

**THE TECHNIQUES
OF THE
HAND CAMERA**

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The Techniques of the Hand Camera by Walter Bulkeley Coventry

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WALTER BULKELEY COVENTRY

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BY

WALTER BULKELEY COVENTRY,
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PREFACE.

SOME apology is needed for giving to this little treatise a title which its contents do not strictly bear out. The explanation is that the book has been reviewed in a semi-official manner under the title "A Treatise on the use of the Hand Camera," and condemned as being too technical for general reading; and in possessing a title that might be misleading in this respect. There is much truth in this verdict; and it is hoped that the alteration of title, by erring in an opposite and safer direction, will prevent any misapprehension and disappointment that might have been caused by publishing the book and placing it in a catalogue under its original name.

Whilst fully accepting what will no doubt be the general opinion of the book, there are certain considerations which seem to suggest that it may not be altogether useless. To many persons the hand camera is far from being a toy; it becomes at times quite as much a *professional* instrument as, for example, an engineer's theodolite; whilst the remarkable skill and ingenuity shown in the construction of the various appliances that constitute a high-class camera, make it all the more worthy of being treated in a somewhat technical manner.

It is hardly necessary to point out that in subjects of this kind there is always a more or less wide gap between the results of theory and practice; and it is not to be supposed that mathematical rules and formulas can be worked to with strict accuracy; their practical value is to be found in the fact that they teach us in the shortest and surest way what to attempt and what to avoid. The following remark by Mr. Boursault in the treatise referred to below, very aptly expresses this point: "Il est vrai que le calcul ne peut pas tout donner

en photographie, mais on a le droit, et on doit, lui demander le plus possible."

No effort has been made to produce a complete treatise on hand camera photography, the design has been rather to supplement the instructions contained in some of the more elementary hand-books of the subject, and to convey in a concise form a sufficiently exact notion of certain principles that are usually dealt with only in separate treatises. It is perhaps the placing together of these somewhat heterogeneous materials within a small compass that gives to the book a forbidding appearance; but on a closer inspection it will be found to contain nothing very formidable.

The aim of the book is to induce, and possibly help the photographer to use his camera in a systematic and efficient manner; or to put it in popular language, to work his instrument "for all it is worth."

I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to Mr. Léauté (the Editor of the *Encyclopedie Scientifique des Aide Mémoire*), and to Mr. Boursault the author, for permission to make use of some of the Tables contained in his treatise on Exposure⁽¹⁾ published in the series mentioned. I had originally intended to give Mr. Boursault's Table of "Hourly Coefficients" in its entirety, but as Chapter X is merely an attempt to indicate an indispensable *minimum* of what is required, I have introduced a more concise Table of a similar kind; and at the same time I have added the information necessary to enable these coefficients to be calculated under any conditions.

Those who wish to study the subject of Exposure in all its bearings, cannot do better than consult Mr. Boursault's excellent treatise.

W. B. C.

December, 1900.

(1) *Le calcul du temps de pose en photographie*. Gauthier-Villars, Paris, 1896.

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