

tween men and women. But he fell short of making the application of these provocative characteristics to a small Mormon town.

Two very brief statements of a personal nature by David M. Kennedy, an LDS church leader and former United States Ambassador (to NATO and at large), and David C. Montgomery, coordinator of the Near Eastern Studies Program at Brigham Young University, were also included in the book.

The subject matter of this small book encompassed far more diverse ideas than can be properly commented on in a review. Anyone interested in the subject of these studies will be amply served by reading the book. A capstone to the book may well be best expressed by two of the partici-

pants. The first, Mahamand Mustafa Ayouba, from the Centre for Religious Studies at the University of Toronto, had returned to his former Muslim faith after several years as a fundamentalist Protestant who had "shouted more amens and hallelujahs than any of you." From his point of view, Mormons would not succeed in "converting Muslims" any more than others who have tried. But he felt that Mormons could succeed in creating "an important dialogue that will lead to a fellowship of faith between you and us" (pp. 116). The second, Omar Kader, who now teaches at BYU and is a Mormon convert from Islam, observed that Brigham Young University was well suited as a place "to reduce the spots of ignorance within our own thinking" (p. 61).

Rx with a Historical Slant

Medicine and the Mormons: An Introduction to the History of Latter-day Saint Health Care by Robert T. Divett (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon Publishers, 1981), 222 pp., \$9.95.

Reviewed by N. Lee Smith, a Salt Lake City physician.

IT IS EASY FOR ME TO BE enthusiastic about this relatively short, readable volume, which in many ways breaks new ground in Mormon historiography. It is a book for all fascinated with Mormon health attitudes as well as Mormon history aficionados who have wondered at the intriguing array of often-passionate medical inclinations among Mormons. This fascinating story of evolving biases reveals much, not only of Mormon medicine, but also generally of nineteenth-century medicine on the American frontier. That period was certainly one of the most colorful and revolutionary in all medical history with attitudinal overtones which persist to our own day.

Robert Divett, certainly one of the top two or three LDS medical historians, is

well qualified for the task. His careful documentation draws on new sources that will delight the scholar; and his very readable, objective style likely contributed to the prizes he was awarded by the American Medical Library Association for articles partially incorporated into this volume (which also includes much of the material in his Autumn 1979 *DIALOGUE* article).

A variety of matchmakers have, from ancient times, promoted the natural marriage of medicine and religion. The priest-physician concept of ages past, still literal in the medicine men of the "less developed" cultures today, parallels the desire of many latter-day Mormons for their earthly healer to be in tune with the Divine Healer. Divett chronicles the Mormon struggles with such intertwined issues: faith-priesthood healing confronted with man's medicines; (and which medicines?—man-designed or natural?); the role of sin or devil-possession in causing disease; the "eternal laws" governing health and healing; the Word of Wisdom as a spiritual principle; and the role of "God's chasten-

ing hand" in disease-caused suffering. These concerns are developed historically as Mormons viewed them, not philosophically or theologically. Divett handles such emotion-packed issues tactfully and with the historian's attempt at detached objectivity.

After laying a succinct background of "Medicine in the U.S. in Joseph Smith's Day" (Chapter 1), Divett describes some of the significant health impacts on the larger Smith family (Chapter 2) and the "Medical Aspects of the Restoration" (Chapter 3). He lineates how Joseph Smith, Sr.'s, family became impoverished in the ginseng trade, which led to their westward migration to Palmyra. He also describes the significant impact of remarkable faith-healing episodes and of Thomsonian herbalists on Joseph Smith's thought and thus on nearly all early Mormon medical attitudes.

Lest one underestimate Samuel Thomson's influence, note that part of his herbal revolution against the then-orthodox medicine of calomel, bleeding, etc., was his strong opposition to alcohol, tobacco, and what he called "hot drinks," which he defined as tea and coffee. Two members of the First Presidency in that generation (three if one includes John C. Bennett) were Thomsonian herbalists. Speaking of John C. Bennett, Divett gives some of the best biographical insights available regarding his pre- and post-Nauvoo years. Bennett's medical activities included establishing fly-by-night medical diploma mills and taking degrees and certificates in all the rival medical camps — heroic, eclectic, and even Thomsonian. His inventiveness and opportunism are in keeping with his later ego-preserving treachery toward the Mormons. Also of interest was how important Sappington's quinine pills were in allowing the settlement of Nauvoo (pp. 60–65).

After chronicling the advent of scientific medicine and the flexibility of Brigham Young and later Church leaders in reversing earlier attitudes by accepting the new orthodoxy, Divett's later chapters are a bit bland in their detailing of the LDS hospital system, health missions, and the like.

The book's strengths clearly lie in its earlier history; the omissions from contemporary history and issues justify the subtitle, "An Introduction." The chapter, "New Directions of the 1970s and 1980s," doesn't quite make it to the 1980s. In a second edition, this terminal chapter could be considerably strengthened by discussion of the official LDS positions on current bioethical issues such as birth control, medically indicated abortions, artificial inseminations, test-tube babies, life prolongation and of the coming theological problems raised by new medical capabilities in genetic engineering, intersex and sex change treatments, and new discoveries such as genetic and neurochemical influences on behavior, altruism, depression, etc. These present-day medical concerns, currently being explored by such Mormon associations as Collegium Aesculapium (LDS physicians) and AMCAP (Association for Mormon Counselors and Psychotherapists) are likely to be fraught with every bit as much controversy as issues of yesteryear. But then it is never quite fair for a reviewer to list what he wishes the author *had* included.

Nevertheless, the immediate history of the Word of Wisdom revelation could have been more fully developed: the Kirtland context of temperance movement passion, popular health reform fervor, and medical questions that undoubtedly led in part to Joseph Smith's prayerful inquiry, resulting in the Word of Wisdom revelation. Additionally, the section on the introduction of scientific method to medicine would be benefitted by stating that many popularly held folk (Thomsonian, herbal, homeopathic, etc.) beliefs were carefully studied and were found to be largely fallacious. The documentation of this last point would be most helpful in fulfilling the author's expressed purpose of helping physicians understand the attitudes of their LDS patients and to respond appropriately, particularly to those whose medical beliefs have been culled from the advice of prophets from an earlier and very different era. In this regard, it would also have been