

and Masters seem locked into the right and wrong of prescriptivism in language and ignore any descriptive view of change in Zimbabwean English. The very title *Better English* invokes many assumptions.

In many ways the meandering nature of this book could not have been avoided: a book on errors should follow the completion of a survey of contemporary Zimbabwean English. At present, no one can state objectively the degree of prevalence of these errors in the English of Zimbabweans. We don't know the age of the perpetrators of the errors, nor, which is much more serious, have we any idea of the level of their language development when the collection was made. If the readers find some of the examples eccentric or like none they have ever encountered, this could be to do with the fact that the authors have taken them from speakers whose English is too poor to offer any systematic pattern of error. Singularity of this kind is not confined to a preference for grandiloquent terms — a frequent manifestation of pre-systematic errors.

A further problem is that the competence of the same error-makers varies from situation to situation. Indeed, even the time they have in which to produce a particular form has some bearing on their performance.<sup>2</sup> Generally, speakers have less time for the retrieval of forms than writers, and spoken/written would be a further valuable parameter for inclusion in collections of errors.

Some form of salvage might, in later editions, be undertaken by the publishers to compensate for flaws in the conception and unevenness in the presentation of this volume. A first step might be to discourage collectors of errors from publishing until their skills of taxonomy have been plumbed. A collection of errors looks temptingly like a manuscript. In the case of the present work a teachers' resource book written by a linguist could plaster over the cracks. That linguist will be hard pressed to account for the mixture of language levels and the absence of contrastive analysis and a level of discourse, to say nothing of the presence of (if one dares to use the word) errors.

Collectors will be collectors and one can expect with some confidence and trepidation that errors will soon be collected and managed or mis-managed using computers. One positive pointer is that computer software will, of its nature, invite the statement of some of classificatory parameters missing from this work.

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**Lost Chance: Southern Rhodesia 1945-58** By *H. Holderness* Harare, Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1985, 235 pp., ISBN 0-949932-88-4, Z\$6.95.

**Caught in the Crossfire** By *Patricia Chater* Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1985, 206 pp., 16 plates, ISBN 0-949932-82-5, Z\$6.50.

Although they are consecutive, not contemporaneous, accounts, to read together Hardwicke Holderness's *Lost Chance* and Patricia Chater's *Caught in the Crossfire* is to have most clearly illuminated the reasons for the failure of the White liberal movements in the then Rhodesia and the inevitability of a war to break the deadlock.

<sup>2</sup> S. Makoni, D. Phil. thesis in progress on Zimbabwean Interlanguage Grammars, to be submitted at Edinburgh University.

People like Hardwicke Holderness were the products of an education and a background that still aimed at the classical ideal of a 'good man'. As he himself says, they held to a 'kind of ethic which placed a high value on fair play, good manners, integrity, and deplored boasting, doing people down, questioning the umpire' (p. 17). Reading *Lost Chance* today one might be inclined to feel that some of the characters were too good to be true. But one would be wrong. They were, indeed, for the most part conditioned to what Aristotle calls 'a disposition to virtue and the performance of virtuous actions'. But they were equally conditioned to the Aristotelian ideal of 'the mean', of avoidance at all costs of extravagant emotions, ideas or actions. And that is why, ultimately, they failed to influence the turn of events in Rhodesia. Their commitment to what they saw as the right thing to do was sincere and deeply felt. They laid on the line their careers and their place in their own society. But to lay their lives on the line as well was to them inconceivable. Inconceivable because in a country ostensibly at peace one does not make that kind of sacrifice, and inconceivable because it would have meant openly crossing the colour line to fight against one's own kind. And as a result they lost out to those White Rhodesians who were prepared to lay their lives on the line to preserve a status quo which they saw as eminently desirable.

Although only briefly a member of Parliament, Holderness's position in the community and his personal qualities kept him in touch with the thinking on both sides. He writes from within, as a member of the governing élite. His record of the politics is lucid, and his account of the mutual interaction of the history, personality and environments of the period is fascinating. His book is immensely alive, immensely readable, and it presents a view all too easily forgotten, that of the White Rhodesian who did not agree with the Rhodesia Front. He knows it all, because he was there, and he has succeeded in recreating both the events and the moods of a crucial period in African history.

Patricia Chater, on the other hand, writes from without, from a unique position as a White who has been absorbed into the Black community and who writes out of a sympathetic perception of what it meant to be on the receiving end of government policies formulated without regard to those affected.

Originally attracted by a British newspaper account of partnership in action, Chater found herself ultimately at St Francis Mission, a small African religious community. After two years of living at the mission, she was sufficiently impressed by what she describes as 'a community living the Gospel fully, truly and joyfully' to join it as a member (p. 10). It is this background of a Christian, caring and spiritual community that gives extra weight to her account of the passionate conviction of the Africans whom she knew that their lives were a small price to pay for the right to be no longer second-class citizens in their own land. Like the White Rhodesians, they too laid their lives on the line, but theirs was an offensive, not a defensive, action and they were ultimately to succeed.

In the earlier background section one is made aware of the increasing polarization of the two sides, a polarization which causes Chater to present her account straightforwardly in terms of 'goodies' — the freedom fighters — and 'baddies' — the establishment. She allows the former no faults, the latter no virtues. The book is understated and carefully factual. Although, because of the role played by the members of the mission and their friends in the struggle, Chater was in touch with many of the 'big names' of the liberation war, she has chosen to

present her story from the personal angle, as it affected the lives of individuals. The wider events are seen in terms of their repercussions on members of the community and their relatives. But she does not dwell on what is past, and, unlike Holderness, she is able to end on a note of hope and encouragement, looking forward to the building of a new Zimbabwe.

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**Neutrality or Co-option? Anglican Church and State from 1964 until the Independence of Zimbabwe** By M. Lapsley. Gweru, Mambo Press, Mambo Occasional Papers — Missio-Pastoral Series 16, 1986, 106 pp., ISBN 0-86922-407-7, Z\$7.31.

This is an important book on an important subject. The subject is the use of religion to legitimize a political system. The particular instance the author examines is the Anglican Church's support of the Smith regime between 1964 and 1980.

The first chapter focuses on UDI and its immediate aftermath, and the churchmen whose pronouncements are analysed are Bishop Skelton of Matabeleland, Bishop Alderson of Mashonaland, Dean Wood and Fr. Hugh Bishop. The second chapter deals with the pronouncements of Bishop Burrough of Mashonaland and Bishop Wood of Matabeleland on the Land Tenure Act, the new Constitution of 1969, and the World Council of Churches' Programme to Combat Racism. Chapter Three deals with the years 1972-80, as the independence struggle intensified, and the main churchmen considered are Bishop Burrough, Dean John Da Costa, and Fr. Arthur Lewis.

Of the churchmen treated in detail, nearly all are found wanting to some degree, and are considered to have supported (at least unwittingly) the Rhodesian government. Thus, in terms of the book's title, most are judged to have been co-opted into supporting Smith. The shining exception is Bishop Skelton, whose 'erudition, intellect and breadth' (p. 22) are frequently praised. His perception and courage were remarkable: 'Not since the days of Arthur Shearly Cripps, had an Anglican voice been raised so loudly in defence of the rights of the African majority' (p. 32). At the other end of the spectrum Lapsley places Fr. Lewis, Bishop Burrough and Dean Da Costa. They, and others to a lesser degree, are found deficient on various counts. They were too concerned with institutional interests. They deferred to the attitudes of White members of the Church because they provided the bulk of the Church's finances. They saw only individual acts of injustice and had no perception of the unjust system underlying everything. They succumbed to the official government propaganda about 'the communist threat'. They were too concerned with appearing neutral, too worried about the law and order issue, too obsessed with avoiding dissension within Church ranks. They identified too closely with the White community to be able to understand the Africans' concerns. All these issues are summarized in the conclusion, where Lapsley also makes an interesting comparison with the Roman Catholic Church which, in his opinion, fared rather better in this area.

The book is written from the standpoint of liberation theology about church