

Fanny Fern, "How not to have your picture taken," 4 August 1859

(keywords: Fanny Fern, Sara Willis Parton, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography)

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EWER ARCHIVE N8590001

Published in:

St. Catharine's Journal (Ontario, Canada) (4 August 1859): 2.

HOW NOT TO HAVE YOUR PICTURE TAKEN—Fanny Fern in a late effusion had the following in relation to likenesses, which is very good:—Do you want to be amused! Go to our daguerreotype, hallo type, ambrotype, photograph and similar establishments and see how human nature comes out in frames. One man has evidently laid himself out in the tie of a cravat destined for immortality: another has thrust his hand tragically into a buttoned up bosom, which never could contain anything else: another still, parting his hair in the middle and staring frenziedly into the blue ether, has written himself down a donkey for posterity. "How is it about the women?" Well, they are just fit for such men. Flowered and feathered—till it is a positive relief to rush into a plaster cast shop and see a cool Venus.

[End of text.]

EDITOR'S NOTES:

Fanny Fern is the pseudonym of Sara Willis Parton. Also of interest is chapter 53 of Parton's novel, *Ruth Hall: a Domestic Tale of the Present Time* (New York: Mason Brothers, 1855) in which the daguerreotype is central to the plot.

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URL: http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/N8590001_FERN_ST-CATH_1859-08-04.pdf

Document created by: Gary W. Ewer

Creation date: 2009-04-07 / Last revision: 2016-04-02

Citation information: *St. Catharine's Journal* (Ontario, Canada) (4 August 1859): 2.

Prepared from: photocopy from microfilm kindly provided by Dennis Gannon.

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