

Mormon opinion that Joseph Smith was the author of that publication and that the work reflects the "anti-Catholic" and "anti-Masonic movement" occurring in western New York in the 1820s. As further evidence that the Book of Mormon was a product of the times, Ahlstrom notes that in the 1820s people were considering the question of Indian origins; and then he contends that the Book of Mormon not only answered that question but reflected the "total social and spiritual situation of the 'burned-over district' of western New York" (p. 503).

Critics continue to assert that the Book of Mormon reflects the environment of the early Republic. While some parallels between beliefs and patterns of behavior described in the Book of Mormon and those held and practiced by Americans in the 1820s do exist, there are also many parallels in patterns of belief and behavior between our age, the era of the Reformation, the Middle Ages, and other ages. Moreover, the critics fail to mention the innumerable differences between the social, political, religious, and economic patterns described in the Book of Mormon and popular views and practices of individuals who lived in the early Republic.

Most of the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints after 1850 is summarized in one paragraph which emphasizes the polygamy issue. Mormonism during the twentieth century, including the welfare program, is ignored.

Although one might challenge portions of Ahlstrom's study, in most respects his history is accurate. He has produced, with some qualifications, an exceptional summary of the religious history of America.

## Brief Notices

### DAVIS BITTON

*Ensign to the Nations: A History of the Church from 1846 to the Present.* By Russell R. Rich. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Publications, 1972. 663 pp.

A pedestrian treatment of L.D.S. history from 1846 intended for B.Y.U. Church history classes. The closing chapters plod through developments, one president at a time.

*Special Slippers.* Words by Roger Knight. Drawings by Karin Knight. Santa Barbara, California: Sandollar Press. 35 pp. \$2.50.

A story by an L.D.S. couple "assembled for James, who considers [it] his very favorite story in the dark." Delightfully illustrated.

*The Restoration Movement: Essays in Mormon History.* Edited by F. Mark McKiernan, Alma R. Blair, and Paul M. Edwards. Lawrence, Kansas: Coronado Press, 1973. 357 pp.

An introductory essay and twelve chapters by a group of L.D.S. and R.L.D.S. historians. Uneven, as all such works are, this collection contains some very good chapters indeed. Examples: "Mormonism and American Culture: Some Tentative Hypotheses" by Klaus J. Hansen; "Nauvoo and the Council of the Twelve" by T. Edgar Lyon; and "Theocratic Democracy: Philosopher-King in the Reorganization" by Paul M. Edwards.

*The Reminiscences and Civil War Letters of Levi Lamoni Wight: Life in a Mormon Splinter Colony on the Texas Frontier.* Edited by Davis Bitton. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1970. 191 pp. \$7.00.

Not previously reviewed in *Dialogue*, this small work is relevant to Mormon, Texas, and Civil War history. Levi Wight was the son of Lyman Wight, the Mormon apostle who led a splinter group to Texas in 1845.

*Utah's Heritage.* By S. George Ellsworth. Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1972. 510 pp.

Intended for textbook use in Utah schools, this work is the result of many years of preparation by Ellsworth, Professor of History at Utah State University. For its general excellence the book received a special citation from the Mormon History Association in the spring of 1973.

*Mormonism and American Culture.* Edited by Marvin S. Hill and James B. Allen. New York: Harper & Row, 1972. 189 pp.

A volume in the series "Interpretations of American History," this work brings together eleven essays by different scholars. In addition to well known articles by David Brion Davis, Mario S. De Pillis, William Mulder, and others, there are two essays written especially for this volume: "Sources of Strain in Mormon History Reconsidered" by Thomas F. O'Dea and "Crisis in Identity: Mormon Responses in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries" by Leonard J. Arrington. A minor irritant is the omission of footnotes from the scholarly articles. There are useful introductions and a selected bibliography.

*Genealogical Research: A Jurisdictional Approach.* By Vincent L. Jones, Arlene H. Eakle, and Mildred H. Christensen. Woods Cross, Utah: Genealogical Copy Service, 1972. 326 pp.

A how-to-do-it manual for genealogists interested in systematic, thorough research. The "research outlines" list scores of primary sources to be examined and should prove valuable to historians as well as genealogists.

*Outstanding Stories by General Authorities.* Volume III. Compiled by Leon R. Hartshorn. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1973. 270 pp. \$4.95.

Fifteen general authorities are represented here with stories drawn almost entirely from their addresses at general conferences. There is little imagination in the preparation of such a work, but its convenience seems to suffice for popularity among Mormon readers.

*Discovering the Quality of Success.* By Paul H. Dunn. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1973. 140 pp. \$3.95.

Inspirational chapters, full of personal experiences, slanted to the needs and interests of Latter-day Saint youth.

*The Keystone of Mormonism: Little Known Truths about the Book of Mormon.* By Paul R. Cheesman. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1973. 176 pp. \$3.95.

Not a profound book but useful in introducing problems of Book of Mormon translation and changes from the original manuscripts through the different editions. Worthy of commendation is the forthright treatment in Chapter 4 of "Eight Different Accounts of the Angel Moroni's Visit."

*Discovering the World of the Bible.* By LaMar C. Berrett. Provo, Utah: Young House, 1973. 701 pp. Paperback.

Lavishly illustrated itinerary intended primarily for tourists in the Middle East. Countries included are Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey.

*Angel Children: Those Who Die Before Accountability.* By Mary V. Hill. Bountiful, Utah: Horizon Publishers, 1973. 70 pp. \$2.95.

This comforting book is an outgrowth of the death of the author's infant son. Although the experience was intensely personal, she sought to know what the prophets, ancient and modern, had to say in such circumstances. The result is a tender and compassionate personal statement.

*Planning LDS Weddings and Receptions.* By Lois F. Worlton and Opal D. Jasinski. Bountiful, Utah: Horizon Publishers, 1973. 75 pp. \$2.00.

A practical book intended to answer questions regarding the bishop's interview, wedding pictures, apparel, music, temple weddings, home weddings, receptions, etc.