

**S.e.u.o.** (salvo error u omisión), a legalistic expression in Spanish meaning "barring errors or omissions." There was so little time to write a letter last week and I typed it so fast that there were spelling and other errors and a couple of omissions. We had the information on donations exactly backwards. Afterwards we read in the Church News that it's in the U.S. and Canada (where members can best afford it) that contributions have been simplified and reduced—not here among the poor and deprived. I realize that their chapels, etc. are subsidized by others, but what is expected seems excessive to some and they are lost to the church. Only tithing and fast offerings are mentioned in the missionary discussions. Also, we learned later that damage to the 5 de Abril chapel wasn't as bad as indicated in El Mercurio. Elder Samuel Quidiman, who's assigned there, came to see us and said that only the top floor was unusable. Meetings are being held as usual, except that the lack of classrooms makes it necessary for classes to meet in assorted corners. Only recently arrived at his mission, Elder Quidiman is doing quite well. To help him along a bit at the CEM, since he was a little lacking in drive, I jokingly claimed that in Arabic "quidi" means "super" and that he couldn't have been better named. A month later it still made him grin and glow when I asked how an Arab would say "super." (Superman is the same in Spanish—not "Superhombre.")

**Sleepless pursuits.** Often, when unable to sleep, I quest after the difficult or impossible. (Now a lot of you will start sending this heretic sleeping pills.) For years I've meditated over ways to eliminate the appellation "Mormon." Poor Mormon no doubt suffers anguish over the use of his name. After all, it was he who recorded Christ's words in 3 Nephi 27:8. "...For if a church be called in Moses' name then it be Moses' church; or if it be called in the name of a man then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel." I refuse to go by the name "Mormon" and reject the way it's applied, doing my part to assuage Mormon's grief and shame that professed disciples of Christ might countenance such a thing. Whether with reference to the Tabernacle Choir or whatever, this usage should never be sanctioned in the slightest. We have taken upon ourselves the name of Christ, not the name of Mormon, and every Sunday, if faithful, we renew our baptismal covenant by witnessing unto God, the Eternal Father, that we are willing to take upon us the name of his Son (Doctrine & Covenants 20:77); that is, the name of Christ, which both as an adjective and a noun is expressed as "Christian," "cristiano," etc. So, as for me and my house (I sincerely hope), we are Christians, always, never anything else.

In a sense, we are presented with the same quandary as the "Reorganites." The name "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints" had already been preempted by us, so their best alternative was to add "Reorganized." "I'm a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints" is rather long. "I'm a Latter-Day Saint" shortens this but invites puzzlement and skepticism. "I'm L.D.S."—even more abbreviated but of limited currency and requiring explanation—comes across as adjectival, certainly less than a nominal statement of belief and affiliation. "I'm an L.D.S.," as a noun... Forget it! How very uneuphonic. So what are we? "Reorganized Christians"? "Christians of the Latter-Days"?... Too general and ambiguous without further definition. Someone else may hit on a better solution and suggest it to the authorities in a letter, but as for me, convinced in a somewhat sleepless last night that it's the only way, the way of simplicity and truth, I have decided to introduce and speak of myself, with joy, only as a Christian (un cristiano), as a brother in Christ (un hermano en Cristo). Nothing is more important or of greater priority. Explanations and distinctions can follow, bridging always with love and respect common beliefs and feelings.

**"Build on Common Beliefs":** the title of one of our most significant CEM lessons. I don't suppose we intend to, but regrettably we seem to abhor and fear being perceived as having anything in common with other Christians. Quite naturally, this is often interpreted as an attitude of arrogance and disdain as well as evidence that we are not Christians. An example: We reject the symbol of the cross. We justify ourselves by saying that we should not emphasize the gruesome crucifixion but rather the positive, glorious resurrection. There is no glory without anguish. Christ's glory is that he suffered indescribable pain and died on the cross for us. Try representing the resurrection symbolically. I challenged one of our elders, a very talented artist, to do this. He tried clouds and streaming rays of glory, etc. but how can you adequately, clearly portray the resurrection in wood or bronze atop a steeple? Much has been made of the fact that representations of the cross have been found in ancient America, evidence that the other sheep (Jn. 10:16) knew of Christ's resurrection (1 Nephi 11:33). True Christians, ancient Christians in both hemispheres,



loved and used the symbol of the cross. I am with Paul (Galatians 6:14): "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Despite the horror that it represents as a cruel instrument of death, can anyone conceive of a more meaningful, glorious symbol for Christianity than the cross, despite traditions in a few cultures that complicate understanding and acceptance of it? Compare the cross as a Christian symbol with the sunstone of the Nauvoo Temple (Church News, 12-2-89, p. 5). And we wonderingly ask why people say that we are not Christians.

Pres. David O. McKay delighted in quoting his fellow Scotsman Robert Burns: "Would that some power might the giftie g'ie us / To see ourselves as others see us." Well, have we ever bothered to take a good look at ourselves, our customs, attitudes, and practices to find out whether a Power has given us this gift? With respect to the cross, I know of no scripture, ancient or modern, that forbids its use. All things in our church are supposed to be done by common consent. When were we ever asked our views regarding the cross? When has the Church Building Committee asked the views of any congregation regarding anything important related to their chapel? In about 1963 I was president of the Valparaíso District when a representative of said committee presented for a vote of the brothers and sisters the acceptance of plans for our new chapel in Viña del Mar. Standing at the gringo's side, I said, "Wait a minute. How can we vote on this when we haven't even seen the plans and no one has given us the faintest idea of what the chapel will be like?" He brushed me aside and proceeded to call for a vote. I did not raise my hand in approval but didn't have the raw guts, back then, to raise it in disapproval. (Oh, Goodie, I still hadn't really learned.) Though no architect, I had lived in Spanish America, I was a student and teacher of its language, culture, and traditions and—extremely important—I had read Edward T. Hall\* over and over. Officials with no perception, no desire for consultation, no familiarity with the people concerned, no thought or consideration, no true, actual, palpable, non-egocentric, non-ethnocentric love and respect for them, and ignorant of Hall's The Silent Language, The Hidden Dimension, etc. are not fit to plan anything anywhere for anyone, within any cultural tradition, including their own. Each culture, every subculture, generally with no conscious knowledge of it, structures space and time, etc. in its own way. But those who paternalistically, unilaterally, arbitrarily and arrogantly operate on the basis of the principle of the divine right of kings (It lives on) cannot be bothered with trifles. (\*No relative, but I like to call him "Uncle Edward T." Talked to him once at a meeting in Chicago.)

**Various.** With no missionaries presently at the CEM, we attended the stake conference of the Las Condes Stake by invitation of the stake presidency. What a lovely day, what a lovely meeting! Such brotherhood and friendship, such beautiful countenances, radiant with the light of the gospel! I conjectured that the extremists who bomb and set fire to our chapels perceive us only as abstractions, not as persons with families and friends, who delight in the sight of a child, a flower, a bird, a cloud, a tree, who have high ideals and want to excel and to serve, who pray to God and praise him in music and word. On the other hand, I thought maybe that is exactly what bothers them in their blind, viscious, evil fanaticism. Merrill, I thought, as is my habit, gave the best talk of all. Her husband received more compliments than deserved. Pres. Flores had said that he wanted us to join him at the pulpit and respond to questions regarding missionary work and the CEM. He changed his mind, however, and we had to speak more extemporaneously and spontaneously. **No.** Merrill has the habit of asking me if I'm ready to eat, so I continue to improvise answers: No, I'm half-baked, no, I'm too hard to swallow, I'm stringy, gristly, too rare, too sweet, sour, "pasado" (over-ripe, rotten), skinny, bony... You get the idea. **Mare nostrum** (Latin: our sea). The Bolivians are always dying to see "their" sea. A mediterranean nation (meaning surrounded by land), with their access to the Pacific taken away from them by Chile in the War of the Pacific, Bolivia won't give up what it considers to be its rightful claims. Politics aside, it's wonderful to see the sea. So we robbed time for lessons from lunch periods, etc. and on P-Day (preparation day) took our Bolivians (los escogidos/the chosen ones) to Valparaíso, Viña del Mar and up the coast as far as Con Con. They loved it. Oh, they were so happy! We had a great, unforgettable time together. At the Instituto Chileno-Norteamericano de Viña, where we stopped to donate some things to the library, the missionaries were wowed to see that it's named La Biblioteca Wendell H. Hall. Hernán Cortés, "director of courses" back then and now, showed them around. He is the most cordial, splendid person—made them feel so welcome and right at home. **The Mirandas.** They want the two of us to do the teaching and me to do the baptizing. Grandson Johnny Hall, in a recent letter reported that he earns \$100. a month delivering the Daily Herald. Jorge Miranda, with a family to support, doesn't earn much more than that working 6 long nights a week. There's so much unemployment and underemployment here that grown men deliver the papers and shine the shoes, etc. •Ev luv MW