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PORTRAITS WITH LANDSCAPE BACKGROUNDS —DOUBLE NEGATIVES.

SINCE we called attention some months ago to the charming card pictures of Mr. Edge, in which a landscape taken from nature is introduced as a background to the portrait, many ingenious suggestions for modes of double printing* and for the production of double negatives have been communicated to our pages. We have now to introduce to our readers a mode of producing a double negative by which the figure and landscape background can be printed successfully at one operation. The method we are about to describe is due to Mr. Burgess, of Norwich, and is, we venture to think, so simple and efficient as to leave nothing further to desire in this direction. By the use of ordinary skill, care, and taste, double negatives with various effects can be produced, and the printing is conducted in the ordinary manner without extra care or trouble. The examples which Mr. Burgess brought under our attention some weeks ago, when he favoured us with a visit, were described as merely experimental essays, but their excellence afforded sufficient warranty of the capability of the process, and we apprehend that the beauty of the results, so far as the background can influence it, need only be limited by the art skill of the photographer.

The plan devised by Mr. Burgess consists in a new use of our collodio-chloride process. A negative is taken, as usual, in the studio, with such foreground effects as may be suited to the finished result; the background screen must, however, be a dark one, either black or as nearly so as the darkest part of the landscape. When the negative is completed it requires a protective coating, which prevents the film from being dissolved or injured by the next coating, which consists of collodio-chloride. Mr. Burgess at first used india rubber-solution, but has since found that albumen answered better, and the latter will doubtless aid in securing vigour in the image. When the protective varnish of india-rubber or albumen is dry, it receives a coat of collodio-chloride of silver, and when this is dry the figure and foreground are carefully painted out upon it with indian ink applied with a camel's-hair pencil. This done, the sensitive collodio-chloride film is exposed under a transparent positive obtained from any suitable landscape or other negative which may be chosen, and a negative image so produced. It is then fixed and washed in the usual manner. Toning, it will be observed, is unnecessary, as the brown tint of hypo fixing is most suitable for printing purposes. The indian ink which masked the figure is washed off in the course of the fixing and washing, and

* We may here remark that Mr. Robinson has recently reduced double printing to a system of great simplicity, arranging the negatives for combination in a picture so that they may be worked by his ordinary printers by a system of registration, in which care to follow instructions alone is necessary to success. We shall have something to say on this subject shortly.

the figure and foreground remain as in the original negative.

We subjoin Mr. Burgess's communication, received since we saw him, in its integrity:—

“My dear sir,—I have pleasure in sending you my promised communication on ‘double printing,’ or rather *double negatives*, but my time has been too much occupied to permit me to experiment with it so far as I should have liked. However, the specimens I send herewith are sufficient to show that it can be done satisfactorily. When used with taste and skill, I think the method will give great power to the photographer, as it is possible to make the background harmonise and blend with the figure; and this being done on the negative, of course the printing proceeds with no more than the usual trouble. I quite appreciate *good printing*, but, I think, as a rule, we do not spend sufficient time and care in producing negatives of a superior quality.

“The admirable little pictures by Mr. Edge first induced me to give my attention to double printing more closely than I had hitherto done, although I had frequently printed in skies and made use of the *dodge* in other ways without any scruple as to its legitimacy. I did not until then fully realise the additional power which is thus gained by the photographer. At first I took the figure and foreground with a light background, graduated to dark grey at the bottom. A print having been taken from this, I painted out the figure and foreground with indian-ink (this is easily done by any one who can draw moderately well, even with a profile), and laid the print upon the background negative. When the print is washed, prior to toning, the indian ink is carefully removed, a little friction with a brush being sometimes necessary. The advantage in this plan lies in the fact of its being possible to follow very intricate outline without any fear of the mask slipping. Another plan is to paint a mask on ‘vitrified’ sheet india-rubber, or talc. This is laid over the print and gummed in its place. I have made the ‘sheet india-rubber’ by coating a glass alternately with collodion and india-rubber until of sufficient thickness.

“But it is the plan of making a double negative which I think is most useful, and I will proceed to describe my method of doing this. I take the negative of figure and foreground with quite a dark, plain background, and, whilst still wet, after fixing, flow over albumen and water mixed in equal parts. When dry, I coat the plate with collodio-chloride of silver, and when this is again dry paint out with indian-ink all the figure and foreground. I then proceed to print from a transparent positive of the background on the collodio-chloride of silver, which will, of course, produce a negative of the background at the back of the figure.

“I have also tried coating the negative of figure, &c., with india-rubber, and preparing as a dry plate, but found