

man who speaks the truth about universal human experiences. No attempt is made to shape his experience or the Church to fit idealized preconceptions. Rather, we see an honest man who, like Joseph Smith, was satisfied from his own investigation that the competing religions of his day did not seem to have the truth. As he struggled with the routine challenges of life he kept an eye out for answers to his questions about higher matters. There is a world of difference in the level of sophistication of the world in which Pablo Choc was living when the missionaries found him and the world in which most missionary contacts live. But there is a similarity in feelings, the insights and the spiritual witness that he recounts when he observed the missionaries conducting a funeral for the mother of his Mormon friend, and then later as they came to his own humble home. As he tells of his conversion and his gradual affiliation with the Church, every honest reader will see his own experiences, his own life, his own temptations and his own victories. This story poses a challenge to wealthy and sophisticated

American and European members of the Church: For if one's heart is proud, and one despises the poor, here is a man he cannot despise. This uneducated Guatemalan Indian is our brother. He is an elder and a president of a branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He has dedicated nineteen years of his life to the building up of the kingdom in his village. His oldest son, Daniel, was able to become a missionary with the support of \$100 a year which Pablo and others provided and his life was taken in an accident while he was helping members of the Church restore an earthquake-damaged home.

Palmer artfully joins diverse elements into an effective and coherent work. Although he does not raise the obvious questions that each reader must raise for himself, he seems to be saying that the membership of the Church around the world must ultimately embrace all their brothers and sisters in the equality of the Saints. Palmer's book carries many valuable messages, but this is one of the chief among them.

## *The Last Anecdotes*

*Deity and Death.* Edited by Spencer J. Palmer. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1978, 156 pp. \$5.95.

*Reviewed by Peter Y. Windt, associate professor of philosophy at the University of Utah.*

This book includes seven essays, divided into two groups. The first three essays, collected under the heading, "Death and Dying," deal with a variety of practices, attitudes and beliefs on the significance of death and appropriate ways of dealing with death. The last four essays, under the heading "Deity and the Divine", include a comparative study of ascension motifs, a comparison of the roles of reverence for life in Eastern and Western religions and studies on the origins and character of some major aspects of religious thought in Japan and China. While the range of topics discussed is very extensive, the combination is not

implausible. We might expect discussion of the institutions for dealing with death in a given society to reveal some important characteristics of predominant religious attitudes and beliefs in that society. And we might expect an investigation of religious attitudes and beliefs to explain some aspects of institutions dealing with death. All the essays are short, congenial and easily read. They tend to be anecdotal, with a potpourri of facts, conjectures and suggestions. The reader can come away with interesting tidbits such as he might gain from an evening's casual conversation with the authors. Such a conversation is not without its rewards, and if the collection is approached in anticipation of such rewards, it will be worth reading.

On the other hand, those who are seriously attempting to come to grips with the issues upon which these essays touch are likely to be disappointed. The information and suggestions could be made more sig-

nificant to the serious reader by bearing on the individual or social needs which various practices or attitudes seem to serve: whether those needs are basic to human nature or are products of particular social structures. They might bear on whether or not institutions, attitudes and beliefs are designed intentionally to serve certain needs, or whether they simply have sprung from past successes. Questions could be raised about the effectiveness of various institutions in dealing with these needs. Other questions could be raised about the internal consistency of beliefs, attitudes and practices. One could explore philosophical or theological arguments for or against the coherence, ap-

propriateness or moral correctness of the attitudes and institutions considered.

Each of these issues calls for its own methodological approach, employing the arguments and evidence appropriate to it. But these issues are not distinguished clearly in these essays, nor are they supported by evidence or argument. In fact, the essays are so anecdotal that they even fail to provide guidelines for informed speculation.

Although these essays were not intended to be technical papers, the scholars who wrote them could have outlined some of the ways in which their information could contribute to a better grasp of basic issues. It is regrettable that they did not do so.

## *Panorama of the First Century*

*A Mormon Bibliography, 1830-1930: Books, Pamphlets, Periodicals, and Broad-sides Relating to the First Century of Mormonism.* Edited by Chad Flake with Introduction by Dale L. Morgan; University of Utah Press, xxxii, 828 [84] pp., illus., index. \$75.

*Reviewed by Donald R. Moorman, professor of history at Weber State College.*

Confirmed scholars are a tenacious lot, and when a combination of learned men pool their genius great things occur. Such is this magnum opus. The product of over a quarter century of labored research, this bibliography is the finest thing since Hubert H. Bancroft completed the first great study of Utah's history in the closing years of the nineteenth century.

A brief review cannot do justice to the scholarship, wealth of materials, or the variety of literature found in this massive study, but those who pursue specific research related to Mormon matters will find the bibliography an index to this western religious culture. "Anyone who leafs through this volume," Dale Morgan writes in his introduction, "even in idle curiosity, is going to acquire a new and panoramic view of, a fresh insight into, Mormonism as a phenomenon in American and world history. The titles and authorship of the various

books speak eloquently not only of Mormonism, but also of the general culture exemplified by Mormonism as a religion, society and personal experience."

The work is restricted to books, periodicals, Mormon or predominantly Mormon newspapers, pamphlets, and broadsides pertaining to the first century of Mormonism. But it was not the intention of its editors to provide a complete union catalog of Mormonism; rather, they included numerous listings of adequate locations when items could be found.

This long awaited volume was conceived in 1949 by the masterful student of the Mormons, Dale L. Morgan, a native of Utah, who was awarded a Guggenheim fellowship to study early Mormon history. Morgan was a many faceted scholar who found new interest in the settlement of the West, particularly in the fur trade of the Rocky Mountains. The quality of these works led the academic world to look forward with great anticipation to the continuation of his Mormon bibliography, as well as to his exciting projected study of related church histories; however, Morgan lost interest in the work and allowed the bibliography to be resumed by John James, then librarian at the Utah Historical Society. Over the years other names were given custodial care until Chad Flake finally completed the massive project.

After maddening delays, Chad brought