

“Daguerrean Gallery,” (Jesse Stone, Boston) 24 December 1853

(keywords: Jesse Stone, 28 Hanover, Tremont Row, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography)

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DAGUERREAN GALLERY.

AMONG the first who attempted to produce impressions on paper placed in the camera obscura, Sir Humphrey Davy stands pre-eminently conspicuous; but Monsieur Daguerre was the first who succeeded in fixing the shadows of objects on a smooth surface, so as to retain them permanently. When the fact was announced, it was received with incredulity; but truth triumphed, for the fact was incontrovertible, and conviction vanquished skepticism—for perfect impressions of house, churches, and landscapes, and exact likenesses of living men, women, and children, were produced on metallic plates. And when, through the munificence of the French Government, the important secret of Daguerre was made known to the public, the news spread with unparalleled rapidity. Improvement followed improvement so fast that miniature paintings threatened to sink into universal disuse.

At the World's Fair, it was pretty generally acknowledged that the Americans excelled in two things at least,—manufacturing agricultural implements, and sun-paintings. Those who desire to see to what perfection the beautiful art has arrived, are respectfully invited to examine some splendid specimens which may be seen at the Gallery occupied by Mr. J. Stone, 28 Hanover Street. Directly on the corner of that busy thoroughfare and the Lane which leads to the entrance of this Gallery, may be seen a case containing specimens of his art. Up in the operating chamber, however, is the place for connoisseurs to gratify their taste. Unlike the flat, pale, and tameless pictures, which were formerly exhibited by daguerreotypists, these specimens of light limning have that life-like and natural look, which makes them stand out on the plate as though some invisible and superior agency had carved them there.

Mr. Stone is very happy in managing his lights and shades, giving breadth of surface, rotundity and soul his pictures. He has had eight years' experience in this art; consequently, he has a right to claim superiority as an executant. The walls, which seem to be paved with pictures, make a museum of his apartment. There we notice single figures and groups, and among them some of our well-known public characters—Miss Cushman, Miss Pelby, the late Dr. Tucker, and many others. We noticed a Napoleonic head, as well as various other specimens of art, and men, women, and children, in different attitudes. As a copyist, Mr. Stone is unexcelled. In his glass case we noticed cases of almost every pattern and price—cotton, silk, velvet, plush, of every variety of color, and every imaginable form—round, oval, square, octagon, &c., and lockets gleaming with gold—in a word, all the paraphernalia of the profession.

The light which comes through the glass roof, rains down like a golden shower upon the room, filling it with soft, mellow light, and painting the most perfect portraits. A polite and pleasant lady is always on hand to wait upon customers, and Mr. Stone does his work not by proxy, for he is always on hand to attend to his patrons personally. It will be remembered by many that he formerly did business on Tremont Row. Success to him—may his *shadows* never be less.

[End of text.]

EDITOR'S NOTES:

Other articles of interest appearing in this publication are George W. Bungay, "American Enterprise – No. XXXVI, Daguerreotype Materials," (regarding the daguerreotype stock business of Benjamin French), 7:6 (6 August 1853): 84; George W. Bungay, "American Enterprise – No. XXXVIII, Hale's Picture Gallery," (regarding the daguerreotypist Luther Holman Hale), 7:8 (20 August 1853): 116–17.

1. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/P8530008_FRENCH_WAVERLEY_1853-08-03.pdf
2. http://www.daguerreotypearchive.org/texts/P8530009_HALES_WAVERLEY_1853-08-13.pdf

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