The Gentle Art of Making Enemies

From the middle of the eighteenth century, with the growth of travel at home and abroad and the increase in leisure for the wealthier classes, the arts became the subject of more widespread appreciation and discussion. The rapid expansion of book and periodical publishing in this area both reflected and encouraged interest in art and art history among the wider reading public. This series throws light on the development of visual culture and aesthetics. It covers topics from the Grand Tour to the great exhibitions of the nineteenth century, and includes art criticism and biography.

The first pages of this 1890 work contain an account of the efforts of various ‘pirates’ to publish a selection of the letters of James Abbott McNeill Whistler (1834–1903), and their ultimate frustration. In fact, the American journalist Sheridan Ford had been given informal permission by Whistler, who then changed his mind, decided to publish a book with his own design, and took legal action to suppress Ford’s version. The ‘prologue’ is an extract from the review by Ruskin which led to the famous libel case in which Whistler was paid one farthing in damages, and the first part is a rollicking romp through that trial, with sidenotes designed to undermine the evidence of the various expert witnesses with quotes from their own writings. The book continues in the same vein, with selected correspondence between Whistler and the critics, edited to amuse as well as (perhaps) edify his readers.
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The Gentle Art of Making Enemies

As Pleasingly Exemplified in Many Instances, Wherein the Serious Ones of This Earth, Carefully Exasperated, Have Been Prettily Spurred on to Unseemliness and Indiscretion, While Overcome by an Undue Sense of Right

James Abbott McNeill Whistler
The Gentle Art of Making Enemies

of

China
AN EXTRAORDINARY PERSONALITY

Plot
Writings

SEIZURE OF MR WHISTLER'S PAPERS
The Gentle Art of Making Enemies

...
Mr. Whistler's Paper Hunt
In the 1860s, James Abbott McNeill Whistler wrote a poem titled “A Great Literary Curiosity” which begins with the line: “In the world of letters, I hear a noise of a poet making an original contribution.” This poem reflects the artists’ desire to stand out in the competitive literary world of the time. Whistler, known for his avant-garde art and publishing, aimed to make his mark in both the artistic and literary circles.
William Hickman
London:麦克

Undue Sense of Right
And Indiscipline, While Overcome by an
Eunuch Pretently Surrounded on 70 Unseenlines
Or This Earth, Cambridge Exasperated, Have
In Many Instances, Wherein the Serious Ones
As Passionately Exemplified

Making Enemies

or

The Gentle Art
The face, fair, soft; easy in eye,

of the happy, thus pathetic figure,

heron and tormentor of the refreshing

one illustrated.