

Recent Developments in the Design and Planning of Low-Cost Housing in Rhodesia Edited by M. A. H. Smout and P. van Hoffen. Salisbury, University of Rhodesia, 1976, illustrated, 60pp., mimeo, Rh\$3,00.

The Accommodation of Permanent Farm Labourers By F. P. du Toit. Salisbury, Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Research and Specialist Services, *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal Technical Bulletin* No. 17, 1977, illustrated, 63pp., Rh\$1,00.

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-Zenzeza 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.

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Salisbury: A Geographical Survey of the Capital of Rhodesia Edited by G. Kay and M. A. H. Smout. London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1977, viii, 119pp., illustrated, £3.50.

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 site 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