

which a dry one cannot possess, and for ordinary work the old collodion process will for some time be superior to the gelatine, as I do not think that (with some few exceptions) the results are equal to the best wet work. The fact of the general inferiority is to some extent demonstrated by the oft-reiterated statement that such and such a negative is equal to a good wet plate. In the hands of many photographers the dry process is somewhat uncertain and variable, the general defect being want of printing vigour, or what some people term "pluck." This arises usually from over-exposure; for one dry plate under-exposed, there are a hundred over-exposed, and then the difficulties begin; a thin development intensifying with unstable salts, and probably, after all, a somewhat unsatisfactory result.

Again, the commercial samples vary much, one batch being considerably quicker than another, most makers producing two or more qualities or degrees of rapidity. And it would seem as if they got mixed, the ratios of exposure vary so much.

When the professional man can prepare his own plates, these difficulties may to a great extent vanish, and then we may discuss the policy of discarding the bath and its numerous appendages.

The easy and certain production of gelatine rapid plates will doubtless aid in the production of what may be called artistic studies; when the production of pictures, as distinguished from portrait studies, is in question, the rapid exposures will permit of more action in the figures. An excellent paper on this subject, entitled "Motive in Photographic Pictures," appeared in a recent number of the PHOTOGRAPHIC NEWS, and is of value as suggesting what ought or ought not to be attempted in photographic art studies. But it is perhaps in landscape and general out-door work that both the professional man and the amateur will most feel the advantages of dry plates. I remember well, in the days of wet plates—that is, before rapid dry plates were known—what an incumbrance the dark tent or box, the bath and solutions, were, with the accompanying result of stained fingers and dress, owing to working in an unusually cramped space; how the carrying of all the impedimenta to the place desired, if a distant and somewhat inaccessible one, was just sufficient to take off the edge of the enjoyment; then the stifling work in the tent, which was partly compensated for by seeing the results as you proceeded; and then the fagging work of carrying the traps to the station after having done a good day's work. I well remember walking over the hills from the Washburn to Otley on one occasion with other photographic friends, after working hard all day—on a holiday, too—how disgusted we all were with the apparatus. Another advantage the dry plate has over the wet in landscape work is, that you are prepared to take advantage of any fleeting effect of light and shade, such as we often see in hilly districts, and if the sun should happen to be clouded when you are ready, you can patiently wait until it again illuminates the scene, without being harassed by fears of your plate spoiling.

A day out with the camera, now, instead of entailing a great amount of physical labour, becomes a wholly delightful affair, when you can get far away from the "busy haunts of man," plant your camera by the side of some rippling stream, and, with a good companion and a choice cigar, seek out all the charming bits of landscape, with nothing to bother you save what you can conveniently carry; under these circumstances I know of no more delightful way of spending a holiday. Speaking of holidays reminds me of an occasion when gelatine dry plates were transformed into wet ones before the day was over. I was out with a birthday party, one magnificent autumn day, at a well-known place not many miles from Leeds, and we had taken a camera and dry plates with us, in order to secure a few of the many charming views with which the place abounded. We walked down the river-side amongst some of the most exquisitely tinted foliage I ever saw, and exposed several plates, returned to the hotel, dined, and then drove to a park some little distance away, where we anticipated some satisfactory work being done. Our first shot was at a group of the party on some ruined terrace steps; then we walked through the grounds like Dr. Syntax, in search of the "Picturesque." Just before us lay a beautiful lake, the surface so still and unruffled that the reflections were perfectly startling in their truthfulness, almost making you uncertain which was water and which sky. One of the party, somewhat in advance, who had the camera and plate-box slung across his shoulder, stepped on to the stone coping of the pond, with the remark, "I wonder how deep it is!" when lo! a sudden dis-

appearance, and a loud splash, announced the fact of his departure in search of a reply to his inquiry. On rushing to the edge, there was our friend comfortably swimming about, pipe in mouth, the camera, dark slide, and all the paraphernalia of the day's work, floating on the surface of the pond. My first care was, of course, to pull out the too enthusiastic inquirer after information, and then to secure the wreckage, but the plate-box, being heavy, had gone to the bottom; however, a few bubbles rising, revealed its whereabouts, and it was eventually fished out, full of water. The half-drowned party was at once despatched to the hotel, and on his arrival the only dry clothes available were some of the landlord's, who was a man of somewhat extraordinary build and dimensions; and as our friend was rather below the average height, his appearance in a suit of clothes about twelve sizes too big for him was utterly ludicrous, and may be better imagined than described. I regret to say that he formed the butt for the unfeeling jokes of the company for the remainder of the day.

Such incidents as these, however, serve but as the *sauce piquant* which gives a zest to the pursuit of landscape photography. I recollect being myself the victim of a similar accident when crossing a rapid stream, the slippery stones forming a very precarious foothold, and seeing the companion of my ramble rolling on the grass, bursting with laughter at my unsightly appearance, as I scrambled out, looking very wet and very undignified.

There are scarcely any enthusiasts in photography but have some droll stories to tell of their rambles in search of the beautiful, as the most charming bits are frequently just those that are the most difficult of access. I think if a few of the gentlemen who take out their holidays in photographic rambles were to favour us with an occasional paper on their experiences, it would prove very interesting and entertaining.

"All work and no play," says the proverb, "makes Jack a dull boy," and I do not think it at all derogatory to the artist or the man to sometimes unbend, and leave the purely scientific track for a little genial relation of their experiences by flood and field.

One of the regular contributors to the pages of the "Journal" would seem to decry this sort of subject, and thinks evidently that photographic societies should deal only with strictly scientific or artistic matters; but I think an occasional recreative paper is not to be despised by way of relief from the constantly recurring chemical and optical formulæ.

The summer season is now coming on, and if each member who produces any landscape work were to bring proofs to our meetings, it would add greatly to their interest, and a system of exchange might be arranged which would be much valued by some of the members; in addition to which the exhibition of such productions might become so many lessons in art composition, and, if critically analyzed, would be valuable as a means of education.

I know that many of these remarks have been made again and again, but there still seems to be the necessity for urging them amongst the members of societies. We are too much afraid of (may I say?) exhibiting ourselves, so that there seems to be a lack of matter at most meetings; let us therefore try to prepare something for our next session that shall be of value, either scientific or artistic, and from which we may derive profit as well as pleasure.

FRENCH CORRESPONDENCE.

GREATLY INCREASING USE OF GELATINE PLATES IN FRANCE—PRIZE COMPETITION FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN PHOTOGRAPHIC MATERIALS FOR TRAVELLING PURPOSES—BANQUET OF THE PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY OF FRANCE ON THE 3RD APRIL—PHOTOGRAPHY APPLIED TO THE BIOSCOPE AND PHENAKISTISCOPE—THE BIOSCOPE OF M. EUGENE SIMMONAR—PHOTOGRAPHIC TOYS BY M. LIPMANN.

Greatly Increasing Use of Gelatine Plates in France.—The great development of the use of gelatine plates is increasing in France from day to day. The movement has now spread to the provinces, and I am acquainted with several portrait photographers who exclusively employ these plates. It is from England, however, that we have received the stimulus, as the numerous preparations which are sent to us from the same country contribute not a little