
Review: Photographic Surveying

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a joint Anglo-Belgian Commission was employed in surveying the region near the 30th meridian between Lake Albert and the parallel of 1° S. The committee saw that this was an opportunity, such as might not recur for years, for utilizing some of the *personnel* of the joint commissions, after the completion of their official work, for measuring a section of the arc along the 30th meridian, and thus helping to realize the great project, first definitely mooted by Sir D. Gill, for carrying a geodetic arc from the Cape to the Arctic. The cost of the work was met partly by a grant from the Treasury and partly by donations from four scientific societies—the Royal Society, the Royal Geographical, the Royal Astronomical, and the British Association. It amounted to £3800. This did not include the astronomical observations, which were done by a Belgian observer, M. Dehalu, nor did it include the greater part of the expense of camp equipment, instruments, and tools.

The work was fully up to the exacting standards set in South Africa for first-order triangulation. The probable error of the base measurement was one part in one million, and the average closure error of a triangle was $0''.8$, corresponding to a probable error of an observed angle of $0''.4$.

The datum for the altitudes was a gauge on Lake Albert, of which the height is derived from the levelling results along the railway from Mombasa to Port Florence, and thence by water-level to Entebbe, and then again by spirit-levelling to Butiaba. The results are fairly consistent, and the final assumed height of the lake (May to July, 1908) is $+2028$ feet.

We trust soon to hear that this arc is being extended southward through German territory to meet the termination of the South African section immediately to the south of the southern end of Lake Tanganyika.

E. H. H.

PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEYING.

‘Die Geschichtliche Entwicklung der Photogrammetrie und die Begründung ihrer Verwendbarkeit für Mess- und Konstruktionszwecke.’ Von Max Weiss. Stuttgart: Strecker & Schröder. 1913. *Illustrations and Diagrams*. Price 12 marks.

This is a typically German publication, a sort of *catalogue raisonnée* of all the instruments designed for any form of photographic surveying, with numerous full-page illustrations and a complete bibliography of the books on the subject in all languages. The latter feature is useful, but the main part of the book seems to us of little value.

The possibility of carrying out a survey of a country by photographic methods is admitted. What we want to know is how this method compares with others, and whether, in particular, we in England are right in thinking that photo-surveying is more akin to an amusing game than to a useful art. Much as it has been discussed, and vast as the continental, especially German, literature on the subject is, we have never yet seen an account of any direct test in the form of competitive surveys executed at the same time of the same piece of country, the one by an ordinary surveyor using well-established methods, and the other by a photogrammeter (if we may use the word), followed by a critical comparison of the resulting maps.

Until we see this we shall retain an attitude of scepticism, an attitude which the book before us does nothing to modify.

E. H. H.