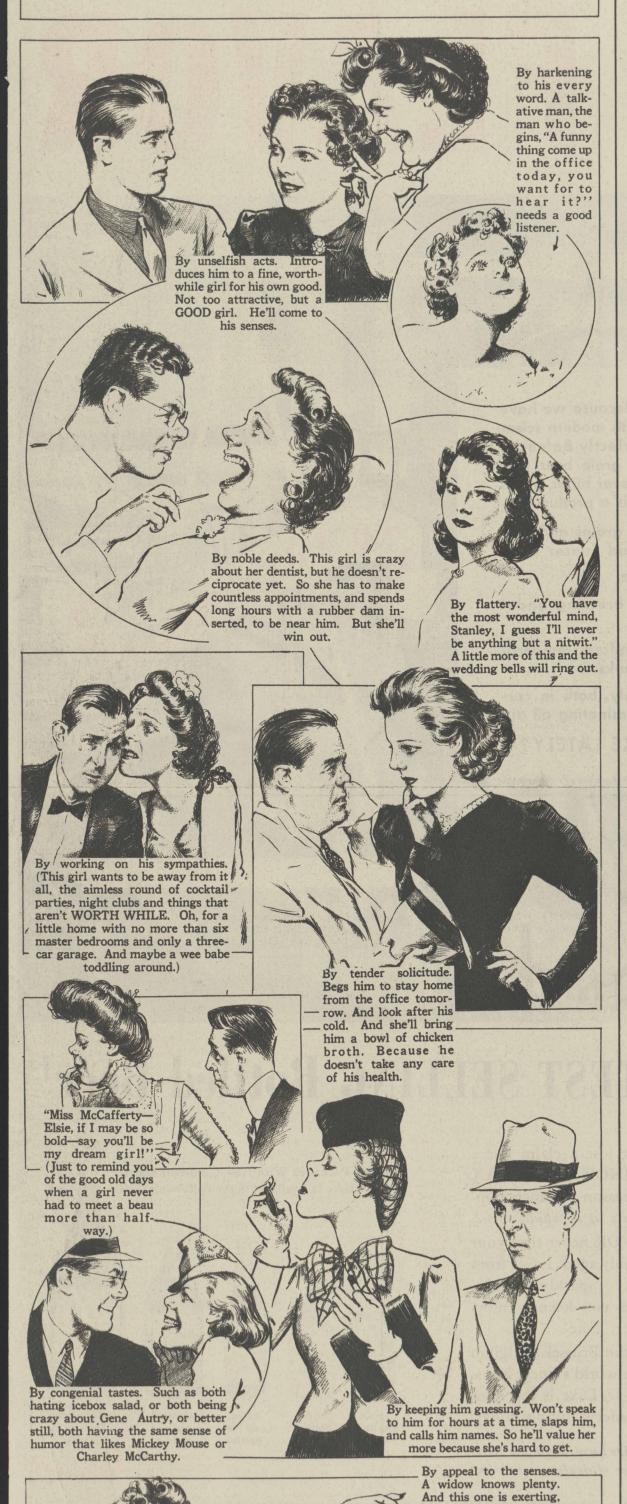
HOW THEY GET THEIR MEN

By W. E. Hill



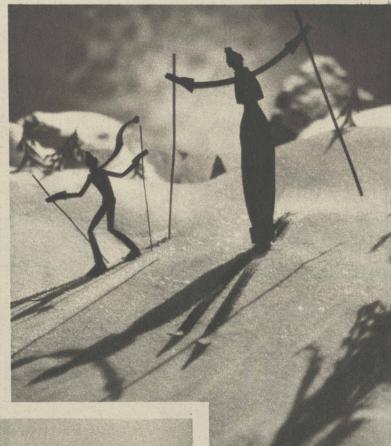
KNOW YOUR CAMERA

(Managing Editor, Popular Photography Magazine)

'Table-Top' Shots Fun, Helpful

ABLE-TOP photography -taking pictures of miniature sets made up from odds and ends found around the house—is a field of photographic activity which every amateur should investigate. Here you can produce with the simplest means an unlimited variety of striking pictures and learn a lot about photography in general while you are snapping mere

As the name suggests, tabletops are made on a table, or any other flat surface, right in your home. It may be pitch dark and raining outdoors, yet your tabletop sets will give you brilliant pictures of desert scenes, tropical forests, and bring exotic animals and odd "personalities"



Cutouts from black paper, placed on a snow substitute (sugar, salt, borax, flour, cotton, and any number of other substances can be used for snow) and back-lighted, give interesting table-top shots of skiers.

here are a few examples. Velvet or fur may be made to photograph like grass; twigs of different types, dressed up with foliage cut from crêpe paper, give excellent trees. Pebbles and pieces of coal can be made to appear like rocks or mountains. Sugar, salt, borax, white cotton, and many other objects can create the effect of snow. A mirror or a piece of glass appears in the picture as the surface of a lake, and if you want waves you can stretch a few strips of painted paper horizontally across the scene. Crumpled cellophane gives the effect of ripples on water.

You can make table-tops with any camera, even though you will get best effects with a camera which permits ground-glass focusing. Get as close to your miniature sets as your lens permits. If you use a portrait attachment on the lens of a folding camera, measure the distance from the set carefully to get sharp focus.

need at least two strong lamps the length of time it takes to in reflectors. By putting a mask clear.

with a small hole in front of the reflector you can transform it into a spotlight, giving concentrated light on sharp shadows. There is no better way of learning how to illuminate a set or to create an effective portrait lighting than by creating light effects in table-top photography.

If you are looking for new subjects to photograph, create them yourself and try table-top photography.

OUESTIONS

Questions of general interest to camera fans will be answered here. No individual replies, other than those published, can be promised.

Is there anything wrong with using a portrait or close-up attachment over my enlarger lens in order to obtain bigger blowups without raising the enlarger head so far above the easel?-

ANSWER: This method has become fairly common and is of considerable help in making big prints. Of course, any change in the optical system of an enlarger (which is really a sort of camera) is apt to introduce some manner of imperfection in the image produced by the enlarger. By careful inspection of your enlarged image you can tell how well the method will work in your particular case.

In a recent column you suggested holding a filter in front of the cell of a photo-electric exposure meter as a means of determining the proper exposure with that filter. One or two authorities have advised me against this practice as not being accurate.-R. S.

ANSWER: This procedure is not claimed to be highly accurate, but in practice you can obtain a useful approximation of the proper exposure by so doing. The method is of special value when speed is essential.

How soon is it safe to remove my 35-mm. film from the hypo when processing is done in a "daylight" tank, with frequent agitation?—R. L. J.

ANSWER: Under such conditions it is generally safe to remove the film after eight minutes in the hypo. A period of ten minutes is certainly ample, assuming that you use a fresh fixing bath. One axiom is that For lighting your set you will you should fix the film for twice



Ship models and even the cheapest toys help to make impressive table-top shots if photographed from the right angle and lighted properly.

right into your home to pose patiently for your pictures.

With a little ingenuity you can build practically any setting you want to photograph and your camera will transform it into a realistic picture. There is just one thing you must always remember-the realism of miniature sets is based on keeping the objects used in correct proportion to each other. If two of an old-world street or a real dolls are to represent mother and child, one should not be ten

times the size of the other. A stroll through the toy department of any store will furnish you with a wealth of ideas for building table-top sets out of miniature objects. You can either buy your props for a few cents in the store or you can scene by showing stars, clouds, build them yourself, provided you have retained enough of your kindergarten training. Paper cutouts, figures shaped

all at once, charm, roguishness, come hither

and noblesse oblige,

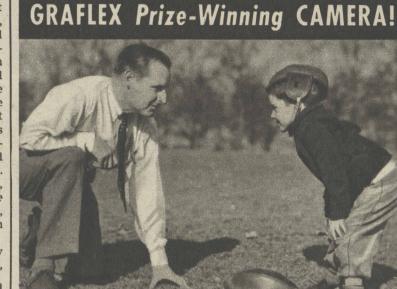
with telling effect.

from pipe cleaners or from plasticine, and vegetables trimmed to the shape of human beings or animals are among the favorite props for this type of picture.

But the main figures alone

don't make a complete set that would photograph realistically, and not even toy houses and doll furniture are sufficient in themselves to create the impression interior. Many additional little objects are needed to complete a realistic scene, and you must have a background which blends into your picture. The best background is a sheet of cardboard placed directly behind the scene. It can be black, a neutral gray, or can be painted to fit into the or whatever else the occasion

calls for. To give you an idea of how simple it is to build table-tops,



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Pipe cleaners are the favorite medium of table-top sculptors. This group showing young George Washington chopping down the cherry tree, was modeled and photographed by Albert G. Johnson of Chicago.

 Bargains in used cameras and other photographic equipment and supplies are offered in the Cameras and Optical Goods column in the Chicago Tribune want ad section.

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