

the good ones. How would a twenty-five cent and a twenty-five dollars suit of clothes compare—that is provided you would find a suit as cheap as that. Is it any wonder you fail?

I do not think that I am giving away any trade secrets, for I think that any man of common sense would be able to see that this is the case, and all who have had any experience with cheap instruments can, and I am sure for the sake of their less experienced brethren, will corroborate what I say.

It surely must be that those that are buying a camera cannot stop to figure just what percentage of the whole amount they are going to spend in photography, their first investment is to be. The cost of the camera is a very small thing in comparison to the amount it takes to keep on taking photographs and if one keeps at it anytime, the cost of a cheap camera is perhaps only one or two per cent. of their total bill of expenses. And the percentage of failures runs up as the cost of the camera runs down.

There is a lot of talk in the photographic journals about it being the camera and not the man that makes the picture. Don't be misled by it. It only means that it is the posing that depends on the man, the selection, so to speak, and then after that it is up to the instrument. If the instrument is a poor one, while it will produce in a general way the same result on the plate, there will be numerous little differences between the picture produced and the picture that would have been produced had the lens been decent. I would hate most awfully to say it for a fact, but I would not hesitate very long to make a wager that most of the sample pictures shown as the work of the cheap cameras are cut from the centres of pictures taken with high-priced machines. And if that is not the case, it is only because the manufacturer lacks enterprise. I know that if I were in the business of making cheap cameras I would do it mighty quick.

In the correspondence which I conduct in one of the photographic magazines, there seems to be a run from time to time on the query, "Which is the best camera for me to buy?" The people who ask it never think to say what sort of work they intend to try to do with it, but in view of the fact that they do not realize how important a question this is to be answered, this can be overlooked. But they do put such simple little queries sometimes. For instance, one says in a letter that I had last week, "Some time ago I read an article on photographing clouds which said that — lens and the — plate were used. Do you know whether any other camera will take clouds as I am going to get a different kind that is cheaper. I expect to take quite a lot of clouds." Another encloses me a list of instruments that some journal gives in exchange for subscriptions, where the prices vary all the way from five to twenty-five dollars, in accordance with the number of subscriptions that are secured. And yet he calmly comes forward with the question, "Which is the best?" O these amateurs! Why is it they don't find out what they want to take with the camera and then ask what sort of an instrument is best adapted to the type of work they have in mind. This asking of questions promiscuously, is foolish.

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The Scrap Bag.

THE ANNUAL EXHIBITION AT THE NEW YORK CAMERA CLUB. —A short time ago I had the pleasure of going over the photographs that represented the year's work at the New York Camera Club, and on the whole I might say that the exhibit was a remarkably good one. One point well worthy of mention, inasmuch as this is the home of the fuzzy type, is that the exhibit was on the whole remarkably free from the so-called

"souful" photograms. Perhaps the only two members whose work could be really said to belong to this class, were Mr. Joseph T. Keiley (as one might expect) and Mr. Juan C. Able. The latter gentleman's name appears twice on the catalogue as the maker of by-gum pictures while Mr. Keiley offends no less than five times, though it is true that one of his productions entitled "Vine (crowned: A Summer Idyl," being a representation of a corn field in the autumn, is by no means a fudgism and is well able to rank as a pretty composition. To go to the opposite extreme and look at the most commonplace sort of work, it is only necessary to turn to the productions of Miss Frances B. Johnston whose "Carpenter" and three "Studies of School Children" are particularly sharp and clear and hold the interest of the observer, not on their "indefinable subtleties" but on their ability to tell their story clear and well. A marvellously vivid photogram of the common thistle by L. W. Brownell attracts attention from the masterly manner in which the subject is handled. In fact it is a question as to whether he or Wm. J. Cassard with his pictures "Grapes," "Fruit," "Ducks," etc., is justly entitled to the palm for still life photography. Rudolph Eickemeyer, Jr., is to blame for four delightful little studies entitled "Spring," "Summer," "Autumn," "Winter," though he rather spoils it all by showing alongside them a thing which he calls "Late Afternoon in Winter" composed of all foreground and a horizon that comes within about half an inch of the top of the plate. I can really give no better description of it. In fact, in view of the good work that this gentleman turns out as a rule, the less said about it the better. The only thing to do, is for the sake of charity to suppose that he was imitating a "fuzzy-type." Frank Eugene, who shows five portraits is certainly entitled to the distinction of the most unique mountings that have been seen on the walls for some time. To describe them would be little short of an impossibility without reproductions of the pictures themselves, but perhaps some idea of what they were like will be obtained when I say that the mount that the print was mounted on was very thin, a sort of Japanese paper, I think. The effect was on the whole not unpleasing. Chas. H. Loeber was well represented by a single picture, "A Winter's Day on East River," an extremely vivid scene in the vicinity of the Brooklyn Bridge, showing a tug in the foreground and large quantities of ice running. Mrs. Sarah H. Ladd's "Messengers of Spring" was good. "A Winter Landscape" by Wm. B. Post was also very fair. Francis J. Strauss' "Beach, Montauk" was a most magnificently executed scene along the sand dunes, and was well worthy of an enlargement instead of the comparatively small-sized copy that was shown. Although there were a number of portraits shown—a large number in fact—there were hardly any of them that were worth mentioning, with the exception of those that were exhibited by Frederick Colburn Clarke and Mrs. R. P. Lounsberry. Strange to say both of these showed photograms of well known people. Mr. Clarke's "Maud Adams in L'Aiglon" was without exception the best likeness of the popular young actress that I have yet had the pleasure of seeing, while his portrait of Gen. Nelson A. Miles was also a remarkable likeness. Mrs. Lounsberry's picture of Miss Mary Mannering standing at the door of a little cottage with her horse, is too well known to make further comment necessary. Her picture of Mr. Richard Le Gallienne, the author, stamps her as a master of the lens as far as the making of a speaking likeness is concerned, and unless Mr. Le Gallienne is much unlike the ordinary sitter that the photographer runs up against, he could not help but be pleased with the pensive, thoughtful, and if I may use the word "poetic" air, with