

to outline the gospel plan, reference should be made to the most complete scriptural definition of the gospel itself, that found in 3 Nephi 27:13-22 given by the Savior; yet the passage is not cited. Some other less important weaknesses are evident. The book lacks continuity in topical movement from some chapters to others, and has some organizational deficiencies. For example, the discussion on becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ (Chapter 5) might well have followed immediately, or even have been incorporated into, the chapter (number 2) on the Savior as the light in our lives. Also, more care might have been shown in distinguishing between entering the celestial kingdom and obtaining exaltation. The distinction, though probably obvious to most Latter-day Saints, would add accuracy to some of Barrus' statements.

These weaknesses do not seriously obscure the message of *The Way to the Sun*. What is said is stated succinctly and simply, amply supported by well-selected scriptural passages. The book is written in a sincere and concerned tone, and evidences in the author both a high sense of commitment to the Lord and conspicuous spiritual insight. Focusing on the basic and eternal verities of the gospel, and upon the necessity of consistent application of these principles in daily living, Barrus gives special emphasis to the Savior as the light and heart of our lives, and to the importance of following Him in order to be renewed spiritually and become partakers of the divine nature. In all, Barrus has made a highly commendable effort to summarize some of the basic gospel requirements comprising the way to the Son.

Tanner, Annie Clark. *A Mormon Mother: An Autobiography*, rev. ed. Foreword by Obert C. Tanner. Salt Lake City: Tanner Trust Fund, University of Utah Library, 1973. 346 pp. \$10.00.

(Reviewed by John B. Harris, associate professor of English at Brigham Young University.)

It is just possible that an autobiography has a natural advantage over a third-person narrative. In its immediacy and directness, its personal point of view, its emotional commitment, and in its often semi-polished prose, it can give the reader a sense of reality and participation that a more ob-

jective work might miss. Certainly such an account avoids the pedantry that often mars scholarly biographies. At any rate, it struck this reviewer that *A Mormon Mother* (volume one of a new series, UTAH, THE MORMONS AND THE WEST) made far more captivating reading than did such highly-touted recent works as Elizabeth Longford's massive study of the Duke of Wellington, Jane Aiken Hodges' epistle-based biography of Jane Austen, and Ralph Martin's immensely popular two-volume portrait of Jenny, the mother of Winston Churchill. The only really damaging characteristic of the book is the author's inclusion of so many letters to and from her children that they clutter the work with irrelevancies and mar the flow of an otherwise straight-forward and vigorously-told story.

At the urging of her children, who considered the work a highly personal memoir, Mrs. Tanner wrote her autobiography in 1941, the last year of her life, and for years very few copies were to be found outside the family circle. Fortunately, Mr. Dale Morgan recognized *A Mormon Mother* as far more important than a private narrative and urged this general publication, and one easily recognizes that although the narrative is, indeed, personal, it is also an excellent microcosmic picture of Mormon life in transition, as it moved from pioneer settlement to modern metropolis, from a tight, self-contained and all embracing community to a disunifying cosmopolitan world, from childlike faith to disturbing intellectual inquiry.

Annie Clark was born in 1864 in Farmington, Utah, the second child of her father's second wife, and the sense of being second seemed to plague her all her life. Hence, her chief ambition appears to have been to make her children front runners. Her father, Ezra T. Clark, was a pioneer who had known the Prophet Joseph personally, who was intimately acquainted with contemporary Church leaders, and who stood for immovable faith and loyalty in his Church/community positions. He served several missions for the Church, and it was on one such mission to England in 1856 that he met Susan, the girl who was to become his second wife and Annie's mother. Ezra lived with his first wife, "Aunt Mary," but Susan and her children were reasonably well cared for and properly respected, living in a pleasant, adequate house across the street from Ezra and Mary's larger home.

It is obvious that Annie looked upon her father not only with respect, but with awe. She loved him and acknowledged that he demonstrated his love for her, but their relationship was always somewhat distant, more a discipleship on Annie's part than tenderness. But with her mother, Annie had a very close union. As the oldest daughter in her mother's family, Annie worked closely with her mother and became a kind of partner with her, acting as assistant household manager and often as adjutant mother to the younger children. It was out of these experiences that Annie, in retrospect, saw her mother as having been less than fairly treated, not simply by her father, but more correctly, according to her view, by the system in which they lived. Susan had come from a refined home in England, and Annie thought it unfair that the duties of a new-settlement farm wife had been thrust upon her. She also resented her father's acknowledgement of a pecking-order in the family and her mother's consequent secondary and semi-neglected position. These adverse feelings, however, seem the reflections of a mature woman lamenting her own life more than the sympathy of a young girl for her mother. As a child and young woman Annie apparently accepted their lifestyle as normal and satisfactory.

Naturally eager for knowledge, Annie was allowed to go to Brigham Young Academy in 1882-3 to study religion. There a visiting professor, Joseph Marion Tanner—against the wishes of Karl G. Maeser—soon began to show her special attention. It is evident that Annie was not particularly attracted to him romantically, but she deemed it almost a sin to refuse an opportunity to marry in polygamy, especially just then when the Edmunds-Tucker Act had recently been passed and many Mormons took a defiant pride in adhering to "the Principle." Obtaining a *reluctant*, semi-approval from her father she married "Mr. Tanner," as she stiffly refers to him in her autobiography, in the Endowment House in 1883. Even taking into account that the law forbade Joseph Tanner from openly acknowledging Annie as his wife, there seems to have been a curious and unusual coolness between them from the start. Mr. Tanner made appointments and promises to visit his new wife and, without troubling to cancel or change them, simply neglected to show up. But, frankly, they seemed to have little in common even when they were together. Expressions of Annie's resentment are visible early in the account of their mar-

riage, but so, it must be pointed out, are Mr. Tanner's. He apparently felt that she was too self-centeredly demanding and not understanding and appreciative enough of his problems and projects—of which he seems always to have had a super-abundance.

As the children were born, they created an even sharper point of contention between the couple. Annie, ever hungry for education, wanted her children to be well-schooled. Strangely enough, Professor Tanner, the popular, professional teacher, didn't share her sentiments. He thought it more important that the children help the family financially than that they go to school.

With such diversity of attitudes and temperaments, it was almost inevitable that the marriage should collapse. There was no divorce, only Mr. Tanner's announcement that she could no longer look to him for support. Their separation did not mean the dissolution of all family ties; the children were often with their father on the Canadian farm, and even Annie seems not to have gotten over her admiring fondness for an obviously unusual and intelligent man. Some of Annie's tenderest expressions of sympathy toward her husband came after their separation. For example, she was genuinely offended by the chilly attitude shown her husband by Church leaders whom he had served so loyally when Joseph Tanner persisted in obeying "the Principle," practicing polygamy, after the Church had forbidden the practice. She frequently evidenced a great pride in his educational accomplishments and in his influential connections, and—although the chapter entitled "Mr. Tanner's Death" is a short one—it is clear that Annie Clark Tanner retained some fondness for her estranged husband to the end. She was very grieved to learn that he had died all alone in Canada, but when she learned that he had died peacefully, her first thought was, "Surely the Lord loved him."

A Mormon Mother is the story of a brave and courageous woman whose energy, determination and goals helped her to raise a remarkable family, a family with many front-runners. It is the story of a woman forced to struggle against the hardships of poverty, against the legal witch hunts which plagued Mormon wives who lived on the "underground," against a husband who didn't share her ambitions for her children,

against sickness, death, and separation. But mostly it is the story of a woman struggling against herself. It is a glimpse into one woman's journey from what she herself regarded as a naively simplistic faith, to what most readers will detect as an almost equally naive doubt, and finally to what appears to have been a peaceful and happy resolution at the end. Her big battle was with polygamy, and her primary adversary was her husband. Her triumphs over both seem just and overdue, and the reader is inclined to view Annie Clark Tanner as her obviously devoted son Obert does, as a tragic heroine who managed to capture a bit of poetic justice in her life before it ended. But a suspicion keeps lurking in the back of the reader's mind: can we depend upon all of her evaluations? Probably not. Cold objectivity would be simply too much to ask. It is true that "history is always written by the survivors," but it would be interesting to hear Mr. Tanner's version of the story.