

LETTERS

No Crusades

Thanks for your hard work and dedication. I realize that the current atmosphere of conservatism and orthodoxy can sometimes be frustrating for those of us who need to ask questions for which there are no easy answers, but it is nice to know that we are not alone. From everything I've ever read in the scriptures, I have to believe that the Lord really wants us to know the truth of all things and not be contented with the status quo. At the same time, we have an obligation to be true to ourselves and the knowledge that is revealed to us and need to respect the free agency of those around us.

Please don't ever get caught up in the crusading spirit. Those who do tend to be more concerned with "winning the glorious quest" (whatever that quest may be) than simply being dedicated to the truth and teaching it with compassion and understanding. Thanks again for your courage and willingness to sacrifice in behalf of all of us.

Jane A. Geller
Upper Darby, Pennsylvania

The 100 Percent Myth

Richard J. Cummings's claim to have only a 15 percent testimony (Summer 1986) leads me to point out that anyone who thinks he has a 15 percent testimony must believe there is a 100 percent testimony out there somewhere. This isn't true. The core of each person's testimony is composed of several items, differing in composition from the core of every other

Mormon's testimony. Saint A may hold dear Articles of Faith 1, 2, and 4, while also being attracted to practices 34, 45, and 115. Saint B may cling to Articles 49, 1, and 7 together with practices 108, 92, and 359.

Moreover, the list of articles and practices changes from season to season. The following nineteenth-century items are now "out," for example: blood atonement, temporal polygyny, the temporal kingdom of God, the Adam-God theory, and speaking in tongues.

Academically sophisticated Mormons, such as Professor Cummings, quite naturally are attracted to a different set of core testimony elements than some of the businessmen down on Temple Square. Just because there are presently more businessmen than academics among the General Authorities doesn't mean that professors have to be like-minded to be good Mormons.

Joseph H. Jeppson
Woodside, California

Mutual Endeavor

Thank you for your invitation to return to the fold as a subscriber. I'm a warm friend of *DIALOGUE* and also appreciate all the fine things you are doing in the Mormon literary field. As you probably know, the forty books I wrote and published in the past years, many of them concerning the same audience, qualify me to the same interest and endeavor.

I hope you realize the important role you play in our mutual world. Thank you for inviting me to again join you in the

field of our common heritage. Unfortunately for me, total blindness has forced the verdict. For fifty years I managed with one eye to carry on a career of journalism and editing many books concerning the American West. This last year I lost the sight of the remaining good eye. Total blindness is hard for me to accept. But from it there can be no reprieve. No longer can I see my beautiful world. As an author, no longer can I write, read, or share in the literary world. I must therefore leave it to you. God bless you in your endeavors. And thank you for again asking me aboard.

Paul Bailey
Claremont, California

P.S. This note was scribbled in the world of total darkness. I hope you can read it.

Disappointed in "Nephite"

We received our winter issue of *DIALOGUE* and read with interest and appreciation many of the articles.

However, when we read the short story by Levi S. Peterson, "The Third Nephite," we had a different feeling. We were both disgusted, embarrassed, and ashamed of the ridicule that was placed on the person who was supposed to be an apostle of Christ, hand chosen by him in the flesh. We were offended by the language that this character used. We were also disappointed in the foul language and the frequent use of the name of Deity. We were ashamed of the type of character Otis was, and of his actions and language.

If this story was meant to be humorous, we certainly missed the point completely. We are embarrassed for the author and will be careful in the future to omit his writings in our reading.

This is not the kind of reading we want in our home. It is not what we would recommend to our friends or grandchildren. If there is more like it published in *DIALOGUE*, we will cancel our subscription.

Herman and Maude Fielding
Othello, Washington

Unheard "Shout"?

Steven Heath (Fall 1986) noted that the polygamist inmates in the Territorial Penitentiary raised the hosannah shout in the spring of 1886. Rudger Clawson was one of the approximately fifty men residing in bunkhouse number three, then occupied exclusively by Latter-day Saints, when the shout was raised. In his "Penitentiary Experiences, 1884-87" (LDS Historical Department Archives), he records that the proposal to offer up the sacred shout was individually assented to by the assembled brethren.

He then notes that the shout was given in the daytime "filling the room with a great volume of sound, which I am sure escaped through the [two] windows and entrance into the open air. The shout was given with earnestness and force almost sufficient to raise the roof, and yet, strange to say, not a prisoner outside of that little company in the bunk room appeared at the door, nor did any one of the guards rush up to learn the cause of so great a disturbance."

The shout appears to have been offered to and heard only by the heavenly hosts.

Melvin L. Bashore
Riverton, Utah

EDITORS' CORRECTION: Several readers have asked us to identify the five founders of *DIALOGUE* and to correct an error in our opening statement in the Spring issue (pp. 4-5). Eugene England and Wesley Johnson served together as managing editors from 1966 through 1969 when Gene left Stanford. Wesley Johnson continued as managing editor through 1970. Others in the original group were: Frances Menlove who served as manuscripts editor, Paul Salisbury as publications editor, and Joseph Jeppson as Notes and Comments editor. Wesley Johnson will explore in detail these people's roles in the founding of *DIALOGUE* in his history of the journal which will appear in the winter issue as part of *DIALOGUE*'s Twentieth Anniversary Celebration.

field of our common heritage. Unfortunately for me, total blindness has forced the verdict. For fifty years I managed with one eye to carry on a career of journalism and editing many books concerning the American West. This last year I lost the sight of the remaining good eye. Total blindness is hard for me to accept. But from it there can be no reprieve. No longer can I see my beautiful world. As an author, no longer can I write, read, or share in the literary world. I must therefore leave it to you. God bless you in your endeavors. And thank you for again asking me aboard.

Paul Bailey
Claremont, California

P.S. This note was scribbled in the world of total darkness. I hope you can read it.

Disappointed in "Nephite"

We received our winter issue of *DIALOGUE* and read with interest and appreciation many of the articles.

However, when we read the short story by Levi S. Peterson, "The Third Nephite," we had a different feeling. We were both disgusted, embarrassed, and ashamed of the ridicule that was placed on the person who was supposed to be an apostle of Christ, hand chosen by him in the flesh. We were offended by the language that this character used. We were also disappointed in the foul language and the frequent use of the name of Deity. We were ashamed of the type of character Otis was, and of his actions and language.

If this story was meant to be humorous, we certainly missed the point completely. We are embarrassed for the author and will be careful in the future to omit his writings in our reading.

This is not the kind of reading we want in our home. It is not what we would recommend to our friends or grandchildren. If there is more like it published in *DIALOGUE*, we will cancel our subscription.

Herman and Maude Fielding
Othello, Washington

Unheard "Shout"?

Steven Heath (Fall 1986) noted that the polygamist inmates in the Territorial Penitentiary raised the hosannah shout in the spring of 1886. Rudger Clawson was one of the approximately fifty men residing in bunkhouse number three, then occupied exclusively by Latter-day Saints, when the shout was raised. In his "Penitentiary Experiences, 1884-87" (LDS Historical Department Archives), he records that the proposal to offer up the sacred shout was individually assented to by the assembled brethren.

He then notes that the shout was given in the daytime "filling the room with a great volume of sound, which I am sure escaped through the [two] windows and entrance into the open air. The shout was given with earnestness and force almost sufficient to raise the roof, and yet, strange to say, not a prisoner outside of that little company in the bunk room appeared at the door, nor did any one of the guards rush up to learn the cause of so great a disturbance."

The shout appears to have been offered to and heard only by the heavenly hosts.

Melvin L. Bashore
Riverton, Utah

EDITORS' CORRECTION: Several readers have asked us to identify the five founders of *DIALOGUE* and to correct an error in our opening statement in the Spring issue (pp. 4-5). Eugene England and Wesley Johnson served together as managing editors from 1966 through 1969 when Gene left Stanford. Wesley Johnson continued as managing editor through 1970. Others in the original group were: Frances Menlove who served as manuscripts editor, Paul Salisbury as publications editor, and Joseph Jeppson as Notes and Comments editor. Wesley Johnson will explore in detail these people's roles in the founding of *DIALOGUE* in his history of the journal which will appear in the winter issue as part of *DIALOGUE*'s Twentieth Anniversary Celebration.