

Nephi, Seer of Modern Times: The Home Literature Novels of Nephi Anderson

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Richard H. Cracroft

I

Nephi Anderson, known primarily among late twentieth-century Latter-day Saints as the author of *Added Upon* (1898),¹ attempted in that widely read, ambitious failure, to encompass “all things in heaven and earth within 140 pages.”² B. H. Roberts wrote this statement in admiration, but I assume Anderson knew better—at least, if he didn’t then, he would later, when he came to be a much more accomplished writer. Endowed as he was with a fine narrative gift, a rich imagination, and a keen sense of appreciation for literary style, Anderson subsequently attempted two major revisions of *Added Upon* in a futile effort to transform his wooden *tour de force* into a lively novel on par with his nine later works. Inevitably and sadly, Anderson has been dismissed—or heralded—on the basis of this first novel, when in fact he would be better served by study of his nine later—and always better—novels. Unfortunately, the nine later works are now generally unavailable and thus virtually ignored, and Anderson, if discussed at all by modern Mormon critics, is dismissed as a one-novel, one-failure author.

The truth is otherwise. As an examination of Anderson’s ten novels, four additional books, forty various articles and at least forty-eight identified short stories makes impressively evident, Anderson was a vital and positive force in turn-of-the-century Mormon letters. His unparalleled contribution was to combine a remarkably fervent faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ and in the teachings, history, culture, and mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with a single-minded devotion to establishing a Mormon literature which reflects this faith. The fact of his popular success among the Latter-day Saints is recorded in the number of editions his many works enjoyed—and which *Added Upon* still enjoys.

But while Mormon critics have generally dismissed Anderson’s work without examining more than his first and weakest effort, Anderson’s remaining body of writing should be of interest to Mormons in the mid-1980s not only because they reflect *fin de siècle* LDS and American values and concerns, and not only because Anderson has made the most important, sustained literature from the stuff of Mormon belief and practice, a significant didactic literary questions he confronted continue to challenge Mormon writers, critics, and readers.

II

Christian Nephi Anderson was himself a thoroughgoing product of the Mormonism he so fervently professed. Born on 22 January 1865, in Christiania, Norway, to Latter-day Saint parents Christian and Petronelle Nielson, Nephi, as he always signed himself, emigrated to the United States with his parents in 1871, when he was only six years old. The family settled in Coalville and later Ogden, where Nephi's father worked as a painter and paperhanger, trades which Nephi also learned but soon left for a career in education. Married 22 December 1886 to Asenath Tillotson, Nephi received his education in Ogden schools and at the University of Utah. In 1892–93, he interrupted a career of teaching in Box Elder and Weber counties to serve an LDS mission to his native Norway.

After his return from Norway, Nephi again taught in several schools in Ogden and Brigham City and named superintendent of schools in Box Elder County, where he served from 1900–1903. Soon after the death of his wife, in January 1904, Anderson was called on a second mission, this time to Great Britain, where his renown as a writer on LDS subjects led to service under Mission President Heber J. Grant as editor of the *Millennial Star*.

Following his release in 1906, Anderson made an extensive tour of Europe, after which he returned home to Salt Lake City, where for three years he taught as an instructor of English and missionary course teacher at LDS High Church. In June 1908, Anderson married Maud Rebecca Symons, and in July 1909, he was again called, along with his family, to serve as missionaries in the Central States. Headquartered in Independence, Missouri, Anderson edited the *Liahona*, the voice of the Church to the central United States, until the fall of 1910, when he was recalled in order to serve as editor of the *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, replacing Elder Joseph Fielding Smith who had just been called to the Quorum of the Twelve. Anderson served in this post until his untimely death on 6 January 1923, at age fifty-eight, from peritonitis, which developed following emergency surgery. Besides being a missionary and a prolific writer, Anderson was a dedicated Church leader. In 1910 he was called to the General Board of the MIA, where he remained until his death. He also served on the General Priesthood Committee of the Church and prepared several courses of study for the Church priesthood quorums. He spent much of his time during his last years traveling among the LDS stakes giving instruction in genealogy, for which he became a major force in the Church. It was he who prophesied, in October 1911, that the small genealogical library in Salt Lake City would one day be “the largest and best equipped . . . in the world.”³ The esteem in which Anderson was held by Church leaders is attested to by his funeral held in the Salt Lake City Tenth Ward on 10 January 1923, at which Elder George Albert Smith and Elder Joseph Fielding Smith of the

Quorum of the Twelve spoke, as did Elders Anthony W. Ivins, Rudger Clawson, and Heber J. Grant of the First Quorum of Seventy, “all of whom spoke of his noble character and his efficient work in the gospel cause.”⁴ Resolutions from many of the stakes of the Church poured into Salt Lake City praising Anderson for his “genius and his skill” in teaching and in writing for the Latter-day Saints.⁵

III

It is in his “genius and his skill” as an author in the Home Literature tradition that modern scholars are most interested, for Anderson stands at the head of the Home Literature movement in Mormon letters, that movement which also included such influential figures as Susa Young Gates, Orson F. Whitney, Emmeline B. Wells, B. H. Roberts, Josephine Spencer, and Augusta Joyce Crocheron.

Home Literature—fiction, drama, poetry, and essays written by faithful Mormons to instruct other Mormons in faith, Mormon standards, and Mormon commitment—rose to importance over the space of a single decade, 1888–98 (the latter the year of *Added Upon*), and has continued to be a force in Mormon letters ever since.

From the earliest days of the Territory of Deseret, the leaders of the Latter-day Saints had little use for fiction, particularly of the dime-novel variety then flooding the country. Indeed, George Q. Cannon blamed novel reading for “many of the evils which prevail in the world.”⁶ It was only after the monolithic strength of Mormon isolation began to be threatened by the influx of Gentiles and their accompanying gentile values that Church leaders, notably Orson F. Whitney, Susa Young Gates, and Emmeline B. Wells, suggested that the Church fight the fires of a pervasive popular fiction with a fiction and a literature lit at the torches of LDS values.

In 1888, Bishop Whitney, in a major address directed to the youth of the Church, called on Mormon writers to produce a literature for home consumption, a “home Literature,” “pure and powerful,” centering on Mormon themes and reflecting Mormon ideals, a literature which would one day enable the Mormon culture to produce “Miltons and Shakespeares of [its] own.”⁷

Responding to this challenge, Nephi Anderson wrote and published, to wide though not uncritical Mormon acclaim, *Added Upon* (1898), a novel based on an idea which he had begun to formulate in 1893, following his return from his mission to Norway. Excited about the possibilities of Mormon literature, and by the success of this first book, Anderson exclaimed in “A Plea for Fiction,” an essay published in the first volume of *The Improvement Era*, “What a field is here in Mormonism for the pen of the novelist”. And he called for promotion, in the stakes of Zion, of “the good, pure, elevating kind” of literature.⁸

In *Added Upon*, and in the nine novels which would periodically follow, Anderson attempted to achieve just that. He worked with imaginative vigor to express his appreciation for the impact of the doctrines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on his life and the lives of all who had been, like him, caught in the gospel net.

Anderson's literary theory is therefor similarly single-minded and focused. In his short story, "At St. Peter's Gate," published in the *Improvement Era* (1917), Anderson tells of a painter, a singer, a writer of a books, a physician, a businessman, and a merchant, applying for entrance to heaven. Each of them, however, had catered in life only to the wealthy—none of whom was present in the heavens to testify in the petitioners' behalf. The writer, when asked if he had taught his readers great ideals, replied "I never had patience with 'purpose' stories."⁹ Consequently, the writer, Anderson leads us to believe, went straight to the celestial kingdom—with the rest of the gifted but selfish artisans and businessman. "By all means let us have in literature, as in all else, 'Art for Art's sake,'" he wrote in "Purpose in Fiction" in 1898; "only let us understand what art is." And art, for him, meant purpose, for "Art deals with love, and God is love; Art deals with truth, and God is the source of all truth."¹⁰

In "Purpose in Fiction" Anderson succinctly states his literary creed and the central tenet of LDS Home Literature when he insists that "a good story is artistic preaching," and that "a novel which depicts high ideals and gives to us representations of men and women as they should and can be, exerts an influence for good that is not easily computed." He concludes that the main object of literature is not to provide amusement. "He who reaches the people," he writes, "and the story writer does that, should not lose the opportunity of 'preaching.'"¹¹

The process of change and self-realization through the gospel lies at the center of each of Anderson's novels and short stories. Since missionary work is the vehicle for preaching Mormonism and effecting such dramatic changes and insights, Anderson wrote about it, more or less, in all of his novels and stories. "Teaching the gospel to receptive minds is the keenest joy of missionary life," he writes in *A Daughter of the North*,¹² and in *Romance of a Missionary* he writes, in a typical passage:

The missionary spirit burned within him, and drove out all fear. If the door was slammed in his face, he simply hummed softly a song . . . and then went to the next door. . . . After a time, he declared that he would rather hold a good street meeting than to eat one of Sister McDonald's splendid meals. There was something exhilarating to the soul to have a large company of people stand and listen to the message which he was sent to deliver.¹³

Anderson's missionaries, sometimes weak and often vulnerable, grow mighty in the work long before the "long-sleeved envelope" of official release sends them back to their patiently waiting Utah sweethearts.

But his missionaries are, after all, only catalysts for broken and contrite hearts; thus Anderson portrays, again and again, the pattern of truth-seeking, acceptance, trial, change, and gratitude. Harald's father, in *The Castle Builder*, speaks for many of Anderson's characters when he says, "Thank God, thank God, the truth has come at last."¹⁴

Such change is the dynamic force in all of Anderson's plots and follows hard on the inevitable temptation and trial—whether after the irate parent has disinherited the young convert, or after the bewildered (and handsome) gentile lover has severed his relationship with the newly baptized young woman. The characters must then undergo the agony of doubt and the consequences of their new Mormonness. But the heroes or heroines inevitably triumph over self, never to waver again. They change their lives, shed Babylon, and embrace the supposed loneliness of Mormonism only to be "surprised by grace" and the blessings which follow conversion—often in the form of material and romantic recompense. Despite this purposeful, didactic heresy, Anderson developed into a craftsman whose integration of the gospel message into his stories was increasingly subtle and skillful. Though dated, his novels are still generally readable, occasionally charming, often moving, and always faith promoting. They are not as good as we would hope; but they are much better than some critics have led us to expect, reminding the reader, on occasion, of the works of such contemporary novelists as William Dean Howells, Edward Eggleston, and Winston Churchill. But the difference between Anderson and other turn-of-the-century writers remains profound: his novels are permeated with Mormonism, which he explores in unprecedented ways. He became the first Latter-day Saint to attempt a literary fusion of life, modern fictional modes, and Mormonism—a fusion which continues to challenge Mormon writers. As Anderson's ten novels attest, he grew increasingly adept at making that difficult fusion.

IV

Nephi Anderson's first attempt at integrating Mormonism and realistic literature is a failure—a failure which has moved several generations of Mormon teenagers. In *Added Upon* (1898), Anderson attempts to follow Signe and Rupert and their friends through premortal life and earth-life into the spirit world, through the Millennium, and finally, into exaltation (with which he chose to deal in blank verse). The best sections of the novel are those concerning earth-life, wherein Anderson prefigures his real strength—telling a good story.

Even in these mortal sections of *Added Upon*, however, Anderson fails to pay attention to transitions, to necessary detail, or to logical character development. His protagonist, Rupert, moves from Norway to the American

Midwest and West, through material success and failure and loss of his true love, only to find, at the point of suicide, happiness in the restored gospel of Jesus Christ as taught to him by Signe, whom he marries, and with whom he moves west once more, only to die in a construction accident. The story then continues to follow the couple—Signe laboring in mortality and Rupert in the spirit world—until they are reunited, resurrected, and eventually glorified.

Anderson's avowed purpose, of course, is to demonstrate Mormon teachings (and some individual views) concerning relationships between the living and the dead, the unborn and the living, and the importance of vicarious ordinances in behalf of the dead—concerns similarly underlined in such modern spin-offs of *Added Upon* as *Saturday's Warrior*, *Star Child*, and *My Turn on Earth*.

Often impatient and awkward with the vehicle of fiction at this early stage in his career, Anderson frequently stumbles in his attempts to combine story and sermon. To his credit, however, his section on the Millennium shows imagination and insight—and perhaps some indebtedness to Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888) and William Dean Howells's *A Traveller from Altruria* (1894). Anderson depicts, for example, a visit to the Celestial City by the king of Poland, who is conducted on a tour and taught the Lord's laws of social equality, economics, government, and, of course, theology. The king learns that it is truly a blessing to live in the holy city when George Washington, Martin Luther, and Socrates arrive to speak to the children about history. The trio have been, the guide points out, "at the school of the prophets all morning, and now they come from the high school yonder. You see what advantages today's students of history have," he adds.¹⁵

Evidence of artistic growth is abundant, however, in his second novel, *Marcus King, Mormon* (1900).¹⁶ More tightly focused, with fewer characters and a smaller canvas, this novel follows Marcus King, a young minister, through his conversion to Mormonism, his rejection by his fiancée Alice Merton because of his conversion, and his exodus to Utah, where he meets and eventually marries Janet Harmon, but not until he converts Alice to the gospel, nurses her until her death, and returns to Utah and Janet and temple marriage—to both of his loves, living and dead, a *deus exodus Mormonia* ending which appears in several of Anderson's novels and short stories.

Marcus King, Mormon is occasionally clumsy in its execution, notably in King's unnecessary confession at the end that he is the author but has written in third person because of modesty—a point of view which then forces him to explain lamely that passages written in praise of his character have been sneaked in by wife Janet without his prior knowledge. Still, in

Marcus King, Mormon, far superior to and far more readable than *Added Upon*, Anderson makes an interesting attempt to examine personal sacrifice on an individual and a collective level.

In *The Castle Builder* (1902), Anderson's experimentation with technique continues with even greater success as he turns to Norway for his setting and relates the fortunes of Harald, a king of Norwegian Horatio Alger who rises from rags to Mormonism, and his lovely Thora, a wealthy lass who eventually renounces all for Mormonism and Harald.

Anderson's developing technique is seen in his obvious but sustained use of unifying symbolism—in a number of rose and castle-building images, for example—as well as in his soaring, romantic descriptions of Norwegian landscapes, which he attempts, often successfully, to parallel with beautiful gospel inscapes. *The Castle Builder*, though sometimes overwritten, becomes Anderson's first real novel, and he manages to mute gospel preaching and underscore the realities of human psychology as his hero and heroine make important accommodation in their lives because of their new faith.

In his fourth novel, *Piney Ridge Cottage* (1912),¹⁷ published a decade after *The Castle Builder*, Anderson sets the story in Utah and attempts to deal directly with the importance of marrying within the faith. Julia Elston, a cultivated and beautiful Mormon girl who reads the *Atlantic*, *Harper's*, and *Ladies Home Journal*—and the Church magazines—has her certain future with Glen Curtis temporarily disrupted when her handsome adopted half-brother, a confirmed and tenacious Gentile, arrives from Chicago, falls in love with her, is softened by association with the Latter-day Saints, and is taught the gospel. The question throughout, however, is whether the Gentile, Chester Lawrence, is converted to Julia or to Mormonism. Julia opts, after great internal turmoil, to marry Glen Curtis, who is called on a mission. He goes, of course, as “refusal [of a mission call],” Anderson teaches, “never enters the mind of a true Latter-day Saint.”¹⁸ Chester, spurned, eventually leaves as well, heartbroken but true to his newly found faith. All ends well when Julia receives a belated but comforting spiritual witness that she has done the right thing.

In *Piney Ridge Cottage*, Anderson portrays human psychology by dealing with inner turmoil. He demonstrates clearly, and with a sophistication uncommon in Home Literature, that even when one lives a righteous life decisions are not always easy. It is only after Julia's struggle and decision that she receives her spiritual confirmation in this novel, Anderson also manages to use a passable dialect and to portray with such effective local color that the reader is reminded of Bret Harte and even Sarah Orne Jewett. The gospel, while integral to the book's fabric, is often made subsidiary or tangential to the drama being enacted in the misunderstandings and decisions of the major characters.

Piney Ridge Cottage has a weak sequel in *The Story of Chester Lawrence* (1913),¹⁹ in which Anderson takes the story of Gentile cum Saint Chester Lawrence to its fanciful but not very satisfying conclusion. Trying to heal his wounds, Chester, while traveling by ship to England, meets and fall in love with the lovely but frail Lucy Strong. Chester converts Lucy to Mormonism, much to the discomfort of her adopted minister father, who, it turns out, is Chester's father. After some weeks in England, Lucy, terminally ill, is hastened homeward on an unseaworthy ship, which sinks. While the ship is sinking and Anderson is taking utmost advantage of all the *Lusitania* anguish, Lucy dies of natural causes. Chester nobly gives the last place in the last boat to the Reverend Mr. Strong, who goes sorrowing to Utah, where he joins the Church and will have the temple sealings performed in behalf of Lucy and Chester.

The Story of Chester Lawrence, not nearly as successful as either *The Castle Builder* or *Piney Ridge Cottage*, is literarily one step backward, flawed as it is in its very conception. But there are successful moments as well, scenes which demonstrate that Anderson was still growing in his technique. He handles, for example, the various settings of Ireland, England, Paris, and Lucerne in vivid prose and also gives his readers their first taste of Mormon proselytizing, as Chester, during his London stay, accompanies the missionaries in their endeavors. Throughout the book Anderson also crafts an internal unity through the Lucy leitmotif. He also suggests very subtly the symbolic relationships between Chester's voyaging and his life.

One of the greatest evidences of Anderson's development as a writer comes, however, in his next novel, *A Daughter of the North* (1915), clearly one of his best. A kind of reversal of *The Castle Builder*, *A Daughter of the North* examines the effects on Atelia Heldman, a lovely, wealthy, talented and nationally renowned Norwegian boat-racer, of her conversion to Mormonism. Atelia, finding she cannot embrace both Mormonism and her beloved Halvor Steen, is tempted to recant, but remains firm and passes the conversion agony to Halvor, who eventually joins the Church after proving to himself that his conversion is genuine. The couple rejoice in their newly found Church and emigrate to Utah where they are sealed in the Salt Lake Temple.

A Daughter of the North, full of internal character turmoil, lovely settings, and believable conversation and plot, is an exciting novel. It is packed with several adventures, including fire and shipwreck, all set against the backdrop of Norway's spectacular fjords and painted on a Mormon canvas, not merely sprayed with a Mormon veneer. Anderson's characters are real, as is their misery, their joy, their love, and their impatience in waiting for the happiness they eventually achieve. *A Daughter of the North* still reads well and might be favorably compared with such second-ranked American

novels as Harold Frederic's *The Damnation of Theron Ware* or Edward Eggleston's *The Hoosier Schoolmaster*.

With *John St. John* (1917),²⁰ however, Anderson suffers from an epistolary mess of Mormon history. Like Marcus King, John St. John leaves a life of ease and wealth to investigate Mormonism's claims. He joins the Saints in Missouri, is converted, and in a long series of letters to his believing mother and his inane and lifeless fiancée, Dora, John relates the high points of LDS church history through the Missouri and Nauvoo periods. Dull Dora and her lovely sister Jane visit John and his mother in Nauvoo, but Dora continues to resist the faith while Jane becomes converted to Mormonism—and to John. This fragmented retelling of early Church history is followed by revealing that John St. John, prosperous and middle-aged, is now the husband of both Dora, the dull and unbending Gentile, and the vivacious, charming and believable Jane.

John St. John, while it depicts some notable scenes, is an artistic failure in which Anderson attempted to create in fiction that which he had already better accomplished in exposition in his *A Young Folk's History of the Church* (1898).²¹

In the next novel, *The Romance of a Missionary* (1919), Anderson successfully follows Elder Willard Dean through his first faltering steps as a missionary into a brief flirtation with English Saint Elsa Fernley, who reciprocates, causing him to flee the city and to come of age as an effective and mature missionary through his work among the lower classes in industrial England. Toward the end of his mission, Elder Dean assists in sending Elsa to Utah, where she marries Willard's best friend. At the end of the book, Willard, still on his mission, is assured in a well-crafted prophetic day-dream of a bright future with Grace Wells, his lovely Utah love.

In *The Romance of a Missionary* Anderson skillfully treats the English rural and urban contrasts and portrays several of his characters with a richness previously found only in *A Daughter of the North*. His missionaries have frailties as well as strengths, and among his Englishmen are authentic portraits of poor and distressed human beings, as well as believable portrayals of the middle class. Anderson weaves into the story a subplot involving a young woman cousin whose life has been blighted by her lover's alcoholism. Elder Dean is able to effect reform and conversion in the young man and eventual reconciliation with his fiancée. But Anderson is full of surprises. His ninth novel is totally different from his earlier works. *The Boys of Springtown* (1920)²² is a pleasant summertime idyll about William Wallace Jones, a young English convert to the Church sent to live with his aunt in Springtown, Utah, while his mother saves enough money to transport herself to the American West. Anderson unfolds, in a spritely and entertaining style reminiscent of the works of the Yorgason brothers, a number

of adventures among the lively Mormon boys of Springtown. The book, lighthearted and charming, its Mormonness remarkably subtle, still reads well and continues to be read and appreciated (where it is available) as a kind of Mormon *Tom Sawyer* or *Penrod*.

Anderson caps his literary career with *Dorian* (1921),²³ probably his best, and certainly his boldest novel. *Dorian* is the story of Dorian Trent, a small-town Mormon boy with intellectual abilities which have been fanned to white heat by Uncle Zed, the town philosopher and avid disciple of Orson Pratt. Dorian, a reader of Dickens, Thackeray, Huxley, Ingersoll, and Thomas Paine, is sobered by the death of his first love, Mildred Brown, which turns him more fervently to philosophy and away from practicality and awareness of the unwavering love of his lovely neighbor, Carlia Duke.

Dorian is first shaken into realization of his own feelings for Carlia by the attention paid her by Jack Lamont, a traveling salesman with an automobile and dubious background. When Carlia disappears for several months, Dorian undertakes a search for her, only to learn that, months earlier, Jack had drugged and seduced Carlia, who had given birth to an illegitimate child, born dead. Dorian also discovers that Carlia, ashamed and fearful, remains in hiding. He eventually finds her and attempts to answer to himself the question, "Could he let his love for her overcome the repulsion which would arise like a black cloud into his thoughts?"²⁴ Gradually he finds he can love her without qualification. Without revealing to Carlia that he knows of her baby, he takes her home, where she eventually confesses her fall, only to find that Dorian has known all along, having learned the lesson of the book: one must not only learn but also live the tenets of the theology one studies. As the book ends, a year later, Carlia has nearly completed what Anderson calls a "period of purification," and, after discussing their future plans for education and temple marriage, the sadder but wiser pair walk on, "hand in hand," writes Anderson symbolically, "down into the valley of sunshine and shadow."²⁵

Dorian is Anderson's mature novel, and it is generally a success. Artistically, Anderson has come a long way. Gospel discussions among the characters continue to be important to the book, as in all of Anderson's works, but in *Dorian* they often form a counterpoint with the ongoing life of the Valley and are obstacles to Dorian's real understanding of Carlia and life.

The novel is real: in the foreground are serious human dilemmas and problems, and Carlia's fall and Dorian's ability to forgive and eventual willingness to marry her in the temple suggest a maturity and wisdom in Anderson's final novel which makes it the success it generally is. *Dorian* recalls Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. But unlike Angel Clair, Dorian demonstrates his own Christian capacity to forgive. Carlia is real: she pouts, frets, grows angry, despairs. Dorian is real: he becomes angry, fights, swears,

and irritates the reader in his short-sightedness regarding Carlia's plight. All of this tempers Dorian's superior intellectual powers and gentles him to believability. His triumph comes in his struggle to harmonize his knowledge of science and Mormonism and in his forgiving relationship with Carlia.

Dorian also underscores a maturity not only in Anderson, but in his readers—or at least in Anderson's respect for his readers—and fosters hope for a more sophisticated LDS Home Literature. With Anderson's untimely passing, however, such promise was left unrealized, for in the next half-century Home Literature, conforming to the enervating policies of the Church magazines, would fall far short of the promise to which Anderson had pointed at the end of his career.

V

Karl Keller proclaims that "literature cannot be theological tracts, with dogma abstracted, ideas preached, salvation harped on," and he insists that "literature is seldom written, in the service of religion."²⁶ Nephi Anderson, unwilling and unable as he was to separate creed from experience or art from belief, would strongly disagree. Still, while his work falls short of modern critical expectations, Anderson moved steadily from writing the dogmatic didacticism which Keller attacks toward more subtle portrayals of life as experienced by a man whose meat and drink and air were Mormon.

His accomplishments should be instructive to modern Mormon writers, for, like many present writers, he was fascinated by the "flood subjects" of missionary and conversion experience and by the old verities of repentance, personal worth, love pride, humility, and spirituality. He attempted to deal with such themes in a way which is at once artistic and orthodox—a challenge which many current Latter-day Saints, captivated by Babylon, discuss, but few attempt, and fewer succeed in meeting. Unable to separate Mormonism out from the fibers of his art, Nephi Anderson tried very hard to turn his positive Mormon experience into significant art. In Anderson's successes and failures, in his steady progress from artless dogma to gently dogmatic art are lessons to be learned by modern Mormon readers, critics, and a whole new generation of writers.

A PARTIAL LIST OF NEPHI ANDERSON'S WORKS

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_____. *The Boys of Springtown*. Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing and Publishing Co., 1920.

_____. *The Castle Builder*. Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1909.

- _____. *A Daughter of the North*. Salt Lake City: De Utah-Nederlander Publishing Co., 1915.
- _____. *Dorian*. Salt Lake City: Bikuber Publishing Co., 1921.
- _____. *John St. John*. Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing and Publishing Co., 1917.
- _____. *Marcus King, Mormon*. Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1916; first published 1900.
- _____. *Piney Ridge Cottage*. Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1912.
- _____. "A Plea for Fiction." *Improvement Era* 1 (January 1898): 186–88.
- _____. "Purpose in Fiction." *Improvement Era* 1 (February 1898): 269–71.
- _____. *Romance of a Missionary*. Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing and Publishing Co., 1919.
- _____. "At St. Peter's Gate." *Improvement Era* 21 (November 1917): 45–50.
- _____. *The Story of Chester Lawrence*. Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1913.

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1. Nephi Anderson, *Added Upon* (1898: reprint, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973, 34th printing).
2. In announcing the eighth edition of *Added Upon*, Nephi Anderson said that "Elder B. H. Roberts of the *Improvement Era* in reviewing said that I had encompassed all things in heaven and earth within 140 pages" (*Deseret News*, 13 August 1921, sec. 3). I have been unable to find a review by B. H. Roberts in which he makes this statement, though Roberts does state, very early, that *Added Upon* "is doubtless his [Anderson's] chief work, judged in the way of permanency" (*Improvement Era* 5 [August 1902]: 808).
3. Anderson, *Added Upon*, foreword.
4. Nephi Anderson" (obituary), *Improvement Era* 26 (February 1923): 373–75.
5. "Nephi Anderson" (obituary), *Utah Genealogy and Historical Magazine* 14 (April 1923): 62–66.
6. George Q. Cannon, Editorial, *The Juvenile Instructor* 5 (8 January 1870): 5.
7. Orson F. Whitney, "Home Literature," in Richard H. Cracroft and Neal E. Lambert, *A Believing People: Literature of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1979): 208–10.
8. Anderson, "A Plea for Fiction," *Improvement Era* 1 (January 1898): 186–88.
9. Anderson, "At St. Peter's Gate," *Improvement Era* 21 (November 1917): 44–45.
10. Anderson, "Purpose in Fiction," *Improvement Era* 1 (February 1898): 270.
11. *Ibid.*, 270–71.
12. Anderson, *A Daughter of the North* (Salt Lake City: De Utah-Nederlander Publishing Co., 1915), 84–85.
13. Anderson, *Romance of a Missionary* (Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing and Publishing Co., 1919), 21.
14. Anderson, *The Castle Builder* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1909), 192.
15. Anderson, *Added Upon*, 188.
16. Anderson, *Marcus King, Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1916; first published 1900).

17. Anderson, *Piney Ridge Cottage* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1912).
18. Ibid., 191–92.
19. Anderson, *The Story of Chester Lawrence* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1913).
20. Anderson, *John St. John* (Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing and Publishing Co., 1917).
21. Anderson, *A Young Folk's History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1916).
22. Anderson, *The Boys of Springtown* (Independence, Mo.: Zion's Printing and Publishing Co., 1920).
23. Anderson, *Dorian* (Salt Lake City: Bikuber Publishing Co., 1921).
24. Ibid., 205.
25. Ibid., 223.
26. Karl Keller "On Words and the Word of God: The Delusions of a Mormon Literature," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 4 (Autumn 1969): 16.