

Gilman & Mower, "The Photographer's Guide," 1843

(keywords: Gilman and Mower, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography.)

THE DAGUERREOTYPE: AN ARCHIVE OF SOURCE TEXTS, GRAPHICS, AND EPHEMERA

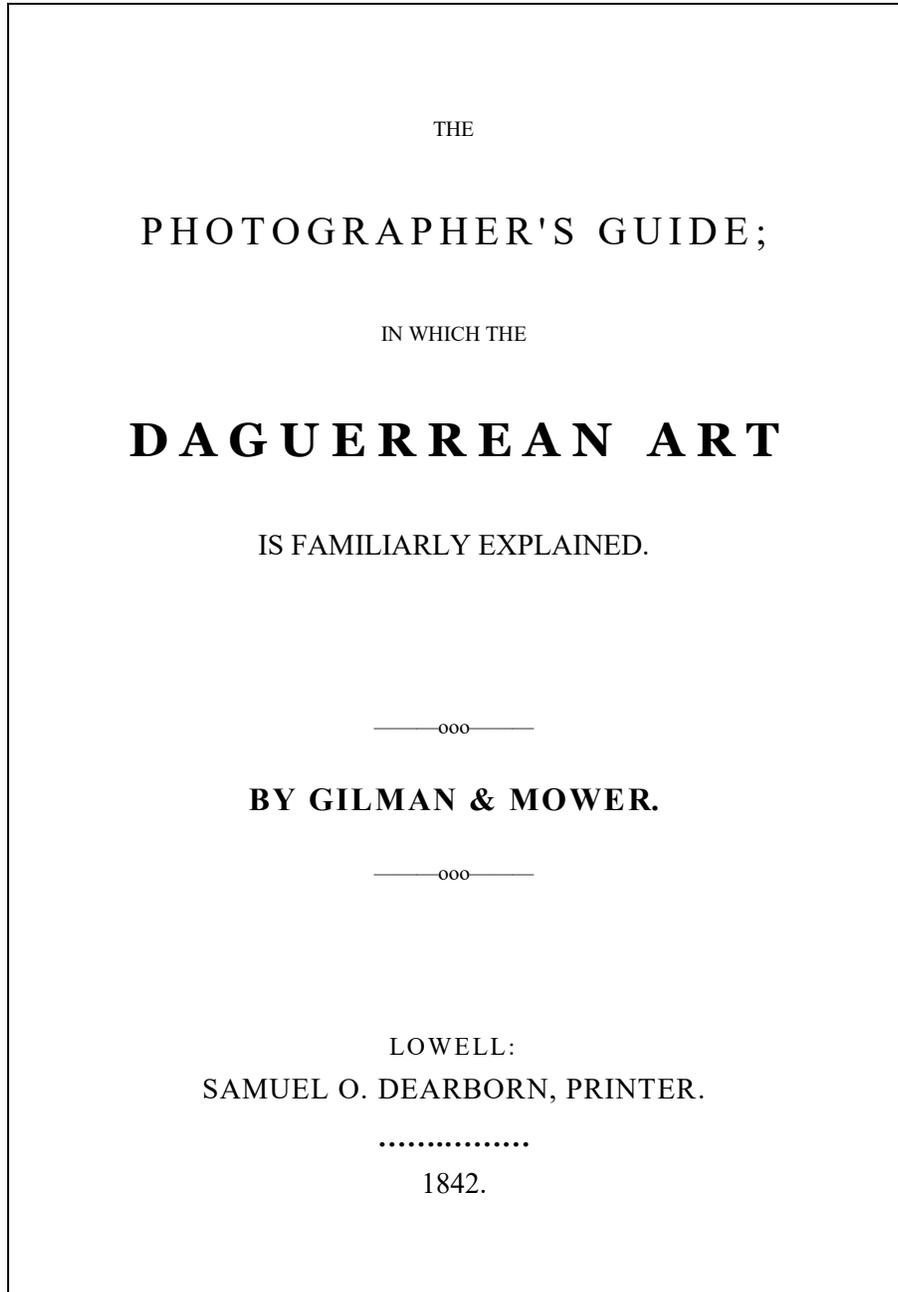
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The following—an approximation of the original presentation—is the complete text of:

Gilman & Mower, *The Photographer's Guide; in which the Daguerrean Art is Familiarly Explained* (Lowell: Samuel O. Dearborn, printer, 1843).



P R E F A C E .

WHEN a system is offered to the public, claiming to be considered as useful, it is the duty of those who present it, to show why it is so. The extortionate price asked for instruction in the Daguerrean Art, prevents persons acquiring a knowledge of it, who would otherwise gladly do so, as a means of acquiring a good livelihood. Therefore the authors have been induced to publish this little work, that ALL may obtain a thorough knowledge of this art, at the least possible expense. In the following treatise, we have endeavored to correct some of the gross errors, which abound in the practical application of the art; and present to those engaged in the science, and others who may take an interest in it, the most approved method, practiced by the most eminent Photographers in the United States. We have selected much useful matter from various sources, but have interwoven it in such a manner with our own views, that we have found it impracticable to indicate, in the usual manner, the authorities to whom we are indebted; therefore, we acknowledge that we have drawn at some length from Professor Silliman's Journal, and the original Daguerreotype process.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S GUIDE.

PICTURES taken by the Daguerreotype, are the works of Nature, assisted by Art, and as far surpasses the productions of the Limner, as all Nature's works do those of Man; or, speaking figuratively,—Nature is the mind which prompts or incites the Daguerreotypian Artist; and the light of heaven constitutes the pencil, which can be applied to every object. Landscapes, Paintings, Machinery, &c. can be copied with accuracy which no artist could ever attain; and yet, the process is simple, requiring no acquaintance with Chemistry, or knowledge of drawing or painting. Light performs the whole. Therefore, persons sitting for miniatures need not expect to be flattered, for the light is no sycophant or respecter of persons, but acts in a faithful and an impartial manner. Yet the most eminent Photographers do not succeed in obtaining a perfect impression at every trial, for the nature of the art does not admit of it, as will be hereafter explained.

Now, since man is a being of curiosity and admiration—endowed with the faculty of marvellousness or wonder, which delights in the strange, the novel, and the wonderful.—What can be more gratifying to this faculty, than to witness the astonishing effects of the Daguerreotype in producing accurate Miniatures, Landscapes, &c., solely by the rays of light.

Man is also an intelligent being, endowed with intellectual and reflective faculties, which enables, and gives him a desire to see through, and explain cause and effect. What then can be more interesting and pleasing to the intellectual and philosophic mind, than to trace the effect of this curious operation of nature to its cause. To man's ideality, this art

must be gatifying; for these pictures are as perfect as the imagination can conceive. The plate, a blank void, becomes filled up with all the fairy lines and graceful symmetry of a picture; affording another beautiful example, that the art of man cannot be compared to the works of nature and of nature's God.

This art likewise, holds out strong inducements to persons desirous of acquiring a fortune by the investment of a small capital—and to a person of leisure, it may become a source of amusement and pleasing recreation. Have you a father, mother, brother or sister, from whom you are soon to be separated, what better memento can you have of them than a Daguerreotype Miniature, where each feature is accurately portrayed, even the very expression of the countenance is correctly given, as to be at once recognized by all who have ever seen the original.

The Daguerreotype is so called from DAGUERRE, the discoverer; a Frenchman by birth, who received a large sum for making the art public, and is now an honorary member of the Royal Society of arts and sciences at Paris. The art is nothing more nor less, than rendering *shadows* tangible.

The apparatus, by which the images of objects are fixed upon plate, consists of a Camera Obscura, in which the images of external objects received through plano convex lens, inserted in a brass tube or barrel, are exhibited distinctly, and in their native colors on an achromatic glass, placed within the machine and called the Obscura Glass. The rays of light as reflected from objects, make an impression upon the plate which is placed in the apparatus, at a certain distance from the Lens, that is, where the image appears brightest and most distinct in the Obscura Glass. A single Meniscus Glass, it is said has produced as brilliant and accurate results as has yet been seen, and requiring less time; all objects appear inverted, when seen in the Obscura Glass; this however may be easily obviated, by taking the object as reflected from a mirror, which is very necessary in copying landscapes,

machinery, &c. This arrangement, however, from the loss of light increases the time of operation, by one third of the whole. The cause of an object appearing inverted is easily accounted for, when it is once understood that all rays of light proceed in a straight course, if not interrupted by other bodies; hence, the rays of light proceeding from the extremities of an object, in order to enter the small aperture in the Camera Obscura, must necessarily proceed in an oblique direction, consequently the rays must cross each other before passing the Lens, which accounts for the inverted image.— After the rays enter the Lens they become converged, or brought to a focus, where they meet with the convex side of a plano convex Lens, which causes them to be again converged, and they thus come in contact with the plate.

It may be proper here to remark, that the smaller the aperture in the front part of the apparatus, the longer the time necessary to obtain an impression, but when once obtained, it is far more distinct than it would have been were the aperture larger. All rays of light which enter a convex Lens become converged or bent towards the centre, except the one that passes through the axis, which proceeds in a direct course.

The word *convex* is so called from a rising or swelling on the exterior surface, into a spherical or round form. All rays of light which enter transparent bodies of different densities in an oblique direction—become bent or refracted. A familiar example of this kind is, to place a piece of silver in an empty cup in such a position, that the side of the cup will just hide the silver from the eye, then by pouring water into the cup, the silver will appear to rise, and thus becomes visible. The reason of this is obvious, the water being a more dense medium than air, causes the ray of light reflected from the silver to become bent in such a manner as to enter the eye; if this ray of light after passing through water, had passed through glass, it would have been still more refracted towards a perpendicular, glass being still more dense than

water. Colors of rays when converged or brought to a focus, are white, which doubtless is the reason why the colors of objects are not transferred to the miniatures. As the science is yet in its infancy, perseverance may in time obviate this difficulty.

The plate in general use for taking miniatures, is composed of copper, plated with pure silver; the copper should be of a sufficient thickness to maintain the perfect smoothness and flatness of the plate, so that the images may not be distorted by the warping of the tablet.

In the choice of Plate care should be used to select such as present an even surface, free from wave or ridge. Daguerreotype Plates are either of American or French manufacture, French Plate is preferred to the American, on account of its possessing a smoother surface; American Plate is very imperfect, the silver abounds with perforations which appear like black dots in the designs. It may also be distinguished from the French, by the yellow coat which it assumes in burning, (a process hereafter described.) From five to forty impressions may be taken on one plate, by scouring them out, in short, they may be used till they are worn through to the copper.

Paper, Plainished Brass, and Copper may also be used, after having gone through with the following process:—1st, a solution of nitrate of silver, so weak that the silver is precipitated slowly, is laid on uniformly over the plate, at least three times, with a camel's hair pencil. After each application of the nitrate, rub the plate gently in one direction, with bitartrate of potassa, applied with buff. This coat of silver receives fine polish from peroxide of iron.

The chemicals used in fitting the plates to receive an impression, are Iodine, Chlorine, and Bromine. Iodine, was discovered by M. Courtois, in 1812, while engaged in the preparation of carbonate of soda; it is obtained from the lye made of the ashes of certain marine vegetables, or sea plants. It is a friable solid, of a dark blue black color, and metallic

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luster; it corrodes the cork of the phial in which it is kept, and if exposed to the air, it slowly evaporates. It has a pungent odor, an acrid taste, and stains the skin of a deep brown color—it also destroys vegetable colors. Starch, is the most delicate test of Iodine, which the chemist possesses. It is said, that with starch, one part of Iodine, may be detected in 450,000 parts of water.

Chlorine, is a volatile gas obtained by a chemical process, not necessary here to describe. It was discovered by Scheele, and by him, denominated dephlogisticated muriatic acid; a pressure of four atmospheres changes it from a gas to a liquid. This gas is of a greenish yellow color, and if inhaled will cause coughing, with the sense of strangulation; and in manufactories where it is prepared, some of the workmen have occasionally fallen down senseless, in an instant, when accidentally exposed to a current of this gas. It has a disagreeable astringent metallic taste. It should be closely confined in glass, and placed in a cool situation, to prevent evaporation, and it should also be kept from the light, as it is very sensitive to the action of it, even when closely confined in a phial. It destroys all vegetable and animal coloring matter, and is extensively employed in bleaching and fumigation.

Bromine, is a volatile fluid; liquid at a natural temperature, like Mercury, and has an odor resembling Chlorine, but much more disagreeable. It is a strong poison and of a reddish color. It is called Bromine, on account of its foetid smell, and was discovered a few years since, by M. Ballard, who obtained it by passing a stream of Chlorine, through bittern, (the liquid that remains after boiling down sea-water to prepare common salt.) It may be necessary here to mention, that a person can very well dispense with the use of Bromine, in taking Miniatures, where there is a good situation to command light, this being more sensitive to the action of light than Chlorine, enables a person to take an impression very quick; which is of great importance in taking the min-

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atures of children. Quicksilver or Mercury is also used after the impression is taken; the use of which will be explained in its proper place. Also, the use of Hyposulphate of Soda, which is a compound, being composed of Sulphuric Acid, and Carbonate of Soda.

The process of fitting a plate to receive an impression should be performed in a dark closet, by the light of a lamp, as the chemicals used are very sensitive to the action of the light, the mysterious influence of which, destroys the effect that it is necessary they should have upon the plate, in order to obtain an impression.

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DIRECTIONS FOR THE FORMATION OF YOUR
CHEMICAL BOXES, &c.

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Your Iodine box should be composed of hard wood, made in a shallow form, with grooves cut in the sides, in which the cover is made to slide. Place a small quantity of Iodine in this box, distributing it equally on the bottom, and cover it up closely with a piece of gauze or paper. The gauze regulates the evaporation of the Iodine, and also prevents the small particles from rising and adhering to the plate; which they would otherwise do, owing to its affinity for the silver.

Your Chlorine should be evaporated through water upon the plate; in order to do this, put a few drops of Chlorine in a glass dish, with just water enough to cover it, place it in a box made similar to the one containing the Iodine. Your Chlorine box will need replenishing often, owing to the volatility of this gas.

Bromine is used in the same manner as Chlorine, and when used, Chlorine is dispensed with.

Your Mercury bath should be an iron vessel placed upon legs, with a wooden top closely fitted to it. Likewise,

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there should be a thermometer attached to the bath, in such a manner as to have the bulb immersed in the Mercury, which is deposited in the bottom of the iron vessel.

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DIRECTIONS FOR PREPARING MATERIALS FOR
POLISHING.

In polishing plate, use is made of rotten stone, nitric acid, alcohol, and flower of emery. The rotten stone should be finely pulverized, and settled in water three times, allowing it to settle ten minutes the first time, twenty the second, and thirty minutes the third time. The liquid should then be carefully turned off and evaporated—the sediment remaining is fit for use. Nitric Acid may be diluted with water, (or alcohol, which is preferable,) in the proportion of one part acid to fourteen water. This should be mixed with the rotten stone, before applying it to the plate.

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DIRECTIONS FOR POLISHING PLATE.

As it is of great importance, and highly necessary to have a plate well cleaned, and polished in order to take a good impression, (persons being more liable to fail in this respect than any other,) we shall be somewhat particular in describing the process. First, take your plate by one corner, with a pair of nippers, and hold it over the flame of a spirit lamp (the silver upwards,) causing the flame to traverse with proper regularity the whole surface of the plate. This operation should be continued till a white coating is formed all over the surface of the silver; after it is cool, place it upon a sheet of smooth white paper, upon a table or something of the kind, then apply your mixture of rotten stone and acid with a swab of fine cotton or buff, free from oil, rubbing it lightly. The rubbing should be performed transversely, with an oval stroke, and always in a direction opposite to that in which the plate is to be held to view the picture; after this, rub it dry with another swab of cotton. Then transfer your plate

to another sheet of paper, and apply your alcohol in the same manner as the acid, but not with the acid swabs. This done, drop your plate into some flour of emery, then give it a light rap to disengage the coarse particles which adhere to it, and place it upon a sheet of paper, rub it thoroughly with some fine dry cotton or buff till you obtain a good polish.

Flour of emery may be used in the same manner as rotten stone, if properly levigated or washed. Care should be taken not to get any sweat from your fingers upon the swab, as this would cause black streaks upon your plate, which would become visible after receiving a coating of quicksilver. To prevent this, it is a good plan to have handles to the swabs. The authors will here add from their own experience, that two requisites are indispensable in these experiments, viz:— a good polish on the plate, and extreme cleanliness in all the operations; dust and stains on the plate make large blanks in the drawing. After obtaining a good polish, the plate is placed in a frame, fitted for the purpose, and fastened in the copper side, by a piece of wood which is attached to the frame by brass hinges in the same manner as a door, when the plate is placed in the frame—this door is secured by a button. At the same time a piece of tin is made to slide in such a manner, as to entirely exclude the light from the silver side of the plate. This done, place it over your Iodine, and withdraw the tin, so that the Iodine may, by evaporation adhere to the plate, which should be kept moving over the Iodine, so that it may receive an even coating. You should also, examine it occasionally by the light of your lamp, and when it assumes a bright gold color, re-place the tin, and remove it to your Chlorine. If this operation be protracted, the gold color passes into a purple or violet, which should be avoided, because in this state, the coating is not so sensitive to the action of the light,—also, if it appear that the color is deeper on one side of the plate than the other, to equalize the coating, it must be turned one quarter round, at each inspection. *A yellow, gold color!*—nothing more nor

less; is the *only* assurance, that the ground of the future picture is duly prepared. The time for this cannot be determined, because it depends upon circumstances; the principal are, the temperature of the apartment, and the state of the Iodine box. No other heat should be applied to your Iodine, to cause evaporation, than what can be applied thro' the temperature of the room, in which the operation is performed. The oftener the Iodine box has been used the more rapid and equal will be the evaporation upon the plate, owing to the wood becoming impregnated with the Iodine. It is also very important that the temperature of the inside of the box, be equal to the air outside, for otherwise, a deposition of moisture gathers upon the plate, a circumstance fatal to success. This moisture which collects in the box, can be removed by sulphuric acid, a cup of which should remain in it. If this precaution is neglected, it will often be found impossible to obtain an impression.

From description, this operation may, perhaps, seem difficult, but with a little practice, one can judge pretty correctly, the time necessary to produce the true tone of color, and also to inspect the plate with greater rapidity, so as not to allow time for the light to act; which it would do, if exposed for any length of time to the light of a lamp.

The plate should be entirely excluded from the light while over the Chlorine, using your judgement as you best can, as to the time it should remain there. After one trial you can judge very correctly as to the strength of your Chlorine, and the rapidity with which it evaporates and condenses upon the plate.

If the plate has received a large quantity of Chlorine, less time is necessary to sit for an impression. If too much light is obtained by too long sitting, the impression will appear faint and indistinct, becoming visible soon after placing it over the mercury; and after washing in the saline wash, will appear gray or slate color. It will sometimes appear of blue color, this is owing to too much Chlorine. On the con-

trary, if not light enough is obtained, the impression will be dark, and will bear a great deal of heating over the mercury. Care should be taken while bringing the impression out, not to let it remain too long over the bath, as the best of impressions may be spoilt by so doing. After the plate is taken from the Chlorine, it should be entirely excluded from the light, till placed in the Camera; after placing the Camera in front of the object, which you are desirous to obtain a representation of, the first requisite is to secure a perfect adjustment of the focus. This is accomplished by advancing or withdrawing the frame, containing the object glass, so as to obtain the outlines of the subject with great neatness in it.

This being properly adjusted, withdraw the obscura glass and insert the frame containing the plate in its place, which done, withdraw the tin and open the aperture in front of the apparatus, consulting a watch. This part of the operation is a task of some niceity, as nothing is visible, and it being quite impossible to determine the length of time necessary for producing a picture; this depending entirely on the intensity of the light upon the object.

The season of the year, and the hour of the day, exert a great influence upon the celerity of the operation; the most favorable time is the summer season, from 9, A.M., to 3, P. M. If the first trial proves a failure by withdrawing the plate too soon, or be leaving it too long exposed, the operator should commence with another plate immediately, correcting the second trial by the first; which will generally prove successful. After taking the impression close the aperture, and replace the tin in the frame. This done, withdraw the frame and place it immediately over the mercury bath, which should be placed in the dark closet above mentioned; the top part of this bath should be constructed in such a manner, as to allow the frame containing the plate, to rest at an angle of forty-five degrees, thus permitting the examination of the design, through the glass, in the front part of the bath. There should also be a curtain of dark cloth attached to the bath,

so as to prevent the ingress of light through the glass, when not witnessing the operation. After your plate is properly placed over the bath, take your spirit-lamp and place under it, till the mercury rises in the thermometer from fifty to seventy degrees.

This depends however, upon the light obtained, less light requiring more heat, and more light less heat. This operation should be examined occasionally by the light of your lamp through the glass. The lamp should be kept moving, while under the bath, to prevent the mercury from becoming heated in such a manner as to cause particles to rise and adhere to the plate. When the impression is fairly brought out, replace the tin so as entirely to exclude the light from the plate, as the design would soon be destroyed by the decomposing power of the light upon the chemicals.

The next process is, to take your plate from the frame, and immerse it in a dish of pure water; the object of this is to harden the impression, so that the saline wash may not act upon the drawing. Having done this, put your plate in an earthen or glass bowl, and turn on a solution of hyposulphate of soda, which will extract the chemicals from the plate;—while the mercury still adheres to it, owing to the affinity of the pure metals.

After remaining a short time in this wash, the plate should be transferred to another bowl of pure water, in which it must be well rinsed, and then removed to another bowl of water; after being rinsed in this for a short time, take it by one corner with a pair of nippers, and pour pure water upon the face of the plate, this carrying away every remaining portion of the saline wash. Being thoroughly rinsed, hold it over your spirit-lamp in such a manner as to keep the water running upon the plate as it evaporates—if allowed to settle and evaporate in spots, it will leave stains upon the drawing. The plate should be kept in motion while washing, to prevent the particles of dust from settling and adhering to it. This process can be easily acquired, by a little

practice; it is of great importance to use pure water, for, if in the last washing, the liquid contain an admixture of foreign substances, they will be deposited upon the plate, leaving numerous and permanent stains. To be assured of the purity of the water, let a drop fall upon a polished plate, evaporate by heat, and if no stain be left, the water is pure. To obtain pure water, take rain or snow water, and filter it through a fine sponge or filtering paper, placed in a glass funnel,—river water is considered bad on account of the vegetable substances which it contains.

Distilled water is always sufficiently pure; after this washing, the drawing is finished. It only remains, to preserve it from dust and dampness that might tarnish the silver. This is done by placing a glass over the drawing, with a border placed between the glass and the plate, to prevent the glass from touching the sketch, the edges of these should be confined with gold beater's skin, which will exclude the dust and likewise keep the glass in its proper place. It will thenceforth prove unalterable, even by the sun's rays.

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GENERAL OBSERVATIONS UPON THE DAGUERREAN ART.

A process, it is said, has been employed in France, and repeated with success in New York, which fixes the picture and changes the color; it also removes all the reflection from the silver, and renders the use of glass protectors unnecessary. The process is as follows: a gramme of Neutral Chloride of gold, and three grammes of hyposulphate of soda, are dissolved in one pint of water, or in that proportion. The plate having the view upon it, supported by a wire frame, has some of the liquid poured evenly over its surface; heat is then applied from below with a spirit-lamp, with a large wick—the view presently turns dark; it should then be removed, and thoroughly washed and dried.

The most important application of which the Daguerreotype Art is susceptible, viz: taking portraits from life, to which it owes its chief interest, was made by Professor Draper and by Mr. Walcott, a Mechanic of the city of New York, about the same time, and neither possessing a knowledge of the views of the other; yet, results similar in their character were obtained by each operator, but under circumstances slightly different. Professor Draper employed Daguerreotype Apparatus, the lens of which was four inches in diameter,—Mr. Walcott substituted an elliptical mirror in place of the lens. Mr. Ibbotson of London, has suc-

ceded in copying images by artificial light. That from lime rendered incandescent by the flame of the oxyhydrogen blow-pipe, is said to be sufficiently intense for the purpose, and produces fine specimens in a shorter period than solar light.

Formerly, in most of the Photographic establishments of Europe and America, the rays of light were admitted through blue glass, which intercepts the blue rays and prevents their ingress, it being then considered indispensable in producing a good picture. It is also said to give a pleasing sensation to a person, whereas, if the blue rays were admitted, it would become a disagreeable one, if the light was intense.

A speculum was formerly used in taking pictures; the direct rays of the sun being reflected upon the object which it was desirable to obtain a representation of; this was practiced, at a time when Iodine was the only chemical substance used, in preparing a plate to receive an impression, and the object of the speculum was to lessen the time in sitting for a miniature. But the speculum, likewise, had its disadvantages;—causing an unnatural distortion of the countenance, and a universal contraction of the eye, of the person sitting for a likeness; but, since the application of chlorine, all catadrioptic glasses have become obsolete in production of Daguerreotype Miniatures.

A saturated solution of common salt, will answer the purpose of hyposulphate of soda, in washing a picture, (although the latter is preferable,) this solution should be composed of one part salt to three parts water. It should be filtered through filtering paper, previous to use.

Several attempts have been made to preserve Daguerreotype Sketches by means of different varnishes, obtained from succinum, copal, india rubber, wax, and various resins; but, it has been observed, that by the application of any varnish whatever, the lights in the sketches were considerably weakened, and at the same time, the deeper tones were hidden. To this disadvantage, was added, the still greater injury, from the decomposition of the mercury by all the varnishes tried; this effect which did not become apparent, until after the lapse of two or three months, terminated in a total destruction of the forms of the objects re-resented.

Great care is necessary in the use of oils, the least particle of which, upon a plate, would prevent an impression from being taken. We will here give two facts, showing the effect of oil upon the plate, and the importance of neatness, in all the various operation. A gentleman, in Boston, happened to place his fingers upon the wood inside of his mercury bath-box, having some oil upon them at the time; after this he found it impossible to bring out an impression—this he remedied, by cutting the oiled part out of the bath-box. At another time, he took some putty, and stopped a small crevice, in his bath-box, where the wood is fitted to the iron; this proved the means of rendering all his endeavors to obtain a miniature, abortive, till he took a file and filed it out. The effect the oil had upon the plate; was this, by heating the bath, the oil adhered to the surface of the plate, which prevented the *mercury* from doing so,—consequently, the impression could not be made visible; as it is by the affinity or union of the two metals, that the impression becomes tangible. Care should also be used in the application of your acid, not to let it stand in drops upon your plate, as it would spot and injure it.

Particles of mercury, will also spot your plate. Your plate is not lost after taking an impression; for, by polishing, as heretofore described, it can be made fit to receive a new impression; but the process of heating

should not be carried on where you polish your plate, as the mercury, by heating will fly off and be liable to get on your swabs. In designs which you do not intend to preserve, it is of great importance to remove the mercury immediately, by going through the polishing process. If this be neglected the mercury finally adheres to the silver, and fine drawings cannot be obtained, if this amalgam be present. They always, in this case want firmness, neatness, vigor of outline and general effect.

Persons sitting for miniatures, should keep perfectly motionless, with their eyes fixed upon some object; since, by moving the eye there will appear to be a general confusion in the eye of the miniature, owing to the pupil of the eye reflecting white. In taking a miniature, great care is necessary in arranging the light equally upon the sitter. The light should always enter the room in front of the object to be represented, and always from one source, as the light will cause as many white specks to appear in the eye of the miniature, as sources in which it enters the eye of the original. Also, if the direct rays of the sun enter the room, care should be taken to break the reflection from the sitter, by neglecting to do so, the eye will appear imperfect, and one portion of the miniature will be over done by too much light before the other receives a sufficient quantum.

Plates of a superior quality may be had at the following prices, viz:—
3 1-4 inches by 4 1-4, 62 1-2 cents each—2 1-4 inches by 3 1-4, 45 do.—
2 1-8 by 8 1-4, 37 1-2 do.—1-5-8 by 2 1-8, 25 do. Also, Morocco cases complete for placing the picture in, at prices varying from \$3, to \$10 per dozen. Gilt frames and glasses cost about half the price of morocco cases. ☞ Apparatuses may be obtained, for, from 20 to \$60, depending upon the degree perfection of the instrument.

Persons desirous of engaging in the Photographic Art, can be furnished at short notice, with apparatuses, plates, chemicals, &c. of the very best quality, and upon as reasonable terms, as can be purchased in Boston or New York, by applying to GILMAN & MOWER, No. 35, Merrimac Street, Lowell, Mass. Any other information cheerfully rendered.

N. B. For certain private reasons, a gentleman wishes to dispose of three quarters of a superior Daguerreotype Apparatus, for taking landscapes or miniatures; not wishing to dispose of the whole of it, owing to the uncertainty of obtaining another as good. For further particulars inquire as above, (post paid,) if by letter.

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EDITOR'S NOTES:

This manual provides a valuable glimpse into the early days of daguerreotypy and is one of the first stand-alone manuals published in America. Written during the period when initial experimentation was giving way to the era of commercial viability, it documents the incorporation of two key improvements to the process: the use of bromine as an accelerator, and the use of gold chloride in toning the image.

The pamphlet may not have had widespread dissemination. This editor knows of no contemporary reference to the text and its obscurity is further reflected in its mention in only one of the major photographic histories.¹

The preface acknowledges that the information is drawn from a variety of sources. One source not mentioned is François Fauvel-Gouraud, *Description of the Daguerreotype Process, or a Summary of M. Gouraud's Public Lectures, according to the Principles of M. Daguerreotype. With a Description of a Provisory Method for Taking Human Portraits* (Boston: Dutton and Wentworth's Print, 1840).² A comparison of the two texts reveals copied passages.

1. Beaumont Newhall, *The Daguerreotype in America* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1961): 169.

2. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/F8400001_GOURAUD_MANUAL_1840.pdf

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