

**LORENZ ALMA TADEMA:
HIS LIFE AND WORKS.
FROM THE GERMAN BY
MARY J. SAFFORD**

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Lorenz Alma Tadema: His Life and Works. From the German by Mary J. Safford by Georg Ebers

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GEORG EBERS

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LORENZ ALMA TADEMA.

G. S. Morris

Lorenz Alma Tadema

99543

HIS LIFE AND WORKS

BY
Morris
GEORGE EBERS
Author of "Uarda," etc.

FROM THE GERMAN BY MARY J. SAFFORD

WITH THIRTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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LORENZ ALMA TADEMA.

THE charm of the author's twofold vocation of scientist and poet lies in his being at liberty to devote himself exclusively to congenial occupations; and what could be pleasanter than to trace the life and labor of a man who is very near one's heart, whose works afford nothing but satisfaction and enjoyment, and of whose method of production and sphere of activity he may venture to say — the author as an artist modestly retires behind Tadema — often and strikingly coincide with his own.

Yet it has required much urging from the publisher of these pages to induce me to write a biography of my friend. He is an artist and, as the writer is only a lover

of art, not a professional art-critic, he could not at first refrain from declining a task for which his capacity and critical training in a field at present occupied by science did not seem equal. But the deeper his sympathy with the man whose life and creations were to be delineated, the more tempting the commission appeared and, after reflecting upon the manner of executing it and entering into the master's development and works, he thought that he who knew him so well as a man also understood him as an artist, and would probably be able to give a faithful picture of his life. True, this must from the outset decline to be judged as an art-criticism, and its author will be content and grateful if his portrayal is successful in presenting to other lovers of art an accurate picture, in clear and lifelike form, of one of the greatest and most peculiar artists of our times.

Another and more professional hand, Vosmaer, the Dutch author and art-critic, has undertaken in his art-romance, "The Amazon"*—a work far too little known in Germany—to give us a portrait of Tadema,

* English Translation published by Wm. S. Gottsberger, N. Y.

whose personality as man and artist he attempted to copy line by line in the artist Aïma; but the poet has profited by the license allowed him to add much of his own material to the picture, and, moreover, occupied himself more with the finished master than with the process of his development. In the latter field, Vosmaer has diverged most widely from the true course of events; but it seems particularly attractive to me to follow the master's work, not as a poet, but a historian, and show the finished artist to the readers of these pages, not in the light of imagination, but precisely as he is in reality.

The Tadema family (not Tadéma) is, as the name — which sounds like Habbema, Wibisma, Eisinga, etc — indicates, an old Friesland one. Our Tadema's father was a notary in the beautiful and wealthy village of Dronrijp in Leeuwarden, his mother's name was Brouwer. At his baptism the boy — born January 8th, 1836 — who was to be so great an honor to his native place, was christened Lorenz. Alma is a fancy name, adopted by himself when a young artist, partly on account of its euphonious sound, partly because he