

Photographic Notes.

A Rule for Amateurs.

A writer in *The Photo. American* says: In nearly every collection of photographs by amateurs we find, usually, about one-third of the number absolutely worthless.

The mechanical part may be all right, but the subject itself has nothing whatever to recommend it—weak, devoid of interest, unpicturesque. The failure is, of course, the result of inexperience. Every novice must learn for himself the subjects that make good pictures. Suggestions will help sometimes, but practical application will do more. The lesson will not be so readily forgotten when needed.

During the earlier months of my experience with a camera, I formed a rule which has saved many a plate. The rule was this: *Always favor a doubt.*

Dozens of subjects come in our way whenever we go out with a camera. If we snap at everything the result will be a series of worthless negatives. Discrimination and selection must do their part. Governed by these two arbiters, our eagerness to snap this and that will be greatly modified. We shall stop to consider the advisability of using a plate.

But even with this controlling system, we shall not always avoid photographing things we do not want. Now comes in my rule. The subject under consideration is good, but not perfectly satisfactory. There is a shade of doubt in our mind; shall we take it or not?

My method is—favor the doubt. That is, if you are at all concerned about the cost of plates. If not, snap everything, for you may by chance strike something good.

The option is your own.

A FIXING BATH.—A fixing bath used by Mr. M. R. Hemperley is strongly recommended. It hardens the film, clears the negative, and gives good color. Thirty-two ounces sulphite of soda (hydrometer test 60), add to this one ounce sulphuric acid very slowly, and eight ounces solution of chrome alum (hydrometer test 60), then add the whole to two gallons saturated solution of hypo, and it is ready for use. Leave the negative a few minutes longer in the bath than is required for fixing. This is important, as the permanency of the negative depends upon it. Don't use a flat tray to fix in, it causes spots and dirt; use a grooved box.

To Prevent Curling of Prints.

How many photographers are annoyed by prints that they do not wish to mount curling up.

This may be entirely avoided if the prints are immersed in the following solution after their final washing:

Water..... 1 part.
Alcohol..... 4 parts.
Glycerine..... 3 parts.

After this they will dry quite flat. C. J.M.

A GOOD PASTE.—The *Photo-Gazette* gives the following formula for a handy paste, better than anything we have ever come across:

Gum arabic..... 60 grammes.
Glycerine..... 15 grammes.
Methyl alcohol..... 45 c. c.
Water to make up the whole 250 c. c.

Dissolve the gum in 120 c. c. cold water, add the glycerine, and finally, constantly stirring little by little, the alcohol; at last add enough water to make the whole 250 c. c.

RESTRAINERS IN DEVELOPMENT.—In *La Photographie* are some interesting notes by L. Tranchant on restrainers. He finds that all chlorides, bromides and iodides retard development, as well as the cyanides and sulpho-cyanides of potassium, sodium and ammonium. To these must be added a certain number of organic acids, including acetic and malic acids and all their soluble salts. It was found that the chlorides of the alkalis, chloride of zinc, acetic and malic acids, and acetate of soda, all act as restrainers without exercising a solvent action on the bromide of silver in the emulsion; but chloride of copper and the cyanide and ferricyanide of potassium had a solvent action on the silver bromide. The restraining power of some of the substances is as follows: 1 per cent. chloride of copper or 5 per cent. chloride of zinc is equivalent to 20 per cent. bromide of potassium; 25 per cent. solutions of the chlorides of sodium or ammonium have the same restraining power as 20 per cent. bromide; 10 per cent. solutions of acetic or malic acids are equivalent to bromide of 1 per cent. Acid chloride of zinc causes the gelatine film to strip off its support, but if the solution is neutralized with bi-carbonate soda, chloride of zinc can be employed safely, in spite of the small precipitate of zinc carbonate that forms. The author recommends

strongly that bromides should be banished from the dark room, on account of their solvent action on the silver bromide in the emulsion. Their place should be taken by sodium or ammonium chloride (common salt or sal ammoniac), which he prefers to all other restrainers. —*Photo gram.*

On the Drying of Negatives

If negatives are taken from the washing water, and simply set up to dry spontaneously, drops of water will collect here and there upon the surface; and as these parts remain damp long after the rest of the film is dry, there is a danger lest they should, when at last dry, be more transparent than the surrounding portions of the negative. I find it an admirable plan to remove all water from the surface of the film. I formerly used flutless blotting paper, but I find an easier method is to simply wipe the film carefully with a piece of soft, thick twill calico—a portion of an old bed sheet which, having been frequently washed, is free from any fluff that might be present if it were new. I fold this up into a flat pad about six or eight inches in length, and with it wipe the film lengthwise and crosswise until all surface moisture is removed, and then set the plate up to dry in the usual way. It will be found that the film, if this precaution is taken, will dry more rapidly as well as uniformly. —*Photo Beacon.*

FORMULA TO INTENSIFY.

1—Bromide of potassium..... 1 ounce.
Water..... 16 "
2—Bichloride of mercury..... 1 "
Water..... 16 "
3—Sulphite of soda..... Strong solution.

To intensify, soak plate well in water and then immerse plate in No. 1 for about five minutes; then pour off and flow plate with No. 2 till desired density is obtained. Wash well and immerse in No. 3 till plate resumes its natural color, wash well and dry.

INTENSIFICATION WITHOUT MERCURY.—Make two solutions. (1) Gallic acid 1 part, glycerine 25 parts, water 125 parts; (2) Silver nitrate 180 grains, citric acid 30 grains, nitric acid 25 drops, water 3 ounces. Dissolve the gallic acid in warm water, add the glycerine, allow to cool, and filter. When the negative is ready to be intensified, pour sufficient of No. 2 into a measure, and add four drops of solution No. 1 for each drachm of No. 2 used. Flow this mixture over the negative, holding the latter in the hand, then wash well and fix for a minute or two. —*Photo. Gazette.*