

In my judgment, those few Latter-day Saints whom I know to be conscientious objectors are not cowards or disloyal to their country or the Church. On the contrary, they have shown great courage and are frequently subjected to considerable personal abuse. The long and torturous process including the costs of a lawyer would seem to be a test of one's conviction. However, it also implies conscientious objection status is available mostly to the rich, educated, or wellborn.

If we are to understand Latter-day Saint youths who have become conscientious objectors, Thomasson's compilation is required reading. While at first glance this compilation of documents seems rather shocking to some members of the Church, yet hopefully his efforts could be the beginning of a more meaningful dialogue within the Church regarding military service and conscientious objection. Such dialogue will not settle the question, but it may improve understanding.

RUSSEL J. THOMSEN. *Latter-day Saints and the Sabbath*. Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1971. 150 pp.

(Reviewed by F. Kent Nielsen, instructor in the Physics Department at Brigham Young University. Mr. Nielsen's field of research is the history and philosophy of science. He is author of *Book of Mormon Studies* (1959) and has published in the *New Era*.)

Russel Thomsen is a young Seventh-day Adventist doctor currently working at the LDS Hospital in Salt Lake City. His book is a zealous, missionary-minded effort to persuade Mormons to his point of view. Written primarily as a tool for that purpose, the present work was originally presented to the Loma Linda University (the SDA institution near San Bernardino) in 1968 as a master's thesis in religion, under the title *The History of the Sabbath in Mormonism*. Printed by the Seventh-day Adventist publishing house, it is an attractive paperback of 150 pages, plus appendix, with notes for each of its nine chapters, and a bibliography. It is generously illustrated.

Thomsen's overall approach is basically polemical and hortatory and his work consequently suffers from a lack of

objectivity and of critical evaluation. By an objective standard, he fails to establish his major thesis, that Latter-day Saints have nothing more than tradition as a basis for keeping Sunday as a Sabbath day of rest and worship. Notwithstanding this failure, there are points of interest in the work. The chapter on "Sunday Closing Laws and Mormonism," while written with some animus against the LDS Church, does provide historical documentation of an issue upon which the Seventh-day Adventist have been very sensitive. The section on James J. Strang, although often used by Thomsen as a vehicle for taking "pot shots" at Joseph Smith through Strang, does remind us of the Saturday-sabbath practices of that interesting Mormon offshoot. One can, however, hardly credit Thomsen's incredible assessment that except for the Prophet Joseph, Strang "possibly bears no equal in the history of the Mormon movement"!

Easily the most worthwhile contribution of Thomsen's book are the chapters dealing with Samuel Walter Gamble's anti-sabbatarian arguments and their uses by Latter-day Saint authors. Gamble's contentions showed a fertile imagination coupled with an ignorance of history, the Jewish calendar, and Greek usage, and have been discredited and rejected by responsible scholarship. An unwitting wholesale acceptance of Gamble's arguments by some LDS authors has certainly invited, with justification, Thomsen's rejoinder that Latter-day Saints appear to be "an audience with a need for more ammunition." (p. 77.)

But when it comes to the presentation of his own case, Thomsen involves himself in an equally specious argumentation. Seventh-day Adventists have long argued that early Christian, Gentile, and Jew, alike, worshipped on the Jewish Saturday Sabbath until that day was deliberately and wickedly changed to Sunday in Constantine's time because of the pagan sun worship of the Romans. That absurdity is faithfully reproduced by Thomsen, who reports that Constantine was a sun-worshipper (p. 125) and that the use of Sunday by Christians as a day of worship has been customary only "since the fifth or fourth century" (p. 19). Again adhering scrupulously to the traditional teachings of his church, Thomsen equates the expression "the Lord's Day" with the Jewish Sabbath wherever it occurs in the early Christian documents and even in Latter-day Saint scriptures (p. 19). Such convenient rewriting of

history and historical usage is totally inexcusable at a time when scholarship has made available contemporary documents from the earliest Christian period, as a few representative citations will indicate:

"The Master commanded us [to celebrate] service at fixed times and hours." "On the Lord's Day of the Lord [we] come together, break bread and hold Eucharist." "We . . . celebrate with gladness the eighth day in which Jesus also rose from the dead." "No longer living for the Sabbath, but for the Lord's Day, on which also our life sprang up through him and his death. . . . It is monstrous to talk of Jesus Christ and to practice Judaism." "Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly . . . and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead. For he was crucified on the day before that of Saturn; and on the day after that of Saturn, which is the day of the Sun, having appeared to his apostles and disciples, He taught them these things." (See *I Clement* XL:1-2; *Didache* XIV:1, 3; *Barnabas* XV:4-9; *Ignatius to the Magnesians*: VIII-X; *Justin Martyr's First Apology*, LSVII.) Such documentary sources from the first Christian century and from men who know the Apostles themselves make crystal clear the actual beliefs and practices of early Gentile Christians concerning Sunday, the Lord's Day, and their practice of sacramental worship upon that day in commemoration of the Lord's resurrection. There is no need for special interpretation to understand what John meant when he wrote to such people about being in the spirit on "the Lord's Day" (Rev. 1:10); nor to understand Paul's charge to his Gentile converts who were being troubled by the Judaizers of their time:

[Christ blotted] out the handwriting of ordinances that were against us . . . and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross . . . Let no man therefore judge you in mean, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the *sabbath days*. (Col. 2:14, 16; cf. II Cor. 3:6-11.)

Thomsen is inconsistent in his position with respect to the early Christian practice of Sunday observance since, when he refers to the testimony of the Christian Fathers, he accepts it as showing such a practice in the first and second centuries (notwithstanding the Constantine theory), arguing that such practice "may have been one of the early apostasies" (p. 110).

Thomsen makes an ambitious attempt to refute LDS observance of the Lord's Day, Sunday, from LDS scriptures themselves. He shows that from its beginnings the LDS Church observed Sunday as a day of rest and worship, a "Sabbath," (pp. 10-17 and *passim*), with an "apparent unanimity of belief and practice" (p. 17). He further shows that such belief and practice was not based on unchallenged acceptance of the prevailing Christian practice, but that important leaders like Brigham Young (pp. 20-27, 62-64) and Wilford Woodruff clearly understood the distinction between the seventh day Sabbath of the Jews and the first day Sabbath of the Christians, and also understood the Sabbatarians' arguments that Christians should be keeping the Jewish Sabbath. Orson Pratt used the existence of such arguments as one of the reasons why new revelation was necessary, and Wilford Woodruff had been himself a Saturday-sabbath keeper before he joined the LDS Church.

In his presentation of the position of these men Thomsen is guilty either of incredible naïveté or else of deliberate misrepresentation. He contrives a context wherein the early leaders continued to hold serious questions and doubts about the Sabbath issue, an issue which was "clouded" because of the "turbulence surrounding the birth of Mormonism" and never resolved, being "engulfed in the furor of the times" (pp. 22, 19, 55), and finally "dismissed as unimportant" (p. 63). Such a picture is totally inaccurate. Woodruff's acceptance of the Church was decisive for him upon the very issue of Sabbath keeping. He used it as an example of one of the false traditions he had laid aside when he accepted the truth: "I knew that the Latter-day Saints . . . had the true Church of Christ; and if I had a hundred traditions I would have laid them all aside" (p. 20). Orson Pratt was not "listing subjects which he felt required additional light" for himself or for the Latter-day Saints, as Thomsen's context plainly implies, but was rather arguing that the rest of the Christian world absolutely needed new revelation from God concerning points upon which *they* could not agree, such as the Sabbath question—revelation which the Latter-day Saints had received, and which *settled* those questions. For Pratt it is not modern-day revelation, but the New Testament without such revelation which is "an insufficient guide" (pp. 21-22). Both Pratt and

Woodruff agree that the Sabbath issue, far from being an issue overlooked in the "furor of the times," is an issue which had been definitely settled by modern revelation.

Thomsen completely misrepresents the LDS position on modern revelation by treating it as a "last resort" (p. 17) instead of the primary and sufficient basis for practice, as it is treated by all LDS writers. And while he quotes the pertinent part of D&C 59 as the basis for LDS Sunday observance, even mentioning that the revelation was given on Sunday (p. 18), he somehow manages totally to ignore the significance of the phrase "on *this*, the Lord's day" (verse 12). To a people who had from their beginning observed Sunday, the Lord's day, as a day of worship, and who were engaged in such observance at the very time they received the revelation, what else could the identification of "this, the Lord's day" as the holy day upon which they were to rest, worship, attend church, and offer up their sacraments mean but the Lord's acceptance of that practice and His enjoinder of its continuance?

That core position, urged by every LDS writer upon the subject, is not answered by Thomsen, or even acknowledged. It is totally ignored. Thomsen contends instead that the revelation was only "exhortatory," challenging the people to follow the Ten Commandments and similar gospel principles (p. 18). To support his contention, Thomsen urges only his misuse of the term "the Lord's Day," his naïve claim of Joseph Smith's ignorance of the time of the Biblical Jewish Sabbath, and his assertion that "nowhere . . . can it be found that Joseph Smith questioned the validity of the Ten Commandments." Built upon this tottering foundation, his argument proceeds to take strength unto itself by the mere process of repetition, until he arrives at the wholly unsubstantiated conclusion that "Sunday observance in the Mormon Church, as in the Roman Catholic Church, lies in tradition alone.

Thomsen's book will likely be of interest to only two groups of people: Seventh-day Adventists and Latter-day Saints. Many Seventh-day Adventists will no doubt find it satisfying and gratifying, since they already share its author's preconceptions and will seldom have the background to note where he is falsifying the Latter-day Saint position. Some Latter-day Saints may be sufficiently stirred up to learn about their own doctrine and its sources and to stop using bad argu-

ments for presenting a good case. If so, the book will serve a useful purpose for them also.

GUSTIVE O. LARSON. *The "Americanization" of Utah for Statehood*. San Marino, California: The Huntington Library, 1971. 328 pp. \$7.50.

(Reviewed by Dr. T. Edgar Lyon, associate institute director at the LDS Institute of Religion adjacent to the University of Utah and research historian for Nauvoo Restoration, Inc. Dr. Lyon is presently a member of the editorial board of *BYU Studies*.)

This book should be in every university, college, and public service library where inquiries are made concerning the ecclesiastical and religious aspects of Mormonism and their relationship to Utah's struggle for statehood. *The "Americanization" of Utah* is an all-inclusive phrase which Professor Larson has applied to the process by which a small minority of the inhabitants of Utah Territory in the last four decades of the nineteenth century, almost all of whom were not only non-Mormons but also not natives of the territory, attempted to secure political control by disfranchising the Mormon majority. After the "Americanization" program had failed, Frederick T. Dubois, a former territorial attorney general of Idaho during the period, referring to the efforts of federal officials to build a political structure on an anti-Mormon bias, made the following confession in his *Autobiography*:

Those of us who understood the situation were not nearly as much opposed to polygamy as we were to the political domination of the Church. We realized, however, that we could not make those who did not come actually in contact with it, understand what this political domination meant. We made use of polygamy in consequence as our great weapon of offense and to gain recruits to our standard. There was a universal detestation of polygamy, and inasmuch as the Mormons openly defended it we were given a very effective weapon with which to attack.

It is to this discussion that the book under review is concerned.

In the estimation of this reviewer, no writer is better qualified than Gus Larson to have undertaken an exhaustive