

OPERATING.

COATING THE DAGUERREOTYPE
PLATE.

The principal difficulty in coating the plate, is that of preserving the exact proportion between the quantity of iodine and bromine, or quick. It is here necessary to say, that hardly any two persons see alike the same degree of color, so as to be enabled to judge correctly the exact tint, *i. e.* what one might describe as light rose red, might appear to another as bright or cherry red; consequently, the only rule for the student in Art, is to study what appears to him to be the particular tint or shade required to aid him to produce the desired result. Practice has proved that but a slight variation in the chemical coating of the Daguerreotype plate will very materially effect the final result.

Experience proves that the common impression iodized to a *rather light yellow gold tint*, and brought by the bromine to a *very light rose color*, have their white part very intense, and their deep shades very black. It is also known that if you employ a thicker coating of iodine, and apply upon it a proportionate tint of bromine, so as to obtain a *deep rose tint*, the oppositions will be less marked, and the image have a softer tone. This effect has been obvious to every one who has practiced the art. Thus we observe that the light coatings produce strong contrast of light and shade, and that this contrast grows gradually less, until, in the very heavy coatings it almost wholly disappears. From this it will readily be perceived that the middle shades are the ones to be desired for representing the harmonious blending of the lights and shades.

Then, if we examine with respect to strength, or depth of tone, and sharpness of impression, we see that the light coating produces a very sharp, but shallow impression; while the other extreme gives a deep, but very dull one. Here then are still better

reasons for avoiding either extreme. The changes through which the plate passes in coating may be considered a *yellow straw color*, or dark *orange yellow*, a *rose color*, more or less dark in tint, or *red violet*, steel *blue* or *indigo*, and lastly *green*. After attaining this last named color, the plate resumes a light yellow tint, and continues to pass successively a second time, with very few exceptions, through all the shades above mentioned.

After having the iodine box clean and dry, put into it three or four drachms, or for winter, even an ounce of the best iodine, and spread it evenly over the bottom. The manner of charging the other box will of course vary with the kind of quick or other accelerator used. Keep the lid of your box screwed down when not in use.

1. Coating over dry iodine to an orange color, then over the quick, to a light rose, and back over iodine one-sixth as long as first coating, will produce a fine, soft tone, and is the coating generally used for most quicks.

2. The plate iodized to a dark orange yellow, or tinged slightly with incipient rose color, coated over quick to a deep rose red, then back over iodine one-tenth as long as at first coating, gives a clear, strong, bold, deep impression.

As a rule, the heavier the first coating of iodine, the lighter the re-coating, and vice versa, for the reason that, as a heavy coating tends to destroy the shadows, so the light re-coating tends to strengthen them, and restore the equilibrium.

Our favorite mode of coating is the second, as described above, and which we will now point out more particularly. The temperature of the coating-room should be about seventy degrees. Care is necessary that the plate be of the same temperature as that of the room, or a little higher. This may be accomplished by placing the fingers on the back, when it will soon assume the proper degree for the reception of the vapors of iodine. Rap one corner on some hard sub-