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[Review of the book Bantu, Boer and Briton: The making of the South African native problem by William Miller MacMillan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963)]

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Bantu, Boer and Briton

The Making of the South African Native Problem. William Miller MacMillan. Revised ed. Oxford University Press, 1963. R5.70.

Reluctant Empire

British policy on the South African frontier 1834–1854. John S. Galbraith. University of California Press; Cambridge University Press, 1963. R6.95.

In the preface to *Reluctant Empire*, the Professor of history at the University of California, Los Angeles, ascribes his surprising interest in the history of a land so remote from his own, to the inspiration of C. W. de Kiewiet. His book is a remarkable example of the fruit that a teacher's deep interest can bear.

The simultaneous appearance of a new study and the revision of a classic one, both dealing with the crucial period of South African history when Bantu, Boer and Briton, colonists and authorities, first ranged themselves athwart positions still tenaciously exposed today, is a literary occasion. More interest must now reside in a comparison of the two books than there does in a consideration of the nature and extent of Professor MacMillan's revision.

Although both books rest on a detailed study of the turbulent decades of Eastern frontier conflict that followed on the emancipation of the slaves in the 1830's and extended to the liquidation of the Orange River Colony in 1854, they supplement and even correct each other.

Galbraith has produced a definitive account of British frontier policy; and in doing so has drawn on all the untapped sources that diligence and tenacity could discover. He has found that the eclipse of the British ethos on the frontier (and its erosion elsewhere) can be traced to a zeal for retrenchment on the part of successive British Governments, which itself had complex causes.

It is safe to assume that only the original edition of *Bantu, Boer and Briton* was available to Galbraith, and as his research progressed, he became convinced that it revealed over-reliance on the ex-parte evidence culled from Dr. Philip's papers. Nor does the new edition reflect the re-orientation on which Galbraith would now insist. It should be observed however that Macmillan could retort that data and inferences drawn from the Philip papers can have no parallel for his purpose, which differs from Galbraith's.

Reluctant Empire is an explication of *British* frontier policy. *Bantu, Boer and Briton* attempts to review the vicissitudes of the impulsion to seek a humane reconciliation of race interests in South Africa; it does not get as close to the present as (say) the recent indications of white apprehension in Natal, but it does reach the 20th century. These are oversimplifications, but it follows from them, and from the lasting impression the Philip papers made on Professor MacMillan, as well as the degree to which he remains convinced of the pertinence of Philip's views for racial co-existence in Africa (which all comes out very strongly in the revised edition) that, ex-parte or not, Philip's views are the cornerstone of Macmillan's book, and he would have it so. Indeed, the inalienable worth and enduring significance of *Bantu, Boer and Briton* derives from the fact that Professor Macmillan's work on the papers was the only one to have been issued before they were tragically consumed in the Witwatersrand University library fire in 1931.

Macmillan is still convinced that Philip was outstandingly well-equipped to decide with discernment on the most advantageous long-range policy to adopt towards the clash of racial interests in South Africa, a clash that has hurt and robbed so many. To Macmillan Philip now seems to have been something of a seer and not surprisingly—he was an educated, unopinionated and unprecipitate thinker; and he was greatly helped to arrive at sound conclusions by his many prolonged and extensive journeys: truly the man on the spot. As Macmillan laments, caricatures of this assessment are still widely enshrined in our textbooks, and propounded by our history teachers—after twenty-five years. May the revised edition end this steady misrepresentation.

All who expound and opinionate on South African history and affairs, and particularly teachers of history, should not overlook these books. Let those who may have been wearied and confused by the arrogant and unimaginative terms in which South Africa's problems are strait-jacketed at party congresses and on political platforms—white and black—turn to these books for refreshment.

R. EYBERS

Basic Mathematics

An introductory course. Grace C. Martin and Ann Smalley. English University Press, 1962. (A tutortext.) British price, 35/–.

This "teach yourself" book on elementary arithmetic and algebra, in the words of the authors, is "a new venture in an old field". It is not a conventional text-book and clearly shows the great possibilities of programmed instruction. It is a "must" for the student-teacher and a more than useful book for the experienced teacher. It will be very interesting to see how effective this "self-tutor" is when used by pupils.

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