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## Brief Notices

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## Brief Notices

*Centennial Utah: The Beehive State on the Eve of the Twenty-First Century*, by G. Wesley Johnson and Marian Ashley Johnson (Cherbo Publishing Group, 1995)

This attractive volume is one of many Utah statehood centennial efforts by publishers and authors. The Johnsons have a unique approach that actually determines the structure of the book. Utilizing a technique of interspersing historical essays, a few individual profiles, and some current Utah businesses' histories, the publication attempts to tie past to present. Although, there is an emphasis on the contemporary Utah scene, which genuinely hampers the historical integrity of the book, the purpose of the book is to demonstrate Utah's economic vitality in 1996.

Inclusion of corporate stories is apparently based on each business's opportunity or willingness to contribute to the book's publication. Consequently, the volume is, in some respects, paid advertising for those who are included. For whatever reason, several important Utah businesses such as Huntsman Chemical, Nu-Skin International, Geneva Steel, and Pacifi-corp are given little mention, limiting the statewide coverage of this publication.

The book is a welcome addition to the centennial feast of Utah

books. The color photographs in the historical essays create a worthy framework for the publication. *Centennial Utah* definitely adds to the knowledge of what Utah is in 1996 and provides useful sketches that call for greater study of Utah's contemporary business community.

—F. Ross Peterson

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*The Restored Gospel and Applied Christianity: Student Essays in Honor of President David O. McKay, 1995* (Center for the Study of Christian Values in Literature and the Religious Studies Center, 1995)

This eighth volume in *The Restored Gospel and Applied Christianity* series is an even better read than its predecessors. As word has gotten out over the past decade about O. C. and Grace Tanner's generous prize bequest to the McKay Contest, the student writing competition's quantitative leaps in submissions have stimulated a steady increase in the quality of the best essays—these eleven were the cream of almost two hundred entries.

There's a lot to like in this collection of student essays examining the application of the gospel to life. Matthew Kennington's "Mud," for example, illuminates the

miracles God can work with the meanest, muddiest materials—not only with lowlifes like Matthew’s friend Frank, but with us. The essay challenges whether we can “look up to God at that day with a pure heart and clean hands” (Alma 5:19). I, with the author and muddy Frank, would “kinda like to get cleaned up first” (70). This vivid essay sticks in the mud of my conscience with the probing persistence of those “pesky foxtails that burrowed into my socks and scratched my ankles all the way home” (76).

And that’s just one of the dishes in this smorgasbord of moral readings. “A Big Enough Umbrella for Singing in the Rain” convinces me that God’s love is “big enough to cover all his children” (67). I am moved by the moral of “Te Necesito, Sí”: “If you tell everybody else that God loves them, then He has to love you” (84). “Of Heart and Hand” focuses me vividly on the cracked and inadequate hands of a nurse that must stand in for the hands of the Savior. “Joy Trip” persuades me of its profound premise about the painful but promising costs of living fully: “The price of joy is feeling everything” (77). I resonate with the moral of “Living Leftovers”: God won’t forget us—not protagonist Gary, not the author, not any of us will remain leftovers in the great refrigerator of our Father.

Sure, there’s some unevenness, but I suspect that the determination of just which essays are most valuable will depend upon individual readers. The collection’s motley inclusiveness may turn out to

be a strength for its readership: there should be something here for everyone. If you haven’t yet found something in this 1995 volume to like, you haven’t read far enough.

The volume is available through the BYU Center for the Study of Christian Values in Literature, and the BYU Religious Studies Center, as well as LDS bookstores.

—Steven C. Walker

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*Prepare to Be Healed*, by Milly Day and Richard Neitzel Holzapfel (Bookcraft, 1995)

With this 109-page volume, what you read is what you get. It seems to say, “On your mark, get set . . .” but leaves the “go” to others. This isn’t about how to gain emotional strength, but how to *prepare* to get it.

The obvious need for this volume cries out. Both mental health professionals (such as Day, a licensed marriage and family counselor) and ecclesiastical counselors (such as Holzapfel, a former bishop and institute director) often decry the lack of preparation people bring to the counseling session. The cliché “You can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make ‘em drink” is apt; people come for counseling but are not always prepared to accept or to implement the help offered.

Still, the sheer simplicity of this volume might leave some disappointed. The two authors alternate in presenting chapters which explain why people might need professional counseling, how to find

it, and how to prepare to take the advice and assignments given. Their advice is sound and thoroughly grounded in gospel principles, but it may leave the reader standing on the starting line wondering where to go once the starting gun goes off.

—Patricia Mann Alto

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*The Latter-day Saints: A Study of the Mormons in the Light of Economic Conditions*, by Ruth Kauffman and Reginald Wright Kauffman (Williams and Northgate, 1912). Republished with an introduction by John S. McCormick and John R. Sillito (University of Illinois Press, 1994)

*The Latter-day Saints: A Study of the Mormons in the Light of Economic Conditions*, which originally appeared in London in 1912, was the work of two Marxian socialists from America. It was particularly significant in the context of the intense anti-Mormonism in England in the early twentieth century, for it was the first full-blown Marxist interpretation of Mormon history to be published. At heart, however, it was also an indictment of American capitalism, which, the authors charge, eventually took over and dominated the Church.

The first five chapters sketchily cover the American setting, the origin of the Church, the Martyrdom, the exodus to the Great Basin, and the creation of the Mormon "empire" in Utah. They are written in a strident tone and avoid no opportunity for snide remarks

clearly intended to show that if Mormonism ever had a spiritual foundation it rapidly disappeared as the Church became more involved in economic enterprise. The fierce desire by the Mormons for economic control of the Great Basin, the authors claim, led directly to the Mountain Meadows Massacre and the Mormon War. Such spurious interpretations have long been discredited by responsible Mormon and non-Mormon historians, but they were clearly the kind of thing anti-Mormons in England and elsewhere wanted to hear in 1912.

The authors also charge that the crusade against the Mormons was not a moral crusade against polygamy, but rather a crusade against the economic and political power of the Church in the Territory of Utah. In this they were partly right, but the modern reader will recognize many distortions. The same thing is true with the discussions of Mormon doctrine, the practice of polygamy, and Mormon economic enterprise around the turn of the century.

While the book is highly distorted historically, it does contain a variety of reasonably documented but little-known facts. However, its value lies chiefly in what it reveals about the kind of "scholarly" literature about the Mormons that once circulated in England and elsewhere. At least the reader will understand why readers of that time looked at the Church with a high degree of suspicion, especially if this kind of literature was all they had access to.

The republished book is introduced by John S. McCormick and John R. Sillito, who have both worked in socialist history and themselves adopt an economic interpretation of history. Their interesting introduction has value partly because of what it tells about the Kauffmans.

In their concluding chapter on "The Future of Mormonism," the Kauffmans summarize their conviction that religious forms are the results of economic conditions and that the economic conditions of the early nineteenth century produced Mormonism. Moreover, they say, parroting the typical Marxian view of the evolution of society, when capitalism finally expires in the United States, then all Christian "Science" will end . . . [and] Mormonism, in which the hierarchy is already exploiting instead of benefiting the laity, will pass away. . . . Until that time, it [Mormonism] will in one form or another remain" (346). I think the Kauffmans would be very surprised at the present form of both Marxian socialism and Mormonism.

—James B. Allen