

of the respective readers. Translators can either strive to produce one-to-one correspondence between words in a sentence or they can attempt to reproduce a similar meaning which communicates with the reader's experience. For example the German sentence, "Der Apfel faellt nicht weit vom Baume ab," can be translated either "The apple falls not far away from the tree," or "He's a chip off the old block." The problem is really insurmountable when we attempt a similar enterprise between cultures as fundamentally different as Egyptian and American. The differences are so radical that we can only suspect them in most cases. Nibley has helped place our discussion in perspective by drawing attention to this problem. A translation of a Book of Breathings as presented in Chapter 2 is still foreign to most modern readers. His claim that it presents an "Egyptian Endowment" hints at another translation.

The remainder of the body of the book gives the fruits of Nibley's efforts to find meaning in the Egyptian symbols that will be understandable to one of our culture. This is Nibley at his most characteristic, drawing on his wide exposure to the primary and secondary literature of the ancient world. He has made extensive use of the so-called Books of the Underworld, a corpus of Egyptian literary productions which elaborate on the activities of the denizens of the underworld. This material has recently been tapped by Egyptologists like Erich Hornung as a valuable source for insights into how the Egyptian understood the nature of his gods and the way he related to them. Nibley has brought together much material that will give all a detailed exposure to the Egyptian world. Scattered throughout this section are numerous drawings and illustrations taken from original Egyptian material (although the source is not always given) which give an exposure to Egyptian religious scenes. Their connection to the text, however, is often loose—possibly an attempt to illustrate the Egyptian style, as Nibley claims (p. 3), in which figures used often have only a remote connection with the text.

A further attempt to expose us to the Egyptian world of religious concepts and its remnants is provided in the Appendix, where Nibley has shown six documents that follow the pattern that he has adduced from the Book of Breathings.

Nibley avoids providing a summary and conclusion to the material he has presented. His purpose was "not to prove a case but to state one," providing the reader "with information to help him make up his own mind." And it is with great control that the reviewer has resisted the temptation to improve on Nibley's resolve. For always behind any such summing up lies the necessity to refer to the ceremonies of the Mormon temples, to which part of the readers of this journal will not have been initiated. Suffice it to say that there are obvious parallels apparent to those exposed to both and Nibley has made a valuable contribution by providing us with the material which will allow some of us at least to draw our own conclusions.

## Life Under the Principle

EDWARD GEARY

*Family Kingdom*. By Samuel Woolley Taylor. Revised Edition. Salt Lake City: Western Epics, 1974. xi + 323 pp., \$7.95.

*Family Kingdom* was written primarily for a non-Mormon audience, written, as the

author says in his Preface, to satisfy the “insatiable curiosity” and correct the “amazing amount of misconception regarding the institution of plural marriage as once practiced by the Mormons.” It had a considerable success in the market for which it was intended when it first appeared in 1951, and though it met some initial resistance it has in the succeeding years achieved the status of a minor classic within Mormondom as well, making it one of the very few books on the Mormons to be accepted both inside and outside the Church.

This is a remarkable achievement, but then *Family Kingdom* is the story of a remarkable and fascinating man. John W. Taylor was the son of a president of the Church, was himself a highly regarded and widely popular apostle, a man of big ideas, great personal charm, and an unwavering devotion to principle. So unwavering, in fact, that he refused to give up the practice of plural marriage when the Church did and as a result was dropped from the Quorum of the Twelve for marrying two wives (his fourth and fifth) after the Manifesto and eventually excommunicated for taking yet another wife. At the same time, however, he refused to associate with any of the splinter groups that sprang into existence after the Manifesto. He insisted that his personal disagreement with Church practice was not a challenge to the truth or authority of the Church.

As remarkable as he was, John W. Taylor was simply an eminent example of a type familiar in Mormondom, the man who combines an extreme conservatism on theological and social issues with a wildly speculative approach to economic affairs. Such people insist upon (and often pride themselves in) walking by the Spirit in all things and strictly refuse to compromise on matters of principle, as they see them; yet they are ever ready to involve themselves and their fellow saints in risky get-rich-quick schemes (usually with the claim that the wealth so effortlessly gained will be used to further the Lord’s work) which often lead to financial disaster. Samuel Taylor maintains that this man was a hero to his family. Certainly he is a hero to Samuel. The book treats of John W. Taylor’s foibles as well as his heroism, but its general tone is full of admiration, even awe. Indeed, there is at times a pre-adolescent quality to the author’s tone. It is the tone of one who lost his father before the stage at which he would have begun to rebel against him. As I read the book, I occasionally had the feeling that John W. Taylor was too good to be true. But perhaps I am wrong. After all, any man who can marry six strong-willed and (judging by the photographs on the book’s dust jacket) unusually attractive women and who can keep each of them firmly convinced until her dying day that she is his favorite wife—such a man is capable of anything.

*Family Kingdom* is a commercial book, the product of a craftsman who knows his market and sets out to meet its requirements. There has always been a national market for the “colorful” book about a backwater subculture. But this book is also the work of a man trying to come to terms with his own heritage, which has at its center the greatest crisis in Mormon history. Samuel Taylor is clearly interested in the psychology of polygamy and in its social implications. Yet he also realizes that the interest of the popular audience is of a much shallower sort, that they seek entertainment rather than insight. Therefore it is understandable but also, I think, unfortunate, that the author takes pains not to seem too “serious.” The book is highly anecdotal, with its more serious exploration kept to small and irregular doses.

For example, in the middle of the book Taylor begins to bring out the problems faced by the children of a polygamous family, especially the eldest in his mother’s family, Joseph. Joseph is deprived of his childhood, given too much responsibility

too soon, compelled as he is to be the man of the house most of the time. There is a fine passage in chapter ten describing a journey to the Mormon colonies in Mexico, where John W. Taylor is taking some of his wives to avoid legal problems in the States. As usual, Joseph's mother must pose as a widow, managing her five young children entirely by herself while her husband sits in another part of the train giving his full attention to Rhoda, the new wife. Here is the encounter:

In the car ahead, Father was seated with Rhoda, laughing, joking, having a gay time. The children dutifully said nothing, but their large eyes picked him out instantly, staring at him and the dark-haired beauty beside him; their heads turned as they approached his seat, looked back as they went past.

"Watch where you're going, children," Mother said.

Then the baby saw her father, reached out her arms and began to bawl. "Shh, darling. Shh."

"Beautiful children, Madam," Father said.

"Thank you, sir. Traveling makes them so cross." Mother hurried on.

Then she must deal with the resentment of her eldest son:

"We can't speak to him, but Rhoda Welling can laugh and joke with him all day long every day. I don't like it."

"Father is helping her pass the time away."

"Is she traveling alone?"

"I'm sure I don't know, dear." She bent to his ear. "Joseph."

He waited. "Yes, Mother?"

But he couldn't know. Not yet. In case of trouble she couldn't have the responsibility of the knowledge upon him. "Try to understand, darling."

"I think I do, Mother. And I don't like it."

What, we wonder, will happen to this boy? What form will Joseph's resentment take when he is eighteen? I value *Family Kingdom* because it raises such questions as these. I wish it explored them more thoroughly.

## Fatherly Advice

WILLIAM MULDER

*My Dear Son: Letters of Brigham Young to His Sons.* Edited by Dean C. Jessee. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974. 375 pp., \$9.95.

The fiddles are tuning in Mormon historiography. Not only is there a great deal of activity as new histories are written and old classics revived; there is, more importantly, a new professionalism. Mormon scholars have come of age: they have learned the tools of their trade and have achieved a certain objectivity and composure in dealing with their extraordinary history. The amateurs and apologists are still around, but now, *officially*, if we are to judge from what has been happening in the Historical Department, the Church seems to favor the trained historian and an educated handling of its great storehouse of materials. A new spirit animates the original commission that "There shall be a record kept among you," and modern means are being put at its service. A *Guide to the Historical Department* welcomes