

ture. The poems in the book are undistinguishable in substance and style, and the dramatic vignettes are thin and sentimental. Longer works are represented only by summaries and excerpts, but there is nothing to indicate that they are any better than the short pieces. This should not be taken, however, as evidence that Mormon writers are less successful than Mormon painters and musicians. There is a significant amount of good poetry and fiction being written in the Church, but either it has not come to the notice of the editors of this volume or else their tastes are less reliable in this area than in others.

In his preface to the book, Dean Wheelwright cautions the reader "not to draw final conclusions from this volume. It does not presume to delimit Mormon art." No doubt this is the key to appreciating *Mormon Arts, Volume One*. The book is weakest when it does attempt to delimit Mormon art, and strongest when it is most tentative and open. It is neither the first nor the last word on Mormon art, but it does break ground that can now benefit from more intensive cultivation.

Intimate Portraits

JOHN STERLING HARRIS

The Rummage Sale. By Donald R. Marshall. Provo, Utah: Heirloom Publications, 1972. 141 pp. \$3.75, hardback. \$2.50, paperback.

In that everlasting discussion on when we are going to have a Mormon literature, the anticipated writer of the great Mormon story is usually expected to be a Tolstoi or a Melville who will tell it as an epic. Now comes a fascinating book by Donald R. Marshall called *The Rummage Sale*. It is unquestionably Mormon and is also very good, but it is not an epic at all. It is instead a series of short stories that are rather closer to William Dean Howells or Sarah Orne Jewett.

The resulting tales come out as honest, intimate portraits of common people in small Utah towns. Instead of struggling with the great issues of truth and error or good and evil, they grapple with the problems of their own identities versus community and family expectations, with small town parochialism versus sophistication, or with the conflict of stability versus change.

One such portrait is that of Thalia Beale, a shy old maid from Ephraim, who after her mother's death takes her savings and makes a trip to California—managing to spend a month in Pacific Grove and Carmel, pretending to herself that she is living a cultivated life before returning to the drabness of her home. (*Dialogue* readers will remember this story from the Autumn 1972 issue.) Another story, "All the Cats in Zanzibar," is the journal of LaRena Homer from American Fork who takes a grand tour to the Holy Land and finds it inferior to Utah. "May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You" is the outrageous correspondence between Elder Calbert Dunkley and Floydene Wallup—a kind of Ring Lardner story with characters who are embarrassingly Mormon. "The Sound of Drums" is a story of a young man from Heber who earns a Ph.D. in the East and returns on a visit to be embarrassed at the narrowness and provinciality of his family and home town. Here, as in other stories in the volume, Marshall's