

negative of Major Russel, from which I took several prints. The portrait was upon a whole plate, and the idea conveyed was that the gallant gentleman was a very austere dogmatic little man, with grey hair and whiskers—one, in fact, under whose rule, whether military or otherwise, it would be an infliction to be placed. Judge then of my surprise on making the acquaintance of the gallant Major the other day to find him above the middle height, with hair, no matter of what colour, but certainly not grey, and a very jolly fellow. I was similarly deceived in Mr. Taylor, whom you all know as an old member of your Society, and now one of the editors of the 'British Journal.' He and I had known each other for some years through our respective cartes; but we neither of us recognized the other when we met for the first time, the other day, in Mr. Ross's office. Mr. Taylor I had always regarded, from the evidence afforded by his photographic portrait, as a little pale-faced fat man, with very large square shoes, and probably a shuffle in his walk. He turned out to be a very tall rosy-faced man, and neither fat nor shuffling. What he had thought of me was evidently quite as wide of the mark; and he did not hesitate to confess his surprise. I have often wondered whether the world-wide celebrities, whose cartes one sees in one's own and every body else's album, are as unlike their photographic portraits as one's own friends are known to be. The question assumes quite a serious aspect when we reflect upon the permanent prints of the nobilities of the present day, which are to be handed down to posterity in Swan's or Pouncy's carbon. Query, is it not morally wrong to go on thus deluding one's fellow-creatures, not only of this but of all succeeding ages? And yet if people will knowingly go, as they do, into hot, short, glaring glass rooms and be taken,—with the results of such a practice staring them in the face in nearly every photograph they see,—why then, I can only say, on their own head be it, and posterity must take the consequences.

I am surely not exaggerating the case a bit. The evils which I describe exist, and it ought to be a question of the first importance to every professional portraitist to ascertain whether his glass room is properly constructed, and whether his mode of posing and exposing is the best possible.

Too much importance is, I think, attached, in the first place, to a good business locality, and not enough to the aspect of the studio and the general conveniences for work. A first-class photographer need not surely confine himself to Regent Street or Princes Street, if the aspect of the room in that locality is objectionable. M. Silvy and M. Joubert probably do as much business at Bayswater as most of the Regent Street professionals. Who ever dreams of caring about where a great artist lives, and of making a difficulty of a mile or two more or less to his studio, or whether it be north or west of the General Post Office? A photographer who aspires to be an artist must show excellence in his work, and make the public go to him, wherever he happens to find it most suitable to his purpose to live. If a smoky atmosphere stops the actinic rays and lengthens the exposure, besides precipitating blacks upon the negative and filling the studio with a haze which veils the picture, let

the photographer have the courage to tell his sitters to come to him a mile or two out of town where he can take them better. The question of the proper construction of the glass room ought never to be how to make the most of a bad situation, but how to construct the best possible room in a thoroughly suitable situation.

Assuming, then, that we have a suitable situation, what is the best possible construction of the glass room? Examine, first, the generality of photographic portraits, and then go about amongst photographers and observe the kind of room in which these portraits are taken, and I think the truth will not fail to dawn upon you. The common faults of photographs are in the eyes and the expression, while the common faults of glass rooms are that there is too much top-light, too much glare, too much light opposite the eye, too much dirty glass, and that they are too short, and have too little ventilation. A glass room is generally an uncomfortable place to go into; and no one would willingly sit in a chair in the front of the background and face the light if there were any other chair in the room unoccupied. The place of the sitter is the most uncomfortable in the most uncomfortable of rooms; how then can a photographer hope to get a pleasing expression in his picture?

But I will not go on enlarging upon evils with which you are all, gentleman, but too well acquainted. I will endeavour to suggest a remedy, and leave it to you to discuss the merits of that suggestion, and point out the mistakes in it, if there are any. But first let me submit for your inspection four little portraits which I cut out the other day from a recent Number of the 'Bulletin Belge,' and which illustrate four different methods of lighting the sitter, viz. by a top light, a front light, a side light, and an oblique light. They are all portraits of the same person, and yet I beg of you to observe that so different are the effects of the different methods of lighting, that the likeness to the same individual is scarcely preserved in any two of them. Please observe, also, that in the case of the front lighting, the eyes are entirely put out by staring at the light, and look like two white wafers.

The type of the worst possible construction of glass room is, I think, that at King's College, as well as that of M. Claudet; in both of which there is glass all round, and a glass roof, pointed in the former case and round in the latter. The term "glass room" very properly applies to this sort of construction; and if we bear in mind that it is *not* a glass room that we want, but rather a long dark passage, we can then change both the name and the plan of the studio (the "crystal gallery," as it is sometimes facetiously called) at the same time. Let us then agree in future to call the studio the dark gallery, and remember that it is darkness, coolness, and ventilation that we want,—and not heat, glare, and a common promenade for the friends of the sitter, which is to look showy and smart. Let the reception-room be as elegant as you please; but let the studio be as it were another optical contrivance (a sort of continuation of the camera), and let it be just as ugly inside, and with walls blackened in the same way wherever blackness is required; and let us not forget that