

a series of gorgeous peacocks all round the apartment. Mr. Leyland was furious, but Whistler persisted in finishing the work, and in the last panel of all, painted, in commemoration of the quarrel, two fighting peacocks with ruby eyes. At a later date, the entire decoration was bought by a rich New Yorker and brought to America, but "La Princesse," the keynote of the whole, could not be purchased, so was left in England.

In 1885, Whistler gave, in London, his famous "Ten O'clock Lecture," presenting his view that in art, merely mechanical labor should be eliminated, that the whole should be spiritualized, idealized, dependent upon the inspiration of the artist.

In 1886 he was elected to the Presidency of the Society of British Artists, in Suffolk Street, but the path was not one of roses. He was too honest in his criticisms, too particular in his choice of the pictures permitted at the exhibitions, to obtain much popularity. Sales of pictures, moreover, chanced to decrease, owing, as afterwards proved, to a general wave of hard times that swept over Europe, and he was finally put out by a majority of votes in favor of one Wyke Bayliss. As he sarcastically remarked, "the halt, the maimed, the blind,—all except the corpses, don't you know," had been brought up to out-vote him. During his term as President, however, he had been in no sense a failure. He had reformed the methods of hanging the pictures, had put new life and ideals into the students, and had obtained a Royal Charter for the Society, which was henceforth known as the Royal Society of British Artists.

On the personal side, he had, too, made some small gain through the friendships formed at his famous Sunday breakfasts, when the members of the Society were invited to his studio on Tite street to drink tea from his favorite blue china (called by him and Rossetti, "Long Elizas," on account of the decorations of "lange leisen," or tall figures), and to hear his sparkling conversation. A number of these friends and admirers resigned when the change of Presidents was made. "The artists have come out, and the British remain," he said.

After a sojourn in Paris, where he was invited on to the jury of the "New Salon," he returned again to England, and began once more to hold exhibitions of his work. For nearly twenty years, owing to Ruskin's influence, his pictures had not sold in England; now they began to find favor and brighter days dawned. In 1898 he was made President of the International Society of Art; but two years previously a great blow had come to him in the death of his wife, who was buried on her birthday, May 7th, 1896. Henceforth he lived in great retirement at Chelsea, where he died in his seventieth year, July, 1903.

Of Whistler's more intimate life, perhaps less is known than of any other artist who has achieved an equal fame. He had but few very close friends. To others who met him he appeared either genial and interesting, or a coxcomb, conceited, of caustic wit though of undoubted brilliance, a discrepancy explained by his friends as due to the fact that he was really of dual personality, the man that he really was, full of high ideals for his work and poetic feeling, and the man that he chose to appear to those who did not appeal to him. At all events, he appears to have been a character of rare sensitiveness, with highly-strung nerves, all too often rasped upon by an unappreciative public, and of an independence as rare, which sought self-defence in the biting sarcasm of which he was so thorough a master, and which so often cost him the love of a world that does not like sarcasm. What passed for conceit is now credited as being only confidence in his work and the principles for which he stood. He was probably only sincere when he said, "There are Hokusai, Velasquez—and I," for Hokusai and Velasquez were the only masters whom he recognized.

In appearance he was distinctly unusual, tall, slight, nervous, with flashing eyes, and dark hair curiously relieved by one snow-white tuft that grew above his brow; dress, always fastidious, sometimes bizarre; conversation filled with quick, short, brilliant sentences and ready retort. He slept and ate but little,—when alone would often forget about his

meals altogether. Unlike Turner, he was always dainty. It was said that he "lived as exquisitely as he painted."

In his work he was altogether the enthusiast. He never worked except at the height of his powers, when in full inspiration. Every stroke must tell. When tempted to go on with the mechanical exactness and laboriousness of the universal artist up to that time, he threw away his brushes, preferring to that even the ultra-impressionism of Manet and his school. "He strained away from his pictures everything but the quintessence of the vision and the mood."

He was conscious of a close kinship between music and painting—emotion expressed through the finger tips—and continually used musical terms in naming his pictures, "Nocturne in Blue and Silver," "Symphony in Blue and Violet," "Symphonies in White," holding that a certain keynote of color must be struck and maintained throughout a picture if harmony is to be maintained. In his portraits he aimed at expressing character rather than mere beauty or pleasing quality, hence is it that his portrait of Carlyle is considered the best ever painted of the rugged, eccentric old Scotsman.

"It is, however, as painter of the night, that he has won his fairest laurels. As T. Martin Wood has said, 'Before Whistler painted it, night was more

has had the privilege of living with that masterpiece,—what more does he want?' At his death, however, it was found that the borrowed pictures on hand were carefully entered up in his books, with minute directions in regard to their return.

Whistler never deteriorated in his work, perhaps because he never yielded to the temptation to hurry in it for the sake of making money. To him art always came first. At the last he painted as well as at the beginning. And so today every piece of his work, however small, whether in etching or lithographing or oil-painting—and in all he achieved excellence—is precious.

[Note.—Since writing the above, a small "Whistler" has been bought for our National collection of art at Ottawa,—the price paid, \$300. . . . We have not attempted to show examples of any of the artist's fine sea or night pictures in connection with the above sketch, as they do not reproduce well in black and white.]

Something About an Old House and an Old Time Worth.

Some years ago, before it was my privilege to claim Canada as my home, I lived in what was then a pretty rural village within a few miles of Old London. We had winding lanes and green

When I started on my quest, I had no particular goal in view, but I had a dim notion that somewhere amongst the narrow thoroughfares of the East End of London I should find some old house with a story which would serve my purpose. Leaving my little white pony at Old Kilburn Gate, with instructions that I should find him awaiting me some three hours afterwards, I took the "sixpenny omnibus" through Oxford street and Holborn to Bishopsgate street. Without, where I felt pretty sure I should find what I was seeking, and it was just there, nearly opposite Old Widegate street, that my eye caught a passing glimpse of what was undoubtedly "an old house," my old house, in fact.

But it is time for me to quote from my old paper.

"The very thing at last! as old as the hills, at least," thought I, "but alack-a-day, it is nothing less than a tavern, or worse still, a mere gin-shop, and how can a respectable, almost middle-aged English gentlewoman, ever get to see the inside of it."

"Well! the outside must serve my turn," so I took a turn or two in rotation with a policeman (who evidently had his eye on me), that I might satisfy the cravings of my soul for conquest. I, who was prepared to storm a fortress, was baffled by a gin-shop!! All I could do, of course, was to note my house, mark its situation, observe its ancient frontage, and, the details of architecture which might tell its age, such as balcony on the top, the oddly-shaped would-be bay windows, the carving, etc., and, in fact, bring "the house home in my pocket" to be explored more at leisure. Though I had not conquered, neither had I been defeated, and consoling myself with that assurance, I turned my steps homeward.

I was convinced that the individual who so many years ago had built a gothic dwelling-place so ornamentally carved, so alcocked, and yet so angular, so quaintly pillared and arabesqued, so receding below and so adjusting above, must have been a man of original views, and likely to have made his mark in his day.

Nor was I wrong. Neither stucco nor color could disguise that fact from my discerning eye.

Sir Paul Pindar was a man of mark. Born in the reign of Elizabeth, though not important enough either to be snubbed or to be elevated into dignities by her, he became what I have rightly called him, "a man of mark," in the reign of James I., the very evident selfishness, and disgusting pedantry of that king, saving him from that sacrifice of self to loyalty, which in the next reign, that of Charles I., nearly ruined him. History tells us that he survived the ill-fated monarch for whom he had sacrificed so much but one year.

One can picture this fine old merchant knight in the solitude of just such a chamber as that curious old house must contain, with bowed head and broken heart, shedding tears of bitter regret for the hard fate of the master he loved, and whose downfall his faithful servant with all his wealth had been powerless to avert.

My books give of Paul Pindar only the driest records, such as a list of his benefactions, how he gave to Sion College in 1632, two hundred pounds to be laid out in books. For the repairs of St. Paul's Cathedral, the munificent sum of nineteen thousand pounds—how he was far too knowing to sell on credit to James I., a diamond valued at thirty thousand pounds, but, yet, lent it to him on gala days (of this diamond Charles I. eventually became the purchaser, how he extended English Commerce during his nine years' residence in the Turkish Dominions, when appointed by James I. Ambassador to the Grand Seignior, how he rented alum mines at fourteen pounds (?) per annum, which were the first known in England (at Gis-



Thomas Carlyle.

(From a painting by Whistler.)

opaque than it is now. . . . It was left for a man of the world, coming out of an artificial London room, to paint its stillness, and also to show us that we ourselves had made night more beautiful, with ghostly silver and gold, and to tell us that the dark bridges that sweep into it do not interrupt—that we cannot interrupt, the music of nature."

Like Turner, Whistler looked upon his paintings as his "children," and had an intense dislike to parting with them. Often he would borrow a picture that he had sold—invariably signed with the odd twist of the monogram made up of his initials, which he called a "butterfly," but which looked more like a bat,—saying that he wished to improve it. Once in possession, he would keep the picture on and on, and when expostulated with, would say, "For years this dear person

fields, pretty hedges surmounting banks on which grew wild flowers and feathery grasses, of none of which now does a single trace remain. Pretty Willesden to-day is just a part of London, wholly disguised by bricks and mortar, and changed almost beyond recognition. I have revisited it once, but certainly shall never try to do so again.

What brought the dear old village so vividly back to my mind was the finding amongst some old hoardings a paper I had written over thirty years ago for a small literary club of which I was a member, and which I venture to think may not be without some interest to-day. The subject we had chosen for this especial occasion was "Old Houses," and we were left free to select any old house anywhere, with or without a history of its own.