

"Acculturation", though poetry ends and moral essay takes over two thirds of the way down the page, both tells of and creates images of the meeting of East and West. In "Pake Cake and Prayer" Charlie Goo's store vibrantly illustrates and dramatizes the encounter with a carefully retrained lament for the coarsening of values by foreign interlopers.

the kids file in
hungry for pake cake and soda,
crack seed, won ton chips,
and nacho cheese doritos.

The juke box wails I love you
into the undistinguished morning.

"The Boy Named Pita," "Hokulea" and many others are complex expressions of what seems most valuable and moving in this poet's book. "Song from Kapiti" is

a testament of genuine and admirable dedication. Hers is poetry we must feel to read, and having read it, we are grateful to know another woman who not only honors her people and explains herself but glorifies the images of humanness.

I am she learning to sing
the sweet sad songs of a people's soul
I am the lone bird
alive in a limbo of longing,
enduring the winter world,
surviving
on the slim promise
of a future summer.

In such poetry there is no need of startling techniques or unusual firecracker associations, as it would be superfluous to hang exotic costumes on a soul. It is poetry that is needed, and reassuring.

Brief Notices

GENE A. SESSIONS

A Joseph Smith Chronology. By J. Christopher Conkling. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1979. 286 pp., index, \$6.95.

For those souls who are either unaware of the seven-volume *History of the Church* (the so-called "Documentary History") or simply scared of its bulk, and for those strange sorts who enjoy reading laundry lists of events, here is a gem of small price. Offering the student of Mormonism an almost day-by-day account of the life of the Prophet, Conkling clothes his book in respectability by using footnotes and a name index. In many ways he is successful, for while *Chronology* is largely redundant, its handiness makes it quite useful, even to the professional historian more familiar with and unafraid of the stuff from which it came. As with most works drawn largely from secondary sources and "pseudepigrapha" such

as the *History of the Church*, it contains much information that is unreliable and much other that is more ancillary than informative. In the long analysis, such works as this one betray Mormonism's increasing membership in the league of the rushed, where there is no time for reading and comprehension, only for quick lists and ready answers. The trouble is that history grows more complex as time passes and as the present crowds with more information about it. When we end up reading and thinking about lists of names, dates and places, we know we have reached the point in the progress of history when there is just too much of it, and when our minds have decided that it is impossible to understand it. Maybe if we can just memorize the day-by-day, the step-by-step, history will lose some of its vastness, and some of its terror. Now, on with our list of books. . . .

Favorite Selections from Out of the Best Books. Edited by Bruce B. Clark and Robert K. Thomas. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1979. Xiii +324 pp., indices. \$7.95.

More proof of the rush malady coming upon us is this shortcut of a shortcut. Between 1964 and 1971, several volumes in a series entitled *Out of the Best Books* came forth from the Church for use in the Relief Society's cultural refinement program. Now, the two BYU professors who compiled those works have chosen what they consider the most meaningful selections and have brought them together in one volume. One immediately wonders what value a digest of a digest might hold for LDS readers, but the answer comes swiftly: Talks! What better way could there be to convince a congregation that you have learned out of the best books as the Prophet commanded than to quote from a book that quotes from the books you want everyone to think you have read? After all, we have not the time to read real books, do we? All sarcasm aside, however, Clark and Thomas have a good eye for the majestic in literature, and it is better to read what they choose than to read nothing at all.

The Windwalker. By Blaine M. Yorgason. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Publishers, 1979. 99 pp., illus. \$4.50.

At first glance (which lands on a melodramatic jacket painting by the author himself), this one looks like another dumb book about the noble savage by some Mormon who still believes kids on the placement program turn white. Once open, however, much more than the expected emerges. Yorgason, who teaches in the church system, weaves an intricate tale of religion, aging and death that has little to do at the core with Indians. What the hero of the story does has rather to do with mankind's ultimate confrontation with things spiritual. An old Indian, left to die in the wilderness, surprises his family and himself by living on, and while doing so carrying on an intriguing dialogue with God, or "Giver-of-life." Much of the text is in verse that some-

times comes up corny, but even then the meaning of it all comes through. Yorgason's message goes something like this: In the midst of the staggering acceleration of time with which we are all confronted, we must take the time to remember that our journey to the end is just as primitive and just as awesome as it has been for every thinking soul who ever walked the earth wondering what its all about. *The Windwalker* asks the reader to think about such a basic reality, even though the modern world presses in upon us with only the material, and a veritable avalanche of it that denies death and hence any reality at all.

Born of the Spirit. By E. Richard Packham. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Publishers, 1979. xii +76 pp., index. \$6.95.

As the title suggests, here is a complete book dealing with the issue of being born both of the water and of the spirit. Christ's oft-quoted challenge to Nicodemus, found in John 3:5, could become the center of a hot debate between Mormon and non-Mormon sriptorians if anyone ever decides to look honestly at the traditional LDS interpretation of the passage. To most of the Christian world, Jesus was simply telling the Pharisee that he misunderstood the command to be born again by saying that entering into his mother's womb again was impossible. Christ explained that a man must be born not only of the water (birth itself) but of the spirit also. Indeed, the Mormon interpretation holds little water in the contextual sense, yet again and again we hear the missionary challenge to be born of the water (baptism) and of the spirit (the gift of the Holy Ghost). Predictably, Packham has nothing to say about this sticky issue and instead gives us page after page of a dull sacrament meeting sermon guaranteed to send even the most dedicated church-goer into a sound sleep. Perhaps Packham should have called it *Bored of the Spirit*. Where are the Parley P. Pratts and B. H. Robertses when we need them?

Woman's Divine Destiny. By Mildred Chandler Austin. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1979. 77 pp. \$3.95.

In these days of fear and consternation over the dangers to the family of nascent feminism in the Church, what more appropriate recipient of the now-coveted Milk the Mormons Award could there be than a book telling Mormon women that all they need to know is what God told Eve in the Garden of Eden, and then uses more than seventy-five pages to cite all the stuff God has said about women ever since. According to Ms. Austin (that ought to get her), nothing has changed since Mother Eve ate the apple. All a woman has to do to be happy is "be a helpmate [sic]," let her husband rule over her, and be a mother. Ah, wouldn't it be lovely if that would do it? But what about the single woman? What about the divorced woman? And what about the twenty-five years that nine of every ten women in America will work outside the home? What about the forty years or so in the "empty nest?" But those are tough questions, and we would *never* expect a recipient of our mammary prize to worry over such things. It would seem that if the Lord had so much more to say about women in a changing world than what He said in the beginning, He should have a lot more to say as time passes. God never changes, but the world He created does. If Mormonism is the living religion it claims to be, then Austin's simple-minded book has no place in it.

Take Time to Smell the Dandelions. By Karla C. Erickson. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Publishers, 1979. 88 pp. \$3.95.

Raising children is something about which God told Adam and Eve very little while He had them in the Garden of Eden, and thousands of generations of parents have suffered accordingly. Erickson's little "How To" manual has some intriguing ideas about how a two-hundred-pound father might begin to get into the world of his little ones, which is never easy. The trouble with a book like this is that if a parent cares enough to buy it and read it in the first place he or she has probably won the battle already simply by the caring itself. Nevertheless, Erickson outlines a whole passel of *ways* to care. Too many parents love, but don't know how to love. And there *is* a big dif-

ference. Aimed primarily at the relationship between little children and parents, it says nothing about dealing with adolescents, yet Erickson is undoubtedly right when she calls for a strong bond between little ones and their parents, so strong that it will not break when the kids hit puberty.

God the Father. Edited by Gordon Allred. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1979. 316 pp. \$7.95.

In what we might call the ultimate book on Parenting, Gordon Allred has brought sixteen essays and discourses on the nature of God the Father together in one volume. Indeed, one might take a complete course in Mormon theology using Allred's book as a text. Of course, the key selection is the mysterious and ascendant King Follet Discourse on the "kind of being God is" that Joseph Smith delivered in April 1844. No piece of Mormon thought has had a more far reaching effect than this one. But Allred's other selections are just as intriguing. B. H. Roberts was in fine form when he wrote "Christian Creeds and the Unknown God" as was James E. Talmage with "God and the Holy Trinity." While Mormonism does not have nor does it need under its creed a school of theologians, discussion of the nature of God becomes too often lost in the midst of other more picayunish matters of religion. *God the Father*, while in the class of a shortcut compilation, offers a compact reminder of the Restoration's unique concept of the Eternal and man as a literal child of God.

Hard-Rock Miners: The Intermountain West, 1860-1920. By Ronald C. Brown. College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1979. 336 pp., illus., appendices, biblio., index. \$15.95.

Coming back to earth in the most real sense, we notice this piece of revisionist literature that applies its iron to some of the most colorful history of Utah and hence Mormonism. Brown maintains against all odds that industrialization benefited miners far more than it harmed them by building a pool of wealth that ultimately brought good pay and better conditions into the mines. In the Utah/

Mormon context, his thesis would belie the Mormon mythology about the advantages of forsaking the riches of the mines for the subsistence of the fields. But Brown's controversial contention seems silly in the face of the horror industrialization wreaked upon the miners as it demanded more iron and more coal at whatever the price in human suffering. Brown seems to be saying that it is all right to exploit the worker today as long as you feed him tomorrow. Whether his thesis is convincing or not is not what makes *Hard-Rock Miners* worth our concern but rather its fascinating look at the social history of the industry. Most attention goes to Colorado and Nevada, but enough of the history of mining as a way of life in the midst of Mormondom comes through to make this a book well worth the attention of the student of Mormon history. We tend to forget that for many years the crucial question among the Saints was to mine or not to mine.

An Analysis of the Names of Mormonism.

By John R. Krueger. Bloomington, Indiana: The Selbstverlag Press, 1979. 20 pp. biblio. \$3.00.

The author, a professor of Ural-Altaic Studies at Indiana University, has accomplished an unbelievable study of the names found in Mormon scriptures, those both peculiar to Mormon sources and common elsewhere. His original hopes were to see his labors rewarded with a publication in *Dialogue* or some

other "respectable journal," but he had to settle instead for a vanity publication from his own press (P.O. Drawer 606, Bloomington, IN 47401). The reasons for Krueger's inability to find a journal that would publish his work have certainly nothing to do with the quality and comprehensiveness of his endeavor. The little pamphlet contains everything one could possibly ever want to know about Mormon names, and the information comes in all shapes and sizes, but mostly in the form of lists, which is the piece's downfall: It is virtually impossible to read. Krueger's competence and skill as a linguist cannot compensate for his apparent poverty in the style that would have enabled him to present his data in an intriguing and fluent way. Still, his little pamphlet answers many fascinating questions about Mormon names, and asks even more than it answers. After stating his purpose in the beginning—to analyse Mormon names without questioning the veracity of the religion itself, Krueger proceeds to ask Mormon scholars and adherents to explain the clear evidence that the complexity of Mormon names increased as Joseph Smith matured, and to recognize that such Greek names as Timothy should not have occurred in the Book of Mormon. We must wonder whether Krueger submitted his article to Modern Microfilms, although Jerald and Sandra would have required far more editorializing than the professor from Indiana would have permitted.