

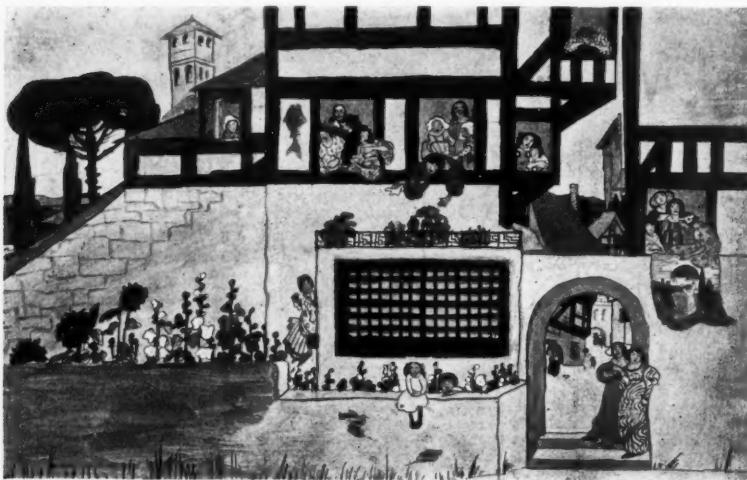
A SCENE FROM "HENRY MORGAN"

CLEVERNESS, ART, AND AN ARTIST

The inklings of Genius are seldom found lurking in the academic, and when genius assumes the stiff and somber mantle of this ancient attribution it is rated to its worth by reason of its own being rather than by reason of its assumption of any garb whatsoever. Even in this day of unusual movements in art, when an appreciative atmosphere is radiated for the benefit of those certain daring ones who illumine it with their brilliance, it is not an ordinary thing to find one so absolutely untrammeled by Traditions of the Schools, so unhampered by the whimperings of convention in art, so undeterred by any dictates of precedent from venturing farther afield, and one so masterfully conquering color and tactfully forcing an allegiance of it to purpose which has come whole-souled, as has Pamela Colman Smith, whose work stands unique in America, and certainly as unique everywhere. Metaphysicians, logicians, and all those other "icians" whose delight in life rests in monologizing on what may or may not have been, what

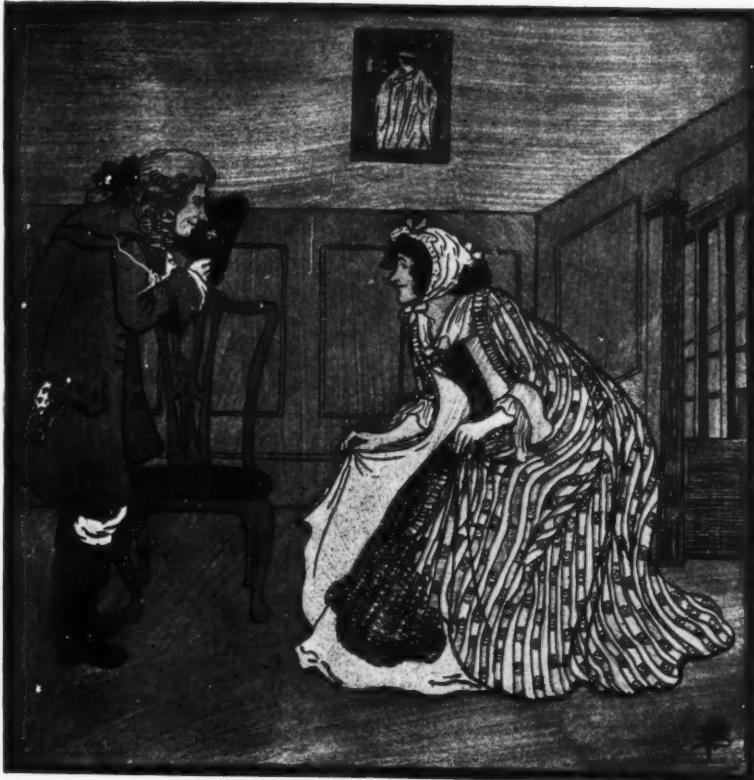


may or may not be, tell us that one may be an artist without the necessity of having the ability of manual interpretation; wherefore I take it technique is a secondary matter, although it is a dangerous thing to declare it as dogma. One need not take into especial consideration the question of draughtsmanship in these clever drawings and color illustrations by Pamela Colman Smith, because it would be rather open to controversy, but any one of any artistic perception will delight in the quality of the lines of these pictures, though the lines are not



STAGE SCENERY, BY PAMELA COLMAN SMITH

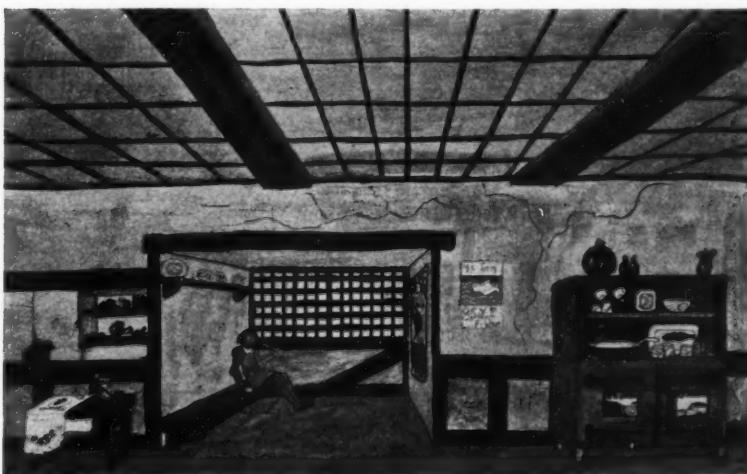
of the same defined sort that characterized the drawings of Aubrey Beardsley, nor do they show any imitation of Japanese methods, although probably receiving some inspiration from them; but they are original, and the drawings are unique in that they show an unusual conception of composition, and their subtle humor is refined yet vigorous. Indeed, this vigor, both of composition and color, is the striking characteristic. This artist has been doing these delightful essays in the short space of a year or two, and the accomplishment is therefore the more remarkable, and the promise is given that greater things may be looked for from her brush and pencil in a time to come. However, the absolute candor with which these drawings and sketches have been put forth makes it possible to consider them just as they are. The colored drawings cannot be appreciated through the interpretation of black and white, and their exquisite brilliancy, reached in a manner that would startle any plodding artist or



"MRS. ANNE OLDFIELD ACCEPTS THE APOLOGY OF
MR. NATHAN OLDWORTHY, OF COVENTRY!"

From Irving and Terry Souvenir, by Pamela Colman Smith
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technician, can scarcely be described by words. We are accustomed to know that the prints by William Nicholson will partake of the quiet tones of the buffs, browns, of old rose, dull blues, and faded greens, all massed with black (where even the orange cadmium hair in the print of the "divine Sarah" is unusual to Nicholson), as we can look for the liquid, thin tints of Andhré des Gachons' color-prints. Pamela Colman Smith is versatile, yet in no sense of the word the imitator of the methods of Nicholson, Andhré des Gachons, nor of any other colorist. If you should enjoy the great privilege of a peep



STAGE BACKGROUND, BY PAMELA COLMAN SMITH

into her studio—a great room joyously free from the commonplaces that have come to make one studio generally representative of every other one, a room where art is living rather than imprisoned—you will see over in a corner by the window a little table quite quivering with curious bottles, saucers of pigment, vivid inks, Chinese whites, blacks, and indigos, while one little corner of it is a veritable chemical emporium. Before this material panegyric of paint the clever artist sits, and dipping a Japanese brush in this place or in that, fixes her inimitable creations deftly and definitely and without the affectation of pottering. Here were made the illustrations for the Irving and Terry book, "Widdecombe Fair," and "Fair Vanity," brought out by Doubleday and McClure Company, and the "Annancy Stories," written and pictured by this illustrator (who is quite as clever at writing), published by R. H. Russell. "Widdecombe Fair" and "Fair



MINIATURE FIGURES FOR THE PLAY OF "HENRY MORGAN"

"Vanity" are quite unique in their colored illustrations, inasmuch as these were printed by a process of stenciling never before seen in this country. In this manner the prints were made to reproduce more nearly the original colors and qualities of the drawings than any other process could have brought them to do.

From time to time a bookplate or a color print, complete in itself, will find its way from that studio nest up under the sky; nor is it all work and no play there. A wonderful toy theater, quite aesthetic, and rich enough in its appointments to have delighted poor Ludwig of Bavaria, stands at the other side of the windows. All the scenery and the decorations of the proscenium were wrought by the artist herself. Quaint ballads from many a volume of forgotten lore are staged here, and I have never seen a more gorgeous presentation on any stage. The knights and ladies of the buskin are first drawn on stiff paper and colored, then cut out and made to lead upright lives with a bit of glue and proper manipulation. Oh, that some of our modern playwrights might come here for a lesson in dramatic construction, or that the scenic artists of to-day did not feel that they could not learn a new thing or two! Here a professional stage costumer might well gasp envious gaspings; and you should see the procession of over three hundred figures called forth when Henry Morgan, private et cetera, is knighted by Charles II. for "bravery on the high seas." It is marvelous, and when you come away you feel that art is a tangible thing after all, tangible because it has been brought before you in an enjoyable way; and in the sanctity of your own chamber when you look over your possession of some of Pamela Colman Smith's prints



MINIATURE FIGURES FOR THE PLAY OF "HENRY MORGAN"

you will not think of saying, "Who ever saw dangly fingers like that on any creature?" or, "What funny toes!" but you will feel that you have something beautiful and enjoyable, therefore something which must be art.

GARDNER TEALL.



MR. WHISTLER AS A TEACHER

The place that belongs to the artist James McNeil Whistler cannot be affected by the reputation for eccentricity that is commonly given to the man. Perhaps of this side of the master enough has already been told; and having been privileged to know him as a teacher, I would pass on to other students of art some of the inspiration which a face-to-face acquaintance and a consequent study of his attitudes toward art have given me.

There is a sense in which the word artist may be used which gives it a certain meaning of exclusiveness otherwise quite inexpressible. The word has become too common. It is in its exclusive sense that I would speak of Mr. Whistler, the superlative artist, the poet-artist, and of his teaching. The man who paints symphonies and harmonies announces himself from the first a kind of musician with a musician's power. Subtlety is his watchword. In these days of so many painters but of so few artists it is inspiring to recall the man whose fine eye detects and whose master hand reveals the quiet dignity of things, the poetic suggestiveness in men and nature, whose delight is in the exquisite finesse, the beauty of individualities and in the expression of soul, which characterize his portraits. His artistic enjoyment in each