by the conflicting armies of Khusru and Caesar, but lifting never a hand in either cause;—Arabia was at length to issue forth from its silent mystery, and, after baffling for a thousand years the curious gaze of strangers, was at last to draw to itself the fearful eyes of all men. The people of whom almost nothing before could certainly be asserted but its existence was finally of its own free will to throw aside the veil, to come forth from its fastnesses, and imperiously to bring to its feet the kingdoms of the world.

It is not all Arabia of which I speak. The story to tell has nothing as yet to say to the "happy" tilled lands of the south, or the outlying principeds of Hira and Ghassān bordering the territories and admitting the suzerainty of Persia and Rome. These lands were not wrapped in mystery: the Himyerite's kingdom in the Yemen, the rule of Zenobia at Palmyra, were familiar to the nations around. But the cradle of Islām was not here.

Along the eastern coast of the Red Sea, sometimes thrusting its spurs of red sandstone and porphyry into the waves, sometimes drawing away and leaving a wide stretch of lowland, runs a rugged range of mountain. One above another, the hills rise from the