

weakness of the developer, to leave the picture for a long time in the developing solution. This was also recommended by Dr. Stolze. I have made a set of parallel experiments, using normal potash developer and ordinary soda developer of varying grades of concentration.\*

The result was, shortly, as follows:—The developer diluted with three or four volumes of water brought out, after thirty or forty minutes, as much detail in the shadows as the ordinary undiluted developer; but the latter had given so much intensity in the highly-lighted parts, that the negatives printed with difficulty. The plates from the dilute developer were more tender and harmoniously defined. For instantaneous pictures with strong contrasts of light and shade, therefore, the dilute developer is to be preferred to the concentrated. We must, however, allow from half to three-quarters of an hour's stay in the solution.

When, however, the whole scene from which the instantaneous exposure has been taken is monotonously lighted, and poor in effects of light, the ordinary strong developer as hitherto employed is to be preferred.

### ARTISTIC FEELING IN PHOTOGRAPHY.

BY A. H. WALL.

#### PART VI.—ON THE TREATMENT OF SKIES AND CLOUDS.†

EVERY good landscape painter and art photographer will, I believe, admit that over no part of his work has he more control, or finds better opportunities for getting artistic technical effect, and expressing feeling and thought, than he has when putting in skies and clouds. There, nature presents him with such infinite and ever-changeable varieties of forms, lights, shadows, and effects. But the scope offered him is a source of both power and danger. If he ventures into this vast storehouse to select for himself, he must do so with some scientific knowledge of atmospheric phenomena, which is only to be acquired by careful study and observation, otherwise he may perpetrate many serious mistakes.

Obviously, for instance, it would never do to join in discordant mixture a sunless sky and a sunny landscape; yet even this has been done. And as palpable would be the blunder of putting clouds lighted from the zenith over a landscape lit up by a westerly or easterly sun; and this, too, has been done. Nor would it be less ridiculous to give the feebly-marked details, the wan, mistily-lighted objects, and the vague, vaporous distances of morning or evening landscapes under clear, bright, noontide skies; although even these combinations are to be found. Here, then, we see the advantages and dangers of a photographic practice now common, and, I think, artistically commendable—that of printing-in skies from separate negatives.

I have already pointed out (see page 645) that linear and aerial perspective govern the forms and tones of clouds just as they do those of terrestrial objects, and therefore, again, we must have due harmony or agreement between sky and landscape. The photographer who lacks the requisite knowledge, and therefore does not understand these necessities, should be content to watch and wait until sky and landscape present such pictorial combinations as he has seen in the works of our best landscape paintings, notably some more rarely seen in nature which exist in the paintings of the Turner collection, and then secure two negatives, one of the sky and one of the landscape—of course without altering the position of the camera.

One great element of usefulness in cloud and sky effects in proper combination, is the aid they render in the composition of lights and darks, meaning by this, please remember, not only light and shade, but objects which

are light or dark by virtue of their local colours. Let me illustrate this.

Even in full sunlight touches and masses of dark colour may spread through a composition, giving it breadth, richness, and variety. But sometimes, through their positions, they have the reverse effect, resulting in isolated, startlingly prominent, scattered spots and patches, spoiling utterly from a pictorial point of view what would otherwise have been an extremely interesting and beautiful landscape. The painter would, in one way or another, boldly alter these offending spots of local light or dark, rightfully ignoring unimportant facts, generally due to some mere chances, when unaltered they would spoil an excellent subject. But the photographer's power in this direction is either not sufficient, or he has really none. Only nature can come to his assistance, and she will often do so by such an alteration in the general effect, as a shadow-casting cloud will give. Then see how rapidly a magical change is wrought, and be swift to seize it! The staring patches of light and dark cutting up and destroying the composition are all but lost in a broad sweeping mass of delicate shadow, toning down the lights subduing details before prominent, and lessening the contrast between the local lights and darks, thereby increasing the appearance of space,\* giving greatly increased brilliancy to light and shade in the luminous portion of the picture, subduing too uniformly "made out" details, and giving some parts of the landscape dominance over others, while in various differing ways securing those vital elements of pictorial effect, harmony, breadth, and vigorous contrast. A wonderful variety of effects altogether new are thus wrought by the shadow of a passing cloud over hill and dale, forest, fields, villages, and white scattered cottages, the mere enumeration of which would demand as much space as I can give my present paper. Yet in times past I have actually seen a photographer standing before just such a landscape as I have imagined, waiting with his hand upon the cap of his lens, until "that beastly cloud-shadder" had sped away!

These flying cloud shadows, being sometimes within the plane of the picture, come into it; but they are more frequently out. In the former case they must, as a matter of course, be seen in the photograph; but in the latter there is no such necessity, and thus the door is opened for a little skilful artistic dodging, in the printing of which, however, only a truly artistic photographer should avail himself. The attempt, if made inartistically, would probably err on the side of comicality.

"It is a strange thing," wrote Ruskin in one of the most beautiful of his many prose poems, "how little people know about the sky. It is the part of creation in which nature has done more for the sake of pleasing man, more for the sole and evident purpose of talking to him and teaching him, than in any other of her works, and it is just the part in which we least attend to her. . . . There is not a moment in any day of our lives when nature is not producing scene after scene, picture after picture, glory after glory, and working still upon such exquisite and constant principles, of perfect beauty in that glorious dome, for the good and delight of all the dwellers upon earth. It is the realm of beauty, beauty raised to the loftiest in order that all may see it. Sometimes gentle, sometimes capricious, sometimes awful, never the same two minutes together; almost human in its passions, almost spiritual in its tenderness, almost divine in its infinity. Surely it is meant for the chief teacher of what is immortal in us, as it is the chief minister of chastisement or of blessing to what is mortal. And yet we never attend to it, never make it a subject of thought, but as it has to do with our animal sensations. We look upon all by which it speaks to us more clearly than to the brutes, upon all which bears witness to the intentions of the Supreme in giving us more

\* We destroy both space and size, either by the vacancy which affords us no measure of space, or by the distinctness which gives us a false one.—RUSKIN.

\* The formulae of ordinary concentration are well known. I employed those given in my work, "Die Photographie mit Bromsilber Gelatine," 1886, Knappe in Halle. See also my article in one of the last numbers of the PHOTO NEWS on the "Soda Developer."

† Continued from page 647.