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Book Notes

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Book Notes

BRUCE B. CLARK AND ROBERT K. THOMAS. *Out of the Best Books*, Vol. 3. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1967. 340 pp. \$2.95.

These Brigham Young University colleagues contribute another volume of a series that impressively integrates religious ideals with the themes of world literature, an educative venture which President David O. McKay has most effectively pioneered in his long career of writing and speaking. This volume concentrates on the meaning of happiness, honesty, forbearance, faith, and love, for the lesson work of the Relief Society, in itself a demonstration of the breadth of the LDS program of personal development. The method of presentation is vital, stressing the individual encounter and experience with the literature and gospel themes thus presented. The anthology is selected with relevance and imagination; i.e., the inclusion of Edward L. Hart's artful and touching "To Utah." Concise background notes maintain an excellence in terms of context and the inducement of provocative insight: i.e., the suggestion that the older brother in the Parable of the Prodigal Son is hardly the paragon of virtue that much discussion assumes him to be. Not the least of the beneficiaries of this series might be those who suppose that either the University or the Church of these authors stands for a restrictive religionism.

WILLIAM F. ALBRIGHT. *New Horizons in Biblical Research*. London: Oxford University Press, 1966. 51 pp. \$1.70.

Three short lectures offer the rare experience of efficiently reading the main conclusions of America's greatest Bible

scholar (judged by the scope of his skills) and certainly one of the few genuine intellectuals (Albright would prefer Christian humanists) produced by our pragmatic culture.

In his forthright and unpretentious manner Albright discusses the impact of archaeology and philology in making more understandable the accurate sequence of Old Testament literature, his own skepticism at canonizing Greek analytical thought without respecting ancient Hebrew skills in thinking and writing history, and the implications of the double discovery of a proto-Christianity in the Dead Sea Scrolls and a perverted Christianity in the Gnostic documents evolving away from second-century orthodoxy. On this last point, Albright is emphatic in his conviction that informed students cannot now date any New Testament book beyond the first century. On these and other issues the person with traditional views of authorship and dating of New Testament literature will find that the current Age of Discovery has been more favorable to his views than to the liberalism that held the field before the Second World War.

JOHN COOLIDGE HURD, JR. *A Bibliography of New Testament Bibliographies*. New York: The Seabury Press, 1966. 75 pp. \$2.50.

Hurd's guide illustrates the sheer volume of publication on the Bible in recent years, identifying as it does hundreds of books and articles that do nothing but list and evaluate thousands more; and all of this concerns basically the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, with most items listed appearing in the past two decades. Realizing that even scholars today cannot tell the players without a program, Hurd adds a valuable supplement of sixteen pages that itemizes sources of biographical information on major writers. Confrontation with this mass of scholarly production raises the question of its possible use. For one thing, it is vain to look for some professional consensus, which obviously does not exist in the century of overpublish. Perhaps the fact that Hurd features first of all bibliographies of tools of study will underline the point that no one is a Bible scholar who merely reads the opinions of Bible scholars. Only the mastery of languages and historical

data gives anyone the independent judgment to be a significant voice.

ROBERT J. MATTHEWS. *Index and Concordance to the Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Provo, Utah: Robert J. Matthews, 1966. 46 pp. \$1.00.

In their gratitude for a modern prophet, Latter-day Saints must face the possibility that they might know him rather superficially. Available books collecting key quotations from Joseph Smith are no guarantee that readers are really exposed to the range and depth of principles that he proclaimed and died for. Since Mormon literature is notorious for inadequate indexing, one result could be recurrent discussion of issues that does not utilize available doctrinal resources. Matthews' work is a major step toward correcting such a defect in the use of the Prophet's statements, and no informed Latter-day Saint can afford to be without a simple reference tool of this importance. Matthews deserves more than mere credit for producing it; it should be included in future printings of the *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*.