

RANK HERESY—A FEW LINES ON PINHOLE WORK.

BY F. A. WRIGHT.

THE Editor has desired me to say something about pinhole photography; and in reply to my remonstrance that I knew nothing at all about it, stated *that* was just the reason I should do so. The Editor's "sweet insistence" is a thing to be experienced and remembered. To proceed.

Don't read up all the literature you can lay your hands upon relat-

ing to the subject. Just take a piece of ferrotype plate (you can get this for a few pence), and knock a hole through it with a needle (a medium size). You will find plenty of methods of doing this in back numbers of AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER. Cut the plate round to fit inside of lens tube against iris diaphragm, open the latter to its fullest extent, remove the glasses, and there you are. That's all you want!

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Be sure to back your plates, not necessarily because you are using a pinhole, but because you *should* do so. Pick up your kit, and sally forth. Take your pipe, also make up your mind to enjoy it. Anyway, let the last thing you think about be the pinhole, and utterly ignore *f*64, meters, and all the rest of the photographic stumbling-blocks. Think only of your pictures, effect, etc. You know how to get your subject on the screen, so to speak? Set your camera up facing the subject, *but level*, then swing it round halfway upon its base and put your eye to the pinhole after removing the ground-glass. Then you will see your subject bounded by the frame of the camera back.

Let the extension of the camera be, say, about 8 in. After getting your subject satisfactorily arranged, turn the camera back again, and insert the slide, putting the cap on previously. Draw the shutter, remove cap, and proceed to enjoy a quiet smoke. Don't worry yourself about exposure, think only of *your completed picture*. Five! ten! fifteen! twenty minutes! do not make much difference. Suppose you give your first trial ten minutes if the light is fair, twenty if not. The dry plates at present in use have a tremendous latitude; and for my part it doesn't matter if a plate is *considerably* exposed, you can make up more in developing than most people think. Develop with, say, double the water your ordinary formula gives, and keep the negative thin. *Now* comes the part that wants all the skill you are capable of,

to wit, printing. All the previous operations are as nothing compared with it. Try a print on, say, C C platinotype paper from the negative just as it is, and when it is dry, see where it fails to exactly transcribe your idea of what you wished it to be when exposing the plate. Then with paint, powder, dabbers, or what not (let *f*64 go hang) *make it print as you want it*, and do not be satisfied until it reaches your preconceived idea. A picture should be but the reflection of a man's mind, not the result of photographic procedure (I trust I am making myself clear). Increase a shadow here, brighten a light there, shade this part a bit, anything to help your motive, idea, or whatever you may be pleased to term it. If your negative is thin (and C C paper wants a thin negative) you can do almost what you please with it.

I had almost let myself run into a dissertation upon printing, and that is not pinhole. Instructions for pinhole photography, to my mind, may well be left at "get a bit of ferrotype plate, or something like it, make a small hole in it, and use it instead of lens."

Of course, I am aware that to all this *F*64 would respond with a loud laugh of derision, but *chacun à son gout*. It doesn't require much skill to make a passable negative, *but a man has to be more than a photographer to produce a work of art from it*.

Finally, don't worry about manipulations, and you will enjoy your work the better.