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Note: original letter from Manet
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MR. WHISTLER'S

ETCHINGS OF VENICE.

THE FINE ART SOCIETY,

148 *New Bond Street.*

LIST OF ETCHINGS.

1. THE LITTLE VENICE.
2. THE TWO DOORWAYS.
3. THE BEGGARS.
4. NOCTURNE.
5. THE DOORWAY.
6. THE RIVA.
7. THE BRIDGE.
8. THE LITTLE LAGOON.
9. THE PALACES.
10. THE VENETIAN MAST.
11. THE TRAGHETTO.
12. THE PIAZZETTA.

A limited number of Impressions of these Etchings will be printed by Mr. Whistler.
The price may be obtained on application.

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N.Y. Evening Telegram Oct 11. '83

Whistler's Etchings and Dry Points.

Many persons who know more or less about art, went to Wunderlich & Co.'s yesterday to see fifty etchings and dry points from the hands of Mr. Whistler. It is hardly necessary to say much more of these than that, as a rule, they prove that the unfavorable comments universally made upon them by the London press were not without reason. They certainly present very little to please the eye, feed the thinking powers, or stimulate the imagination. They are doubtless warmly welcomed by the esoteric circle who accept eccentricity for merit and abnormality for originality. In another sphere Mr. Whistler has done enough excellent work to deserve the reputation he has gained as a painter of unusual strength. In the present collection of etchings and dry points the most interesting feature is the catalogue, because each number is there accompanied with one or two detractions quoted from critics in London and elsewhere. This selection does not spring from Mr. Whistler's "generous vitality," as has been claimed. It is merely *amour propre*, under a piquant and unhackneyed form.

The Whistler Collection.—At Bendann's, on Baltimore street, yesterday, an exhibition of Whistler's etchings and dry points was opened. The gallery was arranged in pale yellow and white, which a deep orange carpeting rather marred. The etchings were lightly framed and hung against a white background in easy range. Numbers of artists and connoisseurs flocked thither during the day. The etchings now on exhibition compose the second series of scenes from Venice. There are old bridges, canals, palaces, piazzas, street scenes and water fronts, given with an infinite variety of method and effect. The views of Venice from the sea are rich in their tints gotten by smearing the plate with the printing ink before the impression is taken. In these he uses the dry point a great deal also. Everything is done with great boldness and in a style that tells at once of "free-hand." Whistler is an erratic genius. His photograph, which hangs among his etchings, shows a quizzical good-humored face, and an attitude that is full of grace and absurdity. His whole air speaks for him of the disregard for conventionality and the desire to shock, astonish and delight. At the same time a peculiarity of his person is a perfectly white tuft of hair sticking straight up from his abundant crop of black wavy locks.

There is also on exhibition the painting of an illumination and fireworks at night, which Ruskin called "a pot of paint thrown at the public." It is a wonderful piece of painting.

ETCHINGS BY WHISTLER.

A Fine Art Exhibition at Bendann's—Some of the Subjects.

At Bendann's may now be seen the remarkable etchings of Whistler. They are not for sale, but are simply placed there to be seen. The room is peculiar in appearance. The walls are covered with unbleached cotton, stenciled with the cabalistic sign-manual of the artist, and hung with yellow curtains at window and door. A huge crane, doing nothing in particular with great energy, occupies one corner; gilt easels are scattered here and there, with etchings upon them, and the walls are covered with them. These are all framed alike in neat white frames. There is thus an all-pervading tone of white, or whity-brown, and yellow; the only thing like color in the room being the celebrated painting that caused the lawsuit between Whistler and Ruskin. It is not this, however, that is most interesting. It is the etchings and dry-points.

The etchings of Whistler have a charm that is not easy to express or even to understand. They have in an intense degree the attractiveness of individuality and character in conception and execution. He does not draw what other people draw, and he does not draw it in the same way. Perhaps this originality sometimes verges into violent eccentricity and affectation; but there is a delight that the spectator has in receiving a new revelation of the picturesque and characteristic that leads him to forget this, or even to look upon it with a pleased indulgence. The human figures which he introduces in his scenes are drawn with great carelessness, and yet, they usually have a suggestiveness and harmony with the surroundings that are better than mere academic accuracies of drawing. One merit these etchings have beyond all others—economy of execution. This is the secret of the exquisite effects of light that he obtains, the luminousness of skies, the lustrous calm of water. He sets down his picture with as few strokes as possible, and does not get it muddy by working over it. When he hits a happy effect he leaves it in all its purity. There is finish, however, where the soul of the scene is. The distance the sky forms, the ripple of water, are usually defined with most delicate precision of touch. If there be confusion in them, it is because there is intricacy in the forms that he portrays. In listening to a piano sonata by Beethoven, one feels that it would be better if scored for an orchestra; but one does not feel this in listening to a work of Chopin. It is pure piano, and is completely uttered by the piano. One feels in looking at an etching by Rembrandt that it would have been better if Rembrandt had painted instead of finishing it up with such marvelous skill. In looking at an etching by Fortuny, one sees the wondrous grace and life in the figure so dextrously set down; but this, too, would be better in colors. But Whistler's etchings, like Chopin's etudes, reach a complete utterance of the idea within the limitations of the instrument. He etches what ought to be etched, and not a line more. Look at them; feel the space, the light, the air, the glow that there is in them, and you long no more for color or finish; for you feel that if you had color and finish, you would lose something of these more precious qualities. You may find better drawings than Whistler's, finer finish and greater sentiment or sentimentality in choice of subject, but you will find none that are more suggestive nor more masterly in treatment.

There is a delicious humor about the catalogue. The artist has culled from the criticisms by his assailants every spiteful or inane stupidity that he could find, and prints them. There is on the catalogue not one word of praise of any picture, but every belittling criticism that has been poured upon it. One says, for example, "His color is subversive;" "An unpleasant thing framed in Whistler's odd fashion;" "Mr. Whistler's figure drawing is generally defective, and always incomplete." Can anything be found more delightful than this—"There are many things in a painter's art which even a photographer cannot understand;" "There is no moral element in his chiaroscuras;" "Failures that are complete and failures that are partial;" "Years ago James Whistler was a person of high promise." Yet, what Oscar Wilde says is not quite true—"Popularity is the only insult that has not been offered to Mr. Whistler." It would be difficult to spend an hour in better company than with these etchings—and catalogue.

THE TIMES 25-12-81

MR. WHISTLER'S ETCHINGS OF VENICE.

FINE ART SOCIETY'S GALLERY, NEW BOND-STREET.

In no department of art so much as in that of etching do we instantaneously recognize the difference between work which, however perfect in its technical portion, is in the main mechanical and uninteresting and that which seizes firmly, though it may be imperfectly, a true artistic idea. Indeed, in etching the idea is the real reason for the work existing; it is because of the capabilities of the etching needle and the copper plate for translating with a rough fidelity an artist's momentary impression that the value of etchings is so great. And it is in this respect that the art differs so much from that of engraving. What may be fairly demanded from any painter who attempts to etch is that his work should contain a definite artistic impression, that the scene or incident which his plate records should have, besides its own intrinsic beauty of detail, the trace of the worker's own personality. It might almost be said that, whereas the chief merit of painting is to record things as they are in their most beautiful form, so the function of etching is to record things as they are not, save for some fleeting moment in the mind of the artist—that under a certain phase of mind and character any given object, landscape, or action looked thus and thus only; that, for instance, one who went to Rome saw little in the Colosseum, but much in the group of children which happened to be playing under the shadow of one of its ruined archways; that a traveller in Venice was impressed by its poverty, though he scarcely felt its beauty; any evidence, in fact, which can be gained from the proof of its having been executed under the pressure of one dominant thought, no matter how partial and even defective that thought may have been—this it is which identifies the work as true etching. Mr. Whistler's present works do not represent the Venice of the poets and novelists, still less the Venice that most of us have learnt to love and look for through Mr. Ruskin's teaching, but they are essentially Mr. Whistler's Venice—an Italian city, that is, viewed by a modern American, whose charm consists in the continual opportunities which canal, lagoon, and palace afford for presenting in the most forcible manner the contrasts of past greatness and present degradation. There has not been in our recollection any series of works published illustrative of Venice which gives the main features of the locality and its life so truly as do these 12 etchings. Still more certain is it that the artistic value of this series is a very high one. The plates may perhaps be divided into two classes—those in which the main effect is dependent upon the pure etched line, and those where it is chiefly produced by the somewhat less legitimate and certain method of printing from an imperfectly cleaned plate, the former of these approximating to the appearance of a wood-cut, the latter to that of a mezzotint. As an example of the former, the one entitled "The Little Venice" leaves scarcely anything to be desired, its very simplicity being delightful. Something of the large grasp with which Turner used to treat the slow flow of a still current is visible in the expanses of placid water which Mr. Whistler shows us in this etching and in that of the Riva degli Schiavoni, the latter of which, with its huddled gondolas and fishing boats, its irregular line of houses and its scores of figures, is probably the most genuine and satisfactory piece of pure etching in the exhibition. As might be expected, Mr. Whistler's talent, great as it is, occasionally fails him where he takes a subject whose beauty is alien to his sympathies—as, for instance, in the etching entitled "The Doorway," which is a rather elaborate study of the ground, or rather water floor of one of the most beautiful palaces to be found in the back canal of Venice. This palace, which is now turned into a sort of Venetian Pantechnicon, is noticeable for having the lower courses of its architecture very boldly and beautifully carved in Byzantine work, and, immediately above these, having round its door and long windows pilasters of the Renaissance period, very delicately and richly carved in low relief. In no other building at Venice with which we are acquainted are the two styles brought into such clear contrast, and it is wonderful to see how, so far from destroying one another's beauty, the result is rather of the reverse kind. This at least in the original; in the etching we doubt whether many people would notice the contrast or realize the extreme beauty of the sculpture. The perfectly accurate curvature and elegant fancy of the Renaissance work is lost in the somewhat unsympathetic scratches with which Mr. Whistler has delineated the carving, and in like manner the solidity and richness of light and shade in the lower panels have also disappeared. The result is a very picturesque doorway, set in a rich frame and delightful as a picture; but what we admire in the etching is not what we should admire in the original, and one feels a little vexed at being taken to such a splendid piece of architecture and then being practically told only to look at how nicely the light and shade fall upon the chairs and tables and lounging girl which we see through the open door.

Perhaps the finest of all these works is the one entitled "The Two Doorways," which represents a corner in one of the small canals. In this Mr. Whistler has given us a perfectly intelligible and, as far as it goes, perfectly accurate account of the street architecture of Venice; he has given also an etching of singular purity, the effect scarcely at all dependent upon anything but actual work executed with the etching needle, and portions of which are as fine in light and shade as could be desired—witness, as an example of this, the doorway on the left, in which is the hanging-lamp. The quality of these etchings, taken as a whole, which will most surprise the outside public, who are accustomed to think of Mr. Whistler chiefly through the somewhat indefinite pictures in oil which he has exhibited of late years, will be the excessive skill of the drawing, even where it is most free. Look, for instance of this, at the windows and the moored gondolas in the etching entitled "The Palaces" and at the drawing of the details of grated windows and shattered masonry which occur over and over again in this series. The quality which attracts us the most, and which is the one that in our opinion separates the series from others of like kind, is the thorough vivacity and individuality of the work. It does not feel much, but it sees everything, and what it does not feel to that it does not pretend. Such as it is, the work, besides being skilful, is undoubtedly genuine and original, and this sufficiently accounts for its charm as well as expresses its merit.

Limner.

MR WHISTLER is etching a plate of considerable size. The subject is, "One of London's Most Important Highways." It will be published by Messrs Dowdeswell.

12 N.Y. World Oct 11. 1883

WHISTLER'S QUEER CONCEIT

A NOVEL ARRANGEMENT IN WHITE AND YELLOW.

A Decidedly Original Method Adopted by Ruskin's Opponent to Exhibit His Etchings.

Among American artists abroad none have achieved more prominence than Mr. James McNeill Whistler, and his works have excited more general and continued interest than those of any of his English confreres. His is one of those aggressive natures that finds its chief pleasure in conflict. The sounds of war breathe sweeter harmony to him than the whisperings of peace. His controversy with and suit against Mr. Ruskin is well remembered, and not alone with the great art-writer but with others prominent in the world of art and letters he has waged wordy conflicts in the public press for some years past. He has been characterized in the most uncomplimentary terms possible, called insane, a fool, and his works have been stigmatized as the efforts of a madman, but he has worked on, seemingly revelling in the abuse showered upon him, bent upon carrying out his peculiar ideas.

So determined a character has, of course, won friends as well as made enemies, and there is quite a respectable number of persons who are great admirers of his work, and upon whom the term "Whistlerites" has been bestowed.

If he is original in the subject and method of treatment of his work, he is, if possible, more so in their titles and in the means adopted to advertise and attract public attention to them. These last have been denounced by his enemies quite as fiercely as the works themselves, but they have certainly directed public attentionn to them, and he is never at a loss for new devices to retain the same.

There is, therefore, the height of "method in Mr. Whistler's madness," and no artist of modern times has been more extensively advertised than himself. Mr. Ruskin's characterization of one of his works as a "pot of paint" was probably worth thousands of dollars to him, and other attacks have been equally profitable. His "Nocturnes" and "Arrangements" have become part of the slang of the day, and have been used by writers and speakers with much effect.

"IN WHITE AND YELLOW."

The announcement that a private view of a collection of etchings and dry points by Mr. Whistler would be given yesterday at No. 868 Broadway, therefore, aroused much interest, and few persons fortunate enough to have invitations to the same remained away. The card had his peculiar device, which resembles an intoxicated butterfly, printed in yellow in the corner, and below were the words "Arrangement in White and Yellow."

When the first visitors passed through the yellow portieres into a well-lighted back room there was a universal call for quinine, for the effect was positively malarial. Every detail was white and yellow, even the coat tails of a dress suit which an attendant wore. The etchings and dry points covered the walls, and were each framed with a large white mat. The tiles and back of the fireplace were yellow, as was also the mantel-board. The matting on the floor had a yellowish tinge; the ottoman in the centre of the room was upholstered in yellow plush; vases of yellow crackle-ware stood upon the mantelpiece and on what-not tables here and there, and in them were white and yellow roses.

The whole effect was exceedingly good and commanded universal approval, except on the part of two lady visitors, who wore colors that were too strong in contrast. They retired precipitately.

The room and details were arranged by Mr. Kennedy, in accordance with Mr. Whistler's instructions, and the same plan was followed when the works were exhibited in London.

THE EXHIBITION.

Even the catalogue is original. The etchings are those of the well-known second series on Venice, and the artist, under the title of each and every one, has placed the most adverse criticism obtainable, instead of, as is customary, the most laudatory. This has the effect of enabling the visitor to agree or not with the critic, and as the remarks are so severe as a rule, he or she will side with the artist from a natural feeling of pity.

The etchings themselves, when carefully examined, show Mr. Whistler to be what has already been decided upon by the most fair-minded critics, a man of unusual poetic appreciation, ability and power of expression, whose work is uneven, and marred very often by great carelessness and a striving after conceits and fantastic effects. These faults are more evident in his paintings than in his etchings, but they are present in them to a sufficient extent to justify this judgment.

JOKES WORTHY OF STUDY.

The catalogue is headed with a quotation from London *Truth*, "Another crop of Mr. Whistler's little jokes;" but they are jokes worth studying and will well repay the visitor. They present a Whistlerized "Venice," it is true, but not a "Venice," as some would have it believed, from which all poetry and romance has vanished.

In No. 8, "Nocturne Riva," especially, the drypoint process has produced a most charming creation—a night scene in which the effect of color is wonderfully brought out. Again, in No. 13, "The Doorway," the warm tone and the architectural drawing are praiseworthy indeed. He is particularly happy in his rendering of these old Venetian doorways, and there is not one that will not repay careful study.

On the other hand, there are some examples shown which certainly seem to justify such criticisms as these printed: "There may be a few who find genius in insanity," and "they may have a merit of their own, but I do not wish to understand it." Of No. 23, "Lobster Pots," a few wicker baskets heaped together in confusion, and without any attempt at coherence or composition, Mr. Hamerton says: "So little in them, and the visitor, after profound reflection, comes almost to the conclusion that there can be little in the man who etched them."

But with all its excellences and defects this dish that Mr. Whisiter has served up for New Yorkers is a delightful and piquant one, and the catalogue is in itself so novel and original as to be well worth perusal.

Over the mantel hangs the picture "Vauxhall by Night," which so aroused Ruskin's ire. It is an "impression" and the only possible distinguishable feature in it is the red rain of the bursting rockets. The great art critic's worth is not to be wondered at after its contemplation.

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Spectator ART. 11.12.80

MR. WHISTLER'S "VENICE," AT THE FINE-ART SOCIETY, NEW BOND STREET.

THERE are artists of many kinds and every rank, and there are painters of many kinds and every rank, who are not artists at all. And hereby "hangs a tale." For it is apt to happen that those who seek to express and those who seek to lead the popular judgment of Art, mistake the good painter for the good artist, and blame as an artist the man who fails as a painter; and so there comes confusion, and sometimes even "gnashing of teeth." It is not sufficiently remembered that artistic excellence must consist at least as much in habit of mind as in habit of hand; that, like a poet, an artist is "born, not made." And yet, without such remembrance we can hardly estimate rightly the most trivial of our picture exhibitions; and so we fall constantly (we had almost said consistently) into the error of taking good joiner-work for good Art, and bestow our praise on that perfected skill of hand which accomplishes all that it seeks, without hesitation or failure, rather than a work which falls short of its aim, because of that aim's worthiness. We want no "mute, inglorious Miltons," in these days; our Miltons must not only be loquacious, but trained in the best graces of elocution, and even then must curtail their epics within the compass of a magazine article, or people will scarcely listen to them. So it is that all hesitating, imperfect utterance of deep thoughts, whether in art or poetry, has gone, for the time at least, "to the wall," and we have substituted as our chief good, compositions which express in a clear, emphatic, and partial manner, some thought which no man shall be too hurried, or no woman too shallow, to interpret easily.

This being so, how can we wonder at the present popularity of the art of Etching?—an art which is essentially limited in its range, emphatic in its diction, and partial in its truth; which is happier in the gloom of a doorway than in the glow of the sunshine, and turns with a pleasant blindness from whatsoever in Nature or Man is of perfect beauty or noble thought, to linger with a vain kindness over the dark shadows of some city alley, or the broken timbers of a disused barge. It is not, then, wonderful that the series of etchings of Venice by Mr. Whistler, which are now being exhibited at the Fine-Art Society's Gallery in New Bond Street, should give us the desolation, the poverty, and the decay of the great city, rather than recall to us either the times of its greatness or the beauty of its age. The ruin that would be pathetic in a picture, the contrast between former purpose and present use, which would almost shock us with its intensity if seen in the actual place or in a painted picture, becomes, in the hands of the etcher, but one more element of picturesqueness, one more reason of the subject's suitability for his purpose. The etching-needle, which could hardly reproduce in all its subtle beauty the unbroken curvature of the perfect palace, finds it both easy and pleasant to touch with jagged outline the shattered arches which are all that time and restoration have left, and, in fact, delights in every accident which, marring the perfect beauty of the sculpture, has brought it into picturesque decay. It was hardly, therefore, to be expected that an artist (for, with all his imperfections, Mr. Whistler is a genuine artist) whose work was peculiarly suitable to etching, should have seen more in the old city of the Doges than Mr. Whistler has seen, and set down for us in these twelve illustrations of Venice. And those who feel painfully, as, no doubt, many will, the absence in these works of any feeling for the past glory of Venice, must, after all, consider that it is not in works of this kind that such feeling could be expected to manifest itself. What has been done, and done with cleverness so great as to be almost genius, is to sketch the passing, every-day aspect of canal, lagoon, and quay; to give, in fact, to those who have not seen the city some notion of that outside aspect, in which wealth and poverty, grandeur and squalor, life and death, are so strangely mingled. And this outside aspect has, in the main, been truly given. It is not the Venice of a maiden's fancies or a poet's dreams, but the tangible Venice known to tourists,—especially to those tourists who stop a day or two, drink their coffee at Florian's, dine at Danielli's, and have a shilling's-worth of gondola in the evening, to wind up the day. On looking at the series for the first time, one is impressed with the excessive cleverness of the artist in avoiding all the ordinary points of view, and this impression rather deepens than fades upon closer inspection. Even such a well-worn subject as the Riva degli Schiavoni is made original by being taken from a high point of view, and looked at lengthwise, instead of from the Canal; and there is, perhaps, no more masterly piece of work in the whole series than that of the numerous small figures, each with a clearly-marked individuality, which Mr. Whistler has introduced into this etching. The plate, too, entitled "The Beggars," is a wonderful piece of rough work, in which every line has distinct meaning, and the composition, as a whole, has some of the dramatic qualities which mark Rembrandt's etchings. The figure of the haggard woman-beggar especially, is almost tragic in its intensity, and might stand for "Gervaise Coupeau," towards the close of *L'Assommoir*. Probably the best of the series is the one entitled "The Palaces," two palaces on the Grand Canal, with a broad stretch of water in front of them, and numerous gondolas moored against their walls.

In this etching, Mr. Whistler's drawing, which, though always masterly, is sometimes that of a very slovenly master, appears at its best, and we do not know of any free-line work of the etching-needle which tells more with so slight an apparent effort than does the work throughout this plate. On the whole, the series is decidedly an interesting one, though, as we have hinted, it does not represent any Venice that we much care to remember; for who wants to remember the degradation of what has been noble, and the foulness of what has been fair?

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The Critic November 26 1883

The Fine Arts

An Exhibition of Mr. Whistler's Etchings.

ABOUT eighty etchings and dry-points by Mr. Whistler were placed on exhibition on Wednesday last in a Broadway picture store, under circumstances which call for a rebuke to the parties concerned and a warning to the public. Cards were sent out stating that Mr. Whistler desired the company of the persons addressed at a private view of his works, when the fact was that Mr. Whistler was on the other side of the Atlantic, and in all probability knew nothing of the affair. To give it more of a genuine flavor, and to attract the curious, it was announced that there would be an 'arrangement in white and yellow;' and, accordingly, a liberal, but not a judicious, use has been made by the shopmen of white paper and yellow paint in fixing up their exhibition room. Such expedients as this may be forgiven in the case of a somewhat vain man of talents, anxious to sell his wares, and therefore desirous of calling attention to them cheaply; but Mr. Whistler and other artists who, like him, are not above advertising themselves in strange and original ways, would do well to consider that their inventions of this sort, as soon as they are successful, will be taken up by the dealers, who alone will profit by them, while to their inventors will accrue only the ridicule and discredit that must follow from them. The gullible picture-buyers who can be fooled by such means are, perhaps, little deserving of sympathy; but they should at least be told that they are doing harm to the cause of art and injuring their own taste (if they have any) in countenancing such dodges on the part of either artist or dealer.

The etchings themselves are mostly of Venetian subjects, and of recent date; that is to say, of questionable quality. To be more particular, some of them are bad; a great many are careless and slovenly; and few are good examples of Mr. Whistler's present manner. The great majority are sketches of doorways and bits of architectural ornament, very loosely treated, with a smudge of ink, to represent water, at the bottom of the plate. There are no examples of the artist's earlier and more serious work, which is a matter of complaint, since the works which are shown have been for some time in the market.

The "Long Lagoon" (14) is one of several instances that the artist is less happy in dealing with a long wide stretch than with a detached strip or slip of water. The command shown elsewhere of the peculiar effect of water seems here to fail him. "Little Salute (Dry Point)" has under its title a quotation to the effect that it is unnecessary to disquiet one's self about the artist's work; and so far as this specimen is concerned we agree with the quotation. In a sense there is disquiet in the confused and blurred rendering; but it is a disquiet with which no one need be burdened. "Wool Carders" (18) has a quotation and a very amusing sub-quotation. The quotation is, "They have a merit of their own, and I do not wish to understand it"; and in the expression adopted there is an obvious mark for Mr. Whistler's humour. Only here the figures have no merit that ordinary eyes can discern; they are ridiculously shadow-like suggestions which are as much worth understanding as a gibberish language. Not much more solid or careful are the figures in "Upright Venice" (19), in which also the water—again a long stretch—is, as compared with other works, poorly and faintly indicated. In the next work, "Little Venice" (20), the artist has played off a remarkable, but hardly a desirable, joke by ostentatiously adorning the water-surface with the same Japanese-like mark which appears on the cover of his Catalogue, and the same joke is repeated in another way in "Regent's Quadrant" (22), which for the rest is a very clever suggestion of the hurry and bustle of the streets.

DAILY NEWS. 2·12·80

MR. WHISTLER'S VENICE ETCHINGS.—Mr. Whistler has returned from contemplating the "elegant iambics" of the stones of Venice, if we may quote the author of the Chesterfield letter. A dozen etchings, fruits of his residence in Venice, are exhibited at the rooms of the Fine Art Society, in Bond-street. These works do not seem to us of quite equal merit. In "The Little Venice" and "The Little Lagoon" Mr. Whistler has attempted to convey impressions by lines far too few for his purpose. In "A Nocturne" he has not trusted wholly to the etched line, but depended to some extent on processes of printing. "The Beggars" is far more satisfactory, and so is "The Doorway." Both studies are admirable for perspective and for rare qualities of light and shade. "The Two Doorways" and "The Palaces" have also much power and originality; but, on the whole, we think that London fogs and the muddy old Thames supply Mr. Whistler's needle with subjects more congenial than do the Venetian palaces and lagoons. Our river is naturally full of effects in black and white and bistre. Venetian seas and skies and marbles have colour you cannot suggest with a point and some printer's ink.

MR. WHISTLER'S VENETIAN ETCHINGS

AT the gallery of the Fine Art Society, in New Bond Street, twelve etchings of large size recently executed by Mr. James Whistler are now on view. These are admirable examples of the art. Besides being very picturesque and true in local colour, they are full of tone, and display a complete mastery over the technical difficulties of the method. We have seen no works that so vividly recall the aspect of the quaint byeways and smaller canals of Venice. They are, as etchings should be, above all things suggestive; in none of them is imitation pushed beyond the limits proper to the art. "The Piazetta" and "The Venetian Mast" are striking examples of the artist's graphic powers of realisation; the figures as well as the architectural features of the scenes are indicated with an assured mastery of touch that could scarcely be surpassed. The other plates are, however, not less worthy of admiration; in none of them is there a superfluous line or a touch that could be eliminated without in some degree injuring the general unity of effect.

THE GLOBE 3·12·80

MR. WHISTLER'S ETCHINGS.

A series of twelve etchings, executed by Mr. James Whistler during his recent residence in Venice, may now be seen at the gallery of the "Fine Art Society" in New Bond-street. A considerable divergence of opinion exists as to the merit of much of this artist's work; but even those to whom the eccentricities of some of his strange experiments in colour are most distasteful, must acknowledge the great artistic value of his etchings. His present works are greatly in advance of his former productions of the kind—richer in tone, more restrained in style, and more complete. We know, indeed, of no modern examples of the art, English or foreign, so subtle in suggestion, and at the same time displaying so absolute a mastery over the technicalities of the method. Mr. Whistler has not delineated the stately edifices or comprehensive view that painting has made familiar to all, but has found his subjects in the small canals and in the quaint by-ways of the city. These he has interpreted in a manner showing the most sympathetic appreciation of their picturesque beauty; they are full of local colour, and in each case the point of view is chosen with artistic taste and judgment. The two large plates, "The Traghetto" and "The Beggars," each representing a long covered way with picturesque and appropriate figures, as regards beauty of tone and perfect balance of light and shade, could scarcely be surpassed. The more elaborate architectural features in "The Doorway," "The Palaces," and others of the same class, are admirably designed, not with laborious minuteness, but with a perfect understanding of their especial character. A principal merit of these works is their unity of effect; the figures, which in some of them hold an important place, are most skilfully introduced; and, besides being full of character and well grouped, they are in perfect keeping with the scenes they inhabit. The drawings and wood engravings by Bewick, which we have already noticed, still remain on view in the same gallery.

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MR. WHISTLER'S "ARRANGEMENT."

ETCHINGS ON EXHIBITION IN NEW YORK IN A "YELLOW-AND-WHITE" SETTING.

[Correspondence of the Transcript.]

NEW YORK, Oct. 10, 1883.

London is no longer to have a monopoly of the entertainments with which Mr. Whistler has been wont to delight his friends and scandalize his critics. Last summer, while in London, Mr. Hermann Wunderlich called upon Mr. Whistler and persuaded him to allow a collection of his etchings to be exhibited in New York. For this purpose it was decided that the fifty-one etchings and drypoints which were on view in the rooms of the Fine Art Society last February should be shipped to America, and should there be displayed for the edification of the public and for the amusement of the critics. But something more than the etchings was needed, and so it was determined to surround them with all the accessories which served to set them off in London.

Behold the result! An "arrangement in yellow and white" the like of which we have never seen in New York—a room lighted from above, in which these two colors are the only ones to be seen; the wall hung with heavy white felting; the woodwork painted a light yellow, and the chairs and two little stands of the same color; yellow tiles around the fireplace, with some of a darker tint to relieve the eye; yellow jars on the mantelpiece and on the tables, full of yellow and white roses; yellow stuffs on the oval-shaped divan in the middle of the room, and a portière of the same material hung upon a brass rod; and a matting on the floor that is more of a yellow than any other color. Such is the appearance—but stop. I had nearly forgotten the most interesting feature of the room, without which it would be sadly incomplete—a lad in a livery of yellow and white, who moves about among the curious sight-seers, selling the little brown catalogue on which Mr. Whistler expended so much humor!

The impression which one at first receives on entering this room, at the rear of Mr. Wunderlich's store, is rather difficult to describe. Surprise and wonder at such an unfamiliar sight soon give way to an agreeable sense of the fitness of the colors and decorations which serve to set off the etchings in so good a light. Mr. Whistler's idea, I suppose, is to give the etchings an appropriate setting and to throw them into as much prominence as possible, and this result he certainly attains. For, after the eye becomes somewhat accustomed to the novel surroundings, the etchings attract and retain one's undivided attention. What matters it that the room presents a rather cold and cheerless appearance, so long as there is "harmony" between its soft tints and the pictures on the wall? Who would not run the risk of a cold rather than not get an accurate idea of one of Whistler's famous "arrangements"? Away with such nonsense! Take your quinine along if you must, but do not miss seeing this unique show. For my own part, I rather enjoyed the change from the darker hues of the ordinary picture gallery, and found it difficult to believe that the "arrangement" was not an aid to the artistic appreciation of the etchings, which, many of them being very small and others mere suggestions of an idea, and hence little more than sketches, need some such unobtrusive background to be seen at their best. Smiles played over the faces of the ladies as they entered the room and realized, most of them for the first time, the effect of such an "arrangement," and the comments which I overheard were, as a rule, favorable. The amateurs and critics, not to speak of professional artists were also there, all eager to see not only the etchings, but the peculiar environment in which they find themselves.

As one enters the room, the first object that arrests the attention, after one has stared the lad in livery nearly out of countenance, is the famous "Nocturne in Black and Gold" which hangs opposite the doorway—the only painting in the room. Probably this picture, if it could be called such, is displayed as a reminder of the celebrated libel suit which Mr. Whistler brought against Mr. Ruskin five or six years ago for his sweeping criticism of it, or rather of himself. You remember the controversy—Mr. Ruskin's denunciation of the painter as a "cockney and a coxcomb," the suit that followed, the evidence, which was even more interesting than that at the equally celebrated and more recent Belt-Lawes libel suit, and the verdict of a farthing's damages, if I recollect rightly, in favor of Mr. Whistler. While looking at the "Nocturne" I could not but think of the pleasure the American artist must have felt when he subscribed this same farthing to the fund to pay Ruskin's expenses incurred in defending the suit. The opportunity was indeed a rare one, and I have no doubt that Whistler, so keen is his sense of humor, laughed by the hour over the discomfiture of his critic. There the painting hangs, however, among the little etchings which have caused nearly as much comment, and appeals to the passer-by in a forlorn and rather hopeless way. One of the charms of Whistler's work, to my mind, is its suggestiveness; and this quality, which leaves to the spectator the task of elaborating the central idea as he will, invests his etchings with an interest that attracts and holds one's attention. This is the flattery which the artist pays to the public, for the former presupposes an ability to work out the problem of which the hint is given, and the knowledge of this fact tickles the fancy of the observer who thinks, and with no little reason, that there is a tacit sort of understanding, of a rather confidential character, between himself and the artist. But, alas! for the man who attempts to fathom the meaning that lies in the "Nocturne in Black and Gold"! There is a limit to the power of the imagination, and, as it seems to me, Whistler presupposed an abnormal development of this attribute of the mind when he sent this picture into the world and asked that the riddle be solved. The comment on it which I overheard seemed worthy of note as the experience of one man: "I never saw Nature in exactly that form but once," said he. "Once?" cried his companion, "when, pray?" "I slipped down on some icy steps last winter, and when I reached the bottom the scene which came across my vision resembled that picture in many respects." This scene could hardly be classed as a phase of Nature, and yet it comes nearer to that than the "paint-pot struck by lightning," to which this widely-known painting has been compared. But I have dwelt too long upon this one example of Mr. Whistler's peculiar genius, and I only wish to admit without reserve that I derive no pleasure from it, and fail to comprehend its scope and purpose. Perhaps my descendants, a thousand years hence, in whom the imagination may reach a higher stage of development, will be more fortunate, and if the painting still exists, will find beauty, grace, and even a clearly expressed idea, in it.

There is much that is interesting in this collection of etchings which for the next four weeks will provoke comment and criticism from professional and amateur. With few exceptions the subjects are Venetian, most of the plates having been prepared a year or two ago. The identical first proofs which we now have were exhibited in the same manner early this year in London, and the "arrangement" was also the same. Society, led by the Prince and Princess of Wales, crowded the rooms, and all London was laughing for a time over Mr. Whistler's cleverness in compiling such an entertaining catalogue. This catalogue we now have, and within its brown covers and rough edges is entertainment enough for an evening. Mr. Whistler made a great hit, and turned the laugh on his critics by placing beneath the titles of his etchings excerpts from hostile criticisms on his work. And, moreover, he did this with great skill and with a fine sense of humor, his aim being to place his critics in the most ridiculous light possible. On the titlepage are the words, "Out of their own mouths shall ye judge them," and beneath the general title "Venice" one finds "Another crop of Mr. Whistler's little jokes," attributed to the London Truth. Throughout the little book, from the sententious remark, "Criticism is powerless here," beneath the title of the first etching, to Whistler's scathing reply to Mr. Frederick Wedmore, who complained of a mistake in the first edition—the one that we have is the sixth—there is not a dull line. Many instances might be given of the amusing way in which Mr. Whistler has transfixed his critic. For instance, under No. 23, "Lobster Pots," he quotes from Mr. Hamerton, "So little in them!" Beneath No. 11, entitled "The Dyer," a splendid example of Whistler's power to depict light and shade, a quotation also from one of Mr. Hamerton's criticisms is given, in which the artist is said to "evade great difficulties" "by having as little as possible to do" with these very qualities in his work. A similar sentiment from the same critic is also given beneath "The Doorway," another illustration of the fine effects of light and shadow as employed by the artist. To the little "Turkeys" is appended the remark of Mr. Wedmore, "They say very little to the mind." When this same critic complained because he had been misquoted, the catalogue making him say "understand" when the word should have been "understate," Whistler wrote a letter full of humor and sarcasm to the World apologizing for his carelessness; "for," he said, with mock seriousness that must have made his critic wince, "for naturally I have all along known, and the typographer should have been duly warned, that with Mr. Wedmore, as with his brethren, it is always a matter of understating, and not at all one of understanding."

The personality of Mr. Whistler is so fascinating a theme, he is so original, not to say eccentric, that it is difficult for one to escape from the spell and turn one's attention to the products of his genius. I found many of his etchings charming beyond description, full of strength, beauty and picturesqueness, and stamped with the individuality of the man behind them. His freedom from conventionality, however annoying it may be to his London critics, ought, I think, to find favor here, where the canons of art are somewhat more elastic and where nothing is admired more than originality and independence. The critics may wrangle as to whether he is more than a cleverly eccentric man who despises the accepted rules to which they pin their faith and in the absence of which they fail to comprehend his work, but one feels that he is their match, and is capable of defending himself from their attacks.

See * next Page

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ST JAMES' GAZETTE DEC. 9./80

MR. WHISTLER'S VENICE.

WHATEVER may have been said of his paintings, the etchings of Mr. Whistler have always been received by the public, and even by the much-abused critics, with ungrudging praise. From the year 1860, when he first became known as an able artist on copper, until now, his reputation has steadily increased, although his periods of abstention from the art have been long and frequent. His etchings used to be remarkable for the clearness, decision, and unerring precision of their drawing, as well as for the power which they displayed, in common with his oil pictures, in their grasp of the essential elements of any particular effect. He has never, so far as we know, attempted to transfer to copper any of the more ambitious works of the architect. In his subjects taken from great towns—Paris, London, and now Venice—he has always shown a preference for their picturesque by-ways and their odd corners of unpremeditated quaintness over such grandiose vistas and piles of historic architecture as were loved and sympathetically drawn by Méryon. And so in these plates we have twelve views of Venice, and among them no St. Mark's, no Rialto, and no Santa Maria della Salute; the last omission being, we should think, unique. In all his former etchings, whether of river-side wharves and barges, old timbered houses, or groups of the *ouvriers*, of Paris and London, he was careful to give a strong foundation of firm drawing to the impressions he strove to convey. In these plates, however, he has cast aside this pains-taking method, and gone direct to the effect which he desired by the shortest and easiest route. He has been content to show us what his eyes can see, and not what his hand can do. They approach, therefore, much nearer to his method upon canvas than any that have been seen before. Their charm depends not at all upon the technical qualities so striking in his earlier work, but upon their unity and simplicity of expression. All those theoretical principles of the art, of which we have heard so much from Messrs. Haden, Hamerton, and Lalauze, are abandoned for a method which, in its simplicity and contempt for elaboration, reminds us more of the etchings of the Spaniard Goya than of any other aquafortist. The short scratchy lines, the excessive simplification and want of variety in the handling, and the use made of surface-printing, all help to make up this resemblance. The best examples of his earlier work, such as "Black Lion Wharf," "The Thames near Wapping," "The Thames at Limehouse," "The Lime-Burners," and many others, each contained as striking an expression of a momentary effect or of a prevailing *genius loci* as we see in the best of these plates, such as "The Riva," "The Doorway," "The Little Venice," or "The Little Lagoon;" besides which, they afforded us an opportunity of enjoyment in the technique of the artist, of which we are now deprived. Perhaps the best of the series are the three called respectively "The Riva," "The Doorway," and "The Little Venice," in the order in which we have named them; and, as they are typical of the rest, we will content ourselves with a particular notice of them only. The first is a vivid rendering of the teeming life which is the main characteristic of the one wide street in Venice. On our left stretches the long line of buildings, from a little beyond the prison nearly to the public gardens; palaces and churches are mingled with more humble shops and dwellings. To the right is the canal with its crowd of gondolas and fishing-boats, the long yards of the latter swinging over the heads of the people who throng the quay. This etching is a "bird's-eye view," and must have been taken from some window in the neighbourhood of Daniele's Hotel. "The Doorway" shows us the doorway and steps of one of the more ornate byzantine palaces. The look of mystery inseparable from the open and shadowy portals which border the Venetian canals is here accentuated by the figure of a girl showing dimly through the gloom within. The architectural ornaments and the interlacing bars of the gratings which flank the doorway are skilfully and subtly suggested rather than absolutely drawn. "The Little Venice" is one of the slightest of the series; but in its expression of that sense of solitude and isolation which is caused by a first view of the Queen of the Adriatic, "sitting on her islands beyond three miles of sea," it is as powerful as any of the twelve. The plate called a "Nocturne" depends so entirely, not only for its effect but even for its substance, upon the printer, that an impression pulled by any hands other than those of its author would be without any sort of value. We may fitly apply to these works of Mr. Whistler's the remark made by Sir Joshua, in his fourteenth discourse, upon the method of Gainsborough, upon "the odd scratches and marks which on a close examination are so observable in his pictures; that seeming chaos, by a kind of magic, at a certain distance assumes form, and all the parts seem to drop into their proper places, so that we can hardly refuse to acknowledge the full effect of diligence, under an appearance of chance and hasty negligence." But just as neither the contemporaries nor the successors of that great painter have asserted that his beauties were enhanced by the queer methods he sometimes adopted, so it is our opinion that this new manner of Mr. Whistler's is no improvement upon that which helped him to win his fame in this field of art.

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...his work is his best defence. The collection to which we now have access contains many examples of his felicitous choice of subjects, some of which he has worked out in detail and others of which are only suggestions and hints. These feeling impressions so quickly transferred to the plate are none the less interesting, to my mind, than the more elaborate works, for the central idea is, in most cases, easily caught, and the surroundings are always picturesque and stimulating to thought and study.

E. W. M.

BRITISH 3. 12. 80 ARCHITECT.

THE well known butterfly has made its appearance again, and we are right glad to welcome back that most original artist, J. A. McN. Whistler, whose etchings of Venice are now on view at the Fine Art Society's Galleries, New Bond-street. This series of twelve views is in Mr. Whistler's later manner, as shown in the etchings of old Putney Bridge and Price's Candle Manufactory, which, though lacking many of the qualities to be seen in the artist's earlier work done in Paris and on the lower Thames, have a delicacy of their own, wholly inimitable, reminding one rather of the tenderest touch of a sable's hair, than of the sharp point of a steel needle. We shall refer to these in detail next week.

BRITISH 10. 12. 80. ARCHITECT.

MR. WHISTLER'S etchings of Venice, now on view at 148, New Bond-street, and to which we briefly alluded last week, consist of twelve impressions arranged on a maroon-coloured cloth, with rough chalk numbers underneath, and not in sequence, possibly a quaint conceit on the part of the etcher, but not conducive to the convenience of the visitor. The numbers go thus, 1, 12, 9, 7, 11, 5, 4, 3, 2, 10, 6, 8. They all have indicative titles, as "The Little Venice," "The Little Lagoon," The Traghetto," &c. No 1, "The Little Venice," is a very simple plate, a horizon line of shipping and distant buildings with no sky to speak of, and apparently done at one biting in of the plate, with no dry point work on it. No 9, "The Palaces" contains more work and is a more important plate altogether, but the shadow on part of the building is apparently done by hand in the printing, that is to say it is not in the etched lines of the plate, but is a *more or less* skilful manipulation of ink on the part of the printer before the plate is put in the press. We say "more or less" because a large piece of the shadow has been allowed to spread itself over the sky. No. 7, "The Bridge," appears to be all plain straightforward etching, the delicate parts being obtained by careful biting. The same remarks apply to Nos. 10 and 12, "The Venetian Mast" and "The Piazzetta." No. 5, "The Doorway," has a deal of interesting work in it, and is somewhat distinguished from the other prints by containing a largish-sized figure, which, though very slightly etched, adds to its interest. The upper part of the plate, the buildings, figure, &c., are all etched in the ordinary manner, but the water below the doorway which constitutes an important part of the plate seems to have been produced with a mezzo-tint tool, that is, as engravers say, a "ground" has been laid out of which the lights have been either scraped or wiped. No. 2, "The Two Doorways," is somewhat similar in treatment to No. 5. No. 3, "The Beggars," has some careful etching in it, and also a good deal of skilful printing. No. 6, "The Riva," is a big bristling plate, with houses, and ships, and people, all plain straightforward etching. No. 4, "Nocturne," is different in treatment to the rest of the prints, and can hardly be called, as it stands, an etching; the bones as it were of the picture have been etched, which bones consist of some shipping and distant objects, and then over the whole of the plate ink has apparently been smeared. We have seen a great many representations of Venetian skies, but never saw one before consisting of brown smoke with clots of ink in diagonal lines.

THESE etchings of Mr. Whistler's are nothing like so satisfactory as his earlier Chelsea ones; they neither convey the idea of space, nor have they the delicacy of handling and treatment which we see in those. A certain amount of judiciousness in printing is, of course, right, but when it comes to "painting" the plate with dilute ink it can scarcely be called etching; it more resembles the old school-boy game of putting a blot of ink on a piece of paper, folding it up and squeezing it, and trusting to chance as to what it may be like when opened. Under ordinary circumstances any two or three clever printers would produce pretty nearly the same impression from one plate, but we don't think any printer could produce the "Nocturne," unless he saw the exhibited impression, and then he could not get a similar proof as the ink, of course, would not go twice alike, having no etched lines on the plate to hold and direct it.

LOOKING at the above-mentioned as studies in black and white, we much prefer "The Doorway"; the rich velvety quality of the lattice over the door is very delightful, and with the delicately suggested figure, and the dark coloured water beneath, make a very strong picture. We call to mind too in one of the other plates, a very charming little peep through an archway, with a sunny wall and distant passing figure.

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TWELVE etchings of Venice, by Mr. James Whistler, the result of twelve months' work—but such work!—are now on view at the galleries of the Fine Art Society, 148 New Bond Street.

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JOHN RUSKIN has not smashed "Jimmy" Whistler, for the Prince of Etchers holds his own in the head-quarters of him who writ "Ye Stones of Venice."

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THE arch-critic may say, "Your painting serves its purpose. Hang the fools!" This is what those who can afford the luxury will do to these treasures in "dry point."

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how much of learning and restraint and control before his hand could have produced, with the serene patience of assured strength, those rare figure-drawings of which a few are in London, and two of the very finest in the museum of Dijon.

But, putting aside the question of Mr. Whistler's deficiencies—which, in the presence of his qualities, do not trouble us very much—let us say a word upon the merits of his etchings generally. It is one of the virtues of etching to seem to be spontaneous, and Mr. Whistler is never laboured. If he does not draw the figure accurately, he can draw it expressively. And if the emotional element is lacking to his art—and, being "never literary," he is likewise never dramatic—he is a keen observer and a vivacious chronicler of things that are commonplace only to commonplace people. He is a triumphant student of the combinations of definite lines, and of

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not been there. The other sex might have been, and knew something about it. There was the blackness of night, with a falling star or some fireworks coming down from the top, and a sort of blaze at the bottom—perhaps a bonfire. That was all; but Mr. Moore said it was very beautiful. Mr. Whistler did not see things as other people did; but he saw strange, fantastical things, especially in what followed in the train, of a rocket as it came down. He did not deny that he had done exceedingly good things; but as to these pictures they could only come to the conclusion that they were strange, fantastical conceits, having some merit, but not worthy to be called works of art. There was a mania at the present day for what was called "art," and it was the fashion to admire everything that was incomprehensible, and to say "How exquisite!" So with respect to the Cremorne picture, though people had not the least idea what the artist intended to portray, they felt bound, perhaps, to come to a conclusion that it had some mysterious beauty. It was the opinion of Mr. Ruskin that care and conscientious labour in a picture were matters to be appreciated, and that an artist ought not to present a picture to the public until he had, as far as possible, brought it to a state of perfection, and that also was the opinion of artists whom he was obliged, he might almost say, to drag before the jury. Those artists would say that whatever Mr. Whistler had done in the past—and there was no doubt he had produced some most beautiful etchings and pictures—these were not works to be proud of, not works deserving admission into any art gallery in the country. Coming to the libel, the Attorney-General said it had been contended that Mr. Ruskin was not justified in interfering with a man's livelihood. But why not? In fulfilling the duty of a critic was Mr. Ruskin upon that ground to be tender or not to criticise at all. But then it was said, "Oh, you have ridiculed Mr. Whistler's pictures." If Mr. Whistler disliked ridicule he should not have subjected himself to it by exhibiting publicly such productions. Mr. Ruskin was not a hard and unbending critic who dealt in nothing but severity. He blamed when he thought he was called upon to blame, and praised highly when he thought praise was justly due. It was strong language, no doubt, to call an artist a "stick," but some artists were sticks, had been called so, and would be called so again. And it was, moreover, language that was applied to a great variety of persons in other walks of life. If a man thought a picture was a daub he had a right to say so without subjecting himself to the risk of an action. Then Mr. Ruskin spoke of "the ill-educated conceit of the artist, so nearly approaching the aspect of imposture." If his pictures were mere extravagances, how could it redound to the credit of Mr. Whistler, who had done very good work, to send them to the Grosvenor Gallery to be exhibited? Some artistic gentleman from Manchester, Leeds, or Sheffield might, perhaps, be induced to buy one of the pictures because it was a Whistler, and what Mr. Ruskin meant was that he might better have remained in Manchester, Sheffield, or Leeds with his money in his pocket. It was said that the term "ill-educated conceit" ought never to have been applied to Mr. Whistler, who had devoted the whole of his life to educating himself in art; but Mr. Ruskin's views as to his success did not accord with those of Mr. Whistler. Who ever heard of a lawyer bringing an action because it was said that he was not a good lawyer? The libel complained of said also, "I never expected to hear a coxcomb ask 200 guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face." It must be remembered that this term was applied to him as an artist, and not as a man. What was a coxcomb? He had looked the word up, and found that it came from the old idea of the licensed jester, who wore a cap and bells with a cock's comb in it, who went about making jests for the amusement of his master and family. If that were the true definition, then Mr. Whistler should not complain because his pictures had afforded a most amusing jest. He did not know when so much amusement had been afforded to the British public as by Mr. Whistler's pictures. If Mr. Whistler's reputation as an artist was to be founded upon these pictures he was a pretender to an accomplishment he did not possess, and was worthy of the name of coxcomb. He had now finished. Mr. Ruskin had lived a long life without being attacked. No one had been able to say that he had purchased his praise, and no one had attempted to control his pen through the medium of a jury. Mr. Ruskin said, through him, as his counsel, that he did not retract one syllable of his criticism, believing it was right. He would ask the jury not to paralyse the hand of one who for such a long life had given himself wholly to the worship of the art which he loved. Of course if they found a verdict against Mr. Ruskin he would have to cease writing, but it would be an evil day for art in this country when Mr. Ruskin would be prevented from indulging in legitimate and proper criticism by pointing out what was beautiful and what was not, and when all critics would be reduced to a dead level and forced to indulge in nothing but a fulsome adulation.

The following evidence was then called on behalf of the defendant:—

Mr. Edward Burne Jones, examined by Mr. Bowen—I am a painter, and have devoted about twenty years to the study. I have painted various works, including the "Days of Creation" and "Venus's Mirror," both of which were exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877. I have also exhibited "Deferentia," "Fides," "St George," and "Sybil." I have one work, "Merlin and Vivian," now being exhibited in Paris. In my opinion complete finish ought to be the object of all artists. A picture ought not to fall short of what has been for ages considered complete finish. I have seen the pictures of Mr. Whistler. The nocturne, in blue and silver, I consider a work of art, but it is an incomplete one. It is an admirable beginning, and is only a sketch.

Does it show the finish of a complete work of art?—Not in any sense whatever. The picture representing a night scene on Battersea Bridge is good in colour, but bewildering in form; and it has no composition and detail. A day or a day and a half seems a reasonable time within which to paint it. It shows no finish—it is simply a sketch. The nocturne in black and gold has not the merit of the other two pictures, and it would be impossible to call it a serious work of art. I have never seen any picture of night which has been successful, and Mr. Whistler's picture is only one of the thousand failures which artists have made in their efforts to paint night. The picture is not worth 200 guineas, considering how much more careful work is done for a much less sum.

Mr. Bowen here proposed to ask the witness to look at a picture by Titian, in order to show what finish was.

Mr. Serjeant Parry objected.

Mr. Baron Huddleston—You will have to prove that it is a Titian.

Mr. Bowen—I shall be able to do that.

Mr. Baron Huddleston—That can only be by repute. I do not want to raise a laugh, but there is a well-known case of "an undoubted" Titian being purchased with a view to enabling students and others to find out how to produce his wonderful colours. With that object the picture was rubbed down, and they found a red surface, beneath which they thought was the secret, but on continuing the rubbing down they discovered a full length portrait of George III. in uniform.

Mr. Serjeant Parry said his objection to the production of a work of Titian was this. Mr. Whistler had never placed himself in the same position as that great artist, and therefore it was unfair to institute any comparison between them. However, he would not press the objection.

The witness was then asked to look at the picture, and he said—It is a portrait of Doge Andrea Gritti, and I believe it is a real Titian. It shows finish. It is a very perfect sample of the highest finish of ancient art. The flesh is perfect, the modelling of the face is round and good. That is an arrangement in flesh and blood. The colour is in perfect tone, and the drawing sufficiently fine. In Mr. Whistler's pictures I see marks of great labour and artistic skill, and I think he had great powers at first, which he has not since justified. He has evaded the difficulties of his art, because the difficulty of an artist increases every day of his professional life.

Cross-examined—What is the value of this picture of Titian?—That is a mere accident of the sale room.

Is it worth 1,000 guineas?—It would be worth many thousands to me, but it may have been sold for forty guineas. I have seen a Titian in the possession of Lord Elcho for which he gave £20 only.

Cross-examination continued—Mr. Whistler has an unrivalled sense of atmosphere in painting. I have exhibited two unfinished sketches at the Grosvenor Gallery, which I admit is not a very desirable thing to do. I think Mr. Whistler's colour in moonlight pictures is extremely good. The pictures alluded to in this case I look upon as incomplete.

Mr. Frith—I am a R.A., and have devoted my life to painting. I am a member of the academies of various countries. I am the author of the "Railway Station," "Derby Day," and "Rake's Progress." I have seen Mr. Whistler's pictures, and in my opinion they are not serious works of art. The nocturne in black and gold is not a serious work to me. There is a beautiful tone of colour about the Battersea Bridge picture, but it does not represent perfect atmosphere. To my thinking, the description of moonlight is not true. The picture is not worth 200 guineas. Composition and detail are most important matters in a picture. I attend here on a subpœna against my will. I am much pained to have to give my evidence.

Cross-examined—I think Mr. Whistler has very great powers, but I do not see them displayed in these "things." In our profession men of equal merit differ as to the character of a picture. One may blame while another praises a work. I have not exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery. I have read Mr. Ruskin's works.

Mr. Serjeant Parry—Is Turner an idol of Mr. Ruskin's?—Yes; and I think he should be an idol of everybody.

Mr. Serjeant Parry—Do you know one of Turner's works at Marlborough House called "The Snowstorm"?—Yes, I do.

Are you aware that it has been described by a critic as a mass of soapsuds and whitewash?—I am not.

Would you call it a mass of soapsuds and whitewash?—I think it is very likely I should. When I say Turner should be the idol of everybody I refer to his earlier works, and not to his later ones, which are as insane as the people who admire them.

Mr. Baron Huddleston—Somebody described one of Turner's pictures as "lobster salad."

Whistler
PC 4

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Mr. Whistler

requests the pleasure of the Company

of _____

at a Private View of his

Venice Pastels.

on Saturday, Jan. 29th

Fine Art Society — 148 New Bond St.

from 11 o'clock to 6.

4 THE TIMES. FEBY. 7. 1881

MR. WHISTLER'S VENICE PASTELS.

Mr. Whistler has added to his etchings of Venice, which we recently noticed when exhibited at the Gallery of the Fine Art Society in Bond-street, a number of sketches which it pleases him to call "pastels," but which would be more correctly described as sketches in black chalk touched with colour in crayons. Without attaching much importance to the name an artist may choose to give his method, it is as well to understand that in a true pastel the ground of the picture is entirely covered with the coloured chalk employed, this being generally obtained by making it rough like a surface of fine sand, somewhat as the fresco painter proceeds, the use of this being to enable the artist to blend the crude, powdery colour of his crayons, and thus give the soft gradations in light and shade and colour without any distinct outline. The transparent effects which painters get with their oil mediums in richness of depth and general tone and harmony are therefore denied to the pastel artist, beautiful as his work is in its way. But Mr. Whistler, with his artistic instinct and his ingenuity in the adaptation of his materials, succeeds in combining something of the brilliancy and purity of the pastellist with the general effect or tone of the oil and water-colour painter. He finds his tone and general effect in the brown-toned paper upon which he sketches so rapidly, and with all the charming suggestiveness of the expert etcher that he is, the picturesque forms and colours which Venice, in all her varied beauties, lavishes before the artist's eye. This, then, is precisely the reverse of pastel. Yet, nevertheless, we must own it is a far more artistic and interesting mode of artistic expression; it is a method that commends itself to an impressionist, and conveys to us the feeling and perception of transient beauties which are too often missed in the more deliberate and less impulsive efforts of the orthodox student. Turner had long ago found that coloured chalks could serve him well in recording passing effects of sky and sea, which his mind's eye retained in a more ideal shape, to be developed in his pictures. Many of these are to be seen among his sketches. But those were mere memoranda, while these "pastels" of Mr. Whistler are his perfect works—suggestive little pictures which, if he had tried to make them more than this, would have been deformed into elaborate failures. So it is that, with a strong idiosyncrasy and no small faculty of expressing himself, Mr. Whistler, with his slightest sketch, sets the imagination going and makes us conjure up a picture of some well-remembered beauty of a Venice evening sky or vista among the palaces on the canal when the most finished picture only forces a comparison with the reality not so favourable. Among these 50 small sketches many have the charm of freshness and airy atmosphere and a sparkling brilliancy of positive colour, which, though often verging upon the prismatic, gains a sort of fascination by its very slightness and the clever distribution of glints of light in making up a pictorial effect. The Riva (10), which Mr. Whistler after his humour calls a "nocturne," shows the sky and water of delicate blue flecked with specks of white and lemon colour, enforced with the black gondolas and figures on the quay in the foreground. In a different vein, the Giudecca, styled a note in flesh colour, glows with pink and creamy yellow and white, the warm gray ground helping the effect, and the picture completed by the dark gondola and figures. The Campanile at Lido (27), with the slender tower telling strongly against the sky, ever so slightly brushed over with a mere bloom of blue, forms an exceedingly pleasing sketch. The attempt at a stormy sunset (28) is not so happy as in those which are simply tinted. Such tremendous scarlets and orange yellows on this tiny scale become violent and harsh beyond all tolerance to the eye. Perhaps one of the best for pictorial and Turner-like effect is "The Cemetery" (36), in which the pearly white church among the red tile roofs around glistening in the blue sky, and with the wide spread of water, seem to make up a kind of mirage of light and colour. Mr. Whistler's new method is seen to its best in subjects of this kind, where the indistinctness of the forms is overlooked in the general effect suggested, and, as we understand his work, this is all that he has pretended to show in these Venice pastels.

MR. WHISTLER'S VENICE PASTELS.

DAILY NEWS — 31·1·81

The French have an expression by which a man is said to "find himself" when he hits on the right mode of expressing what genius he may have in him. In his "Venice Pastels" at the Fine Art Company's Rooms in Bond-street, Mr. Whistler has emphatically "found himself." The Exhibition will be open to the public to-day, and, whatever else he may think, every observer will have to admit that Mr. Whistler's method and *faire* are original. It does not, of course, follow that they will be universally liked, for what is original is apt to be strange, and what is strange is apt to be resented. Mr. Whistler's strength lies in the swiftness and certainty with which he records his impressions of nature. The aspects of nature which appeal to him are of a sort that spectators less quick in sense are wont to miss. They therefore find nothing familiar and attractive in Mr. Whistler's work, and the rapid manner of it they often think mere indolent swagger. All rapid manner has a tendency to degenerate into indolence; but in these pastels we think Mr. Whistler has been swift without being slovenly. They are rapid sketches of light, of colour, and of aerial distances and architectural effects. The instrument used is pastels on a brown paper. By some magic of his own Mr. Whistler has produced the opalescent colours of sunset skies, the movement of water, the golden green lights which are sometimes seen on the Thames as well as on the Venice canals. The distant domes and spires glow with the soft radiant blue of the sunset air of Italy. The night effects (still called "nocturnes") are singularly successful. If we are to choose favourites we may mention "The Little Riva" (3), the "Tobacco Warehouse" (5), "The Riva at Sunset" (6), "A night view of the Riva" (10), "The Little Venice" (16). There are wild and lurid sunsets, as (28) "The Storm," contrasted with the grey and blue of "The Giudecca" (29) in winter. The yellow and black sails of the fishing boats are well rendered in 47, and Mr. Whistler's foregrounds are happily set off with the black of gondolas or of priests' *soutanes*. In short we have here a series of little masterpieces, which please as music pleases, or flowers, or the melody of a poem of Shelley's—pictures of which the first sight is in its way a revelation. In art so personal and peculiar as Mr. Whistler's a critic must speak out just what he feels; he must not dally over his impressions or reason much with his likes or dislikes. One cannot say dogmatically that these things are good, but it is possible to say with certainty that they give immense pleasure, and that Venice floating among her opal skies, or wrapped in her robes of blue and grey, is impressed on our memory by these pastels, as is the beauty of Tours or Nantes by a sketch of Turner's.

E. W. GODWIN

BRITISH ARCHITECT. Feb. 4. 1881.

MR. WHISTLER'S Venice pastels, fifty-three in number, are on view at the Fine Art Society's Rooms, Bond-street. In direct opposition to the critic of the *Daily News*, we will "say dogmatically that these things are good." They are "good." Not only because, as our contemporary says, that "they give immense pleasure," but because they exhibit great artistic skill or craftsmanship. Most of the pastel or coloured chalk drawings we have hitherto seen have been worked with the stump. In these by Mr. Whistler every touch of every bit of colour is laid on direct with the chalk. This of itself requires no small amount of delicacy and cunning, for the material is soft and crumbly, and we can readily understand that such dexterous work as is exhibited in many of these drawings was only brought forth after much patience and labour that might have disheartened anyone endowed with less *verve* and buoyancy than Mr. Whistler.

RECOGNISING, then, the nature of the material—too apt to be overlooked—we will at once refer to what we consider masterpieces, not merely in the use of the pastel, but in the use of the tinted paper (mostly brown) which has been adopted, in the choice of subject, and in its treatment. There are (4), "The Lattere:" harmony in blue and brown; (8) "Little Calle in San Barbara:" gold and brown; (10) Nocturne, "The Riva;" (12) "San Giovanni;" (14) "The Bridge:" flesh colour and brown; (15) "The Palace:" white and pink; (38) "The Red Doorway;" (48) "Salute," Sundown; (50) "Winter Evening;" (6) "The Riva," Sunset; red and gold.

NO. 4, "The Lattere," is a lovely composition with a high horizon; the brown paper, with just a touch, represents in value the quay from the base of the drawing to a considerable distance upwards, then a group of boats, then the blue water to the left, and blue sky above. Note the important emphasis of the two white dots on the boat and the preciousness of the blue *created by the base of brown*. No. 6 shows a sunset effect, and there is another fine sunset in 49; in both the sky is aflame. Look at them at a proper distance (about 7 or 8 feet), and try to find a red sunset in oil or water-colour, or any other medium, to match them. No. 8 may be briefly described as a few scratches and spots, but these are exactly right in place and proportion, and the result is loveliness. No. 10 is another work exquisitely true to nature, and yet it contains on examination nothing beyond some dark scribble, some scattered blue, and some very pale yellow dots—except art, and this has made of it the Riva at night. No. 12 is a most careful and satisfactory impression of the richer architecture of Venice. It is a square doorway, framing a minute view of the church. No. 14 is very much covered by the pastel, the paper tone not playing here such an important

part in the concert of colour as in many others. The perspective of the bridge strikes us as not quite right with the rest. No. 15 is a bright sunny bit of an old palace, like and lovely. Of all the drawings, however, the most remarkable for the quality of decorative beauty is No. 38. Red, blue, green, brown, so well managed, so justly balanced, so rightly toned, that this one pastel would be sufficient decoration for a small room. Obliterate in thought all subject, place it endways or upside down, and our remark would still apply to it as a passage of colour. Apart from this, the subject—an arched doorway in an old house at the corner of two canals, a gondola in the shadow—is extremely simple, full of repose, and wonderfully suggestive of the noiselessness of the place. No. 50. "Winter Evening," is hardly more than a touch, but it is the touch of a hand that can do.

BESIDES those just noted there are others charming in various ways; some for the dexterity of the artist in making two or three light touches suffice for a picture, as in Nos. 25 and 31, some for their subject, some for their colour, and some for their texture. Of the last description a particularly fine example is No. 23, "The Steps," where the old stained plaster on the wall looks as if we could peel it off in slabs if we could but get a trowel behind it. Mr. Whistler has drawn not merely plaster but he has, so to speak, recorded the age of it, and shown us (what is wholly invisible) that there is here and there a detachment from the actual wall that will some day bring about its fall and ruin. Among the more pleasing subjects is No. 7, "The Little Back Canal," a quite exquisite picure. Delicate colour is to be seen in No. 20, "Canal, San Canciano," and there is a sunny sparkling brightness in No. 45, "The Bead Stringers." In contrast to both is No. 47, "The Fishing Boats," a most powerful mosaic of black and gold. In "The Beggars" (32), a winter scene, we find indubitably winter. But the "Red Note" (43), is spoilt by a white shake or trill. Here and there one meets with a little disappointment, a feeling doubtless in which the artist himself must share. There is a time when even a locomotive is at its best, and it is idle to expect that in a series of fifty-three drawings all should be equally attractive in subject and equally good in execution. It is therefore in no condemnatory spirit we regret that the beautifully true distance in No. 18, "Nocturne—San Giorgio," should have been disturbed by the array of gondola ghosts in the foreground, not that we object in any degree to the slight sketching in of the gondolas, it is to the boat (or to anything in its place) that we object. "The Fish Market" (21), and "The Campaniles" (27 and 2), are also instances of a somewhat looser handling.

ONE of the chief things to note in the workmanship of these undoubtedly successful pastels is the subtle manner in which Mr. Whistler has superimposed and inlaid the finest particles of colour, to correct and tone the crudities of the chalk. Some of the drawings at first sight look like slight scribbles in blue, white, and black on brown or grey paper, just as if made in a moment to jot down a passing effect. Now they are really nothing of the kind; the apparently slight is the evident outcome of much thought, the scribble has no scribbling in it, and the colour is often attained by interweaving other colours, and breaking it all in lovely though measured spray over the brown or grey ground. *Ars celare artem* has never in our memory had such a complete justification of its truth as a proverb. Mr. Whistler, however, fears his pastels are not so good as he supposed—for they are selling.

WE ought to add that the arrangement of the drawings in the room, and the colours of the room, the mounts and frames, are all due to Mr. Whistler. First a low skirting of yellow gold, than a high dado of dull yellow green cloth, then a moulding of green gold, and then a frieze and ceiling of pale reddish brown. The frames are arranged on "the line," but here and there one is placed over another. Most of the frames and mounts are of rich yellow gold, but a dozen out of the fifty-three are in green gold, dotted about with a view to decoration, and eminently successful in attaining it.

A rare funny fellow is 'Truthful James.' Last week his Venice pastels were somewhat hardly treated in *Punch*. Mr. Whistler has had his revenge. He has cut out the article, mounted it on a sheet of his offending brown paper, put his butterfly on it, framed it, and hung it up in the Gallery, where it excites the wonder of simple persons from the country, who are not quite sure whether it is not a bit of Venice, say the Doge's marriage-lines with the Adriatic, for example.

WHISTLER'S WENICE; OR, PASTELS BY PASTELTHWAITE.

MR. WHISTLER is the artful Doger of Venice. TURNER made "studies" from which he subsequently developed his pictures: but Mr. WHISTLER is the "Chiel amang ye taking notes"—in colour, and, unable to keep them to himself, he exhibits them in the most generous and self-effacing way to the public generally. It is very kind of him; perhaps it is very deep of him. Does he want to discourage his brother artists from going to Venice? He may have conceived a violent animosity to Mr. COOK, and has hit upon this method of deterring intending tourists from visiting the "Pride of the Sea."

Whatever the motive for the exhibition, the artist seems to speak for himself, and say—"Well, Sir, I'm Master JIMMY WHISTLER I am, and if I can do this sort o' thing with a shilling box o' paints from the Lowther Arcade, a few sheets of blotting paper, and some brown-paper covers off the family jam-pots, I could do bigger work with improved materials, you bet!"

This address evidently conveys the suggestion that he should be forthwith presented by his friends and admirers with a real colour-box and the entire artistic paraphernalia. In furtherance of this design, we place before our readers our own "Notes" in black and white, suggested by those of Master WHISTLER.

N.B.—Visitors are requested to observe the principal figures, on which we only allow ourselves to touch lightly, and compare them with those in the brown-paper Catalogue. These notes being intended for practical guidance, every visitor should take them to the Gallery as a suggestive commentary which will be of the greatest assistance to him in appreciating the collection in detail.

No. 1. *Sotto Portico, San Giacomo.* A sort o' portico. Pretty clear so far.

No. 7. *The Little Back Canal.* Subject from the celebrated Triumviretta, *Coxio e Boxio.*

Sergento Bouncero. Don't be angry, Gentlemen. There used to be a Little Back Canal here.

Boxio e Coxio (together). Then put it up! [*Exit* BOUNCERO.

No. 10.

No. 10. *Nocturne—The Riva.* A Mud-bank note. "First Impression of Venice on a piece of Blotting-Paper."

No. 13. *The Giudecca: note in flesh-colour.* Suggestion for a Picture to represent Mr. IRVING as *Shylock* on a river—somewhere. Note for Jewdecca-rative Art.

No. 14. *The Bridge—flesh-colour and brown.* Suggestion for Sir WILLIAM TITE's pantaloons—say a pair of Tite's.

No. 18. *Nocturne at a Hotel.* Curious specimens of shoes left outside the bedroom doors to be cleaned. Suggestion for the Boots.

No. 18.

No. 21. *Fish Market, San Barnabo.* Suggestion of trade being very dull.

No. 22. *The Old Marble Palace.* We "dreamt that we dwelt in marble halls," and awoke with a severe cold. About this period we came to the conclusion, that if we wisited Wenice—WHISTLER'S Wenice—we should soon become what Mr. MANTALINI described as a "demm'd moist uncomfortable body."

No. 27. *Campanile at Lido.* Suggestion for a camp in ile—this isn't in ile. *Note*—it's out in the desolate country, a truly-rural-Lido sort of place.

No. 29.

No. 28. "*Boat Ahoy!*" Suggestion for a picture of "there were three sailors of Bristol City, Who took a boat and went to sea."

No. 29. *The Giudecca—Winter: grey and blue.* Uncomfortably suggestive of a nervous man bent on taking a header.

No. 35. *The Staircase: note in red.* Suggestion that this note "should be taken as red."

No. 36. *The Cemetery.* This is what Master JAMES calls it. We prefer to consider it as suggestion for a dark scene in some Pantomime of *Gulliver*, representing *Gulliver's* cocked-hat adrift off Lilliput or Water-Lilliput.

No. 37. *Swamped Buttercups.*

No. 38. *The Red Doorway.* Suggestion for the Home of SMUDGE, R.A.

No. 39. Suggestion for a view of the Polar Regions "from the steps of the Piazetta."

No. 43. *A Red Note.* Suggestive that bearer waits answer.

No. 36.

No. 47. *Awfully Cowl'd!* Suggestion for a picture representing three unfortunate Pierrots who, returning from a fancy ball in the country, have lost their way and stuck in a peat-bog.

No. 47.

No. 51. *Campo Sta. Martin—Winter Evening.* Note in Real Jam, or "Venice Preserved."

No. 53. *The Brown Morning—Winter.* Master JAMES means the Brown-paper Morning.

And lastly, what in nature is this curious specimen that appears in every picture? It's not a Gnat: it's not a Mosquito. Can it be a—but this suggestion of Venice is unpleasant for travellers. Did Master JAMES stay in the Palace of the Doges, and at midnight was he aroused from his harmony in snores, and compelled to rise from the ancient bed, light a candle, and—but we will not pursue the subject further.

[Beautiful Venice! "When found make a note of." *Mem.* by J.W.]

IO TRIUMPHE!

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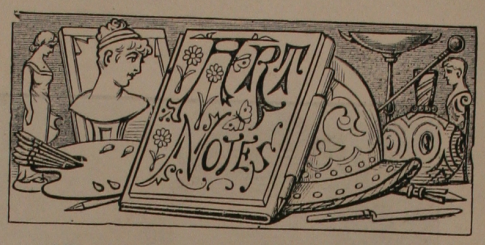
Pictorial World.
5-2-84



MR. WHISTLER'S VENICE PASTELS.

In the rooms of the Fine Art Society in Bond-street there is to be found a most interesting exhibition of fifty pastel drawings by Mr. James A. Mac N. Whistler, made during his recent sojourn in Venice; and though we may not all agree as to the general style of Mr. Whistler's art, or the manner in which he chooses to express himself and his ideas, yet in these pastel drawings the artist is so thoroughly evidenced that even the most grudging will be compelled to award the due meed of praise. It is true that the work has been done with a swiftness and dash that precludes anything like care and finish—these Mr. Whistler has not attempted—but every line has its full value, and the very swiftness of the work records how quickly the artist grasps the salient points of the scene upon which he gazes. But for all the dash with which these drawings are executed, there is nothing slovenly or badly rendered. The medium adopted is pastels on brown paper, which lattter gives the artist, so to speak, the groundwork or tone for his picture, and he works in his aerial effects—the golden gleam of sunset, the red and black of storms—the transparent blue-green of the water, and the near view of streets and the distant domes and spires of Venice, with the coloured chalks with marvellous skill. It is impossible to select any views for special praise when all are so good. As we said at first, it is impossible to gauge these works by any recognised standard of art. There is the strong evidence in each one of Mr. Whistler's individuality, but at the same time they are very clever transcripts of the impressions which the streets, the canals, the public buildings, and the people of Venice have left on the mind of the artist, and we have them in all the freshness and vigour which first impressions always create. It is an exhibition which will doubtless attract many visitors by its novelty, but those who go, in the first instance, for this reason will be sure to make a second visit, attracted by the skill and *chic* of the artist.

OBSERVER ART. Feb. 6- 81

VENICE PASTELS.

Mr. Whistler is an artist of great talent and of still greater eccentricity. If not the inventor, he has, at least, been the populariser of those ingenious though tricky effects of colour in which suggestiveness is made to do duty for representation, and to which musical names, such as symphony and nocturne, have been somewhat affectedly allotted. This nomenclature, specially dear to the school in which vague analogical sentimentalities are substituted for intelligent analysis, is to us universally distasteful; but the paintings with which it has been chiefly associated have not unfrequently been delightful and accurate memoranda, although sometimes, it must be admitted, they have been quite astonishing in their attainment of unreality. Mr. Whistler has, however, been altogether too hardly dealt with for his aberrations, and cannot but have suffered much both from the preposterous admiration of his friends, and from the outrageous hostility of his detractors. We are glad, therefore, to welcome his reappearance as an exhibitor of an interesting set of pastels, the fruit, apparently, of a winter and autumn well spent in the capital of the Doges. We confess to no special liking for the medium he has adopted. Great as is the dexterity with which he manipulates the pastel, the surfaces of the dry colour seem to us almost invariably too rough for effects of transparent light, while the heavy crayon line has a knack of forcing attention to the method when it ought to be wholly devoted to the production. Venice in her beauty never has been, and probably never will be, adequately painted, but there is a sombre and almost prosaic side of her—the rare wintry effects, the gloom of deepening nights and shortening days which Mr. Whistler seems to have found congenial. Working in pastel mostly on brown or reddish paper, he has obtained a prevalent tone that is never thin but not unfrequently depressing. It is, moreover, mostly purchased by the loss of light and transparency. In colour of a different kind he has, however, some remarkable successes, amongst which we should be tempted to give the prize to (6) "The Riva." It is a somewhat lurid but magnificent sunset, and the little waves of the lagoon are glowing, though somewhat sullenly, with red and blue and orange fires. Nothing can be more dexterous than the way in which the dimpled sea is rendered by a few broad lines. Another scene similar in character is (28) "The Storm-Sunset." Here the clouds are even more striking in colour, and a certain luminousness missing in No. 6 is attained, though not without some sacrifice of truthfulness. More pleasing, if less striking as a picture of declining day is (46) "Sunset—the Gondolier," a view taken from the Eastern end of the Riva dei Schiavoni. This is worth looking at, although the gondolier is strangely like a Neapolitan. The later evening pictures are not so satisfactory, Venetian mist and English fog being in several instances insufficiently differentiated. There are, however, some excellent scraps of architectural drawing, in some of which are charming glimpses of distant streets and *campi*, while the splashes of colour made by the gaudy garments which commonly hang from the windows of the Venetian poor are generally turned to admirable account. Of these (14) "The Bridge," and (45) "Bead Stringers" are good examples. Near the latter is a drawing of a market boat, in which, despite the characteristic ugliness of the black and yellow sails, Mr. Whistler is very happy, particularly in the colour of the water, while a few interiors, such as (38) "The Red Doorway," serve as good specimens of the artist's deft draughtsmanship. The salient defect in these very clever pictures is the excess of brown and sombre tones, so that a stranger to Venice, taking Mr. Whistler as his guide, might well suppose that brown skies, occasionally patched with blue, were normal in the home of Titian and Giorgione. Of real Venetian splendour, its golden hazes and dappled flashing peacock-hued seas, and its intensely luminous sky, seen between quaint Gentile Bellini chimney pots, there is little or no trace in these pastels. The best of the attempts to depict this aerial beauty is, perhaps, to be found in (3) "The Little Riva," which has the true opaline colour and the true luminous delicacy, and this the artist has endeavoured to accentuate by placing his anagram, a spot of flat red colour, in a prominent and aggressive position. There is also a sketch on grey paper (13), a very truthful, though not characteristic, picture of the Giudecca; in the foreground the blurred outline of a gondola and its reflection, with the shadowy Redentore in the distance. Perhaps the most agreeable pastel for a permanent possession would be "The Cemetery" (36). The idea of the scene, the island loved of poets and painters, the cool white walls and green foliage, is admirably caught, although here, too, justice is not done to sky and sea. Clever as the colouring in these pictures often is and invariably excellent as is the drawing, we cannot but wish that Mr. Whistler would devote himself more to those labours of the etcher in which he first gained a high place in art. His sense of colour never, indeed, wholly fails him, but his feeling for black and white never fails him at all. One has but to turn to the few examples (not catalogued) which adorn the east end of the room to see how really admirable is the latest work of his needle. Nothing can be more agreeable, for instance, than his etching of a view of the lagoon to the left of the door; the labour is quite trifling, but every line and every untouched surface tells of complete mastery of the method and complete appreciation of the end to be attained. Another fine plate, in a somewhat different style, is called, we believe, "The Two Doorways," a view in one of the larger side canals. The works we have described are seen under most favourable conditions in the room of the Fine Art Society, which has been decorated for the present exhibition under the artist's personal supervision, an olive-coloured baize being carried high above the pictures, while the upper walls are toned to a dull Venetian red. It is the same room where that famous collection of Turner's watercolours were displayed to which Mr. Ruskin furnished a characteristic and pungent commentary. The association of ideas is curious.

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Athenæum

MR. WHISTLER'S PASTELS.

IN the gallery of the Fine-Art Society, New Bond Stret, may be seen a considerable number of drawings in pastels from views in Venice. Many of them are charmingly tender in colour and rich in tone, while some are rather too sensational. They owe much of the force of their middle tints to dexterous use of the brownish-grey paper employed by the artist: this material has often been employed as a tint proper. Among the best is *The Little River* (No. 3), a capital example. No. 6, *The River Sunset*, is more brilliant and effective, but not so delicate. *San Biagio* (9) is first rate and extremely delicate, being a fine study of silvery, harmonious white with local colours, as in the choice tint of the purplish-grey vapours floating past the deep, dull-blue clouds behind them. This atmospheric effect is wonderfully well given. It is difficult to resist the charm of the silvery and flesh tones in No. 13, *The Giudecca*, which comprises a gondola floating on calm and exquisitely graded water. No. 14, *The Bridge*, is very strong indeed, and shows the effect of deep rosy light, like a flash of sunset, on the buildings. No. 27, *Campanile at Lido*, is a capital rendering of a broad effect with massive shadows. No. 36, *The Cemetery*, one of the finest examples, gives us the beauty and dignity of evening, while the milk-white building faces the lighted sky, and innumerable reflections, light and dark, grey, silvery, and brilliantly coloured, shimmer on the rippling water. In this drawing the quality of general keeping is shown at its best. In the same room may be seen a collection of etchings of Venetian scenes as they really are, not a few of which are marked by delicacy, masterly finish, and an exquisite sense of the subtle gradations of light and the comparative relationship of parts as elements of the tone of the drawings. The best represents Venice in the mid-distance on a very high horizon, seen beyond a calm sea, where only the longest and most shallow ripples move, and the distances are, with rare skill, marked by posts.

ON Saturday week the Fine Art Society will open a new gallery at the back of their premises in New Bond-street, with an exhibition of works by Mr. John Everett Millais, R.A., showing to a certain extent the artistic record of his life. Such an exhibition cannot be other than of enormous interest to the public generally who have any regard for art; whilst to the young painter, or student, it will be of more value than any amount of lectures. Mr. Huish, the managing director of the Fine Art Society, deserves our heartiest thanks for the energy he displays in providing these exhibitions. To have at the same time one room set apart for Whistler, and another for Millais, is an event in the chronicle of art exhibitions not likely to be soon forgotten.

BRITISH ARCHITECT.

Folk have flocked to the Fine Art Society's premises to see the wonders brought to light by Mr. Whistler. The gallery in which his fifty-three Venice Pastels are displayed is a cunning arrangement of his own—a marvellous study of room decoration. There is a tall dado of a golden olive in cloth, about nine feet, with a moulding above of citron gold and beneath of guinea gold, surmounted with a frieze of venetian red and a cornice of ruby gold. A subtle medium for the display of his gems. The stimulating effect of the pictures, in their frames and mounting of the three golds employed in the moulding, upon the reparative shade of the cloth is complete.

Pastels (crayons upon brown paper) has been a favourite "game" of many artists—notably George Morland, and later of Mr. Fanner—but never with such success in light and shade, brilliancy and softness, as in these given us by Mr. Whistler. It is difficult to say whether accuracy in architectural effect or variety of theme is the most startling. "The Guidecca: note in flesh" (12), undoubtedly the "Koh-i-noor" of the set, is a luminous seascape in which the artist's daring trick of putting a black object across his foreground is most fortunate. "The Little Riva," in opal (3), throwing off an iridescent shimmer, is in wondrous contrast with "The Palace in Rags" (33), a mellow diffused light in a sombre chamber; or with "San Giovanni Apostolo et Evangelista" (13), an interior effect worthy of Hogarth Many of the drawings have been sold at prices ranging from £20 to £35. COUNTRY GENTLEMAN.

Feb. 5. 1881.

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DAILY TELEGRAPH. *VENICE PASTELS.* Nov. 5. 71.

For ninety-nine in a hundred of those to whom the original and somewhat fantastic individuality of Mr. James A. M'Neil Whistler is agreeably familiar, the expression which his faculty as a colourist and sketcher now finds, in the series of fifty-two pencillings that adorn the walls of the Fine Art Society's Gallery in Bond-street, is entirely new. These Venetian studies in the coloured crayons which were identified, many years ago, with so-called pastel-drawings, and which are to this day the material exclusively employed by the fashionable portrait-artist, Mr. Fanner, will be hailed as an artistic novelty. The use of coloured crayons by Mr. Whistler is perfect of its kind. There is a fascination, a true and legitimate charm, in his "Venice Pastels" which is likely to reach beyond the circle of connoisseurs capable of thoroughly appreciating his labours with the etching-needle. Fancy does not here conflict with truth. Many if not most of the studies recall nature and Venice, at all events suggestively. The mere method of display is a triumph of "tone." Exquisitely simple shades of dead olive green, of brown, of Venetian red, of red-gold and green-gold, and icy pale gold that is almost silver, serve as the colour-settings of Mr. Whistler's gems. The arrangement of the room will be a lesson to æsthetic visitors, in the now favourite amusement of domestic decoration. The test-stone of this cabinet of jewelled art-work is "the Giudecca: note in flesh colour" (13), which holds the crowning place of honour, on the south wall of the gallery. The decorative plan of placing the slender, curved black hull across the picture, on a straight line, is consummately successful in its avoidance of stiffness. A little misleading, perhaps, is the term "flesh-colour" in the title. Nobody knows better than does Mr. Whistler that the aerial flush to which he treats us in his finely luminous distance would only be a small accessory were he really painting flesh. Terms, however, signify little where the work is excellent. The sketch of "The Little Riva" (3) is designated "in opal;" and it is truly opalescent in its blinking inner light and flecks of cobalt, and other pure, lustrous tints. "The Old Marble Palace" (22); "The Beggars—Winter" (32), a sketch in which the smallest colouring relieves the black and grey; "The Palace in Rags" (33), a fine bit of gloom, with a poetic gleam of central light; "The Staircase; note in red" (35); and "Fondamenta dei Mori" (44), with the agitated little crowd on the narrow quay, where the moored boats are all deserted, and the gabled houses jostle and elbow one another, seemingly, as they look down on the sight at their feet, are among the most striking examples. The exhibition should be visited by daylight, much of the delicacy of harmonious combinations being destroyed by the light of gas.

"The World" London Dec. 2. 1881.

FINE ARTS.

Mr. Whistler's 'Venice Pastels.'

At the gallery of the Fine Art Society in New Bond-street, an interesting exhibition has been opened of 'Venice Pastels,' by Mr. Whistler. There are in all fifty-three drawings, executed for the most part upon ordinary brown paper, with recourse occasionally to paper of a gray or drab tint, and bearing those sub-titles of 'pink and brown,' 'blue and rose,' 'fresh colour and gray,' 'red and gold,' &c., which the artist has affected upon former occasions, and which, it may be assumed, afford him a certain pleasure, if they convey to the public only information of a superfluous sort. Mr. Whistler has further indulged his fancy in the choice of the 'tone' of his gilded frames, favouring now 'old gold,' and now gold of almost a silvery complexion, to suit the scheme of colour adopted in his pictures; while the decorations of the room also exhibit diversity of gilding, with contrasts or combinations of olive-green and salmon colour. These and other æsthetic aberrations characteristic of the artist have rather the effect of detaching attention from his works; there is danger sometimes of the picture being forgotten because of the eccentric glories of its environment. It should be said, however, that Mr. Whistler's pastels are really very admirable. Coloured crayons have not hitherto been judged a very desirable means of artistic expression and record: but in Mr. Whistler's hands they become invested with special value. He so skilfully wields, manipulates, and distributes his opaque colours as to produce effects of curious beauty, breadth, and power; it being understood that something of a fugitive quality pertains to these performances, and that they are rather inchoate representations than completed pictures. Mr. Whistler is fully possessed of a scene-painter's mastery of effect; he knows how well the rude lines, the flecks of light, and blotches of shadow will 'fall into shape' and assume pictorial attribute and worth when viewed from a proper standpoint; and he owns peculiar gifts in his sense of light, distance, and atmosphere, in his management of clouds and water. But his works are of very unequal merit, even when tested by standards of his own choosing: he seems too soon satisfied with mere intimations and suggestions; he holds his hand while completeness is yet afar off; his impressions are slight, or he indicates them too faintly, vaguely, and incoherently. How many of these pastels suffer from the vacant spaces 'to let' of plain untinctured brown paper, from indecision of line, from lack of foreground, from the absence, indeed, of industry and conscientious workmanship! Yet altogether this collection of his Venetian drawings manifests remarkably the genius of the artist as a scenic draughtsman and colourist. More vivid portrayals, briskly accomplished, of Venice in winter can hardly have been seen before in a London picture-gallery, or, indeed, elsewhere.

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Court Journal 12.2.'81.

Although like the unfortunate French poet who, dazed, bewildered, driven mad by the practising of the same sonata by his musical neighbour exclaimed in his despair, "Sonata—what wouldst thou? Why dost thou haunt me so?" we are ready to appeal against this eternal harping by painters at this one thing of Venice, yet nevertheless, like the unlucky poet above mentioned, who, although execrating both the player and the playing, yet was always drawn to listen, we find ourselves, however weary of Venice, always attracted by the representation of its beauties, always ready to obey the summons of every painter who returns home laden with his tribute to its picturesque surroundings. And so, in spite of the declaration made many seasons ago that Venice had no longer power to charm, nor the Venetians either, we found ourselves once more standing amid the glories of that enchanted city as presented by the enchanting pencil of Mr. Whistler. In scenes like these this artist has chosen to depict the exaggeration of his colouring and the blending of what to the uninitiated would seem incongruous tints, his whimsical experiments have fair play, and they become whimsical no longer—

blended not by the caprice of the painter, but by Nature herself, into that glorious harmony which he has been so long seeking, and which she so long ago had found. At first contemplation of the glories unfolded by Mr. Whistler, we are dazzled by the gorgeous aspect of the atmosphere at all hours of the day, dawn, noon, and sunset—all have their peculiar tints of beauty nay, even night itself—with its moon overbright, and its stars too large and too numerous, according to the experience acquired in our own cold and colourless climate, becomes splendidly magnificent beneath the artist's touch. The rooms of the Fine Art Society have become almost a battle-field for the London critics—so divided are the opinions, so impassioned the arguments for and against the Whistler style of painting. But all true lovers of the divine art would do well to pay a visit to the Gallery, were it but for the sake of dreaming with the artist, and being visited by the same visions of fairyland, under the influence of which he must surely have been when painting these pastel views of Venice.

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Weekly Times Jul. 20. 1879.

LONDON,

THE MILLAIS COLLECTION.

YESTERDAY the Fine Art Society opened at their rooms in Bond-street an interesting exhibition, consisting of a selection of some sixteen of Mr. Millais' works. These pictures extend from an early period of the artist's career down to his recently painted work, "Cherry Ripe," made familiar to all the world in the Christmas number of the *Graphic*. The only picture in the gallery which has not been publicly exhibited already, is one representing an incident in the brief career of the daughter of Charles the First, called "The Princess Elizabeth in Prison at St. James's." There are three paintings here with which the public are not very familiar: "Ferdinand lured by Ariel," "Isabella," and "The Carpenter's Shop at Bethany," all of which are of interest as showing the strides made by the painter since he first exhibited at the Academy thirty-one years ago, when he was a young and aspiring pre-Raphaelite of twenty. The freshness and beauty of "The Order of Release," lent by Mr. Renton, are simply marvellous, and will draw many to make its re-acquaintance, for, excellent as the engravings are, they fail to convey the delicious tone pervading the picture. "Chill October," "The Princes in the Tower," and "The Yeoman of the Guard," are all such recent creations of Mr. Millais' brush as to need no special notice on this occasion, and the same may be said of "The North-West Passage," now the property of Mr. Bolckow. The remaining works are a small early portrait of a gentleman unknown to fame, "The Woodman's Daughter," "Autumn Leaves," with its somewhat unnatural colouring, the very beautiful "Boyhood of Raleigh," "The Vale of Rest," and "The Gambler's Wife." In an adjoining room are to be found some half hundred of Mr. Whistler's recent productions, but to step from the careful drawing and colouring of Mr. Millais to these vague and unutterable daubs is too great a descent from the sublime to the ridiculous, and we must decline the task of attempting to interpret Mr. Whistler's Venice pastels.

Court Journal 12.2.81

Although like the unfortunate French poet who, dazed, bewildered, driven mad by the practising of the same sonata by his musical neighbour exclaimed in his despair, "Sonata—what wouldst thou? Why dost thou haunt me so?" we are ready to appeal against this eternal harping by painters at this one thing of Venice, yet nevertheless, like the unlucky poet above mentioned, who, although execrating both the player and the playing, yet was always drawn to listen, we find ourselves, however weary of Venice, always attracted by the representation of its beauties, always ready to obey the summons of every painter who returns home laden with his tribute to its picturesque surroundings. And so, in spite of the declaration made many seasons ago that Venice had no longer power to charm, nor the Venetians either, we found ourselves once more standing amid the glories of that enchanted city as presented by the enchanting pencil of Mr. Whistler. In scenes like these this artist has chosen to depict the exaggeration of his colouring and the blending of what to the uninitiated would seem incongruous tints, his whimsical experiments have fair play, and they become whimsical no longer—blended not by the caprice of the painter, but by Nature herself, into that glorious harmony which he has been so long seeking, and which she so long ago had found. At first contemplation of the glories unfolded by Mr. Whistler, we are dazzled by the gorgeous aspect of the atmosphere at all hours of the day, dawn, noon, and sunset—all have their peculiar tints of beauty nay, even night itself—with its moon overbright, and its stars too large and too numerous, according to the experience acquired in our own cold and colourless climate, becomes splendidly magnificent beneath the artist's touch. The rooms of the Fine Art Society have become almost a battle-field for the London critics—so divided are the opinions, so impassioned the arguments for and against the Whistler style of painting. But all true lovers of the divine art would do well to pay a visit to the Gallery, were it but for the sake of dreaming with the artist, and being visited by the same visions of fairyland, under the influence of which he must surely have been when painting these pastel views of Venice.

Academy - 7-6-19-1891-

FINE ART.

MR. WHISTLER'S PASTELS.

MR. WHISTLER'S exhibition of a couple of score of pastels, which are now on view at the rooms of the Fine Art Society, shows him, perhaps, to greater advantage than has any previous exhibition of his engaging and expressive, if sometimes wayward, art. Of the etchings displayed several weeks ago, some were, as was said at the time in this very journal, distinctly disappointing; others were most agreeable reminiscences of a Venetian mingling of glory and squalor. The pastels, if unequal, are unequal within much narrower limits. Here and there they may be inexpressive; here and there the gold has not been hit; but the arrow has not fallen absurdly wide of it. There are, it is true, two or three nocturnes scarcely better than the oil sketches—the agreeable if insufficient beginnings—familiar under the name of "nocturnes" to the visitor to the Grosvenor Gallery. But feeble and immature performances are quite the exceptions; generally the pastels achieve most thoroughly the success that is proper to them. Here and there the artist, selecting this uncommon medium, has grappled with difficulties which another medium would not have presented; now and again he has courted difficulties in order that his skill might overcome them. Such *tours de force* are interesting, even when they are not legitimate. But, still more frequently, the effect beautifully obtained has been an effect which could hardly have been obtained in any other medium, and Mr. Whistler has obtained it with extraordinary command of a brilliant sketcher's skill. The knowledge of what to select, of what to reject, and then of what to express with especial summariness of treatment has seldom been shown so completely. In his best work here Mr. Whistler has been quite unerring; there is unity in it from beginning to end; the conception was clearly formed, and it has been executed deftly and with uniformity of excellence.

Nor would it be doing quite justice to these fascinating pastels to speak of them as the record of rapid impressions. Venetian nature and Venetian art have really been looked at very closely, as well as with an artist's eye, before so many of their essential characteristics came to be recorded in this swift but penetrating way. It ought not to be necessary to say that the most laborious record of the most deliberate impression would not have achieved this particular success on which Mr. Whistler is now to be congratulated; that, in truth, two qualities, or two sets of qualities, have been of necessity found together—the power to see most sensitively and to record most summarily. Such a combination affords, on its rare appearance, one of the keenest pleasures to be met with by the visitor to picture galleries—a subject has been understood and appreciated to the bottom, and then it has been rendered by such an exercise of skill as is in itself a highly interesting feat.

The artist's intelligence of his subject, and his extreme agility in conveying to us the impression it made on him, being the points for which the present show of pastels is remarkable, we need hardly go so far into detail as to pretend select all the good examples of his skill. The best examples unite a quite Japanese mastery of the art of rightly disposing the masses of shade and of hue with a sense of full rich colour certainly not derived from the art of Japan, and almost new to us in Mr. Whistler's work. That Mr. Whistler could be a refined colourist, we did know before; but hardly that, while keeping his refinement, he could be also so forcible a one. Nobler colour than that evident in *The Red Doorway* has never been attained by such unambitious means and such speedy labour. And, abundant and glowing as the colour is, it is likewise most subtle. *The Riva, Sunset, Red and Gold*, is one of the most successful examples of a power to reject everything that is superfluous, to select everything that is entirely necessary. Not even in the slightest of the etchings of Rembrandt or the hastiest sketches of David Cox was art more abstract and summary—the scanty lines or the swift blots more significant. A few touches of the pastel in various colours, and somehow the sky is aglow and the water dancing. The thing has been wrought as it were by pure magic. It would, under any circumstances, be agreeable to record the appearance of such brilliant and such learned little designs as these. Perhaps it is especially agreeable to those on whom, some two years ago, there lay the necessity of plainly distinguishing between the excellent work Mr. Whistler had aforetime performed and the affected labours on which he then seemed bent. They have the pleasure of seeing the fulfilment of the hopes then expressed that so adroit and flexible an artist would not remain too obstinately faithful to eccentric error. A reputation first won by original merit, then for a time imperilled by original absurdity, has been now established and confirmed by the beautiful and pregnant designs which charm some of us by the learning, and all of us by the vivacity, of their art.

FREDERICK WEDMORE.

"The Academy."

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OSCAR WILDE'S LECTURE

There is a new thing to see; and although Mr. Whistler still persists in his peculiar nomenclature—"harmony in blue and brown; note in flesh colour," and such-like verbal eccentricities—I think he will enlarge his circle of admirers by means of his Venice Pastels, exhibited by the Fine Art Society. The number of English artists who have attained even to passable merit in pastels, although Gainsborough was one of them, is very limited, and their works are all characterised by a smudginess conspicuous in Mr. Whistler's work by its absence. There is "The Riva—Sunset; red and gold" (No. 6): how admirably, yet with how few touches, is the glowing sunset interpreted—the sea dashed in with a line or two! Much truer to nature this than its companion work, "The Storm—Sunset" (No. 28), which is a fine specimen of art gone mad. So, too, are "The Staircase; note in red" (No. 35), and one or two others which mar the general excellence. "The Bead Stringers" (No. 45) is one of the best examples of Mr. Whistler's thorough mastery in the art of colour and his clever manipulation of the pastel. I must not forget to say that our symphonic friend has made clever use of tinted paper, thus securing a ready-made tone.

THE WHITEHALL REVIEW.

MR. WHISTLER'S VENICE PASTELS.

"PAN" Feb. 5. 1881.

A SHORT time after a jury of Philistines had awarded Mr. Whistler the famous farthing, he left Chelsea and betook himself to Venice. There he has been hard at work, and his very remarkable and curious collection of pastels now on view at 148, New Bond-street, is the result. It is not given to every mind to understand Mr. Whistler in all his moods. To some he is ridiculous and unintelligible—mad and meaningless; others find in him truth and beauty that they seek in vain for elsewhere. However, it is only fair to shortly state what the position taken up by the Impressionist Master is. His pictures do not claim to be accurate or even faithful representations of external objects. Form and line are of little account to him, but colour, in all its tones and gradations—in endless harmonies, in new and curious contrasts—colour is the soul and secret of Mr. Whistler's work. By its means, by his special knowledge of it, he claims to be able to present a certain moment of feeling—a peculiar sentiment that occurred to him when under certain passing colour-influences. The picture, then, is an expression of the state of Mr. Whistler's mind, and if you can sympathize and feel with that, you like the pictures; if you do not, you had better go to Venice for a time.

These little pastels are drawn on grey or brown paper, the outlines of architecture roughly indicated in black, and the whole mind of the artist as a rule concentrated on the opal glimmer of the water or the crimson and gold of the setting sun. The brilliancy and transparency of the effects produced by the dexterous management of little bits of opaque chalk is marvellous. It is not a trick—it is a secret, and simple and easy as it looks it is a method of immense difficulty to attain. Mr. Whistler told me in his vivacious fashion a story of a brother painter whom he met in Venice. The unbeliever scoffed at the apparently careless simplicity of the pastels, and audaciously undertook to turn out "nocturns," and "notes in flesh colour," and "harmonies" by the hour. He was accordingly presented with sheets of the grey paper, the box of pastels, and the free run of the sunsets. He worked industriously for a week, he tore up in impotent despair acres of his sunsets, he rubbed away with his yellow, and red, and blue, and finally he threw up the whole thing in acknowledged failure, and had to leave Venice to take a course of mud baths.

Take as one of the best examples No. 28, "Sunset after a Storm." Here we have a wonderful note of brilliant colour in the clouds that sweep across the city, and the sky has not only feeling of colour, but rare grace of form. Note the green shutters in No. 21, and the same feeling of colour in the still green water at the foot of the Marble Palace (22); then look at No. 46, the gondolier, with a misty and suggestive boatman rowing in a phantom boat. We admire the colour and tone, but we cannot help asking helplessly, Why on earth not finish the gondolier? It is this deliberate incompleteness, this purposed vagueness and want of finish that persistently puzzle and irritate us. Take Nos. 4 and 31. In both of these pictures we have a quaint and delicate suggestion of distant colour and a vast brown space left completely untouched. Now surely the hand that drew the distant ships in the *Zattere* could have filled up the ugly brown triangle of untouched surface that is left to make a foreground for itself. Nor would the picture suffer from a fore-ground. What Mr. Whistler would probably reply to this is that he didn't *feel* the foreground at that moment; he didn't want it; he didn't look at it, so he ignored it; and if you don't like what he has given you, well, you had better buy a print of Mr. Frith's "Derby Day," and be happy with it!

It is somewhat curious to find this strange combination of cleverness and sentiment in one man. The cleverness has a sort of transatlantic impudence about it that we rarely find united to what I have called "sentiment," or a deep and tender feeling for the soul of nature. "Colour," says Mr. Pater, "is not a mere sensible quality of objects; it is a spirit upon things by which they become expressive to the spirit" and to no mortal spirit apparently does it become more expressive than to the eccentric and erratic soul of James McNeil Whistler.

W.

THE UNION LEAGUE.

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Club and an Exhibition of Pictures.

Last night there was an unusually large attendance at the monthly meeting of the Union League Club. It was thought not unlikely that the question of cleaning the streets would come up for discussion, and many members indisposed to see the Club Boojumized by Brothers Bliss and French attended on that account. The chief interest, however, proved to turn on a discussion of the resolutions offered by the Executive Committee proposing in view of the increased expenses of the club, to raise the initiation fee to $300 and the yearly dues to $75. After a spirited discussion it was resolved to let this matter lie over until October. Mr. Elliot F. Shepard read a paper on the Sinking Fund, and Mr. Geo. P. Butler another condemning the action of the Legislature with regard to the new Croton Aqueduct. Both papers were adopted as resolutions by the club and will be printed. As usual at the monthly meetings there was an art exhibition, but it was more than usually good. Over seventy paintings were hung on the walls of the two rooms dedicated in the new building to such purposes. The walls are softly tinted and the rooms are admirably lighted, though it is to be hoped that the club will introduce the electric lighting which now works so well in the whist-room of the Union Club, and which is infinitely better adapted to showing the color of pictures than gas can be made to be. Much interest was excited by Whistler's eccentric picture, the "Woman in White," which has been so extravagantly belauded by a certain set in London. It represents a tall, slender woman with reddish hair; and, herself "as white as a sheet," clothed in plain white. A lily is held in or rather lolls from her hand, which hangs listlessly by her side, as if she were expecting the poet Postlethwayte to lunch. The figure is silhouetted by a vauge difference in tone upon the white drapery before which it stands, and the feet are set on what seems to be the skin of some animal unknown to zoology. The painting is so high that it could not be hung in a good light. By its side was a small head of the artist painted by himself, which brings sharply out the "derangement in black and white" which passes with him for hair. Another picture by Whistler was called "The Brittany Coast," is a slashing study of rocks, against one of which reclines the figure of a female. In noble contrast with these extravagances was a magnificent landscape by David Johnson, who is fast conquering his place in the van of our contemporary art. It represents a scene in Orange County. A quiet brook, from which cattle are drinking, runs beneath a rustic bridge shaded by a large and wonderfully painted elm. A man and a girl are near the bridge, and a farmhouse seen in the distance completes an idyl of rural peace and repose. The picture should be seen by daylight. Among the other pictures were "Nightfall," by Arthur Parton; "Autumn," by Alfred Fredericks; "Lake Como," by J. R. Brevoort; "Sheep," by Shattuck; "Three Mile Harbor," in Long Island Sound, by T. Moran; "A Peep Down the Mill Stream," by George Inness; "A Water Girl," by Edgar M. Wood; an "Ideal Head," by Reinhart; "A Quiet Night on the Hudson," by G. H. McCord; "October," by T. L. Smith; "What's Your Name?" by F. Schuchardt, jr.; "Choristers," by A. F. Bellows, and several portraits, including one of ex-Secretary Fish, by Huntington.

Then, again, Mr. Whistler's nationality is is so mixed up that it would take an expert genealogist to solve the question. Of Irish pedigree, his father was an American citizen; he himself was born in St. Petersburg, has studied in Paris, lived in America, and is settled in England. So the best solution of this knotty point is to claim the Prince of Etchers as a Britisher.

One of Mr. Whistler's latest notions is to carry about a very long cane, or rather wand, with which he makes great play. Some of his friends say that this strange weapon is only a mahl-stick, while others assert that the etcher took the idea from a well-known French painter, who loves to carry long sticks.

HARPER'S BAZAR.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1881.

MR. WHISTLER'S NEW PORTRAITS.

BY MRS. JULIAN HAWTHORNE.

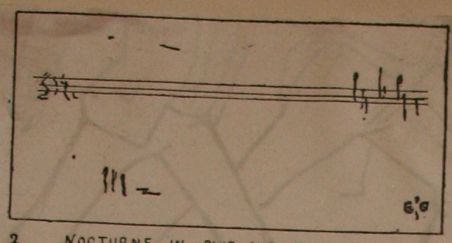
MR. WHISTLER has settled in London again, after his Venetian experience of last year—an experience fraught with golden results, as we intimated some months ago, when referring to his beautiful "Venice Pastels." He no longer occupies, however, that "White House" to which in former years he had given renown, but he has taken possession of a new house, also in Chelsea, and indeed in the immediate vicinity of his previous establishment. Tite Street is the somewhat extraordinary name of the thoroughfare in which the studio stands, and it is of so recent creation that it is as yet not entered in the Directory. The buildings are of fine red brick, prettily designed after the latest fashions. Several lots are still vacant, and ready to be built upon; but the rents are rather high, owing not less to the excellence of the houses than to that of the situation. Tite Street is less than an eighth of a mile in length, and lies at right angles to the Thames Embankment. Opposite Mr. Whistler's studio is the house occupied by Mr. Oscar Wilde, the author of the volume of *Poems* lately published, and by Mr. Frank Miles, who is known as the portrait painter of the London professional beauties—an artist who is reputed to have mastered the difficult art of gilding refined gold and painting the lily. Next door lives Mr. Frank Dicey, brother of the Edward Dicey who visited America during our civil war, and wrote a book about his adventures, and who now edits the great London Sunday paper *The Observer*. Mr. Frank Dicey is a rising artist, and his picture was this year hung in a conspicuous position in the Academy. Round the corner, on the Embankment, is the studio of another artist, Mr. John Collier, who painted the picture of "Hudson," which was bought by the Academy. Altogether the neighborhood is, from the artistic point of view, a very fashionable one, and much visited by "carriage people" during the season.

Mr. Whistler has lately been at work on two portraits, both of them female subjects, and treated with more than his usual subtlety and skill. We found the artist in his studio—a lofty room nearly bare of furniture, but looking like a place meant to work in. The canvases were set up at the further end of the apartment, the spectators—upward of twenty were present—being collected at the other end; for Mr. Whistler's portraits require distance in order to their proper appreciation. On the left was a small four-legged table made of polished mahogany, finely wrought, and fitted on the top with a sloping desk-like surface between two narrow compartments. This is the artist's palette; he mixes his tints on the sloping surface, and keeps the tubes of colors in the compartments. The brushes he uses are for the most part larger than are generally employed by artists, and his method of work is in many respects original, as are the results he produces by it. The artist himself was on this occasion attired in his working costume, which consists in the removal of coat and waistcoat, and the revelation of a fine white shirt. With his swarthy brilliant face and jetty curling hair contrasting with his spotless cambric, Mr. Whistler might be considered a masterly arrangement in black and white in his own person. And this may have been a bit of artistic harmony on his part, the principal one of the portraits on exhibition, or that one of them which alone he wished to be considered finished, being also a study in black and white of the purest kind. You see the full-length life-size figure of a beautiful woman, who stands nearly facing you, in a pose which is wonderful for ease and character. She is dressed in a flowing black robe, broadly trimmed with soft white fur or swan's-down. The arms and neck are bare; the features, though only indicated, are full of individuality and expression. The background is wholly black, yet it appears not as a black surface, but as a mellow depth of darkness. How Mr. Whistler contrives to give an effect of softness and harmony to a subject which in any other hands would appear hard and crude is a mystery known only to himself. He may be criticised for not working on a different principle, for not finishing his work in the manner of other artists, but from the point of view of his own artistic conception he is above criticism. What he does, no other man can do. In delicacy and truth of tone he has probably never been equalled. He apprehends color in all its shades and relations with a kind of inevitable instinct; and though he is never neglectful of form, and can draw the human figure with a liveliness and accuracy that leave little to be desired, he appears to care for that department of art only in so far as it may conduce to the most effective presentation of color. His portraits, and his work generally, suggest objects as they would appear to a near-sighted man with an unerring perception of color. There is a mistiness about them, a vagueness, a mystery, but the longer you look at them, the stronger is the charm they reveal to you. You feel that the reality in all its details is there, though, as it were, behind a veil. It is, however, almost impossible to express in words the peculiar quality of Mr. Whistler's pictures. Like all works of genius, their language is their own, and untranslatable. They remain in the memory as few other pictures do; they are the lyrics of pictorial art.

The other portrait, apparently of the same subject, was treated in a subdued tone of brown and brownish-red. The pose is somewhat as before, but the figure is enveloped in a long brown fur cloak reaching nearly to the feet. In its present unfinished state the artist deprecated criticism; but though the scheme of color is less striking than in the former work, the management is quite as masterly. In both portraits you get a strong impression that a real human being stands before you—not a type nor a generalization, but a particular and distinct human person. That this impression should be wrought by work so defiantly unelaborate in detail and broad in treatment is another indication of the workman's curious genius. But nobody is more human than Mr. Whistler.

The walls of the studio were colored a sort of gray flesh-tint—a singularly cold and unsympathetic hue, but, according to Mr. Whistler's idea, all the better adapted on that account for a studio, which, as he remarked, should not be itself a picture, but a place to make and exhibit pictures in. "Now my other rooms, they are pictures in themselves," added the artist, and we were allowed to inspect two or three of them. Pictures they were indeed, and exquisitely delicate and effective ones. Shades of yellow were present in all of them; in one room there was no other color besides yellow. But it would be impossible to describe the subtle variations which had been played upon it; how the mouldings, the ceiling, the mantel-piece, the curtains, and the matting on the floor enhanced and beautified the general harmony. In the dining-room the mass of color was a strangely vigorous blue-green, the precise counterpart of which we do not remember to have met with. This was picked out with yellow in the mouldings, cornice, etc., with a result extremely satisfactory and charming. All the decoration was entirely free from anything in the way of pattern or diaper; the color was laid smoothly and broadly on the hard-finished plaster, and the effect depended solely upon the contrast and disposition of the tints. Such a method would fail in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, for the least mistake in the selection or placing of a color would spoil all; but Mr. Whistler has done his work for himself, and it is faultlessly done. We venture to say that the exhibition of this house of his in some generally accessible centre of civilization would do more to refine the public conception of decoration than all the examples, lectures, and books of which the modern decorative clique is just now so prolific.

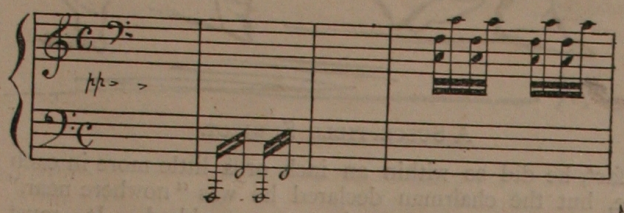
Probably Cremorne Lights (Tate)



2 NOCTURNE IN BLUE AND SILVER

FANTAISIE.

IN THE BLUES.



2. "Nocturne in Blue and Silver." J. M. Whistler.
750

Grosvenor Gallery 1882

Which he wished to remark,
And his language was plain;
"I'll paint nocturnal arrangements
"Again and again."

—BRET HARTE (altered).

Mr. Whistler paints musical landscapes. This is a picture of the blue Danube, and the silver is the price of it. The nocturne can only be properly rendered by the musical composition affixed to it. We presume that everybody has learnt Hamilton's "Instructor for the Piano." The high lights in this picture are in the artist's phraseology, the D lights on the line, and are naturally delighted at finding themselves above high-water mark. Try and play the air, and then you will understand why the picture is in the blues.

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* * *

We were talking about the dog-tax, Mrs. D. and myself. "Its advisability is a matter of opinion," said Mrs. D. "It's a matter of dog-ma!" put in Master DAGONET. He sits down at twice now.

* * *

Mr. Whistler has flung the inkpot in the face of the public, and his price is a shilling. Now, if he'd sling the paint-pot at the same price we might think him fair in his charges.

* * *

Mr. Whistler shuts off his steam in his pamphlet in a series of cockney impertinences. He attacks Mr. Ruskin with the wit of the street orderly boy and the reasoning of a music-hall politician.

* * *

his house to the races.

A lady of æsthetic tastes suffered a severe shock the other day owing to the carelessness or denseness of the officials at a certain loan collection. She was possessed of a fine Whistler in that artist's best manner—that is to say, a dull piece of green canvas with a white streak across the middle, and called "The Thames at Midnight," but looking much more like a dining room wall with some of the paint chipped off by the back of the chairs. With commendable public spirit, the lady dispatched this picture to the Gallery; but what was her horror when she came to see how it was hung to discover, on looking closely into it, that her treasure had been hung upside-down

Though Mr. Whistler is called by his Christian name in the Society journals, and though everything he gives his guests to eat is faithfully chronicled (probably gratuitously) in certain pages of gossip, Society has not yet given him the right to be insolent to its most respected members. The ill taste of his cheap and nasty attack on Mr. Ruskin must do him an irreparable amount of injury, and it incontestably proves that the person who dubbed "James" coxcomb was the bestower of a richly-deserved title.

* * *

Mr. Whistler thinks that Mr. Whistler is a great man, and that Mr. Ruskin is a great fool. The general public reverse the matter, and no amount of ink-squirting or paint-flinging on Mr. Whistler's part will alter their opinion.

Jan 2. 1878.

Jimmy the Rebuke.

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his ideas without considering them.

THE RECEPTION.

After Mr. Wilde's lecture he was taken to the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Holmes where the Art association gave him a little unceremonious reception. In conversation he was found bright and cunning—bright in talking of that on which he was informed, and cunning in turning away from a subject on which his conversation could not be interesting. Many persons who had formed their opinions of the man from the silly things said of him by newspaper men who have misquoted and slandered him in a shameful manner, were forced to change those opinions when they came into the presence of the mild mannered, genial, brighteyed poet.

PHOTOGRAPHY IN ART.

The art journals are quarreling over photography. Those whose columns are devoted to painting and

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JIMMY WHISTLER is a litigious and e blasphemous exponent of æstheticism. Nevert less, his brown pamphlet is an impertin effusion, and not worth even the farthing awar to him by the jury, some member of which probably aforetime suffered from the exercise Yankee 'cuteness.

Mr. Whistler has just added to his recent work in etching—Thames-side studies after the old fashion—a portrait of Sir Garnet Wolseley, of which report speaks well.

such
sketchy scratchy stuff as "Alderney Street" (33), with its phantom horses and cabs and figures. Equally phantom-like and weird is "Traghetto" (37),

OSCAR WILDE'S LECTURE

...ring sense of beauty and his recognition of a real... reality for the imagination. Keats must also ...

The sale of Mr. James A. McN. Whistler's effects last Thursday was quite diverting. His library, consisting of twenty volumes, went for 4s. The prices obtained for his old china and curios were eccentric. A hundred copperplates of etchings were put up; one, sold separately, brought 5*l.* 10*s.*, the remaining ninety-nine went for 6*l.* 15*s.* His crayon sketches and Gilchrist at 50 guineas was thought dirt cheap; and the satirical portrait of 'A Creditor,' at 12 guineas, was considered dirt dear.

his neighbour, and which must bring ruin to many of those who drink!

Yours truly,

Tyle Morris, Briton Ferry, Dec. 24, 1880. GEO. P. IVEY.

"HERE'S A LARK"!

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE CAMBRIAN."

SIR,—Two thirds of the misery of mankind are the results of ignorance, and one of spite. Why should "my friend," "Jim Rogers," be the ruling autocrat, and fill all but one third with such stuff as makes life not worth living.

I have writ me a two column letter anent that "missing link," but I will not hunt in couples.

Do print my friend Whistler's letter, for he is very dear to me, and ought to be to you, for in him "there is much matter to be heard and learn'd." I append it.

Never mind Ned Yates's approbative exclamation. I regret your type will not represent Whistler's sketch—which is a flea "bust up."

I hope to have one of his masterly etchings in the "D. F." collection ere long.

I wonder where the daylight was all night; he came in this morning at thirteen minutes to eight, and my landlady knocked up a row. Then, again, I have broken my pet pipe, and I am oscillating between suicide and beginning a new one;—not very hilarious circumstances under which to try and write a humorous letter. However, we have essayed, and, as you perceive, it has "plucked out brains and all."

Thine, with the compliments of the Season,

J. DEFFETT FRANCIS.

1, Burrows-place, Christmas Time.

I think it would aid the fun of the above if you were to add as Editor's remarks:

"Let Mr. Francis never heed his "two column letter," but send us other such characteristic notes as these: we will gladly print them, for they really are "humorous."

"The "Doctor" ought to be proud to be bracketed in the same letter with "Jemmy Whistler." We also are amongst the admirers of Mr. Whistler's Art, and "append" his letter."

—

"London, Dec. 14.

"Atlas *mon bon, méfiez-vous' de vos gens!* Your art gentleman says that Mr. Whistler exhibits twelve etchings, "slight in execution and unimportant in size." Now the private assassin you keep for us need not be hampered by mere connoisseurship in the perpetration of his duty—therefore, *passe*, for the execution—but he should not compromise his master's reputation for brilliancy, and print things that he who runs may scoff at. Seriously, then, my Atlas, an etching does not depend for its importance on its size. "I am not arguing with you—I am telling you." As well speak of one of your own charming *mots* as unimportant in length. Look to it, Atlas. Be severe with your man. Tell him his "job" should be "neatly done." I could cut my own throat better; and if need be, in case of his dismissal, I offer my services.—Meanwhile, yours joyously,

"J. A. M'N. WHISTLER."

What a funny dog it is!

"Cambrian" Newspaper.
Dec! 31-'80

A NOCTURNE IN BLACK AND GOLD.

In the cross-examination of Mr. James A. Whistler, the distinguished London artist, during the progress of the recent celebrated suit against the critic Ruskin, one answer made to a question of the Attorney General was most striking. It was brought out in the course of the examination that the "Nocturne in Black and Gold," as one of the pictures was called, was painted in "a couple of days—one day to do the work and another to finish it." And then it was asked, "And that was the labor for which you asked 200 guineas?" "No," said Mr. Whistler; "it was for the knowledge gained through a lifetime." The answer was at once applauded in the court-room, and is certainly worthy of commendation. By many persons the measure of value applied to any production of art is the time and trouble expended upon it. Losing sight entirely in the first place of the God-given talent or genius that makes such things possible, and then of the long years of careful study and wearisome labor that have been spent in the cultivation of the talent, they calmly calculate that if Patti sings a song at a concert in which are, say a hundred notes, and receives for her appearance two hundred dollars, that she "earns" a couple of dollars for each note uttered. They ignore the fact that her power to utter those notes arose first from the possession of a phenomenal formation of throat and the soul of an artist, and that even these great gifts would have been valueless but for long years of patient work. Another point rarely taken into consideration—never here, we should judge, from the oft-repeated and unjust demands made upon lyric artists—is that that voice is, so to speak, the capital of its possessor, and every note uttered by it is just so much drain upon it, and is apt to the sooner exhaust and destroy it. So with Mr. Whistler. Though we believe that he is not considered the most modest and retiring of men, he could not well say that, in naming a price for his pictures, he took into consideration the amount of talent put into the work; but, of course, this was as much the case as that he charged for "the knowledge gained in a lifetime."

In this connection it may not be out of place to call attention to the fact that Mr. Whistler is not a Baltimorean, as many suppose. He is the son of George W. Whistler, who graduated at West Point, and resigned in 1833 while a first lieutenant of the Second Regiment, United States Artillery. Afterwards he was a civil engineer successively for the Baltimore and Ohio, the Baltimore and Susquehanna, the Patterson and Hudson, Stonington and Providence, and other railroad companies in this country, and in 1842 he went to Russia, and, with the Winans of Baltimore, built the Moscow and Petersburg Railroad. At the age of forty-eight he died in St. Petersburg in 1849. The artist was born in St. Petersburg, and in 1851 he came to this country, and was appointed by the President a cadet at large at West Point when between sixteen and seventeen years of age. A classmate says of him: "He was small of stature, but lithe, active and very prepossessing in appearance and manners; withal, a good linguist, remarkably intelligent and witty, and soon became a general favorite. In drawing and painting he stood at the head of his class, and was the best artist the academy has ever had before or since his time. Highly imaginative, and endowed with a keen sense of the ridiculous, and with extraordinary descriptive powers, he was a most entertaining companion." He became dissatisfied, however, and purposely failed to pass his examination—a matter of decided congratulation now. Mr. Whistler's connection with the Winans family is but a distant one, his brother, George W. Whistler, having married a daughter of Mr. Ross Winans.

largely represented.

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THE etching of "Jimmy" WHISTLER by M. PELLEGRINI, "Ape," is simply *impayable*. James Abbot McNeil Whistler stands with glass in eye and cane in pocket, with a smile on his face that is "childlike and bland," as if he had just finished his letter to Mr. Seymour Haden, which was one of the best pieces of etching ever done by the Prince of Etchers.

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Society April 23 1881

collection of works by the late George Dodgson, is NOW OPEN No. 5, Pall-mall east, from 10 till 5.—ALFRED D. FRIPP, Secretary.

MR. WHISTLER'S VENICE PASTELS.—A SERIES of 50 PASTEL DRAWINGS by Mr. Whistler are NOW ON VIEW at the Fine Art Society's, 148, New Bond-street. Admission on presentation of address card.

The Times. London Feb. 2. 1881.

DORÉ'S NEW PICTURES, at the Doré Gallery, No. 35, New Bond street, ON VIEW, Daily, 10 to 6. Admis-

THE STANDARD, MONDAY

MR. WHISTLER'S PASTELS AT THE FINE ART SOCIETY.

Legitimate material for a minor exhibition has been found in the two or three score of Pastel drawings which Mr. J. A. Whistler has brought home from Venice. Unlike some of Mr. Whistler's work, they are to be taken seriously. In them Mr. Whistler has done justice to the best side of his talent as we know it at present; for while his early etchings of the Thames were principally devoted to the delicate pourtrayal of curious and unexpected combinations of line on river-side buildings and in river boats, the best of his later work has recorded, not so much actual fact, as the swift impression of fact. He has in that work abandoned precision of line for suggestive groupings of colour or striking juxtapositions of shadow and light. Probably it is no change of theory that has led to this alteration in Mr. Whistler's art, but rather that a man does not see at fifty quite what he saw at twenty-five. Too many artists, reaching full middle age and having made a certain success, are content to go on painting from no fresh impression, painting just what the public has always expected them to paint. The old material serves, and the old method is somewhat mechanically adhered to. Mr. Whistler, whatever may be his faults or his frolics, is freed from the danger of mechanical reproduction. He receives impressions vividly, and he can convey them vividly. The task which in these Venice Pastels, and in many of his later etchings, he has best succeeded in fulfilling is that of skilfully suggesting what he has not attempted to realise.

Therefore, perhaps, his Pastels will be more interesting—we may even say more fascinating—to the people who chiefly care how a thing is done than to the people who chiefly care what it is that is done. Mr. Whistler gives us no fresh vision of Venice, but sets down for us in an incisive fashion our own remembrance of the place; not so much the details of its architecture as its broader general effects, its sunsets glowing over a wide tract of sky, or melting along the waters of the lagoon; its grey autumnal or winter evenings in dirty weather; the flashes of occasional colour which in summer time light up its narrower bye-ways. Venice, so to speak, has not sat to Mr. Whistler for the portrait of its permanent features, but for the speedy seizure of its passing expressions. And though the work thus done is undeniably sketchy, is the very shorthand of art—it is yet generally, within the limits which it sets itself, faithful, significant, and vivid.

The general favourite will probably be "The Riva, Sunset, Red and Gold." You are looking along the water towards the horizon sky, where its colours are deepest—a mingling of many little clouds, red, orange, purple and blue—the dancing water catching the red and the gold. Not much work has been required to convey the effect that was observed, but it has been faultless work. Its few strokes are all frank and visible; there is not a touch that does not tell, and not one that can be harmlessly removed. "The Bridge: flesh colour and brown," presents an effect seemingly more elaborate, and only a most skilled use of the Pastels could have enabled Mr. Whistler to place equally on his paper the solidity of the houses—often whitish, with their thick-painted shutters—and the indefinite reflections of those houses in the sluggish yet still moving water of the side canal. For the first, the touch of the Pastel must be decisive and sharp; for the second, it must seem indeterminate and hazy. Yet the work is so well done that we hardly feel that it was skilful to do it. Here and there, however, in other drawings, there is very evident the difficulty of the medium—a difficulty sometimes so great as to have proved the medium to be really unsuitable. And here and there again, when the medium chosen does not seem to have been in the way, the hand has been less sure, has failed of its purpose, or has stopped even before the mere suggestion has been properly made. Thus one or two of the "Nocturnes" are more truly insignificant than any of the painted "Nocturnes" of the Thames, produced two or three years ago. One or two are wholly inexpressive—an artist's occasional failures, which there can be no need to display. On the other hand, certain of the simpler subjects are in their own way perfectly successful. "The Staircase" is one of these. It records not much in the way of architecture, but is a pleasurable suggestion of Venetian colour—a flash of red, seen in a clear, keen light. We hope a certain measure of durability may be granted to these vivid little Pastels. Just now, at all events, at their freshest, and in the best examples of them, their colour is of gem-like purity; they are, at the same time, sparkling and harmonious, faithful indications of the places and effects they seek to chronicle, and, to the eye sensitive to such matters, for their own sake most enjoyable arrangements of light and of hue. In speaking of them, it is impossible to avoid prominent recognition of what seem their merely technical triumphs. The historical or poetical associations of cities have little charm for Mr. Whistler, and no place in his art. In the character of Humanity he has not time to be interested, preoccupied as he is by its colours and contours. But nearly all that he has intended to do in these Pastels he has done beautifully.

ART.

VENICE PASTELS.

Mr. Whistler is an artist of great talent and of still greater eccentricity. If not the inventor, he has, at least, been the populariser of those ingenious though tricky effects of colour in which suggestiveness is made to do duty for representation, and to which musical names, such as symphony and nocturne, have been somewhat affectedly allotted. This nomenclature, specially dear to the school in which vague analogical sentimentalities are substituted for intelligent analysis, is to us universally distasteful; but the paintings with which it has been chiefly associated have not unfrequently been delightful and accurate memoranda, although sometimes, it must be admitted, they have been quite astonishing in their attainment of unreality. Mr. Whistler has, however, been altogether too hardly dealt with for his aberrations, and cannot but have suffered much both from the preposterous admiration of his friends, and from the outrageous hostility of his detractors. We are glad, therefore, to welcome his reappearance as an exhibitor of an interesting set of pastels, the fruit, apparently, of a winter and autumn well spent in the capital of the Doges. We confess to no special liking for the medium he has adopted. Great as is the dexterity with which he manipulates the pastel, the surfaces of the dry colour seem to us almost invariably too rough for effects of transparent light, while the heavy crayon line has a knack of forcing attention to the method when it ought to be wholly devoted to the production. Venice in her beauty never has been, and probably never will be, adequately painted, but there is a sombre and almost prosaic side of her—the rare wintry effects, the gloom of deepening nights and shortening days which Mr. Whistler seems to have found congenial. Working in pastel mostly on brown or reddish paper,

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Pall Mall Gazette Feb. 9 1881

MR. WHISTLER'S PASTELS ON VENICE.

MR. WHISTLER'S talent is seen to great advantage in the series of pastel studies which are now on view in the galleries of the Fine Art Society. Compared with much of his earlier work in landscape, these spirited and beautiful sketches show a stronger grasp of reality and a more liberal appreciation of the varying aspects of nature. Venice has worked a charm upon Mr. Whistler, and under its influence he has been content to adopt a manner of interpretation that leaves to each individual scene its own special characteristics of form and colour. In many of his English studies, concerned chiefly with the scenery of the Thames, the underlying facts of nature were apt sometimes to be overpowered by the emphasis that was given to the painter's particular mode of presenting his impressions. Here, however, he has put a restraint upon himself, and in the result he has produced a stronger witness to the scope and variety of his resources. The greater beauty and diversity of his theme have carried the painter beyond the temptations of mere mannerism, and have called forth qualities of execution that have been often lacking in his earlier pictures. He has now, for the first time, brought to his work in colour the delicate feeling for minute truths of form which characterized many of his etchings from nature, and he has enriched the harmonies of tone that he could always command by greater fulness of detail and by increased decision in the rendering of separate tints. The scheme of colouring, though always carefully balanced and controlled, is often composed of the brightest hues expressed with remarkable purity and strength of effect. And this brilliant quality of his latest work is the more noticeable from the fact that the material which Mr. Whistler has employed requires the most skilful and delicate handling. To preserve the freshness of colour which belongs to these sketches the artist must possess an absolute certainty of touch as well as certainty of intention. There is no room for laboured or tentative processes of execution; and unless the artist has the clearest vision of his subject he cannot put in force that simple directness of style which gives to the medium its particular charm. Mr. Whistler's talent is of a kind that readily accommodates itself to these conditions. His feeling for beauty in nature has always been marked by singleness of impression, and even in the least successful of his efforts in oil professional artists have recognized the deftness of his touch. To understand how these gifts of eye and hand have served him in the present instance readers must study these pastel drawings for themselves. No attempted description of isolated examples could convey a just idea of the kind of excellence that belongs to them; for the qualities that most deserve attention are in their nature exclusively artistic and technical, and cannot therefore be detached from the work to which they belong.

OSCAR WILDE'S LECTURE

he has obtained a prevalent tone that is never thin but not unfrequently depressing. It is, moreover, mostly purchased by the loss of light and transparency. In colour of a different kind he has, however, some remarkable successes, amongst which we should be tempted to give the prize to (6) "The Riva." It is a somewhat lurid but magnificent sunset, and the little waves of the lagoon are glowing, though somewhat sullenly, with red and blue and orange fires. Nothing can be more dexterous than the way in which the dimpled sea is rendered by a few broad lines. Another scene similar in character is (28) "The Storm-Sunset." Here the clouds are even more striking in colour, and a certain luminousness missing in No. 6 is attained, though not without some sacrifice of truthfulness. More pleasing, if less striking as a picture of declining day is (46) "Sunset—the Gondolier," a view taken from the Eastern end of the Riva dei Schiavoni. This is worth looking at, although the gondolier is strangely like a Neapolitan. The later evening pictures are not so satisfactory, Venetian mist and English fog being in several instances insufficiently differentiated. There are, however, some excellent scraps of architectural drawing, in some of which are charming glimpses of distant streets and *campi*, while the splashes of colour made by the gaudy garments which commonly hang from the windows of the Venetian poor are generally turned to admirable

Observer. Feb. 6. 1881

account. Of these (14) "The Bridge," and (45) "Bead Stringers" are good examples. Near the latter is a drawing of a market boat, in which, despite the characteristic ugliness of the black and yellow sails, Mr. Whistler is very happy, particularly in the colour of the water, while a few interiors, such as (38) "The Red Doorway," serve as good specimens of the artist's deft draughtsmanship. The salient defect in these very clever pictures is the excess of brown and sombre tones, so that a stranger to Venice, taking Mr. Whistler as his guide, might well suppose that brown skies, occasionally patched with blue, were normal in the home of Titian and Giorgione. Of real Venetian splendour, its golden hazes and dappled flashing peacock-hued seas, and its intensely luminous sky, seen between quaint Gentile Bellini chimneypots, there is little or no trace in these pastels. The best of the attempts to depict this aerial beauty is, perhaps, to be found in (3) "The Little Riva," which has the true opaline colour and the true luminous delicacy, and this the artist has endeavoured to accentuate by placing his anagram, a spot of flat red colour, in a prominent and aggressive position. There is also a sketch on grey paper (13), a very truthful, though not characteristic, picture of the Giudecca; in the foreground the blurred outline of a gondola and its reflection, with the shadowy Redentore in the distance. Perhaps the most agreeable pastel for a permanent possession would be "The Cemetery" (36). The idea of the scene, the island loved of poets and painters, the cool white walls and green foliage, is admirably caught, although here, too, justice is not done to sky and sea. Clever as the colouring in these pictures often is and invariably excellent as is the drawing, we cannot but wish that Mr. Whistler would devote himself more to those labours of the etcher in which he first gained a high place in art. His sense of colour never, indeed, wholly fails him, but his feeling for black and white never fails him at all. One has but to turn to the few examples (not catalogued) which adorn the east end of the room to see how really admirable is the latest work of his needle. Nothing can be more agreeable, for instance, than his etching of a view of the lagoon to the left of the door; the labour is quite trifling, but every line and every untouched surface tells of complete mastery of the method and complete appreciation of the end to be attained. Another fine plate, in a somewhat different style, is called, we believe, "The Two Doorways," a view in one of the larger side canals. The works we have described are seen under most favourable conditions in the room of the Fine Art Society, which has been decorated for the present exhibition under the artist's personal supervision, an olive-coloured baize being carried high above the pictures, while the upper walls are toned to a dull Venetian red. It is the same room where that famous collection of Turner's watercolours were displayed to which Mr. Ruskin furnished a characteristic and pungent commentary. The association of ideas is curious.

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2, 1882.—589

"Jiminy"

Nous ne connaissons guère, en France, la personnalité du peintre anglo-américain M. Whistler. Il a bien passé à Paris quelques-unes de ses jeunes années, en compagnie de MM. Ribot, Legros, Manet et Fantin-Latour; mais, depuis, il s'est complètement retiré en Angleterre, où il jouit d'une renommée d'excentrique. J'ai ouï dire que Courbet, l'ayant vu peindre des marines de la couleur la plus nacrée, en reçut une forte impression. En vérité, il est doué de précieux dons de coloriste. Voici,

OSCAR WILDE'S LECTURE

"Arrangement in Brown and Black."

PORTRAIT OF MISS ROSA CORDER.

BY

JAMES A. McNEILL WHISTLER.

EXHIBITED IN THE GROSVENOR GALLERY.

Opinions of the Press.

'Mr. J. M. Whiſtler has two figure ſubjects quite worthy of attention. Diſtinction and character are in the ſeemingly ſketchy portrait, very large and very dark, of a graceful artiſt, Miſs Roſa Corder—"An Arrangement in Brown and Black" (No. 54).'

THE STANDARD, *May* 1, 1879.

'Mr. J. M. Whiſtler's contributions are two life-ſized full-length portraits, and a ſmall ſtudy of the ſea, to all of which he has, as uſual, affixed fantaſtic titles. In the firſt, "Arrangement in Brown and Black—Portrait of Miſs Roſa Corder," the large maſſes of ſombre colour are moſt artiſtically arranged, and the general effect is remarkably rich and harmonious.'

THE GLOBE, *May* 1, 1879.

'Apparently invigorated and impelled to freſh and doughty efforts after recently fighting with wild beaſts at Epheſus—or at Weſtminſter Hall—Mr. Whiſtler has produced in (54) "Arrangement in Brown and Black—Portrait of Miſs Roſa Corder," one of the fineſt pictures of the year. We do not know anything about his work being an "arrangement"; but we hold it to be ſimply worthy of the hand of Velaſquez. The attitude of the figure is eaſy and graceful, yet it is evidently the reſult of intenſe ſtudy; and the gamut of colour, albeit with a background as dark as Erebus, is full of ſweetly concordant tones.'

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH, *May* 1, 1879.

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'No. 54, "Arrangement in Brown and Black—Portrait of Miſs Roſa Corder," is a gracefully painted portrait of a young lady in the two ſombre colours.'

BUILDING NEWS AND ENGINEERING JOURNAL, *May* 2, 1879.

'Then there is Mr. Whiſtler with a really fine Velaſquez-like portrait of Miſs Roſa Corder.' VANITY FAIR, *May* 3, 1879.

'An "Arrangement in Brown and Black."—The portrait of a lady dreſſed in dark brown or black, holding a brown hat in her hand, the face alone ſtanding out in relief againſt a jet black ground.' THE WEEK, *May* 4, 1879.

'We have not yet spoken of the work of Mr. Whiſtler, who is this year at his beſt both in portrait and landſcape. The full-length portrait of Miſs Corder (54) has a ſpontaneous grace and dignity of bearing that is one of the rareſt qualities of portraiture.' THE OBSERVER, *May* 4, 1879.

'Mr. Whiſtler's "Arrangement in Black and Brown" preſents broad grand paſſages of execution worthy of Velaſquez.' THE WORLD, *May* 7, 1879.

'The "Arrangement in Brown and Black" (54), which, no doubt, is alſo a portrait of Miſs Roſa Corder, is a fine illuſtration of a valuable manifeſtation in art.'

THE ATHENÆUM, *May* 10, 1879.

'In the next panel hang the contributions of Mr. Whiſtler, an artiſt who combines, like Mr. Millais, the practice of portrait and landſcape, and who is this year admirably repreſented in both kinds. The Portrait of Miſs Roſa Corder (No. 54) and the Study of Shipping in the Pacific (No. 56), may be taken to illuſtrate the full ſcope and ſtrength of Mr. Whiſtler's reſources.' THE ACADEMY, *May* 17, 1879.

'No. 54. Portrait of Miſs Roſa Corder. J. M. Whiſtler. Better than uſual. Glad to ſay a word for Whiſtler. Admirers of J. M. W., look at this picture, and "Sursum Corder."' PUNCH, *June* 21, 1879.

'The Portrait of Miſs Roſa Corder, an "Arrangement in Brown and Black," by Mr. Whiſtler, exhibited in the Groſvenor Gallery this ſeaſon is alſo we are glad to hear in the hands of the engraver. This figure is one of the moſt maſterly in drawing and bruſh work, that is to ſay one of the moſt thorough examples of artiſtic "workmanſhip" of modern times.' THE BRITISH ARCHITECT, *August* 8, 1879.

this page.

PC 4/75

A sheet containing letters from Manet to Whistler and Duret was extracted from this book and filed under Manet as number B.P.II. M/159.

2 letters from E. Manet removed from this page.
+ transferred to catalogue series.

1881. 2.

2 letters pasted in of Edouard Manet.
Duret's portrait
Exhibitions of Venice
Portraits of Venice
Reviews &c. F. L. S.
Grosvenor Gallery &c.

OSCAR WILDE'S LECTURE

...ring sense of beauty and his recognition of a separate realm for the imagination. Keats was the

SYMPHONIE EN BLANC MAJEUR, par A. ROBIDA.

— Eulalie de Pigeoiseau, ma femme depuis midi, est un ange, une blanche colombe!... Vous savez ce qu'on raconte de... avec son cousin Raoul... Des bêtises!... pur enfantillage!... Il l'avait enlevée... un peu... mais il l'a ramenée lui-même trois jours après!!!

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THE PRINTBUYERS' ASSOCIATION.

By Mr. F. Seymour Haden.

The promoters of the Works of Fine Art Copyright Bill, in withdrawing it at the eleventh hour, have exercised a sound discretion. However desirable such a bill might have been in its relation to art and artists, as a bill subsidized by the Printsellers' Association, and having for its aim to legalize and protect a sort of art property which could only be described as spurious, it was in point of fact impossible. It now only remains to break the back of the association itself, and this may be done in two ways. One, and by far the best, because the most creditable way, is that the more respectable of its members—those of them, that is to say, who when they joined it had no idea of the uses it would be put to—should simply march out of it, in which case the whole fabric would crumble up; the other, that the print-buying public should associate themselves, and by refusing to buy prints issued under the stamp of the delinquent association put an end to it. It is worth while to consider both these alternatives. In the first case a reference to *Year's Art* for 1884, in which a list of them is given, will clearly show that the members of the Printsellers' Association are separable into two very distinct categories—those who have and those who have not grossly abused the facilities which its formation has given for the creation of the spurious art property which you have described. What is to prevent these better men from declaring at once that they will no longer sanction, as they are now tacitly doing, the malpractices of the rest. Of these they are, at present, little better than cats' paws winking at what they do not approve, and helping what they do not profit by. That this is so I have the word of three, at all events, of the most considerable of the London print-selling firms, the representative of one of them going so far as to say he would willingly subscribe £50 if this tyrannical association of which he was perforce a member could be put down; and this being so, what, except the fear of reprisals, is to prevent their marching out in a body? As a matter of fact, they need have no fear of such reprisals, since the public would certainly applaud their act, and, better still, transfer their custom to them.

If, however, these better firms will not, or dare not, do this, there remains the other alternative, which is for the print-buying public, now that their eyes are opened, to associate themselves, and refuse to purchase any print issued under the stamp of the old association. We should then have face to face "The Printsellers' Association" and "The Print-buyers' Association," the latter having the advantage of holding the purse. Are the printsellers prepared for this? All that the new association would have to do would be to send to the outlaws a peremptory summons to surrender or to offer them peace only on the following terms:—The delusive nomenclature now employed by the associated printsellers to designate the state of "proof" to be abandoned, and the "declaration" acquired by the association, and which is equally delusive, to be also abandoned; and—these terms conceded—first, that a nomenclature expressive of the real value of the article sold should be adopted; and secondly, that security be given to the artist that his work shall have a freer outlet—an outlet, that is to say, the key of which is not held by a trade combination. In a word, the new association would demand of the old a complete and unqualified restitution of that liberty both of art and of the artist which they had seized upon and diverted to trade purposes, and a better protection to the print-buying public than is at present afforded by their "declarations" and "stamps." The *Pall Mall Gazette*, to whom the credit of having taken the initiative in this matter is due, would, I dare say, receive the names of gentlemen interested in the purchase of engravings who might approve the formation of such a defensive league while I should myself be glad to help in putting it, which might easily be done, into a workable shape. "Animo non astutia," should be our motto, and, unless I am much mistaken, we should soon see the recalcitrant flag come down.

OSCAR WILDE'S LECTURE.

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P. Mall Gazette — March 15

The least savour of novelty seems to give anything a sort of claim to recognition. A society of "Painter-etchers" is being organized. "Painter-etcher" is a new title, though in form similar at least to "barber-surgeon." The originator of the "Painter-etcher" is the well-known physician and amateur etcher Mr. Seymour Haden, who is appropriately advertised as the president elect of the new society. A provisional council has grown into existence; and the Fellows of the "Painter-Etcher" Society are to be exhibitors of "the art of original engraving in all its forms (painter-etching)," whose names are to be pricked off by the Provisional Council—each member of council pricking a separate list. Three gentlemen—Mr. Poynter, R.A., Mr. Stacy Marks, R.A., and Mr. J. E. Hodgson, A.R.A.—are announced as "assessors." Their function is to leaven with their pricked votes the dough of the Provisional Council's votes. The exhibition at which this ceremony of ostracising a number of labourers in the field of "painter-etching will be performed" is to take place at the Hanover Gallery early in April—perhaps the 1st. It is expected that afterwards the "claim to a recognized status" which the art "has established for itself" will be satisfied. But, "oft expectation sits and most oft there where least it promises." It is clearly permissible to doubt whether even so distinguished a young body as the "Painter-Etchers" will be able to set at rest the cravings of the art of Rembrandt of old time and Whistler of the present for a "recognized status."

P M Gazette March 23 —

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SOCIETY OF PAINTER-ETCHERS.

To the EDITOR *of the* PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—Reading—with some surprise, I confess, that it should have found its way into the *Pall Mall Gazette*—your paragraph on the "Painter-Etchers," I could not but be sensible of how wit might be marred by discourteous expression, and plausibility impaired by untruthful suggestion; for, though it may be accounted a sort of wit to invest me with an opprobrious title, it cannot be true to say of a mode of election analogous to that of any other art society—the Royal Academy included—that it is conceived in a spirit of unfairness and ostracism. Nor will your readers, I think, quite understand how, when it has taken a dozen or more distinguished men to meet in serious council to promote what they believe to be a desirable object, it has been given to one anonymous writer to sit down and dispose of them and their object by a stroke of his pen.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

F. SEYMOUR HADEN.

[Surely Mr. Seymour Haden is making a mountain out of a very small molehill? In the little Note of which he complains the writer certainly had no intention of investing him w th "an opprobrious title," nor do we see that he is so invested in the Note in question. We need hardly assure Mr. Seymour Haden that no discourtesy was intended either towards himself or any of the other gentlemen concerned.]

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A LAST WORD ON THE PRINTSELLERS' ASSOCIATION.

By Mr. Seymour Haden.

The Fine Art Society has so far recovered its equanimity as to find it better to substitute for the foolish personalities in which it has hitherto indulged something which at all events looks like fact. It is not fact for all that, because while I, in my reference to the Printsellers' Association, have been talking of their so-called "proofs" as distinct from the "ordinary impressions" which the rules of the association permit their members to take in any number besides, they, in their counter-reference to my work, are talking of the whole impression taken from any given plate. And, again, it is not fact because, while I have been careful to exempt the more scrupulous members of the association from a share in the enormities practised by the rest, the Fine Art Society tries to hide those enormities by mixing up the innocent with the guilty and striking an average between them. The Fine Art Society must have a poor idea of the little sagacity I possess if they think I will allow them to succeed by so transparent a device. I certainly will not do so. When, therefore, and not before, the Printsellers' Association—of which the Fine Art Society have made themselves the mouthpiece—have met those questions, they will find me perfectly ready to meet and expose the sophistries, insinuations, and hypotheses with which they are trying to smother them. They will find that no amount of mud which they may throw for this purpose will move me in the least. Meanwhile, if there are any who have the curiosity to know what has really been done with the 200 plates which compose my work, they may find much of the information they desire in the exhaustive catalogue of Sir William R. Drake, F.S.A., published by Macmillan; which catalogue, by the way, the Fine Art Society had before them when they referred to "Greenwich," the "Sunset in Ireland," and "Calais Pier," from which 125, 250, and 120 impressions have been taken respectively.

There is, however, one thing as to which I had perhaps better caution the Fine Art Society. Though they have not answered one of the questions which, on the strength of extracts from their own organ, *Year's Art*, have been formulated against the Printsellers' Association, they have not hesitated to say that in relying on those extracts I have aspersed them. Now, there is, perhaps, not much harm in the word "aspersion"—as, for instance, when it is applied to such an act as sprinkling the devil with holy water—still, used as they use it, it is an ugly little word, and if they neither withdraw it nor answer my questions will leave me no choice but to print from the publication in question, which they will observe I have not hitherto done, a list of the plates, by name, which have been made, say, to furnish over one thousand of these "association proofs." Will their colleagues in the association thank them for bringing into prominence such a list? I doubt it, and rather think that, in praying to be "saved from their friends," they will think the Fine Art Society would have done better to have stuck to the motto with which they started—"Silence is golden."

OSCAR WILDE'S LECTURE

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The World. March 29.

A number of people are distressed at the news of Mrs. Greville's death, which occurred after a painful illness of some weeks last Wednesday. She had been in indifferent health since her mother, Mrs. Thellusson, died in the early part of last year. Of a highly poetic nature, Mrs. Greville had few, if any, equals in the art of recitation; and she would entertain her friends with as charming a grace as she thrilled many of the mixed assemblies in Whitechapel and Battersea, whose manners are softened by the kindly efforts of amateurs. Old Carlyle used to relax from his grimness when with Mrs. Greville, and amused both himself and herself in applying such epithets to her as 'exuberant creature' and 'curious phenomenon.' Her large-heartedness endeared her equally with the Poet Laureate and Swinburne. She keenly enjoyed the sparkling humour of Jimmy Whistler, and thoroughly sympathised with the careful scholarship of Henry Irving. The Princess of Wales and the Duchess of Sutherland will feel the loss of a delightful friend and companion as regretfully as the villagers at Milford, where the well-known figure, wrapped in a flowing red cloak, outside an Irish car, will no longer be seen fleeting along the dusty road to Godalming.

been expected.

This is what Mrs. Julia Hawthorne, the American lady who has lately been criticising English celebrities, writes about him:—"He is a tall and large man, with straight flaxen hair brushed back behind his ears, and allowed to grow long enough to reach his collar. His ordinary attire is a long-skirted black coat buttoned around his figure, a white or yellow flower in his button-hole, a white waistcoat, lavender gloves, and silk hat. His ordinary expression is serene and blandly supercilious, but in conversation his smile is ready and affable, and his laugh frequent and pronounced. His name is known in all fashionable drawing-rooms, and his face in very many of them. At opera or play his presence is recognised and commented upon by the gallery. The Prince of Wales lately asked that the poet might be presented to him. 'I have never yet had the pleasure of meeting you,' said the future King, 'and not to know Mr. ——— is not to be known.' A year or two ago Mr. ——— dubbed himself 'Mrs. Langtry's ———,' and declared that his idea of heaven was to sit at the feet of the Jersey Lily and pelt her with flowers. The artist Whistler was once entertaining some friends at his pastel exhibition, when Du Maurier entered, and shortly after Mr. ———. Whistler caught them both by the sleeve, and brought them face to face. 'Look here now, you fellows,' said he, 'I say, who was it? Which of you invented the other, eh?'" Can you guess to whom Mrs. Hawthorne refers?

A funny scene occurred the other day in the London New York

The World April 26. 1882

James's harmonies, arrangements, and eccentricities, 'as certain also of our own critics have said,' are, it appears, differently appreciated in Paris. In any case, Mr. Whistler's portrait of Mrs. Meux has been such a success with the jury on the other side of the Channel, that they at once classed it among the pictures destined to occupy the places of honour in this year's *Salon*. Verily no man is a prophet in his adopted country!

tout!

Individuality is *the* thing. Mr. Herkomer says so; and M. Tissot has taken the hint. M. Tissot has the Dudley Gallery all to himself. He has painted four pictures illustrating his notion of the "Prodigal Son in Modern Life," and seven others on various subjects. Besides these productions there are the results of about 50 experiments with the etching needle. M. Tissot's art is peculiar. It is neat and realistic; fashionable and rather commonplace; smooth and tricky; elaborate and conscientious; and very nice. He has a fondness for the river, which he represents without light or atmosphere; for riverside inns, with well-dressed pleasure parties eating prim repasts, or gazing out of window at an unbeautiful entanglement of masts and cordage, and fumes of dirty steam-colliers; for a not unsaleable sentimentalism; and for a smug respectability. The people he depicts always seem to have at least five hundred a year and nothing to do for it; and he paints them idling, or love making, or stepping out of first-class carriages at railway stations—and paints them, too, with a sort of meritorious, painstaking realism. His work on copper is rather like his work on canvas. He paints a picture, then he etches it; and the etching is usually an improvement on the painting. He has also produced some "Cloisonnés Enamels," but they are more curious than beautiful. The principal of these is a large symbolical work executed partly in bronze, and entitled "Fortune." It is at once pretentious and preposterous. We regret to say that it is M. Tissot's intention to "adapt this work to a life-size monument or fountain." Some enamelled teapots, however, are pretty and effective.

the thanks of the company to Mr. Aitken for it, and the company soon afterwards dispersed.

THOUGHT-READING.—Mr. W. Irving Bishop, the "thought-reader," gave a private *séance* yesterday afternoon at Keats House, Chelsea. The company present consisted of the Prince of Wales, Lady Mandeville, Lady Archibald Campbell, Mrs. Langtry, Lord Donoughmore, Mr. H. Irving, Mr. I. Booth, Mr. Whistler, Mr. Frank Miles, Mr. Oscar Wilde, Mr. and Mrs. George Lewis, and others.

CROWN OFFICE, JUNE 2, 1881.—The Queen has been pleased by Letters Patent under the Great

Love makes those young whom age doth chill,
And whom he finds young keeps young still.
(Cartwright)

OSCAR WILDE'S LECTURE.

...rding sense of beauty and his recognition of a separate realm for the imagination, Keats was the

Whistler's portrait of his mother is a picture that either greatly pleases or greatly displeases; one cannot take a half-way position about it. The study of color makes it a curious piece for artists; in accordance with Mr. Whistler's methods, the manner is so much more important than the subject that he has not stopped to consider the fact that this 'arrangement in gray and black' puts something of a slight on the lady who sat for it. Mr. Whistler is so completely the artist for art's sake, and so wrapped in his own artistic personality, that the sitter and the public are shadowy to him. He is thinking of methods of work, not of the person represented or what the world is going to say. Naturally the world resents this lofty position. The mother, doubtless, forgives gladly. Perhaps the world had better make up its mind to follow the mother's example and forgive the snub in order to enjoy the picture. Evidently the artist does not intend to yield; for, ever since this was painted, Mr. Whistler has pursued his erratic course, flown in the face of conventionalities artistic and social, and been petted by both artists and society to the top of their bent. A memorable portrait it is, declining to omit a wrinkle from the plain old lady or to give a lustre to her quiet dress, and yet reproducing her and the wall of the room beyond, on which hangs a Whistler etching, with a peculiar robust refinement seen in no other work. Depth of thought exactly cannot be predicated for this, and yet in the handling there is plenty of brains, or, let us say, profound inventiveness. Mr. Whistler has the American inventor in him, allied to an exquisite, if not always thoroughly elevated, artistic nature.

I saw the other day the mezzotint engraving from Mr. J. M. Whistler's very noble full-length sitting portrait of Thomas Carlyle. The portrait is among the very finest that Mr. Whistler has ever painted. It is full of breadth, simplicity, and quiet strength, and is wholly devoid of eccentricity or mannerism. The original picture is in the possession of Mr. Graves, of Pall-mall; and I should be glad to learn that this striking yet refined presentment of the Sage of Chelsea had been acquired either by the National Portrait Gallery, of which he was one of the trustees, or the University of Edinburgh, of which he had been Lord Rector, or the London Library, in the Presidency of which he succeeded the late Lord Clarendon. I should be sorry to learn that the Americans had snapped up and carried off in triumph to the land where Ralph Waldo Emerson first made the writings of the author of "Sartor Resartus" known the finest effigy of the Sage of Chelsea that pictorial art has produced. His rugged and strongly marked features lent themselves, on the other hand, excellently well to the purposes of the camera; and there are some simply wonderful photographs of him extant: notably the one by Elliot and Fry, an engraving of which forms the frontispiece to the "Sartor" in the People's Edition of his works.

Illustrated London News 19-2-81

...nue, ...ways ...and ...ller. ...ested ...itous ...dred ...ween ...oil; ...the ...d six ...five ...lst, ...be ...d to ...rms ...ixed ...that ...per ...nth ...ning

...language, it is likely enough that the Roman people will not understand it either. It appears that we can authorise the impression without danger to morality or religion.' The chorus of ghosts was printed forthwith."

"ARTISTIC."—The London correspondent of an American paper tells a curious story of Mr. Whistler the artist's eccentricities. He was engaged to decorate a noble mansion in Belgravia; the price was no object to the owner, and, for that matter, neither was it to Mr. Whistler. One day a friend asked the correspondent to go over and see one of the rooms that was nearly completed, and he hastened to accept the invitation. This is what they saw on entering—a very slim, spare figure extended on a mattress in the middle of the floor; beside him an enormous palette, paints, half a dozen long bamboo fish-poles resting on a line with their butts close at hand, and a very large pair of binocular glasses. Mr. Whistler, dressed wholly in black velvet, with knickerbocker pantaloons stopping just below the knee, black silk stockings, and low pointed shoes, with silk ties more than six inches wide and diamond buckles, was flat on his back, fishing-rod in hand and an enormous eyeglass in one eye, diligently putting some finishing touches on the ceiling, his brush being on the other end of the fish-pole. Occasionally he would pick up his double glasses, like some astronomer peering at the moon, and, having gained a nearer and better view of the effect, he would again begin to agitate the paint-brush at the other end of the long pole. "Now wouldn't I be a fool," said he, "to risk myself on a scaffolding and nearly twist my head off my shoulders trying to look upward, when I can overcome the difficulty and annihilate space so easily thus?"—and he gave a wave of his fish-pole. And such a room—one mass of gorgeous purple and blue, ornamented solely with an enormous number of the eyes of a peacock's feathers! It was as if all the peacocks in Christendom had settled down upon one and were about to smother one in tail-feathers. And this was the celebrated "peacock-room" about which all London went wild not long afterward.

The Examiner, London, June 26, 1881.

THE RIDDLER.

RIDDLER'S SOLUTIONS OF No. 1980

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The Liverpool Daily Post. Tuesday May 3. 1881.

THE GROSVENOR GALLERY.

[FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.]

The chief attraction of the Summer Exhibition which opens to-day is to be found in one of the smallest canvasses on the walls, Mr. Alma Tadema's "Ave Cæsar." Claudius, discovered behind a curtain, still terrified as to his own fate, is saluted as successor to Caligula, who, with head bound with roses for the banquet which he was never to enjoy, lies slain in the midst of the excited crowd. For dramatic power, as well as artistic excellence, this exquisite little work must be pronounced a masterpiece. The marvellous discrimination of tint and texture, the elaboration of detail in strict subordination to general effect, the richness and variety of colour, and the effective arrangement of light and shade in this picture worthily entitle it to the place of honour which it occupies in the centre of the West Gallery. Besides this gem, Mr. Tadema contributes a still smaller upright work, a portrait of a lady singing, the head of her accompanist, probably a portrait too, being also effectively introduced.

Sir Coutts Lindsay exhibits a large design, from Dante's "Inferno," of "Charon's Boat." A subject of this kind, with many life-size nude figures, would tax even the best professional ability. It would be flattery to say that Sir Coutts has been altogether successful in dealing with it; but where failure, even ridiculous failure, was not improbable, it is something to say that his attempt at least commands respect.

Mr. Millais contributes, under the title "Sweetest eyes ever seen," another version of the same pretty girl whom he has painted as Cinderella for the Royal Academy. In this work, which is three-quarters length life-size, he has arranged his model standing with hands crossed in front, holding a basket with violets. The subject is but trivial, but Mr. Millais's sense and power of colour and consummate manipulation give a charm even to trifles. Besides this work, he exhibits a portrait of Mrs. Kate Perugini—a lady in a dark gauzy dress—but, though powerful, it is very sketchy, and the dress is sooty in colour.

Mr. Whistler again appears on the walls with a characteristic full-length life-size portrait of a girl, "Miss Alexander." This work is devoid of colour, being arranged in black and white and intermediate tones of grey. The general effect is dismal in the extreme, and one cannot but wonder how an artist of undoubted talent should wilfully persist in such perversities of judgment.

Mr. G. F. Watts, R.A., sends no fewer than eight works—including a fine portrait of the late Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe—all characterised by graceful fancy. "Arcadia" is a beautiful drawing of a semi-nude female figure, wherein the flowing lines of the figure and the drapery are admirably combined—although we have a suspicion that the right arm is if anything too robust.

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OSCAR WILDE'S LECTURE.

...ring sense of beauty and his recognition of a sep... realm for the imagination, Keats was the

15 Sept 1880

Dear Sir,

Will you excuse the rudeness of three countrymen, who have found out your address and are anxious to know whether you will allow them to see your sketches. Coming from Cambridge (where Prof Colvin administers Ruskin and Slater gratis per week) We should like to see (if not annoying you) the work you have done in Venice. Yours &c. John Wallop

Hotel del'Europe

How Whistler Painted a Ceiling.

London Letter to the Providence Press.

Probably you have heard of Whistler's extravaganza in houses. He was engaged to decorate a noble mansion in Belgravia; the price was no object to the owner—and for that matter neither was it to Whistler. One day a friend asked me to go over and see one of the rooms that was nearly completed, and I hastened to accept the invitation. This is what we saw on entering: A very slim, spare figure extending on a mattress in the middle of the floor; beside him an enormous palette, paints, a half dozen long bamboo fish-poles resting on a line with their buts close at hand, and a very large pair of binocular glasses. Whistler, dressed wholly in black velvet, with knickerbocker pantaloons stopping just below the knee, black silk stockings and low, pointed shoes, with silk ties more than six inches wide and diamond buckles, was flat on his back, fishing-rod in hand and an enormous eye-glass in one eye, diligently putting some finishing touches on the ceiling, his brush being on the other end of the fish-pole.

Occasionally he would pick up his double glasses like some astronomer peering at the moon, and having gained a nearer and better view of the effect, he would again begin to agitate the paint brush at the other end of the pole.

"Now, wouldn't I be a fool," said he, "to risk myself on a scaffolding and nearly twist my head off my shoulders trying to look upward when I can overcome the difficulty and annihilate space thus?"—and he gave a wave of his fish-pole.

And such a room! one mass of gorgeous purple and blue, ornamented solely with an enormous number of the eyes of a peacock's feathers. It was a room to make a man a lunatic in a week. It was as if all the peacocks in Christendom had settled down upon one, and were about to smother one in tail feathers. And this was the celebrated "peacock room" about which all London went wild not long afterward.

MARCH 12, 1882

DRAMATIC & MUSICAL GOSSIP.

"O ROMEO, Romeo! wherefore art thou, Romeo?" That's what about one-half of Henry Irving's admirers were saying on Wednesday night before the big show at the Lyceum began. When it was all over—that was just as "Big Ben" was striking twelve: what a time to let an audience loose!—a good many of them seemed disposed to change their tone, and to cry, "O Romeo, Romeo! why were you not Romeo long ago?" The house, of course, was packed from the orchestra to the ceiling. Some amongst the pittites and the gods must have had enough of it by the time the curtain fell, for not a few of them assembled about mid-day, armed with books and papers to while away the hours, and armed, too, with provender to keep off hunger. The Prince and Princess of Wales were not among this crowd, but they put in an appearance soon after the rising of the curtain, though not in time to see the wonderfully realistic scrimmage between the rival factions of Capulet and Montague—a scrimmage arranged by the Lyceum manager just to take a little of the conceit out of the Meiningen show folk, who, after their essay at Drury Lane, went back to tell their countrymen that nobody knew anything about the handling of stage crowds but themselves. There were dukes and duchesses, and lords and ladies of high degree, artistic swells, including Whistler with his tuft, and literary "pots," and, in a word, such a gathering of notabilities as has never before been seen on a "first night," even at the Lyceum.

...cumstances.

ART STUDENTS' RECEPTION.

Among the features of the exhibition at the last monthly reception of the Art Students' League were some very fine sketches by Mr. Albert Moore, of London. The designs looked like figures for panel or wall painting, but the drawing was very fine and beautiful, and the positions full of life, movement and variety. A very singular composition in oil was from an artist now in Florence, and conveyed the idea of the effect of music upon different persons and characters. The idea was good, but the treatment was dreadful. Still, the picture was striking and attracted great attention.

More interesting, however, to many was a little portrait in black and white, by Whistler, the Baltimore artist, now resident in London, of Mr. Whistler's mother. From a side view, in a sitting position, and a few inches of space, it tells the story of a life as pen and ink could not tell it. It might be a portrait of Miss Muloch's "Brave Lady," when her work was done, and she sat down in the twilight to wait for her summons. All the storms, all the fears, all the anxieties, all the burdens, have gone from her life, taking with them the color, the warmth of hair and cheeks, the lightness and the activity of step, the heat of rebellion and the scorn of righteous indignation, and left her a pure embodiment of spirit, of patient waiting.

Not the least interesting part of these receptions

OSCAR WILDE'S LECTURE.

...ring sense of beauty and his recognition of a ...rate realm for the imagination, Keats was the ...

...*opos* of Mr. Whistler, his really fine portrait of Carlyle is now on ...t Graves's in Pall Mall. This excellent picture, so well known by ...zzotint engraved from it, is by far the finest portrait of the sage of ...that has been painted of late years, and ought certainly to be ...sed for the National Portrait Gallery.

Spectator. Dec. 11. 1880.

ART.

MR. WHISTLER'S "VENICE," AT THE FINE-ART SOCIETY, NEW BOND STREET.

THERE are artists of many kinds and every rank, and there are painters of many kinds and every rank, who are not artists at all. And hereby "hangs a tale." For it is apt to happen that those who seek to express and those who seek to lead the popular judgment of Art, mistake the good painter for the good artist, and blame as an artist the man who fails as a painter; and so there comes confusion, and sometimes even "gnashing of teeth." It is not sufficiently remembered that artistic excellence must consist at least as much in habit of mind as in habit of hand; that, like a poet, an artist is "born, not made." And yet, without such remembrance we can hardly estimate rightly the most trivial of our picture exhibitions; and so we fall constantly (we had almost said consistently) into the error of taking good joiner-work for good Art, and bestow our praise on that perfected skill of hand which accomplishes all that it seeks, without hesitation or failure, rather than a work which falls short of its aim, because of that aim's worthiness. We want no "mute, inglorious Miltons," in these days; our Miltons must not only be loquacious, but trained in the best graces of elocution, and even then must curtail their epics within the compass of a magazine article, or people will scarcely listen to them. So it is that all hesitating, imperfect utterance of deep thoughts, whether in art or poetry, has gone, for the time at least, "to the wall," and we have substituted as our chief good, compositions which express in a clear, emphatic, and partial manner, some thought which no man shall be too hurried, or no woman too shallow, to interpret easily.

This being so, how can we wonder at the present popularity of the art of Etching?—an art which is essentially limited in its range, emphatic in its diction, and partial in its truth; which is happier in the gloom of a doorway than in the glow of the sunshine, and turns with a pleasant blindness from whatsoever in Nature or Man is of perfect beauty or noble thought, to linger with a vain kindness over the dark shadows of some city alley, or the broken timbers of a disused barge. It is not, then, wonderful that the series of etchings of Venice by Mr. Whistler, which are now being exhibited at the Fine-Art Society's Gallery in New Bond Street, should give us the desolation, the poverty, and the decay of the great city, rather than recall to us either the times of its greatness or the beauty of its age. The ruin that would be pathetic in a picture, the contrast between former purpose and present use, which would almost shock us with its intensity if seen in the actual place or in a painted picture, becomes, in the hands of the etcher, but one more element of picturesqueness, one more reason of the subject's suitability for his purpose. The etching-needle, which could hardly reproduce in all its subtle beauty the unbroken curvature of the perfect palace, finds it both easy and pleasant to touch with jagged outline the shattered arches which are all that time and restoration have left, and, in fact, delights in every accident which, marring the perfect beauty of the sculpture, has brought it into picturesque decay. It was hardly, therefore, to be expected that an artist (for, with all his imperfections, Mr. Whistler is a genuine artist) whose work was peculiarly suitable to etching, should have seen more in the old city of the Doges than Mr. Whistler has seen, and set down for us in these twelve illustrations of Venice. And those who feel painfully, as, no doubt, many will, the absence in these works of any feeling for the past glory of

Venice, must, after all, consider that it is not in works of this kind that such feeling could be expected to manifest itself. What has been done, and done with cleverness so great as to be almost genius, is to sketch the passing, every-day aspect of canal, lagoon, and quay; to give, in fact, to those who have not seen the city some notion of that outside aspect, in which wealth and poverty, grandeur and squalor, life and death, are so strangely mingled. And this outside aspect has, in the main, been truly given. It is not the Venice of a maiden's fancies or a poet's dreams, but the tangible Venice known to tourists,—especially to those tourists who stop a day or two, drink their coffee at Florian's, dine at Danielli's, and have a shilling's-worth of gondola in the evening, to wind up the day. On looking at the series for the first time, one is impressed with the excessive cleverness of the artist in avoiding all the ordinary points of view, and this impression rather deepens than fades upon closer inspection. Even such a well-worn subject as the Riva degli Schiavoni is made original by being taken from a high point of view, and looked at lengthwise, instead of from the Canal; and there is, perhaps, no more masterly piece of work in the whole series than that of the numerous small figures, each with a clearly-marked individuality, which Mr. Whistler has introduced into this etching. The plate, too, entitled "The Beggars," is a wonderful piece of rough work, in which every line has distinct meaning, and the composition, as a whole, has some of the dramatic qualities which mark Rembrandt's etchings. The figure of the haggard woman-beggar especially, is almost tragic in its intensity, and might stand for "Gervaise Coupeau," towards the close of *L'Assommoir*. Probably the best of the series is the one entitled "The Palaces," two palaces on the Grand Canal, with a broad stretch of water in front of them, and numerous gondolas moored against their walls.

In this etching, Mr. Whistler's drawing, which, though always masterly, is sometimes that of a very slovenly master, ppears at its best, and we do not know of any free-line work of the etching-needle which tells more with so slight an apparent effort than does the work throughout this plate. On the whole, the series is decidedly an interesting one, though, as we have hinted, it does not represent any Venice that we much care to remember; for who wants to remember the degradation of what has been noble, and the foulness of what has been fair?

Sat. Dec. 11. 1880

BOOKS.

THE DUKE OF SARDINIA *

OSCAR WILDE'S LECTURE

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...ed, wet, but triumphant with the honours of the tourney.

A LITTLE GAME.

Oscar Wilde Shows the Westerner Something of His University Education.

From the New York News.

While Capt. Foster was swapping lies with Ned Fry, out at the Cliff house, San Francisco, last week, Oscar drove up with Mr. Lock, and, taking a stained glass attitude on the balcony, was for some minutes lost in the contemplation of the grand old ocean breaking on the cliffs far down below him. "How grand the roar of the ocean," he said, dreamily, to the captain.

The captain was a little taken back, but agreed that it was.

"Would any price be too great for the glory of watching hour by hour, and day by day, through the placid waveless days of summer and the grand turbulence of the wintry gale?'

"Fifty a month," said the captain, who, while Oscar sighed unheeded, asked Fry what kind of a canary bird it was, anyhow.

After a time they went to the bar, where Oscar ordered "some milk, fresh from nature's odorous laboratory," while the others took a little lemon in theirs. Then Fry and the captain and another gentleman sat down to play "dollar ante."

"What eeze dollar ante?" said Oscar, dreamily, in a mezzo-soprano sigh. They explained.

"I, too, will fill in the passing day, if I may."

"Of course," and they gave him a seat and chuckled way down in their bronchial tubes.

A great sadness was upon him. Sometimes an unutterable melancholy would fill with dark shadows his dreaming eyes, but he said little—only sighed. Capt. Foster did not sigh. Several times he might have been heard to say something about dynamite. Mr. Fry was also a little melancholy, but talked in a different strain, several times saying rapidly, "—— the luck." By-and-by it was Oscar's deal, and he caressed the cards gently and distributed them mournfully, like crumbs at communion. Everybody went in. The captain took two cards. Fry took one and Oscar one.

"I will distribute a five spot," said the captain, locating a five-dollar piece in the centre of the green. "It will cost you five more," remarked Mr. Fry, disseminating a ten.

"Beshrew me, but I am oppreessed with doubt," murmured Oscar. "Could I but penetrate the dark veil of the future—but, no, nay, then will I risk all," and he doubtfully and sadly put up his portion. "Ten harder," said the captain. "Ten more than you," remarked Fry.

Oscar knitted his brow. "Verily I am in the vortex, and the o'ershadowing sky is murky, but I must stay. I will—how do you phrase it—call, call on you."

And the captain joined the merry throng. "Three aces," said he. "Full hand," said Fry, proudly, as he showed his cards and reached for the money.

"Too, too," the poet murmured, as he almost weepingly laid down four deuces.

And when the captain had flung his cards out of the window, and Fry was making the air blue with interjections, Oscar winked his eye audibly, and remarked in his natural frame of mind:

"Now that I remember, gentlemen, we used to indulge in this little recreation at Oxford. Come and take a snifter with me."

A young lady in Rhode Island cut and sold her luxuriant brown hair to a lady in Providence for $200, to procure comforts for her sick mother. She is entitled to the best husband in that State.

...ring sense of beauty and his recognition of a ...

...IE STANDARD, MONDA...

MR. WHISTLER'S PASTELS AT THE FINE ART SOCIETY.

Legitimate material for a minor exhibition has been found in the two or three score of Pastel drawings which Mr. J. A. Whistler has brought home from Venice. Unlike some of Mr. Whistler's work, they are to be taken seriously. In them Mr. Whistler has done justice to the best side of his talent as we know it at present; for while his early etchings of the Thames were principally devoted to the delicate pourtrayal of curious and unexpected combinations of line on river-side buildings and in river boats, the best of his later work has recorded, not so much actual fact, as the swift impression of fact. He has in that work abandoned precision of line for suggestive groupings of colour or striking juxtapositions of shadow and light. Probably it is no change of theory that has led to this alteration in Mr. Whistler's art, but rather that a man does not see at fifty quite what he saw at twenty-five. Too many artists, reaching full middle age and having made a certain success, are content to go on painting from no fresh impression, painting just what the public has always expected them to paint. The old material serves, and the old method is somewhat mechanically adhered to. Mr. Whistler, whatever may be his faults or his frolics, is freed from the danger of mechanical reproduction. He receives impressions vividly, and he can convey them vividly. The task which in these Venice Pastels, and in many of his later etchings, he has best succeeded in fulfilling is that of skilfully suggesting what he has not attempted to realise.

Therefore, perhaps, his Pastels will be more interesting—we may even say more fascinating—to the people who chiefly care how a thing is done than to the people who chiefly care what it is that is done. Mr. Whistler gives us no fresh vision of Venice, but sets down for us in an incisive fashion our own remembrance of the place; not so much the details of its architecture as its broader general effects, its sunsets glowing over a wide tract of sky, or melting along the waters of the lagoon; its grey autumnal or winter evenings in dirty weather; the flashes of occasional colour which in summer time light up its narrower bye-ways. Venice, so to speak, has not sat to Mr. Whistler for the portrait of its permanent features, but for the speedy seizure of its passing expressions. And though the work thus done is undeniably sketchy, is the very shorthand of art—it is yet generally, within the limits which it sets itself, faithful, significant, and vivid.

The general favourite will probably be "The Riva, Sunset, Red and Gold." You are looking along the water towards the horizon sky, where its colours are deepest—a mingling of many little clouds, red, orange, purple and blue—the dancing water catching the red and the gold. Not much work has been required to convey the effect that was observed, but it has been faultless work. Its few strokes are all frank and visible; there is not a touch that does not tell, and not one that can be harmlessly removed. "The Bridge: flesh colour and brown," presents an effect seemingly more elaborate, and only a most skilled use of the Pastels could have enabled Mr. Whistler to place equally on his paper the solidity of the houses—often whitish, with their thick-painted shutters—and the indefinite reflections of those houses in the sluggish yet still moving water of the side canal. For the first, the touch of the Pastel must be decisive and sharp; for the second, it must seem indeterminate and hazy. Yet the work is so well done that we hardly feel that it was skilful to do it. Here and there, however, in other drawings, there is very evident the difficulty of the medium—a difficulty sometimes so great as to have proved the medium to be really unsuitable. And here and there again, when the medium chosen does not seem to have been in the way, the hand has been less sure, has failed of its purpose, or has stopped even before the mere suggestion has been properly made. Thus one or two of the "Nocturnes" are more truly insignificant than any of the painted "Nocturnes" of the Thames, produced two or three years ago. One or two are wholly inexpressive—an artist's occasional failures, which there can be no need to display. On the other hand, certain of the simpler subjects are in their own way perfectly successful. "The Staircase" is one of these. It records not much in the way of architecture, but is a pleasurable suggestion of Venetian colour—a flash of red, seen in a clear, keen light. We hope a certain measure of durability may be granted to these vivid little Pastels. Just now, at all events, at their freshest, and in the best examples of them, their colour is of gem-like purity; they are, at the same time, sparkling and harmonious, faithful indications of the places and effects they seek to chronicle, and, to the eye sensitive to such matters, for their own sake most enjoyable arrangements of light and of hue. In speaking of them, it is impossible to avoid prominent recognition of what seem their merely technical triumphs. The historical or poetical associations of cities have little charm for Mr. Whistler, and no place in his art. In the character of Humanity he has not time to be interested, preoccupied as he is by its colours and contours. But nearly all that he has intended to do in these Pastels he has done beautifully.

THE M... ...AR.

OSCAR WILDE'S LECTURE

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THE BRITISH ARCHITECT AND NORTHERN ENGINEER
A RECORD OF ACCESSORY ARTS & SUMMARY OF MINING NEWS

DILETTANTISM.

A FRIEND sends us these "notes," written by a philosopher of no small repute, and we recommend "æsthetic" people to read and digest them if they can:—

The Italians call every artist *maestro*. When they see anyone dabbling in art without making it a profession they say "Si diletta." The polite satisfaction and astonishment with which they express these words show what they think of the dabbler.

The word *dilettante* is not to be found in old Italian. No dictionary has it, not even the *Etrusca*. In *Jagemann* alone you find it. He explains the word thus—"an amateur in art who not only contemplates and enjoys it, but wishes to take part in its creation." There are few such in the records of past times. There is an immense number of them in modern times.

The reason of it:—

The exercise of art is considered one of the chief factors in education or culture. When we speak of the dilettanti we exclude the case of one born with a real artist's talent who is by circumstances prevented from excelling. We only speak of those who give way to their instinct for imitating without having any particular talent for any special art.

Hence in trade the word duffer—dabbler, *pfuscher*, in opposition to craftsman. The latter, properly taught, acquires his craft by rules and precepts and he practises under the protection of laws.

Hence the ancient guilds.

The dilettanti is to art what the duffer is to trade.

Scarcely any nation has a word for dilettanti in that its full meaning.

We take it for granted that art also ought to be learnt by rules, although unlike those of trades not thoroughly recognised: the laws of art are *spirituelle*, not *bourgeois*.

What are the chief attractions of dilettantism?

Gain, with honour.

The artist is despised, looked down upon.

Assurance of an extensive enjoyment of the refinements of life is generally the foundation of all empiric esteem.

The sort of safe maxims we accept as highly moral are built up on birth, bravery, wealth. Genius and talent, though they have the inner certainty, are most uncertain as to the outward recognition of them. Nor do they always meet the demands and obligations of the day.

In barbarous times they are esteemed a scarcity. They are never certain of success, which must be often secured by begging and sneaking, and therefore so much the worse for those artists who personally canvass for the applause of the moment;—orators, actors, musicians.

Artists live, with a few rare exceptions, in a sort of involuntary poverty. There never could or can be a doubt that the state of the producing or creating artist is one to be envied.

Origin of dilettantism:—

A certain general esteem for the arts. An assimilation with the requirements of the middle class, by whom it becomes legitimatised.

The *artist* must be born.

He is a person privileged by nature. He is obliged to do something which no one can do like him.

And yet he cannot be imagined to be isolated.

Nor would he wish to be.

The work of art challenges humanity to enjoy it, and to awaken sympathy for this enjoyment is an irresistible longing in all men.

The greatest sympathiser should be the *real* dilettante, who would enjoy fully as much, nay, much more than others, because he could feel both cause and effect. Thus he is a practising dilettante, for when man enjoys he becomes at once productive.

This is the innermost quality of human nature—in fact, one may call it without exaggeration human nature itself.

An unsuppressible instinct to do the same—instinct for imitation proves nothing as to any born talent or genius for these things.

Look at children. They are urged on by everything active that attracts their attention—soldiers, actors, rope-dancers.

They put an unreachable goal before them, which they saw attained by practised, experienced adepts.

Their means become their ends.

A child's ends or purpose is mere play—an excuse to practise the passions.

How like the dilettanti!

There is dilettantism of women;—

There is dilettantism of the rich;—

There is dilettantism of the upper ten.

It is a sign of a certain progress.

All dilettantis attack or approach art on its weak side to produce at once imaginative compositions *via* Passion instead of Work.

Dilettantism in *artists*—what is the difference? A higher or lower degree of empiricism. False praise of dilettantism, unjust blame or criticism.

Advice to the dilettanti—what place he is to take. We have excluded born artists prevented by circumstances from excelling. They are rare phenomena.

Many dilettanti imagine themselves to be such! Though with them it is only a wrong direction which, trouble as they may, will attain no goal. Their utility is but small to themselves, and their use to artists or to art worthless.

And they do a great deal of harm!

Though men, artists and art cannot be debarred from a certain appreciative practical sympathy.

Purpose of these notes:—

Difficulty of effectiveness.

Short description of an incarnate dilettantism (we appeal to philosophers) would be a benefit to the next generation.

January 23, 1880.

OSCAR WILDE'S LECTURE.

The Young Apostle of Æstheticism Explaining His Theories of the English Renaissance.

It is seldom that Chickering Hall has contained so fine an audience as that which gathered there last evening to see Mr. Oscar Wilde and perhaps to listen to his exposition of those peculiar views which have distinguished him from everyday folk in England. And Mr. Wilde was well worth seeing, his short breeches and silk stockings showing to even better advantage upon the stage than in the gilded drawing-rooms where the young apostle has heretofore been seen in New York. No sunflower, nor yet a lily, dangled from the buttonhole of his coat, indeed there is room for reasonable doubt as to whether his coat had even one button-hole to be put to such artistic use. But judging his coat by the laws of the Philistines it was a well-fitting coat, and looked as though it had been made for the wearer as a real coat and not as a mere piece of decorative drapery. Promptly at 8 o'clock the young lecturer came upon the stage, and with the briefest possible introduction from Colonel Morse, Mr. Wilde began his lecture.

A subject as evasive as beauty, for beauty was the real subject of the lecture, is difficult to grasp with logic. Not analysis, not description was the method of treatment, but revelation. "Beauty cannot be taught, but only revealed," is the apothegm that Mr. Wilde never tires of repeating; and this, fitly enough, is the key to his style. He handled no prosaic subject nor was his handling prosaic. Long melodious sentences, seldom involved, always clear, unfolded his meaning as graceful curves reveal a beautiful figure. A vocabulary as wide as Swinburne's and well nigh as musical, modelled on that rich and flowing prose which is as marvellous as Swinburne's verse—how could such a style be dull? Yet it was never obscure. Always the first clear principle of chaste English, simplicity, and the careful attribute of clean thought, exactness, characterized his style. Almost gorgeous at times, his language never quite ran away with him, but was always equal to the clear expression of the most subtle fancy. The best parts of the lecture were its clear glimpses of a rare appreciation of artistic literary work from Homer to William Morris. Laugh as one may, perhaps as one must at times, at the attempt to make an original out of a caricature (for the conclusion is irresistible that the real creation is Gilbert and Sullivan's and not Wilde's), there are piercing bits of criticism and evidences of clean scholarship discernible everywhere. In spite of the frivolous that is, perhaps unfortunately, inseparable from the man and the subject, it is not every day that one can sit in the hearing of so keen a critic or catch such glimpses of so clear a revelation of art. Perhaps the young poet may yet lack strength, but he certainly does not lack fluency, width and felicity of style.

Among the many debts, said Mr. Wilde, which we owe to the supreme æsthetic faculty of Goethe is that he was the first to teach us to define beauty in terms the most concrete possible; to realize it [illegible] I mean always in its special manifestations. So, in the lecture which I have the honor to deliver before you I will not try to give you any abstract definition of beauty, any such universal formula for it as was sought by the philosophy of the eighteenth century; still less to communicate to you that which in its essence is incommunicable—the virtue by which a particular picture or poem affects us with a unique and special joy, but rather to point out to you the general ideas which characterize the great English renaissance of art in this century. This renaissance has been described as a mere revival of Greek modes of thought; and again as a mere revival of mediæval feeling. It is really from the union of Hellenism in its breadth; its sanity of purpose; its calm possession of beauty, with the intensified individualism, the passionate colors of the romantic spirit that springs the art of the nineteenth century in England, as from the marriage of Faust and Helen of Troy sprang the beautiful boy Euphorion. I trace the first tendencies of the modern renaissance to the French Revolution, and the desire for perfection which lay at the base of that revolution found in a young English poet its most complete and flawless realization. Pindus and the achievements of Greek art are foreshadowed in Homer; Dante prefigures for us the passion and color and intensity of Italian painting; the modern love of landscape dates from Rousseau; and it is in Keats that one discerns the beginning of the artistic renaissance of England. Byron was a rebel and Shelley a dreamer; but in the calmness and clearness of his vision, his self-control, his unerring sense of beauty and his recognition of a separate realm for the imagination, Keats was the pure and serene artist, the forerunner of the pre-Raphaelite school, and so of the great romantic movement of which I am to speak.

If you ask nine-tenths of the British public about the pre-Raphaelites, you will hear something about an eccentric lot of young men to whom belong a sort of divine crookedness and holy awkwardness in drawing all the chief objects of art. To know nothing about their great men is one of the necessary elements of English education. Indeed, the average Englishman will tell you that æstheticism is the French for affectation or the German for dado. The pre-Raphaelites were a number of young poets and painters who banded together in London about thirty years since to revolutionize English poetry and painting. They had three things which the English public never forgive—youth, power and enthusiasm. Satire paid them the homage which mediocrity pays to genius. Their detractors blinded the public but simply confirmed the artists in their convictions. To disagree with three-fourths of all England on all points is one of the first elements of sanity.

Pre-Raphaelism was above all things a return to nature—to draw and paint nothing but what was seen. With the joining of William Morris and Edward Burne Jones to the original board came changes. The latter brought to painting a more exquisite choice, a more faultless devotion to beauty, a more intense seeking after perfection. He felt that the close imitation of nature was a disturbing element in imaginative art. To Morris we owe poetry whose perfect precision and clearness of word and vision have not been excelled in the literature of our country. This revolution was not only one of ideas but of creations. The poetry of Morris, Swinburne and Rosetti shows a style flawless and fearless, a sustaining consciousness of the musical value of each word, a distinct advance in technique, which is the characteristic of all great eras. While then the material for workmanship is being elaborated, what people call the poet's inspiration has not escaped the controlling influence of the artistic spirit; not that the imagination has lost its wings, but we have accustomed ourselves to count their innumerable pulsations, to estimate their limitless strength, to govern their ungovernable freedom.

In choosing his subject the artist is the spectator of all time. Past and present are alike real to him. For him no form is obsolete, no subject out of date. But all things are not fit subjects for poetry. Into the sacred house of Beauty the true artist will admit nothing which is harsh or disturbing, nothing about which men argue. If he writes on these subjects, he does so, as Milton expresses it, with his left hand.

Whatever spiritual message an artist brings to his age is matter for his own soul. It is for us to do naught but accept his teaching. But our restless modern intellectual spirit is not receptive enough. Only a few have learned the secret of those high hours when thought is not. The secret of the influence of Japanese art here in the West is that it has kept true to its primary and poetical conditions, and has not had laid on it the burden of its own intellectual doubts, the spiritual tragedy of its own sorrows. In its primary aspect a painting has no more spiritual message than an exquisite fragment of Venetian glass. It is a certain inventive and creative handling of line and color which touches the soul—something entirely independent of anything poetical in the subject—something satisfying in itself. And in poetry the pleasure comes from what Keats calls the sensual life of verse, an inventive handling of rhythmical language.

And criticism—what place is that to have in our culture? I think the first duty of an art-critic is to hold his tongue at all times and upon all subjects, said Mr. Wilde, and then with an incorrigible[illegible] he proceeded to explain that it is the critic's place to teach the public to find in the calm of art the highest expression of their own most stormy passions. "I have no reverence," said Keats, "for the public or anything in existence but the Eternal Being, the memory of great men and the Principle of Beauty." Such, then, is the spirit which I believe to be guiding and underlying our English renaissance. But it is incomplete. There can be no great sculpture without a beautiful national life, and no drama without a noble national life. The commercial spirit of England has killed both beauty and nobility.

The drama is the meeting-place of art and life; it is the product of a period of great united energy. It is impossible, without a noble public, [illegible] direction, and has shown in one great tragedy what terror and pity he would have purified our age. He has had no worthy imitators. You have listened to the charming music of Mr. Sullivan and the clever satire of Mr. Gilbert for 300 nights, and I am sure, having given so much time to satire, it is not [illegible] to ask you to listen to the truth for one evening. There is no inordinate fondness for vegetable loves among us, though we grant the cleverness of Mr. Gilbert's satire; but such satire is no truer representation of us than the dust in a beam of light is a representation of the sun or the bubble that bursts upon the wave is a representation of the boundless sea.

It is rather to you that we turn to perfect what we have begun. There is something Hellenic in your air and world. You are young; "no hungry generations tread you down," and the past does not mock you with the ruins of a beauty the secret of whose creation you have lost.

Love art for its own sake and then all things that you need will be added to you. This devotion to beauty is the best of all great civilizations; it is what makes the life of each citizen a sacrament and not a speculation, for

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,
That is all ye know on earth and all ye need to know."

The lecture lasted for two full hours and was listened to throughout with the closest attention, and each point made was applauded with æsthetic hand-clappings.

Among the audience were Rev. Robert Collyer, Judge Brady, Mr. John P. Favre, Mrs. Thomas Francis Meagher, Mrs. Egbert Guernsey, Miss Guernsey, Mr. James Lawrence Hutton, Mr. and Mrs. Palmer, Mr. Hugh J. Jewett and the Misses Jewett, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Hawley, Miss Louise Mr Olcott, Mr. Robert B. Roosevelt, Mrs. Marion T. Fortescue, Mr. John Taylor Johnston, Miss Kate Field, Mrs. Claude Nimmo, Mr. Archibald Forbes, Mr. and Mrs. Wakefield, of Boston, Mrs. Burke-Roche, Miss Work, Mr. Henry Marquand, jr., Mr. Taylor Gocwin, Mr. Fred. Gould, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Woolsey, Miss Howell, Colonel and Mrs. Morse, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Wallack, Mrs. Lester Wallack, Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Moss and Miss Emily Moss, Mr. E. Barry Wall, Miss H. Lenoir, Mr. Peter Marie, Mr. Camille Marie, Mr. J. W. Curtis, Mr. Fuller, Miss Colgate, Dr. Griswold, Mr. and Mrs. John H. Davis, Dr. and Mrs. B. L. Dodd, Mrs. Thomas Hicks, Mr. E. F. Roneyn, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hoe and the Misses Hoe, Mr. and Mrs. Sanford, General McMahon, General and Mrs. Z. Deays, Mr. D. Duncan Vail, Miss Kate Sanborn, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Clark, Mrs. E. B. Phelps, Mrs. General Marcy, Mrs. W. E. Case, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Woolsey, Mrs. G. Elder and Miss Elder, Mr. Willie Hauk, Mrs. C. D. Mathews and Miss Mathews, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Tracy, Mr. W. J. Fitzgerald, Miss Sarah Hitchcock, Mr. and Mrs. Buck and Mr. Harry Buck, Mrs. N. L. McCready and the Misses McCready, Professor McDonald, Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Perkins, Mrs. Knapp, Mr. T. Paton and Miss Susie Paton, Mrs. Griffith, Mrs. John Kean, Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Samson, Mr. W. S. Gurnee, Mr. W. S. Gurnee, jr.; Miss Belle Gurnee, Mrs. H. T. Rauth, Mrs. Waterbury, Mr. C. Hester, Mr. Archibald Heiser, Miss Harrison, Mr. and Mrs. John Bigelow, Mr. and Mrs. Messenger, of Brooklyn; Lady Duffus Hardy and Miss Hardy, Mrs. Twombly, Miss Case and Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bergh.

Mrs. John Mack's Reception.

At the close of his lecture Mr. Wilde attended a reception given by Mrs. John Mack at her residence on Fifth avenue. Among the guests were General and Mrs. Frank J. Herron, Mrs. Bettner, Mr. and Mrs. John Bigelow, "Aunt Fanny" Barrow, Commissioner McLean, the Misses Mack, Mrs. John Lidle, Mrs. John Sherwood, President and Mrs. F. A. P. Barnard, Mrs. Judge Field, Mrs. Thos. Vise, Lady Duffus Hardy and Miss Hardy, General McMahon, Miss Annie Stevens, Mrs. A. L. Jones, Mrs. John W. Alexander, Miss Louisa M. Olcott, Mr. Stephen Massett, Mr. D. Duncan Vail and Mr. and Mrs. J. Wilton Brooks.

THE AESTHETIC BOOM.

AVE ROSINA!

[Impression du Theatre.]

Ave Rosina! Queen of Mimes and Mirth!
I've looked on thee and turned me toward the sun.
With thine own silver laugh the streamlets run
And ripple out their gladness to the earth.
Thy happy soul informs the song-bird's flight;
The weird, gray symphonies of winter skies
Reflect the languid witchery of thine eyes.
Thy gold-dusk hair is all there is of night!

And yet, the joyaunce of that lovely mien
I'd turn to fire, or death, or sob, or groan.
Dear Heart, I dare not lose my minor tone;
I must be Wild, Despairing and Unclean,
To clasp thee in a charnel house! Oh, bliss!
The Gorgèd Asp of Passion asks but this!

OW'

[illegible] among common people. No doubt there are girls to be found, amiable and charming in many respects, but un- [illegible] French landscape painters. Keeley Halswelle,

THE GROSVENOR GALLERY.

[SPECIAL]

(From Our Own Art Critic.)

You may look for a renewal of the controversy and the *badinage* over the peculiar development of modern art of which Mr. J. M. Whistler is the prophet. After a little spell of absence from the familiar scene the great discoverer of harmonies and symphonies from the paint-pot has returned, like a giant refreshed, to Sir Coutts Lindsay's famous gallery in Bond Street, and his work is wholly in the old quarry. If the Philistines hoped to win Mr. Whistler in any degree from the error of his ways they have been doomed to disappointment. He seems to say, from the works upon these walls, that he scorns to make the smallest concession to the adversary. Whistlerism was never more extravagant, never more defiant, never more exclusive and uncompromising than in the nocturnes and harmonies to which Sir Coutts Lindsay's collection this year owes so much piquancy and so much that is suggestive of banter, of controversy, of derision, and of etherealised appreciation. On the two sides of the doorway of the West Gallery is a pair of his "nocturnes," the first of them challenging the attention of the critic, on the first page of the catalogue, which may be accepted on both sides as raising the issue over which contending legions fight. The first is a "nocturne in blue and silver." To the common eye it is a sheet of drawing paper covered over with a wash of mixed water-colours, with an accidental spot or two of unmingled white. The catalogue does not say whether it is intended to represent anything, but the artist is a little more communicative as to the "nocturne in black and gold" which hangs on the other side of the doorway, for the catalogue further states it to be a presentiment of the "Entrance to Southampton Water." Whether the painter, on entering Southampton Water by night, saw anything but an expanse of darkness around him, levelling sea and sky and all created things in complete obscurity, with the exception of the glimmer of a lamp or two which were probably situated somewhere in Southampton street, is impossible for the unshriven conventionalist outside the Whistler school to say; but there is the blackened sheet of paper, slightly stricken in one quarter with the colour of dim flame on which anyone familiar with Southampton Water may try his hand at identification. It was probably at about the epoch of this remarkable study in Southampton Water that Mr. Whistler made a sojourn in the Channel Islands, and enriched his portfolio with the "Note in Blue and Opal," and the "Blue and Brown," relating respectively to Jersey and to San Breda's Bay. They who know not the mystery of these things will perhaps irreverently say that the accomplished master of the Whistler school did not need to encounter the perils and discomforts of the formidable sea-passage between Southampton and Jersey in order to produce those thoughts and imaginings in blue and opal and in blue and brown, because the barbarians before whom he is now exhibiting these works of art would have been equally well satisfied if he described them as studies of the Town of London or of Blackheath, under peculiar atmospheric conditions. Besides these studies this artist shows a pair of large pictures with a tall, slender lady in each, which go by the following titles:—"Harmony in flesh-colour and pink—Mrs. H. B. Meux," and "Scherzo in blue—'the Blue Girls.'" Fortunately for the lady who sat as a model for the girl in blue her name is not revealed, and whether she is an obscure maiden or whether she is a queen of society known to all the world, she may be congratulated on the certainty that her nearest friends will never accuse her, so long as she keeps her own counsel, of assisting in the solution of the problem involved in the cabalistic formula, "Scherzo in blue." This is fortunate, because it is clear, so far as clearness may be predicated of anything in connection with this work of art, that it would be necessary for the lady to come out of the blue in order to meet with the justice due to her charms, as judgment goes on such matters among common people. No doubt there are girls to be found, amiable and charming in many respects, but unfortunate in outline and not wholly right, mathematically speaking, as to the relation of the two eyes one towards the other, but it is safe to say that no girl in blue or in any other harmony could have such a twist at the waist as the artist has given this young lady, and live; and of all the eccentric convergences of a pair of human eyes that ever presented themselves to the students of this class of phenomenon, there is not much risk in saying that no such freak of nature is likely to have befallen a girl who voluntarily sits for her portrait as that which is set forth in the unlucky face of this "Scherzo in blue." As a name is given in the catalogue to the lady who has kindly enabled Mr. Whistler to catch the mystic "harmony in flesh-colour and pink," I can only pass it by as a work suited to be paired with the "Scherzo." They are equally wonderful examples of high art in the sphere of the Whistler school, where harmony and symphony are of greater account than symmetry, beauty, and mere conventional correctness in portraying things animate and inanimate on the mundane side of those spheres.

But, inspired or uninspired, all the world will want to see Mr. Whistler's latest revelations, and all the world will be gratified by one of the most interesting and remarkable of the exhibitions that have been held in the Grosvenor Gallery. There is a variety and freshness, an originality of thought and feeling, which are not suggested in walking through the many rooms of Burlington House. Whether we agree or whether we disagree with the notions of the various schools which are commonly embraced with the designation of "æsthetic," there is an undoubted advantage in the freedom of conception and treatment and in the discovering of new realms of subjects for art which are exemplified in the collections which Sir Coutts Lindsay makes for his exhibitions in Bond Street. There is, too, in this gallery a tone of personal illustration and personal association between distinguished people in various fields of celebrity which is not quite so well recognised at the Academy.

"Modern Landscape," by F. Comyns Carr, with etchings from celebrated pictures, and numerous illustrations on wood and in fac-simile (Paris: Libraire de l'Art. London: Remington & Co. 1883).—As distinguished in literature as in the world of the galleries, Mr Comyns Carr, when he undertakes to write letterpress for a choice selection of etchings and engravings in large book form, may be expected to do more than justice to his temporary function of guide. Nine etchings of pictures by Crome, Corot, Constable, Diaz, Daubigny, Dupré, Lawson, and Rousseau form the "pieces of resistance" in this beautiful volume for the drawing-room. Each of these has a full page, with fly-leaves to protect and designate it. The etchers are Park, Wilson, Greux, and Théophile Chauvel. Of the four Chauvel appears to be the most successful, and especially with "La Barque" of M. Dupré. He has also done much justice to Crome's "Near Norwich." Mr Wilson gives a happy presentation of Constable's picture, "Dedham Mill, Essex;" but Mr Park, with marks of graphic ability, can hardly be said to reach sufficiency; while G. Greux, appearing only once, in delineating "Horses at Grass," by N. Diaz, gives the impression of hurry side by side with considerable pastoral appreciation. It is likely that etching may satisfy painters as a translative means of showing their work less than engraving, but it deserves place as one of many methods of preserving and popularising the successes of the brush. If judgment were arrived at on the engravings given here, it might be said that the effect of the love of novelties has somewhat damaged the orthodox skill of the graving tool. But even so, such a full-page engraving as Turner's "Sunrise in a Mist," by E. Evans, will stand comparison with the more ambitious etchings. There are thirty-three engravings and fac-similes altogether, chiefly of pictures by French landscape painters. Keeley Halswelle,

who is well known to Scotland, has his picture of "A Deep and Headlong River" drawn or paraphrased by C. E. Wilson; and Fred Morgan and Cecil G. Lawson also appear as representative of English art in landscape. The engraving by Puyplat, from L. P. Sauvage's "Pourville, near Dieppe," deserves commendation in a special degree, and that of Claude's "Marriage of Isaac and Rebecca," from the National Gallery, is welcome in a work that gives opportunities for knowledge of what is characteristic in landscape. The absence of colour tells more severely on this department of art when represented by printer's ink than on any other. Design and story do not aid the messages of the sky, the forest, or the mountain. But such large numbers are enthusiastic in love of natural scenery that they are glad to be reminded of it by even the most meagre hints. With the present careful selection of pieces they are likely to be highly gratified. It is admitted by Mr Comyns Carr that as a distinct and independent branch of painting landscape may be said to be of comparatively modern origin. There are sceptics still existing who doubt whether it has a separate place at all in art. The older painters held it as the subsidiary of the higher problems of design. The practice of Leonardo and Dürer, who both had strong sympathy with the beauties of nature, was of this kind, though Mr Carr makes them harbingers of the school he discusses. To the Venetian painters, however, he gives the credit of being its absolute founders, Titian the chief pioneer. Rubens and Rembrandt next left their mark on the landscape branch of art. But England claims to have initiated the revolution in it that gives force to the term "modern landscape." The name of our Constable is credited in France with the new departure, which has been followed there with enthusiasm by such men as Corot, Millet, Troyon, Rousseau, Diaz, and Daubigny, of some of whom it will be noticed examples are given. How water-colours seem to have inspired this form of English art; what influence the Norwich school, of which John Crome was leader, had; how the classical landscape of Claude, revived by Wilson and Turner, changed with the latter to the romantic or Byronic, and reached realism in the hands of Millais — these and other lines of inquiry are followed by the essayist rather than writer of letterpress with characteristic ability and refinement. Demur might be made to his appreciation of Mr Whistler's art in modern landscape; and Mr Cecil Lawson's efforts, though those of one loved by the gods so far as dying young is concerned, may not be equal to the admiration given them. Of the former's work it is said that in it "the truths of light and air claim a complete ascendency. The physical realities of any chosen scene are entirely lost in an intervening veil of atmosphere. Local colour has no longer any existence for the painter or for the spectator." The artist of the famous "nocturnes," which seemed to trench on the province of music rather than keep to that of the brush, may wish perhaps to be saved from so devoted and enthusiastic a friend as is the ruler of the Grosvenor Gallery canons of taste. His criticism reminds of a character in Shakespeare's plays who had the gift of talking nothing on nothing. When free from the delightful but critically dangerous bonds of personal friendship, his judgment is as subtle as it is sound, and his knowledge of imaginative literature gives him an insight that is not universal among those most conversant with art and artists of design and colour. It is something of a special education to follow his account of the rise, growth, and, if Mr Whistler's revolution is to be accepted as fact, decay of modern landscape. If the higher stretches were to be occupied, much regret might not be felt at any useful *reductio ad absurdum*. While, however, landscape is rational and unpretentious, it cannot but receive a large measure of popular attention. The position of Turner as master in the section is not forgotten by Mr Carr, and as his splendid canvases show what can be done in it, there is little fear of revolutions. There was, it ought to be remembered, far more in Mr Ruskin's god than love of landscape, poetry and mythology being quite as much his sources of inspiration.

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MR. BELT'S fortune in a court of law has been better than was Mr. Whistler's. Both sued for damages for defamation of professional reputation, and both gained their case. But whilst Mr. Whistler was obliged to be content with the smallest coin of the realm and no costs, Mr. Belt gained a verdict in his favour for £5,000, and costs allowed. Whether the jury which was so generous to Mr. Whistler would have been equally magnanimous to Mr. Belt is of as little moment to us as is the speculative thought as to whether the latter will rejoice as much in his £5,000 as the former appeared to value his farthing. The contrast between the two verdicts is striking enough in all conscience, but then Mr. Belt was permitted to give practical evidence of his capabilities, whereas we do not know that the idea of Mr. Whistler's exhibiting his manipulative skill and creative genius in open court was ever thought of. Nor do we care to inquire into the reasons why in the Whistler *v.* Ruskin case, Baron Huddleston should have looked so leniently upon Mr. Ruskin's strong and offensive epithets towards Mr. Whistler as an artist, and yet have attached so much importance to those which defamed Mr. Belt as a sculptor. In both cases the plaintiffs were to all intents and purposes called impostors, and both sustained damage to their professional reputation. But beyond all speculative questions of this kind, there are others of greater moment involved in the result of the case just concluded, and to these we will briefly refer.

IN the first place, a great deal was made of the fact that Mr. Belt got others to work for him. In the architectural profession, as well as in that of sculpture, this is done to a large extent, and often enough really clever work is done by those who have no part or lot either in the commission or honour which lies at the end of it. In this respect it is difficult to see how Mr. Belt should have been singled out for the special showing up of the farming system. For, however much such a system is to be condemned in art work generally, to publicly brand a man as an impostor, on the score of getting others to work for him, is attempting to prove too much. No man's capabilities are to be appraised in any such way as that. Then there is the strong testimony of artists of great reputation sworn against the qualifications of Mr. Belt as a sculptor. We cannot think for one moment that there was any particular hostility on the part of these witnesses to Mr. Belt's practising the profession of sculpture. Rather would we attribute it to a jealous regard for art itself, and the recognised methods of academic training. And whilst it is impossible to set off the jury's verdict against the opinions of so many able artists (whose oath *must* be believed), it is certain that such statements as those which gave rise to the Whistler and Belt cases overstepped the bounds of legitimate criticism. In neither one case nor the other was there the slightest difference between the actual words used and the flat assertion that each of them were art impostors. Both have been declared otherwise by a jury of their fellow-countrymen, and it only remains for Mr. Belt to show the public and the profession that the decision in his case has been a true one. Mr. Whistler's claim to recognition as an artist of the highest culture was established long ere Mr. Ruskin thought fit to test it in a court of law.

Daily Chronicle. May 1. 1882

With Mr. J. M. Whistler's "Harmonies," "Nocturnes," "Blue Girls," &c., we must decline to hold any converse whatever, neither understanding them nor feeling any desire whatever to do so.

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(2) Mr. J. M. Whistler's "Nocturne in Blue and Silver" is a very remarkable production, seemingly based on linear and chromatic canons not yet sufficiently understood by the vulgar, and in the way of which, were an attempt made by any one save Mr. Whistler himself to expound them, madness might lie. The First Napoleon remarked of Goethe that he was a great genius, who had a great deal to say, but who did not know how to say it. When, on the other hand, we turn from Mr. Whistler's inscrutable "Nocturne in Blue and Silver" to (48) his perfectly lucid, sane, and comprehensible "Harmony in Flesh-Colour and Pink"—the portrait, to be precise, of Mrs. H. B. Meux—it is difficult to avoid the conviction that this talented artist is thoroughly capable of giving articulate expression to that which is within him, but that he does not always choose to say that which he pictorially means. Monkeys, the savages hold, are quite capable of speech, but prudently hold their tongues, lest the Tyrant Man, hearing them talk, should set them to work. Analogously, Mr. Whistler may as a rule pretend to be mute, or babble in an unknown tongue, lest, were he always to make himself understood, an exigent public should insist upon his being continually intelligible, and paint nothing but good pictures. Now and again, however, his seemingly settled purpose fails him; and he produces—as in his portrait of Mrs. H. B. Meux—a work of such singular beauty, grace, and force of expression as to reveal all the technical capacity which is unmistakably latent within him, but which for some mysterious reason he so often hides beneath the bushel of fantasy, whimsicality, and caprice.

Standard May 1. 188

Mr. Whistler is more amply represented, always, of course, by examples of his later fashion. Many people will laugh at Mr. Whistler's pictures, and there is one of them over which he must himself make merry. For when he calls his nocturne in black and gold (No. 106) "Entrance to Southampton Water," he does so, we suspect, with a profound conviction of the greatness of the joke of life, and of the amusing necessity of furnishing titles for the edification of people who have no artistic sensibility. "Southampton Water" might, for all that the spectator can know to the contrary, be the Tamar, the Mersey, or the Wash. What it really is is a delicate study, with each scanty clot of colour precisely in the right place, of a night effect, broken by artificial light, and happening—somewhere or other; it does not matter where. The portrait of Mrs. H. B. Meux, very accurately described as "Harmony in Flesh Colour and Pink" (No. 48), is suggestive of pleasant movement, and of character so far as the ways of a woman in momentary action are themselves a part of character. But we suppose Mr. Whistler to have been occupied less with a character than with an aspect; and as a large study in colour the work is delightful, though it looks to be audacious. For is it not, at the same time, sensitive and adroit?

Daily News May 1.

Mr. Whistler's "Nocturne in Black and Gold" (106) is like Albert Smith's "Study of Cologne Cathedral at Midnight."

What is a *scherzo*? (67). We hope there are few in nature and that Mr. Whistler will introduce no more into art. This *scherzo* is in blue, and reminds one of the "fever in green," which Sully said he met leaving Henri IV. Why should not Mr. Whistler paint a fever in green?

Daily News May 1.

Returning to the entrance of the West Gallery, we remark Mr. Whistler's "Nocturne in Blue and Silver"(2), in which the yellow lights seem perhaps somewhat too strong for the general tone of the Nocturne.

Daily News. May 1.

We may notice Mr. Whistler's blue-grey nothings—nocturnes and other mysterious combinations,

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Daily News May 1

Of Mr. Whistler's "Harmonies," a clever portrait of Mrs. H. B. Meux (48) is the most harmonious.

Current April 29

"Harmony in flesh-colour and pink —Mrs H. B. Meux," brings us to Mr J. W. Whistler, who is represented here by seven works in all, this being, perhaps, the best of his portrait compositions. The expression infused into this lady's face is very weird and uncanny, but there is harmony in the arrangement of the colours, although that harmony seems to be attained by the vagueness and want of definiteness that form the most notable features of the work. Further on we come on another and stranger, and perhaps more characteristic, full-length figure by Mr Whistler, called "Scherzo in Blue"—the "Blue Girl"—more sketchy and washy than the "Harmony." This "blue girl" is thin and long and lanky in the legs and arms, and has apparently been chosen on account of her undeveloped condition, which corresponds closely to the treatment to which Mr Whistler has here subjected her. The river scene entitled "Nocturne in blue and silver" is a true and fine effect, and will undoubtedly find many admirers; but the "Nocturne in black and gold—entrance to Southampton Water," is an impenetrable darkness that may be felt, but which can, we imagine, hardly be appreciated.

Liverpool Courier

No. 67, a "Scherzo in Blue," looks as if Mr. Whistler had been trying his hand in his turn at a portrait of Connie Gilchrist.

Sunday Times April 30

THE GROSVENOR GALLERY.

The summer exhibition of the Grosvenor Gallery, which opens on Monday, will be found to contain more than usual of those works whose merits are on their surface, and fewer of that description which require exceptional gifts for their enjoyment. The simple and obvious order is very decidedly in the ascendant, and the recondite and mysterious only appear in sufficient number to add piquancy to the collection.

It is satisfactory to find that Mr. Whistler's tendency to musical exercises in colour has not been completely removed by the ministrations of Profesor Ruskin, and that the tonic artist continues to produce nocturnes, harmonies, scherzos, etc., as of yore. If he also continues to get the same prices he is to be congratulated, and the purchasers, well—they perhaps do not require congratulation, their virtue is its own reward. The portrait of Mr. H. B. Meux, entitled "Harmony in Flesh Colour and Pink" (48), is a clever sketch as far as it goes, the "Blue Girl Scherzo in Blue" (67), is not. There are five other performances of the painter in which his admirers will no doubt experience a chaste delight.

May 4 Manchester Examiner

THE GROSVENOR GALLERY.

Sir Coutts Lindsay can hardly be congratulated upon the collection of pictures he has brought together for the summer exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery. Even remembering all the curiosities and monstrosities which have been presented to us here since the gallery was first established, we have never before found so large a proportion of feebly-pretentious work. There is, however, one source of satisfaction, and that is that the imitators of Mr. Burne Jones are not so much to the point as usual; although perhaps as compensation we have several "harmonies," "nocturnes," and "scherzos" from Mr. James Whistler. Mr. Ruskin a year or two ago expressed his opinion of certain performances of this gentleman in vigorous terms, which led to the intervention of the law. What Mr. Ruskin would say of Mr. Whistler's later works may easily be guessed, but the ordinary critic who finds it difficult to speak of them with patience and politeness does perhaps best to pass them over without comment.

Graphic May 6

. . Besides several curious exercises in colour conveying only the vaguest suggestion of anything in nature, Mr. Whistler sends a full-length portrait of "Mrs. H. B. Meux," undefined as to form, but charming by reason of its exquisite quality of colour, its just balance of light and shade, and general harmony of effect.

Manchester Examiner May 4

Our old friend Jimmy Whistler is of course very conspicuous here; he is this year seen at his best and at his worst. Some of the little paintings of water are delicious, but his blue girl is positively awful. He calls it a "Scherzo in Blue"—a blue shriek would describe it better.

Modern Society May 20

With five pictures by TADEMA—none, however, very remarkable—five by Mr. WATTS,—one a very funny full-length portrait of the Prince of WALES—many by the young and ambitious aspirants who have small chance of encouragement at Burlington House, and a new crop of Mr. WHISTLER'S little jokes, the Grosvenor has opened its courtly *salon* under every possible favour of fashion and æstheticism.

—*Truth.*

Nonconformist May 18

Mr. Whistler is represented by seven nocturnes, or "scherzo in blue," &c., &c. We may have a little too much of this sort of thing. Here we have a great deal too much. These pictures are studies in colour, experiments of what can be done, but they ought not to take their place in a public gallery.

Saturday Review May 27

and Mr. Whistler's absurdly named "Harmony in Flesh-Colour and Pink—Mrs. H. B. Meux" (48) is so clever as to make one regret its deliberate eccentricity.

Portfolio June 1

Intermediate between this group and more naturalistic painters, we may record the clever colour studies of Mr. Whistler which reappear in these rooms, on a disproportionate scale. The subjects, which are of little consequence, apparently, for interest or form, are portraits arranged as *Harmonies*, a *Schorzo*, and so on.

Life May 18

Mr. J. W. Whistler contributes several of his peculiar tone-studies, which have little to recommend them save the eccentricity of their titles.

Society May 27

48. "Harmony in Flesh Colour and Pink." J. M. Whistler.—Portrait of Mrs. H. B. Meux in the character of *Miss Cherrylips*, saying, "What do you think of this dress, because I've lots of others?"

Colonists of India May 19

. The Japanesque artist, Mr. Whistler, sends seven of those musical sketches, unique in style and title, which excite as much shallow ridicule as thoughtless eulogium. No 48, "Harmony in Flesh Colour and Pink," is unquestionably clever. But why has the carpet wandered up the frame? We ask this question in no scoffing spirit, but with a sincere and earnest desire for information.

World & Pictorial May 20

Mr. J. M. Whistler's "Harmony in Flesh-colour and Pink" (48) is very wishy-washy, and one cannot be surprised at Professor Ruskin, though his words were very scathing.

Mr. J. M. Whistler's "Harmony in black and red" (129), is not worth a second glance.

Pictorial World April 20

Mr. Whistler sends seven works, all in his own mysterious manner, the best of which is undoubtedly the portrait of Mr. H. B. Meux, which is designated "A harmony in flesh colour and pink" (48), and which is attractive solely for the graceful pose of the figure. We often wonder whether Mr. Whistler is a humourist, and whether he puts forth his "symphonies," "nocturnes," and "arrangements," for the purpose of having a laugh at the public. Certainly if he can get the public to pay for such work, it is no one's right to interfere; but we must decline altogether to consider them from a serious art point of view. We can enjoy the joke—but we cannot criticise.

England (126 Strand) May 27

It is true that there are still some unsightly blots from offenders such as Mr. Whistler, but they are the exception, not the rule.

3072

Punch May 27

Globe May

105

No. 48. To be completed in a few more Sittings, by J. M. Whistler.

The best picture by Mr. J. M. Whistler in the collection, and indeed the only one that is likely to be regarded with much satisfaction, is a gracefully designed full-length portrait of "Mrs. H. B. Meux" (48), in a dress of greenish grey tint, trimmed with pink. The forms are undefined, and the features scarcely discernible, the face being overshadowed by a large hat; but the picture, as a whole, delights the eye by its fine pervading tone, its exquisite quality and just balance of colour, and its perfect keeping. In Mr. Whistler's other canvases, including a "Scherzo in Blue" (67) and a "Nocturne in Black and Gold" (106), said to represent the entrance to Southampton Water, his eccentricity is more apparent than his genius

Sun May 17

THE "HARMONY."

MATILDA JANE, I 've been and seen
A work to turn your head—
A rhapsody in blue and green,
And yellow, black, and red;
My friends will simply go insane,
For envy's force is strong;
I 've *bought* the work, Matilda Jane,
And here it comes along.

A frightful sum I 've given for
The work that meets your eye;
I 've bought it at the Grosve*nor*,
Where Wealth alone may buy.
Matilda Jane, that canvas speaks,
It shouts from ev'ry line,
A man could gaze for weeks and weeks
Upon that great design.

Now bring the steps, Matilda; fly
Within our banquet-hall,
And hang this great production high
Upon its fairest wall,
That all may see the charms that lurk
Within its peerless——stop,
Is this the bottom of the work,
Or can it be the top?

Your explanation 's nobly meant,
But foolish, to a word;
Your reading of the work's intent
Is hopelessly absurd!
It regularly shocks me that
Such schism should prevail—
This yellow patch is *not* a cat,
Nor is the green its tail.

Attend, Matilda; hear how I
Beneath its surface dip:—
The yellow is the sunset sky,
The green 's a plunging ship;
The red 's—the red 's—I 'm mostly quick
To hit upon and trace
The mean—the red 's a candlestick—
No, that were out of place.

Why—there—with reason I 've relied
Upon my deep resource—
Why, this that we supposed the side—
Yes, that 's the top, of course!
We follow this unfailing plan,
And we at once disclose
The portrait of a gentleman—
Of course—why, here 's his nose!

And yet it isn't wholly clear
In certain places now—
For what 's the comet doing here?—
And isn't this a cow?
I rather think the puzzle's roots
Too deeply hidden lie;
I fail to grasp that pair of boots
That decks the distant sky!

It 's wrong side out! Matilda, blush!
What foolishness! Alack!
The cleanings of the artist's brush—
He 's daubed 'em on the back;
Ah, here 's the front; now try again,
Our pains were misapplied—
This isn't *half* so nice and plain—
I like the other side.

Literary World June 2

Of Mr. Whistler we do not speak. To judge by the prominence of his works in the *Grosvenor*, they must be held by Sir Coutts Lindsay to have a beneficial effect upon the taste of artists and of the public. The fact is that they tend to make art a laughing-stock. When you look out of window in a dark night, you see a few vague masses and glimmerings, but you can distinguish nothing, and you turn away with the reflection that the eye gives you no information in the absence of light, and that illumination either by sun or moon is indispensable to open-air beauty. When you find, from the catalogue of a picture-gallery, that the dark prospect you had looked at is the *Entrance to Southampton Water*, you feel that it is the printer, not the painter, who has made it possible for you to learn this from the picture; and when the surface of black, with touches of yellow here and there, is additionally described as a *Nocturne in black and gold*, you ask yourself whether the photographic artist, whose photographs taken in the dark Mr. Albert Smith used to make everybody laugh at, was, after all, a caricature. Pictures in darkness are contradictions in terms. So long as Sir Coutts Lindsay is the patron of oddity, he cannot be recognised as contributing to the education of taste.

Society May 3

Mr. J. M. Whistler stands out prominently amongst the portrait painters in his delightful "Harmony in Flesh, Colour and Pink—Mrs. H. B. Meux," one of the most tender and charming realisations of a charming face imaginable; then a "Scherzo in Blue," "The Blue Girl," "A Nocturne in Blue and Silver," a dream of delicate tones dotted with dancing light, and a companion, "Nocturne in Black and Gold—Entrance to Southampton Water," and two scenes from pleasant Jersey—"Note in Blue and Opal" and "Blue and Brown," one of the sweetest spots on earth, the Bay of St. Brelade.

The Albion Liverpool April 29

The peculiarities of Mr. Whistler's fancies are seen in nearly all the rooms. One of the most pronounced specimens (No. 67) is Scherzo in blue, "The Blue Girl." The features bear examination; but the remarkably lean, lengthy, ill-proportioned, and inelegantly-placed limbs of his young lady are, to say the least, artistically unusual. There is a harmony in flesh colour and pink, Mrs. H. B. Meux, which is admirably successful in producing the effect of a person seen through lace curtains and smoky panes. No. 2, a nocturne in blue and silver, is really well worth seeing. The artist, in this instance, has achieved distinction, with less to show for it than by any previous effort.

South Daily News May 1 (Wales)

THE GROSVENOR GALLER

[BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.]

LONDON, Saturday.—The Grosvenor this year may be considered as, on the whole, tame. It is impossible year after year to keep up an exceptional interest. The masters of the peculiar school which it brought into deserved notice have played their big trumps. The aces, kings, and queens were in Sir Coutts' first two or three hands; we have now come down to the sevens and the fives and the threes. Mr Whistler is, however, once again in the catalogue, notably in two examples—one of his strength, and the other of his inexcusable weakness and affectation. There is always a difficulty in criticising the Grosvenor, because a certain amount of gush is expected in favour of a special clique of painters. If the gallery held no works but theirs, the critic's course would be plain; but when you have mastery and mystery side by side, you are taken at a disadvantage.

Paris Journal May 5 (Signed Denion)

Tout d'abord, j'ai été stupéfié de la médiocrité générale du Salon. Parmi toutes ces toiles, à peine y en a-t-il dix qui méritent qu'on les admire, à commencer par le portrait de M. Whistler, une belle, simple et grande œuvre, ne vous déplaise. Il y a, soit dit en passant, dans cette étude de femme désolée, dans l'harmonie générale du tableau, une mélancolie grandiose, qui fait penser à la *Marche funèbre* de Chopin. Whistler est l'Hébert des impressionnistes.

Le Charivari May 12 (signed Louis Leroy)

M. VID. — O sainte frivolité! Pour vous punir, je vous arrête devant la *Femme en noir* d'un artiste (Whistler) qui, si je ne me trompe, a fait jadis la *Femme en blanc*. Il ne se répète pas, celui-là.

Mme RÉCAMIER. — Cette pauvre dame est tombée dans l'encre. Que de rouge et de poudre de riz il lui faudra pour réparer du noir l'irréparable outrage!

Gazette des Beaux Arts June (Signed Antonin Proust) 109

Les nombreux des très bons portrait Tu Salon je dois placer

celui de M. Whistler dont les eaux-fortes sont de purs chefs-d'œuvre.

Le Tribulet May 14 (Signed G. Japy)

M. Whistler, encore un Américain, pour un portrait qui a l'air de venir du musée de Madrid, ou qui devrait s'y trouver à une belle place;

Le Constitutionnel May 20 (Signed Henry Tsimon)

Quelle fantaisie est venue à M. Whistler de donner à son portrait de femme, l'aspect sépulcral, pas même d'une morte, — d'un fantôme. Il y a pourtant là quelque chose de plus qu'une fantaisie; mais un souffle, une ombre, — rien, — c'est trop peu.

La semaine de Paris May 21 (signed R. Miles)

Quel est ce *portrait* tout noir d'où sortent une tête de femme, des bras et la fourrure blanche d'une pelisse? C'est bizarre au premier aspect, mais après quelques instants d'un examen attentif, on reconnaît que son auteur, M. WHISTLER, est un vrai artiste, avec une note grandement originale.

The Art Interchange April 13

From Mr. Whistler there is a large work, conspicuously odd, as though his intention had been to emphasise the eccentricities which have made him famous. An old lady is seated in a chair so that a side view is presented. The composition is quite simple, all the artist's efforts apparently having been directed toward producing a sombre, aged effect, in which certainly he has been successful besides showing some peculiar technique.

Leeds Mercury May 11 (Salon)

Mr. Whistler exhibits a characteristic study in black and white, in the portrait of a lady whose slightly sandy hair forms the only relief to these two shades.

Guide du Salon May 13

Portrait de Mme ***, peinte dans la suie, par WHISTLER : aimez-la si vous voulez.

Journal Amusant Mai 20

40880

Madame Harry-Men, seule inventeur de la *pommade Albinos*, pour faire blanchir instantanément les cheveux.

L'Opinion Mai 18

M. Whistler, qui depuis 1863 n'avait pas fait parler de lui, a passé tout ce temps à étendre du noir de fumée sur cette grande toile.

Un peu de mie de pain, deux ou trois enleués fort adroitement opérés, et voilà une impression de tristesse qui m'envahit en regardant ce résultat.

La peinture, à ce point de vue, trahit le deuil d'une âme incomprise.

Et il y a une femme au cœur d'or qui a été compatissante au point de lui laisser reproduire ses traits ! ô cœur humain !

L'Artiste Mai 7

M. WHISTLER, en quête de nouveautés ingénieuses dans la composition trop souvent banale du portrait, va du noir au blanc et du blanc au noir. Certain portrait de femme en blanc attira l'attention jadis. Le portrait en noir de Mme Harry-Mew n'est pas moins curieux. M. Whistler a ses hardiesses à lui et son originalité quand il le faut.

L'Intransigeant Mai 26

L'autre est la *Femme en noir* de M. Whistler. Les deux extrêmes.

La *Femme en noir*, c'est le contraire. Un fond d'encre. Un manteau rudimentaire de plumes blanches emprisonne — sans la serrer — une longue silhouette de velours, qui se confondrait avec le reste, sans cette bordure éclatante. Une gorge très rose s'échappe du corsage, et une tête jeune se dessine au-dessus du col plein de grâce. A l'abord, ce singulier portrait excite une violente surprise. Mais il n'y a rien ! dit-on. Mais c'est de la démence ! Cette femme n'est qu'un tache à peine raisonnée ! Ne vous détournez pas. Persistez à contempler, et vous verrez, peu à peu, une sveltesse sortir de cette ombre, de légers reflets arrondir l'opulence des seins, la gorge se cintrer, des cambrures se produire, et, dans le visage, une grâce infinie se répandre.

Je blâme ce parti pris trop évident, qui exile de la palette presque toutes les couleurs sauf le blanc et le noir, pour s'en tenir à démontrer la valeur des rapports.

Mais je reconnais qu'en cette expérience, le résultat est des plus curieux. Il est vrai qu'un tel système ne pourrait s'enseigner. M. Whistler en est l'inventeur. Qu'il en ait le bénéfice, mais qu'il ne fasse pas de disciples. Ce sont les disciples que je craindrais.

Le Constitutionnel June 9

on aurait pu récompenser les six eaux-fortes, d'un effet surprenant, de M. Whister, d'après les vues les plus caractéritiques de Venise.

HENRY TRIANON.

La vie Domestique June 17 · De Basilan

Quant au Portrait de M. *Whistler* je me demande ce qu'il fait au Salon. Le malheureux cholérique qui est cloué sur cette toile serait bien mieux au Père-Lachaise.

Boston Weekly Transcript May 30

Curiously, as though to complete the show of the new school in all departments of art, Whistler this year makes one of his rare appearances in Paris. He, too, has a portrait nearly life-size—a lady in a cloak lined with white fur—and he has evidently gone over his work again and again to take out of it all suggestion of its being done in paint.

Journal des Arts June 13 (A. D'Alligny)

Le portrait de Mme Harrymen par M. N. WHISTLER est d'une pose excellente; la figure bien peinte; les fourrures du manteau sont traitées trop sommairement. Plus accentuées, elles donneraient plus d'éclat à l'ensemble.

Times Mon 8

THE GROSVENOR GALLERY.

(FIRST NOTICE.)

It is impossible to consider this year's exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery a very satisfactory one, or even to give it the doubtful praise of average excellence. This gallery is dependent, more than any other in London of at all equal importance, upon the good work of half a dozen artists, and if they are either unrepresented, or unfavourably represented, the mass of the pictures is little likely to make up for the deficiency. A good deal of the amateur element still lingers in the works shown here, and makes known its prejudices and its shortcomings also in the selection of the pictures. As a consequence we see works of the most astonishing *technique* here hanging side by side with thorough work. Another element of insecurity with regard to the merit of the collection is that it happens in some instances to afford a home to the eccentricity which has nothing but eccentricity to recommend it. Before such pictures as the large full-length portraits by Mr. Whistler critic and spectator are alike puzzled. Criticism and admiration seem alike impossible, and the mind vacillates between a feeling that the artist is playing a practical joke upon the spectator, or that the painter is suffering from some peculiar optical illusion. After all, there are certain accepted canons about what constitutes good drawing, good colour, and good painting, and when an artist deliberately sets himself to ignore or violate al of these, it is desirable that his work should not be classed with that of ordinary artists. To say the truth, this year's Grosvenor Gallery is unfortunate in its portraiture, even when the name of the artist would seem to afford us a guarantee of merit.

World Mon 3

Mr. Whistler's wand-like walking-stick was one of the most striking objects at the private view of the Grosvenor Gallery. It was longer than himself, and even slimmer, and he balanced it delicately between finger and thumb. He explained that he intended that it should become historical, and its appearance doubtless marks a new departure in the fashion of sticks.

Morning Post May 2

Several of Mr. Whistler's eccentricities are here, which it is needless to describe; he is fortunate in getting so much wall-space allotted him. "

South Wales Daily News Mon 1

And now we come to Mr Whistler. A little picture of his at the doorway (No. 2 in the catalogue) reveals his extraordinary command of aerial perspective. It is a stretch of the river at twilight, with the glimmer of the gaslights on the opposite shore. No materials can be simpler than those employed, no result more triumphant in its achievement. And then we cross the gallery and come to No. 67, a scherzo in blue. A thin girl stands with legs wide apart, in the attitude of a gentleman on his hearthrug, with his back to the fire. One cannot well describe her surroundings more accurately than by calling them paint. They do not seem to be, or to represent, stuff of any known texture. Bluish green paint is behind her; purplish paint under her; her little skirts are blue, and some of the blue has escaped out of the background on to the frame. Is it not a pity that affectation should drive a man to push eccentricity beyond the verge of the ridiculous? Let us turn to healthier work.

Ill. London News Feb 6

Mr. Whistler is also here, and some apology may be made for the analogy he claims to exist between his suggestions of colour and the "notes," "nocturnes," "harmonies," and "scherze" of music; but if music were never more distinct and complete in form, and its harmonies were no better than, for instance, those of the leaden "flesh colour and pink," numbered 48, it would hardly enthral our senses.

The Builder Mon 6

Of Mr. Whistler's contributions, his so-called "harmony in flesh-colour and pink" (48), of which we do not see the flesh-colour, is nevertheless, in its peculiar style, a graceful and pleasing portrait, more remarkable for the elegant pose of the figure than for the colour, after all. Other portraits that are here from the same hand are better passed over.

Academy Feb 6

The charm of quick and graceful movement is just suggested by Mr. Whistler's "Harmony in Flesh-Colour and Pink—Mrs. H. B. Meux;" and, as in Eastern work, colour is disposed by colour with a curious instinct for success. A certain legitimate enjoyment—the enjoyment of the dexterous hand—belongs to so considered a slightness, if people will but accept it for what it is, and for nothing besides.

Art Journal June 1

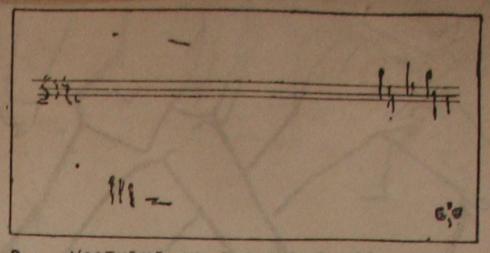
Art Journal June 1

From Mr. Burne Jones to Mr. Whistler is a considerable step, but the latter is responsible for the most conspicuous picture in the room after Mr. Burne-Jones's 'Tree of Forgiveness,' namely, a 'Harmony in Flesh-colour and Pink—Mrs. H. B. Meux' (48): a young lady in pinkish grey and pink, with a touch of positive red upon her lips, and a few threads of scarlet in the carpet upon which she stands, and her face partly shadowed by the broad brim of her hat. Mr. Whistler has never painted anything more delicate in colour than this, nor ever, perhaps, anything quite equal to it in the rhythm of line to be obtained from the sweep of female drapery.

Spectator May 13

At present, pretty well half the big room is filled by gigantic contributions from Mr. Whistler and Mr. Richmond, one of whom sends seven and the other ten works. It is quite conceivable that the large, blue canvas, with a small, blue girl in the midst thereof, which Mr. Whistler entitles "Scherzo in Blue," may have a meaning and a merit that we do not comprehend; but certainly, one example of such work is all that can be needed; it is like a two-headed nightingale, or the "Siamese Twins," not beautiful in any way, and only interesting as long as it is unique. Besides, there is a certain amount of insult to painters like Watts, Millais, Leighton, Burne Jones, and Holman Hunt, in overwhelming their contributions with masses of confident mediocrity or incompetent eccentricity. No one who cares for poetry would bind Walt Whitman and Tennyson together, and if Sir Coutts Lindsay intends to be a true patron of Art, he must remember that one first part of his duty is to know good Art from bad, and take care that his actions make such knowledge more general. In Art, as in life, love of the just, must include hatred of the unjust; and it is as necessary to discourage all vicious or tricky styles of painting, as it is to encourage all sound, good craftsmanship. As we have so often said, one of the bad results of the present fashion for Art, is that those who buy have no real knowledge of, or love for, the art they purchase, and so are at the mercy of any charlatan who can gain access to them. It is no light matter for a man of Sir Coutts Lindsay's influence in the Art world, to set the cachet of his approval upon bad painting, for that is to turn his influence against every true painter, and delay the time when his work will be properly and fairly appreciated.

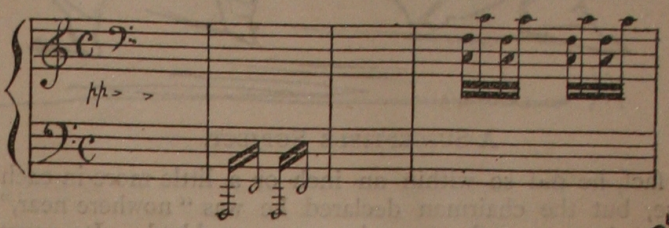
Society May 13



2 NOCTURNE IN BLUE AND SILVER

FANTAISIE.

IN THE BLUES.



2. "Nocturne in Blue and Silver." J. M. Whistler.
750

Which he wished to remark,
And his language was plain;
"I'll paint nocturnal arrangements
"Again and again."

—BRET HARTE (altered).

Mr. Whistler paints musical landscapes. This is a picture of the blue Danube, and the silver is the price of it. The nocturne can only be properly rendered by the musical composition affixed to it. We presume that everybody has learnt Hamilton's "Instructor for the Piano." The high lights in this picture are in the artist's phraseology, the D lights on the line, and are naturally delighted at finding themselves above high-water mark. Try and play the air, and then you will understand why the picture is in the blues.

L.S.J. June 12

The Grosvenor Gallery exhibition would be incomplete, indeed, without some novelties by Mr. Whistler. This eccentric genius is entitled to the honour of having added to the summer exhibition both the best and the worst pictures of the collection. His portrait of Mrs. Meux, which he humorously describes as "A Harmony in flesh colour and pink," is a marvellous example of impressionist painting. It is an admirable likeness, graceful in attitude, harmoniously and delicately coloured. The hanging committee of the Grosvenor Gallery should have allotted this a position at the end of the room. It requires distance for the eye to embrace at one glance all the charms of one of the best of Whistler's works. What a difference there is between the refined beauties of this and the extraordinary eccentricity of another of his exhibits! Mr. Ruskin might well ask, Is this a picture? and, if so, what is it supposed to represent? It presents the appearance of a few inches of highly varnished marbled hall paper, or a perpendicular sheet of limpid ditch-water. It is framed and numbered "2"; moreover, for the guidance of those unfamiliar with the Whistlerian vagaries, it is described in the catalogue as a "Nocturne in Blue and Silver." If Mr. Whistler aims at unconventionality and his patrons admire the "nocturne," the artist is entitled to all praise, and his critics deserve any enjoyment they may derive from inspecting this picture, and Nos. 67 and 106 from the same hand.

South London Chronicle May 6

"Rough winds do shake the darting buds of May," Shakespeare says in one of his sonnets, but it was during the last hours of April that the trees in our parks were rudely upturned, and those whose misfortune it was to live in old houses found the roofs shedding slates but all too liberally. The sudden storm was indeed a disturbing element on Saturday evening when we were returning home from the private view at the Grosvenor Gallery, and had spent the afternoon drinking in inspiration from Mr. Burne Jones' pictures, and recalling, while studying Mr. Whistler's "Nocturne in Blue and Silver," his "Harmony in Flesh-colour and Pink," "Scherzo in Blue," "Harmony in Black and Red," and "Nocturne in Black and Gold," the artist's passage at arms with Mr. John Ruskin respecting the great art critic's very severe strictures.

Queen May 6

Mr J. M. Whistler is, we think, as usual, somewhat beyond the sphere of art criticism, and we really have nothing to say concerning his "Blue Girl," "Harmonies," and "Nocturnes," leaving them to those who see or imagine they see, beauties in them, not open to the ordinary eye.

Court Journal May 6

Whistler's "Blue Girl," though set down in the catalogue, does not appear. It has been withdrawn by the artist for awhile, in order to finish it more highly. Holman Hunt, Burne Jones, Millais, and Sir John Leslie, all contribute works of such excellence it would be impossible in our limited space to dwell on their characteristic beauty.

St James's Gazette May 6

115

THE GROSVENOR GALLERY.—I.

THE general character of the collection at the Grosvenor Gallery does not greatly differ from that of the Academy. If we except the "Phyllis and Demophoön" of Mr. Burne Jones—about which opinion is, of course, much divided—there is no picture in the rooms so striking as Mr. Alma Tadema's "Claudius" or Mr. Gregory's lady in white satin, of last year; neither, on the other hand, are there so many pictures of very inferior quality. The good portraits are less numerous than they have sometimes been; and so are the examples of that class of work—said to be at the opposite pole of art—of which the Grosvenor Gallery is supposed to be the nurse. In the big room two of the most remarkable pictures are portraits by Mr. Whistler: one of them, which is catalogued as a "Harmony in Flesh-colour and Pink—Mrs. H. B. Meux," is a striking combination of pink-greys and pink, with here and there a touch of scarlet which helps to give solidity. The figure is finely posed; and the face is shadowed effectively by the brim of a round hat. A "Scherzo in Blue—the Blue Girl" (why does not Mr. Whistler paint a gavotte or a barcarolle for a change?) and a "Harmony in Black and Red" are less pleasant productions: more than that we dare not say.

Court Journal May 6

GROSVENOR GALLERY.

This exhibition, thanks to the perseverance and judicious administration of Sir Coutts Lindsay, is increasing in importance with every year. The "startling novelties in art," which at first attracted public curiosity alone, have been accepted, notwithstanding opposition, and we find the pictures by Whistler and others of his school, that once caused such dissension, no longer condemned as the wild experiments of untutored genius, are examined and discussed with the same impartiality as the works of other painters who follow the beaten route. The *odeur de bonne compagnie* which greets the visitor on entering the Grosvenor Gallery is fully borne out by the exhibition. The portraits of distinguished characters, pictures by artists of high name surround us, no work being admitted save by invitation to the artist. Sir Coutts makes himself responsible in a manner for the artistic worth of the works exhibited, and certainly this year the responsibility is fully justified.

In the west gallery the "Nocturne in Blue and Silver," by Mr. Whistler, a picture which a few years ago would have created the utmost excitement, now gives rise to no altercation—but shares examination and criticism with the other pictures. Comprehension of the subject is difficult, and a wit has declared that it requires more genius to understand the "Nocturnes" and "Arrangements" than to paint them.

Daily News May 29

Mr. James Whistler is well to the fore this season with fresh and characteristic work. His so-called "arrangement" in black, a portrait of Mrs. Meux, has gone to the Paris *Salon*, but he has reserved another "arrangement in pink and green" for the Grosvenor Gallery, for which he will also have ready a portrait of Sir Henry Cole, K.C.B. He has painted a "Nocturne" of Southampton Harbour, and during a recent visit to Jersey has made some water-colour drawings of sea, sky, and shore, under silvery, golden, and grey aspects.

The Guardian May 10

(48), a harmony in flesh-colour and pink, by Mr. Whistler. The pink is pale, the flesh-colour is stony grey, and the slender form seems retreating and ready to vanish into thin, if not transparent, air. A "Harmony in Black and Red" (127), another portrait of a lady, is equally characteristic of Mr. Whistler. We welcome again the familiar Nocturnes, in Blue and Silver (2) and in Black and Gold (106), though at the first glance the latter work looks much like a dark slate, upon which a child has been rubbing in a rough design of an uncertain character. Mr. Whistler shows by his two slight sketches in water-colours (341 and 342), from subjects in Jersey, that he does sometimes draw in a style like that of other people.

Observer May 1

Of Mr. Whistler's contributions, the majority of them will be classed with the absurdities by this artist which Mr. Ruskin so roundly condemned a year or two ago. They serve for the sneer and the laugh of derision, but are so far removed from any accepted canons of art as to be beyond the understanding of any ordinary mortal. He sends a "Nocturne in blue and silver," a "Harmony in flesh-colour and pink" (portrait of Mrs. H. B. Meux), a "Scherzo in blue" (an outrageously ugly portrait of a "girl in blue"), a "Nocturne in black and gold" (supposed to be a representation of the entrance to Southampton Water, but being in reality a flat mass of blue-black colour with a dab or two of light thrown in), a "Note in blue and opal," and another note in "Blue and brown." At one time Mr. Whistler did seem to be on the point of developing these nocturnes and harmonies into something in the nature of artistic suggestions, but now he altogether burlesques art, and the sooner he relinquishes this mad-cap business for a more legitimate field of art the better, for, with all his eccentricity, he is an artist, and both with etching needle and brush has achieved really good work.

The Times May 2

Hue, the Government contractors, occupied two or three of their most able artists for several weeks—and that the firm decline to charge for the work so well done.

This, naturally enough, leads me on to Art subjects and to the Grosvenor Gallery, which, as a show, is infinitely better than the one at Burlington-house, the only blots in the Exhibition being Mr. Whistler's "Scherzos in blue," "Nocturnes in blue and silver," "Harmony in flesh colour and pink," &c., &c., all of which gems I am sincerely thankful to say I cannot appreciate. With these exceptions, the collection which Sir Coutts Lindsay has gathered together is, in my humble opinion, the best he has ever shown, and such will be the general verdict.

The Leeds Mercury May 2

No exhibition at the Grosvenor would be complete without some specimen of the "Impressionists," and of these the various schools are represented by Mr. Whistler, Mr. Spencer Stanhope, Mr. Walter Crane, and Mr. Strudwick. Of Mr. Whistler's contributions two especially deserve notice, a Nocturne in blue and silver (2), and the portrait of Mrs. H. B. Meux, a "harmony in flesh colour and pink." The delicacy of sentiment in the former, suggestive of the unseen but not unfelt beauties of the scene; and the refinement and grace of the latter show the capabilities of that art which unfortunately is too frequently exaggerated in the hands of its highest exponents.

Queen Post May 1

I must not omit to add that Mr. Whistler has returned to the scenes of his battles and his glory. Never, but once, in the history of Sir Coutts Lindsay's gallery has the prophet of nocturnes, harmonies, and melodies in paint been in greater force. Let those admire who can.

Glasgow Herald May 1

Mr Whistler is a "Grosvenor Galleryman" with a vengeance, and gives us half a dozen specimens of his most eccentric studies. The best of them is a "Nocturne in Blue and Silver" (No. 2), "A Night Scene on the Thames," and the worst (both execrable) a "Harmony in Flesh-Colour and Pink" (48), and a "Scherzo in Blue" (67).

Le Monde Illustré June 16

— M. Whistler nous revient après vingt ans d'absence. Il s'était fait connaître, en 1861, si je ne me trompe, au *Salon des refusés*, par un portrait excentrique de femme vêtue de blanc; il envoie, cette fois, l'effigie d'une dame entièrement vêtue de noir. C'est toujours la même peinture, étrange, bizarre, dénotant, sans doute, un tempérament d'artiste, mais mal équilibré, et, en définitive, médiocrement recommandable.

Bazaar May 15

Of the productions of Mr. Whistler, seven in number, it is not easy to speak explicitly. Regarded as artistic experiments merely, they are full of interest, and, furthermore, we are fain to own that they possess subtle qualities which grow in attractiveness the closer one studies them. "Before such pictures as the large full-length portraits of Mr. Whistler," impatiently observes the *Times*, "critic and spectator are alike puzzled. Criticism and admiration seem alike impossible, and the mind vacillates between a feeling that the artist is playing a practical joke upon the spectator, or that the painter is suffering from some peculiar optical illusion. After all, there are certain accepted canons about what constitutes good drawing, good colour, and good painting, and when an artist deliberately sets himself to ignore or violate all of these, it is desirable that his work should not be classed with that of ordinary artists."

As a set off against this we may perhaps be permitted to quote from the *Athenæum*, the divergence in the views of high critical authorities being always more or less edifying. Our literary contemporary thus comments: "At the opposite end of the artistic pole to Mr. Jones are the technical experiments of Mr. Whistler. Adopting and intensifying the principles of the Japanese in respect to colour, the audacious Franco-American painter has produced studies of effect, tints, and tones of which the most acceptable are as follows: 'Nocturne in Blue and Silver' (2) renders with exquisite gradations and perfect truth one of those lovely effects of dimly illuminated morning mists on the Thames which nature evidently intended Mr. Whistler to paint. Pallid azure vapours fill the vista just before dawn; on the shore are gleams of orange light. With much skill a drifting raft, giving due solidity to the whole, has been placed in front. The 'Nocturne in Black and Gold' (106) is the complement and the converse to the last. It is a mystery, the charm and fidelity of which we acknowledge, composed of the darkest grey and dusky olive tints, among which a beacon lamp rises on a pole above a space of apparently irresolvable gloom, but which may be a cottage or a light vessel. Subtly graded gleaming bars and long lines of golden dots in the distance attest the existence of Southampton Water and the town lights."

It will be noted that whereas the *Times* in its hostile remarks refers specially to Mr. Whistler's figure subjects—portraits we can hardly term them—the *Athenæum* ignores these, and reserves its praise for the two river scenes mentioned. The latter, we agree, are the achievements by this eccentric artist most obviously open to eulogy.

Artistic [illegible]

Guardian May 9

Mr. J. M. Whistler sends two of his clever and mysterious little "Nocturnes," a river in the waning light and river by night (2 and 106).

Royal Cornwall Gazette

The great aim of a landscape painter is to secure what is termed "breadth" in his art work. This has been undoubtedly effected by our *ci-devant* friend, Mr James Whistler, since his latest "Nocturnes," "Harmonies," &c, are all breadth, to the utter exclusion of every other artistic feature. Such "night-marelike" rubbish can be neither stood nor understood by those dull, unimaginative mortals who see only with ordinary human eyes.

Guardian May 9

Mr. J. M. Whistler's portrait of Mrs. H. B. Meux is called a "Harmony in flesh colour and pink" (48), and is in many respects a masterly piece of tone-painting, but is still somewhat lacking in finish about the face, and presents an appearance of a somewhat sickly nature. A "Scherzo in Blue" (67) has not this particular defect.

Paris April 29

Whistler, portrait de femme des plus intéressants, qui jette une note très personnelle au milieu des envois de MM. Wagrez, Yvon, Van Beers, Bernier.

Réveil April 30

l'étrange et très-intéressante dame en noir, avec manteau de fourrure, de Whisler,

La République française 23 Mai

Un Américain qui au Salon des refusés, 1863, obtint un succès considérable avec une *Femme en blanc* d'un dessin médiocre mais d'une palette fière et savante, M. Whistler, se manifeste cette année par une *Femme en noir*. Ces vingt ans n'ont point profité à l'artiste, qui a frisé le génie, mais qui s'est diminué par plus d'excentricités que d'œuvres de ta

lent. La mystification, qui le hante comme de certains personnages dans les romans américains, est devenue, avec le temps, funèbre. Un visage de femme rond, bouffi, pas plus accentué que les visages de poupée auxquels se complaisait Hamon, s'enlève en rose terne sur un fond noir mat.

Punch May 20

GROSVENOR GEMS.

by a mere Mortal from the Works of the Gods in t

No. 127. "Keep it Dark; or, The Ghost in the Haunted Coalhole." A Darkie Harmony, by a Whistler.

L'Europe Artiste May 14

Malgré soi, on s'arrête devant un portrait de femme de M. Whistler; évidemment l'auteur cherche et veut; nous laissons à d'autres à juger s'il a trouvé. Quant au portrait, ce n'est à proprement parler qu'une ébauche; le parti-pris de jeter un manteau gris sur une robe noire ne nous paraît pas heureux et rend l'ensemble complètement terne.

Morning Post May 16

THE GROSVENOR GALLERY.

[SECOND NOTICE.]

ART and science are so closely akin, and both are so manifestly included under the general head KNOWLEDGE, that we need make no excuse for treating works of art from the artistic as well as from the scientific standpoint. Yet we shall not dwell further on those enormities of the æsthetic and maniac schools which are manifest at once to the artistic eye. We must, in passing, note that a word in excuse may be said for the followers of the modern Mediæval school. There is a natural temptation for those who find that, though eager to cover canvas, they can neither draw nor paint, to take work in hand which requires skill neither in colouring nor in drawing. "You are not pretty, my child," said a clever mother to her daughter; "therefore, you had better be odd. It is your only chance of attracting attention." This, which is the *raison d'être* of the æsthetic school generally, is a sufficient principle for the painters of that school. Any one can copy a mediæval picture without faults detracting from its mediæval character: a little change in an impossible limb does not make it less mediævally impossible; a slight difference in some ghastly tint gives only another ghastly hue, which still remains mediævally hideous. Therefore, if we were advising a would-be artist who could neither paint nor draw (and who was too lazy to learn) how he might obtain an easy notoriety, we should tell him to try the mediæval school. "You are too unskilful or too idle," we might say, "to paint anything really good; therefore go in for oddity. Even *your* drawing will not spoil a mediæval figure. You know as much of perspective, linear and aerial, as the mediæval painters did (who knew nothing); you cannot err much more egregiously through want of talent and energy than they did through want of experience. Follow, then, their school. Carefully copy all their faults. Pretend that you find in deformity beauty which others cannot see, in sickly tints a delicacy of hue which others cannot appreciate. Remembering that as there are always many foolish people, you may be sure of a following, after a fashion." In every age there have been these affectations, though we learn it, unfortunately, not from any works which have survived, for all the works of such schools have a fatal facility in fading out of view, but from occasional passages of ridicule in writings by contemporaries who have survived. In this way the memory of even æsthetic absurdities may be handed down—to an amused posterity.

Of the Whistler school it need only be said that as there are some who take idiocy for ecstacy, there may be a few who find genius in insanity.

L'opinion nationale May 22

121

L'effet que produit le grand portrait de femme de M. Ned Whistler est extrêmement singulier. On se sent étonné et séduit, frappé de curiosité. On appréhende vaguement que cette toile de sujet simple contient de grands raffinements, des complexités cachées. Cet état d'esprit persiste et pourtant on ne peut le raisonner plus clairement ni en discerner les causes.

M. Whistler a peint une jeune femme de taille moyenne, debout, blonde, suffisamment grasse et rose, habillée d'une robe décolletée noire et a demi drapée dans une pelisse blanche. Or cette fourrure, la robe, les chairs des épaules, des bras, des joues, les cheveux, les perles de la coiffure, ce rang de perles si bizarrement, sont faits d'une façon si bizarre, avec des procédés si totalement dissemblables de ceux qu'on emploie communément, que l'œil hésite avant d'admirer.

En réfléchissant, on se rappelle que Velasquez peignait à peu près de la même touche sommaire, apparemment insuffisante, magistrale cependant, les blancs et les noirs. On se souvient du « Portrait de l'Infante » à la salle La Caze, où le peintre espagnol reproduit de cette même manière légère et veloutée, le rose des joues et des lèvres, avec la même sobriété sourde, l'éclat des cheveux blonds et des perles. Une très faible partie de la surprise causée par la toile de M. Whistler se dissipe et l'on admire ce que l'art de ce peintre a d'absolument original.

On remarque l'impression bizarre de cette figure noire sortant d'un fond de même ton exactement par le contraste cru de la pelisse qui l'enveloppe. Le noir domine toute la toile et assourdit toutes les couleurs. Le blanc de la fourrure s'en trouve sali et atténué. Il étend sur tout le modèle une mince gaze obscure qui refroidit et éloigne les chairs des bras et de la poitrine, éteint le rose des joues et ajoute au mystère du regard. M Whistler par cet assombrissement de toute sa toile est parvenu à nous faire apparaître son modèle non comme une créature vivante mais comme une vision nocturne, animée d'une vie mystérieuse et troublante.

Les yeux de la femme conservent leur façon inexplicable de regarder, des yeux bleus, éteints, agrandis et noircis encore par les cils noirs qui les étoilent, drôlement naïfs, ambigus et souriants, pleins de choses perverses. Puis on considère le visage à peu près rond, joli, charnu, avec une petite bouche de très jeune femme, la pose de tout le corps, penchée en avant un peu maladroite, sans l'ombre de la majesté habituelle des portraits de femme à fourrures. La bizarrerie de cette belle jeune femme peinte dans la coloration sourde d'un demi-crépuscule, produit une impression merveilleusement fantastique et singulière.

Au point de vue technique, le portrait de M. Whistler enthousiasmera tous ceux qui possèdent le sens de la couleur. Jamais personne, n'a su faire concerter d'une façon plus juste et avec un effet plus étrange, le noir, le rose et le blanc. Mais on démêle dans l'œuvre de M. Whistler, autre chose que cette maîtrise d'œil et de main. Par son coloris bizarre par la ténuité de sa touche, la pose du modèle, par des artifices invisibles et d'effet d'autant plus sûr, ce peintre anglais a produit une œuvre tourmentée, où se heurtent les qualités méditatives et fantastiques, les plus hautes, la grâce gauchement corrompue, la froideur de l'ombre, le charme d'une femme moderne, noté dans la dissonance aigüe des deux couleurs primitives.

Le tableau de M. Whistler est évidemment l'œuvre la plus attirante et la plus suggestive du Salon. Il nous paraît juste de dire qu'elle a des mérites assez rares pour être associée aux toiles les plus célèbres.

EMILE HENNEQUIN.

L'Evénement April 30

Le portrait de femme exposé par M. Whistler, qu'une certaine femme en blanc, refusée en 1863 ou 1864, faillit rendre célèbre, m'a paru un peu noir; mais on y sent la main d'un artiste plus soucieux d'interpréter que de copier. Cela devient de plus en plus rare; les gentilshommes ordinaires de Sa Majesté Collodion ne me contrediront pas.

Liverpool Courier May 1

Several arrangements in blue and silver, in white and pink, in black and gold, and black and red are exhibited in prominent positions by Mr. J. M. Whistler. Mr. Watts, Sir Lindsay Coults, Mr. Boehm, Mr. and Mrs. Alma Tadema are among the artists who are represented this year.

Le Moniteur des Arts 30 Juin

M. Whistler a retrouvé à Grosvenor le succès de sa fameuse *Femme en blanc* au Salon des refusés de 1863. L'*Harmonie en rose et couleur de chair* et la *Nocturne en noir et or* sont deux toiles absolument charmantes. M. Whistler n'a jamais été plus raffiné et plus délicat que dans ces deux tableaux à étiquettes bizarres. Je n'en dirai pas autant de l'*Harmonie en noir et rouge*. Dans le langage néo-anglais, qui est celui de M. Whistler, on sait que le mot *harmonie* est tout simplement synonyme de *portrait* et le mot *nocturne* de *paysage*. Ainsi, harmonie en rose et couleur de chair, cela veut dire en bon français : Portrait d'une dame décolletée, vêtue d'une robe grise à rubans roses.

Daily News May 1

Mr. Whistler is again in force. He has a nocturne which is pleasant to look upon, and one portrait which does not make a nervous spectator shudder; but his "blue girl," of which so much has been heard, is hideous, and his other "arrangements" are appalling to the mind. If anybody likes to call this art he is welcome to do so; we call it artfulness.

Architect May

THE GROSVENOR GALLERY.

WE have heard this exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery denominated a scratch exhibition. The word thus applied is perhaps a little unkind, and not a little contemptuous; but it is so far true that the collection of pictures is even more than usual diverse in styles, various and incongruous in subjects, and unequal in worth. For our part, we have always upheld in these columns that a chief virtue of the Grosvenor Gallery platform was its opportunity for the display of singular and individual art manifestations elsewhere discouraged or rejected. Therefore we rejoice to see Mr. WHISTLER once more displaying his *Harmonies* and *Scherzi*, skilful studies of mere colour apposition and relation, planned on a scale out of all proportion to their necessity and slighted as to subject.

L'Echo de Charlemagne 14 Mai

Tous nos compliments aussi à M. Whistler. Son œuvre est grande et belle. Cette étude de femme désolée a un caractère vraiment grandiose et revêt une mélancolie du meilleur aloi.

L'artiste Juillet

Un des anciens compagnons d'infortune de M. Manet, M. Whistler, l'auteur de la *Dame blanche*, qui parut au Salon des refusés en 1863, revient au Salon de cette année, avec la *Dame noire*, une étrange apparition, poétique et mystérieuse, ténébreuse comme la nuit et troublante comme un songe.

Athenæum May 6

At the opposite end of the artistic pole to Mr. Jones are the technical experiments of Mr. Whistler. Adopting and intensifying the principles of the Japanese in respect to colour, the audacious Franco-American painter has produced studies of effect, tints, and tones of which the most acceptable are as follows. *Nocturne in Blue and Silver* (2) renders with exquisite gradations and perfect truth one of those lovely effects of dimly illuminated morning mists on the Thames which nature evidently intended Mr. Whistler to paint. Pallid azure vapours fill the vista just before dawn; on the shore are gleams of orange light. With much skill a drifting raft, giving due solidity to the whole, has been placed in front. The *Nocturne in Black and Gold* (106) is the complement and the converse to the last. It is a mystery, the charm and fidelity of which we acknowledge, composed of the darkest grey and dusky olive tints, among which a beacon lamp rises on a pole above a space of apparently irresolvable gloom, but which may be a cottage or a light vessel. Subtly graded gleaming bars and long lines of golden dots in the distance attest the existence of Southampton Water and the town lights.

Scotsman 3 May

... J. M. Whistler is here again with his nocturnes; and if it is difficult to make much of one in which spots of yellow lamp-light glimmer here and there from out an expanse of hazy blackness, there is much charm of luminous colour in the twilight subject, with river receding into dreamy distance, which represents the colour scheme of "blue and silver." Some figure pieces, which this artist exhibits as "harmonies" in this, that, and the other, are, of course, harmonious enough; but being, as they are, mere rubs-in of colour, have no claim to be regarded as pictures.

Scotsman May 20

From J. M'N. Whistler has come, in portrait form, a harmony in black and white; the artist having, however, put more colour into the lady's cheeks, as well as more definition into her costume, than he usually bestows upon such studies.

Art Journal July

Mr. Whistler always obtains for his pictures a graceful reception at the Salon. This year he exhibits a portrait of Mrs. Meux (entitled in the official catalogue 'M. Harry-Men'), which is altogether more satisfactory than the artist's 'Harmony in Flesh Colour and Pink' of the same lady now exhibiting at the Grosvenor Gallery. The French artists, who delight in experiments, are much interested in the rough canvas and the thin coating of paint which Mr. Whistler affects.

Boston Weekly Transcript June 17

J McN. Whistler, "Nocturne in Blue and Silver," "Harmony in Flesh Color and Pink—Mrs. H. B. Meux," "Scherzo in Blue—'The Blue Girl.'" "Nocturne in Black and Gold—Entrance to Southampton Water," "Harmony in Black and Red," "Note in Blue and Opal—Jersey" and "Blue and Brown—San Brelade's Bay."

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