

Amateur Photography

II. Getting Best Results

THE EDITOR

OUR first article briefly described the various forms of Cameras generally used by amateur photographers, and promised that this would give some simple hints as to how to make the most of the outfit you have. The points contained herein are necessarily general in character; but I shall be pleased to correspond personally with any of our readers who may desire more specific advice.

There are a few points held in common by all photographic outfits no matter how cheap or how expensive they may be. I shall state only three essential ones here.

1. Every outfit has its true field and sphere of usefulness. It is capable with proper manipulation of doing work for which it was constructed.
2. Every outfit has its limitations. No expert photographer would think of doing all classes of work with the same instrument.
3. Every careful operator, no matter what his outfit may be, will intelligently study its capabilities, understand its

them in correct relation to one another for practical work. If you demand too much of your lens it will fail you and you will perhaps condemn it as "no good," when the real lack is not in it but in your misuse of it. This misuse of the lens is the chief cause of failure with many young photographers who are in too great a hurry to "make pictures." They "snap" at anything that takes their fancy, regardless of existing conditions, position, or light, and wonder afterwards why they did not get anything worthwhile.

Though you may not understand the most elementary principles of optical science you must at least never forget that throughout all your work you are subject to inexorable law, and that if you ignore or violate this you must pay the price of failure. Nothing is more beneficent than light, and yet it is wholly arbitrary in its action. If you do not pass it in sufficient measure through your lens onto your negative surface, you need not look for good pictures. Light is the prime element on

light in the same time than those of the cheaper grades; but even these are comparatively useless for rapid work without sufficient light on the view. And some grades of plates are much more sensitive than others; but even a "lightning" plate on a dull day will give poor results without adequate exposure. You had better err on the side of a too long than a too short exposure, for if you have the latent image on your plate and handle it carefully, you can restrain the development and get a good negative. But if your plate has never seen the picture you have been trying to take, all the coaxing and forcing you may do in the developing process cannot bring up an image which is not there, nor never was.

My counsel then is twofold in this relation. Do not try to take everything and do not take anything unless you see that you have a reasonable prospect of success. I know the impatience and almost feverish haste which a young person with a camera frequently feels; but you must learn to obey law if you would not be forced to pay penalty later.

If you would get best results with your present outfit, therefore, study it, know its capabilities, respect its limitations, use it intelligently, and be content to work within its proper scope.

In my next I shall have something to say about the choice and treatment of subjects for your camera and how to handle them.

Accompanying these are three pictures taken under wholly varying conditions and with three different lenses. Study them. The "Princess Adelaide" was taken on a film from the heights above Vancouver Narrows, as the steamer below me was steaming full speed out to sea. The exposure was 1-250th of a second. Not an atom of sky is visible, but the view gives a good idea of the opposite shore at low tide.

The interior view of the office was taken on an ordinary plate with a wide-angle lens. This was necessary as the typewriter seen at the left was only about four feet from the camera. To get sufficient light on the bookcases in the rear office it was necessary to give approximately half a minute exposure. The lady in the picture is Miss Wallace, my office assistant. Near her is Rev. J. K. Curtis, and in the adjoining office is Rev. F. L. Farewell. The picture was taken without any direct sunlight on the windows, on a moderately bright day, during a recent noon-hour when both of the Field Secretaries happened to be in together. No special preparation whatever was made for it.

The gallery view of the Metropolitan Church was taken on a rapid plate last fall, just before the meeting of the Ecumenical Conference, and appeared in The Globe of about that time. I gave the plate an exposure of thirty-five minutes on a rather dull afternoon. The full organ, front view, in the October Epworth Era, was taken at the same time.

These three pictures studied in the light of the simple suggestions contained in this article, will, I hope, enable some of my readers to get better results than ever by the intelligent use of the equipment they have.



AN INTERIOR VIEW OF ONE OF THE GENERAL OFFICES.

limitations, and be content to work within them.

If you will bear these three points in mind you will save yourself much disappointment and not a little unnecessary expense, for the greater number of failures arise not only from the insufficiency of the apparatus used, but from the inefficiency of the person using it. One is only courting disappointing failure when he tries to do the physically impossible thing, and thousands of exposures are made under conditions that absolutely preclude success.

Know your outfit thoroughly, and be content to use it as the manufacturers intended, or you will fail. For this you should study it as a whole, and in its parts as related each to the other, so that you will not use it blindly or ignorantly.

Give particular attention to the lens. It is the most important part of your whole outfit. Know what it is intended to do, and then give it a chance to do all it can for you. Find out how the shutter is related to the lens, and keep

which you are utterly dependent, and by some means you must have it in sufficient degree or fail. Any lens will pass only a limited amount of light in a given time. Therefore, if you try to take a picture quickly in a dull light you will completely fail. If the day is bright with clear sunshine, it is manifest that the intensity of the light will be much greater than if the weather be cloudy. If the light is not sufficiently bright for enough of it to pass your lens in say one one-hundredth of a second, you must leave the lens aperture open for a proportionately longer time. If your view contains moving objects it is practically impossible to get a sharp well-defined picture of such unless the shutter works rapidly, and if the day be dull this quick action will prevent the passage of sufficient light to your plate or film and you will have nothing of value to show for your effort.

Therefore do not spoil good material by trying to take moving objects in anything but a strong light. Of course some high-class lenses pass much more