PHOTOGRAPHING WITHOUT A CAMERA: BY EVA DEAN

DID you think that to be a photographer you must own a camera, a dark room and a collection of developing trays, and that you must waste appalling numbers of expensive films before you learn how?

Did you ever take a trip to the woods or the seashore and wish you could carry home with you some little picture of it to crowd under the rim of your mirror to remind you of a happy day in the dull ones that might follow? Or was it a thought of the pretty things you might have made for Christmas that caused you to wonder again about the cost of a camera, a dark room and an uncertain quantity of films? And you might have had the pictures without the camera or films, as you will soon see.

I went to the woods one afternoon in May. It was a day that seemed the very incarnation of the spirit of spring, as though, having thrown off all encumbrances, she stood revealed, eager, breathing in a thousand tiny bodies on every side. The camera, however, seemed to shrink before the responsibility of portraying such joy. Translated into black and white, all the little dancing leaves and buds would be lost in a solid mass of foliage, and it was they who spoke most eloquently of the scene. Finally, yielding to the modest good taste of the camera, the flowers were permitted to speak directly for themselves, and—so it has happened—several of them have finally found their way onto these pages.

The process of photographing flowers without a camera is very simple, and the purpose of this article is to describe it so that all who care to will be able to give pleasure to themselves and their friends by this means. Many pretty ways of using the little pictures thus made will suggest themselves to one who is working with them, such as cards of greeting, valentines, place cards, or calendars; in the latter case each month could be represented by some plant appropriate to it. The method, as described in this article, will be adapted to the use of blue-print paper, since that is the simplest to handle and also the least expensive of the photographic printing papers in the market, and, too, its dark blue color is almost universally liked. After mastering the handling of blue prints, many will doubtless
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wish to experiment with other kinds of paper, so as to get pictures of different colors. Most other papers, however, have to be “developed” or “toned,” or both, after being printed. Full directions for handling each one will be found in the package containing these papers.

The outfit necessary for photographing without a camera is: A printing frame, costing from fifteen cents upward, according to its size, a sheet of plain glass cut exactly the size of the frame, and some blueprint paper. The paper comes in tin tubes, and should be carefully protected from the light at all times. The sensitive, or printing, side is a light yellow or greenish yellow color. When the paper is found to look dull and decidedly greenish, it is probably not fresh and would not give good results. A newly purchased package of old paper can be exchanged at any shop for fresh.

For a first attempt, it would be best to select a beautiful leaf, so as to begin on something that is uniform in texture. Place the piece of glass in the printing frame and lay the leaf upon it in the position in which it is to be printed. Put a sheet of blue-print paper into the frame back, and then turn the frame over, exposing the glass to the direct rays of the sun.

But very few trials will teach even the most timid beginner how long to expose the paper. A definite rule cannot be given, as too much depends on the strength of the light and the particular paper used. The parts not covered by the leaf will at once begin to darken, finally taking on a purplish tinge, when the printing will probably be found to be sufficient. It is possible, however, to print too long, in which case the background will remain purplish and not turn blue when it is taken out of the frame and put into water.

When it can be done, the prints should be placed in water as soon as they are taken out of the frame, plunging them in quickly face downward. Care must be taken to handle the picture only by the waste edge of
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the paper, as, being chemically prepared, even the secretions of the skin will be enough to spot it and ruin the result.

The water of the bath should be changed at least half a dozen times, allowing the prints to stand in it a number of minutes before each change. When possible, it is better to use running water, letting the prints remain in it for at least three-quarters of an hour. This washing is done to remove all chemicals from the paper, for if any are left in, the pictures will change color in a short time. If the printing should be done where no water was accessible, the prints could be laid between the leaves of a blank book and kept from the light until possible to wash them.

leaf and darker backgrounds. Success in printing must be a matter of experience.

If a plant has a woody stem which cannot be pressed flat in the printing frame, shave it down with a knife; otherwise its round shape will admit the light beneath it and it will look as fine as the stem of a maidenhair fern. Any flower having a thick center, such as dogwood, should be treated in this way. A section of a bud will print to look like a whole bud, while the round bud itself would have been crushed out of all semblance to its natural shape.

Perhaps a word may not be out of place here with regard to other papers than the blue print because, although more difficult to handle, it is possible to get much more detail with them than with blue print. Many of these papers print best at night, by artificial light, and very quickly. But to get the finest possible results with them, several things have to be considered. In discovering and conquering the individual characteristics of each plant, however, lies the keenest pleasure of the whole process.

It will be found that the green coloring matter of leaves is very opaque to light, and by the time a flower has been printed long enough to show the veining of its leaves, the blossom itself and the tender stems will probably all have disappeared. To avoid this, as soon as the picture is printed sufficiently for the blossoms, paste bits of paper on the outside of the glass, covering all the thinner portions, and thus allowing the leaves to be printed sufficiently without eating out the more delicate parts. It is not necessary to cut the paper the shape of the parts to be covered, as after a certain amount of exposure the background is as dark as it can become, and longer printing will not intensify it. But if the picture has not been exposed long enough for the background to reach its maximum darkness, the bits of paper will show as spots on the print. Experimenting is the best teacher.

Another thing to be guarded against is the overlapping of one leaf upon another in the printing frame; for two layers of the green coloring matter will be more than the light can penetrate, and a white spot will result. If the picture has been printed long
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enough to get detail in the rest of the leaf, this white spot will be a blemish.

Wild azalea may combine most of the difficulties likely to be met with in the process. Their long stamens and the thin, pale extremities of the flowers require but a very few moments to print. The stem end of the flower, of a deeper red, should have more time, for it is covered with a soft fuzz that seems to deceive the rays of light as to its real boundary, while the leaves require a still longer printing than even the thick por-

tions of the blossom to accomplish the right result. The woody stem has to be shaved, a thing not easy to do in this case without loosening the attachment of the flower.

It has been noted that these prints come out more or less as silhouettes. In the case of a white flower without its leaves, such as lily-of-the-valley, that effect is the natural one, but often a delicate, pale blossom with a dark leaf will print an absolute negative,—its light flower dark because of the thin-

ness of its petals, and its green leaves white because of their thickness. Although the pictures are very suggestive and satisfying in this way, it is sometimes possible to get a positive from one of the negatives that will

come nearer reproducing the natural conditions than a negative does. Place the first

print in the printing frame with its face upward, or away from the glass, and, laying a

fresh sheet of paper down upon it, print the whole as was done with the flower itself.
The light will have to penetrate the thick-

ness of the first print, and its action will of

course be retarded, but one half of the back

of the frame may be safely opened at a
time without disturbing the paper, and in

this way the progress of the work can be

watched as well as through the glass. As

the print will fade greatly in the bath, it

must be made a great deal darker at the

start than is desired when finished. In this

positive the background and the flowers will

be light, and the white leaves of the negative
dark, although on account of the blurring

influence of the paper through which the

light must pass the second print may not be

as clear as the first one.

Sometimes, in planning the prints for a

special use, it would be convenient to have

a white space left on them for a greeting, a

calendar, or a name. This may be arranged

for by placing a thick card of the desired

shape in the printing frame with the flower,

and thus incorporating it as a part of the

picture. The ways seem endless, however,
in which the prints can be used. A collec-

tion of silhouettes from the old home flower
garden will please the most satiated receiver

of Christmas gifts. A puzzle game can be

made for a student of botany by combining

parts of different plants in one print to test

his skill and discernment. A game for chil-

dren can be arranged by making a collection

of the silhouettes of leaves for them to

guess, and incidentally to learn. Or, revers-

ing the fate of the Imperial Cesar, who,

"dead and turned to clay, might stop a hole

to keep the wind away," the commonest

weed by the roadside could glow down in
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A GARDEN FOR THE FIRST YEAR

benign radiance from the panels of a candle shade upon the heads of the very family who had fought its existence all summer. But whether from the candle shade, the calendar, or the corner of a mirror, the little prints will give no one such delight as the one who makes them, to whom, quite apart from their beauty, they will speak in treasured memories of some day in May.

A GARDEN FOR THE FIRST YEAR: BY VIVIAN BURNETT

PEOPLE who are building houses too often take it for granted that they cannot have any sort of a garden the first year, that they must be content with a house in a bare lot, surrounded by unpicturesque stretches of soil, if nothing worse. Most houses, in fact, go through their first summer circled by the débris of the carpenter, the plasterer and the plumber. This is all wrong, and is the result of not taking up the question of a garden soon enough. The house and its grounds should form a unity, and no house can be properly planned without some idea in the owner’s mind of what the garden is to be. Especially should the grades, the roads, paths and terraces be well considered at the very beginning, before the foundation of the house is actually commenced, or great trouble, possibly expense and disappointment, are likely to ensue. The proper way to evolve a garden is to begin when you design your house, and achieve it as far as you may while you are building the house. As for giving up the idea of having a garden the first year, you certainly need not if your house is being built during the fall and winter. It is only a matter of knowing what to do and when to do it, then with a little thought results that are surprising can be obtained.

For the sake of your garden-to-be, you should make every effort to persuade the builders to restrict building materials and waste to as small an area as possible, and if you are successful in this you will be able to get a fine start at least in a part of your grounds by putting in a great many plants in the fall. You will not be able to plant anything very near the house, of course, and will be forced to rely on one season’s growth.

There are two things to be kept in mind in planning your garden for the first year. One is to obtain a quick temporary effect and the other a permanent growth as quickly as possible. Here, as in most projects, the question of expense enters. If you are able to pay large prices you will be able to get fine immediate effects by buying large plants from a nursery. It is possible that you may be lucky enough to have good-sized trees and possibly some shrubs already in your garden; though very few, especially those who build in suburban sections, have this good fortune. If you go to the nurseries for trees and shrubs, what you can get merely depends upon the length of your purse. You can have a tree forty feet high if you will pay three or four hundred dollars for it. But by using a little wit and some money you can have a luxuriant growth, excepting the large trees, that will, even the first year, make your grounds seem a perfect bower.

You can call upon both annuals and perennials,—that is, the plants that are sown and blossom in one year, as well as the plants that will survive the winters, and spring up year after year without a special invitation. A Craftsman garden should depend largely upon perennials, because they require so little care, but the first-year garden can draw with good results upon the annual plants. Here again the question of expense enters. You can raise your perennials, if you wish, from seeds bought at five cents a packet; but if you do, you will in most cases get but scant foliage and few flowers during the first season. Yet it is the most delightful way to do it, for you have the pleasure of watching the plants from their beginnings, and of doing the whole thing yourself. If, on the other hand, you wish to get immediate effects from your perennials, you can buy plants of moderate size from the nurseryman at about twenty-five cents apiece, with a surety that they will make a great show and blossom consideredly the first season. You can also buy annuals already started.

If you find it possible to start your work in the fall, you should begin the first of September to think of what perennials and bulbs you intend to plant. For a first-year garden bulbs are a great help, as they will give you results in the early spring months when flowers of any sort around the bare-looking house will be welcome. Buy daffodils, tulips, irises, hyacinths and lilies-of-the-valley in as large quantities as you can afford. Try to coax the builders away from