

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

remembering brother lyon

The tears came unexpectedly and profusely when I walked into my brother's house and saw the very natural picture of my husband on the cover of *Dialogue* as it lay on the table there. (My copy came the next day.) How generous and kind of you to honor him by this beautiful cover, your editorial, Davis Bitton's tribute, Lowell Bennion's reflections and, in addition, an article by him. I am amazed that you would do so much. It comes over me strongly that he was held in higher esteem than even I realized. My sincere and deep gratitude to all of you.

In my thinking your editorial tribute to my husband is one of the most accurate assessments of his personality that anyone has yet written. I was especially pleased that you spoke of his boundless energy and his cheerfulness and that you said "his voice was always on the verge of laughter." You captured his spirit and expressed it beautifully.

Thank you also for the other thought-provoking and informative articles in the issue.

Hermana Lyon
Salt Lake City, Utah

I wanted to send you this note expressing my appreciation for the memorial pieces that appeared in the latest issue of *Dialogue*. I thought your introduction captured Dad's personality to a "T." Having sat through a number of his classes, I can also see him with a twinkle in his eye and a half smile, talking about St. Augustine or telling of St. Bernard of Clairveaux and the founding of monasteries. I was also fascinated by his piece on Mormon Church historians, as I had not seen it before now. Again, thank you for this very lovely tribute.

Joseph L. Lyon, M.D.
Salt Lake City, Utah

Thank you for the lovely tribute! You've done a first-rate job with *Dialogue* generally, though my lapsed subscription does

not prove it. That is a consequence of sloth and ever-shrinking reading time. Tomorrow I plan to repent. Let me say how profoundly I appreciate what you said about my father and did for him. It meant a great deal to me.

James K. Lyon
Del Mar, California

How grateful we are for your wonderful *Dialogue* featuring Dad on the cover. I almost hate to write a formal thank-you letter since your remarks were so warm and personal—you truly captured some of Dad's essence in your introductory paragraphs. My own very biased opinion happens to correspond with yours—he was one of the greatest men in "these here parts."

Ted Lyon
Provo, Utah

Thank you for the articles about and by Brother T. Edgar Lyon. I was at the University of Utah during his time, and I feel fortunate and blessed that I came under the influence of two great men, Brother Lyon and Brother Lowell Bennion.

I drop everything when *Dialogue* comes, and I read it from cover to cover. Keep up the good work!

Donna F. Nelson
Ellensburg, Washington

I am pleased to remit a check for another year's subscription. This latest *Dialogue* will be prized by the Smiths. You see, T. Edgar Lyon was a life-long friend—we were almost inseparable until we each married. Since then we had seen each other every year or two and always for a good visit.

It is well to spend some time with Leonard Arrington, too. This remarkable and gifted writer is by far the most professional Church Historian. I have enjoyed especially his biography of Edwin Woolley.

Keep up the good work. Our wishes for your success.

Jesse R. Smith
Washington, D.C.

The Winter 1978 issue was of particular meaning to me [containing an article on] my great uncle T. Edgar Lyon. I regret that distance separated us, for I could have learned so much more. But one of my best memories is of a visit a decade ago. Like many young people I had unanswered questions and inner struggles about the Gospel—and found some solace in *Dialogue*. It was exhilarating to hear of “Uncle Ed’s” enthusiasm for *Dialogue*. I’m sure he enjoyed reading this issue from the other side, unless they’re keeping him busy telling his anecdotes.

Scott S. Smith
Thousand Oaks, California

I thought your last issue with its tributes to T. Edgar Lyon was marvelous. The article on J. Bracken Lee and the Mormon Church was especially insightful.

James N. Kimball
Salt Lake City, Utah

bouquets for “brack”

My husband and I feel that Dr. Lythgoe’s extensive and fair research into my husband’s political life has given him a rather broad view of my husband’s activities and accomplishments during those busy years. Surely that was a unique period in the history of our state and a challenging one! Our kindest best wishes to you.

Margaret D. Lee
(Mrs. J. Bracken Lee)
Salt Lake City, Utah

I enjoyed reading Dennis Lythgoe’s article about “Brack.” He is a very special friend and a super honest person. It is too bad that there are not more Lees!

Ray Phillips
Salt Lake City, Utah

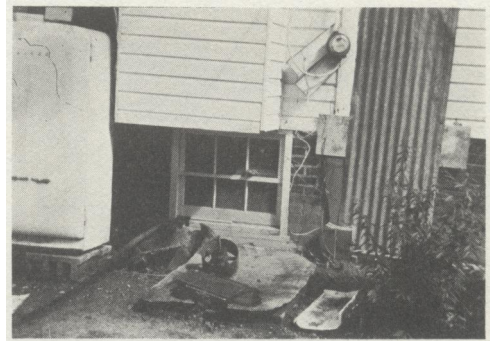
project liahona

When I saw your last cover with the Siamese montage of Freud and Jung, I thought surely the subject of dreams would be discussed at last. Not so. I can’t help but think of our most fundamental scriptural beginnings such as Moroni’s quotes from the Bible to Joseph Smith, in particular Joel 3:28,

... your sons and daughters shall prophesy. Your old men shall dream dreams and your young men see visions ...

In this light it is surprising to me that a culture like ours, boasting as we do of a love of truth, is so ignorant of as vital a subject as dreams. The dreaming process is such a simple, direct and self evident way to inner truth. All one need have to tap its treasures is simple desire to know and a little faith. A simple prayer request is often all it takes to wake the next morning with a dream response. The simple act of placing a pad of paper by the side of one’s bed with pen and flashlight is a powerful suggestion to the maker of dreams that you are serious and receptive and prepared.

This is a personal subject. But is *Dialogue* required to be impersonal? Or, to be scholarly and responsible, must our subjects be abstract and “objective”? I hope not!



One of the best metaphors on dreams I’ve read recently comes from *The Dream Diary* by Carrol Regnier Associates, referring to the activity of “The mind at night:”

The human mind is rather like a parliament. By day the ruling rationalist party has a comfortable majority, and therefore is able to govern without much interference from the other parties. True, it may have to put up with a motion of no-confidence now and then, or even endure the occasional filibuster by a still small voice, but it always gets its way in the end. It devises the priorities, makes the decisions, responds to the crises, takes credit for the triumphs, explains away the defeats, and in general supervises the day-to-day running of a life.

At night, however, the loyal opposition comes into its own. With all the government

offices shut down, your shadow government is free to review the majority party's performance, hold hearings, make demands, raise alarms, issue warnings, call attention to mistakes, and in general throw its weight around.

So, I propose we figure out a way to dialogue on dreams. Let us discover, present and share with each other the findings of our collective "loyal opposition." Perhaps we could call it "Project Liahona?"

Eugene Kovalenko
Provo, Utah

porridge of pap

Your Autumn issue served up a porridge of condescending pap when the Saints need nourishment most of all. Here is Brother Larson comparing the RSV to the King James: who cares if we have the New Translation? Here is Brother King's pseudo-erotic "Marriage Song"; how dare he insult the readership by footnoting his poetry! Are we swines to which Dialogue must throw literary pearls? And here is "Star Wars" as gospel truth! Never give the sucker an even break.

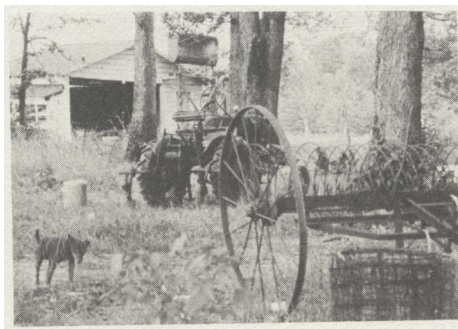
But what hurts most is Sam Taylor's admission that "like it or lump it" he has slipped into the comfortable irrelevancy of California's armchair Mormonism. That is the hardest lump in the porridge to swallow. I would have thought more from John W.'s son.

It hurts because I've lived in Brother Taylor's California, and it has about as much to do with early Utah as the Osmonds' version of "The Great Brain." It hurts when the ward grinder is assigned to the garage of a Seventy who hawks food storage containers when members show up to grind their wheat. It hurts to hear returned missionaries tell racial jokes about ghetto blacks and then hear the whole congregation break out in laughter. It hurts to leave a sick and pregnant Asian wife in the care of the Priesthood and the Relief Society and return to find her collapsed on the floor and my three-year old nursing her back to health. Despite promises and even long-distant pleas when no one answered my phone, no one ever came.

And it hurts when the Bishopric won't visit a black member because of his neighborhood (That same black man left groceries on my doorstep when he thought I was

out of food.) Three times I moved to find my Zion; three times I told the Bishopric all the hurt and embarrassment my wife had endured when members would ask her did she work in a bar just because her eyes were slanted; three times we moved before the home teachers ever bothered to come.

There is a world crying for help, waiting for someone or something to help. How do we distribute wealth? How do we bring back the Order of Enoch? How do we prepare for Jackson County? At what point does our allegiance to governments stop? What are the harbingers of unification with the Reorganized? Should we begin to pray for the return of the Principle? Or else what do we intend to do with the plural wives of Islamic converts when we proselytize in the Mid-east? What should be the shapes of our cities, our towns, our wards and our temples: Should Zion be built-up through new town developments or lie scattered as she is? Do we feed the poor before we preach the gospel? Here are your priorities, not the junk food we have been getting. We can no longer afford the luxury of looking in on your little Essene community when you have turned your back on the evils of Rome which threaten to batter Israel: inequitable



wealth, selfishness, insensitivities to other cultures, complacency, materialism, legalism and hypocrisy.

Once I was told (perhaps in jest) that the Genesis Group resorted to smuggling messages under President Smith's birthday cake in order to keep the lines of communication open. I once thought Dialogue did the same. Surely the revelation on blacks would not have come if President Kimball had not asked, and he would not have asked, if he did not feel sure that we were ready to receive. But there is more revelation to come, and who is there to tell the Prophet

we are ready? Certainly not your Autumn contributors.

Happily, the Ensign in recent issues has struck hard at the evils which threatened to keep Zion from rising forth. If Dialogue cannot keep pace, then perhaps it is time to call it quits. I already get Newsweek.

Neil B. Hall
Subic Bay, Philippines

... and a scoop of praise

The essays by Adele Brannon McCollum and Owen Clark (Vol. XI, No. 3) were landmark publications, especially where Clark speaks of a "synthesis of religious experience and current scientific thought." They tend to scoop some of the more simplistic pieces written by others. Thanks for a truly insightful and sensitively edited issue, Ellis Dye, Karl Keller and David Rowland to the contrary.

Thomas L. Rogers
Provo, Utah

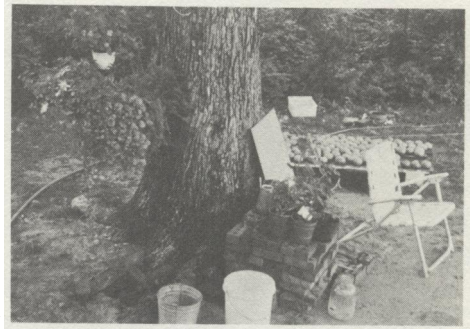
Editor's note: See also Gerald Bradford's contribution in Notes and Comments

timeless nibley

It is absolutely startling to think that there are really human beings on this planet with brains like Hugh Nibley's. Even now, after all these years, I can still see him coming to class armed with a stack of books that would not only educate us, but delight and entertain us as well. I took Literary History of the Greeks from Dr. Nibley, the then and now foremost intellect of Brigham Young University and most other western colleges as well. He would read to us directly from the Greek texts, translating Homer into current comicstrip vernacular. Incredible!

I really did not belong in that class. All my fellow students were Rhodes Scholars, or were working on some thesis or the other. My major was Fun-Around-Campus, with a minor in Elementary Education. I only took the class because a friend had urged me to get acquainted with Dr. Nibley. I soon discovered that I could get to know Dr. Nibley only after a fashion. I had the feeling that he wouldn't recognize me outside of class (or in class for that matter). Indeed, I don't remember his taking roll more than once during the term. But if you're thinking that he did not have an interest in his students, do not be misled. He had so much concern that he willingly set up a series of

debates with the leader of a religious group that had been sent to Provo to "convert" the students at BYU. I had chosen to do my class paper on the "Mysticism" of this particular group. Though he never admitted he was protecting his lambs from the wolves, Dr. Nibley nevertheless made shambles out of their arguments with his lucid insights. It was not until much much later that, from



my own mature vantage point of both parent and teacher, I could gain a full appreciation for what he had been doing then.

I congratulate the committee that produced *Nibley on the Timely and the Timeless* and I salute Dr. Nibley, former BYU Professor of the Year. Indeed, he has been my professor of the year every year since!

E.C. Weaver Shaeffer
Clovis, New Mexico

In one of the essays in *Nibley on the Timely and the Timeless*, Hugh Nibley compares the brain to a pair of glasses with different colored lenses through which one would see alternate flashes of red and green flickering at high speed. This image, as well as being literally true of the modality of human attention, might well serve as a metaphor for the kind of mind Dr. Nibley displays to those of us who have long known him in print, selecting and filtering flashes of insight in different modes and presenting them in the spluttering, supererogatory prose style which is his signature. It is almost as though he were matching his style to our cerebral functions in order to bypass the conscious censor which keeps us from learning anything really new. Actually it is an effort at condensation, rather than an overabundance of words, that gives Nibley's prose its strobelight effect. He has too much of the Arab commentator in him to leave out a single instance that might bear some

light on the point he is making, so example is piled on example with a minimum of smooth transition to round it into an article or more often a string of "parts."

But Nibley can speak with other voices, and they are represented here. One sample of the dialogue defense of Joseph Smith against the likes of Brodie is presented in "Their Portrait of a Prophet." Most satisfying are his talks, which are well represented by "Genesis of the Written Word" and "Zeal Without Knowledge." I only lament the exclusion of the articles on statecraft, which are less available to the Mormon audience for whom this volume was presumably intended than many of the inclusions. Particularly attractive to the Nibleyphile is the "Intellectual Autobiography" which freshly prefaces this collection, unlike Truman Madsen's somewhat tired list of Nibley prodigies in the Foreword.

Kathleen R. Snow
Seattle, Washington

praise for a poet

I have been receiving your excellent publication for some time, and I read it with enjoyment and delight. It is refreshing and encouraging to read articles of scholarship beyond the sometimes confining limits of "official" information. I have also been impressed with the quality of the fiction and poetry published in your magazine. I particularly like a poem I read in the Autumn issue 1977 by Dawn Baker Brimley (Koos-harem, Utah—1914). It is vivid and moving. I hope to read more of her work in future issues.

Della Mae Wood
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Editor's note: see this issue

and a round of applause

One round of applause for the comment by Stanton L. Hovey, Letter to the Editor, Vol. XI, No. 4 (Winter, 1978):

... Certainly some church members desire to explore on their own the pros and cons of a social issue but feel threatened by doing so and need to conform to someone else's official position.

The point is even more pertinent to purely intellectual issues as opposed to merely "social issues." The Mormon gospel teaches us fundamental truths. But our understanding

and articulation of those truths and their relationship *inter se* require each of us to study the logical and practical implications of all that we are taught. As one of the founders of your august journal oft quoted: "Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good."

G. L. Ensley
Los Alamitos, California

from the british grapevine

I have recently become a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and during my reading as an 'investigator' I came across a number of extracts from and references to *Dialogue*. As the books available to me are rather dated, I had thought that *Dialogue* was no longer published, especially as I could find no one who had come across it. (*Dialogue*, it appears, is a common title for educational publications in the U.K.) And as my university, Victoria Manchester, is not really connected with religion *per se*, I thought there was no hope of gaining copies. However, while looking for something totally different, I discovered the address of *Dialogue*, and I thought it worth the attempt to write and ask if it is possible to subscribe. One is rather cut off from what one might call advanced or intellectual Mormon thought, and it would be refreshing to be plugged in. Apart from that, as far as I am aware *Dialogue* is the only specifically Mormon publication not run by the Church itself and as such opens the possibility of raising issues in a committed but not propagandist manner.

Nigel R. Johnson
Manchester, England

Can I open a subscription to your excellent journal, several copies of which I have recently digested?

We rarely ("never" would be a more appropriate word) see any promotions of your "mag" over here. It is left to a very tenuous grapevine to circulate the good news. Yet there is clearly a need for such a stimulating publication among members here. We cannot be saved in ignorance!

I enclose my remittance and proof of my student status, and I look forward to my first year's copies in due course.

Ross Andrews
Manchester, England

Students may follow Mr. Andrews' example and subscribe at half price. Ed.