

used so. It does not just work as the emic concept intended. But love in Sierra Leone? Bolten has left that to somebody else to write about.

MATS UTAS
The Nordic Africa Institute

IMPERIAL ENGAGEMENT

The Government and Administration of Africa, 1880–1939, 5 vols.

Edited by Casper Andersen and Andrew Cohen.

London: Pickering & Chatto, 2013. Pp. cxvii + 1907. \$795/£450, hardback (ISBN 978-1-84893-318-7).

doi:10.1017/S0021853714000292

Key Words: Colonial administration, colonial policy, diplomacy, sources, text editions.

This five-volume collection contains more than 120 primary sources that give some sense of the complexity and diversity of Britain's imperial engagement with Africa in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Besides printed memoranda and reports, it includes material from the most important relevant archives in the United Kingdom, namely the National Archives, the Sudan Archive at Durham University, and Rhodes House Library in Oxford. In spite of the march to digitalization, the editors have selected much that remains beyond the reach of the Internet.

The collection naturally focuses more on Briton-penned material, although Volume Two, on governance and law, does contain a terrific 1926 letter from the Kabaka of Buganda, attempting to circumvent Uganda Governor William Gowers's potential Native Administration plans by bending Gowers's predecessor Geoffrey Archer's sympathetic ear. The editors have strengthened the collection by resisting the temptation to overemphasise particular regions and topics at the expense of less anthologized material. Whilst Lugard's declarations on the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria are present and correct, this is not to the exclusion of sources concerning Gambia and British Somaliland.

Indeed, considering the difficulties the editors must have faced when selecting their sources, it is notable that these volumes do not feel intensively curated. There is certainly no linear narrative. Highlights of Volume Three, on taxation and revenue, include Harry Stephen's and Edmund Morel's very different accounts of the Hut Tax rebellion in late Victorian Sierra Leone, whilst carefully delineated plans for increased settler activity in postwar Kenya are juxtaposed against Norman Leys's blunt criticism of the resultant land alienation in Volume Four (rural and urban land). Volume Two is particularly admirable in its range of content, although the central concern throughout much of the volume is naturally the implications for indirect rule and 'native administrations' for the functioning of local government and courts, and for relationships between Britons and indigenous elites, invented or otherwise. To be sure, short but helpful introductions (that which introduces Volume Three is particularly good) pre-emptively place the ensuing documents into a broader narrative of the development of the colonial state. But these sources have not been rigorously pruned and one does not get the impression that they have been selected

principally because they relate to particularly popular recent historiographical trends, such as debates concerning the limits of the colonial state's coercive ability.

Instead, the sources are multifaceted enough for one to be able to find many different overarching themes to the collection. The theme most immediately apparent to the present reviewer is straightforward: the increasing ambition and remit of the colonial state and, accordingly, the increasing sophistication of colonial policy, particularly after 1918. For example, Volume One, concerning recruitment and training, charts the post-Great War expansion of the civil administration and efforts to replace those Edwardian officials London deemed ne'er do wells with capable graduates, as well as the development of an increasingly scientific approach to the exploitation of African resources ushered in by the formation of bodies such as the Colonial Agricultural Service. Similarly, Volume Five on health and labour shows the growth of efforts made by the colonial state to grapple with the medical implications of an increasingly mobile African populace.

It seems rude to highlight criticisms of a collection that attempts to reflect over half a century of African policy in five volumes but, partly because of the aforementioned overarching theme, and partly because of the present author's own prejudices, it feels that the collection focuses too heavily on the testimony of elites, be they government officials in London, noted experts, or governors and other senior figures within the colonial secretariats themselves. Conspicuous by their relative marginalization are the rank and file civil and military personnel. The editors clearly recognise the value of such figures' material, hence Volume One's extract from the memoirs of Sudan Political Service official H. B. Arber, for instance. Arber gives insights into the tensions between different attitudes towards governance that the proclamations of Arber's boss Sir John Maffey do not. The inclusion of material such as handing over notes, passed from outgoing to incoming district commissioner, and end of year reports, would have shielded the collection from the suggestion that the significance of elite proclamations on systems of governance for on-the-spot policy implementation is revealed more by implication than demonstration. Nevertheless, this is a relatively churlish criticism. *The Government and Administration of Africa* is a very welcome collection.

CHRISTOPHER PRIOR
University of Southampton

LETTERS FROM THE ROAD

The Travel Chronicles of Mrs. J. Theodore Bent. Volume II: The African Journeys.

Edited by Gerald Brisch.

Oxford: 3rdguides, 2012. Pp. xxxii + 344. £27.50, paperback (ISBN 9781905739370).

doi:10.1017/S0021853714000309

Key Words: Exploration/travel, memoirs, sources, white settlement, women.

Amateur archaeologist and explorer J. Theodore Bent (1852–97) and his wife Mabel (1846–1929) spent much of their adult lives trekking through Africa, the Middle East,