Anyone with even a mild interest in double stars will enjoy reading Observing Visual Double Stars. Couteau's love for this branch of astronomy is evident throughout the text. His enthusiasm just might inspire a few young amateur astronomers to pursue careers in double star astronomy. Those half a dozen beleaguered professionals certainly hope so.

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BOOK REVIEW

Photoelectric Photometry of Variable Stars

Douglas S. Hall and Russell M. Genet, International Amateur-Professional Photoelectric Photometry, Fairborn, OH, 1982, 280 pages, illustrated, $18.95.

Photoelectric Photometry of Variable Stars is a gold mine of current information on astronomical photoelectric photometry.

The foreword is by Frank Bradshaw Wood, the editor of Photoelectric Astronomy For Amateurs (1963). His main point is that the amateur astronomer with a photoelectric photometer now can carry out work which will be of scientific significance and of permanent value.

The history of astronomical photoelectric photometry is written by Gerald Kron, student of the pioneer, Joel Stebbins. Chapters 3 through 8 cover very nicely all the "nuts and bolts" considerations of the hardware and the instruments of photoelectric photometry. Systems at various levels of complexity are covered, from the simple method of DC integrating with a meter to pulse-counting with input to a home computer. These chapters concerning the electronic equipment of necessity do require some knowledge of electronic technology in order to be understood. But the book is not too deep in that subject, because after all, photometry is an exacting science. There is enough detail given to answer most technical questions relating to photometry if the reader has a reasonable understanding of electronics.

The last one-third of the book relates to the application of the equipment, that is, how and what to observe. First to consider is the effect of the atmosphere on the starlight. The authors then take us through standardizing your photometric system in reference to a recognized system, such as the UBV system. An example is given, from the original strip-chart data through to the standardized results. There is a very good discussion on the sources of observational errors, how to recognize them, and how to deal with them. At the end is a large reference list and two appendices. Appendix A is a list of abbreviations and acronyms used in the book and their meanings. Appendix B is a list of manufacturers and variable star organizations the reader might want to contact.

Anyone interested in photoelectric photometry will find much useful information in Photoelectric Photometry of Variable Stars.

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