

To Correspondents.

- DINSDALE AND Co.**—We have received a letter from these correspondents in reply to the recent note of Mr. Griggs on the subject of photo-lithography; but as it is exclusively devoted to the consideration of matters of a personal character, uninteresting to the public, and is discourteous in tone, we cannot give it insertion in our columns. In substance, the object of the letter is to deny the truth of a statement, in Mr. Griggs' note, that he had taught Mr. Dinsdale photo-lithography. Whether he did so or not is unimportant to the public. To this denial various allegations of the incompetency of Mr. Griggs are added, which allegations, from the successful public exhibition of his powers, we are indisposed to accept as true, and should therefore act unfairly in publishing the statements. That our correspondents offered to undertake commercially the photo-lithography upon which Mr. Griggs was engaged at the Indian Museum, and that their offer was not accepted, is scarcely a matter of public interest. The letter concludes as follows:—"We hope, Mr. Editor, you will permit us to be present at the printing of the proposed 'silver surface stone,' when we shall be happy to supply your readers gratis with the results so illustrated after the first hundred pulls." Messrs. Dinsdale and Co., in a former letter, intimated that it was impossible to produce a drawing in chalk upon a stone upon which a silver photographic image had been produced. They now suggest that the thing is possible, but that it will not yield more than 100 impressions. This is a question which is more interesting than any personal discussion, and the practical decision of which we hope shortly to be able to announce.
- PHOTOGRAPHY.**—Mr. England's studio is in St. James's Square, Notting Hill. He does not, we believe, print for the trade.
- A LONDONER IN IRELAND.**—You are familiar, doubtless, with the various formulæ for lime toning baths which we have given from time to time, and lime is the oxide of calcium. The calcio-chloride of gold is a double chloride of gold and calcium.
- W. J. A. G.**—If you require one lens for all purposes the triple is best, and it has really no fault; but if it be required for landscape only, in which straight lines are not important, a single combination will give a more brilliant image. We should prefer to have both, but if we had to select a lens for universal use, it would be the triple. Exaggerated perspective does not necessarily belong to wide-angle lenses, but is often incidental to their use. It is due to the use of lenses of extremely short focus. If, for instance, you use a wide-angle lens of 10 inches focus, and an ordinary landscape or portrait lens of 10 inches focus, and produce a picture of the same size with each, the quality of the perspective will be the same in both cases. We cannot give absolute advice as to the most suitable lens to get, unless we know what your friend has already, and the subjects to which his attention during his tour will be especially devoted. 3. Of the tents you mention we decidedly prefer No. 2, as combining the greatest number of advantages.
- J. R.**—As to the keeping of plates by Mr. England's process, much depends on the details of preparation and on the temperature. In hot weather Mr. England used more dilute albumen and more dilute silver solution. He has kept the plates a month or more; but, as a rule, they are better prepared and developed within a week if the weather be very hot. In cold weather they will keep much longer. The general experience seems to be that if they are long kept they require longer exposure.
- NEO.**—The method we have generally employed in stopping-out a sky when necessary is as follows:—After varnishing the negative, the lower part of the sky to the horizon is stopped-out with water colour, using lampblack generally: a band of about a quarter or half an inch of this is sufficient. The remainder of the sky is then stopped-out at the back, either by means of black varnish, or a mask of blackened silver paper. Sometimes we find that the whole stopping-out can be best effected by a mask of very thin excited albuminized paper, blackened by light. With skill the outline can be sufficiently carefully followed (the image having been first printed on the paper) to place this in contact with the face of the negative.
- A. PARRY.**—From the irregular shape of the dense spot in the middle of your negative it is not probable that it is flare, unless you were using an improvised and irregularly-shaped stop. It is probably the result of a drop of nitrate of silver having fallen on the face of the negative after the developing solution has been drained off. This would in many cases produce a dense spot. A dirty plate might cause a similar result. 2. The Amateur Photographic Association's address is at 12, York Place, Portman Square, W. Mr. Melhuish, the Secretary, will give you all particulars if you write to him at that address.
- R. B.**—The chief disadvantage of using only salts of cadmium in collodion is, that they have a tendency to produce a glutinous condition, which renders it difficult to obtain an even film. To obviate this a sample of cotton giving a thin limpid collodion should be employed, or else the collodion should be kept for many months, during which time it gradually becomes more limpid. 2. The quantity of cotton must depend upon its quality. With some samples the collodion is quite thick enough with 3 or 4 grains per

ounce; with others 5 or 6 grains, or more, will be required. We, as a rule, prefer a sample in which 5 or 6 grains give sufficient body. 3. The authority is not trustworthy.

- X. X.**—The time allowed for either the gallic acid or the gum solution to remain upon the plate before draining is not, we believe, important; about a minute or two in each case. Mr. Gordon's experience is that the film becomes loosened from the plate during the various processes of developing, fixing, and washing, remaining attached by the varnished edge; but not that it blisters. In his experience the finished negative shows no trace of the effect of the loosening, but that it dries evenly without either marks or wrinkles. 2. The extra amount of bromide is to be added directly to the collodion. We will consult Mr. Gordon as to the blistering, and let you know his opinion in our next.
- FRED YOUNG.**—See answer above. Mr. Gordon's opinion will, doubtless, help you, and we hope to give it in our next.
- M. D.**—The excessive washing of prints before toning often increases toning difficulties. We prefer a slight washing, but neither the use of a chloride nor a prolonged washing in common water. 2. Always wash the print between toning and fixing. It is a good plan to immerse the print in a solution of carbonate of ammonia before placing in the hypo bath. A long immersion in weak hypo is not desirable. Use a strong hypo bath; not less than one ounce in four of water. Wash the prints well in several rapid changes of water before placing them in the washing machine. 3. It is very much a matter of taste. We generally prefer a warm tone; a good black is suitable to some subjects; but a blue or inky black is, to our taste, always unpleasant.
- D. D. D.**—Our own experience with the collodio-bromide process is too limited to decide absolutely as to the cause of your difficulties. We have used collodio-bromide made by ourselves, and used within a few hours of mixing, and we have used it after having been made some days by Mr. Sayce, and, in each case, with success. Those who have had experience in the process lay some stress on the bromized collodion having been prepared some time before working. The use of hot water having proved useful in Mr. Sayce's practice, we should recommend you to adopt it, although it is possible to succeed without. 2. The tannin should be allowed to soak into the film for three or four minutes. 3. These plates may be employed for enlarging upon, but the time of exposure can only be learnt by experiment. 4. If you make your own collodion, dissolve the bromide first in the alcohol; if you buy your plain collodion, add the bromide to the proportion of alcohol which would be usually employed as the iodizing solution with the collodion in question.
- VIGNETTE.**—A very light grey painted in distemper or oil-flattening will give a good background for vignettes. Unbleached calico, without any print, may be used, but the background must, in that case, be kept some distance behind the sitter. For a curtain, either damask, or moreen, or velvet, or repp, or tabaret, or any of the materials commonly used for curtains in dwelling houses, may be used. Maroon, or brown, or green, may be used with advantage.
- LYTLES STUDIO.**—The discolouration in the print forwarded is due to imperfect fixation. It has apparently been immersed in a weak or exhausted hypo bath. Use strong fresh hypo solution, and never use it a second day.
- MR. WARNER'S MOUNTING BOARD.**—We have examined the tinted mounting board, with a sample of which Mr. Warner favoured us. It is found, on testing, to contain a very minute trace of hypo; insufficient, probably, to cause any injurious action, the more so that it is only obtained after long soaking, and is probably due to the white paper which forms the inner portion of the board.
- J. H. R.**—It is probable that your sample of Castile soap has not been pure, but has contained alkali in excess. The precipitate you have obtained is not pure oleate of silver, but is probably a mixture of oleate of silver and oxide of silver. We find it partially soluble in alcohol, leaving a brown residue, which, on examination, will probably be found to be oxide of silver. The late moment at which your letter arrived does not permit full examination this week. For use with the collodio-bromide of silver you will probably find it less trouble to add a little alcoholic solution of soap to the collodion, or even to add a little pure soap in shavings. We have found that method answer with collodio-chloride of silver. 2. Probably the simplest and most convenient actinometer would consist in a piece of paper prepared with collodio-chloride of silver, and observing the time required to colour to a certain standard light tint.
- FOURTH VOL.**—We cannot tell you how far it is probable that you will find a market for a series of stereo negatives, nor their probable value; it is a question dependent upon so many circumstances. You can only learn by enquiry of probable buyers. Try the Stereoscopic Company. 2. The patchy effect of red and blue which you describe is due, of course, to irregular toning. This may arise from some imperfection in the paper; or from handling the prints before toning with soiled fingers; or from the prints sticking together in the toning bath. There is no remedy for such defects after they are produced. 3. "Nitrate of magnesium" is simply an incorrect mode of phrasing nitrate of magnesia. We have not tried Newton's printing bath. Several correspondents in our next.