

nected in the minds of tidy housewives with the fact that you can—if you like—eat your dinner off the floor.

Mr. Midwinter shows us his washing trays and dishes. They are self-made; a frame-work of wood, with a sheet of plate glass let in, not at the bottom of the frame, but only half way down, so that each utensil is a double dish. You might employ one side for a hyposulphite solution, and having done with the liquid, and thrown it out, turn over the bath, and employ the other side for developing dry plates in pyrogallic solution. There is thus no fear of contamination. A glass plate bottom being perfectly flat permits of employing much less liquid than is necessary in the ordinary bath. A shellac varnish applied to the woodwork protects it from the action of any liquid with which it may come into contact.

MESSRS. RUSSELL & SONS AT WORTHING.

THE judges at the Pall Mall Road Exhibition recently awarded a medal to Messrs. Russell and Sons, of Worthing, the particular picture securing the honour being a group of three ladies posed with rare grace and skill. This, coupled with another excellent picture—that of a rough countryman laughing and showing every tooth in his head, a laugh so infectious that you could not pass the portrait without laughing too—showed what good work could be done in Messrs. Russell's studio, and we were very glad, therefore, when opportunity permitted us to pay it a visit. The two pictures we have alluded to were so excellent that the judges must have had some difficulty in selecting the one to which the green label "medal" should be attached; they chose, as we have said, the group. We should have chosen the other.

This countryman picture deserves just a word of comment. It was the work, we believe, of Mr. Fielder, the principal assistant of Messrs. Russell and Sons, and was forwarded to the Exhibition as a result which had received "not a touch on the negative, nor a touch upon the print." Now this is a very important point, but, unfortunately, the information was by some oversight omitted from the catalogue. Had the fact been duly chronicled,

not only the judges, but the visitors too, would have taken much more interest in the picture, for although no objection may be raised to moderate retouching, the absence of any working up—all things being equal—adds obviously to the value of a photograph. We mention this not for the purpose of questioning the judges' dictum, nor on behalf of Mr. Fielder—for to that gentleman was due the production of both studies—but simply to show the desirability for publishing the fact of a picture being untouched when this is really the case. Naturally, the artist prides himself a good deal upon this circumstance, and yet, despite its importance, it is ignored altogether. As to the jovial countryman himself, with his flowered waistcoat and unkempt hair, we may add something else, only our readers must take what we tell them in the strictest confidence. The countryman is an old hand at making people laugh, and that is why he succeeds so well in the picture; it is Mr. Harry Poulton, the comedian.

Messrs. Russell's studio is a spacious oblong apartment, measuring, perhaps, 30 feet by 16 feet. It has a northerly light, which is, however, only permitted to enter in moderation. There is a skirting-board four feet high, while practical blinds are capable of shutting out the side light. It is the top light that is most employed for illumination, but the glass here does not reach to the apex of the roof. Therefore the light above is not strong, since it comes, so to speak, from a window in the roof, and not through one whole half of the roof itself; moreover, the glass is rough and not clear. The curtains to admit the side light are adjusted when the model is seated; those nearest the sitter are light, and they get darker towards the camera end of the room. "Pronounced shadows and high lights should be in every picture," says Mr. Fielder; "but, of course, you want something besides black and white."

For taking any photograph above the size of a carte or cabinet, Dallmeyer's rapid rectilinear for 10 by 8 pictures is here used, an instrument which Mr. Dallmeyer himself, singularly enough, simply recommends "for general use out-of-doors." For the panel or promenade style, as we ourselves can testify, the lens is excellent, rendering drapery on the margin of the picture with marvellous Fritz Luckhardt-like detail. There is an ordinary chimney-piece and fender in the studio, and this is made to do duty with good effect, both in winter and summer; only, so it seemed to us, it was the lady who affected the mantelpiece and

mirror in the summer time, and the gentleman, with his foot on the fender, in winter.

Of backgrounds there were very few in the studio, but a snow landscape deserved attention. The trunk of a tree with matted snow on one side, as the result of a drifting storm, was a prominent feature, but the white landscape was not overdone; the flooring was of canvas, with a few roughly-marked foot-prints, and cotton-wool was employed to add to the effect. A grass ground was also very clever, made of green silk threads—one of Atkinson's, we were told—and with this some good recumbent models had been photographed: gentlemen lying at their ease on the sward, reading and smoking. "We have all sorts of possible and impossible accessories," said our host, "pointing to a large stock of furniture, "but we like to employ them as little as possible now-a-days."

The silver bath has been for some time past dispensed with at the Worthing studio, and only gelatine is employed; and this, strange to say, without any alteration to the dark room. This has an orange-stained window and two tammy curtains. But the relief in being able to do without collodion was beyond description. The dark room is on the roof, and therefore exposed to the action of the sun, the consequence being that in summer the ether and alcohol fumes were well-nigh insupportable. "Only those who work in a dark room like this," said our host, "can appreciate the value of gelatine plates. The health question alone would be enough to bring gelatine into favour."

Messrs. Russell and Sons print a proportion of their work in carbon by the so-called chromotype method, "but it requires a very good negative to stand it," we were assured. Beside the printing room is an open flat roof that serves as an out-door waiting room for visitors. We thought of M. Liebert's "terrasse d'agrément," where models in waiting smoke their cigarettes; if he could only secure a prospect like this, the bright expanse of sea, the green waves and white cliffs extending as far as Beechey Head, our Parisian confrère would be happy indeed.

Gelatine plates have given little difficulty in the experience of Messrs. Russell. Never to proceed with a batch if the first or second film turns out questionable, is the invariable rule followed, and in this way much trouble and worry are saved. Gelatine plates, when good, are simple and easy to work, and when they give trouble, the fault, nine times out of ten, lies in imperfect

preparation. Therefore, rather than lose precious time in attempting to secure an inferior result with a second-class plate, the questionable batch is put on one side and returned. When the developer is once fairly at work on the film, one or both of the tammy blinds are drawn up, and the manipulation proceeds behind a single thickness of orange glass. From this it will be seen that Messrs. Russell and Sons do not prepare their own plates. They give two reasons for this, and it must be admitted that they are good ones. In the first place, they are quite satisfied with the films that they purchase; and in the second place, the time of their establishment is already fully occupied in camera and printing work. So long as it is possible to obtain trustworthy films at a reasonable rate, say Messrs. Russell, we shall prefer to leave the difficult work of preparing gelatine emulsion to others. They are very proud of their mounting material at the Russell studio; as at many other establishments, the mounting of pictures caused a good deal of trouble and anxiety, but these have not been known since the employment of a material proposed in one of our YEAR-BOOKS. Since that time the Messrs. Russell have never employed any other material, and seeing it has given so much satisfaction, we take this opportunity of repeating its composition :—

Best Bermuda arrowroot	...	...	...	3½ ounces
Water	...	...	...	28 „
Sheet gelatine or glue	...	...	...	160 grains
Methylated spirit	...	...	...	2 ounces
Pure carbolic acid	...	...	...	12 drops

Mix the arrowroot with six ounces of water into a paste, then add 22 ounces of water and the gelatine. Boil and stir for three or four minutes, then let it partly cool. Finally, add carbolic acid and spirit; keep stirring till properly mixed.