

“Death of Daguerre,” 4 August 1851

(keywords: Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre, Charles R. Meade, Henry W. M. Meade, Meade Brothers, history of the daguerreotype, history of photography)

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DEATH OF DAGUERRE.—Our attention is called to the death of the celebrated Daguerre, the inventor of the art which bears his name, by a letter from Meade, Brothers, of this city. His decease occurred on the 12th of last month, at his residence, Brie Sur Marue, [Marne—ed.] in France. Daguerre was celebrated for his contributions to science and works of art long before his discovery of the Daguerreotype. Some of his chemical dioramas have been exhibited in this country; of these we may mention “The Crumbling of a mountain in the valley of Goldan,” [Goldau—ed.] “the interior of the church of St. Etienne du Mont, with the Midnight Mass in Paris,” and “the Carnival at Venice.” These works were unfortunately destroyed by fire. Many who had the pleasure of witnessing their exhibition, will remember the striking and beautiful effects produced on the same canvas by the aid of different kinds of light.

Daguerre, like many other great inventors and benefactors to mankind, would have ended his last days in poverty but for the liberality of the French Government, which conferred on him a pension of 10,000 francs a year, in consideration of his great discovery. Many have been enriched by that discovery, and the daguerreotype art, in its various branches, now gives employment to thousands in various parts of the world. The Messrs. Meade, in their communication, suggest that all daguerreotypists wear crape on their arm for thirty days, as a token of respect to the memory of the father of their art, and they also express a hope that “The American Lithographic Association,” will change their name to “The American Daguerreotype Association, for the promotion of the art.

Of the importance of the Daguerreotype Art in the state of perfection to which it has been brought, most of our readers are well informed. By it the beauties of the landscape, and the features of the human form, are transcribed and preserved with astonishing correctness and rapidity. By this delightful art the sweetest associations and the dearest friendships of life are supplied with mediums of preservation. The pencil of the painter, and the chisel of the sculptor are too slow and costly to be employed in the service of any but the wealthy; but the Daguerreotype Art is the servant of all classes. The poorest can employ it to stamp the image of a loved object, or the countenance of a cherished friend. It helps the memory, and serves to keep the tenderer feelings of our nature vivid, warm and active. It is an art that contributes greatly to the humanizing, civilizing, and binding together of the human family. Much as is every one who has improved, or may improve the art, to be honored, the

greatest praise is due to him who discovered its first principles. It is easier to improve than discover. The name of Daguerre will, therefore, be handed down to the latest ages, in connection with this art, and his memory cherished as a great benefactor to his race.

[End of text.]

EDITOR'S NOTES:

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