

MR. EDITOR,—Your "NEWS" might well be called "The Practical Photographers' Guide," it abounds with so much that is really useful. I always preferred the practical to the mystic theoretical. From my infancy, it seems, I have been fond of it. One instance will suffice. When but a child and some repairs were being done in my father's house, having heard the plasterer say to his man that there was not enough of hair in the lime, I very coolly took my younger brother into a room, and, with a pair of scissors, clipped off his hair, without the least regard to his personal appearance, and supplied them with the desideratum.

When Fothergill's dry process came out I gave it a fair trial, and the first view (Glasgow Harbour, 8 x 10) was so excellent that I prepared a number of 8 x 10 plates by that process, and my friend Mr. W., another member of our practical society (a very successful Hill Norrisite), prepared a number of stereoscopic ones by his mode, and we started on a photographic tour to the far-famed scenery of the "Lady of the Lake,"

"In autumn, sæ pensive, wī yellow and grey."

We left Glasgow in the afternoon and got to Killlearn—stayed all night at Deacon W.'s—started next morning in his dog-cart, accompanied by two friends—went by the Aberfoyle-road—passed through the bustle and excitement of digging, building, and laying the huge pipes of that gigantic undertaking—the conducting of the Loch Katrine water to supply Glasgow for domestic use—passed Gartmore man-

sion and arrived at the "Clachan" of Aberfoyle, of Rob Roy celebrity, when we took view No. 1, viz., Aberfoyle Inn, with a harvest-field foreground, Lockard, &c., in the distance. After some refreshment, we found that the spring car (for the hills) was engaged by an English lady and gentleman, but who kindly allowed our traps to go with them to the Trossachs. The day being fine, we left our overcoats, and with tripod in hand we took our journey across the hills to our base of operations, the "Trossachs." The views which could be taken on the road are endless, and truly magnificent; and when Lake Vennacher broke on our view, and then Loch Achray, we were perfectly entranced—

"So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream."

On looking behind us we saw the spring car jolting and toiling on, and we were fully half an hour at our destination before it. After getting our traps out, and thanking them for their kindness, we set out for work.

"Where the ruffe Trossach's dread defile
Opens on Katrine's lake and isle."

Picture No. 2. View from right of the ferry-house, looking down Loch Katrine, &c., with our two friends disposed in the foreground. While here, a young English gentleman unfortunately pitched his camera rather near the road, for, while standing watch in hand, half-a-dozen coaches with tourists rushed past him one after the other, turned, and re-passed him, to wait the arrival of the steamer's passengers for Cullender. He had, likewise, a further annoyance, in a silly lad (who was more knave than fool) selling Highland nuts, who would always place himself in the way of the lens; a silver sixpence, however, opened up his comprehension at once, when all other modes failed. One of our party kept him out of our way, by pretending to drive a hard bargain with him, till we had done—he being done at the same time. Picture No. 3, from a little way down the loch, taking in the ferry-house, Ben-Venne, and the foot-path, our two friends arranged on favourable points for the picture. Whilst exposing, a joyous party of young ladies, with their father, passed, which considerably chagrined our friends, who flattered themselves on their judgment of female beauty, but couldn't turn round to catch even a passing glimpse of these "ladies of the lake," but stood rivetted to the spot, as if biologised, while we could scarcely keep our gravity at their position; and they were wild when we told them that they were perfect specimens of English beauties. After taking Ellen's isle, and a few others, the sky got suddenly overcast, and a few drops of rain fell, and then there fell such a torrent, it fairly deluged "fairy land," and we had to run for it. At Trossach's Inn we found the spring car ready, which had been engaged to take us back to Aberfoyle—in we went;—

"Across the stream we took our way,
That joins Loch Katrine to Achray."

And then across the mountains, the rain, if possible, getting worse. On ascending the first hill we had all to come out and walk, it being so steep, when our two friends set off to "walk it" home, while Mr. W. and I drove and walked, as necessity required, with our coat-collars turned up, and our focussing cloths over our shoulders (many a time were they wrung dry, and donned again); at last we got to Aberfoyle Inn. Although thoroughly "droukit," we kept up our spirits wondrously, and had many a hearty laugh, although sometimes on the wrong sides of our mouths. Two of our party took off boots, stockings, and trousers, to get them dried at the kitchen fire; the one had on drawers, and looked queer enough, but the other, not having on such nether garment, looked queerer still; and we laughed outright when he complained of the rough haircloth seat. After a *petit verre d'eau de vie*, and a "tousie tea," we got, so far, comfortable. Our dog-cart was now ready, but poor Mr. R. could not get on his boots, and had to get his feet and legs wrapped up in straw, and to be lifted into his seat of honour, as our "Jarvie." Being all seated, and having lit our cigars, away we started for Killlearn, where the Deacon's

wardrobe afforded us a complete transformation from top to toe. When we got into the dining room to tea, some friends were there to meet us; and, there being some good pianists present, we tripped it on the light fantastic toe, and chased away any casual acquaintance we might have formed with Master Rheumatism. Many a time that night we mistook each other's identity, in our new habiliments. Next morning we started home to develop our resources. Nothing appeared but haze—the resinous effects of the pine boxes which contained our plates, and the saturation with rain, had completely ruined them.

Having given my first campaign with the dry process (although the wettest I ever experienced), I feel inclined to abide by the wet. I have no difficulty with it, and always satisfy myself with a picture before leaving the spot. The dark box described in vol. i., p. 297, comes nearest the one I use, but mine can be folded up like a portfolio, and is mounted on a perambulator, which also carries a necessary supply of eatables as well as chemicals, &c.

Some of our practical society intend exchanging the pictures they take this season with those of other kindred spirits, so as to vary their portfolio.

In the prosecution of the delightful art of photography there occur so many amusing incidents, that I have commenced making a collection, and shall be happy to receive such as any of your readers may feel disposed to send.