

the room, and he was right, for each speaker gave a different strength.

The president, in the course of a few remarks, wanted to know why there were not more photographers present, not only from the country, but also from the city. He asked what was to be done to bring them in, and wanted this convention to discuss this and other questions which he mentioned, among which was the proposition to have a Board of Examiners and issue a diploma to those who passed before the board. He then called upon Mr. Cunningham, of Hamilton, who read a paper prepared upon this subject, treating the question in a most able manner.

HELP.

BY A. M. CUNNINGHAM.

A few months ago I chanced to meet at a railroad depot a member of the Executive Committee of this association, and in conversation with him I was informed that he had great trouble in getting help. He said: "I can get lots of help, but it is no good." His train moved off, but his remark was left behind, and I commenced to solve the problem—How can photographers get good help?

But before we direct our attention to this, let us glance at a few of the reasons why help generally is poor. The most striking, to my mind at least, are poor employers, poor pay, and poor rules governing apprentices. Let us deal with them in order:

First, poor employers. Seldom does the pupil excel the teacher, and how very few of our galleries can be considered schools of photography. Why, I know a photographer, who boasts an experience of over twenty years, who insists that sal soda is the developing agent in the developer; and yet that man usually has two or three "learning the business." Such incompetent employers as these are largely responsible for the poor help, because a young man who has served a year or two under such an instructor is hardly likely to give satisfaction in his next situation, which, as a matter of fact, he accepts as a practical photographer.

As to the poor pay I will say nothing. I only trust that all employers present will do their duty in this respect; but I ask you if the average wages paid is sufficient to tempt a young man of average ability to adopt photography as a profession.

Now as to rules governing apprentices. I believe every gallery makes its own. Now, I maintain that there should be something done in this line to protect not only photographers, but apprentices, from humbug. Cases are not by any means rare where young men have paid \$50 to \$100 to photographers, who have undertaken to learn them "the business" in three or six months, and in the majority of such cases the party undertaking to do this could not hold a position in an average gallery at \$8 a week. It is from such sources as these that poor help and cheap opposition spring.

Now, how can we best remedy these evils? I believe it lies in the hands of this association, and the means are educational. In the first place bring your help to the conventions, where they can witness demonstrations and hear discussions on their every-day work; where they can see the best work from other galleries, and compare it with their own productions. There are lessons to be learned from everybody, even though it should be to avoid the mistakes into which your neighbor has fallen.

In glancing over our conventions one would almost think that they were alone for the employer, who attends annually, while his help is left at home to keep things running as best they may, in the full assurance that the "boss" will be home in a day or two and tell them how much better the work at the convention was than theirs. Now, if it is absolutely necessary that someone stay at home, try for one year how it works to send your help and stay home yourself.

But in case you should do this next year let me give you a hint. Arrange before you close this convention that the next one shall be less of a fair and more of a convention. Instead of centring the interest in the prize list (which is foreign altogether to a con-