

ballooning beauties. (The young prophet's sisters are just such a bunch: they wobble flabbily as he chases them upstairs, intending to goose them.) In addition, the (intended) lively, earthy family talk that fills the books is not always, in my view, effective; the characters are sufficiently convinced of their own cuteness that I am reminded of the excesses of Heinlein's later novels. Presumably, though, what can't be cured must be endured.

Some years ago I expressed in print my disappointment that Card, an obviously talented writer in a largely transcendental

genre, did not invest his writing with more explicitly Mormon themes. Now he has done it, and in spades: he has chosen the biggest Mormon story of them all. The Joseph Smith story is something that unfailingly calls up shivers and awe in the most jaded Latter-day Saint, regardless of our disillusionment with modern mega-institutions and attitudes. The raw chutzpah of choosing that story takes one's breath away. So far Card has not disappointed us, for the most part. I would venture to say that the Prophet himself would at least smile at this enterprise.

Honoring Arrington

New Views of Mormon History: Essays in Honor of Leonard J. Arrington, edited by Davis Bitton and Maureen Ursenbach Beecher (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1987), 438 pp., \$19.95.

Reviewed by F. Ross Peterson, professor of history, Utah State University, and editor, *DIALOGUE: A JOURNAL OF MORMON THOUGHT*.

LEONARD ARRINGTON deserves to be honored. Nineteen of his professional associates, former employees, and friends have each contributed to this book a previously unpublished essay to thank a man who fostered their individual careers. Although Arrington's contributions are highlighted in the introduction and the volume ends with a detailed bibliography of his work, the essays do not focus on him or on his all-too-brief tenure as LDS Church historian from 1972-80. Each essay covers a topic of special interest to its author; only the authors' appreciation for Arrington links the pieces together.

In some respects the volume is a historiographical statement. During Arrington's years as Church historian, numerous scholars, young and old, inside and outside of the Church, were able to utilize Church archives and records in an unprecedented

way. The result was a "New" Mormon history or at least a new view of the Mormon saga. Indeed, historians produced numerous volumes and articles published by scholarly presses and professional journals. The "in-house" publications also benefited by the breadth of historical research and writing. Numerous religious historians like Jan Shippo, Lawrence Foster, and Mario dePilis considered Mormons writing objectively about their own historical experience new and exciting. Arrington and his colleagues shared a brief but fleeting moment of open scholarly glory.

But the reality of writing objective institutional history in a grand way became dangerous to the larger Church institution. Arrington's plan for an officially sanctioned, eighteen-volume sesquicentennial history was scuttled in midstream, he was demoted, and his division was exiled to Brigham Young University in Provo—minus the historical documents.

Most of the contributors to this festschrift participated with Arrington in that shining moment. They offer here articles that exemplify what Arrington sponsored and encouraged. Their work is in areas familiar to them; their narratives are neither threatening nor earthshaking. Like Arrington himself, the essays are appropriately calm, dispassionate, and straightforward.