

Brief Notices

Prophet of the Jubilee, translated and edited by Ronald D. Dennis (Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1997)

In July 1846 in Rhydybont, Carmarthenshire, Wales, Dan Jones published the first issue of a monthly LDS periodical in the Welsh language on a press owned by John Jones, Dan's brother, who was an ordained Congregational minister. The periodical, *Prophwyd y Jubili* (*Prophet of the Jubilee*), ran monthly thereafter through December 1848. Jones's great-great-grandson Ronald Dennis has presented what he calls a "facsimile translation" (xxix) of the complete series, retaining original fonts, layout, and pagination, slightly enlarging font size for readability. Text and index are over seven hundred pages, and Geraint Bowen, former Archdruid of Wales, offers a superb introduction.

Many articles in *Prophet of the Jubilee* rebut arguments of local anti-Mormons or apostates. Articles entitled "The 'Hater of Deceit' Proving Himself a False Prophet Again!!" and "The 'Rev. W. R. Davies, from Dowlais,' and His Cruel and Shameful Persecution Again!—Again!!" give a glimpse of the intense feelings between early Welsh Saints and their religious adversaries. Jones

garnishes his numerous doctrinal treatises with occasional fiction and poetry, excerpts translated from the *Millennial Star*, the neighboring LDS periodical in England, and portions of articles on religious topics taken from European and U. S. newspapers.

A brief summary of each article is provided at the beginning of the book, but after that the reader is left to plod through the text without annotations. While pagination is sure to confuse some readers, *Prophet of the Jubilee* opens up LDS historical documents that have been inaccessible to most English-speaking readers for 150 years. Here is a mass of interesting cultural and doctrinal history, as well as the voice of Dan Jones himself, one of the most prolific and persistent missionaries in the history of the Church.

—Jed L. Woodworth

Book of Mormon Authors: Their Words and Messages, by Roger R. Keller (Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1996)

The statistical study of Book of Mormon texts is a well-traveled road in Book of Mormon scholarship. However, in *Book of Mormon Authors*, Roger Keller shows

that there is still valuable work to be done.

Keller acknowledges a great debt to previous statistical studies. The most famous of these is Wayne A. Larsen and Alvin C. Rencher's "Who Wrote the Book of Mormon? An Analysis of Wordprints," published in *Book of Mormon Authorship: New Light on Ancient Origins*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1982). In this ground-breaking study, Larsen and Rencher use "wordprints," patterns of language using numerous "function words," to establish the authenticity of various authors. Larsen and Rencher argue that because wordprints are primarily set through function words, it would be very difficult for one author to imitate or emulate another author's wordprint. Thus, a wordprint becomes a kind of linguistic "fingerprint."

Keller builds his analysis on the wordprint studies of the Book of Mormon and takes as a given the division of authors established by Larsen and Rencher and others. Keller's work then extends previous statistical studies of the Book of Mormon by moving from description to interpretation. Instead of focusing on function words, Keller catalogues patterns of content words in the Book of Mormon to identify major themes.

Although Keller is not trained as a statistician, he is very careful about his methodology and works closely with other scholars who have conducted statistical textual studies. Keller uses a kind of "cluster analysis," in which he identifies

certain key terms related to major themes and then identifies which authors use which terms. He then interprets the differences in terminology among Book of Mormon authors. Each chapter of his book includes a section entitled "Theological Implications," in which Keller connects his interpretation of Book of Mormon terms to LDS theology.

After discussing the general differences among Book of Mormon authors, Keller delineates five major themes or clusters of terms that appear in the Book of Mormon: laws and commandments, church and churches, earth, Israel, land and lands. Within each section, he provides a helpful table that lists the terms he identified as part of the cluster and the incidence of this term for each Book of Mormon author. Readers who are not as interested in the details of Keller's methodology may want to skim through this section of each chapter and move directly to the interpretation and theological implications, Keller's most useful contribution to Book of Mormon studies.

Because of his theological training, Keller has a real ability to distinguish shades of meaning in Book of Mormon terms. His analysis introduces a number of new and provocative interpretations of Book of Mormon authors and presents important theological principles. Keller unabashedly uses his study of the Book of Mormon to build faith in his predominately LDS audience, but he is also careful to explain that his testimony of the Book of Mormon does not come from scientific studies.

Previous statistical studies of the Book of Mormon may have been too technical for many lay readers, but Roger Keller's *Book of Mormon Authors* has greater appeal and should inform and inspire both casual and serious scholars. Keller admits that his work is not finished, and he encourages others to undertake similar studies, particularly studies of how Book of Mormon authors use synonyms for the terms he identifies. Such a study of synonyms would lead readers into even more nuances of meaning in their reading of this ancient text.

—Gary L. Hatch

The Rhetoric of David O. McKay,
by Richard N. Armstrong (Peter
Lang, 1993)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints experienced exceptional worldwide growth and public recognition during the presidency of David O. McKay. This book, by an assistant professor at Wichita State University, is a study of President McKay's rhetorical appeal to both members and nonmembers and a look at the role he played in creating a positive public image of the Church.

The author suggests that President McKay's timely messages, such as "no other success can compensate for failure in the home," filled the needs of many people—members and nonmembers alike. His clarion call, "every member a missionary," not only inspired the LDS community to accelerate their

missionary effort, but also motivated nonmembers to learn more about the Church. Consequently, Church membership rose dramatically during his presidency (1950–71). Because the book is written for a non-LDS academic audience, it also includes chapters explaining the importance of general conference to Church membership and how Latter-day Saints fit into the Christian community.

All readers will appreciate the positive effect President McKay's exceptional rhetorical skills had on the Church's public image and growing Church membership, but Latter-day Saints will also finish the book with the conviction that the Lord calls his leaders when their talents are most needed.

—Beth Hamilton

Voices of Old Testament Prophets: The 26th Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium, compiled by the
1997 Sidney Sperry Symposium
Committee (Deseret Book, 1997)

The 26th Annual Sperry Symposium centered on various Old Testament prophets, especially the little-known figures and obscure events in their lives. Interesting details and analyses are included, often for the first time in LDS circles—for example, on the mentoring of Jethro, the rebellion of Korah, the stability of the prophets in the Exile, the saviors referred to by Obadiah, the hopeful stories of Habakkuk and Abigail, and the blessings of the temple in the ministry of Haggai. More familiar themes