

The Photographic News, November 26, 1880.

PHOTOGRAPHY IN AND OUT OF THE STUDIO.

SOLAR PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE PHOTOPHONE.—PHOTOGRAPHIC REPRODUCTIONS.—SARAH BERNHARDT AND HER PHOTOGRAPHS.—THE SUN'S SPOTS AND POLITICS.—HOW TO SECURE A GOOD EXPRESSION.

Solar Photography and the Photophone.—Professor Bell's latest discovery, the Photophone, promises to be capable of yet further wonders. Professor Bell lately visited M. Janssen's solar observatory at Meudon, and was much struck with the solar photographs which are the French astronomer's speciality. He expressed the opinion that the variations of brightness of a given solar point might make the photophone speak, and so reproduce in the laboratory sounds produced on the sun. M. Janssen placed his instruments at Professor Bell's disposal, and on a fine day the experiment was made, but without distinct success. M. Janssen has proposed that a series of successive photographs of a particular point on the sun's surface be passed rapidly before an objective giving images on the selenium apparatus, so condensing into a brief space variations which in the solar images are too slow to produce sound in the photophone. If this be successful the "music of the spheres" may be literally realised! At all events, the result of some preliminary experiments is stated by M. Janssen to be hopeful, in his notice brought before the Academy of Science on the 2nd of November.

Photographic Reproductions.—An important adjunct has been made to the Bibliothèque Nationale in the Rue de Richelieu, Paris. A spacious photographic studio has been erected, in which reproductions of the rare stamps and curious designs which the library contains will be made. It will also be utilized for reproducing ancient manuscripts, the duplicates of which will be distributed in the various depositories throughout the country, and so avoid, in case of fire, the entire destruction of relics of the past whose loss would be absolutely irreparable. The studio is placed at the top of the building, and is about eighteen metres long and about seven wide. The dark room is situated in one corner of the studio, which is constructed entirely of glass and iron. This is an example which might well be followed by our Government. The reproduction of old documents is carried on to a large extent by the Ordnance Department at Southampton; but the work here, extensive as it is, represents but a very small portion of that necessary to be done. At the Record Office and the British Museum must be vast stores of manuscripts of historical value, which, if once lost, could never be replaced. At the British Museum there is some apology for a photographic studio, but connected with the Record Office nothing of the kind is to be found.

Sarah Bernhardt and her Photographs.—Mdlle. Sarah Bernhardt has a very keen appreciation of the value of photography. On arriving at New York she was waited upon by Mr. Sarony, who offered her 1,000 dollars for the exclusive privilege of photographing her. Mdlle Bernhardt thought the sum too low, and modestly demanded 5,000, to which the New York photographer naturally demurred. Eventually the actress came down, and accepted Mr. Sarony's offer, which must certainly be considered a most liberal one. Already Mdlle. Bernhardt has sat ten times, and anticipates going through the ordeal thirty times more. In the opinion of many people, who have a horror—or pretend they have—of sitting for their portraits, she will at this rate have earned her money. We shall be rather curious to see those new portraits of the "incomparable Sarah." Those exhibited in the shop-windows of London have certainly not done her justice. With a face so mobile and emotional, Mdlle. Bernhardt is by no means a favourable subject for the camera; and those persons who have only seen her photograph must marvel greatly at the

enthusiastic descriptions of the actress given by the New York papers. According to the infatuated writers, there is assuredly no truth in the ill-natured remark of Dumas, who said of a picture of Mdlle. Bernhardt and her dog, that it was the picture of a dog looking at a bone!

The Sun's Spots and Politics.—Professor Piazzi Smyth, the Scottish Astronomer-Royal, is said to have made an important discovery: nothing less than that the attentive observation of the sun's spots on the part of our rulers would lead them into good government. The sun, it would appear, is extremely interested in the Irish question, for we read in the current number of the *Astronomical Register* "that the sun, in his never-ceasing cycles of radiant heat, light, magnetism, and spots, with their necessarily accompanying tenth or twelfth bad agricultural year, fights against the Irish Land League." An F.R.A.S., writing in a contemporary, amused with this notion, suggests "that a really formidable rival publication to *Zadkiel's Almanack* (on strictly sun-spot principles) might be brought out specially for circulation in Ireland. Here are a few of his suggestions. "One spot and a few small faculae on sun's disc would indicate an agent dangerously wounded, and two process-servers beaten to a jelly. Neither Mr. Foster nor the constabulary on the spot." "Sun absolutely free from spots," would mean "three landlords shot dead, an agent fired at; everyone put in as care-taker in Mayo pitchforked." "A group of spots appearing on the sun's following limb signifies one landlord ineffectually fired at. Several tenants spontaneously pay their rents." This is not a bad notion. If the sun really desires to act as the guide, philosopher, and friend of the English Government, no time should be lost in the interpretation of his variations. The only question which exercises our mind is: might not the presence and absence of the sun's spots be just as applicable to the difficulties in the French Chamber, the solution of the Eastern question, or the suppression of the Nihilists? What is there to indicate that the sun cares only for Ireland?

How to Secure a Good Expression.—We presume that the days are past when a photographer thought he had done his duty and his sitter justice, after moving about the studio silently and mysteriously, and fidgetting about the head until the "subject" was not quite sure it belonged to him, to blandly tell him to "look pleasant;" or, if the subject were a lady, to bid her, off-hand, put on a smile. A few fossilised specimens, we are afraid, still remain, and to them we recommend the following, which the *New York Daily Graphic* relates: "A decently-dressed workman came to a photographer's recently to have the portrait of his wife taken. While the operator was arranging the camera the husband thought fit to give some advice concerning her pose. 'Think of something serious,' he said, 'or else you will laugh and spoil it. Remember that your father is in prison, and that your brother has had to compound with his creditors; and try to imagine what would have become of you if I had not taken pity upon you.' We are not at all sure that an observation of this kind from the photographer would not be more efficacious in securing a lively expression than the stereotyped request to "smile, and look pleasant."

At Home.

MR. WALTER WOODBURY AT MANOR HOUSE, SOUTH NORWOOD.

If we divide the history of photography into two periods, that which preceded collodion upon glass, and that which has followed it, we shall find in the second era no name more prominent than that of Mr. Walter Woodbury. Woodburytype, to the modern photographer, is as "familiar in his mouth as household words," and is, and apparently will be, for many years to come, the only photo-engraving process of practical and commercial value. What a fortunate idea to light upon, many have thought in becoming