

The ease with which any colour may be produced on a slide prepared by the carbon process is not recognised as it should be. Workers who have always devoted their attention to other processes have neglected this one, not knowing, perhaps, how easy it is by it to produce beautiful effects. Carbon tissue is now specially prepared for transparencies, and when the worker cannot get the exact tint which he wants, it is not a very difficult matter to prepare it at home. The year before last, some blue (carbon) slides were shown at the Crystal Palace Exhibition, and were rightly awarded a prize by the judges. The process is especially valuable in the reproduction of astronomical subjects. These used to be drawn by hand, but now that the camera is being every day more and more wedded to the telescope, these rough diagrams should disappear in favour of actual photographs of the scenery of the heavens. A good photograph, well shown by a powerful light, would, if prepared in this way, be the most beautiful astronomical picture possible, second to nature herself.

Had Meissonnier chosen to adopt the arts of the modern fashionable photographer, there is little doubt he could have doubled his earnings, large as they were. Occasionally Meissonnier condescended to portraits, but, as in the celebrated instance of Mrs. Mackay, the wife of the American Bonanza King, he very rarely pleased. As one of his critics remarks, "He would paint womankind just as they came to him, with nothing extenuated, and with all their wrinkles, and the powder with which they tried to hide them, set down so faithfully that the disgusted sitters thought they were set down in malice. His paintings of painted women, marvels of accuracy in their absolute fidelity, are true types of realistic art." This is not the kind of talent which sitters appreciate. No wonder, therefore, that few examples of his skill in portraiture exist.

Meissonnier could never have become a court painter, although Oliver Cromwell would have delighted in his truth. We suppose an example of a court and fashionable painter who is absolutely true to nature is not to be found. The essential quality of a skilful artist of this kind is an elegant mannerism. As was remarked some time ago in the case of the Guelph Exhibition, the faces of the Kneller and Lely period are so much alike that they are untrustworthy as portraits, simply because the artist has adhered to a supposed type of beauty to which all his sitters were anxious to belong. If Sir Peter Lely had been a Meissonnier, how different the Hampton Court beauties would appear! But then had he been a Meissonnier he would never have been chosen to paint them.

It is easy to understand the difficulty which is experienced in obtaining papers to be read before photographic societies. So much has been written on every branch of the art that to expect any novelty is almost hopeless. At the same time, societies must

live, and it is to be presumed they cannot live without having papers read at the meetings. We fancy that too much stress is laid upon this supposed necessity. Some of the best discussions frequently happen when there is no set subject set before the meeting.

The anxiety, however, of those who have the interests of the Photographic Society at heart in regard to the technical meetings can well be appreciated. We fancy that, in the new rooms, these meetings will be much better attended, and will have more vitality than there used to be in the old quarters. It is, of course, desirable to have a subject to fall back upon when there is nothing before the meeting. It is a fact, nevertheless, that the absence of a paper induces those members who, under no circumstances whatever, would put pen to paper, to bring out orally some interesting point of practice which they otherwise would have kept to themselves, not willingly, but because the necessity for narration has not arisen. One of the objects of these technical meetings, we take it, is to give opportunities to those members who have had plenty of experience, but who dislike to place their experiences on paper. Hence the absence of a paper is not altogether an unmixed evil.

Photographers are not alone in their endeavours to make their productions permanent; artists have troubles from the same source. The question, indeed, has come to such importance in Paris that a committee consisting of distinguished painters has been formed to investigate the subject of the value of pigments.

The fact that Mr. Alfred Marks has been appointed manager of the Central Bank of London reminds us that Mr. Marks was the secretary for the society for photographing Old London. It has always been somewhat of a mystery why this society ceased to exist. The work it did was extremely valuable, but surely it did not exhaust the material. Is it not possible for some of the London photographic societies to take up the work as a speciality?

A photograph was the cause of a rather curious scene at the *Nouveautés* Theatre, Paris, the other evening. The leading actress in the play assumes the character of a young girl who has lost her parents, and who is anxious to find them. To assist her in her quest, she sticks into her enormous *chapeau en éventail* all the portraits of her friends. These portraits had been bought at random at a shop near the theatre. Early in the evening a young Russian, with several friends, entered a *baignoire*, when, to his great disgust, he discovered that one of the portraits sticking in the hat was of himself. He immediately rushed behind the scenes, and had a wordy war with the lady in question, terminating the affair by violently snatching her hat from her head, tearing his photograph off, and marching triumphantly back to his box! Such sensitiveness is indeed rare.