

TOOLS FOR BEGINNERS.

The beginner must be supplied with a retouching disc, upon which the negative can be steadily placed so as to be worked upon by transmitted light; a couple of Faber's artists' lead pencils, H and HH; a pad of glass paper for sharpening the pencils, and some retouching medium. Experts also provide themselves with some scrapers, stumps and fine steel points, but the beginner will not need these for a long time.

TOUCHING OUT BLEMISHES.

A proof should always be supplied so as to show the workers where the defects lie. But before beginning work the negative must be prepared so that the pencil will bite readily upon it. This is done with a drop of the retouching medium (which is a sort of varnish composed of resin and turpentine), rubbed over the surface with the finger until it is evenly distributed. Supposing the subject to be a head, the first thing to be done is to touch out very lightly all undoubted freckles, making the transparent spots which they produce on the negative appear as nearly like the surrounding tone of the flesh as possible, and carefully avoid going beyond them. First work will look scratchy, but practice will overcome this difficulty.

SOFTENING SHADOWS.

When success in touching out blemishes shall have been gained, attention may be turned to softening shadows which are too dark. This must be done very lightly and gradually, avoiding straight, shading lines, and matching the penciling to the texture of the rest of the face. It must be born in mind that all the lines, inflections and modelings are as much a part of the likeness as the features, and to entirely obliterate them is to destroy the character of the photograph. The face may be beautified, but the likeness will suffer correspondingly. Very skilful and artistic retouchers may doubtless improve the expression of a mouth without destroying the likeness; but it is far too delicate an experiment to be attempted by any save an expert. The beginner must be satisfied to soften so as to harmonize the lights and shades.

HIGH LIGHTS.

The practice of working up high lights on the face is generally condemned. If these lights do not appear in the negative no amount of worked-in lights will improve it. The same is true of the sparkle in the eye; if it does not

appear in the negative, painting it in will give it a hard, unnatural expression.

LET THE MOUTH ALONE.

Mr. Rockwood regards retouching negatives, up to a certain point, as more mechanical than artistic. The dividing line is where eradicating blemishes from the flesh leaves off and modeling lines begins. He says that lines and wrinkles may be very much softened, but must never be entirely removed. He advises the beginner to be content with working upon the forehead and the lines about the eyes, but to leave the mouth alone, for therein lies the likeness. He also allows some very delicately worked-in high lights, but qualifies his indulgence by saying that it should only be attempted by one with a knowledge of light and shade.

A GOOD FIELD FOR GOOD WORKERS.

In brief, Mr. Rockwood gives beginners several negatives to work upon at first simply to see what they will do. He gives no instructions or suggestions unless aptitude is shown at once. He then lets them begin on unimportant work, such as smoothing out imperfections in hands and arms. They are next put on the face, and so until they develop the capability of changing forms, making hollow cheeks plump, filling out bits of drapery and cutting off angles. He says the work is easily learned and without doubt there is a good field in the work for women with brains.—*Philadelphia Record*.

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Amateur Photography.

HOW AND WHY SOME SUCCEED WHERE OTHERS FAIL TO MAKE GOOD PICTURES.

THOSE who have been attacked by that strange yet fascinating malady known as the "camera craze," but who have not yet developed into full-fledged "fiends," will find as they go on in the path they have chosen that increase of knowledge and skill are only gained by patient application and constant study. The army of "button pushers" which each recurring season of photographic activity sees let loose upon a long-suffering and inoffensive public, to a great extent neglects the keynote to which the song of success is pitched. The majority of the members of that army are content to let the supply houses, camera makers and professional photographers develop the negatives which they have taken, and then print the pictures required, delivering the product to the so-called amateur along with a bill. This is not amateur photography,