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POET-LORE
THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF
LETTERS

DOUBLE SUMMER NUMBER.
June-July, 1895.

ALLADINE AND PALOMIDES. A Prose Play. (Com-
plete). *Maurice Maeterlinck.*
THE DEVIL INSPIRES THE MONK: An Anglo-Saxon
War Story. *Lindsay Todd Damon.*
VIRGIL'S ART. *John Allee.*
THEOCRITUS: Father of Pastoral Poetry. *Joshua
Kendall.*
GREEK TRAITS IN WALT WHITMAN. *Emily Chris-
tina Monk.*
URIEL ACOSTA. (Translated). *Karl Gutzkow. Trans-
lated by Richard Hovey and Francis Stewart Jones.*
RUSKIN'S LETTERS TO GHESNEAU: A Record of
Literary Friendship. III. *William G. Kingsland.*
CHOICE OF SUBJECT-MATTER in the Poets: Chan-
cer, Spenser, Tennyson, Browning. Part II. of
Annals of a Quiet Browning Club. *I. N. Cog.*
RECENT BRITISH VERSE. *P.*
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Periodicals.

The *Quarterly Review* for July contains eleven articles several of which are really A 1, others possess great merit, but the one on the "Life and Teachings of Mohammed" is below mediocrity, and is calculated to mislead public opinion at a time of perturbation on the Eastern Question. Unfortunately the reviewer lacks the gift of a judicial mind, and evidently is unable to weigh conflicting evidence. The following is a simple way of testing the matter: Suppose that an educated Mohammedan, wishing to depreciate Christianity, imitated the reviewer's method, and (1) picked out isolated passages from the Old and New Testaments; (2) selected from the multitude of creeds and dogmas of antagonistic Christian churches whatever in his opinion would tell against Christianity; (3) made selections from Jesuit and narrow-minded Protestant writers; (4) quoted from the histories of the crusades against the Albigensis; (5) the massacre of Saint Bartholomew; (6) the horrors of the Inquisition; (7) showed the decadence of Spain after the expulsion of the Moslems; and, then, (8) adopting the widely spread but erroneous belief that J. S. Mill was one of the leading thinkers of his age, quoted from p. 90 of his overrated "Essay on Liberty" (See page 28 of review of J. S. Mill's "Essay on Liberty" in the Toronto Reference Library) where he invidiously contrasts the Koran with the New Testament; and, referring to the Christian standard of ethics, falsely states (p. 90) that "the only worth professedly recognized is that of obedience." Should we call that a correct and fair way of describing the religion taught by Christ and its natural results? Yet this illustrates the reviewer's method of dealing with his subject. All thinking men must admit that Christianity is vastly superior to the religion taught by Mahomet; but facts should be stated fairly and from a judicial standpoint. Among other factors the reviewer ignores (1) the results caused by racial differences; (2) different eras of time; (3) and the consequences of polygamy. When the ruling classes practice polygamy with the natural result that on an average their wives and concubines are greatly inferior to themselves, there is sure—from this cause alone—to be a steady mental deterioration in the ruling race. This simple fact of itself would explain the decadence of once-flourishing Oriental dynasties, and, as a necessary consequence of that, of their subjects. A single quotation will show the unfitness of the reviewer to pose as a judge of facts. He actually accepts and repeats as true (p. 223) a childish statement that the annual revenue of the Byzantine Empire in the beginning of the thirteenth century was £130,000,000 (say \$650,000,000 of dollars) and this although at that time it only comprised about one-half of the present Turkish Empire, the revenue of which highly-taxed state is only £18,000,000. Even this lesser area "was greatly impoverished by the ravages of the crusaders"; yet, according to him, its revenue was almost one-half greater than that of the United Kingdom in 1894. His statement is simply absurd; and some of his others are on a par with it. This is historical-buckram, an introduction of Falstaff's arithmetic into history. In the *Fortnightly* for July there is a valuable paper by Mr. Davey—who is well-informed upon Turkish questions—on "The Present Condition of Mohammedan Women in Turkey." Many of his facts refute the loose statements of the *Quarterly Reviewer*. He states (p. 53): "Perhaps the greatest benefit which Mahomet conferred upon woman was the very strict laws he framed to render her absolutemistress of her fortune. These laws remain in vigor to this day." P. 66: "The virtues of the real Turks are as conspicuous as ever, hospitality, an utter freedom from vulgarity, and great kindness to the poor and animals." The following is from an American review: Years ago a party of Americans were travelling in Asiatic Turkey, and, through their interpreter, a Greek Christian, they asked a question of a humble wayside Turk; but they doubted the truth of his answer; whereupon the Greek observed: "You can believe what he says for his religion don't allow him to tell lies." What an unconscious satire upon nominal Oriental Christians! No one contends that the Mo-

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hammedan system of government is a good one, but writers—more especially those who contribute to our high-class Quarterlies—should always take pains anent their facts, and bear in mind that they are not addressing a youthful debating society. There is also in the *Quarterly* a very able and statesmanlike paper on the "Royal Commission on the Aged Poor." The proposal to pay pensions to the aged poor will be brought before the newly elected Parliament, and as the subject practically embraces the whole question of what is the best way to lessen and deal with poverty we will refer further to it in a subsequent issue of THE WEEK. There is, in addition a capital account of the Spanish Armada, showing how the undertaking failed, mainly through the splendid seamanship and active courage of the English commanders. Sound naval strategic views are added which apply at the present time. There is also a valuable paper on "The Reports of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies." All who take an interest in that subject should read and study it.