

## BOOK REVIEW

**The History of Photography; Its Relation to Civilization and Practice;** Dr. Erich Stenger; translation and footnotes by Edward Epstean (1939), *Mack Printing Co.*, Easton, Pa.

Here is a book on the history of photography written by the man who, after Professor Eder, is the most competent in Germany to write upon such a subject. The translation into English, faithfully carried out, is by Mr. Edward Epstean of New York, who has done more than anyone in recent years to make photographic history available to the English-speaking public. Mr. Epstean has given much of his time and money to the preparation of translations of the most important French and German works on the subject.

The present book is interesting from two points of view: (1) the early history of photography and the earlier stages in the development of photographic processes and their applications are dealt with in great detail, and will be a valuable source of reference; (2) the book represents a picture of the present German viewpoint of the subject. Mr. Epstean points out in his preface that it is difficult to write history objectively, and that any criticism that might be raised as to the preference of the author for his Fatherland might apply equally to history books written in other countries. A presumably "controlled" book on photographic history may in itself, however, be an interesting historical document. We must admire Mr. Epstean for arranging for the publication himself when the international situation led his original publisher to disavow any sponsorship of the book.

There is perhaps a tendency to place too much emphasis on information as to the first people who started to do things which later developed into something worth while, and not enough information about what they led to. However, there are many who will be interested in ready references to the early historical material, and to them the book will be valuable.

Mr. Epstean has added many footnotes, correcting certain misstatements in the text, and amplifying some of the material.

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