

The Uses of the Photographic Section.

The Photographic Section of the Limerick Field Club was established in 1896, its object being to bring together the amateur photographers of the city and county, and by mutual help to promote the art, and assist each other. Our membership has shown a steady increase, and now numbers forty, which fully justifies the action taken by the founders of this Section. We have had an exhibition of members' work each year at our Annual Meetings. The pictures shown this year were of a high standard of excellence, giving great promise for the future, and our lantern slide makers have nobly upheld the credit of our Club for good work in that direction.

It is desirable that all members should send in some work for exhibition, and that they should select specimens from that class of subject of which they are making a study, in which both inclination and opportunity are directing their footsteps. As members of a scientific society, it is particularly desirable that they should select some special line of work, and in this direction they will find many openings. In any of them a vast amount remains to be done. Members should try to work for the Club and its advancement. As members it is their duty to do so; and the result of such work is shown in the success of our Winter lectures this year, no less than four having been illustrated by lantern slides prepared by members. A small number are doing this work: what would it be if all gave a helping hand? We have a vast number of members willing to fill our Club room at all lectures, and we are glad to see them: they come as critics, but seldom as contributors to our Club meetings. To work with an object in view is of the greatest assistance to the beginner; have something to aim for, and one will find one's interest in the work grow day by day. Every photographer's taste moves in a certain direction: one will soon find out one's own line, and then can follow it, no one can master all the branches of the photographic art, what is done, let it be done well, and made the best of, and as a result success will be achieved; the pictures will adorn our walls, and the lantern slides our Club screen.

The lectures on photographic subjects, which have been given from time to time, are intended to be educational, and should be sources of information for all; the most advanced student, as well as the last to join our ranks, should find in them something to make a note of. They have been selected with the object of giving the latest information in special lines of work. Photography is advancing rapidly, and we must all try to keep our information abreast of the times. To do this lectures must be attended, and the literature of the subject studied; if not, we shall but rise to a certain level, which may be good enough for some of us, but, I trust, not for all. The hard-working member will go on doing better year by year, gaining experience,—in other words, learning by his failures. Those beginning are reminded of the great advantages they possess in belonging to a club such as ours, where each member is willing to assist the other, and by his advice and experience to help his fellow-student out of his difficulty. We should all develop the faculty of asking questions.

Our Summer Excursions afford opportunities for photography in the various branches of Club work—Botanical, Antiquarian, Entomological, and Geological; and the members interested in these departments, who are not themselves photographers, will be glad of the assistance of any members who are, and are willing to work for them. Every member who places his photographic knowledge at their disposal will add to the resources of the Club, in supplying negatives for the illustration of future lectures, and in building up a fund of material to be called on at some future date. But this is not all: while one is thus brought to observe Nature or Art through the camera, one is at the same time receiving a first lesson in natural science or archæology, and, let us hope, laying the foundations of a closer study of some Field Club work.

A start has been made in a photographic survey of old Limerick (now rapidly passing away), and in this work we would enlist all our members. We regret it was not begun years ago. Let us make good use of our time, and, as a result, some at least of the historic remains of our city may be handed down to the future as a permanent record of what remained in our day, and will show to those coming after us that something useful had been accomplished by the Photographic Section of the L.F.C.

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