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AMATEUR VS.
PROFESSIONAL.

BY M. P.

The "What is an Amateur" controversy is making its annual appearance in the English Photographic press. The struggle to determine just where to draw the line seems to wage as fiercely as ever with some classes. On some professionals the mere mention of the amateur seems to act like a red flag would to a bull. With them the definition an amateur would be one who keeps well into the back woods and does not interfere in any way with the business of any person who may for the time being call himself a professional photographer; who does not photograph anything living or dead, neither man in any of his seven ages nor woman in any age, for verily this is the field of the pro-

fessional (of the kind), and the field of the amateur is down back of the barn, where he can immortalize the rail fence or the old Tom cat. Even then should the fence figure in a law suit and want the amateur's negative to prove that it is a respectful and, with all its crookedness, an honest fence, standing on its own ground, the amateur must at once cast his work to the winds and send post haste for the professional.

Be it admitted that there are amateurs and amateurs, must the fact that of the many there be found a few who bring discredit upon the art by trading upon the statement (not the fact always) that they are amateurs, to cut and direct work away from its legitimate channel; must for this reason the awful cry of amateur vandalism be raised until one is almost ashamed to pursue his chosen pleasure? As opposite to this class of professionals we find those who recognize in the amateur one who has played no inconsiderable part in placing photography where it now stands, and through whose agency the art side of photography has been raised until it now stands well up with that of painting and kindred arts. Does anyone really know of an instance where the true amateur, and by this is meant the large majority, has taken the bread from the professional's mouth, or injured his business