

# ARTISTS GIVE DINNER TO J. ALDEN WEIR

Noted Painter the Guest of  
Honor at Feast at Sal-  
magundi Club.

## HE TELLS OF EARLY DAYS

Votes of Asylum Inmates Sent Him  
Ahead in Popularity Contest—  
What a Dealer Advised.

More than one hundred artists gathered last night to do honor to J. Alden Weir, the noted painter, at a dinner in his honor in the exhibition gallery of the Salmagundi Club, 14 West Twelfth Street. Mr. Weir was assured that he would not have to make a speech, but after hearing the speeches made in his praise by Royal Cortissoz and F. Ballard Williams, and eating the dinner prepared by the incomparable Pollock, the chef of whom the Salmagundi Club is so proud, Mr. Weir rose from his chair to offer some reminiscences of his early career.

"Some time ago when I sent a painting," said Mr. Weir, "to an exhibition out West, I received a letter from the Secretary of the association giving the show, in which he told me that I was carrying off great honors, because my painting was running neck and neck with Mr. Brown's.

"Later I received a second letter in which I learned that every person paying 10 cents was entitled to a vote on the merits of the exhibitors.

" 'You and Mr. Brown were running neck and neck,' the writer said, 'until yesterday, when we, the inmates of the asylum for the half-insane, were let in to see the exhibition, and then you forged ahead.' "

Mr. Weir went on to relate how he and John Henry Twachtman had given an exhibition in the year 1880, in which each had entered forty pictures. For several days the exhibition went on and not a picture was sold.

"I finally tried to persuade an art dealer," he continued, "to buy some of the pictures, but he objected that there was no foreground.

" 'You can't sell pictures nowadays without flowers and things in the foreground,' he told me. 'You say that is a middle distance, but it won't do. The people demand flowers and pretty things in the front of it.

" 'Now, take Jones's painting,' he said. 'He was trying to sell pictures with yellowish, unhealthy pools of water on them. But everybody thought they looked malarial and unwholesome, and he could not sell a picture. Well, I told him that if he wanted to make a success he would have to paint good, clear water through which you can see the stones on the bottom. He took my advice, and see the success that he has made.' "

Finally, Mr. Weir said, he sold one picture, but Twachtman was not even that successful. So that Twachtman's feelings should not be hurt, Mr. Weir and his friends arranged to find a purchaser for a Twachtman painting. This was accomplished, and the sale made Twachtman very happy. Several days later, however, the two painters were invited to visit the place where the Twachtman picture was hung. They found the painting had been hung upside down.

Mr. Weir's recollections had such an effect on a white-haired member of the club that he rose to his feet, apologized for being out of order, and proposed a toast to Twachtman and Weir, which was drunk standing.