

brought it back with me from Chicago, and put it up here." It was a good idea, certainly; but one don't like to be caught napping, for all that. Had no one been looking, we should have gone back and kicked that door. Only fancy being brought to book by a pale-faced bit of wood!

The room for sensitizing paper is adjacent. Messrs. Taylor's large branch establishments at Liverpool, Manchester, &c., print for themselves, but when we find 130 sheets a day being sensitized, there is pretty good proof that Forest Hill is a busy place. At the present date of writing we hear there are twenty-five branch establishments, not including those in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Chicago; but as Messrs. Taylor still appear to be busy annexing towns at the rate of something like two a week, we make the above statement under every reserve.

The strength of the printing-bath in vogue here is thirty-five grains to the ounce, and in respect to the collection of residues, a most systematic plan is adopted. All waste solutions containing silver, from whatever source they come, are first treated with hydrochloric acid, and subsequently with liver of sulphur. That is to say, having been collected in large jars, hydrochloric acid is added to precipitate chloride of silver; the liquid is then drawn off into another receptacle, into which liver of sulphur is put, which naturally brings down any other silver that may be present, in the form of sulphide. By this exhaustive treatment every particle of the precious metal is recovered.

Downstairs is the printing room. It is a rule, and a very good one too, to fix down both vignette and negative in the printing-frame, at the commencement of operations, with strips of gummed paper; in these circumstances, there is nothing to fear from the carelessness of printers in permitting negatives or vignettes to slip when changing the paper, and thus getting the picture out of the centre. As Forest Hill prints for a score of branches, it is very necessary to put a distinguishing mark on the prints as they are produced; the printer who withdraws the picture from the frame does this, pencilling on the back an initial letter corresponding to the town whence the negative has come.

The spacious washing-room is next door. There are three large washing troughs of wood, lined with lead and coated with shellac. A huge rose above supplies the water, which, when it has risen to the top of the receptacle, is emptied by a syphon. Blistering of the albumenized paper is almost unknown; but the addition of spirit to the sensitizing solution, in the proportion of about three per cent., is regarded as a preventive measure against the disagreeable phenomenon. The printing is accomplished under a glass roof, which, in summer time, is covered with tissue paper.

We have no time to speak of the series of printing-rooms, mounting-rooms, sorting-rooms, &c., through which our courteous guide leads us. It is the club portrait that occupies all these busy people—a collodion transfer painted in oil; the finished production may not have much claim to rank as a work of high art, but there is an important point in all these portraits that has probably had more to do with Messrs. Taylor's great success than anything else. It is that however much, dress and garments may be coloured and beautified, face and features are simply covered with an even wash. In other words, advantage is taken of the photographic shadows that already exist on the portrait, and these supply sufficient contrast, without there being any necessity to tamper with the likeness by the application of body-colours.

In an establishment which gives employment to between five and six hundred employes, it is necessary to have strict rules and regulations. The hours of assistants are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; the girls however, not coming until 9 a.m. But six o'clock is the maximum time, and many are released from their work, especially in winter, some time before this. Wages vary, of course, with the skill and capacity of the assistant; but two young ladies were pointed out to us in the painting room whose average earnings were three pounds a week.

One word on the subject of collodion making, before we close our rapid sketch. Collodion is generally three months old before use, and sometimes is even permitted to rest a year before employment, Messrs. Taylor having a firm belief in a ripe material. It is all made on the premises. The pyroxylin employed is half high, and half low, temperature material. These are the proportions:—

Pyroxylin	...	...	...	9 ounces
Ether	...	...	...	4 gallons
Alcohol	...	...	...	3 "

In twenty-four hours dissolution is complete, and the collodion is then turned into a mixing stone cask, having the tap half way up. Here it remains a week or more to settle, and is then drawn off and put into other stone jars, where it remains till required for use. As only half the contents of the mixing cask can be drawn off at a time (since the cock is half way up), freshly-made collodion is always mixed with a proportion of old. In a word, the collodion is treated in precisely the same way as connoisseurs treat their whiskey, who by this means are able to detect a flavour of the old "cratur" in every new supply.

The "At Home" for next week will be "Mr. Walter Woodbury at Manor House, South Norwood."

COLLODION VERSUS GELATINE.

BY W. K. BURTON.

IN connection with the above controversy, and frequently before, I have seen the statement made that gelatine dry plates are more sensitive, relatively to collodion, in a dull light than in a strong one. This I have always doubted, and I think that now I can prove that it is not the case.

Let us consider for a moment exactly what the statement means. It means one of two things: either that a given amount of light, when extended over a considerable length of time, has more effect upon a dry plate than the same amount of light when extended over a shorter time, or that in the case of the wet plate the reverse is the case.

Let us take the case of the dry plate, and see if this is really true. Let us suppose two dry plates, upon one of which falls light which we shall represent by sixteen for one second, and let us suppose that on the other falls light which we shall represent by one for sixteen seconds. It is said that the latter plate will appear more fully exposed than the former. We must at once admit that if this be the case it will be so whether the lesser brightness be due to the comparative dullness of the object from which it is reflected, or by the interposition of a diaphragm one quarter the diameter of the diaphragm used for the first plate, the light from the object being the same. It is absurd to say that the plate can discriminate between dullness produced by dullness of the object, and the same amount of dullness produced by the interposition of a smaller stop.

Now, if the statement were really true that the latter plate would appear more fully exposed than the former in the case of a stop of a diameter equal to one quarter the diameter of the stop used for the first plate, we would have the rule whereby we compare the speed of lenses entirely upset. We would no longer find that the exposure required was inversely as the square of the diameter of the aperture. I think any of my photographic brethren who have tried will agree with me that this rule holds most perfectly both for wet plates and dry. I have myself tried experiments for the sole purpose of ascertaining if it does, and have not the smallest hesitation in saying that for all plates, either wet or dry, that I have tried, it does. This proves, I think, beyond doubt, that the relative speed of wet and dry plates remains the same for different brightnesses of light of the same colour. I believe that the reason why it has become generally believed that dry plates are so much more sensitive compared to wet in dull weather than in bright, is that—in this part of the world, at least—dull weather almost always means yellow light, and there is not the smallest doubt that bromide of silver is far more sensitive to yellow light than is iodide.