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[Review of the book Insights commentary: 18th century in South Africa, by André Cilliers (Cape Town: O.U.P., 1966)]

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to accumulators, there is nothing about electricity from batteries. In view of the widespread use of dry cells in pocket torches, electric razors and latterly in transistor sets, and the use of secondary batteries in cars, one would expect to find something on the subject. Electrolysis, too, seems to be ignored, in spite of its almost universal application in industry to-day. Maybe the writers feel that this branch belongs to chemistry rather than to physics.

Anyway, to sum up, this volume will prove invaluable to the reader who wants to know something about physics rather than to get through an exam., and even the examinee will be amply repaid for the time he spends with this as a change from stewing over his more formal text books.

G.C.B.

INSIGHTS 1: The Eighteenth Century in South Africa *by André Cilliers.* (Oxford University Press, 1966.) R6.00.

In his introduction André Cilliers highlights one of the basic problems facing the teacher of history. The problem is that: "The average child is so far removed from the events he is required to study in the history class that he, trying to understand them in the light of his own experience, finds that they do not make sense." To find ways and means of making the past meaningful to children is one of the challenges that confronts the history teacher. The main tools for meeting this challenge will always be the spoken and the written word "but they must be supplemented by visual aids with all but a minority of children if they are to be effective tools . . . Most children need the help of visual as well as verbal images, at the secondary no less than the primary stage." (Handbook for History Teachers.) Pictorial material thus has a place in the history lesson for it helps turn "unfamiliar words, places, peoples and situations into clear and accurate images."

Insights is a most welcome publication for it provides teachers with the necessary information and suitable pictorial material that they need to "reconstruct the life of a past community in such a way that their pupils understand what it was like to live in this past period."

Insights is divided into two parts: a set of six plates illustrating various aspects of Cape life and a commentary in English and Afrikaans which discusses each plate in turn.

The commentary is well written and performs two functions. Firstly, it draws one's attention to the main features of the plate itself and provides an explanation and description of them. Secondly, it provides additional information so that the plate can be related to the wider historical context. On Commando (Plate 6) is a good example. The commentary deals with equipment, dress and firearms which are illustrated, as well as the misunderstanding over grazing rights and the evolution of the commando system which provide the wider background. The information is dealt with under sub-headings which makes for easy reference and location of material. The commentary also contains sketches which illustrate points made in the text.

The six plates give a dramatic and colourful presentation of what life was like in the eighteenth century. The plates illustrate the following topics: Fighting a fire; The arrival of a Dutch fleet in Table Bay; Farm life; A Trekboer in search of pasture; Town life; On Commando.

These plates are very successful teaching aids. They measure $1\frac{1}{2}$ by 2 feet in size and are thus large enough for the pupils to see and small enough to be easily handled. The plates are mounted on a frame that stands easily on a table. If so required the pictures may be taken out of the binding and used as wall illustrations. The plates arouse interest because they are well conceived, well drawn, brightly coloured and have a three-dimensional effect. Furthermore, the plates are historically accurate and the main features of each plate stand out very clearly. The plates are well suited to the level of classes in the upper primary and lower high school.

These plates can be used by the teacher not only to illustrate his lessons, but as aids for revision, as a means of training the pupils' power of observation and as a basis for group or individual exercises.

I have two criticisms to make about these pictures. The first is that more attention should have been given to the order of presentation. I suggest that the order should have been as follows: The arrival of a Dutch fleet in Table Bay; Town life; Farm life; Fighting a fire; A trekboer in search of pasture; On Commando. In this arrangement there is a logical movement through the three main divisions of life in the Cape Colony: town, country, frontier. This connecting thread is absent in the present sequence. The second criticism is that *On Commando* (Plate 6) is the least successful of all the plates. The eye is drawn to the centre of the picture and bypasses the main figure on horseback. The details mentioned in the commentary are not clearly illustrated. Thus the plate is of little value.

Mr. Cilliers and Oxford University Press are to be thanked for producing this volume. I am sure that **Insight** will be used to good effect by teachers of history. I look forward to the next volume in the series.

E.V.