**Another Look**

**Women: Changing Ideas and New Directions**

By Marie Cornwall

Is there something new in the air? Are things changing for LDS women? There seems to be more press coverage about women in the LDS church (the Salt Lake-based Mormon Women's Forum, Ed Firma ge's unabashed support for the ordination of women, Carol Lynn Pearson's one-woman play *Mother Wove the Morning*). These days I hear more talk of priesthood ordination, more attention to Mother in Heaven, more gathering of women to talk and think about who they are. Women are pressing for change—take for example the recent campaign to appoint women editors to the Encyclopedia of Mormonism project. Refinements in the temple ceremony indicate a responsiveness to women's experience. What does the next decade hold for Latter-day Saint sisters?

Of course, there are still those who in their heart of hearts hope all of this women's stuff will blow over. But I also hear more women and men beginning to anticipate change, even to expect it. After all, some change has already occurred. Women can now pray in sacrament meeting, there is an annual all-Church women's meeting, and occasionally there is a female speaker at general conference. I have heard conference addresses implore men to treat women better, to recognize the needs of their wives, to be responsible fathers, and to serve their families.

So what can we expect as we look toward the twenty-first century? More change, more of the same? Yes, there will be more change. There will be more accommodations to women's concerns and experience, but I doubt very much that they will be as far reaching as some hope they will be. And no, women's issues are not going to just fade away. I can see that when I look into the fiery eyes of a younger generation of women whose expectations are greater than mine ever were. The gender issue strikes at the very core of Mormonism, at least the American version of Mormonism, and whatever happens is likely to have as great an impact as Wilford Woodruff's 1890 manifesto on plural marriage, the ordination of blacks, and the correlation movement in shaping the twenty-first-century Church. Predicting the outcome precisely is difficult simply because there are multiple forces—some pushing us toward a resolution, others pulling us away—but all equally forceful.

Church growth presents a great challenge for those who look for major change with regard to women. The tremendous growth the Church is experiencing (predictions are for more than 265 million Mormons by 2080) is creating a totally new church that can only succeed by reaching beyond the American culture, particularly the white, middle-class, well-educated, professional culture that dominates Mormonism in the United States and along the Wasatch Front. Consequently, as the Church grows, Wasatch Front members will experience a shift in power and emphasis as the Church takes on a more international focus. The new budgetary program is just the beginning. Think of the implications of the following statistics. In 1970, 82 percent of the Church population was in the United States and Canada. In 1980, English-speaking North America was still dominant with 64 percent of the Church population. However, current estimates of growth suggest that by the year 2000 only 43 percent of Church members will live in this region of the world; 40 percent will live in Latin America.

As a result, women's concerns which are framed within a middle-class American perspective will be viewed as less legitimate as they compete with the equally demanding concerns of a world-wide membership. For many women in the world, the patriarchy of Mormonism is a gentler, kinder form of male dominance: Yes, the husband still isn't home much, but in Mormonism he's more responsible and takes his fatherly duties more seriously. And he treats his wife better.

The feminist movement in the United States has always suffered from its white, middle-class proclivities. The tendency has been to emphasize those aspects of the movement that are of most concern to women who already have a choice (What university should I attend? Should I have a career or should I stay at home? Should I have another baby...
or not?). U.S. feminists have not been as good at articulating the concerns of minority women or poor women. Mormon feminists and liberals can be faulted in the same way – there is too much attention to priesthood ordination and Mother in Heaven theology, not enough attention to spouse and child abuse or the feminization of poverty.

A recent issue of Time noted that most U.S. women avoid the feminist label. Despite their agreement with many of the issues of the movement (for equal pay, day care, maternity leave; against job discrimination and rape), only 33 percent actually identify themselves as feminist. The same is true of most LDS women – they are very willing to talk about the shortcomings of the Church with regards to women, but few are willing to align themselves with feminism, and while most want things to be different, few by comparison talk of ordination as the solution.

Church growth works against the resolution of gender issues in other ways. Growth is naturally associated with more bureaucracy and increased hierarchy. The essence of priesthood is sometimes lost in programs, duties, and responsibilities. It becomes associated with ecclesiastical hierarchy, layers of authority, regulations about who can do what. As bureaucratic and hierarchical processes come to dominate in the Church, the gender differences are magnified simply because of the additional administrative layers where women have little input or access to the decision making process.

Additionally, continued growth requires a large missionary force and sufficient leadership to run the branches, wards, and stakes. Everything is dependent upon having a sufficient number of Melchizedek priesthood holders to fill leadership positions. Since only men are ordained to the priesthood, organizational resources become focused on increasing the number of active LDS men. Imagine a fully functioning ward where there are only five active men who have been ordained to the Melchizedek priesthood. The gender problem is magnified simply because the men needed to administer the affairs of the Church are in short supply. And scarce resources take on added value. I've never heard a bishop bemoan the lack of women in a ward, and I doubt I ever will.

Ironically, these organizational issues not only work against the resolution of gender issues but they also assure that gender issues, especially the ordination of women, will be kept boiling on the back burner. One thing that will continue to fuel the fire is our emphasis on family life. Large families support traditional gender roles. This would not necessarily be a problem except that we live in a society which values power, prestige, and status more than the production of children. Moreover, traditional women are viewed as consumers, not producers. The economic contribution of women who do not work for a wage is invisible to most people. This invisibility contributes to conflict not only between men and women but also among women. Women who are able to choose the traditional lifestyle, and who do so with the best of intentions, find that the sacrifices they make are not necessarily appreciated by other women or men. Similarly, women who choose a less traditional lifestyle, also with the best of intentions, and women who are not able to choose a traditional lifestyle because of the circumstances of their lives, find that other women and men question their motives and worthiness.

Major economic and social changes occurred in women's lives during the twentieth century. The increased demand for women workers has encouraged women to enter the labor force in record numbers. In the United States, 70 percent of all women work outside the home, and almost 60 percent of married women with children under six are in the labor force. The trends are similar for Mormon women – although data do suggest that more LDS women delay entrance into the work force until their youngest child is in school. Economic forces make it more and more difficult for a family to live on the income of one wage earner. Economists report that household earnings declined during the late seventies and eighties, forcing women to enter the labor force to supplement their husbands' earnings. Large Mormon families are particularly likely to feel the crunch, especially with the added expectations of tithes, missions, and college educations.

Increasing numbers of women are completing baccalaureate as well as advanced degrees. In 1987, women in the United States earned 51 percent of bachelor's degrees, 50 percent of masters degrees, 35 percent of doctoral degrees, 39 percent of law degrees, 31 percent of medical degrees, and 23 percent of all dentistry degrees. Our emphasis on learning and education within Mormonism suggests similar trends among LDS women, particularly since Latter-day Saints are among the most highly educated of religious groups, second only to Jews and Episcopalians. While many occupations remain segregated by gender, today women are fully integrated in others: editors and reporters (51 percent women), accountants and auditors (50 percent), personnel and labor relations managers (49 percent), bus drivers (49 percent), and bakers (48 percent).

During the last two decades there have been major changes in language. Both spoken and written language has changed. Young women are more sensitive to sexist language and that sensitivity will extend to the language they find in the standard works. While my grandmother grew up in a world where "he" and "men" could be interpreted as both male and female, the next generation of readers will find the scriptures' lack of attention to women, particularly in the Book of Mormon, to be disquieting.

The study of theology has traditionally been a male domain. However, these days almost 4 in every 10 theology students are women. In 1986, women received 36 percent of all Master's degrees and 10 percent of all doctorates in theology. These women are working to make a claim on theology, interpreting scripture from a female perspective. The work of women in other religious traditions is already having an influence on LDS women.

The question of ordination will remain ever before us as it becomes more common in other religions. Consider the changing attitudes of American Catholics regarding ordination of women. In 1974, only 29 percent favored the ordination of women; in 1982, 44 percent favored ordination; and in 1985, 52 percent favored ordination. A similar poll of Mormons might show the same trend, although I suspect far less than half would currently favor ordination. It is the younger, college-educated Catholics with high incomes who are most likely to favor women's ordination. That also seems to describe those who are raising the issue within Mormonism.

Despite the strains around gender issues, most LDS women will remain committed to the gospel and to the Church. Yes, sadly, there will be those who leave, emotionally if not physically. But as long as priesthood holders continue to be the scarce resource there will not be a sufficient number of disaffected women by comparison to create the kind of organizational pressure which produces radical change. Discussion about the ordination of women will always be with us in the future, but the "moral majority" within
Mormonism will most likely seek and find more conservative remedies.

In the future, more women will choose not to seek permission for their activities from a hierarchy they feel does not understand them. There will be more efforts outside the regular institutional channels to organize and create communities which give support to women's experiences. Women will take responsibility for caring for their own and their sisters' spiritual development (as always) by instituting or continuing such activities as Exponent II, Mormon Women's Forum, women's support groups, and even women’s retreats organized at the ward and stake level. As women discover and feel comfortable with their own spiritual strengths they will increasingly use them in the privacy of their own homes and neighborhoods. Perhaps the most striking change will be the continued curiosity and discussion about Mother in Heaven. It is possibly the most important mechanism by which women will find a place within Mormonism. I do not know whether the institutional Church will discourage this curiosity, I hope that it does not.

The greatest limitation to change will be the conflict among women themselves. While conservatism of some women endures, other women offer solutions before they fully understand the problem. Moreover, the most conservative of LDS men will always quote the satisfaction of their own wives as sufficient evidence that there is no real problem. I suspect change will occur only to the extent that LDS women can agree on the issues which face them. But the task of identifying the core issues is difficult because simply talking about them creates conflict and controversy. And sadly, religions, like families, often choose to neglect the underlying problems which fuel the dissatisfaction of their members if confronting them creates additional conflict and discord.

NOTES

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REVIEWS

A SOLID, BALANCED ACCOUNT

ESTABLISHING ZION:
THE MORMON CHURCH IN THE AMERICAN WEST, 1847-1869

By Eugene E. Campbell

Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988, 346 pages, $20.95

Reviewed by Dean May

In 1973 the History division of the Church Historical Department, under Leonard J. Arrington, Davis Bitton, and James B. Allen, planned a comprehensive sixteen-volume sesquicentennial history of the Church. Topics were proposed, authors assigned, and work began on the most ambitious project in Latter-day Saint historical studies since B. H. Roberts’s Comprehensive History of the Church was published in 1930.

The fate of what is still spoken of as “the sixteen-volume history” has been complex, involved with decisions by the Church hierarchy that led to Leonard J. Arrington’s replacement by G. Homer Durham as Church Historian and the removal of the History Division from the LDS Church Office Building to BYU, where it became the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute of Church History. One concern of some Church leaders was that scholarly works, including the sixteen-volume history, might be seen as having official sanction if published by the Historical Department of the Church, which could be constraining to authors or, in the view of some Church leaders, discomforting to the membership.

This project was not, however, abandoned, and the authors were encouraged to continue work on their respective volumes and seek publishers independently as each volume was finished. Establishing Zion is the sixth volume to appear, and work continues on ten more, though some are modifications of the original design (see sidebar). Though varied in quality, as might be expected from a set involving sixteen authors sharing no common editorial pencil, the project has gone far toward realizing its potential as a major contribution to Latter-day Saint history. The publication of this book does much to bring that work along.

Eugene E. Campbell, former BYU history professor, had virtually completed the manuscript for Establishing Zion prior to his death in April 1986. With the cooperation of the Campbell family, the manuscript was edited by the staff of Signature Books and appeared under their imprint in 1988. The book is a monument to the grit of Eugene Campbell, regarded by all who knew him as the one for whom the phrase “gentleman and scholar” must originally have been coined. He worked tenaciously to complete this volume, the summation of many years of diligent, thoughtful scholarship, thus assuring that no gap in the sesquicentennial history would be left by his passing.

In it Campbell offers a close, balanced account of the major events shaping the Mormon and the broader Utah populations from white settlement in 1847 until the great transformation brought by the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869. He
chose the twin themes of colonization and confrontation to characterize the period. His clear and direct narrative dispels any notions that the West offered isolation and a secure haven for the Saints. They had barely dug in for the winter of 1847 when, in December, emissaries from Fort Hall entered their camp, suggesting the possibility of future trade. There was constant intercourse between Utah and California: Sam Brannan intercepted Young's pioneer company before they reached the Salt Lake Valley (after a daring dash from the San Joaquin Valley); returning members of the Mormon Battalion arrived from California within days of Young's party; Jefferson Hunt undertook a trading mission to Southern California that fall; in 1849 Brigham Young sent out missionaries to gather in some of California’s gold; at the same time a stream of California-bound argonauts began to flow through the Salt Lake Valley on their way to the mining camps; and San Bernardino was established in 1851 as a Mormon settlement. The Mormons, as Campbell makes clear, were not as isolated even in the first decades in Utah as we sometimes have thought.

Establishing Zion offers much detail and rich anecdotal material on colonization, Indian-white relationships, doctrinal change, religious reform, the Utah War, and other events marking the first twenty years of Mormonism in the Far West. Readers familiar with Campbell’s previous essays on these themes will find few surprises here, and the book does not seem to be driven by an overriding conceptual framework. In some instances the structure inhibits conceptual clarity. For example Campbell discusses in separate chapters the “inner colonies” and the “outer colonies,” concluding that Mormon colonization shows no clear or consistent pattern, as if nothing were learned from repeated colonization endeavors. Such a perspective would arise naturally when lumping chronologically diverse but geographically concentrated colonies. Viewed over time, one can discern the evolution of a distinctive pattern in Mormon colonization of the West, tempered of course by the precise purpose of the colony and the geographical constraints the proposed site imposed. The earliest settlements were made in an individualistic and somewhat chaotic manner. By 1849, with Sanpete colonization, some patterns and rules were being established, reaching their clearest articulation in the 1850-51 settlement of Parowan. Thereafter “called” settlements followed the Parowan pattern when establishing a bridgehead in previously unsettled territory or seeking to exploit particular resources. Once such a settlement was established, spontaneous satellite towns grew up wherever niches offered a likely site.

Regrettably Professor Campbell was not able to document fully his manuscript prior to his death. There are no footnotes, which would have been of great value to careful students of the period, and the index is minimal. These defects are countered in part by a set of clear and useful maps, a good selection of enlivening photographs, and a general bibliography.

Establishing Zion offers a solid and readable account of the period and is a worthy increment to the ongoing list of publications arising out of the sixteen-volume project.

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1. For a discussion of the events surrounding the transfer to BYU of the History Division by one intimately involved, see Davis Bitton, “Ten Years in Camelot: A Personal Memoir,” Dialogue 16 (Autumn, 1983): 9-34.

VALEDICTION

God’s people always leave. He gives them compass and they set sail, learning to lean into the wind.

Point your sword heavenward, hack your unleavened bread, cut kindling. But don’t malign the stars. They do the best they can with what they’ve got. It’s hard to steer by the sun. Its fast broad strokes, brilliant but vague are always only the start.

Stars are the leaves of heaven, fluttering gently swaggering in the solar wind. They will part and let you by if you remember the password. But remembering too much will square your horizon, turn the grass too green, freeze seeds in their pods.

In fall every footprint is an explosion. Stars ignite every night. God smiles when he sends us away. If we return, he weeps.

—SCOTT SAMUELSON

WHAT BECAME OF THE SIXTEEN-VOLUME CHURCH HISTORY?

ESTABLISHING ZION is only the sixth book published to date out of the original sixteen volumes planned in 1973.

While publication of the sesquicentennial history was intended to begin in 1980 and continue regularly for several years, it is uncertain now whether all projects will be published. However, those published in order of publication are: Milton V. Backman, The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio 1830-1930 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986); R Lainer Britsch, Unto the Islands of the Sea: A History of the Latter-day Saints in the Pacific (Salt Lake City: Desmet Book Company, 1986); F. Lamond Tullis, Mormons in Mexico: The Dynamics of Faith and Culture (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1987), and Eugene Campbell, Establishing Zion (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988).

Work continues by Max Parkin on the Missouri period; by Reed Durham on the migration to the West; by Charles S. Peterson on the period from 1869 to 1890; by Davis Bitton on cultural life in the nineteenth century; by Richard O. Cowan on the period from 1930 to 1950; by James B. Allen on the twentieth century after 1950; by John L. Sorenson, on cultural life in the twentieth century; and by Douglas Tobler on the Latter-day Saints in Europe. In addition, Lamond Tullis continues to work on a volume covering all of Latin America and R. Lainer Britsch on all of Asia.
REVIEWS

THE JOURNAL OF DISCOURSES: THE SEQUEL

COLLECTED DISCOURSES DELIVERED BY PRESIDENT WILFORD WOODRUFF, HIS TWO COUNSELORS, THE TWELVE APOSTLES, AND OTHERS

Volume I, 1886-1889; Volume II, 1890-1892; Volume III, 1892-1893
BHS Publications, 1987, 1988, 1989. $15.95 each
edited by Brian H. Stuy

Reviewed by John Sillito

In the past few months, Constance Lieber and I have been editing a collection of the letters of Martha Hughes Cannon and her husband, Salt Lake Stake President Angus M. Cannon, written while "Mattie" was in self-imposed exile in England avoiding prosecution for polygamy. We spend a great deal of time looking at various diaries and journals covering the period of the late 1880s, and in the course of this research, both of us were struck with the influence the federal government had on the Saints during the "Raid." While we were generally aware that the government's actions helped develop a sense of solidarity among the Saints, the impact of the persecution on individuals was brought home to us more dramatically through reading these personal writings. The Cannon's referred frequently to the actions of the federal government and their allies against the Mormons as they tried to deal with the tensions resulting from their separation.

Moreover, we found accounts of the effects of the persecution as a recurring theme in other sources as well. Emmeline B. Wells, for JOHN SILLITO is an archivist and an assistant professor at Weber State College.

example, remarks on the difficulty of maintaining customary marital and familial relationships during "these days of sorrow to our people," when the Saints felt that they were constantly under surveillance. As she notes in her diary on 29 October 1887: "it is very unpleasant to creep into one's own apartment when one has a right to go openly."

In light of the importance of this period in understanding developments in Church history, Brian H. Stuy has provided general readers and scholars of the Mormon experience alike with an important reference tool. These compilations—the first three volumes of a projected six volume series—bring together the writings of Mormon church leaders after the demise of the Journal of Discourses and prior to the beginning of the published conference reports. Stuy has prefaced each selection with a brief overview of the subjects covered in the particular address, making it easy to thumb through the selections looking for material. While most of the selections come from such expected sources as the Millennial Star and the Deseret News, others come from lesser known sources such as the Logan Jour-

nal, the Brigham City Bugler, and other small newspapers and magazines. It is clear from Stuy's compilation that the words of Church leaders printed in various places were an important source of information and encouragement for the Saints during trying times.

The first volume covers the crucial years from 1886-89 which, in Stuy's words, "were filled with persecutions and trials for the Church and its members" (1). This was a time when Church President John Taylor and other Church leaders were on the underground. A selection by Angus M. Cannon is typical of many of the writings in this volume dealing with the difficulties facing the Saints. At a special conference of the Salt Lake Stake held in the Tabernacle, Cannon remarks that the Saints are disappointed because "the seats ... formerly occupied by the First Presidency ... are now made vacant by the actions of wicked men." Cannon exhorts his congregation to turn to God during these difficult days when they seem "to be left to themselves for a season."

Tests are being made of us today with regard to our faith and integrity in the Lord. The law of celestial marriage has been entered into and embraced by a considerable proportion of our people. As a consequence we have been put through a fiery ordeal, and few have swerved from their integrity. What has been the result? If we have not been cast into fiery furnaces or fed to wild beasts, we have been imprisoned with the basest of criminals. We have been isolated from our loved ones, deprived of their presence and permitted to gaze upon the pale faces of our wives and children as they look down upon us from the summit of the wall enclosing the prison in which we were confined. If we had forsaken our wives, forsaken our children, gone back upon the covenants made with God, and preferred liberty and freedom to imprisonment, we could have obtained freedom, but we preferred prison bars to liberty at such a price. . . . I propose to hearken unto the voice of God, let the result be prison bars, penitentiary walls or death. (30, 33.)

Other discourses cover a variety of topics from the trek of the pioneers to great books and writers to the treatment of animals. Also included in this volume are selections from
the funeral services for John Taylor, Erastus Snow, and Eliza R. Snow.

The second and third volumes in the series cover 1890-1893, a period marked particularly by the issuance of the Woodruff Manifesto and the completion of the Salt Lake Temple. Stuy comments that these years witnessed an increasing millennialism as well as an awareness of the growing importance of political questions facing the Church. These themes run throughout the selections included in the second and third volumes.

In assessing this period, Stuy notes that the discourses covered in these volumes were particularly important as the Saints sought "comfort and assurance that the Lord . . . was still guiding his church." As he observes:

The events leading up to the Manifesto were complex, as were the events following its approval by the Church. . . . Many Saints saw it as an end to the persecutions, the raids . . . and breathed a sigh of relief at its issuance. Others saw it as a relinquishing of a commandment of God, and perceived the compromises made by President Woodruff as an indication of an apostasy by the church from the divine laws of God. Still others, including President Woodruff, perceived it as a way of preserving the Church until the glorious return of the Lord. . . . (xxvi)

In assessing these Collected Discourses, every individual reader may have a "wish list" of things they believe the books should include. For me, though Stuy is gathering the writings of General Authorities and other male leaders of the Church, the collection is unfortunately limited by not including writings of prominent women of the time. At the same time, while some explanatory references are included and, in volume one at least, a selected index is provided, the collection will be enhanced by an overall index which is in the works. In the meantime, such criticism should not detract from Collected Discourses which is an essential reference collection for the personal and institutional libraries of those concerned about the history of Mormonism during some of its most important years.

SEA OF SINAI

Sands, sun-tarnished, slip through tracing Nile fingers, trickling dust, pushing grited-waves in the slow thrust of burial seas: writhing dunes, covering evenings, unwriting runes scrawled in pale sweeps of sanded hide that swept immutability under their slow and rising tides and left nothing behind but dawn and a new horizon touched by a wave of wind on an ever-setting sun.

All stench sunken, all sight.
No sign of evident history.
Only the calm remains that was there before

and the silence of slow waves breaking.

—VIRGINIA ELLEN BAKER