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BOOK REVIEWS


These publications testify to the growing awareness of the acute needs of Africans for adequate housing, not only in the overcrowded towns but also in the countryside. As the contributions in the previous issue of Zambezia by Stopforth and Seager indicated, the needs are pressing and what is required is not the slow provision of the ‘total environment’ beloved of administrators, but a dramatic break-through in encouraging self-help so that people can get legal tenure and make the first step to decent living conditions by building low-cost housing units that can be extended and enhanced in time.

The first of these publications is the record of a symposium organized by the Regional and Urban Planning Centre of the University of Rhodesia. The twelve papers cover a wide range of subjects from high-density housing in Bulawayo, to farm compounds, to the technical problem of different sorts of materials and structures. What raises the greatest interest, however, are the proposals by P. van Hoffen and A. J. Wales-Smith for the building of all-brick structures. As has been shown recently in The Rhodesia Herald (21 November 1977), this idea, deriving from Fathy’s work in Egypt, is being implemented not only on farms with low-cost sun-dried bricks but also in Salisbury’s European suburbs.

The second publication is a detailed analysis of the planning and building problems in housing that 25 per cent of the African population that lives on European-owned farms. The author favours the use of sun-dried bricks and thatch roofing and emphasizes the importance of a degree of self-help in solving these housing needs. Much of what he recommends could also apply, in part, to the rest of rural Rhodesia and even the new ‘suburbs’ that, as the Derbyshire-Zengeza episode has shown, will inevitably develop.

R.S.R.

St Peter’s Harare By A. Bex, S.J. Gwelo, Mambo Press. Occasional Paper, Missio-Pastoral Series No. 7, 1976, 63pp., Rh$0.65.

Vatican II, the Ecumenical Council convoked by Pope John XXIII between 1962 and 1965, aimed to achieve an aggiornamento, an up-dating and renewal of the Roman Catholic Church. The Council considered and pronounced upon the nature, structure, role and worship of the Church in the modern world, on its relationships with other Christian denominations and with non-Christians, on religious freedom and on many aspects of Christian education and life.

St Peter’s Harare is the fascinating account of an imaginative and productive attempt to implement the spirit of Vatican II in a lively African congregation sited in one of the most densely populated areas of Rhodesia; it is the
account of an effort to build a caring community on the basis of the Christian faith.

The two European priests and the two African brothers are the nucleus of activity, but not in the old authoritarian sense, for surrounding them, in concentric circles, are the Parish Executive (which the Parish Priest does not chair), the Parish Council, and the Parish as a whole, organized in twenty-four sections.

Christian witness and action are seen as the activity not only, or even chiefly, of the clergy, but of the whole congregation, and they cover a wide and profound range: meaningful liturgy ("The Mass was soon dragged down from behind the colossal black butcher's slab of a high altar, above and far from the people", p.28); religious education in schools; the use of the Bible; Christian social life and action; the role of the priest and the brother; ecumenical experiences; problems of marriage; help for the needy and care for the sick. Problems concerning the compatibility between certain African traditions and practices are squarely faced, and the African sense of the wide family of the living, and of the one community of the living and the dead, is seen as a lesson to individualistic Westerners in their inhibited loneliness.

The book is the description of a Parish which is a 'true and lively' memorial to its guide and leader, Fr Wim Smulders, S.J., accidentally killed in December 1975, whom the people called 'Munhu' — a human being in the Shona understanding of the word.

University of Rhodesia

R. Craig


This book endeavours to provide a geographical account of the City of Salisbury based upon individual research efforts of eight staff members of the Department of Geography at the University of Rhodesia in the period 1968-72. As stated in the preface, the underlying research objectives 'were partly to provide a basis for effective teaching of the geography of the local region, and partly to contribute to an understanding of Salisbury and its problems in wider circles' (p.vi). Since individual research efforts were permitted to reflect the varying interests and expertise of the participating staff, the reader should not expect these objectives to be met fully in this volume. Also some of the chapters show their specialized nature and style in spite of the commendable efforts of the editors to standardize the terminology and phraseology.

In classic geographical fashion the first chapter of the book contains a discussion on the siting and situation of Salisbury by R. W. Tomlinson and P. Wurzel; restricting themselves to essentially physical attributes, they outline the physical environmental factors which account for the location and growth of the city. Then follows a descriptive historical account by A. J. Christopher of the areal morphology of Salisbury within the setting of a pre-determined cadastral framework; maps usefully illustrate the growth and development of land use in the city. Smout also discusses the growth and development of land use in the city to include land-use density and the vertical (townscape) dimensions, and systematically describes the city centre, the industrial, and the European and African residential areas. Kay and M. Cole focus on the citizens
of the city and provide some interesting insights into Salisbury as a man-made environment built on apartheid principles. Disparities in the social, economic and demographic characteristics of the city's racial groups are vividly discussed and supported by tabulated data, maps and photographs.

The fifth and sixth chapters by Smout provide an explanatory description of the dichotomy between commercial development in the city centre and that in the suburbs. Based upon a 1970 land-use survey and applying very basic analytical techniques, Chapter Five deals with land-use structure, land-use distribution and functional regions of the city centre. From these findings Smout concludes that Salisbury is essentially a young city which will inevitably experience further substantial structural changes. In Chapter Six the functional nature and distribution of suburban shopping centres as well as the related shopping patterns and habits of the suburban residents are discussed fully with supporting analyses of data collected by means of questionnaires and extensive fieldwork. Although the data is now more than four years old, this chapter still contains valuable insights into Salisbury's suburban commercial activity.

J. Trinder provides a historical description of Salisbury's industrial areas up to 1972, which is disappointing in its limited research and lack of explanation of the location and growth of the various industries in terms of industrial linkages or agglomeration and deagglomeration relationships. P. A. Hardwick examines the development and the state of Salisbury's intra and extra-urban transportation systems up to 1972. The report is supported by substantial amounts of data gathered from fieldwork surveys and from local government records; but while the growing transportation problems of the city are highlighted, little is offered by way of concrete prescriptions for these problems.

In the last and concluding chapter Kay sees the two major problems facing Salisbury, as first, the rising costs of running a city with uneconomic lateral sprawl of low density housing in white suburbia. The second concerns racial discrimination and associated socio-economic inequalities between white and black residents of the city. As Kay rightly points out the related solution to these problems will ultimately rest with the politicians and administrators. Having said this Kay surprisingly proceeds to offer solutions based upon the premise that the growth of Salisbury will continue to be influenced by apartheid principles. In part this premise highlights one of the problems which bedevil this book, namely time. Some of the findings in the book and the conclusion drawn therefrom are either outdated or based upon premises which have been changing very quickly. The late publication of the book also adds to these problems.

One of the most serious omissions in the book is the lack of references. Without a bibliography I cannot see the 'necessary link between research and teaching' (p.vii) being adequately provided. The authors would have saved a lot of valuable time and effort to those who wish to follow up on their research if copious data source references were included. The same applies to methodologies (not clearly spelled out in the text, if at all) which some authors used to manipulate and analyse data.

Nevertheless the book, although expensive, does neatly provide interesting information for the general reader not concerned with detail.

University of Rhodesia

C. C. MUTAMBIRWA
Southern Africa

By A. J. Christopher

Folkestone, Dawson, 1976, 292pp., £8.00.

Historical geography within Southern Africa, the author points out, has been a neglected subject in the twentieth century, and this book is an attempt to correct this deficiency. He has concentrated his attention almost exclusively on European settlers and their interaction with the land. Within the limitations he has set for himself, Christopher has done a highly competent job. He has traced the changing patterns of land use from the first settlement in the 1650s to the urban industrial era of the twentieth century, and the information he provides should be of considerable value to students of Southern African history. He explains the relative lack of appeal of Southern Africa for European immigration as compared to the United States and to British settlement colonies elsewhere in terms of the poverty of the physical environment, much of which was suitable only for highly dispersed pastoral activity, and to the presence of a large indigenous population. The latter had a dual discouraging effect — Europeans did not desire to come in larger numbers, and South African Whites did not want poor labourers from Europe when they had available a large cheap African labour force.

Concentration on white settlement, however, produces a one-sided view of South African history. The reader will find in this work little of the sturm und drang of inter-racial contact during the last three hundred years. The one chapter that he devotes to African and European contact is the least satisfactory part of the book. There are many dubious statements. He says that the Hottentots were ‘content’ to work for European farmers — a curious choice of words. And to maintain that Europeans avoided the dense African population zones up to the 1860s (p.139) seems to ignore the collisions on the eastern frontier during that period. The author expresses the hope that some other writer will take up the theme of African imprint on the landscape. This reviewer heartily concurs that such a study is very much needed.

University of California, Los Angeles

J. S. Galbraith

African Nationalist Leaders in Rhodesia: Who’s Who

By R. Cary and D. Mitchell.

Bulawayo, Books of Rhodesia, 1977, illustrated, 310pp., Rh$9.00 (pbk Rh$3.00).

Prominent African Personalities of Rhodesia

Salisbury, Cover Publicity Services, 1977, illustrated, xi, 196 pp., Rh$6.00.

To those seeking answers to a whole host of questions facing Rhodesia and who are concerned about the future of our country, these books are well worth purchasing, if only to study the history and experience of a number of the people included. I also offer a word of appreciation to the authors for their efforts; it must have been a time consuming operation requiring a great deal of cross-checking and not always in the easiest circumstances.

For me the volume by Cary and Mitchell does answer some of the questions that are repeatedly asked in Rhodesia today. One of the first that comes to mind is, ‘Are there African leaders capable of running a government in this country?’ Secondly, ‘Is there the material to provide Officers of State as well as Civil Servants at the levels capable of running a moderately successful government?’ In answer to the first question I would have no hesitation in
saying the answer is in the affirmative. This book discloses three if not four men who would, in my opinion, be capable of heading a Government and quite a few more who would be capable of handling a Ministry, but the first question is, of course, tied up with the second one and here I am on much more uncertain ground. Without discrediting any former holders of office in Rhodesian Governments, we have had two experiences in the last twenty-five years where men of no experience whatever of government, have moved up from the ranks of Members of Parliament and become Prime Minister, viz. Garfield Todd and Winston Field. There have been many examples of men with little parliamentary experience finding themselves as Cabinet Ministers, and indeed, the whole of Winston Field’s government was without ministerial experience. An even more forceful example than that was the case of the late Captain Frankie Harris who was not even a Member of the House when Huggins made him the Minister of Agriculture.

I go into detail for the obvious reason: this question arises, ‘If men are capable of becoming Prime Minister as well as Minister, why can they not also be top Civil Servants, etc. etc.?; and here is the reason for my doubt in answering the second question. Any experienced Cabinet Minister will know that even with long parliamentary experience becoming a Minister is not the easiest of jobs; but if one has had no experience whatsoever of Parliament and then suddenly becomes a Minister, the position would be quite impossible if it were not for the backing and support of an experienced and loyal Civil Service. It is their task to see their Minister is fully informed; and within the confines of the Ministry concerned they should be in a position to speak frankly and honestly to their Minister. Whether or not he takes that advice is up to him but the role of the civil servant is to advise his ministerial master of the facts of life. Here is the crux of the matter and reflects my concern as to whether or not a high standard of government could be maintained in view of the fact that so few black Rhodesians have risen to any senior position in the Public Service. I have no doubt in my own mind that those who are negotiating the possibility of a Settlement to the Anglo-Rhodesian dispute are as fully alive to this problem as I am. The question remains, ‘What steps have been taken to prepare Africans for these higher responsibilities?’

Reading the record of some of the more important figures in this book, one conclusion is almost inescapable, and that is how difficult it is for a black Rhodesian and a Nationalist to emerge as a leader of his people. I do not refer only to the problem of tribal loyalties and traditions, because whilst I believe that these do exist, they need not be insurmountable. What I have in mind is the almost impossible position that faces any aspiring African leader by virtue of the fact that since 1965 when the State of Emergency was declared prior to U.D.I., no African could really put forward a programme for the progress of his people without running the real risk of conflict with the authorities. A dispassionate examination of the situation discloses that from the introduction of the 1969 Constitution onwards the African leader had nothing to offer. The ultimate goal of the 1969 Constitution was that the Africans, in the dim and distant future, would be entitled to fifty per cent of the representation in Parliament; and bearing in mind that representation in Parliament was based on the amount of income tax paid, it is no exaggeration to ask whether any worthwhile promises could be made? If this is examined in the light of what was happening to the rest of the African continent, was it not inevitable that any African leader who stood for moderation or preached it, was going to be very easily outbid by those who, on the basis of numbers, demanded the whole loaf not to be shared with anyone?

In spite of help given by this book, the reader will still experience difficulty in assessing from where the next generation of leaders will emerge. I am
inclined to the view that if there is a successful negotiation in the near future, it is almost certain that the gentlemen whom I would describe as the 'Old Guard' of the Nationalist movement are likely to be in charge of any new regime in Rhodesia. However, I do believe that others are available. It is an interesting reflection on the changing times to see an African of the status of Bishop Muzorewa say that having to go to gaol first is really no longer a prerequisite to leading your country!

I would conclude by saying that I hope it will not be too long before the authors produce a revised volume to expand somewhat on the qualities of the generation to follow. I could not resist a wry smile when I read Mr Musarurwa's remarks (p.14) on African Nationalism and I quote: 'At a time when Africans in that country [Uganda] had started the war for self rule and independence against British Colonialism ...' Is it not strange that the vast majority of Europeans were quite convinced and, I believe, still are to this day, that British Governments, either Labour or Conservative, have had only one ambition and that was to shed their colonial responsibilities in Africa as soon as possible. I think this view is endorsed by the fact that the doctrine of paramountcy of African interests did apply to most British colonial territories that I knew of.

Salisbury

Sir Roy Welesky


These three books are of very different character. Tanser's is a conventional guide book which deals with the practical problems confronting tourists (such as passport formalities, hunting licences and car hire) as well as with the historical and geographical background. It is, of course, none the worse for that; and it does neatly comprehend within two covers all that the literate and intelligent tourist would normally require.

Phillipson's book is very much more learned work — but nonetheless of great value to anyone who wants to know more of this very interesting and very well-researched area around Victoria Falls. Phillipson provides several background chapters and more specialized topics are covered by such experts as, amongst others, G. Bond, J. Desmond Clarke, J. O. Vogel, R. H. N. Smithers. This is a model of what a detailed study of a region can be and it could well be copied for other regions in Central Africa.

The third book is one of the series of handbooks prepared by the Foreign Area Studies of the American University, Washington, which is designed as background reading for diplomatic, military and other government personnel. It provides a well-balanced, objective survey of the history, politics and economy, a fairly up-to-date bibliography and a useful index. At the price, it is a bargain for the general reader who wishes to be well informed.

R.S.R.


In spite of the reprinting for many years now, of Africana in general and travel books in particular, there appears to be no slackening in demand for these tales of adventure and fortitude. The book by Lord and Baines brings us closer to having all Baines’s works available in reprint. F. R. Bradlow has written a very useful and analytical introduction which shows how the production of the first edition was affected by Baines’s decision in 1868 to go to the Limpopo on behalf of the South African Exploration Company. It was rising public interest in new mineral discoveries such as these which, of course, made the market for a vade-mecum of this sort; and indeed it was public interest in the Tati finds that encouraged Lord also to publish his now rare book Diamonds and Gold: The Three Main Routes to the South African Ophir (London, J. B. Day, 1871). Such books serve to remind us that it was only the remarkable success of Kimberley diamonds that in effect staved off a ‘rush’ to Matabeleland twenty years before the Rudd Concession. The second book on Baines under review is an address given by Bradlow in connection with the centenary of Baines’s death; it is a useful survey of Baines’s talents, and a chronology of his career has been added. It is to be hoped that Bradlow’s long interest in Baines will one day result in a full-length study.

The two volumes of Holub’s travels, Seven Years in South Africa, are useful to Rhodesian readers, describing as they do his three journeys between 1872 and 1879, which took him through the west of Matabele country to the Falls and into Lozi country. These volumes are complemented by Emil Holub’s Travels North of the Zambezi 1885-6 which is a translation of parts of Holub’s Von der Capstadt ins Land der Maschukukulunbe (1890); the sixteen chapters which describe the journeys to and from the Zambezi, between 1883 and 1887, however, have never been published in English (despite what The Dictionary of South African Biography says), but the present reviewer hopes to publish his translation in a couple of years. An aspect of Holub which will then be investigated is his claim made that it was he who popularized the idea, taken up by Selous and Rhodes, that Matabeleland and Mashonaland were desirable for British settlement.

R.S.R.


Following the centenary of Arthur Shearly Cripps's birth in 1969, the present decade has seen a renewal of interest in the life and work of this pioneer Rhodesian missionary, poet, writer and champion of African rights. However, Doyle's work is so far the first full-length literary study to appear in print. Apart from D. E. Borrell's articles cited in the bibliography of the first work under review, and strangely not consulted by Doyle, recent attention has focused on his Franciscanism and political activism rather than his achievement in the sphere of English literature. The present volumes accordingly fill an important gap in current writing on Cripps, and help to provide a more fully-rounded picture of this highly gifted and complex man. Moreover, they essentially complement each other: Chennells, Brown and Rix offer a substantial selection of his novels, short stories and poems, with introductions to each section which show critical insight — in the case of Rix's introduction, considerable critical insight — into Cripps the artist; Doyle's full-length literary study draws on the full range of his poetry and prose fiction to provide a potentially more detailed evaluation within a biographical setting.

The question will inevitably be raised as to whether the compilers of the first volume have made a truly representative selection from Cripps's large literary output (nine novels, three volumes of short stories, twelve books of verse). So far as his poetry is concerned, Rix asserts that the task is relatively easy: 'the essence of his mind and most of his themes, can be shown in a relatively small selection' (p.283). While it is true that the range of Cripps's verse is limited, the winnowing process has been too drastic, and the reader may get the false impression that his poetry is, in general, inferior to his prose fiction. His longer poems are not represented at all, save for an extract from his verse drama, The Black Christ. It is especially unfortunate that his most revealing poem, 'Seen Darkly in Africa' which sums up his whole philosophy, has been omitted:

To me — as one borne out of his due time —
To me — as one not meet to reckon in —
To me (of all injurious aliens chief)
Christ hath reveal'd Himself — nor as to Paul
Enthroned and crown'd, and marr'd, despised, rejected —
The Divine Outcast of a terrible land,
A Black Christ with parch'd Lips and empty Hand.

Brown's short story compilation is well-judged, and includes several of Cripps's most compelling satires: 'The Old Boy', on the pavement law, and 'Fuel of Fire', a vehement attack on the colour bar which has marked prophetic overtones. In his introduction to this section, Brown draws attention to his ability 'to select the exact words or set up the right situation' (p.175). The reader's attention might also have been drawn to Cripps's economy of style in the better short stories, often under fifteen hundred words in length: generally speaking, Cripps is at his most effective in prose writing as a miniaturist.

The selection of only two out of the nine novels Cripps wrote offers considerable problems. For the historian of early European settlement in
Rhodesia, Chennells’s final choice is ideal. _Bay Tree Country_, penned in the
wake of the notorious 1911 labour circular, is a scathing indictment of
the Chartered Company’s African labour policy, the Black Peril scare which
culminated in the Sam Lewis incident, and the Rhodesian press, ‘tied and
bound with local chains’ (p.117). The subject matter of _The Brooding Earth_
— from a purely literary standpoint, perhaps the better of the two novels —
is limited to one solitary, but crucial theme in Rhodesian history, the land
issue. Written in 1911, Cripps’s haunting novel anticipates the legalized des-
poilment of the reserves which preceded their formal gazetting under the
1920 Order in Council.

On the literary level, as Chennells rightly points out in his introduction,
the two novels establish ‘alternative images’ to those created by Gertrude
Page and Cynthia Stockley for early white Rhodesian society (pp.13-14). On
the purely historical level, however, _The Brooding Earth_ and _Bay Tree
Country_, are political tracts, thinly disguised as novels, hewing closely to the
line established for Southern Africa by Olive Schreiner in the 1890s. Readers
familiar with the period will find in _Bay Tree Country_ explicit references
to contemporary events which must have been fresh in the mind of the
author when he wrote the novel, and which almost certainly inspired him
to put pen to paper in the first place.

On the other hand, the choice of these two particular novels presents
Cripps foremost as a novelist of ‘white Rhodesia’, notwithstanding the fact
that he deviates substantially from the orthodox Henty tradition. Chennells
discusses some of the others briefly in his introduction, but Cripps might have
been better served if one of the two novels selected had given way to one
of the purely African works, particularly _Chaminuka : The Man Whom God
Taught_ (1928), which, if nothing else, shows the greater sense of identification
with the Shona he had attained fifteen years later.

This is a very small reservation, however. The compilers and Mambo
Press are to be congratulated for reprinting a generous measure of Cripps’s
literary output, much of which is hard to come by, and which, except for
some earlier poems republished by Oxford University Press in 1939 (Africa :
_Verses_ has never been reprinted.

The decision of the compilers to limit their choice to works set in Rho-
desia, presumably dictated by the consideration of local appeal, has fortu-
tously helped to reduce the overlap between the two books under review, as
Doyle has tended to concentrate his attention on Cripps’s other literary
material. A substantial section of Doyle’s study is devoted to Cripps’s less
familiar _Magic Casements_ (1905), a collection of stories set in the period of
the Wars of the Roses. This work is far from being the idiosyncratic exercise
in archaism that it appears to be at first sight, as Cripps is hinting a parallel
with contemporary Mashonaland, a point Doyle has failed to exploit. In both
instances, the common people are menaced by the evil forces of an incipient
materialism, summed up in one of Cripps’s typically succinct and apt sym-
bols, the ‘Golden Death’ (_Magic Casements_, p.112). Elsewhere in his writings,
another illuminating link can be seen between Jack Cade and the Shona
medium Chaminuka, both of whom became folk-heroes after suffering
martyrdom at the hands of the forces of oppression.

This discussion reveals an important shortcoming in Doyle’s book.
Cripps the priest, mystic, shepherd of his Maronda Mashanu flock and ob-
server of nature emerges clearly from his pages, but Cripps the polemicist
is only fleetingly caught. The important formative influence of the Christian
Socialist movement on the outlook of Cripps and many of his upper middle-
class contemporaries at Oxford in the early 1890s is not mentioned at all.
His political verse receives little attention, except for the piece on Rhodes
(discussed on pp.163-8), but even here Doyle has not fully explored his love-hate relationship with the Founder, a theme Chennells has developed within the wider context of Cripps's attitude to white settlement in Rhodesia (p.22).

Certainly Cripps's later political verse is far from being his best poetry, and one would be rash to accord it more than a modicum of literary praise, but in the realm of the Philippic, it stands high. Throughout his life, he produced it in vast quantities, starting with the 'Ode in Celebration of the Hut Tax' (1903) and continuing into the late 1940s, by which time it had achieved a place of dominance in his literary writings. Much of it is still in manuscript form, scattered through the various collections of his papers, but several poems appeared in less accessible places, like the *Gwelo Times*, *Labour Front* and the Fabian Colonial Bureau *Empire* (later *Venture*), and await an anthology.

The reader may be a little disappointed at the rather desultory nature of Doyle's treatment of his subject: much of his book summarizes the plots of Cripps's prose fiction. In general, it lacks the critical incisiveness which is such a commendable feature of the first work under review. Of course, Doyle is working under a severe disadvantage: Cripps is virtually unknown outside Rhodesia, and a literary critic overseas cannot assume that his readers will have any prior knowledge of his works. The compilers of the Mambo Press volume do not have this problem, as the selected texts follow their introductions. Sometimes Doyle succeeds in the dual task of summary and comment, for example in the case of *Chaminuka*, but often he does not, especially when dealing with the short story collections.

However, the most striking difference between the two works under review is their respective opinion of Cripps's calibre as poet and writer. Doyle tends to be laudatory, almost adulatory, overlooking many of the manifest stylistic weaknesses referred to by the compilers of the first volume: his 'occasional archaic awkwardnesses' (Brown, p.173); the 'outmoded romantic diction' of his war poetry and the 'seductive but malign succubus' of Keats which hangs over his poetry (Rix, pp.248, 285). To which can be added his propensity to see life as a set of warring absolutes. His novels and short stories are twentieth-century morality plays, with the limitation in characterization which inevitably results from this type of literary form. Foreman Hind is just too bad, and Lyndhurst, too good, to be true. In short, Cripps is not a great literary figure, but as the foreword to the Mambo Press volume so rightly observes, he was the 'first of any stature or significance' in Rhodesia (p.6).

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M. C. Steele