

Christ with the uncertainty and anguish that is part of being human. This is a

Christ humans can relate to, one who understands mortality.

## BRIEF NOTICES

*The True Believers* by Alyce S. Rohrer (Port Washington, N.Y.: Ashley Books, Inc., 1987), 454 pp., bibl., \$18.95.

THIS BIOGRAPHICAL NOVEL traces the life of Henry Lunt from his conversion to Mormonism in England in 1850 to exile in the Mexican colonies in the 1890s. Carefully researched from Lunt's journals and letters, family histories, and public records, the story tells of Lunt's conversion, travel to Utah, missions in southern Utah and England, years as bishop in Cedar City, and his plural marriages. An introductory section summarizes the history of Mormonism, and an annotated bibliography lists works on related topics.

The practice of polygamy is a central focus in the novel, particularly from the wives' point of view. The difficulties of the practice on a personal level, and its challenges to the faith of those who lived it, provide conflict throughout the novel. After the Manifesto Lunt's faith led him to live the last years of his life in the Mormon colonies in Mexico, where plural marriages continued for a time. Lunt's own difficult last years, as told here, reflect the hesitant end of Mormon plural marriage.

*The Writings of Camilla Eyring Kimball*, edited by Edward L. Kimball (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), xvii, 157 pp., \$10.95.

CAMILLA EYRING KIMBALL served as a refreshingly candid and outspoken role model for Mormon women during a time of upheaval in expectations and roles of women during the 70s and 80s. And yet, as her son Edward observes in his introduction, "no

one would be more surprised at the appearance of a book containing her words than Camilla Kimball" (ix).

But for many women it was her unpretentious ordinariness that made Sister Kimball more influential than she might have been in her otherwise glamorous position as the prophet's companion: "I know something of losing one's parents, of seeing one's spouse racked with stress and pain, of having one's savings of many years wiped out by theft or bank failure, of watching loved ones stray from the gospel, of having a child stricken with crippling illness, and of feeling disabling old age creeping on" (p. 27). She boldly revealed her own doubts and independence from her husband: "I am a bit more restless than my husband. He has always been solid and unquestioning in his faith, and he has never been able to understand why I have to question and delve" (p. 109). Sister Kimball upheld the traditional values of family and Church with untraditional style. She championed the challenging "profession" of homemaking and warned that "rather than directing both marriage partners away from the home, we need to encourage both to make strengthening the family their primary concern" (p. 10). Her writing is always full of gently persuasive common sense rather than intimidating authority.

Sister Kimball has been an influential, effective spokesperson for women. Her example was influential because of her position as "first lady" to the Church. Her voice was and continues to be effective because it is one of the few official voices that is personal, reasonable, candid, direct yet nonjudgmental — and female.