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# The External Evidences of the Book of Mormon

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## A CRITICAL STUDY OF

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*This Pamphlet of 96 pages is Part I. of a complete study of the Book of Mormon and Mormonism. If the reader wishes to obtain the other Parts as they appear, write to the Author.*

# INTRODUCTION.

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The writer offers no apology for this book. Mormonism is a perpetually live question, and will remain so for years. It has an impressive vitality. It is bold, aggressive, intolerant. It can make no compromise with Christianity, nor Christianity with it. They are incompatible, as much so as freedom and slavery. The Mormon church is founded upon theocracy, the church of God upon democracy. No freedom of discussion is possible under a priesthood that graduates up from the lowest to the highest, which highest is God's sole mouth-piece. When God speaks, all discussion must cease. It is either submission or apostasy.

This study goes far beyond any preceding attempt to get at the origin, character and matter of the Book of Mormon. It confines itself as closely to that one thing as the nature of the examination will permit.

Joseph Smith comes under investigation as author and his history is given and his character delineated only so far as his history reflects light on his book, and his book reveals him. The later history of the people, their peculiar customs, the political questions involved, the system of religious socialism which binds the members together and their peculiar doctrines and practices are discussed incidentally, and only where they elucidate the book under examination.

The objective point is the Book of Mormon. Is it true, or false? If true, Mormonism is true and invulnerable. If false, neither logic, nor faith, nor prayer, can save it. Mormon writers have often conceded this. They accept the alternative; so must we all.

"If the origin of the Book of Mormon could be proved to be other than that set forth by Joseph Smith; if the book itself could be proved to be other than it claims to be, \* \* \* then the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and its message and doctrines, \* \* must fall; for if that book be other than it claims to be; if its origin be other than that ascribed to it by Joseph Smith, then Joseph says that which is not true; he is a false prophet of false prophets; and all he taught, and all his claims to inspiration and divine authority, are not only vain, but wicked; and all that he did is not only useless, but mischievous, beyond human comprehension."—Eld. B. H. Roberts: Preface to *New Witness for God*.

There are two ways of stating a case or of arguing a matter. One is the method of the controversialist, who is striving for victory, but not searching for truth. We do not follow that. The other is the method of the seeker after truth. He is calm, dispassionate.

sionate, clear, fearless, but never vindictive nor supercilious. He gives his opponent credit for honesty as to his convictions and faith, and weighs his reasons conscientiously.

This study may be, doubtless will be, a disappointment to the ultras of both sides. There is no malice in it, no vituperation, no invectives, no hysterics. It would be useless to claim that prejudice has no place in it. Our prejudices are our second nature. They are inevitable. A presentation of a matter of this kind, without influence from former convictions, would be superhuman, divine.

Mormons will not like the book, for it takes a straight course through a tangled maze, having for its one aim, the discovery of the eternal boundary lines.

Truth and error, though they may be mingled in human statements, never lie within the same limitations; they always occupy different and antagonistic positions.

The arguments that Mormons advance to justify their belief, have been carefully considered, weighed, and their values estimated. These have not been taken up, specifically, except in a few instances, but they all have their place in the general argument.

The Book of Mormon must come to us not only untainted by proved fraud or deception, but also free from the suspicion of it. There must be no room for imposture. For if it be true, its appearance in the world is as momentous a fact in human history, as that of the New Testament. A world's salvation by restoration, depends upon it. Its credibility, therefore, as a divine revelation, must be absolutely unimpeachable.

At every step of this investigation we are virtually asking this question: Could Joseph Smith, with the help of other men, or without it, have written or done this? Was God a necessary part in the transaction?

If we find that the Book of Mormon can be accounted for by human agency, without divine assistance, if its marvels rest upon mere credulity and are not sustained by sound reasons—that is if one must lay aside his common sense and stultify his intelligence to believe them—the book must and will be rejected by people of intelligence.

This first number is the preface to our Study. It is an examination of the External Evidences of the Book of Mormon, a critical survey of the history preceding and accompanying its coming forth. We take up the book itself in the next number.

The designation, Mormon, is used in no invidious sense, but because it is short, expressive and accepted by that people.

In writing, the members of the Church of the Latter Day Saints in Utah are in mind.

## I.

# THE COMING FORTH OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

It is only fair that one accused as Joseph Smith has been, should be permitted to speak for himself. We, therefore, give his own account of himself and his book, abridged somewhat, but not to the prejudice of his story—as we find it in his Autobiography:

"I was born Dec. 23, 1805, in Sharon, Vt. My father, Joseph Smith, moved to Palmyra, N. Y., when I was in my tenth year; after about four years in Palmyra, he moved to Manchester in the same county.

"Some time after we moved to Manchester, there was an unusual religious excitement, beginning with the Methodists, but soon became general among all sects. The whole country was affected and great multitudes united with the different churches.

"This created no small division among the people, some crying, 'Lo, here!' and others 'Lo, there!' These converts expressed great love for one another and the clergy manifested great zeal to get everybody converted, yet when the converts began to file off, some to one party and some to another, these good feelings were shown to be more pretended than real, priest contending with priest and convert with convert, and their good feelings, if they had any, were entirely lost in strife of words and contest of opinions.

"I was at this time in my fifteenth year, and my father's family was proselyted to the Presbyterian faith, four of them, my mother, Lucy, my brothers, Hyrum and Samuel, and my sister. Sophronia, joining that church.

(1) "I was called to serious reflections and suffered great uneasiness. Still I kept myself aloof from all parties, though I attended meetings as occasion would permit.

"In time I got somewhat partial to the Methodists and I felt some desire to join them; but so great was the confusion and strife, that it was impossible for a person as young as I was and unacquainted with men and things to come to any certain conclusion who was right and who was wrong.

"In the midst of this tumult I often said to myself, what is to be done? Who of these parties are right and who wrong, or are they all wrong? If any one of them is right, how shall I know it?

"While laboring under this difficulty, I was one day reading the

Epistle of James 1:5: "If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." Never did any scripture come with more power to the heart of man, than this to mine. I reflected on it again and again, knowing that if any one needed wisdom from God, I did.

"At last I came to the conclusion that I must remain in darkness, or else ask of God. This I determined to do.

(2) "In accordance with this determination to ask of God, I retired to the woods on the morning of a beautiful day in the spring of 1820. It was the first time in my life I had ever made such an attempt, for amid all my anxiety I had never as yet made the attempt to pray vocally.

"Reaching the place I had in mind to go, and looking around to see that I was alone, I kneeled down and began to pray.

(3) "I had scarcely done so, when immediately I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me, so great indeed as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak.

"Thick darkness gathered around me, and it seemed to me for a time I was doomed to sudden destruction. Exerting all my powers to call upon God to deliver me, just when I was ready to sink in despair, just at this moment of my greatest alarm, I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me.

(4) "Immediately I found myself delivered from the enemy that bound me, and I saw two personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spoke to me, calling me by name, and, pointing to the other, said, 'This is my beloved Son, hear him.'

"No sooner could I speak than I asked them which of all the sects was right, and which I should join. His answer was that I must join none of them for they were all wrong; their creeds were an abomination and those professors were all corrupt.

(5) "When I came to myself again, I found myself, lying on my back and looking up to heaven.

"A few days after this vision, I gave a Methodist preacher an account of it. I was greatly surprised at his behavior, for he treated my story not lightly, but with contempt, saying it was all of the devil, there were no such things as visions or revelations in these days.

(6) "My telling the story excited much prejudice against me among professors of religion, and caused me much persecution. And although I was only an obscure boy, yet men of high standing took

sufficient notice to excite the public mind against me, and create a bitter persecution. It caused me serious reflection and often has since, that an obscure boy doomed to get his livelihood by daily labor, should be thought a character of sufficient importance to attract the attention of the great ones of the most popular sects, in such a manner as to excite the spirit of the most bitter persecution.

"Nevertheless it was a fact that I had seen a vision and I felt like Paul, who related how he saw a light and heard a voice, although few believed him.

"So it was with me. I was hated and persecuted for saying I had seen a vision, yet it was true. And while they were reviling and persecuting me, I said in my heart, 'Why persecute me for telling the truth?' Who am I that I could withstand God?" . . .

"I continued to perform my common vocations of life until Sept. 21, 1823, all the time suffering persecutions.

(6) "During the time from the vision to 1823, having been forbidden to join any religious sect and being of tender years, persecuted by those who ought to have been my friends and to have entreated me kindly, and if they believed me to be deluded to have endeavored kindly to have reclaimed me, I was left to all kinds of temptations; and mingling with all kinds of society, I frequently fell into many foolish errors, and displayed the weakness of youth and the foibles of human nature; which, I am sorry to say, led me into diverse temptations, offensive in the sight of God. Often I felt condemned for my weakness and imperfections; when on the evening of the above mentioned 21st of September, after I had retired to my bed, I betook myself to prayer to Almighty God for forgiveness, and also a manifestation of my state and standing before Him.

(4) "While in the act of calling upon God, I discovered a light in my room, increasing in brilliancy until the room was lighter than noonday. Immediately a personage appeared at my bedside, standing in the air. He had on a loose robe of whiteness above anything earthly I had ever seen, and his whole person was glorious beyond description.

(7) "He called me by name, and said he was a messenger sent from God, and that his name was Moroni; that God had a work for me to do, and that my name should be had for good or evil among all nations, kindred and tongues.

"He said there was a book written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent and their origin, and containing the fulness of the gospel; also two stones in silver

bows fastened to a breastplate, called the Urim and Thummim, were with the plates. The possession of these stones constituted a "seer" in ancient times and they were for the purpose of translating the plates.

"He quoted prophecies of the Old Testament, first the third chapter of Malachi, and also the fourth chapter with a little variation from our Bible. In addition to these he quoted the 11th chapter of Isaiah, saying it was about to be fulfilled; also the 22nd and 23rd verses of the 3rd chapter of Acts.

"He also quoted Joel 2:18 to close, saying this was not yet fulfilled but soon would be. He told me that when I got those plates, for the time was not yet, I should not show them to any person, neither the breastplate with the Urim and Thummim, except as I should be commanded; if I did I should be destroyed.

"While he was talking, I saw in a vision the place where the plates were deposited. The light of the room grew dim and I saw him ascend in a conduit of light and disappear.

(The vision and charges with some additions, were repeated three times.)

"Again he ascended, the cock crowed, and I found our interview had lasted the whole night.

(4) "I rose and went to work as at other times, but was unable for lack of strength; seeing which my father told me to go home. I started, but in attempting to cross the fence out of the field, my strength failed me, and I fell helpless to the ground where I lay for a time, unconscious of anything.

"The first thing I recollect was a voice speaking to me, calling my by name; and on looking up I saw the same messenger standing over me, surrounded by light as before.

"He again related to me all he had related before, and commanded me to go to my father and tell him all

"I obeyed, returned to my father and rehearsed the whole matter to him. He assured me it was of God and told me to do as the messenger commanded.

"I left the field and went to the place the messenger had told me the plates were deposited, which I knew in an instant.

(8) "Near Manchester, Ontario County, New York, is a hill of considerable size, the most elevated of any in the neighborhood. On the west side of the hill, under a stone of considerable size, lay the plates in a stone box. The stone was thick and rounding on the upper side, thinner at the edges, the middle part exposed.

"Removing the earth, I fixed a lever under the edge and raised the rock, and there I saw the plates, the Urim and Thummim, and the breastplate. I made an effort to take them out but was forbidden by the messenger, and was told that the time to get them would not be until four years from that time. I was to come to the place one year from that time when he would meet me again.

"At the end of each year, I went and at each time found the messenger there and received instruction and intelligence from him respecting what the Lord was going to do, and how his kingdom was to be conducted in the last days.

(9) " \* \* \* In the month of October, 1825, I hired with an old gentleman, Josiah Staal, of Chenango County. He had heard something of an old silver mine once opened by the Spaniards, in Harmony, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania, and had been digging to discover it. He took me with the rest of his hands, to dig for the mine, at which I continued to work for nearly a month, without success, and finally I prevailed with him to cease digging for it. Hence arose the very prevalent story of my having been a money digger.

"During the time I was thus employed, I was put to board with a Mr. Isaac Hale, and there I first saw my wife (his daughter) Emma Hale. On the 18th of June, 1827, we were married, while I was yet employed in the service of Mr. Staal.

"Owing to my continuing to assert I had seen a vision, persecution still followed me, and my wife's family were very much opposed to our marriage, for which reason we went and were married at the house of Squire Tarbill, in South Bainbridge, N. Y., and immediately went to my father's, and farmed with him that season.

"The time arrived at length for obtaining the plates, the Urim and the Thummim and breastplate, and on the 22nd day of September, 1827, the heavenly messenger delivered them to me.

(10) "I soon found out why I had received such strict charge to keep them safe, for no sooner was it known that I had them than the most strenuous exertions were made and stratagems employed to get them from me. Multitudes were on the alert continually, but by the wisdom of God they remained safe in my hands, and when, according to arrangement the messenger called for them I delivered them up to him and he has them in charge until this day, May 2, 1838."

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The foregoing record has been given quite fully, because it covers the most important incidents in the early history of the book. The following further statement as to the plates is appended:



(11) The records were engraved on plates which looked like gold, six inches by eight inches, and not quite so thick as tin, bound together like the leaves of a book, three rings running through the whole. The volume was about six inches thick, and a part of the leaves were sealed. The characters, the engravings, were small but beautiful in form.

With the records was the Urim and Thummim, two transparent stones set in the rim of a bow and fastened to a breastplate.

## II.

### REVIEW OF FOREGOING STORY.

Having given Joseph the opportunity to speak for himself, since we can not cross-question him, we will examine some parts of his testimony. The figures in parenthesis refer back to like figures in his story. (1) We have here presented to us a boy not fifteen years of age, inexperienced and even non-religious, hitherto, very unlettered, seriously debating in his own mind as to which of the sects was right and which were wrong, with all the gravity and seriousness of a mature man. He does not seek to learn about them, he does not go to any minister or experienced Christian to find out, as would have been most natural for him to do.

Next, he betrays indifference as to his own personal relation to God; he hasn't offered up a single prayer, not so much even as to say, "Lord be merciful to me." There is no sign of repentance or confession. He is in deep perplexity, not as to himself, but as to others. So he goes to God, not to inquire what he must do to be saved, but to find out which church was right. We know, from the character of the preaching of that day, that he had listened to many earnest pleas to repent of his sins and turn to God who will have mercy.

His course was so unnatural, so unusual with youths who are very sensitive to sin, and so affected by the story of Christ's suffering for them, that they have no thoughts about creeds and sects, but simply long to be Christ's. To all these influences, this boy in his fifteenth year, presents an unfeeling heart, and is absorbed in the question, "Which sect is right?"

We must be excused from accepting this as being true about the boy; it was a characteristic after-thought of the man.

Fortunately he gives us the approximate time of writing this—May, 1838. The language confirms us in this opinion, for it is the language of maturity, not of youth.

(2) Passing on further, he assures us he had never before attempted to pray vocally. His mother says he had never read the Bible through in his life and was less inclined to reading books than her other children. If Joseph speaks the truth, his home was not a home of prayer, and his mother had never taught him any of those simple forms of petition, which open the doors to God and fix the habit of prayer, in children.

Evidently he was not fit to join any church, although he assures us he was inclined to the Methodists. He was not, to use his own afterwards often repeated phrase, "born of God."

So, when he did attempt to pray, it was not for a new heart, but "Lord, who is the biggest hypocrite?" The answer he says he got was "they are all wrong, their creeds are an abomination, and these professors are all corrupt."

This is a reflection of Joseph's sentiments of 1830 and onward. His method of warring against all churches, was to arraign them for heresy, to charge them with apostasy and as having no authority from God to minister in His name, and to claim that he alone was the messenger whom Heaven had ordained to restore the lost gospel, to re-establish the church of Christ, to usher in a new dispensation, and to save mankind. For eight years he had been uttering these presumptuous claims, and now, in 1838, he seeks to bring in the testimony of God, to confirm his word. Someone—note that he does not say it was God, although he would have us infer it—declares in unmistakable terms of the whole Christian world, "they are all wrong and corrupt." Then he turns to his followers and says, "Haven't I been telling you so?"

We shall find, in the course of this study, that Joseph manufactured scripture and gave forth revelations to suit himself and to confirm his claims; that he even changed his own revelations, when changed conditions demanded something different.

(3) The physical phenomena accompanying his visions, have raised the scientific question whether Joseph was not, by heredity, subject to some form of epilepsy. The feeling of dread, the spasmodic struggle with the spirit of evil, the appearance of light about him, bright personages and voices, unconsciousness, and his lying upon his back, are suggestive of epilepsy. Prof. Riley has treated this matter fully in his *Psychological Study of Joseph, the Mormon Prophet*.

It is well to remember that Joseph Smith is only one of many comparatively recent persons who have claimed visions of God and revelations fully as remarkable as his, and who have been deceived,

by subjective delusions, or were unmitigated frauds. The religious obsession, either that the person is a special messenger from God, or even God Himself, is a frequent symptom of dementia of the most obstinate and incurable form. Such claims do not call for faith but for scientific investigation. If Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God, he differs altogether from those prophets who helped to make up the line of prophets from Samuel to John the Baptist.

One fact impresses us deeply, the omission of independent testimony of his mother who wrote a history of her prophet son, but fails to corroborate his story. What mother would have been so remiss, if these things had been "hid in her heart?"

Yet she contents herself, when it comes to all these marvelous visions, with copying Joseph's own record.

(5) The early persecutions which he pictures in high colors, as following him from 1820, onward, have very little historic basis for belief. He was very likely ridiculed, and became the butt of satirical remarks by his boy companions—if he told that marvelous story—for that would be quite natural. But that "multitudes" conspired to persecute him, that "men of high standing," "the great ones of the most popular sects," excited the country community against him and led them to follow him with harsh persecutions, is incredible. Besides, Joseph's confession that he fell, through mingling with all classes, into sins that were heinous in the sight of God, is a contradiction of his charge.

All of this was written after he got to be a man of 33 with a body of devoted people around him, and so far away from the scenes of his boyhood, that there was little possibility of denial and disproof.

His father does not say he was persecuted, and his mother refers to it in a paragraph of five lines, very much as Joseph had given it. Why did they not give specifications of time, place and persons, if Joseph was persistently hounded by enemies?

(6) The proof that was gathered in 1834 of the general reputation of the Smith family and of Joseph in particular, that he was lazy, untruthful, intemperate and given to exaggeration, demonstrates one of two things; either their charges were true, or the more than sixty witnesses were unconscionable liars.

In this case, the community said the whole family were undesirable citizens, and Joseph, Jr., the worst of all. If it were left so, we might hold our judgment in suspense, but Joseph confesses judgment. He was guilty of things "offensive in the sight of God," which was all the community alleged, the difference being, Joseph plead guilty

to the general indictment, while the community entered specifications.

(7) **Moroni, Joseph's good angel.** This choice was neither a happy nor a logical one. Moroni did nothing more than write the concluding books of the Book of Mormon. He was the son of an illustrious father from whom he received certain plates, and hid them up with his own, in Cumorah, convenient for Joseph, 1,400 years afterwards. When he took his departure from the earth where all his kindred and people were sleeping unburied, it was without any hint he should ever return. On the contrary, he declares "he is soon to rest in the paradise of God until his spirit and body reunited, he is to be brought forth triumphant through the air to meet Jew, Gentile and the Seed of Joseph, at the pleasing bar of God." Moroni, though a prophet, did not expect to appear to Joseph.

The Book of Mormon relates that three of the Nephite disciples of Jesus were left to mingle with men, not seeing death nor translation until their Lord should return; they were to do "great and marvelous works," before that day, "yea, **even among the Gentiles.**" Here was Joseph's chance to be taken into the apostolic office by living apostles; he might also have enlisted the disciple whom Jesus loved, for according to Joseph, John is still waiting on the earth for the advent.

These could have revealed the hiding place of the plates, and given him a flesh and blood ordination as the apostle of "the new dispensation." Joseph seemingly forgot them, and brought in Moses, and Elijah, and Elias, and John Baptist, and Peter, James and John, to give him his "keys."

Joseph does make use of one of these three Nephites, it seems, but it was only to walk and carry one hundred and ninety-four pounds of gold plates from Harmony, Penn., to Fayette, N. Y., a distance of one hundred miles, while Joseph rode in the wagon with young David Whitmer.

Here was their opportunity to introduce a lost salvation to a misguided and lost world. Joseph certainly did them an injustice and failed to fulfill the prophecy spoken of them, by neglecting to call them in.

(8) Joseph's mother, in her interesting history, gives us a side light into the experiences of Joseph, on his second visit to Cumorah, and confirms a piece of the testimony which came out in 1834.

Two of Joseph's companions, young men, gave Joseph's story of his find in the box. As they relate the story Joseph told them, he found the place in "a dream"; Joseph says he saw it "in a vision."

When he attempted to get them, "he was knocked down." On looking up he saw a man, a Spaniard in appearance, wearing a long beard, his throat cut from ear to ear, and blood streaming down, who told him he could not get them alone. That was Joseph's tale to them.

Now, Joseph's mother tells us that, on attempting to get the contents of the stone box "he was hurled violently to the ground." Joseph also related, according to his mother's account, that on another occasion the angel gave him at Cumorah the severest punishment he had ever received in his life. Unconsciously, he confirms the two boys.

(9) Joseph is too modest. He had a reputation far and wide "as the possessor of means by which he could discern things invisible to the natural eye." These are his mother's words, to explain why Mr. Staal came from his home over one hundred miles away, to hire him to help find the lost silver mine. And Isaac Hale says that "he looked for the money diggers with the stone in his hat and his hat over his face." "He gave them great encouragement at first, but when they had arrived in digging near to the place where he had stated an immense treasure would be found, he said the enchantment was so strong that he could not see."

That Joseph used a stone which they call a "seer stone," in translating the plates, is conceded by the highest Mormon authority, as we shall show.

Where did Joseph get that stone? How came he to know it possessed magic power? He does not say, but others do. It was the reputation he got by means of that, long before he thought of translating the book, and while he was using it as a common fortune-teller, that brought Mr. Staal to solicit his help.

(10) How much effort was really made by "the wicked and the ungodly" about him to get possession of his plates, it is now impossible to determine. The pretense of great secrecy, however, on the part of Joseph and his family, is hardly credible. His mother says that the very next day a neighbor came and made inquiries about the plates, but that "no one had ever heard anything from us respecting them, except Joseph's father, two or three years before, had spoken to a confidential friend about them." And this old whispered secret is pointed to as the vent through which the report of the discovery escaped them.

The evidence is very strong to the contrary. The members of the family not only told it but boasted of it; and the news spread

rapidly, east and west, and was the subject of much comment by the newspapers.

Conspiracies were formed, in the wake of these rumors, to get possession of them, so Joseph tells us, but like nearly all his record, it is overdrawn, and the pranks of young men were exaggerated into warlike and hostile attacks upon him by "multitudes."

Joseph was not averse, at any time, to publicity. He knew perfectly well that the advertising he was getting, and the consequent notoriety, would be his chief capital, when his book should come forth. It was his winning card.

(11) Plates of record. This was not an original conception, altogether, yet it was a new thing under the sun to have an entire Bible engraved on brass plates.

The Egyptians had used papyrus, tablets of wax, and flat and cylindrical tablets of clay; the old Babylonians wrote much of their history on clay—on the bricks they built into their walls, or on those kept for public record; the Jews used papyri, and afterwards the skins of animals, for their sacred books and for their chronicles; but extensive records, containing all the Old Testament to Jeremiah, and the genealogy of the tribe of Joseph, inscribed on brass plates; Ether's history of the Jaredites for 1,600 years on gold plates; and the book of gold plates, which Joseph unearthed from Cumorah, containing the sacred things of the Nephites for a thousand years, and the unsealed part to the end of time, was a new thing under the sun. Solomon was wrong. He had not fathomed the fertile imagination of this modern man, who assembled such a magnificent array of metal tablets, brass and gold, as the whole world had never dreamed of before.

The Jews had some plates of brass and gold; brass plates on the base of the laver, and the holy crown of the high priest was a plate of gold fastened to his miter and banded his forehead. On it was engraved, like the engraving of a signet, "Holiness to the Lord."

The Egyptians and Babylonians had gold, but they made their records on cheaper materials. Plates of bronze were used in decorating, here and there, palace or temple, and the Hittite version of the treaty between Pharaoh and the king of the Hittites was upon a tablet of silver, not engraved, but incised, or cut in, so as to leave the characters in relief, as we do on grave stones; but no such method of writing history as Joseph describes has been discovered. The statement lies within the limits of possibility, but its improbability will be seen at a glance. If the Nephites followed the custom exclusively of engraving everything in Egyptian hieroglyphics on plates of

brass or gold, they chose the most difficult, the most laborious and the costliest method possible. They were prolific writers, for we have many plates mentioned; the plates of Laban containing the Old Testament to Jeremiah. The genealogy of the tribe of Joseph; the plates of Lehi; two complete sets of plates by Nephi, one large, the other small; plates of various kings and prophets from Jacob to IV Nephi, covering a period of 1,000 years; plates of Mormon and plates of Moroni; plates of Zeniff; plates of Limhi; plates of the colonists who went northward; plates of Jared; and of writers who followed him for 1,600 years; plates of Ether; and lastly the abbreviated plates of Mormon and Moroni, from which we have the record in the Book of Mormon. Moreover, copies were made of the Scriptures, from the plates of Lehi and Nephi, and widely disseminated among the Nephites and some of the Lamanites. There were, therefore, thousands of them.

Not one of them, however, has ever come to light, to bear its testimony to the Book of Mormon, whereas there ought to have been frequent discoveries of them made, if that book be true.

### **CART LOADS OF PLATES.**

In Journal of Discourses, Vol. 19, P. 36, in a sermon by Brigham Young, we have an account of cart loads of these plates. Here is his statement:

"There were a great many treasures hid up by the Nephites. \* \* \* I lived right in the country where the plates were found. I believe I will take the liberty to tell you of another circumstance that will be as marvelous as anything can be. \* \* \* Joseph did not translate all the plates, there was a portion sealed. \* \* \* When Joseph got the plates, the angel instructed him to carry them back to Cumorah, which he did. Oliver (Cowdery) says that when he and Joseph went there, the hill opened, and they walked into a cave in which there was a large spacious room. \* \* \* They laid the plates on a table; it was a large table that stood in the room. Under this table there was a large pile of plates as much as two feet high, and there were altogether in the room more plates than probably many wagon loads; they were piled up in corners and along the walls."

### III.

## JOSEPH'S SEERSTONE.

The first stone Joseph used was the property of Jack Belcher, of Gibson, who obtained it in Salina, N. Y., while hauling salt. He brought it home because he thought it a "seeing" stone. It was green with irregular brown spots on it, a little longer than a goose egg, and about as thick. It was very likely a green jade stone of inferior quality. His little boy was the first to look into it. As he did so, he first said he saw a candle, and the next time he cried out, "I have found my hatchet," lost two years—and immediately went to the place shown and got it. This stone got quite a local reputation and Joseph Smith got it and used it about two years when he changed to the stone found in digging the well of Willard Chase. This last was the stone he used when in the employ of Mr. Stool in trying to locate the silver mine, and this same stone he used in translating the plates, and in making his revelations, up to April, 1830. There is no doubt that Joseph's seer-stone was first used for ordinary fortune-telling and treasurer-hunting, and afterwards for translating. Afterwards he gave it to Oliver Cowdery, saying he had no more use for it. He discarded the instrument of the "seer," for "the spirit of revelation and prophecy."

The stone is said to be in the possession of the Mormon church, in Salt Lake, at this time.

#### WHAT NEED HAD HE OF THE STONE?

Without the aid of his "interpreters," Joseph afterward "translated and corrected the Holy Scriptures" (our English Bible) and translated the Egyptian rolls, the Book of Abraham, now called the Pearl of Great Price, the fourth "inspired" book of the Mormons, "by the spirit of revelation."

How he explained this translation, if he ever did, we know not, but the question will arise: Did he need the stone, in translating Reformed Egyptian, when he was able, without it, to translate Egyptian? Where was the difference?

Joseph also gave a partial translation by the spirit of revelation of some copper plates, discovered (?) at Kinderhook, Illinois, declaring that they contained the history of the person with whose skeleton they were found, that he was a descendant of Ham through the loins of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, etc. See *Millennial Star*, Vol. 21.



How a son of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and a descendant of Ham, and a king also, got into America, is a nut Joseph did not attempt to crack. Can any Mormon solve the problem? The Kinderhook plates were only a hoax, as was afterwards fully proven.

## IV. THE WITNESSES TO THE BOOK OF MORMON.

On opening the Book of Mormon, we find two certificates, following the Preface, one signed by three men, the other by eight.

The first declares "that we, through the grace of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record; . . . and we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for His voice hath declared it unto us; and we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown to us by the power of God and not of man. An angel of God came down from heaven and brought and laid (them) before our eyes; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ that we beheld and bear record that these things are true; and it is marvelous in our eyes, nevertheless the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it. \* \*"

Mormons quote this testimony with that of the eight, which follows, with much assurance; and well they may, for they are the only testimony, outside of Joseph's own word, that is worthy the name of evidence.

But notice:

1. They give neither date nor place, of this revelation. That disqualifies it as legal evidence.

2. They testify to what was not then an accomplished fact. David Whitmer says this occurred the last of June, 1829. Oliver Cowdery began translating April 7, so that the translation had been going on about seventy-five days, subject to interruptions, about nine pages per day, or 4,000 words, if every week day had been so employed.

A fairly rapid penman can write about 800 words per hour, but it is impossible to continue this more than five hours per day. In translating, Joseph kept his face submerged in his hat, read off the

sentences as they appeared, which Oliver copied down; then he read his copy to Joseph to see if it was correct.

This was slow, laborious and painstaking, and could be accomplished only with far less rapidity, than copying from manuscript, lying under one's eyes. Besides, Martin Harris in about sixty days wrote only 116 pages of manuscript, probably 150 pages of the B. M., but not the same matter. It is therefore extremely improbable that the translation was finished by the last of June. Their testimony therefore was not true. The plates were not all translated.

3. The witnesses were instructed in a revelation given that same month, D. and C. 17:1, 5, 6, that they should have a view of the plates, and also the breastplate, the sword of Laban, the Urim and Thummim and the magical directors; \* \* "And ye shall testify that you have seen them, even as my servant Joseph has seen them." \* \* \*

Therefore their testimony is imperfect, since they do not certify that they saw the other articles named in the revelation.

This is not unimportant, for if the other historic objects had appeared with the plates, it would have strengthened their confidence as to the reality of the vision.

4. The three sign the same certificate, although Martin Harris was not with the other two. This shows Martin a very complaisant witness, and suggests that, if there was deception, Martin may have played the part of the angel.

Note:—The author has in his possession a manuscript written by a man who was once a devout and conscientious Mormon. He emigrated to Utah, leaving his wife in the home land, because she refused to become a Mormon.

He was sent on a mission to Australia, where he married a Christian woman whom he had proselyted to his faith, and returned with a party of converts to Utah.

He spent all that he and his wife had in helping poor saints to make the journey, and they landed in San Francisco with only fifty cents.

For years he observed very conscientiously the requirements of his religion, but was finally convinced that the whole thing was false, by seeing the dishonesty of his neighbors in their tithing, the easy and indifferent life of the higher officials who lived off the tithing of the people, and especially by the teaching of the church as to polygamy and "proxy husbands," which were zealously taught them in their secret priesthood meetings.

He revolted and became as intense in his opposition as he had before been loyal in his service.

In the article referred to, evidently prepared with thought and care, he maintains that Sidney Rigdon acted the part of the angel to these witnesses, and that he got his idea from one of the higher degrees of masonry, where a man plays the part of an angel.

5. By taking the testimony, using D. and C. 17 as our guide in the study of this certificate, we find such qualifications and evasive instructions, as to destroy all its value as testimony.

**"It is by faith you shall obtain a view of them, even that faith which was had by the prophets of old."**

Abraham saw the day of Christ, and was glad. Isaiah saw the kingdom of Christ, and prophesied its glory.

Ezekiel saw the flood of gospel waters breaking forth from the threshold of the temple and flowing eastward with ever deepening and accelerated flood.

But none of these prophets saw those things with the natural eyes, but with the eye of faith—a spiritual vision.

These witnesses were promised a vision of the plates, by faith, **"even that faith which these prophets of old had."**

Was that what they meant, when they certified, they "have seen the plates" containing the record? If they had respect to the revelation, that was all.

The opening words of the revelation imply the same.

**"Behold you must rely upon my word which if you shall do, \* \* you shall have a view of them."** "My word," came from Joseph's lips, not from the lips of Jesus Christ.

That they were instructed and coached beforehand, can not be denied. And this obscurity and qualification of statement, makes it doubtful whether they meant a spiritual vision, or a physical seeing.

Even if they used the term "see" in its natural sense, not in a figurative, psychical one,

### **They Were Incompetent Witnesses.**

Their testimony that they saw plates and engraved characters on them, may be accepted as true, and yet they could not tell whether they were ancient or modern, genuine or counterfeit. There was room for fraud, whether fraud was present or not. Martin Harris was not present with the others, but he was somewhere near.

Another explanation is plausible. The evidence is strong that Joseph continually used hypnotism. His was a strong, masterful,

self-assertive nature, a temperament which qualified him to act the part of such. He knew nothing of hypnotism, as an occult science, but he was proficient in it as an art, as we shall see further along. Anyone who has witnessed the delusions which hypnotists impose upon their subjects, can easily believe that all that the witnesses certify to, as occurring that day, may have seemed to them realities, but were mere delusions.

6. Their testimony was written out for them beforehand. Joseph wrote the certificate, as surely as he wrote Section 17, D. and C., for therein the very form of their testimony is given them. "By your faith you shall have a view of them," and you shall testify it was by the power of God."

"Wherefore you have received the same power, the same faith, and the same gift like unto him," (Joseph)

When, therefore, Joseph wrote out what and how he had "seen by faith," they signed it.

More: Martin Harris was forbidden to give any independent testimony. "He shall say no more unto them concerning these things, except he shall say I have seen these things and they have been shown unto me by the power of God, and these are the words he shall say." Yet he violated that commandment, and certified he saw the angel and heard the voice, and declares "These things are true."

We have an independent testimony of David Whitmer, as given by a reporter of the Kansas City Journal, a part of which we insert here.

"When did you see the plates?"

"It was in the latter part of June, 1829, Joseph, Oliver Cowdery and myself were together and the angel showed them to us. We not only saw the plates of the Book of Mormon, but he also showed us the brass plates (?) of the book of Ether, and many others.

They were shown to us in this way. Joseph, Oliver and I were sitting on a log, when we were overshadowed by a light more glorious than the sun. In the midst of this light, but a few feet from us, appeared a table, upon which were many gold plates, also the sword of Laban and the directors. I saw them as plain as I see you now, and distinctly heard the voice of the Lord proclaiming that the records of the plates of the Book of Mormon were translated by the gift and power of God."

"Who also saw the plates at this time?"

"No one. Martin Harris, the other witness, saw them the same day, and the eight witnesses saw them the next day."

"Smith made fac-similes of some of the plates and sent them by Martin Harris to Professors Anthon and Mitchell of New York. They pronounced the characters Reformed Egyptian, but were unable to read them."

One can not but regret that Joseph did not let these men write out their independent testimonies, instead of confining them to his program. It certainly would have been far more interesting and might have been more instructive, as the above proves.

That there are some errors in the above testimony, is clear. The plates of Ether were gold, not brass.

Prof. Anthon did not pronounce the characters Reformed Egyptian, in his testimony, and Joseph Smith says that Martin reported to him that he said they were true "Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac and Arabic." These characters pretended to be of 600 B. C.; Reformed Egyptian belongs to 400 A. D.

Whitmer says the two professors could not read them, but Martin reported that Prof. Anthon pronounced the translation correct. Here are direct contradictions, and impossible statements.

Had the reporter understood the points in controversy, at that time, respecting the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, and had got Mr. Whitmer's answers to questions covering them, we would have testimony of great value, now forever sealed to us.

Or, if a skillful modern reporter had got on Joseph's track during the first few years of his career as a prophet, he would have shown up the whole matter in a convincing light. Joseph's pretensions seemed to the world so preposterous, and himself so insignificant, that they excited nothing more serious than ridicule or contempt, and he was practically let alone. Being let alone, the error grew.

### Testimony of Eight.

Immediately following this testimony of three, is another signed by eight men. It follows:

"Joseph Smith, Jr., the translator of this work, has shown us the plates which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as he has translated we handled with our hands; also we saw the engravings thereof, all of which has the appearance of ancient work of curious workmanship.

"This we bear record with words of soberness, that the

said Smith has shown us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety that he has got the plates of which we have spoken."

For the first time, and the last, Joseph got his head out of the clouds of mysticism and his feet on the ground, and gave us a purely human testimony. Nothing supernatural, nothing miraculous, no magic nor hypnotism, about that. Let us play him fair, and accept this testimonial for all it is worth. He did not require these men to have faith like unto the faith of the prophets of old, nor were the plates so sacred that they must be shown by an angel who came down from heaven for that purpose; nor was there a voice declaring the translation true. Common, ordinary men saw and hefted the plates which looked like gold, in the sensible way men usually follow in examining things of the earth. The sum of their testimony is that they were permitted to handle the translated leaves, they saw the engravings, and they hefted the book of plates; therefore they say, we know "he has got the plates of which we have spoken." But, two questions arise here, which need to be answered:

(1) Why so much miracle and magic, in the first view of them, since ordinary men saw them in so natural a way, the very next day?

(2) If men who knew nothing of antiquity, who were able to read only English, and therefore could not know the nature of the engravings, were permitted to handle and test the weight of the metal book, why did not Joseph submit the same to men who could have told at once whether they were gold or mere glitter, and whether the engravings were genuine character writing, or mere senseless marks?

To put the two questions into one, why did not Joseph submit his plates to competent witnesses, instead of to men who, from their lack of knowledge, were incompetent to testify in the matter, save that they saw and hefted them? One leaf of the plates, if submitted to the proper witnesses, with the translation, would have been sufficient, either to confirm his claims, or to shatter his dream.

It is not necessary to prove fraud, but simply to show that Joseph pursued a course that protected him from exposure, if he was practicing deception.

If, in answer, our Mormon friends refer us to the fact that Martin Harris did place some of the characters before a learned man, that he pronounced them true characters, the reader is referred to the letters of Prof. Anthon, which are found in all current Mormon literature, the summary of which is as follows:

**Harris' Account:** Harris submitted two sets of characters to

Prof. Anthon, one of them translated, the other untranslated. Of the first Prof. Anthon declared the translation correct, "more so than any he had seen translated from the Egyptian." Of the second set, Prof. Anthon said they were "Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac and Arabic, and were true characters."

He gave Martin a certificate, certifying to the above. As he was leaving, Prof. Anthon called him back and asked how the young man found out that there were gold plates in the box. Upon receiving the answer that an angel of God revealed it, the professor said, "Let me see the certificate." Harris gave it to him, when Prof. Anthon tore it up, saying that there is no such thing as ministering of angels, but if Harris would bring him the plates, he would translate them. Then Harris told him the plates were sealed and he was forbidden to bring them, and Anthon answered him: "I cannot read a sealed book." Harris also states that he then went to Prof. Mitchell, who sanctioned what Prof. Anthon had said as to both the characters and the translation. See *History of Mormon Church*, S. L., P. 20.

**Prof. Anthon's Account: Letter to Mr. Howe, in 1834.**

"The whole story about my pronouncing the Mormon inscription to be reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics is perfectly false. Some years ago, a plain farmer called on me with a note from Dr. Mitchell of this city, requesting me to decipher, if possible, the paper which the farmer would hand me. Upon examining it, I soon came to the conclusion that it was all a trick—perhaps a hoax. When I asked him how he obtained it he gave the following account: A gold book with an enormous pair of spectacles had been dug up in northern New York. The spectacles were so large that a person could use one of them only, but whoever examined the plates through the glasses, was enabled to read them and understand them. Placed behind a curtain in a garret, and thus concealed from view, the young man to whom this knowledge was confined, looked through these glasses occasionally, and having deciphered the characters and committed some of them to paper, handed copies to those who stood outside. Not a word was said about their being deciphered by the gift of God, but everything was done by the glasses.

"The farmer added that he had been requested to contribute a certain sum of money toward the publication of the

book, the contents of which would, he was told, produce an entire change in the world and save it from ruin; that he intended to sell his farm and give the amount needed to publish the plates. As a last precaution, he had resolved to come to New York and get an opinion of the learned, as to the characters, although no translation had at that time been made by the young man. On hearing this I changed my mind, and viewed the matter no longer as a hoax, but part of a scheme to cheat the farmer of his money. I told him my suspicions, and advised him to beware of rogues.

"He requested an opinion of me in writing which, of course I declined to give. He left, taking his paper with him.

"The paper was a singular scroll; singular characters disposed in columns, evidently prepared by some one who had before him at the time a book containing various alphabets, Greek and Hebrew letters, crosses and flourishes; Roman letters inverted or placed sideways and the whole ended with a rude circle divided into compartments arched with various strange marks, evidently copied after the Mexican calendar by Humboldt, but evidently disguised as to its source.

"The paper contained anything else but Egyptian hieroglyphics. Some time afterwards the farmer came again with the printed book, offering it for sale. I referred again to the roguery I had suspected and asked him what had become of the gold plates. He said they were in a trunk with the spectacles. I advised him to go to a magistrate and have the trunk examined. He said the curse of God would rest upon him, if he did. On pressing him to take this course, he told me he would open the trunk if I would take this curse upon myself. I told him I would willingly do so and would incur any risk of that nature, if I could extricate him from the grasp of the rogues. He then left me."

In 1841, Prof. Anthon wrote Rev. T. W. Coit, in answer to some inquiry of his, in which are two seeming contradictions to his first letter. These we quote, because they are emphasized by Eld. Roberts in his *New Witness for God*, and made the basis for impeaching the truth of Prof. Anthon's statements. They follow:

"I have often heard that the Mormons claimed me for an auxiliary, but as no one until the present time has even requested from me a statement in writing, I have not deemed it worth while to say anything publicly on the subject. What



I do know of the sect. relates to some of the early movements; and as the facts may amuse you, while they will furnish a satisfactory answer to the charge of my being a Mormon proselyte, I proceed to lay them before you in detail."

"On my telling the bearer of the paper that an attempt had been made to impose on him and defraud him of his property, he requested me to give him my opinion in writing about the paper he had showed me. I did so without hesitation, partly for the man's sake, and partly to let the individual behind the curtain, see that his trick was discovered. The import of what I wrote was, as far as I can now recollect, that the marks were merely the imitation of various alphabetical characters, with no meaning at all connected with them."

First, as to the seeming contradiction between the well-known fact that Prof. Anthon wrote to Mr. Howe in 1834, which letter was published in full in Howe's *Mormonism Unveiled*, and the above statement that "no one until the present time has even requested from me a statement."

If we had the inquiry which Rev. Mr. Coit wrote Prof. Anthon, we would, no doubt, have a complete explanation. Inasmuch as we do not have that, we can only judge of Coit's letter, by the answer Prof. Anthon gave, and that explanation we have in the first paragraph quoted.

The rumor was prevalent, evidently, that Prof. Anthon was a proselyte to Mormonism and working with them to extend the faith. Notice his words:

"I have often heard that the Mormons claimed me for an auxiliary"—that is a confederate, or ally.

"The facts will furnish a satisfactory answer to the charge of my being a Mormon proselyte."

It is clear that Mr. Coit did not ask him about the truth of Martin Harris' report, as to the interview described in Prof. Anthon's first letter, but as to the truth of the claim the Mormons were making that he, Prof. Anthon, had become a proselyte to their faith.

Prof. Anthon's last letter says, in effect, I knew that they were publishing this, but inasmuch as up to this time no one has written me about that, I have not thought it worth while to make a public statement.

That it is false, the facts I now give you, will prove. Then, to clinch the denial, he gives the facts as to Martin Harris' call upon

him and adds: "Of their doctrines I know nothing whatever, nor have I ever heard a single discourse from any of their preachers."

Mr. Howe wrote Prof. Anthon about Martin Harris' visit; the first letter of Prof. Anthon's answered that. Rev. Mr. Colt wrote asking him about his becoming a Mormon; Prof. Anthon's second letter answered that.

There is no contradiction whatever.

As to the second apparent contradiction, wherein Prof. Anthon says, in the first letter, he declined to give Harris an opinion in writing, and in the second that he did so without hesitation, we have no perfectly satisfactory answer. Prof. Anthon in writing the second time may have forgotten that he did not give it, or in the first that he did give it, a mere lapse of memory. Or Harris may have asked for a certificate twice, once that the characters were true, which Anthon would not give, and a second time in the course of their conversation, he asked Mr. Anthon's real judgment as to the character of the paper, which the Professor willingly gave. An interval of five or six years lies between Harris' visit and Prof. Anthon's first letter, and of seven years between Prof. Anthon's two letters.

Let us examine Martin Harris' testimony as Joseph Smith reported it.

1. He says Prof. Anthon told him the translation was correct," more so than any he had before seen from the Egyptian."

Prof. Anthon says no translation was given him, as no decipherment had as yet been made.

Martin is too willing a witness, he goes too far. This is acknowledged by Eld. Roberts, who, after quoting Harris' statement given above, says: "The writer is of the opinion that there is in this statement too wide a scope given to what Prof. Anthon said of the translation." That is a mild way of putting it. In fact, Harris' statement could not be true.

Eld. Roberts gives "too wide a scope" as to what Prof. Anthon said in his letters, concerning the characters. Mr. Roberts: "It will be seen by his letters, that he (Prof. A.) acknowledges that the characters submitted to him were true characters." "Too wide a scope," is too gentle a characterization of that statement. Prof. Anthon says distinctly that "the paper contained anything else but Egyptian hieroglyphics"; "Greek, Hebrew and all sorts of letters, more or less distorted, "intermingled with sundry delineations of half moons, stars and other natural objects, ending with a rude delineation of the Mex-

ican calendar." Read again what Mr. Roberts says and see if he did not misrepresent Prof. Anthon, with the two letters before him.

2. Harris reports Prof. Anthon as saying that the characters in the second paper were "Egyptian, Chaldean, Assyriac and Arabic."

Of course Prof. Anthon said no such thing. Look at the "characters" given on page following and you can find almost anything in them, except "Egyptian." Two or three resemble Hebrew letters, some have a resemblance to Arabic; but, inasmuch as the Arabic letters were not in use until after the plates were buried, the resemblances were merely accidental, or were copied from a modern book.

3. Harris said he went from Mr. Anthon to Mr. Mitchell, who confirmed what the former said. Prof. Anthon says that Harris came from Mitchell to him, with a note from him requesting him (Prof. A.) to decipher, if possible, the characters.

There is no question as to which is right, as to this fact. Did Harris suffer a lapse of memory, or was he determined to get two certificates that the characters were true, out of one statement that they were meaningless?

#### **Other Proof Should Have Been Demanded.**

That the eleven witnesses were incompetent and too credulous is clearly shown in this:

Joseph Smith reported that he found the plates in a stone box on a certain hill. He described the location with exactness.

That box was a very substantial thing and might have been made to bear strong corroborative testimony to the truth of his statement, or to have disproved it.

The box was there, if ever, intact, when the witnesses signed the certificates. They do not seem to have thought it worth while to verify Joseph's statement, by examining the hill—a very easy matter.

Instead, they accepted Joseph's unsupported word, when as prudent, careful, self-poised men, they should have demanded an examination.

Joseph himself should have suggested this test and said to them, "Come and see where these ancient plates were laid."

Mormons lived in the contiguous country for years, yet none of them ever hunted for that stone box.

On the contrary, they seem to have looked upon the hill as "Taboo"—too sacred to investigate.

Eld. Edward Stevenson, in his "Reminiscences of Joseph the Prophet," tells us that this hill, the Ramah of the Jaredites and

Cumorah of the Nephites, was the treasure hill of the two nations; that soon after Smith found the gold Bible a Rochester company searched it for hid treasure, but "the only results of their efforts were the holes they left on the hillside;" then he adds, significantly: "When they (the untranslated plates) are translated much useful information will be brought to light. But till that day arrives, no Rochester adventurers shall ever see them or the treasures, although science and mineral rods testify they are there. At the proper time, when greed, selfishness and corruption shall cease to reign in the hearts of the people, these vast hoards of hidden treasure shall be brought forth to be used for the cause and kingdom of Jesus Christ."

By this he informs us that these treasures are there, but held under some enchantment which protects them from the unbelieving, but will yield them up to some one of the Latter Day Saints, in the fulness of time. How generally this superstition is held by Mormons it is impossible to the writer to say; but it does not commend itself to hard, common-sense people. It sounds too much like the juggler's formula: "Presto! Change! Now you see it; and now you DON'T!"

## V.

### WHY THE PLATES WERE NOT SUBJECT TO SCIENTIFIC TEST.

Mormons themselves, at least those who intelligently follow the history of the Book of Mormon and are independent enough to ask questions, realize keenly that the story of the plates is open to just criticism, particularly because they were screened from impartial investigation, on the claim that they were too "sacred" for profane hands to touch, or the eyes of the skeptical to look upon; that the reverence and obedience demanded for them, therefore, rests upon credulity and superstition, and not upon scientific proof.

The refusal or neglect to submit them to competent and disinterested men, is a fatal defect in the chain of proof, and subjects the author to the suspicion of fraud. and Mormon writers have been profuse in offering reasons to justify Joseph in his secreting them.

As far as the writer's investigation has discovered them, the reasons given are:

1. It would not validate Joseph's claim to show them to men. Not one in a thousand could read them, very few of the earth could see them, and, therefore, in the last analysis, the

people would have to rest their faith on the testimony of others.

2. Many thousands of Saints are staking their eternal salvation on the principles revealed in the records, are satisfied and happy in their faith in Joseph Smith, and these people are the intellectual and moral peers of those who do not agree with them

3. The church which Joseph Smith founded finds she does not need this independent proof for success; that she is not able to bear off her portion of labor called for to meet all the demands that come to her for help.

4. Many recent scientific discoveries relative to the people whose history the Book of Mormon gives, confirm, unequivocally, the credibility of the book.

5. A half million of devout men and women have risen up during the past few years, to declare, in the fear of God, that they know, by the testimony of the Holy Spirit, that Joseph Smith was a messenger from God, and, therefore, the plates must have been what he testified they were.

6. There is no reason why the Mormon plates should be singled out as an exception. The Bible goes back only to copies of the originals, and Christians are satisfied with that.

If we had the originals of the Bible, or of the Book of Mormon, the exhibition of them would only pander to a morbid curiosity, and give some an opportunity to display their learning. They could serve no good and wholesome purpose.

7. The plates were sacred, and to exhibit them to the world would be as great a crime, as to make a public exhibition of the Dove, the emblem of the Holy Spirit.

## VI.

### REVIEW OF ABOVE REASONS.

The foregoing reasons appear in an article in the Semi-Weekly News, March 8, 1906, in a lengthy article, which brings together all the conceivable arguments for withholding the plates from impartial examination. The author, Mr. Thomas W. Brookbank, has given us, in his carefully prepared paper, the strongest presentation that can be made.

Doubtless he satisfied those whose faith in Joseph Smith over

balances their judgment, for we are all easily persuaded to believe what we want to believe; but the honest seeker, who is after the truth only, will answer him readily, with more weighty reasons. Let us first carefully examine the conditions that confront us.

Joseph Smith, professing to be a prophet, declares he is in possession of ancient records, some of them over 2,000 years old, and that their contents overturn all the existing forms of Christianity, and introduce a new dispensation of grace. Because, therefore, their coming forth is fraught with such momentous and universal importance, involving nothing less than a world-wide revolution, his testimonials should be unimpeachable; they should satisfy every honest mind and confound the most skeptical.

What is his astonishment, therefore, to find that while he professed to have these ancient tablets in his possession from Sept. 23, 1827, to July, 1830, he kept them secreted and urged in justification, that they were so "sacred" that God Himself had commanded him to show them to no one except He ordered it, and that they were seen only twice, and only to select companies of his own friends. The claim itself raises the presumption of fraud.

Any honest man, coming into possession of plates of whose antiquity he was absolutely sure, would not only not fear the most searching and critical investigation, but he would invite it; nay demand it.

We might leave the whole answer in this general proposition; but to satisfy the Saints themselves, we take up the reasons for refusing to exhibit their records, *seriatim*.

1. "It would not validate Joseph's testimony."

That is exactly what it would have done, if Joseph's testimony had been true. But the dilemma is, it would have proved him an imposter, if his testimony was false.

2. The answer to the second reason is easy and cogent. There are other people in the world staking their salvation upon the principles contained in their holy books; not merely thousands of them, but millions.

Mohammedans trust in their Koran; have unquestioning faith in its precepts; prove its authenticity, tracing it historically to Mohammed, their prophet.

Another answer is ready. Mormonism is a corrupted form of Christianity. The Articles of Faith it publishes to the world, agree, verbally, with the general faith of Christians. Who probes deep

enough will find the covert errors that hide beneath the fair exterior. But the ordinary mind will not.

There are thousands of Mormons who are far more Christian than Mormon; whose faith rests just where the faith of Christians is fixed, in Christ. Their hope of salvation is not in Joseph Smith, but in Jesus, and they are trusting Him and Him alone, as their Savior.

Every one who has labored as a Christian missionary in Utah has discovered this fact, and found many to whom Mormonism is only a name, but Christ Jesus is their hope and joy.

3. The writer disputes this reason *in toto*. If there ever was an unpopular religion, it is Mormonism. Its missionaries go out to preach it by compulsion. By that he would not be understood as charging the church with using force, or commanding them to go; but it is undeniable that very, very few of their missionaries go constrained by the love of Christ, or by their faith in Joseph Smith, but because such conditions exist in Utah that custom and the good will of the authorities and one's standing in the community where they expect to spend their lives require them to give the customary time to this work.

When they go, it is to communities that have not called for them and do not want them, and they make thousands of calls at homes where they are kindly told the people do not wish to have any conversation with them about their religion.

4. As to the alleged fact that many scientific discoveries relative to the ancient inhabitants of America have confirmed the Book of Mormon, it is pure "buncombe."

The Mormon church is challenged to make a presentation of these proofs and submit it to the scientific world. Many scientists would just as soon Mormonism were true as Christianity, and would be just as impartial to one as to another.

Let Mormon scientific men gather all these discoveries and present them in positive statements, with the proof they have, and if it stands the cold, merciless, analytic examination scientists make of it, merely to determine the cogency of their arguments, and these men who seek merely for truth, approve the presentation, Mormons may then reiterate their claim with some show of probability.

5. The spiritual proof of the truth of the B. M., the inner, unwritten testimony of the Holy Spirit, is without evidential value, *save as to spiritual things*. This is fully discussed under *The Mormon's Ultimate Test of Truth*. Suffice it to say here, the testimony of the

spirit is never proof of material facts. To accept it as such is to abdicate reason, and enthrone credulity and superstition.

Faith has its foundation in reason; credulity is belief, without intellectual proof, or against proof.

6. The sixth reason is a very unfortunate one for the author. No one asks to make an exception of the plates. His illustration of the original autographs of the Bible, is more unfortunate still.

The cases are not parallel. A good illustration would be where some one claimed to have in his sole possession an original manuscript of one of the books of the Bible, say the autograph letter which Paul wrote with his own hand to the Galatians. Instead, however, of showing it, he hides it away from all except some intimates who never saw an ancient manuscript and know nothing of Greek; claims it "sacred," and finally declares it was taken away by an angel; and to prove he was not guilty of falsehood, but was speaking the truth, he gives out a pretended translation of that letter, which, when examined, proves to be nothing more than a copy of our English translation with a few unimportant changes. What would be that man's standing among Biblical scholars? How much credence would be given his story by men of intelligence?

Just as much as Joseph Smith deserves, who did exactly so as we have supposed this other man to do. He would be a "candidate for ridicule and contempt," and sure of his election.

7. The last reason is the most unreasonable of all. The plates were "sacred" and to exhibit them would be a crime. Can you find a parallel in all the dealings of God with his ancient people? The nearest like it is the ark with the tables of the law. But these were seen and handled by scores of people, and for five hundred years offered the opportunity of verification. The law was not hidden in an unknown tongue, but was written in the speech of the people, copied and widely disseminated.

The claim that the plates were sacred is pure fiction. They were made of unsacred gold, or of a metal that looked like gold, by men. (Martin Harris, "that wicked man," declared that he handled the plates on his knees for an hour and a half, one day.) Nearly every one who helped to write the records, made his own plates. The language was not sacred, but the idolatrous language of Egypt.

The engravings were not sacred, for Joseph copied some of them and showed them to men. In truth he sought to secure a certificate of their genuineness from a learned man; who pronounced them "anything but Egyptian."



What was written on the plates was not sacred, for Joseph hastened to translate it, print and bind it in a book and sell it for \$1.50.

The man himself was not sacred, for he confesses he fell into many foolish errors and was "led into temptations offensive in the sight of God."

The box was not sacred, for it was made of ordinary stones, buried in common earth and covered with a stone.

Nephi does say that he doesn't write anything on them but what he considers "sacred"; that is, he wrote two sets of plates, one the secular, or profane, the history of wars, governments and practices of his people; the other, the small plates, containing the prophecies, the preaching and the ministries of his people. In that sense the plates were sacred—sacred history—but in no other.

## VII. THE NEPHITE PLATES.

The Book of Mormon speaks frequently of the plates and the engravings on them. It is said that these characters were in "Reformed Egyptian"; but this can not be true of the first books the original plates of Nephi, for he made the record "in the language of the Egyptians." In the course of a thousand years, the characters may have changed somewhat, so that Mormon can call them "reformed Egyptian."

Joseph Smith says, in his autobiography, concerning them: "They (the plates) were filled with engravings in Egyptian characters." He also gives their size as six by eight inches, and the block of plates, about six inches thick.

This would make a block of gold containing 288 cubic inches. Allowing one-tenth for loss of weight by being separated into leaves, the gold bible would weight one hundred and ninety-five pounds avoirdupois, and be worth \$58,500.

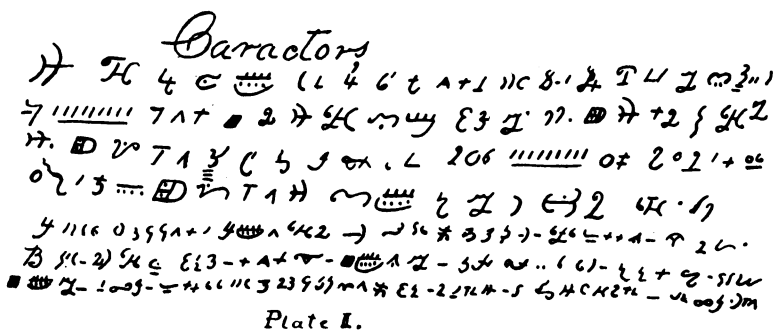
Joseph's story makes it appear that he treated this weight as a light matter. His mother says that he took them from the place where he first hid them, wrapped them in his linen frock, placed them under his arm, and started for home; that on his way he left the road and came to a large windfall, when, as he was jumping over a log, a man sprang up from behind it and gave him a heavy blow with a gun. Joseph turned around, knocked the man down, and then ran at the top of his speed. A half a mile further on, he was attacked again in like manner, knocked this man down also, and ran again. The third time he was assailed, and struck the man, dislocating his own thumb,

When he came near to the house, he threw himself down in a fence corner, to get his breath, and when he reached home he was speechless from fright and fatigue.

## VIII. THE NEPHITE CHARACTERS.

We give herewith a fac-simile copy of some of the Nephite characters, which once belonged to David Whitmer, but are now a part of the Berrian collection of Mormon historic works in the Lenox Library, New York. Their genuineness has never been questioned. Plate I gives us the characters as they appear drawn by Joseph's own hand. Note the word "Caractors" as he wrote it. By selecting the familiar characters out of those in Plate I we get A of Plate II, and by classifying them and combining them we have B of Plate II.

Summarizing them we have seventeen letters of the Roman Alphabet; all the Roman numerals except the figure 7; four of our common punctuation marks; three arithmetical signs; eight printer's signs; tally marks of five and ten; the sign of the English pound, and



that of the ounce, Apothecary weight; six combinations of figures; and most convincing of all we have JOE, upside down, and JOS upside down and backwards. When we study the meaningless characters, we find a few that resemble Greek, some Hebrew, some Arabic, but they are all chance resemblances.

These "caractors" are gravely held forth to the world as Egyptian hieroglyphics, written 600 B. C.

The Mormons have many educated men, men of wide scholarship and of eminent reputation as men of unimpeachable moral character.

If any one of them will undertake to show that the foregoing is unfair or illogical, or if he prefers to prove them true characters and even near-Egyptian, he may use space in our September number, not to exceed 1,500 words.

Study Plate I carefully, turning in your hand so as to place the characters in columns, and then upside down, and you will make such discoveries as justify Prof. Anthon's characterization of them:

$$H \ 4 \ \text{☸} \ L \ 4' \ 6' \ 6' \ A+1 \ 1' \ C \ 8-1 \ 4 \ I \ 3 \ 0)$$

$$\text{|||||} \ 1+2 \ ' \ H \ \text{☸} \ \{ \ 3 \ 7 \ \} \ . \ 12 \ H \ X$$

$$\cdot \ D \ 2 \ 3 \ ( \ 4 \ X \ L \ 206 \ \text{|||||} \ C \ 202 \ 1+26$$
A.  $0 \ 1 \ 5 \ \text{☸} \ D \ 1 \ \text{☸} \ 2 \ 7 \ 3 \ 2 \ H$   
 $4 \ 0 \ 99 \ A+2 \ 4 \ \text{☸} \ A \ H \ 2 \ 3 \ 6 \ A - L$   
 $B \ (-2) \ H \ \{ \ 3 - + \ A \ + \ - \ \text{☸} \ A \ 2 \ H \ . \ ( \ ) - E + W$   
 $\text{☸} \ 2 \ 00 \ 1 - + 66 \ 33 \ 1 \ * \ E \ 7 \ L \ C \ H \ 2 \ T \ L \ 00 \ T \ A \ - -$   
 $A \ B \ C \ D \ E \ F \ H \ I \ J \ L \ O \ 2 \ 6 \ 2 \ 2 \ X \ 2 \ J \ 0 \ 2 \ J \ 0 \ 6 \ - -$ 
B.  $1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5 \ 6 \ 8 \ 9 \ 0 \ 1 \ 8-1 \ 3 \ 0 \ 1+26 \ 99 \ 66$   
 $1:0' \ + - \neq \wedge \ ( \ ) \ " - + + \ \text{☸} \ \text{☸} \ 2 \ 3 \ 00 \ 00 \ . .$

Plate III

The entire question of the genuineness of the so-called Nephite characters, and consequently the genuineness of the Book of Mormon as the records of the Nephites, might rest here.

The "characters" disprove the claim of Joseph, and fasten upon him the attempt to foist upon the world a set of Egyptian hieroglyphics that dares not meet even a common sense test.

## IX.

### THE TRANSLATION.

"Relative to the manner of translating the B. M. the prophet himself has said but little. 'Through the medium of the Urim and Thummim I translated the record by the gift and power of God,' is the most extended published statement made by him upon the subject." Roberts.

Joseph did not seem to sense the importance of a clear statement

as to his method of translation, a matter of really great importance. Oliver Cowdery says: "I wrote with my own pen the entire B. M. (save a few pages) as it fell from the lips of the Prophet Joseph Smith, as he translated by the gift and power of God, by the means of the Urim and Thummim, or as it is called by that book, 'Holy Interpreters.'"

While Joseph and Oliver both attribute the translation to the aid of the Urim and Thummim, yet the evidence is altogether in proof that this was a late invention. The translation was by the stone.

Oliver Cowdery's statement was made in 1848. The term Urim and Thummim, is found only in later Mormon literature, does not appear in the Book of Commandments, published in 1833, and is disputed by every one of the witnesses.

That he used the stone is the testimony of all who have spoken. He could not translate without his "interpreters."

Had he translated solely by the gift and power of God, without the use of the interpreters, the problem would be simple and two hypotheses only would be necessary: (1) That Joseph himself was inspired of God to understand the characters and to render them into English; or (2) The gift and power of God was directed to the characters, and converted them into English, before his eyes.

Under the first hypothesis, Joseph would have been the inspired translator; under the second, it is God, by means of the stone.

But it was not done in so simple a manner, although that was the method of God's prophets of old, as is seen in the interpreting of the writing by Daniel; but a material medium was necessary to Joseph. Without the stone, he was helpless; by means of it he translated. No reference is made anywhere to the Holy Spirit, as inspiring the man. God had no part in it, personally or independently of the material means. The power was in the stone.

A familiar illustration is found in the art of photography. Just as in the translation we have the man, the interpreters and the plates, so in picture-making we have the man, the camera and the object. The artist is helpless without his instrument, for the power to take the picture resides in that. So Joseph was helpless without the seer-stone, for the power to translate was in that. When, therefore, he says, "I translated the plates by the gift and power of God," he means that the "interpreters" was the gift of God and the power to translate. This is not conjecture, nor hypothesis. The "interpreters" is fully explained in the Book of Mormon. In Mos. 28:13, 14 we learn these facts about it: Mosiah had "wherewith" he can look and translate

all records of an ancient date; and "it (the wherewith he can look and translate) is the gift of God."

The magic power was altogether in the interpreters, for any one could look in and "see things," although, if not commanded, "he might look for what he ought not, and so perish."

Whoever was commanded to look in them, could know of "past things and things to come; secret things, and things not known might be revealed."

The "interpreters" had been handed down from generation to generation, for the purpose of interpreting language. Mosiah, by its means, translated the plates of Ether from the language of the Jaredites, to that of the Nephites.

This magic instrument is called in the Book of Mormon "a stone," "directors" and "interpreters."

Alma 27:23 affords us another proof. This is a prophecy, in which the Lord said, "I will preserve unto my servant Gazelem, a stone which shall shine forth in darkness unto light." Joseph appropriated the name "Gazelem" to himself, D. and C. 104:26, and he used the stone for the purpose which the Lord named. In translating he put the stone in his hat, and then immersed his face in the hat and drew it close about his face to exclude the light, and "in the darkness a spiritual light shone" and Joseph saw the characters and the translation.

## X.

# JOSEPH USED ONLY THE STONE. AND TRANSLATED WITHOUT THE PLATES.

Those who speak from personal knowledge, all, save Oliver Cowdery above noted, and his testimony dates back to 1848 only, unite in testifying to this fact. Martin Harris, his first scribe:

"By the aid of the seer-stone, sentences would appear and were read by the prophet and written by Martin and when finished he would say Written, and if correctly written that sentence would disappear and another would appear in its place, but if not written correctly it remained until corrected, so that the translation was just as it was engraven on the plates, precisely in the language then used."

Harris wrote one hundred and sixteen pages of the first transla-

tion, the pages that were lost, and is competent to testify from personal knowledge.

Emma Smith, who wrote for her husband before Oliver Cowdery came, gave this testimony to her son Joseph:

"In writing for your father, I frequently wrote day after day, often sitting at a table close by him, he sitting with his face buried in his hat, with the stone in it, and dictating hour after hour with nothing between us."

David Whitmer, one of Joseph's earliest and firmest friends, in whose father's house much of the translation was made, and whose brother John was one of Joseph's scribes, gives us very clear and very explicit testimony:

"Joseph Smith would put the seer-stone into a hat, drawing it closely about his face to exclude the light; and in the darkness a spiritual light would shine. A piece of something resembling parchment would appear, and on that appeared the writing. One character at a time would appear and under it was the translation in English.

Brother Joseph would read off the English to Oliver Cowdery, who was his principal scribe, and when it was written down and repeated to Joseph, to see if it was correct, then it would disappear and another character with the interpretation would appear. Thus the B. M. was translated by the gift and power of God, and not by the power of man."

This testimony was fixed in the faith of the first Mormons and it prevailed for seventy-five years. They believed, they preached and their literature maintained that the stone translated the Nephite records. It is inextricably interwoven into their arguments. If there was any error in this early belief, Joseph never corrected it.

Eld. Geo. Reynolds makes use of it in his *Myth of the Manuscript Found*, p. 71, to account for the brief time required for the translation of the B. M.

"It must be remembered that the translation was accomplished by no ordinary means. It was done by divine aid. \* \* \* All was simple as when a clerk writes from dictation. The translation of the characters appeared on the Urim and Thummim, sentence by sentence, and as soon as one was correctly transcribed the next would appear."

Other quotations might be given, but this is unnecessary, for all early authorities agree. The stone did it all, and Joseph was merely the reading clerk.

When intelligent men began to read the B. M., no longer bewildered by the glamour of their first enthusiasm, they discovered that the book was crude in style, words were misspelled and used incorrectly, the rules of grammar and rhetoric were flagrantly violated, modernisms were abundant, many plagiarisms marred it as an original message, and whole chapters were quoted literally from our English Bible. Hence they began to ask the reason for these things: and **"Who is responsible?"**

Oliver Cowdery may have been responsible for the misspelled words, but God was responsible for all the rest, for the book was a correct copy of the language of God.

The early defenders of the book met these charges and the ridicule which logical criticisms evoked, with sublime indifference. It was God's book and "His own voice had proclaimed that the translation was correct; what is man that he should reply to God?"

Men of better education followed them who were sensitive to these flings, and they sought a way of escape. Recently, Eld. B. H. Roberts, whose skill as a writer and controversialist is recognized by all, the ablest apologist of Mormonism the church has produced, has invented a new theory. He confesses he was driven to this by the necessities of the conditions that confronted him.

Speaking of the old theory as to the translation—which, by the way is not a **"theory"** but a **historical fact** attested by the original witnesses—he declares that "to advocate it before intelligent and educated people, is necessarily to invite ridicule and make of those who advocate it candidates for contempt."

He adds, as if there is no room to dispute his statement, there is **"no use in resisting the matter, the old theory must be abandoned."**

How did he reach this revolutionary conclusion? Has he discovered any new testimony? None whatever. Has he received a revelation from God, correcting some stupid blunder of former churchmen of high and low degree? No; the heavens are shut up again and the "prophets, seers and revelators" have had no message from the Almighty for over sixty years.

He is driven by pure reason, by cold logic, by the fear of ridicule, to abandon one of the strongholds of his church.

In retreating from this position he impeaches the infallibility of the priesthood, **"a higher degree of priesthood,"** to use his own definition, than his own.

If he is correct, then reason, intelligence and a decent respect

for the opinions of educated and intelligent men are a better help to truth, than all their "inspiration." The change is demanded, not by "the spirit of revelation and prophecy" which they claim to possess, but by their sensitiveness to intelligent criticism, from without. The leaven has been a long time working, but it has worked.

Alexander Campbell exposed this absurdity, Eld. John Hyde proved it, and Rev. Mr. Lamb illustrated it.

The Mormon world "do move," and we may hope that in less than another seventy-five years, some other bright, logical mind and sensitive soul will rise up and persuade the Mormon Authorities to abandon another "old theory," one that is much more the subject of ridicule by learned and educated men, viz., that The Book of Mormon is true.

## XI.

### ELDER ROBERTS' NEW THEORY.

In justice to Mr. Roberts, whom we have named, we give his explanation:

"It should not be supposed, however, that this translation, though accomplished by means of 'Interpreters,' and the seer-stone, was a mere mechanical procedure, that no faith, or mental or spiritual effort was required on the prophet's part; that the instrument did all while he who used them did nothing but look and repeat mechanically what he saw there reflected. \* \* \*

"The translation required the utmost concentration of mental and spiritual force possessed by the prophet, in order to exercise the gift of translation through the means of the sacred instrument provided for that work."

Compare this theory, merely a supposition of Eld. Roberts, with the statement of facts given by Harris and Whitmer, already quoted. Either his theory is wrong or their testimony is false.

Mr. Roberts is attempting, by the invention of his new theory, to lift the responsibility of the many errors of the book from God and to lay them upon the lack of knowledge and the limited language of Joseph. He realized his dilemma; but his own prophet disputes him:

"November 28, 1841. In council with the twelve Joseph Smith said, 'I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth.'" Compendium, p. 273.



Test the Book of Mormon by either theory of translation and the dilemma is equally fatal.

Nephi, the man that bulks largest in the Book of Mormon, in reporting the revelation of the Spirit to him, records the angel as saying: "Behold the Virgin whom thou seest is the Mother of God, according to the flesh." (1st Ed.)

That this was an error is confessed by the change which has been made by some reviser in later editions, to read, "the Mother of the Son of God."

When Joseph gave that out as the translation of certain characters, Cowdery wrote it and then read it to Joseph, and the magic stone approved it, by the sentence fading away and another taking its place. According to the old theory God was responsible for that untruth, since it was "by His gift and power," the translation was made.

If Mr. Roberts is right and the error was due to Joseph's ignorance of the doctrine of God, it vitiates the credibility of his whole translation. The gift and power of God was not potent enough to keep him from falling into palpable error; then the whole translation falls to the plane of Joseph's limited knowledge. Let us apply the test in another instance. This same Nephi wrote, or Joseph translated it and Cowdery wrote:

"Adam fell that men might be"; how do we know that he was not as much in error there, as in the former translation? Again: Over in the Book of Ether, Joseph found something that he translated thus: "They did make all manner of tools to till the earth, both to plough and to sow, to reap and to hoe, and also to thrash."

Was that in the old Jaredite records, a people who left the rest of mankind at the great tower, Babel, and lived separate from the race, or did Joseph weave in a colloquialism of western New York?

If his translation is true, then long before the Christian era, they had in America, plows and seed-sowers and reapers and hoes and threshing machines, and factories to make them.

Evidently he found nothing of the kind there. It is as flagrant an anachronism, as it would be if attributed to the ancient Assyrians.

Again we find in the Book of Mormon, lengthy quotations from our English Bible. 1st Nephi, 600 to 545 B. C., quotes seventeen chapters of Isaiah. Comparing them with our Bible, we find them so nearly an exact copy, that no other conclusion is possible than that they were copied literally. How does that come? Eld. Robert's ex-

planation is, that the work of translation required the concentration of all powers, mental and spiritual, resulting in mental weariness.

When, therefore, Joseph saw that the Nephite record was quoting the Scriptures, that the Bible and the record paralleled each other, "he adopted our English translation," to ease himself of the labor of translating, and because "The English translation was superior to his own."

The first is the recourse of a lazy man, and in Joseph's case was criminal. He was shirking a sacred duty. If the second reason is valid, it is a fatal confession of failure.

Joseph claimed to have a gift from God to translate; but Eld. Roberts concedes that the work of men who had only consecrated learning to aid them, gave a better expression to the Scriptures than he, the heaven-endowed translator, could do.

Mr. Roberts' explanation raises other difficulties. If he did not translate, but copied, how did he know when it ended, and how did he catch those slight changes and variations he introduced?

And how comes it that his principal quotations recognize our modern divisions of the Bible into chapters, the beginnings and endings of our chapters being the beginnings and endings of his quotations? It would be a marvelous thing, if the old Nephite Bible was divided into chapters, and these exactly coincided with the divisions of our Bible made by Cardinal Hugo in the thirteenth century, A. D. Marvelous? Yes, too marvelous for belief.

These contradictions of history with hypothesis, the difficulties which go with both, the conclusions and inferences, which follow, not only bar the way to a belief in the Book of Mormon and the divinity of the mission of Joseph Smith, and make it impossible for men of learning and integrity to become Latter Day Saints, but these questions will also eventually be taken up by higher critics among the Mormons themselves. And, mark this prediction, the result will be to throw over both history and theory, leaving no foundation for Mormon faith to rest upon, but blind infatuation.

## **XII.**

### **THE STONE SUPPLIED BOTH THE TEXT AND THE TRANSLATION.**

The plates were not in the hat when Joseph was translating. They couldn't be put into his hat—Emma says he used "his" hat—if he had tried. The plates were six by eight inches, or twenty-eight inches

around them, and six inches thick. They wouldn't go into any hat but one of very extraordinary size, and then the stone, which was nearly as large as a goose egg, was to go in, too.

Read Whitmer's and Joseph's wife's testimony again, and they prove that the plates could not have been in the hat, although they do not mention them. But Isaac Hale gives positive testimony on this point.

"The manner in which he (Joseph) pretended to read and interpret the plates was the same as when he looked for the money diggers, with the stone in the hat and his hat over his face, while the book of plates was at the same time hid in the woods."

Mr. Hale knew Joseph well for he boarded him while the latter was employed by Mr. Staal to hunt for secret treasure, and Joseph ran away with his daughter and married her.

He knew his method of translating, for Joseph and Emma lived with him for a time after returning from Palmyra, while the translation was going on. His testimony is clear, explicit and convincing.

Orson F. Whitney, one of the apostles, acknowledges (Eighty-second Annual Conference, 1912, p. 49), that Joseph "could sit in his father's humble cottage, while the record was secreted at a distance, and could read what was on the plates."

All of this leads us to the serious question:

What was the use of all that pother to get possession of the plates and to keep his enemies from robbing him of them after he had got them; for Joseph could have translated them as they lay in the box, as well as when they were hid out in the woods?

Then, as to his witnesses, after his translation was completed, he could have taken the witnesses out to Cumorah and with Moroni, his angel, with Moses and Elijah and Elias and John the Baptist, and Peter, James and John, the apostles, he could have shown them the whole assortment and received all his "keys" at once, for "the new dispensation."

That would have been a demonstration worth while, and fully as creditable as the program he followed.

### XIII.

## THE LANGUAGE OF THE NEPHITES.

The Nephites were Jews, inheritors of a thousand years of hereditage. Behind them lay a history which began with Abraham, their

father; their people were solidified into a homogeneous nation under the power of the Egyptian oppressor; they had Moses for their leader, their lawgiver, the wisest and strongest ruler time has yet enrolled; theirs were the fathers, who were baptized unto Moses by the cloud and in the sea, who marched from Sinai, where Jehovah had veiled His majesty in thick cloud, and uttered His voice in the thunder that shook the mountain to its foundations, to Jordan, where they crossed over as they had passed through the sea, dry shod; under Joshua they had wrested their land from the Canaanite and builded their cities and developed their lands; David was their king and psalmist, and Solomon, their pride and glory.

Jerusalem, "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth," was their home. Thrice every year they had seen the tribes come up from near and distant lands, unto the testimony of Israel;" daily, they witnessed the temple service, and its stately worship was one of the most familiar things to them of all their life.

The Nephites shared fully in that momentum which has kept the Jews an unchanged race, although they have become parts of many nations, their religion and their pride surviving two thousand years of dispersion and oppression. But the Book of Mormon represents the Nephites as being of an altogether different fiber of character.

They left Jerusalem and native land without a recorded syllable of regret; they turned their backs upon the promises and prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah of a return and restoration of the nation, with a future glory far excelling even the greatest splendor of the past; they broke away from the old religion, and wandered half the circuit of the earth, to a new, unsettled continent with perpetual isolation from their kindred, and counted it a compensation to have escaped the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of their people. They came to the new world absolutely free to follow in the footsteps of their fathers, to develop to perfection the heritage of their nation's past.

Immediately, however, and without any sufficient cause, they develop two characteristics that were utterly anti-Jewish, viz., they begin to follow Christ, and finally develop a Christian church 150 years before Christ came, and also discard the language in which their Holy Scriptures had always been written, and adopt instead the idolatrous language of Egypt.

They brought, so the Book of Mormon tells us, a freak copy of the Jewish Scriptures, in the hieroglyphics of Egypt, and with it the

genealogy of Joseph's family engraved on brass plates.

Only one person in the colony, Lehi, could read this profane record. Instead of translating it into the language of Abraham and Moses and David and the prophets, he perpetuated the monstrosity and fixed the custom of having all copies of it made in the same idolatrous language, and all records of their subsequent history preserved in the same way. Yet the people used the Hebrew, their "mother tongue," in all their daily life. It follows, therefore, that the Nephites were a bi-lingual people for a thousand years. Now it is a teaching of history that where two languages are forced upon one people, and this has happened many times, a conflict is at once begun which results either in the victory of one tongue over the other, or an assimilation of the two into a third language which supplants both.

Yet the written Egyptian and the spoken Hebrew lived in perfect amity among the Nephites for ten centuries. Another anomalous condition also confronts us, in this supposed event.

The Hebrew was the more expressive and perfect language. Written language was first by means of rude pictures, the written language of primitive man; the last and most perfect form is alphabetic, wherein a sound is represented by an arbitrary sign. Under the first, the meaning is always imperfectly expressed, and is limited to a very small vocabulary. Under the last, every vocal sound of the human voice is registered, and writing becomes co-extensive with human speech.

The Egyptian hieroglyphics are ideographic, a form of writing midway between the two, and therefore imperfect.

The Hebrew was the most versatile, sympathetic language in existence, 600 B. C. It responded accurately to the human voice, so that to read one of the Psalms gave the reader all the meaning and passion of the writer, as perfectly as if he had heard David recite it.

The Egyptian hieroglyphics were utterly incapable of this. We are, therefore, asked to believe that a prophet of God caused his people to degrade their language, to go backward in recording their holy scriptures, rejecting the language in which that scripture had been kept for a thousand years.

The alleged fact would not only be abhorrent and sacriligious to a Jew, but as a de-volution, an evolution backwards, absolutely unthinkable.

Such a change as the Book of Mormon represents must have had a purpose in the mind of the writer. It is not a mere fancy, wrought into a fabulous story without design. What was it? Why is this

unnatural and impossible fact (?) wrought into the very beginning of the Book of Mormon? The answer is found in the anticipated necessities of the coming forth of the book.

The invention was made in 1830 A. D. and not in 600 B. C. The plates must be written in a language which "none other people knoweth," by "means prepared for the interpretation thereof," which means no other man on earth but Joseph Smith could use. It fits into the very necessities of Joseph's venture, albeit it is at war with all the lessons of history and with common sense.

No one could read the characters except Joseph, and therefore no one could dispute his translation.

Do Mormons feel any embarrassment on account of these suspicious conditions? Some do not, but many have a feeling down deep in their hearts, in spite of their hereditary faith, a fear that the Book of Mormon is a deception.

## XIV.

### JOSEPH AS A TRANSLATOR, A FAILURE.

The first task which Joseph had in hand, after he got possession of his plates, was to translate them into English. For this he had no natural fitness whatever. The natural gift differs altogether from that of a seer, or prophet. It needs no supernatural endowment, or divine gift. It requires a thorough knowledge of the two languages, of their idioms, their genius, their delicate shades of thought, and an ability to transfer the meaning and the literary character of the original into its new dress.

Joseph pretended to none of these natural qualifications of a translator, but he claimed to have a special gift from God. That this gift was inadequate, his work amply proves, for wherever it was possible, he ceased translating, and copied, because it was better than he could do.

There are two general objections to his translation. The first has reference to its literary character. As this has been more fully treated in the chapter on the **Book of Mormon as Literature**, it will suffice to say here, that it is impossible to believe that a book written, presumably, by twenty or more different authors, covering the history of a people for a thousand years, could exhibit the uniformly one style characteristic of the Book of Mormon.

Nor does it answer this objection to reply that we do not have the original writings of the authors, but abridgements only, for at

least eight of the books were not touched by Mormon and Moroni. Even if they were all abridged, the objection would hold.

When we compare the writings of which Joseph was the undoubted author, with the above, we find the same style, the same redundancy of words, the same repetitions innumerable, just as the kaleidoscope gives us many figures by means of a few bits of colored glass.

If the plates which Joseph claimed to translate, were filled with the writings of men of individuality and genius, then he has robbed them of all their merit, and by the poverty of his own language and his lack of literary skill, he is a failure, as a translator.

The second objection is a more serious one, one that can not be controverted. He failed to appreciate and meet the extraordinary opportunity his plates gave him.

Bible scholars, for centuries, have been seeking to discover authentic and ancient copies of the Scripture. When such a discovery has been made, as that of the ancient manuscript in a monastery at the foot of Mt. Sinai by Tischendorf in 1859, it creates great excitement in the whole Christian world. Tischendorf, finding himself in possession of this invaluable treasure, could not sleep, so great was his ecstasy.

At the first opportunity he, with the help of two others, copied with religious care, the 110,000 lines of the Codex and noted more than 12,000 changes made by later hands. As soon as possible the entire manuscript was printed and given to the world.

Now Joseph Smith claimed to be the sole custodian for more than two years, of the Egyptian translations of twenty full chapters of the Old Testament, a new version of these parts of the word of God, eighteen of them having been brought from Jerusalem 600 years before Christ. Tischendorf's manuscript was not earlier than 340 A. D., or nearly 1,000 years subsequent to the date of Joseph's copy.

Joseph claimed to possess another advantage over the men of Tischendorf's day. They were compelled to depend, for the correctness of their translation, upon their knowledge of the Greek language, and their ability to transfer the contents of the Codex, into English. Their human qualifications and their fidelity in performing their task, no one questions.

But Joseph had "a gift from God" for this work. He was divinely endowed to translate. Therefore, if he spoke the truth as to his plates and himself, we will have from him the inspired translation of these authentic and most ancient Scripture.

Our interest in them is enhanced when we find that two of these chapters, Mal. 3 and 4, got into the Nephite record, through the mouth of Jesus Christ. Therefore these two chapters are not only ancient and genuine, but they have been authenticated by the very highest authority, that of the Son of God.

Joseph sat down to his task, with these precious documents in his possession, and translated them "by the gift and power of God."

When he handed out his work, it was discovered to be a slavish copy—words, punctuations, even italics were included—of the English Bible Joseph owned.

If, as Mr. Roberts says, the old theory of translation must be abandoned, before intelligent and educated people, because it merits ridicule, what, in justice, can be said of this man who meets such a marvelous opportunity of adding to the world's treasury of Bible knowledge, and does no better than a mere school-boy can.

The truth, stated in the mildest terms possible, is, Joseph "flunked;" he fell down flat; he was "weighed, measured and "found wanting as a translator. And what adds to our amazement is, the man did not seem to sense his ridiculous failure!

To say that Joseph eased himself from the mental and spiritual concentration the translation required, is not to excuse him, but to exaggerate his fault.

Nay! It was more than a fault; it was a crime.

## EXPLANATIONS.

That the reader may follow the author intelligently, in this discussion, the explanations of names, etc., are given.

**Jaredites.** The ancient people who came from the tower of Babel to North America, grew to be a numerous people, and 600 B. C. committed national suicide, annihilating twelve to fifteen millions of people, save two men. This slaughter occurred near Manchester, Joseph Smith's home.

**Jared;** the man from whom the people were named.

**The Brother of Jared;** the real leader, the Moses of the Jaredite exodus. His name is not given.

**Coriantumr;** the commander of one faction, and the only survivor out of millions, who fought at Ramah.

**Ether;** last of the Jaredite writers. He took no part in the battle, but hid himself in the cavity of a rock. He wrote a comprehensive history of the Jaredites on twenty-four gold plates and hid them in the hill Ramah, where the Nephites found them 400 years afterward.

**Nephites;** the descendants of Lehi, Ishmael and Zoram, who left



Jerusalem, 600 B. C., in the first year of Zedekiah, migrated to America, and became a great nation.

They soon divided into two nations, known as **Lamanites** and **Nephites**, named for their respective kings. They all were converted to Christ and lived as one Christian people for a century; finally all apostalized, and became "totally depraved," not only in religion but also in morals and civilization. They divided again and fought under their old names, and in 400 A. D. the Nephites were annihilated and the Lamanites were left in full possession of the land.

Their descendants are the aborigines of the two Americas.

**Lehi**; a Jewish prophet, and the leader of the colony.

**Laman**; his oldest son, who opposed Nephí, and became the leader of one faction of the divided people and gave them his name.

**Nephí**; Lehi's fifth son, the founder of the Nephite nation, who holds the most conspicuous place in their history.

**Alma**; the first High Priest, the founder of the Church of Christ in America, about 150 B. C.

**Mormon**; the last general of the Nephites, who fell with his 230,000 soldiers in the battle of Cumorah, with all the Nephite people, 400 A. D.

**Moroni**; son of Mormon, who escaped the battle, finished the Nephite record and hid the plates in the hill Cumorah, the Ramah of the Jaredites, two miles distant from Joseph's home.

**Book of Mormon**; the translation by Joseph Smith of the gold plates he found in Cumorah. The popular edition has 623 pages, containing about 275,000 words.

**Book of Commandments**; a small book printed in 1833, in Independence, Mo., containing Joseph's revelations to September, 1831. These were destroyed by the mob in July, 1833, only a few copies escaping the fire.

The first edition of the Book of Mormon and the surviving copies of the Book of Commandments are **rara Americana**, and command fabulous prices.

**Doctrine and Covenants**; a republication of the revelations contained in the Book of Commandments, with changes and additions; first published in 1835. Subsequent editions have appeared.

**Pearl of Great Price**; the last "inspired" book put forth by Joseph Smith, containing the Book of Moses, the Book of Abraham and some of the writings of Joseph.

**The Sacred Books of the Mormons are:**

The Bible, King James Translation, The Book of Mormon, The Doctrine and Covenants, and The Pearl of Great Price.

## XV.

### JOSEPH SMITH, JR.: HIS HEREDITY.

Joseph's story of himself was given, in No. 1. Naturally it contains his history as it was involved in, or directly related to, his book. But we need a more intimate knowledge of him,—a knowledge of him before he was born. He possessed eccentricities and unusual qualities of character, and an extraordinary personality. He impressed all alike, as Josiah Quincy has shown in his admirable and penetrating characterization of him, in his "Figures of the Past."

Heredity—the qualities of body, mind, temperament and character, the child's heritage from his forbears,—is often the key that unlocks the mystery of a unique and striking personality, and furnishes a safe basis from which to begin to study and estimate the man. This is our first study in the life of the Mormon prophet.

Joseph Smith, Sr., was one of those peculiar characters which early pioneer society produced; sons of the soil, developing naturally their inherent tendencies, uninfluenced and unmodified by modern conventions, undisciplined by education and narrowed by the pent-up Utica which confined their powers. He was not an irreligious man, much less an infidel, although he was averse to churches, seldom going to Christian assemblies and then unwillingly and only at the solicitation of his wife. Nevertheless he had a form of religion, believed in supernatural powers and practised certain forms of it, like witching for water and for hidden gold. He was a prolific dreamer and his wife has recorded several of his night visions with evident approbation and pride. Analyzed, they are found to be nothing more than ordinary hallucinations of a mind, that, awake, thought strange thoughts which were woven into dreams when he slept, wherein a spiritual guide interpreted the strange sights he witnessed. One of his dreams ended in a night-mare, and one landed him in heaven. One of the dreams is so like the vision of Lehi, I Nephi, 8;., that one is left in doubt whether Mother Lucy drew it from the Book of Mormon, or Joseph used it for his book, afterwards. These dreams always had a religious character and were accepted by the family as signs and omens, messages in cypher from the spirit world. They had no affinity with the Bible, except the last one.

These were told in the family and became the subject of conversation, and so had a powerful educative influence on his boy and put the lad *en rapport* with the mystical, spiritual world, a characteristic which followed through his whole life.

The father's dreams were illogical and full of vagaries, as dreams usually are, and they seldom led anywhere.

Like Lehi, he was a "visionary man," which qualified him when, later, he was made "Patriarch" of the church, to give forth revelations to individuals,—for a honorarium,—which, in reality, were such horoscopes or "fortunes" as modern fortune-tellers dole out. His were the patterns on which all "blessings" still popular among the saints, are framed. The following is a sample which the writer copied from the original, given by one C. W. Hyde, a Patriarch:

"John, I place my hands upon thy head and I seal upon thee a Patriarch's blessing.

For thou wilt yet be called to do a great and mighty work in this kingdom. And thou shalt proclaim the gospel on the islands of the seas. For thou shalt have power to open prisons and cause the lame to leap for joy. For the angels of God shall go before thee. No power on earth shall stay thy hand and you shall hear the voice of angels calling thee by name, from time to time saying to thee be of good cheer for I am with you, and no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper and you shall bring many to Zion with songs of great joy.

For thou shalt behold wars and rumors of wars. Thou art of Joseph and have a right to a fulness of the gospel with wives and a great kindom upon the earth in due time with houses and lands, horses and chariots. For no good thing shall be withheld from you.

These blessings I seal upon thy head with the blessing of eternal lives with all thy fathers household forever and ever Amen."

John lived a very uneventful life, never went on any mission, was born after the civil war and died before the Spanish-American war began, had but one wife and never rode in a chariot. Doubtless there are thousands of blessings cherished in Utah today, containing very similar effusive, florid promises. The writer has read a number of them, and they are marked with the visionary style of Father Smith.

Lucy Smith, the mother, was also a firm believer in dreams and has recorded one which was prophetic of her husband and of Jesse, his brother, the former of which would yield to the gospel, while the other, who refused to accept the prophet's teaching, stood stern and unyielding. She believed in prayer as having magic power to heal

the sick and to solve the mysterious problems of life. Interpretations of dark providences came to her in answer to prayer. She is reticent as to her uniting with the Presbyterian church, but intimates otherwise; but Joseph tells us she did.

Her two oldest sisters had marvelous spiritual experiences, one of them being raised up from the very shadow of death, healed by the Lord, both soul and body. Two days afterward she attended church, sang a hymn and related how she had seen the Savior through a veil as thin as a spider's web, who told her she must return to earth and warn the people to prepare for death, for they must surely die and stand before His judgment seat; that, if she would do this, her life should be prolonged. There was nothing new or startling in this message, nothing original in her vision, except perhaps the thinness of the veil, and was common in that day, the period of the Great Revival.

Lucy Smith's father, **Samuel Mack**, published a little pamphlet in 1810, giving his personal history, his physical ailments and his spiritual experiences. He tells of suffering from a severe fall that affected him mentally and physically; of his having "fever sores" and "falling fits." He anticipated some of Joseph's experiences, saw a bright light and heard a voice calling to him twice, but did not have the wit of the young prophet to turn them to his temporal advantage.

The paternal grandfather of Joseph, Jr., **Asael Smith** "was just recovering from a severe fit," when his son, Joseph, Sr., visited him, in 1830.

**Jason Mack**, an uncle of Joseph, Jr., was almost as much of a "character" in his day, as his illustrious nephew afterwards became. He joined the "Seekers" at sixteen, and believed with them that by prayer and faith he might attain the gifts and powers possessed by the apostles of Jesus Christ. He labored almost incessantly to convert others to his faith, traveling and preaching, and healing in the name of the Lord. In 1835 he wrote a letter to his brother Solomon, affirming that the Lord bestowed

"the gift of healing upon him, by the prayer of faith and the use of such simple means as seem congenial to the human system."

The foregoing is given to show Joseph's heredity and environment, which explain the tendencies physical, mental and spiritual which blossomed out in him.

He also, when a boy, suffered from a grievous "fever sore" on

his leg, had falling fits which rendered him unconscious, during which he saw bright lights and heard voices, and believed in all the "supernaturals" of which he heard much in the family circle.

Consider the natural effect of these physical traits handed down to him, the influence of his environment and his training. Naturally bright and susceptible, these tales of dreams, visions, conversions, healings and death-scenes, without the balancing and true adjustment of experience which contact with the sane world would have given him, invested everything with spiritual meaning and superstitious regard. Add to this home education, the excitement of great revivals accompanied with marvelous physical manifestations of some hidden power, and the man is explained.

It was no wonder, therefore, that when the boy, Joseph, first saw a magic stone he eagerly asked to look into it, and gazed full of faith in its strange power.

When the suggestion came to him, afterwards, to use the stone as the translator of an unknown language, it was not a new discovery or a startling innovation to him, but only an easy transition from crystal gazing for hid treasures, his ordinary vocation, to discovering the hidden meaning of strange characters, by this same stone of magic power.

## XVI.

# CONTENTS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

In the New Testament there are 27 books, divided into 260 chapters of 7959 verses, and 181,253 words; the Book of Mormon has 15 books, 239 chapters, 6,611 verses, and about 280,000 words. Of these, 23 chapters of 508 verses, are literal quotations from our English Bible; there are many other briefer quotations. The average length of chapter and verse, in words, in the New Testament, is 679 and 22 respectively; in the Book of Mormon, 1,192 and 43. The redundancy, the expanded style of the latter, as compared with the Bible, is clearly revealed in this comparison, and is nearly two to one.

The records of both Jaredites and Nephites were kept on plates of ore. Lehi wrote the first records on plates of brass. Mormon abridged them, Joseph Smith translated them, and Martin Harris wrote the translation down as Joseph dictated it.

This translation was lost, through Harris' zeal to show the new bible to his friends.

Nephi also wrote a history of the same period, but separated it,

engraving the secular history on "larger plates" and sacred history on "smaller." This he did, not for any good reason appearing in the record, but to promote the reverence of people for the whole Mormon Bible. Nephi and his brother Jacob, preserved this distinction, to the close of their times; but all other writers after them ignored it. Their own books are modeled on the plan of a universal history. The first six books of the Book of Mormon are original records. Six books are abridgements; two books by Mormon and one by Moroni are also originals. All of these were engraved on gold plates, in Egyptian, or Reformed Egyptian, hieroglyphics, and constituted the book of plates which Joseph found and translated "by the gift and power of God."

Ether wrote his history of the Jaredites on 24 plates of gold, which Moroni abridged into the book of Ether as it now appears in the Mormon Bible.

Lehi wrote 600 B. C.; Nephi and Jacob, his sons, 550 B. C.; Mormon and Moroni 400 A. D. The other writers are supposed to cover the 1,000 years that intervene.

Moroni made up Joseph's book of plates in this order; first, the collection of Mormon, his father, as follows:

(1) The plates of Lehi, from 600 B. C. to 175 B. C.

These were the first plates translated, and written down by Harris, who lost the translation.

(2) The two books—or smaller plates—of Nephi, the books of Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni, which covered the same period, exactly, 600 B. C. to 175 B. C.;

(3) The Words of Mormon, or his explanation of why he bound the above plates with his own works, and some missing links of history;

(4) The books of Mosiah, Alma and Helaman covering the period from 175 B. C. to 1 B. C., 315 pages, or more than one-half of the entire Book of Mormon;

(5) III Nephi, giving the history of Christ's three days'—when He appeared in America, and IV Nephi, the history of the apostolic church and the golden age of Christianity in America and the contest between God and Satan resulting in the complete triumph of the latter,—from 34 A. D. to 305 A. D., 74 pages in all, or one-ninth of the book.

(6) Moroni then adds to the foregoing sum of plates.

The book of Mormon, by his father, 315 A. D. to 400 A. D. He

describes the final war with the Lamanites and their crushing defeat; the abridgement of Ether's history of Jaredites; and his own contribution, made up of some necessary "sundries," which is called the book of Moroni.

There were other plates bound in this collection which were sealed, and contained the history of the world to the end of time,—the character of which is left only to conjecture.

Moroni, after the destruction of all his people, and while in hiding "in the cavity of a rock," finished the record, bound it together with rings running through the edge of each leaf, and hid it up in Cumorah (Camurah, 1st Ed.), and for 1400 years "the fullness of the gospel," the only book that contained the truth of God, which could save men, lay in its unknown grave. At the same time, if Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God, there were four living men on the earth who had been personal followers of Jesus in his ministry, and who had been ordained as witnesses of Him and preachers of the gospel. Moreover, Jesus had said to these men, "Lo! I am with you to the end of the world."

We have, then, if the B. M. be true, this spectacle! The Words of Life, buried and hidden in an unknown tongue and grave; four disciples of Jesus and He abiding with them, appearing nowhere, witnessing to no one, silent and powerless as the dust of Peter and Paul, to arrest the world in its wicked career and turn it back to God!

From 400 A. D. to 1830 A. D., while "the fulness of the gospel" was dead even to the people of America, to whom it had been sent, and Christ's still living four witnesses were dumb, a wonderful revolution was going on in the old world. For, within the period named, the struggle of the church in the old world to free itself from the chains which had been forged to bind it, met a glorious result.

The Reformed Church, issued from its centuries' long imprisonment, with an unchained Bible in its hand, printed in the every-day language of the people. It fought to a successful issue, the war of its independence from the autocracy of pope and priest, and established the right of every man to read that Bible for himself, responsible only to his conscience and God, for his interpretation of it, and to worship without fear of man.

That Book and the Church that bore it went forth to the conquest of the world for Christ. Marvelous changes followed, changes that can be accounted for only by the infinite power of the Holy Ghost. Wicked men were made free from sin; savages given up to

such abominations as polygamy, cannibalism, human sacrifices, fetishism and unspeakable cruelties, were redeemed and civilized and made children of God; civilizations were reformed, and society delivered from ancient and giant wrongs, such as slavery, serfdom, the duel, the lottery, and is now in a hand to hand conflict with industrial injustice, the social vice, and even war itself. These shall be its trophies, at last, and hung up in the Temple of Universal Peace and a World Brotherhood.

### I. THE NEPHITES.

Lehi, a supposed prophet in the days of Jeremiah, but unknown to the Scriptures, warned of God in a dream, left Jerusalem in the first year of Zedekiah, to escape the destruction and captivity impending.

In all there were twenty-two souls, with probably some small children; Lehi and Sariah, four sons and two daughters; Ishmael and wife, two married sons and wives and five daughters; and Zoram, former servant of Laban. Two more sons were born to Lehi, on the journey. The four older sons and Zoram married the five daughters of Ishmael. The two younger sons probably married grand-daughters of Ishmael. Lehi's two daughters remained unmarried.

They traveled three days and came to the shore of the Red Sea,—an impossible journey in three days,—and encamped.

Thence they traveled southeast, and coming to a fruitful land they called Bountiful, Nephi built a ship, out of ore he digged from the mountain, making tools without tools; and, embarking upon it, they set sail on the Indian Ocean, passed through the intricate and dangerous passages of the East Indies, traversed the Pacific Ocean at its widest part, and landed on the coast of South America, at about 30° south latitude, or near where the city of Valparaiso now stands. They could not have landed at a less favorable point, on all the west coast line of the continent. The Andes mountains confront the ocean, with their inaccessible walls, forbidding travel on them or over them, while, to the northward, lying between the mountains and the sea, stretched the desert of Atacama, so dry and denuded of vegetation that even cacti can not grow there,—a waste, sand-driven desert of nearly 2,000 miles.

The colony remained here for some years, planted the seeds they brought from home, and were blessed with good harvests.

Here they found, in the wilderness, the cow, ox, ass, horse, goat and wild goat, and beasts of every kind. Soon, internal strifes arose,



Laman being jealous of Nephi's power and pre-eminence, and they divided into two "kingdoms," the Lamanites under Laman and the Nephites under Nephi. So bitter was this strife that Nephi moved northward, Lehi and wife, three brothers and wives, Zoram and wife and two unmarried daughters of Lehi, a "kingdom" of fourteen souls, accompanying him.

They traveled 2,500 miles northward, but without a single comment on the nature and difficulties of the journey, to the head-waters of the river Sidon, supposed to be the Magdalena. Here they settled, built a city and called it and the country about it Nephi, after the name of their leader. Nephi built a temple like unto Solomon's, ordained his two younger brothers priests, and here they lived for 300 years. But the Lamanites, whom they had left 2,500 miles away, followed them up and bloody wars ensued.

Finally, the Nephites abandoned their city and country, and traveling twenty days' journey northward, discovered a city 400 years old, built by Mulek, a reputed infant son of Zedekiah who somehow escaped the vengeance of the Babylonian king when he killed all the Jewish princes of royal blood, put out their father's eyes and carried him in chains to Babylon.

This colony of Mulek landed somewhere in North America, but found its way into South America and built their city. The only result, judged by the records, was to provide a ready-built city for the retreating Nephites and to strengthen them when the two were united into one nation.

The exodus of the Nephites from their homes was made under Mosiah, a little Moses, who was chosen king of the united people.

The impossibility of the truth of this history is evident, because it is altogether improbable that two nations should live **within twenty days' journey** from city to city, **for hundreds of years**, without either being apprised of the fact.

The Lamanites moved into the city and land of Nephi, and held it ever afterwards, and, from this near and advantageous position, they prosecuted their wars against the Nephites, for nearly 200 years more.

Soon after Mosiah became king of Zarahemla, a colony went back to the land of Nephi, and with the permission of the Lamanites, established a colony under Zeniff as king. Here they multiplied and prospered for three reigns, in the meantime losing their religion, and lapsing into polygamy and idolatry, and suffering great extortions from the Lamanites.

Although they had come from Zarahemla, only twenty days' travel away, no communication was had with the parent city, nor did that entire nation know what had become of their colony.

Limhi, the third king, therefore, sought to find Zarahemla and obtain some help from it to resist the tyranny of the Lamanites. He therefore sent an expedition of forty-three men, who went in search of Zarahemla, which they knew to be not very far away. However, they missed the city, traced the 500 miles of the Isthmus of Panama, traversed a wasted continent formerly inhabited by the Jaredites, destitute of trees and covered with the ruins of their homes and the bones of that people, self-slain 400 years before, making an advance journey of 5,000 miles. This brought them into the region of Western New York, to the region of the Great Lakes, where they found in the hill Cumorah, two miles only from Joseph's boyhood home, twenty-four gold plates, the history of the Jaredites by Ether. These they brought back with them with some relics of the battle-field which had withstood the ravages of four centuries.

They then retraced their steps, missed Zarahemla the second time, and reached home after footing it over 10,000 miles.

When Mosiah II approached the end of life, having no sons who would accept the throne, he persuaded his people to abolish monarchy, because it was so fraught with the possibility of evil, and adopt a republican form of government, calling their rulers, judges. This was 91 B. C.

The government by elected judges was no better for the people than that of the kings, yet it prevailed till after the birth of Christ in Bethlehem, when the nation of 600 years' growth, disintegrated into tribes.

It would be exceedingly interesting, if the historian had thought it worthy of notice, to learn how a homogeneous people, living together for centuries in a limited country, united most intricately by intermarriage, could be divided into tribes according to families, so that every man who had kinsmen and friends, could make a tribe of them and become their chief. The record says:

"Now there was no man among them, save he had much family and many kindred and friends; therefore their tribes became exceeding many and great."

The Book of Mormon is not much concerned with the Lamanites, although it gives us some very interesting data. It represents them as becoming in one generation, a "dark and loathsome people," the curse of God upon them because they rebelled "against I, Nephi."

This curse was a very convenient matter, for when Nephites dissented and went off to the Lamanites, the curse rested on them. But when Lamanites dissented and joined the Nephites, they became a "white and delightsome people."

One evident purpose of the Book of Mormon is to explain the American Indians, who are the supposed descendants of the Lamanites.

As far back as 550 B. C., although they were Jews just out of Jerusalem, the Lamanites had this "blackness of skin;" were filthy, idle and dressed in skins, sometimes wearing only a covering for the loins; shaved their heads and painted their foreheads red; were wild, hardened and ferocious; delighted in robbery and murder, worshipped idols and dwelt in tents; wandered in the wilderness and ate the flesh of beasts of prey, some eating nothing but raw meat.

Yet the king lived in a walled city, had servants and flocks, horses and chariots, and they were armed with swords.

About two years after Christ appeared at the city Bountiful, everybody in both continents was converted, the old linemarks disappeared and the people were homogeneous as in the beginning. This golden age lasted one hundred and fifty years, when wickedness again appeared, and by 250 A. D., the people were altogether corrupt, as much so as the Ante-diluvians, whom they much resemble.

At once, the old division into Lamanites and Nephites appeared, not as in the beginning on family lines, but on religious. Those who continued steadfast in the faith were Nephites; the infidels were Lamanites. And although they became, finally, undistinguished in wickedness, the old names were perpetuated and the ancient feud continued.

The book would have us believe that the Indians are descended from the dark and savage Lamanites; whereas all these lived before Christ, had the curse removed, and were as "fair and delightsome" as the Nephites. The failure of the author to explain the Indians, therefore, is decided, and absolute.

Moroni describes the atrocities of the last times, committed by the Lamanites, but also records the more atrocious inhumanity of the Nephites.

To say, therefore, that the righteous Nephites were slain by the wicked Lamanites, as we often hear, is altogether untrue.

## II. GADIANTON ROBBERS.

The Book of Mormon excels in the extraordinary, the unreasonable. It gives a very prominent place to the devil; he beguiled our

first parents, initiated Cain into a secret society whose object was murder, perpetuated the secrets of that society, somehow bringing them across the flood, and not only reorganized the Society of Cain among the Jaredites, but also made it known to the Nephites. This was the leaven of wickedness that led finally to the destruction of both nations.

This secret combination which began with Cain appeared among the Nephites, and with special power and violence about 15 A. D.

They went by the name of the **Gadianton robbers**, who deserved every opprobrious name that could be invented, for they were guilty of every capital crime, especially robbery and murder. So numerous did they become, so many Nephites "dissented away" to them, that they out-numbered the rest of the people and demanded that the government should be turned over to them. Instead of going out to battle and defeating them, the Nephite general, Gldgiddoni, who was also "a great prophet among them," ordered all Nephites in both North America, which they had begun to settle some 75 years before, and South America, to "take their horses, chariots, cattle, flocks, herds, grain and substance," and gather in the land Bountiful, where they fortified themselves, and dwelt together in one body, a great many thousands of them. Here they defended themselves from the robbers, who occupied the whole country around them, but were unable to supply themselves with food, because they dared not risk crops, and the beasts of the forests were exterminated. The Nephites, on the contrary had sufficient food for themselves and provender for their animals **"that they might subsist for the space of seven years."**

History was reversed in this instance, for the beseiged had ample food and the beseigers were starved out. Desultory warfare marked the seven years, the Nephites always having the best of the battles, until at last they had either killed or taken all the robbers prisoners. In the ninth year of this siege, the Nephites all returned to their own lands, each "with his family, his flocks and his herds, his horses and his cattle," for "they had not eaten up all their provisions."

How the great feat of Joseph in Egypt who gathered the super-abundant crops of seven years into granaries, and thereby kept the people from starving through seven years of drought, pales before this achievement of Gldgiddoni!

By a sudden emergency proclamation, he made millions of people come together, who for seven years lived off their substance, and so contented were they that they kept together for two years more, and

still had plenty to eat for themselves and their domestic animals.

This Gadianton secret combination reappeared in the final apostasy and was the cause, so the Book of Mormon says, of the destruction of the Nephites.

### THE SPREAD OF THE NEPHITES.

About 55 B. C. the Nephites began their first settlement in North America. Hitherto they had been content to confine themselves to the north part of the south continent, from the sea east to the sea west, with probably a few cities on that part of the isthmus which lies next to the main land.

In the year named, 5,400 men, with their wives and children, entered the north country, evidently traveling overland.

Other emigration was carried on in ships, but on the Pacific side. Seven years afterwards "an exceeding great many departed out of Zarahemla and went forth into the land northward. . . . And they did travel to an exceeding great distance and came to large bodies of water and many rivers. And they did spread forth into all parts of the land."

Moreover, the Book of Mormon declares that there was very little timber on the face of the land, and therefore these colonists became expert in making cement, of which they built their houses. But the demand for timber led the people in the home colony to send much by way of shipping, and the colonists "built many cities both of wood and cement."

These people multiplied and "began to cover the face of the whole earth from the sea north to the sea south, and from the sea west to the sea east," which a footnote explains: "From the Atlantic south of Cape Horn to the Arctic, north of North America; and from the Pacific to the Atlantic." A tremendous continent to people in a few years.

### THE GREAT CATAclysm.

Geology and the Book of Mormon are in irreconcilable conflict as to great seismic changes which the latter avers took place at the time of the crucifixion. An earthquake, accompanied by great conflagrations of many cities, by upheavals of valleys into mountains and the leveling of mountains into plains, terrific hurricanes which swept all human structures before them and spirited the people away, not only proved the most destructive storm as to the people and their posses-

sions, ever chronicled in the history of the world, but also the most universal, involving both Americas. For three hours this "confusion worse confounded," this chaos of destructive forces, raged continuously, while a dense, thick night shrouded them in a mist of darkness for three days, in which it was impossible for them to have any artificial light, "neither candles nor torches; neither could there be fire kindled with their fine and exceeding dry wood, so that there could not be any light at all."

Our incredulity, as to this record, is strengthened, and we have to smile, as we read on, and find that many of the cities were at this same time, burning up.

The destruction of Zarahemla and fifteen other cities named, is given briefly but specifically, and then the historian says:

"There was a great and terrible destruction in the land southward. But a more great and terrible destruction in the land northward: for, behold, the whole face of the land was changed, . . . the highways were broken up, level roads were spoiled and many smooth places became rough, . . . and thus the whole earth became deformed, . . . the rocks were broken up upon the face of the whole earth, and found in broken fragments, seams and cracks."

In the year 5 B. C., Samuel, the prophet, declared that, at that time, the rocks were solid, or the more part was "one solid mass," and prophesied that they should be broken up,—as Nephi describes above, and ever after be found in seams and cracks, both on and beneath the surface.

The history, however, refers a number of times to mountains, and the whole continent had been lifted up above the sea, which could not be done, without breaking up the rocks. Besides, the Nephites had gold, silver, iron, copper, zinc and precious stones,—such minerals as are found only in mountain elevations where the lower strata have been broken and tilted up,—all of which required upheavals and subsidences of rock strata which left them broken.

To reconcile some of the statements of the Book of Mormon which are at war with present geologic conditions and modern geography, Eld Roberts, in his "New Witness for God," maintains that previous to this new-world convulsion at the time of the crucifixion, the two continents were separated by water, and South America was only a long, narrow, elevated plateau, where now the Andes rise, and that the mountains which now stand in such unequaled loftiness and

rugged majesty,—and therefore the Rocky Mountains also,—were born 34 A. D. in this unexampled parturition of nature, lasting three hours. He is forced to this desperate position, because Jacob, one of his prophets, declared, after the Nephites were settled in South America, "We are on an isle of the sea." Therefore, the prophet was mistaken or the geological conditions have changed. Mr. Roberts says he doesn't hesitate which to believe, and therefore he changes the geography of a continent and the geology of the earth to fit his scripture.

In 230 A. D., many of the people had become wicked, and the old division into Lamanites and Nephites appeared, the Nephites being those who continued Christians and the Lamanites, the infidels. So the last was begun as a religious strife. But the Gadianton robbers, bound by their secret combinations and oaths, reappeared, and in a few years the people were all wicked, God withdrew His Spirit and the three living disciples, and left the people to sorrow, not unto repentance, "but it was rather the sorrowing of the damned."

Mormon, the last of the name, was made general of the Nephites, but was finally defeated by the Lamanites, and his people and army driven out of South America, along the isthmus, into the land north. That he did not make a stand at the narrowest part of the isthmus, where the Nephites had built fortifications across it, in view of just such a probable reverse as this, impeaches his military skill. Instead of making a desperate stand here, he is more concerned about rescuing the precious plates of Lehi and Nephi and successive scribes, and safely depositing them where Joseph Smith could conveniently discover them, than in beating back the foe.

So they rush pell-mell, many thousands of them, over the narrow bridge of land to the land north, only those escaping who were in the van, or could out-foot the Lamanites.

Then occurred a most remarkable thing. Mormon calls a truce, and proposes to the Lamanites who had him on the run, to cease all fighting, and permit him to gather all his people to Cumorah, 5,000 miles away, where they would fight the final and decisive battle.

The Lamanite general doesn't see anything extraordinary in this proposition, so he graciously consents. For four years there is no fighting, and Mormon uses the time to gather all the Nephites from Cape Horn to the Arctic ocean, from the Pacific to the Atlantic, in western New York. Imagine this stupendous undertaking, equaled in the world's history only once, when the Jaredites were assembled from all the broad continent, for the same purpose at the same place,

men, women and children of all ages, and in all conditions of life, simply to butcher one another.

The Nephites alone had peopled North America, the Lamanites never having changed their habitation, so that for a second time a whole continent was abandoned by its people, and assembled in a distant part of it, merely to fight. About 400 A. D. the Nephites were all gathered, the Lamanite army had marched 5,000 miles from home, and they met at Cumorah.

The Nephite army of 230,000 men was annihilated to one man, Moroni, whom it was necessary to spare that he might finish the record, and bind up the book of plates for Joseph to translate. From one and one-half to two millions of Nephites were slain, according to Mormon authorities, annihilated at once, except a few who fled and were afterwards hunted down, and killed, and a few others who "dis-sented away" to the Lamanites.

Sometimes a novelist gets his hero hopelessly entangled in his plot, and the most convenient remedy is to have him die; so the Book of Mormon, wanting to leave the Lamanites, the forebears of our Indians in complete possession of the land, resorts to a battle for the sudden annihilation of the Nephites. The trend of the story is plain, the necessary conditions are fulfilled, and a nation perishes, so that one underlying object of the history part of the Book of Mormon was fulfilled, which was to prove that the Indians were of Jewish descent, and to enable Joseph to get the plates without the inconvenience and expense of going to South America, where, if at all, the finale should have come.

We will find a second purpose of the writer of the Book of Mormon, in the history of the Jaredites, to which we now turn.

## 2. THE MARVELOUS STORY OF THE JAREDITES.

A colony consisting of Jared, his brother and some others, with their families left the tower of Babel, at the time the Lord confused the languages of the people, and came to America. This "brother of Jared, large and mighty and highly favored of the Lord," is the real leader and a mighty prophet. Yet he is unnamed, in the entire history, but is constantly referred to as "the brother of Jared;" about as sensible as if the name of Moses had not appeared in the Bible record of the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, but he was known only as "the brother of Aaron." The last camping place of the Jaredites, before embarking for their voyage from Asia to America, was called Moriancumr; and this, Joseph declared, was the name of this man,



mighty before the Lord. Jared plays only an inconspicuous part in the journey and future settlement.

By this man's prevailing prayer their language was not confounded; therefore they must have spoken and written the language of Adam, the original speech of man, in Eden.

Through him the Lord gave his commandment to this favored company to go on a journey that would take them more than half-way round the world; and to build the eight barges, on which they should make the voyage of 10,000 or more miles.

To provide for this exodus and journey, they snared the fowls of the air and caged them; seined fish from the rivers and put them in a vessel to transport them; carried bees and "seeds of every kind." They took their "beasts and flocks and herds of every kind," and provender for them, and traversed the continent of Asia, from the river Euphrates, to the eastern coast. Four years were required for this journey, of 4,000 miles, across a continent only a few years out of the flood. After they reached the shore of the Pacific, this brother of Jared built eight barges, after the manner of those they had constructed to cross the inland waters. They were exceeding tight, so that they would hold water like a dish; the bottoms were tight, like a dish; the ends thereof were peaked; the top was as tight as the bottom; and the length thereof was the length of a tree; the sides thereof were as tight as a dish, and when the door was shut, the vessel was as tight as a dish. Which provokes one to say that when they all got inside they were in a "tight place." A hole was made in the top, for air, and another hole was made in the bottom, which was to be stopped, when the water came in. Windows were forbidden, "for they will be dashed in pieces," and fires were not to be lighted, they were to be "as a whale in the midst of the sea." When they were submerged, the Lord promised to bring them up out of the depths. For light within these dark vessels, the brother prepared sixteen stones, "as transparent as glass," and the Lord touched them with his finger, "like unto flesh and blood," and they were placed, one in each end of the peaked vessels, and lighted them.

The colonists numbered sixty souls; 14 in the family of Jared, 24 in that of his brother, and 22 others. When they came to the new world, they gathered together their people and numbered them.

Having built these eight "barges," not quite eight souls to each vessel, with all their cattle and herds of every kind, their fowl and

birds and bees, with provender for all, they were driven of a furious wind which did not cease for nearly a year; they were tossed about on the waves, they were "many times buried in the depths of the sea," and "no monster of the sea could break them, nor whale mar them," for they were all as tight as if they were shut up in clam shells; and after 344 days they landed. They were driven more than twice as long as Noah's ark floated on the waters of the flood. Noah's boat was a great floating barge, roomy and habitable; their barges were made to float on the surface, to be submerged, to roll over, all with equal security. Of course there was great confusion within when one of them "turned turtle," filled as they were with human beings, beasts, birds, fish and bees, but what was a little discomfort like that, to the writer. As for air, they had a hole in the top, making it about as well ventilated as a jug. And if they now and then "shipped a sea," they could open the hole in the bottom, and let the water out.

Mormon writers, in explanation of a hole in the top and one in the bottom, have suggested that the hole in the bottom would serve for ventilation, if perchance the boat had to float bottom side up. And Eld B. H. Roberts, in his *New Witness for God*, calls it an "emergency provision," so that, "In the event of being capsized, the other opening could be used for similar purposes,"—that is for air. Verily here is a pattern for modern shipbuilders; a vessel so constructed that its bottom could become the deck and the deck, the bottom, with the rudder up in the air, on the outside, and everything topsy-turvey within!

The Jaredites are supposed to have landed on the west coast of America, presumably in Mexico, to have moved by expansion into Central America, and eastward, until they finally occupied the whole land even to the Atlantic ocean.

In the time of Omer, the fourth king, a fierce war arose among the people, and Omer took his family and fled to the east coast. Of the rest, all but thirty souls were destroyed, and these found refuge with Omer, who then returned to the original settlement, and again became king. In sixty-two years after, they became strong and rich in fruits, grain, silks, fine linen, gold, silver and precious stones, oxen, cows, sheep, swine, goats, horses and asses. They also had elephants, cureloms and cumoms, which were especially useful to them. In the reign of Com, the seventh king, three generations after nearly all the people had been destroyed, "the people had spread again over all the face of the land," and had become exceedingly wicked, in spite

of "the prophets that came into the land." It would be interesting to know from what land and people these prophets came, since only Jaredites occupied the whole continent. Therefore the Lord sent a plague upon them. "Poisonous serpents came upon the face of the land, and did poison many people." The flocks began to flee before them to the land southward. The serpents got behind the fleeing cattle and hedged up the people from them, depriving them of their food, for a great dearth had destroyed all their fruits and grain. The cattle kept moving to the south, the serpents behind them, the people following and subsisting upon the carcasses of the cattle that died in their flight, until at last the herds and flocks found their way into South America.

That was a continental "round-up," before which the feats of cattle kings sink into insignificance. The people returned to their homes for the drought was broken; but what they ate on the return journey, and until fruits and harvests again blessed their land, the historian does not say, as that was not a very important matter—to him.

In after years the Jaredites used to go down into South America for their meat. If they took it home, as the record implies, it was a marvelous feat of transportation, carrying or shipping meat a thousand or more miles, in a hot country, without ice.

The serpents remained on the land to the reign of Lib, the 12th king, when they were destroyed.

Prosperity returned again, and they had all the wealth before named, and they made "all manner of tools to till the earth, both to plow and to sow, to reap and to hoe, and also to thrash."

In the days of Ether, in the time of the 29th king, about 600 B. C., a civil war arose which involved the whole people and led to their sudden and complete extermination. So intense was the hatred between the two factions, that the people who had spread over the whole land, gathered together in western New York, in the region where Joseph Smith spent his boyhood, every soul of them, male and female, old and young, feeble and strong, leaving a whole continent depopulated, all armed for battle, the women and children as well as the men, and in a battle that lasted eight days, they slaughtered one another, only one of the combatants surviving. A foot-note at the bottom of the page, 606, says: "Including wives and children, the numbers very probably, must have been TEN TO FIFTEEN MILLIONS." The capitals are ours.

A whole nation, inhabiting half of North America, deliberately exterminated itself; a far greater destruction by one battle than history records for all time since records of the killed in battle have been kept.

One naturally pauses to inquire what the purpose of the writer was, in putting forth this impossible story. It is not the vagary, the freak of a mind that was simply bent on writing a great fabrication; there was purpose in it. Mr. Spaulding declared that purpose. It was, as he says in his Ms story, only "the natural sentiments we should form on viewing the innumerable remains of Antiquity which are scattered over an extensive country."

"Gentle Reader, tread lightly on the ashes of the venerable dead—Thou must know that this country was once inhabited by great powerful nations, . . . and that on the ground where thou now treadest many a bloody battle has been fought—and heroes by the thousand made to bite the dust."

Mr. Spaulding wrote the above about 1910, and Joseph Smith wrote the story of the first battle at Cumorah, in 1829.

The Jaredites are the hypothetical explanation of the people who were the builders of prehistoric mounds. And the author got rid of them, just as he did with the Nephites, by killing them off!

### 3. THE RELIGIOUS PART OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

The intention of the writer, or writers, of the Book of Mormon, was to make it harmonize with the Bible. It claims to be a witness of the truth of the Word of God. But it is careful, at the same time, to enter its own claim as being the Holy Scriptures which God gave to the western world. It claims that the stick of Judah, Ezek 37:16, is the Bible, and the stick for Joseph is the Book of Mormon, and that these two, joined together, shall become one,—a united book, one Bible. But one has need only to read on and get Ezekiel's explanation, to see its falsity.

But inasmuch as these forced likenesses and this bewildering use of Scripture, will all come up for particular study hereafter, it will suffice here to give a summary only of the religious parts.

The first part of the B. M., that written by Nephi, I, son of Lehi, is largely given up to "prophecies of the coming of Christ." The purpose of this is to supply the lack of the gospels. For, let the reader remember that Christ came to America, according to the Nephite record, some time after his ascension, full-grown, not a babe, dressed

in a glittering robe, not in ordinary, human habiliments, and remained only three or four days.

Hence there are no gospels in the B. M., no annunciation, no birth and angels and wise men,—no human life of Jesus such as we have in the four evangelists, but a sudden appearing, preceded only by prophecy and the fulfillment of certain signs which were to precede and announce his coming and his crucifixion. The prophecies, most of them uttered presumably 500 years before, were to accomplish what his personal presence and his mingling with men in Palestine did, to prepare the way for his message and his church.

The remarkable feature of these Nephite prophecies is their close and literal following of the New Testament history in the language of our English Bible. About 125 B. C., beginning with king Benjamin, the religious part takes a didactic form;—sermons, addresses, arguments, on almost every theological dogma and denominational difference which the Reformation brought forth, mingled with a few other prophecies, fill up the rest of the book, with the exception of III Nephi which presumes to give the history of Christ's sayings and doings among the Nephites.

The B. M. prophecies of itself before it was written; of one named after Joseph in Egypt, and after the name of his father, who "should be great like unto Moses," and have power to bring forth the scriptures of the Nephites to the Lamanites, or American Indians, "in the meridian of time;" of one (Sidney Rigdon) who should be "a spokesman for him;" of the curse which God would lay upon the Lamanites, "a blackness of skin," for "dwindling in unbelief;" and of the destruction which would meet the Nephites for the same offense, 400 years after Christ.

The records of III Nephi, relating to the manner of Christ's coming, his teaching and his works, occupy 47 pages of the book, from which must be subtracted nine pages, quotations from Matthew, Isaiah and Malachi. These 38 pages are the New Testament part of the B. M.

Two pages of IV Nephi suffice to give us the history of the Christian Church for 150 years,—taking the place of Acts, in our Bible.

Interspersed in the book, are seventeen chapters, literal quotations of Isaiah, by I Nephi; a long parable by Jacob; the organization of a Church of Christ by I Alma, 150 B. C.; the marvelous conversions of Enos, Alma II, and some of the heathen Lamanites, that are as like the camp meeting conversions in Joseph's day, as they are unlike those described in the Scriptures.

Moroni, Joseph's angel, closes the book. He left a ritual for ordaining priests and teachers and prayers for consecrating the bread and wine at the Lord's supper.

The rest of his book is taken up with letters which his father wrote him on Faith, Hope and Charity, which are remarkably like Paul's letter to the Corinthians on the same themes, and on "the baptism of little children." In the latter, he condemns to eternal punishment all who practice "this solemn mockery before God," declaring "they shall perish except they repent."

He includes an argument for present day miracles; for if these have ceased, "then has faith ceased also; and awful is the state of man."

Another letter from Mormon to his son, Moroni, describes in black the sins and atrocities of the Nephites, declaring that "their wickedness doth exceed that of the Lamanites."

Then God leaves the field to Satan, the Son of God is expelled from the land where He had won His most signal victory, and the gospel is hidden in an unknown tongue and locked up in its stone box, for its sleep of 1400 years.

Moroni gives, among his sundry teachings, a rule for the supreme test of spiritual truth, which has had more to do with the spread of Mormonism and with confirming the faith of the saints, than all the rest of the Mormon bible:

"When ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost."

This personal revelation which comes through an inward impression, or conviction, is, to a Mormon, the ultimate test of truth. Is the B. M. a revelation from God? Is Joseph Smith a true prophet? Is this work of the latter days, the true gospel? Is Joseph F. Smith, the present president of the church, the true successor of Joseph, the prophet, and a "prophet seer and revelator?" Don't wait for the reason to pronounce its judgment, pass by all the evidences of the truth or falsity of these things, just go and ask God for an answer, and he will show you the truth of them.

There isn't a religion in the world, although it may be utterly false, that can not be proven true, to its blind devotees, by this same method.

The close of the B. M. is on the same level with its beginning. It opens with man and closes with man. The bible's opening words are, "In the beginning God;" its close is a benediction. The B. M. begins and ends: "I Nephi,"—"I" Moroni; "Amen."

## XVII.

### WHO WROTE THE BOOK OF MORMON?

Evidently, there are only two propositions possible: it is either human or divine; a man-made book, or a revelation from God through human agency. The proposition that the B. M. is God's book, can be maintained, only by showing,

1. That it is not man-made; the proof offered of its human origin must be answered;
2. That the manner of its coming into the world is in harmony with that method which God followed in giving the Bible, His written word, to men;
3. That the man who claimed to make its discovery and to translate it, was worthy of being God's agent, and was thoroughly qualified to perform what he claimed to do;
4. That the book itself, in every characteristic, is worthy to be called a divine revelation, and be classed with the Bible.

It must be of equal literary merit, simple, straightforward and intelligible, and its message such as becomes God.

Its writers will efface self, as far as possible, and be merely "a voice."

Mormons and Christians agree, theoretically at least, on the proposition that the Bible is a genuine, authenticated and credible revelation from God.

The Mormons, however, qualify their acceptance of it to "where it is correctly translated," and claim it is incomplete; that certain plain and precious parts and covenants have been taken away "by that great and abominable church, "whose founder (1st Ed.) is the devil;" and that this mutilation of the Word of God was done designedly, and to lead men astray from the truth.

The same argument may be made against the B. M., for hundreds of changes have been made in the translation which Joseph Smith gave to the world, "by the gift and power of God," and other changes have been made in the last edition, year unnoted in the book, from the text that has been standard for eighty years.

The writer has noted 175 changes, all of them significant, and many of them important, in the first two books. Further: if there are books now lost which once were included in the Bible, the B. M. furnishes no relief, since it does not restore them to the canon of scripture. Neither did Joseph Smith recover these lost books and insert them in his Retranslated and Corrected Holy Scriptures; on the contrary he left another book out, the *Song of Solomon*, and so aided in his alleged mutilation of the Word of God.

All of these propositions will come up in their place, as we progress in our study of the Mormon book. We take up, at this point the first:

### **THE ORIGIN OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.**

The book holds forth that it was written by Nephites, descendants of Jews, and ancestors of the modern people inhabiting this country at the time of its discovery by Columbus, and that its history covers the 1000 years.

The Mormons stoutly maintain this claim, and advocate the genuineness and the validity of the book as a divine revelation to the people of the new world, and by way of the Gentile, Joseph Smith, to the whole world.

This is denied by others who have taken the time and labor necessary to make an analytic study of the book, and they base their objections on firm grounds:

**Who wrote the Book of Mormon?** what is its origin? becomes an all important question, and the answer to it is mandatory: if true, we must believe it, or be lost; if false, it must be rejected, and with it all the pretensions, words and works of Joseph Smith.

We divide the proof, at this moment, into **Circumstantial** and **Positive**; the first having reference to the conditions and facts which indicate its author.

There is but one theory as to the human origin of the B. M., that is worthy of serious attention. Joseph Smith could not have invented its story, its long list of names of persons and places, and its peculiar theology. Unquestionably these were beyond his power. Sidney Rigdon did not write it, although he may have formulated some of its philosophy and doctrines. But it was entirely within the power of Mr. Spaulding, of whom we shall hear presently, to invent plot, characters, names and historical incidents.

Most likely, the historical evidences, as to who was the author



of that history part are all in hand, and we can hope to find no more, unless they are found in the secret archives of the Mormon church. These historical proofs are largely circumstantial, not *prima facie*, and direct. No one can demonstrate, by material facts, his charge that the B. M. is a plagiarism; nor can the Mormon disprove it. The difficulty lies in the fact that the story called the *Ms Found* has never been seen by the public since the B. M. appeared.

The author presents, not only the circumstantial evidence which shows the great probability that the B. M. drew its history from the lost *Ms. Found*, but such direct and indisputable evidence as proves it with mathematical certainty. Our proposition is, *The Book of Mormon History Was Taken from the Ms. Found of Solomon Spaulding.*

### 1. CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

(1) *Rev. Solomon Spaulding*, whose name has become almost as familiar as that of Joseph Smith, through the discussions of the last eighty years, on the origin of the B. M., was born in 1761; graduated from college and theological seminary and spent some years in the ministry.

On account of failing health he taught an academy at Cherry Valley, N. Y., and the records of the Presbyterian Church of that place contain a mention that he preached for it.

In 1809 he moved to Conneant, Ohio, and joined his brother, John Spaulding, and a Mr. Henry Lake in building and operating an iron foundry. His ill health unfitted him for hard labor and his education and literary inclinations moved him to try literature, in the hope that he might make some money.

The war of 1812 ruined the firm, financially, and threw him upon his own resources. Among his writings was a story he called "The Manuscript Found," in which he took an absorbing interest and read it to his friends and neighbors, among whom it became a topic of frequent conversation.

Mr. Spaulding had become much interested in the earth-mounds abounding in all the lake region, the investigations of which led to the discovery of evidences and relics of a pre-historic people. He formed the purpose, therefore, to write a story which would account for them.

His first attempt was abandoned, unfinished, and he began anew, carrying the time of his story from the days of the Emperor Constantine, 330 A. D., to 600 B. C. and changing his characters from

Romans and Indians to Jews, the supposed ancestors of the Indians, and accounting for prehistoric remains by bringing a colony from the tower of Babel to this country, who disappeared about the time the Jewish colony left Jerusalem.

The simple fact that Mr. Spaulding presumed to write a book, made him a man of distinction among his acquaintances, and the singular character of it, being an attempt to answer the much discussed question of that day,—“Who are the American Indians?”—aroused great local interest.

His manner of treatment, also, stamped the book indelibly upon the memory of the people, as he wrote in the quaint manner of Bible Chronicles, using so frequently the introductory phrase, “And it came to pass,” that, in the estimation of many, it marred his work.

The names he used were so unusual and peculiar, that it is not strange many recollected them after an interval of twenty years. These names they heard frequently;—Lehi, Nephi, Alma, Mormon, Moroni, etc., always associated with strange incidents occurring in the lives of the people whom they heard called Nephites and Lamanites.

This story Mr. Spaulding tried to get printed in Pittsburg, then an inconsiderable town of five or six thousand people, going to it from Conneant, O., for that purpose.

In 1812, Mr. Spaulding removed to Pittsburg, Pa., and ran a small store.

In 1814 he removed to Amity, Pa., and opened a tavern. Here the story was again read and discussed by a new circle of people, and Mr. Spaulding renewed his efforts to find a publisher, in Pittsburg, making a second trip to the town, with that hope.

In 1816 he died, and his widow put all his writings—as she thought—in an old trunk and went to live with her brother, Wm. Sabine of Onondago Valley, N. Y.

(2) Joseph Smith worked for this Mr. Sabine, in 1823, the very year he claimed that the angel Moroni appeared to him and revealed the existence of the sacred record.

His mother, presuming she is accurate in her “History of the Prophet Joseph,” assures us that at this time Joseph had never read the Bible through in his life, that he was less inclined to reading books than her other children; but that Joseph, “every evening,” . . . . “gave us some of the most amusing recitals that could be imagined. described the ancient inhabitants of this continent, their dress, mode of

traveling, and the animals upon which they rode, their cities, their buildings with every particular. This he would do with as much ease, seemingly, as if he had spent his whole life among them."

As far as his mother's testimony is to be relied upon, and it bears the impress of truth, it establishes the fact that Joseph had in his possession, in 1824, a history pretending to be that of the ancient inhabitants of this continent. The next year, Joseph tried to get a publisher. Thurlow Weed said:

"In 1825, when I was publishing the Rochester Telegraph, a man introduced himself to me as Joseph Smith, of Palmyra, N. Y., whose object, he said, was to get a book published. He then stated he had been guided by a vision to a spot he described, where, in a cavern, he found what he called a golden Bible. It consisted of a tablet, which he placed in his hat, and from which he proceeded to read the first chapter of the 'Book of Mormon.' I listened until I became weary of what seemed to me an incomprehensible jargon. I then told him I was only publishing a newspaper, and that he would have to go to a book publisher, suggesting a friend who was in that business."

Mr. Weed states, further, that Joseph Smith called upon him the second time, with a Mr. Harris, who offered to go security for the cost of publication.

Mr. Weed was one of the most remarkable men in public life of his day in remembering people, incidents and dates, which he attributed to the habit which he formed early, of relating each day's incidents to his wife, and discussing them with her. His testimony is of great value.

In 1827, Joseph claimed that he had obtained certain plates which gave "an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from which they sprung," just what he had been relating in the family circle, three years before.

Let us leave him here while we take up the history of

(3) **Sidney Rigdon.** The very general belief that this man was in some important way connected with the bringing forth of the B. M. did not rest upon that thorough knowledge of the events of his life which after investigations brought to light, but upon the facts that he was preaching the doctrines of Mormonism, and practising the communism of it, when it appeared, fell in with it, immediately it was preached in his pulpit and by his permission, was admitted to

second place with Joseph in a month after his conversion, and had a people ready to embrace Mormonism, without contention. The other incidents, joined together in close sequence here, were found out afterwards; the foregoing were notorious.

Rigdon was born near Pittsburg, in a rural community, in 1793; lived with his parents until 1810; was a permanent resident of Pittsburg in 1816, for in that year he joined the Baptist church, and became quite active in it; he was again in Pittsburg in 1818.

He studied for the ministry, 1818 and 1819, in Sharon, Ohio, and was married there.

In 1821 he was called to be pastor of the Baptist church of Pittsburg, and began his ministry with it in Feb., 1822.

In 1824 he was expelled from the Baptist ministry for doctrinal errors, joined the Disciples of Christ, and afterwards organized a church of that order in his home city. For two or three years he was actively engaged in preaching the Reformation, and was associated with Alexander Campbell, its prime mover. He claimed to be entitled to as much honor in its rapid spread as Mr. Campbell himself. About 1827 or 1828 he began to introduce eccentricities into his preaching and finally established a communistic church in Kirtland, Ohio, forty miles west of Conneant, where Spaulding had written his story.

In Nov. 1830, he was suddenly converted to Mormonism by Parley P. Pratt, one of his former friends in the Disciple ministry; was baptized the next day and was with Joseph Smith in Palmyra, N. Y., and made second in importance in the church, all within three or four weeks.

Dec. 7 the revelation came to him: "I have prepared thee for a greater work. Thou wast sent forth, as John, to prepare the way before me, and before Elijah, who was to come, and thou knewest it not." Elijah to come, was Joseph.

He was to assist in bringing forth the retranslated and corrected Bible, and to "Preach my gospel and call on the holy prophets to prove his (Joseph's) words." Very soon after, if not at the same time, came the revelation commanding all the saints to "gather at the Ohio," that is at Kirtland, Sidney's home. This was done that winter and spring, and the adherents of the two men were joined.

Then came the revelation to build Joseph a home, and to provide for Sidney, "as seemeth him good." Joseph took good care of him by revelation. Sidney was made spokesman to Joseph, and was to be "mighty in testimony" and in "expounding the Scriptures."

Could Sidney Rigdon have stolen the Spaulding manuscript? The chain of proof is complete—and is as follows:

The Ms. was in Patterson's office, at times from 1812 to 1816.

Rigdon was an intimate friend of Lambdin, who was first an employe and afterwards a partner in the firm of Buttler and Lambdin, who ran a book store and bindery under the control of Patterson and Hopkins—to whom the Ms. had been submitted. This is strongly supported by proof and never denied by Rigdon, although he denied many other things.

The testimony is clear that he could have gotten possession of it. Proof is also at hand that he did have it in his possession in 1822, and again in 1826.

Spaulding expressed his belief that Rigdon had stolen it.

Furthermore, Rigdon had knowledge of its coming forth, before Joseph translated it. There is evidence to show that Rigdon visited the Smith home, during the period between Joseph's finding the plates, and also during the translation, when they were all thrown into consternation by Harris' losing the first 116 pages. Joseph's mother gives us the story of a stranger who was traveling with Joseph in the stage from Harmony, Pa., to Palmyra, N. Y., who insisted on leaving off his own journey and walking twenty miles through the woods at night, from where they left the stage, to the home of Joseph Smith, Sr., "because Joseph's constitution was not strong and inadequate to support him." The two reached the elder Smith's home after an all-night walk, and were present at that interview when Martin Harris told Joseph the manuscript was lost, and the latter cried out, "O my God! All is lost! All is lost! What shall I do?"

● That Mother Smith should have dismissed this mysterious man whom she calls a stranger, without name or identification, is not only strange, but unaccountable, unless it was Sidney Rigdon. Her silence is accounted for—if it was Rigdon.

(3) Parley P. Pratt. If Sidney Rigdon was a conspirator with Joseph Smith in bringing forth the B. M.; so was Parley P. Pratt. He was a peddler in western New York, was in Wayne County, Joseph's home, in 1826, when the latter was in the height of his fame as a fortune hunter by means of his magic stone, and must have known him.

That year he moved to Ohio, to avoid the embarrassment of paying his debts, 50 miles west of Kirtland. Rigdon was preaching all

through that part of Ohio, and Pratt, hearing him, was converted in 1827 and also became a preacher of Rigdon's sort.

In 1830 he left Ohio to visit in New York, took passage on a canal boat from Buffalo to Albany, the fare for himself and wife taking all the money they had and some of their clothing.

At Rochester he left his wife to go the rest of the journey alone, presumably penniless, saying that why he did so he did not know, only that the Lord had a work for him to do.

He preached in the neighborhood of Joseph Smith, Sr., as a Disciple minister, got hold of a B. M. in the home of a Baptist deacon, "a strange book, a very strange book," just published. This was the first time he had seen the B. M.

Pratt says he opened it with eagerness and examined it. "As I read, the Spirit of the Lord was upon me and I knew and comprehended that the book was true. I knew it was true because it was light, and the fulfillment of Scripture; and I bore testimony of its truth to the neighbors that came in during the first day that I sat reading it."

Joseph's mother gives another account of Pratt's conversion. She says that he came to Joseph Smith, Sr's., just as Joseph was beginning the service. "He had heard of us at some considerable distance and had traveled very fast in order to get there at meeting time, as he wished to hear what we had to say, that he might be prepared to show us our error. But when Joseph had finished, Mr. Pratt arose and expressed his hearty concurrence in every sentiment advanced. The following day he was baptized and ordained."

The Mormons have seen clearly that so sudden and such extraordinary conversions, direct suspicion to their genuineness. So they now represent both Sidney and Pratt as being in such antagonism to Mormonism, that it took weeks to overcome their unbelief.

Pratt was with Smith in Oct., 1830, the same year in which he walked right into Joseph's home, and was converted then and there.

About Oct. 17 a revelation came through the stone, directing Pratt, Cowdery, Peter Whitmer and Ziba Peterson to go "unto the wildeerness among the Lamanites," the American Indians of the far west, and preach.

Winter is near and Pratt especially is without suitable clothing for the journey. So the women set about procuring it, manufacturing it out of the raw material. That is, they carded the wool, spun it,

wove the cloth, fulled it, cut out and made the clothing for the four. This took them days to accomplish, after which the party set out afoot, "preaching by the way." From Fayette to Buffalo is 135 miles; from Buffalo to Kirtland is 230 miles, altogether 365 miles. They reached Kirtland, called upon Rigdon who knew Pratt, and were permitted by him to preach in his church.

"At the conclusion of Pratt's sermon," Joseph's account goes on to say: "Elder Rigdon arose and stated to the congregation that the information they had received was of an extraordinary character, and certainly demanded their serious consideration, and as the apostle advised his brethren to prove all things, and hold fast that which was good, so he would advise them to do likewise, and give the matter a careful investigation, and not turn against it without being fully convinced of its being an imposition, lest they should possibly resist the truth."

Rigdon was immediately converted, baptized Nov. 14, the next day, and joined Joseph at Palmyra at once, as we have seen.

Now notice the connection of the links which makes the circumstantial evidence a complete chain.

Rigdon got possession of that copy of the *Ms. Found*, which Spaulding had left in the office of Butler and Lambdin in Pittsburg. Rigdon did not know Patterson, as he claimed, but he was an intimate friend of Lambdin for years. The daughter of the postmaster at Pittsburg, a Miss Johnson, was her father's regular assistant in the office from 1811 to 1815, knew Rigdon and Lambdin, who came to the office together, especially on the Sabbath, at the hour when the office was open. Mr. Engles, the foreman of the printing, said, in the hearing of Miss Johnson, that "Rigdon was always hanging around the printing office." Lambdin may have been concerned in the publication of the book, but not in the manner afterwards adopted. He died in 1825, Engles, July 17, 1827. Sept. 23, 1827, the date when Joseph claimed the book was put into his hands, saw every obstacle removed to publishing it as a new Bible. Joseph also got possession, in 1823, of the copy which had been put away in the old trunk in the attic, when he worked for Mr. Sabine, the brother of Mrs. Spaulding. He knew its contents in 1824. He made an effort to get it published in 1825. He had a general reputation as a seer of "things invisible to the natural eye." Rigdon's attention was drawn to him, and he visited him. When they compared notes, they found that each was the pos-

sector of the same story, and they saw the possibility of making money out of their find; so they joined into a partnership. To publish the story as the production of Spaulding, would bring ridicule, not success. It was "a strange book, a very strange book," and it must appear in a strange manner. But the collusion must not be known, Rigdon must not appear as an accomplice, so Pratt was drawn into the scheme, as a go-between.

He was converted by Rigdon to the Disciple faith, and by Smith to Mormonism. In turn, he converted Rigdon, and **Presto! Joseph and Sidney were in each other's arms.** Mark the combination of needed talents! Rigdon was necessary to Smith, to put the new theology in consistent shape. Smith had only a smattering knowledge of that, but Rigdon was well acquainted with the Bible, a no mean theologian as his seven lectures in the book of D. & C. testify. But Smith was equally as necessary to Rigdon. He had an established reputation as a revealer of secrets, by means of the stone. He was known far and wide, as such, and was just the person needed. If the stone could reveal, it could also translate. Rigdon was widely known, as an eloquent preacher; but while he was regarded as erratic in his theology, he had never posed as a prophet, or claimed occult powers. For him to proclaim that he had found sacred records in an unknown tongue and had translated them by some miraculous power, would not have been believed, and would have brought down ridicule upon him and his pretended work. So Joseph was to do "the magic," and, after the Golden Bible was published, Sidney would come in and supply the doctrine, for the new church. Whether the reader agrees with the conclusion of the foregoing or not, it dovetails together with all the nicety of the joiner's art. Two other circumstances, occurring afterwards, strengthen our contention.

The charge that the B. M. was a plagiarism of Spaulding's **Ms. Found**, was not the work of Hurlbut or Howe, but the spontaneous outburst of public opinion; former neighbors, friends and kinsmen of Spaulding claimed, when they heard the B. M. read, that it was his production. They were indignant that his innocent romance should be published to the world, as a new revelation, the basis for a new religion. It was this popular outcry that started the investigation which afterward resulted in Howe's "Mormonism Unveiled."

Up to that time there had been no charge of plagiarism, no suspicion that the B. M. was not original. But when the people of Connecticut heard it read, those who had become very familiar with Spaul-



ding's **Ms. Found**, with its peculiarities and the strange names of some of its prominent characters, they declared it substantially the old work of Spaulding. Their verdict has never been reversed.

The other circumstance is the method resorted to, by Mormon writers, to stifle investigation. This they have done by insisting that a first, very hastily written and unfinished story of Spaulding's is the real **Ms. Found**. The history is briefly this:

Mr. Spaulding began to write a romance which would account for the prehistoric mounds in which the remains of a very ancient people in America, were found. There is no question of this, for the evidence is in the rough draft of the story itself. The story ends abruptly, in the very crisis of a battle to the death between two warring empires, showing that for some reason which he does not state, the author suddenly abandoned it.

When Mr. Hurlbut got Mrs. Spaulding's (that was) permission to take the **Ms. Found** back to Conneant, O., for comparison with the B. M., he did not open it until he got home. Immediately, he knew it was not what he had gone after, but he turned it over to Mr. Howe. The latter showed it to those who had raised the cry of plagiarism, and they at once declared that it was not the story they were familiar with. Moreover, they testified that they knew of this first attempt, but that he had abandoned it, changed the plot and characters, went back a thousand years and began at 600 B. C., to trace down the origin of the American Indians, instead of beginning with them and tracing them back to their origin, as he had designed, at first. This fits in, with the accuracy of truth, with the story itself. Mr. Howe described this story, very particularly in his book. All this occurred in 1834. Then the manuscript dropped from view, for fifty years.

In 1884, Pres. Fairchild, of Oberlin College, O., being in Honolulu, asked a Mr. L. L. Rice to look through his old papers, if, perchance, he might find something bearing upon the early anti-slavery controversy.

This search resulted in the discovery of the rough and incomplete **Ms.** When its history was traced, it was found that this **Ms.** came into Mr. Rice's possession when he bought out Mr. Howe's business and office effects, all of which were afterwards removed by him to Honolulu in 1839 or 1840. The **Ms.** found by Mr. Hurlbut in the old trunk where Mr. Spaulding's writings, had been placed at his death, was turned over by Mr. Hurlbut to Mr. Howe, who submitted it to the witnesses and was repudiated by them as the **Ms. Found**. This first **Ms.** was brought to light again by Mr. Rice and Pres. Fairchild, while

they were hunting among Mr. Rice's old papers, for anti-slavery documents.

The chain of evidence of the identity of this **Ms.**, discovered in 1884, with the repudiated **Ms.** of Mr. Howe in 1834, is absolutely perfect. Its origin and its history, are indisputable.

Pres. Fairchild, not acquainted with all the facts in the case, and supposing that this was the story upon which the charge of plagiarism had been based, declared it his opinion that "the theory of the origin of the **B. M.** in the traditional manuscript of Solomon Spaulding will probably have to be relinquished. . . . We could detect no resemblance between the two in general detail."

Afterwards, when he learned other facts, he explained his statement as applying solely to the **Ms.** found in Mr. Rice's possession and said: "The discovery of this **Ms.** does not prove that there may not have been another, which became the basis of the **B. M.**"

Pres. Fairchild simply agreed with all previous witnesses, for none of them ever claimed that the Oberlin **Ms.** is the origin of the **B. M.**

Now, with all this clearly in mind, notice the misrepresentation of the Mormons responsible for this literal publication of the **Ms.**

Before the writer lies a pamphlet, published by the **Deseret News Company**, Salt Lake City, Utah, bearing date of 1886, the cover and title page of which are as follows:

**The "Manuscript Found."**

**MANUSCRIPT STORY**

**by**

**Rev. Solomon Spaulding,**

**Deceased.**

The upper line of that title is not only misleading, but false. The **Ms.** of which it is a literal copy in print has no title. Some one, not **Mr. Spaulding**, has written in pencil, on the outside of the bundle, "Manuscript Story—Conneant Creek."

Even if **Mr. Spaulding** labeled this manuscript with these words, those who published it had no right to change the title so as to support their contention.

They offer not a scintilla of proof, nor any argument, but allege that this pamphlet is the one about which the controversy arose. That is, they beg the question.

Mr. Hurlbut, Mr. Howe and the many witnesses to whom it was submitted in 1834, all testified it is not the **Ms. Found**; yet in the face of their explicit denial, the News Company publishes the repudiated **Ms.**, calls it by the title of the missing story, and then boasts that they have shattered the charge of plagiarism. This false title they repeat 115 times more, by putting it at the head of each of the 115 pages, and surround it each time with quotation marks. Why are they so anxious to establish their contention, by printing this false title 117 times, when it does not appear once on the **Ms.**? What purpose can it serve save to obscure the very matter in controversy, and, without any proof whatever, to confute the evidence of the **Ms.** and the testimony of all competent witnesses?

The boldness and audacity of this trick,—for it is nothing more than that,—shows the conscious weakness of their claim, and the fear that a plain statement of facts will be insisted upon. It was never claimed by any one that the story they publish was the one on which the **B. M.** was founded;—but they assume,—they assert—that this was so, and then declare, *Des. S. W. News*, May 14, 1901, that

“it is only the densely ignorant, the totally depraved, and clergymen of different denominations afflicted with anti-Mormon rabies who still use the Spaulding story to account for the origin of the **B. M.**”

The evidence is before the reader. Let him judge whether it shows, in the absence of contradictory proof, a strong probability of the truth of the charge that the history part of the **B. M.** was founded upon the missing **Ms. Found**.

## 2. POSITIVE PROOF THAT THE **B. M.** IS FOUNDED UPON SPAULDING'S “**MS. FOUND**.”

The writer is not densely ignorant, nor “unscrupulously dishonest,” nor “totally depraved,” nor “afflicted with anti-Mormon rabies;” nevertheless he holds a firm conviction that the **Ms. Found** furnished the history part of the **B. M.**, and that he furnishes such evidence here as proves his conviction, sound.

First, we have the preceding circumstantial evidence which ought to convince the unprejudiced mind of the strong probability, if

not certainty, that the *Ms. Found* was stolen, and used by Joseph Smith as the nexus of his so-called "Golden Bible."

To that, the writer adds proof that is not circumstantial, but direct and positive, and, by the law of probabilities, is mathematically certain.

### The Argument Stated.

We have a story, incomplete it is true, but which makes a booklet of 115 print pages, 4 by 6 and one-half inches, sufficient in amount of material, to give us data that will establish the mental workings of the author's mind and demonstrate the peculiar marks of his literary style. It also reveals the nature of the plot, the object in the mind of the author, which he set himself to work out in his story. Mr. Spaulding is the undoubted author of it.

We have also the *B. M.* which certain witnesses testified so strongly resembled a missing story of Mr. Spaulding that they confidently asserted that it and the *B. M.* agreed, as to plot, characters, incidents and names.

If we had that missing story, which they testify Mr. Spaulding called the *Ms. Found*, the task of proof or disproof would be easy and conclusive. That missing story does not appear in any direct evidence, after 1816.

But we do not need it for our present purpose. If we can prove that such correspondences exist between the two we have in hand, as to demonstrate that they are the product of one mind;—if we can show that the mental "finger-prints" which are undoubtedly Mr. Spaulding's in the *Ms.*, are also found in the *B. M.*, in sufficient numbers, it is mathematically certain that he is the author of the history part of the *B. M.* also.

The reason is very plain. An author can not long conceal his identity, even if tries to do so. Perhaps the only literary production that defied discovery as to its author, is *The Letters of Junius*. And many literary critics believe the author was traced down, although he never confessed the authorship. But in this case there was no purpose or effort at concealment. Mr. Spaulding is the known author of the *Ms.*, and he published his connection with the *Ms. Found*, widely and with unconcealed satisfaction.

Moreover he cast aside the first draft of his story for another and a better one. Naturally, if it seemed a good thing, he incorporated ideas used in the first story, in his second. And even if he did not

consciously transfer them, they would persist, in some degree, and appear in his final work.

If Mr. Spaulding wrote the history part of the B. M. we will find his impress, his mental images; coincidents, agreements, germs of ideas appearing in the Ms., will be worked into the second, elaborated perhaps and modified to harmonize with their new associations; but they will be there. And if we find these coincidences of ideas, and correspondences of literary elements, they create a probability arising to certainty, of his authorship, the degree of which will be determined by their number and character.

The two stories differ purposely in time, place of beginning, people and incidents; in geography, names, religion, customs and in literary style. In spite of that, the likenesses will appear, if they are the product of one mind. And if they are the product of one mind, the likenesses will appear.

We present the following long list, and submit it as positive proof that the author of the Ms., Mr. Spaulding, was also the author of the history part of the B. M.

#### **General Resemblances.**

(1) The Ms. and B. M. are pretended histories of the same people, the aborigines of America.

(2) The author of the Ms., plainly indicates one purpose of his pretended history, viz., to account for the ancient mounds in the region of his home. He accounted for them, as being burial mounds of the dead slain in battle. The B. M. carries out that purpose by the invention of the story of the Jaredites. The only ancient people, according to its account, that ever lived in N. America, and therefore they must have built those mounds.

The idea invented for the first story persists in the author's mind and is carried out by him in the book of Ether.

(3) Both books were written to account for the American Indians.

In the Ms., that purpose was expressed but not clearly fulfilled,—because the author broke off his story, while incomplete. He refers twice to their origin: "They originated from some other nation," and "Their (referring to the Indians) tradition tells them they emigrated from the westward."

In the B. M. both of these ideas, are carried out. For it tells us the Indians originated from the Jews, and the original colony "emigrated from the westward."

(4) The two books have a common date.

The *Ms.* begins its history in the 4th century, A. D., intending at some point to trace back the traditions of the origin of the people, but which purpose was defeated by the author's sudden abandonment of the story.

The *B. M.* begins with the supposed ancestry of the American Indians, 600 B. C., and closes its history with 400 A. D.

That is, the beginning of the *Ms.* and the end of the *B. M.*, are substantially of the same date.

(5) They agree also in this:

The *Ms.* says the author of his Latin rolls "found some things in their religious beliefs common to the theology of Europe and Asia."

The *B. M.* represents the ancestors of the Indians as bringing the theology of the Jews from Asia to America. This fulfills the purpose implied in the *Ms.*

(6) Both are the supposed histories of migrations from the old world, the Latins from Europe, and the Jews from Asia.

(7) Both stories represent the parties as being driven in their vessels across the ocean, by winds, and both escaped a violent storm which threatened to destroy them.

*Ms.* "A tremendous storm arose and drove us into the midst of the boundless Ocean." For five days they were driven westwardly, but "On the sixth day after, the storm wholly subsided, the sun rose clear, and the heavens once more appeared to smile."

*B. M.* "We put forth into the sea, and were driven before the wind toward the promised land." "There arose a great storm, yea, a great and terrible tempest." This tempest lasted four days. "After I had prayed, the winds did cease, and the storm did cease, and there was a great calm."

(8) Both vessels attributed their salvation from the deep, to the intervention of providence.

(9) Both ships are represented as finishing their journey with safe sailing.

*Ms.* "Let your sails be wide-spread and the gentle winds will soon waft you into a safe harbor—a country where you will find hospitality."

*B. M.* "I, Nephi, did guide the ship, that we sailed again to the promised land."

(10) Both books assert the existence of two separate people, as inhabiting this country.

**Ms.** The **Deliwares**, or **Deliwans**, were copper-colored, rough in manners and customs, dressed in skins, shaved half the head and painted it red, painted one-half of the face black, and feasted on dogs.

The **Ohons**, to whom the Latin colonists removed, had "but little resemblance to those savages who live along the coasts of the Atlantic. Their complexion, the form and construction of their bodies, their customs, manners, laws, government and religion all demonstrate that they must have originated from some other nation."

**B. M.** Two kinds of people appear in the **B. M.**, the **Nephites** corresponding to the **Ohans**, and the **Lamanites** to the **Deliwans**.

### **Particular Correspondences.**

(1) **The Methods of discovery of the two ancient records are essentially the same.**

**Ms.** The Latin rolls were in a stone box, in the side of an artificial cave,—the whole hidden by a large flat stone, lying on the surface horizontally.

**B. M.** Joseph Smith's account represents the gold plates as being concealed in a stone box, under a stone of considerable size, partly revealed at the surface.

**Ms.** and **B. M.** both represent the finder as using a lever, to lift the covering.

(2) **Ms.** The records were on parchment, "written in an elegant hand, with Roman letters in the Latin language."

**B. M.** The plates were covered with fine engravings, and **Lehi** says that his father's language "consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians."

Note the common confusion of thought. Who would expect to find parchments written with Roman letters in the Greek language; or with Greek letters in the Roman language?

And how could the language of **Lehi** consist of the learning of one people and the strange language of another? Here is common obtuseness of thought.

(3) **Both stories were written, not for the contemporaries of the writer but for the future inhabitants of America.**

**Ms.** As "this part of the earth will be inhabited (possibly) by Europeans, a history of the present inhabitants will be a valuable acquisition,"—therefore he wrote it out, or began to do so, and deposited it in a strong stone vault, to be found by **Mr. Spaulding**,—the author,—in 1810.

**B. M.** At the time referred to in the above, the 4th century, A. D., Moroni finished the book of plates and hid them up in the same district of country, "to come forth by the way of Gentile," . . . "to convince Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God," to be found by Joseph Smith in 1830.

Neither one was written for people contemporaneous with the writer, but both were hidden about the same time, to sleep for 1400 years, and to come forth at the same time, in the 19th century, to the future inhabitants of this land.

**(4) The Modes of Writing Were the same.**

**Ms.** "Beginning at the right, they wrote from the top to the bottom, placing each character directly under the preceding one." The next column, written in the same way, was "on the left of that."

**B. M.** Prof. Anthon, to whom the two copies of Joseph's "Characters" were submitted, says "they were disposed in columns." He was thoroughly competent to judge and we can not doubt the accuracy of his description, although in the specimen printed in No. 1, page 33, the characters are on horizontal lines and written from left to right. They may be read as well in perpendicular columns, as on horizontal lines, upside down as easily as right side up.

**(5) Both books claim to be abridgements of more copious records.**

**Ms.** "To publish a translation of every particular circumstance mentioned by our author, would produce a volume too expensive for the general class of readers." The conclusion is, he will give us the history in briefer form.

**B. M.** Mormon wrote his book, beginning by taking the plates of Lehi, as the basis.

"Wherefore it is an abridgement of the record." This is repeated by different writers, one of whom assures us he could not write "the hundredth part" of the transactions of his people.

**(5) Both People Kept Double Records, one of which they counted "Sacred."**

**Ms.** "A sacred roll of manuscript is preserved among the records of emperors and kings."

This sacred roll was the work of Lobaska, a prophet reformer, who claimed that he had "this system revealed to him in several interviews he had with the second son of the Great and Good Being."

**B. M.** Nephi made two sets of plates, on one of which he wrote



only what he considered "sacred;"—"The ministries," "The prophesying" and "The preaching," of his people.

He also professed to have divine revelations and Joseph Smith claimed to speak for the Son of God.

(7) **The germ thought of revelation** which appears in the unfinished story is also found in the B. M.

(a) **By personal communication with divine messengers.**

Ms. Lobaska claimed to have interviews with a son of the great and good Being.

B. M. Joseph Smith claimed that his first revelation was from a personal interview with the Son of God. The Nephite writers claimed the same favor, repeatedly.

(b) **By Inspiration.**

Ms. "A voice from on high hath penetrated my soul, and the inspiration of the Almighty hath bid me proclaim."

"Thelford said, "Something whispereth me."

B. M. The people heard a voice, \* \* \* "yea it did pierce them to the very soul."

"Thus it whispereth me."

Note, not only the similarity of thought, the persistence of Spaulding's first idea, but also the same phraseology.

(8) **Both Employ Magic.** Magic is that strange and unnatural power which is supposed, by the credulous and superstitious, to reside in ordinary things.

(a) Ms. Lobaska built a curious machine upon which, when seated, "he mounted into the atmosphere and ascended to a great height. Having sailed a considerable distance through the air, he descended slowly and received no damage." When he took these excursions, extraordinary wisdom and knowledge were communicated to him. The germ idea of this is the modern balloon.

B. M. Several instances of extraordinary powers residing in ordinary things are recorded. A notable example, of the same class as above, is the magical ball which Lehi found at his tent door, one morning. In it "were two spindles: and the one pointed the way we should go.

This spindle worked by the faith of the possessor. The germ idea of this ball is the modern compass.

Then, upon this ball appeared writing, which was changed from time to time, "according to our faith and diligence." In crossing the

ocean, this ball became a compass, but not a very reliable one, for Nephi says when his brothers maltreated him, "it did cease to work;" but when they were good, "it did work whither I desired it."

Coming down to Joseph Smith we find a like example of crass magic, in the divining rod. He said to Oliver Cowdery, in a revelation, Chap. vii, 3, B. of C., "Behold you have another gift, which is the gift of working with the rod; behold, it has told you things; behold, there is no other power save God, that can cause this rod of nature to work in your hands, therefore whatsoever you shall ask me to tell you by that means, that will I grant unto you, that you shall know."

(b) But the most extraordinary instance, and a perfect correspondence in the two books, and in Joseph's practice, is **The Magic stone.**

Ms. "Hanock then arose and in his hand he held a stone which he pronounced transparent, thought it was not transparent to common eyes. Through this he could view things present and to come, could behold the dark intrigues and cabals of foreign courts and discover hidden treasure secluded from the eyes of mortals."

B. M. The Lord said, "I will preserve unto my servant Gazelem (Joseph Smith, D. & C. 104:43), a stone which shall shine forth in darkness unto light, that I may discover unto my people \* \* \* the works of their brethren, their secret works and works of darkness."

So the two stones which the Lord gave Jared to be sealed up with his records, made the man who possessed them a seer, "who can know of things past and to come, to whom all things are revealed and hidden things come to light."

These two stones fastened to a large breastplate, Joseph called his "key," but in translating he used the seer-stone. Joseph's mother tells us that he kept this "Urim and Thummim" about him to learn whether his plates were in danger; and D. Whitmer says that Joseph described the journey which he (Whitmer) had just made from Fayette, N. Y., to Harmony, Pa., describing the hotels he stopped at on the way,—by means of the stone.

Mr. Stool came to get Joseph's help, because he had heard that he was "the possessor of means by which he could discern things invisible to the natural eye."

Here we have a perfect coincidence; first the invention of a magic stone written into the Ms. and transferred unchanged into the B. M., save as it is placed in a new setting. It is the same "stone," however, and only an imitation diamond, at that.

(9) The two books, speaking of the same people, give them the same or similar barbaric marks.

**Ms.** Their clothing consisted of skins with the hair on, but in warm weather "only the middle part of their bodies was covered."

"Half of the head of the man was shaved and painted red."

**B. M.** The heads of the Lamanites were shorn; and "they were naked, save it were skins girded about their loins."

"They were naked, save a breech-clout of skin." The Amlicites, in imitation of the Lamanites," "marked themselves with red in their foreheads."

The description of the American Indians is fairly true to history; but that people just out of Jerusalem a few generations, developed so early the barbaric custom of coloring their faces, as Indians do, is incredible. Nor would it have appeared, unless it had been one of the ideas of the author in writing his first story. The thought persisted, and appeared in his second and finished work.

Spaulding is the author, for these are his mental "finger prints."

(10) The Two Books Are Guilty of the Same Anachronisms.

**a. As to Metals.**

**Ms.** "The manufacture of iron and lead was understood."

"By hammering and hardening their iron they would convert it nearly into the consistency of steel."

**B. M.** Iron and steel are frequently mentioned: Nephi retained Laban's sword, "the hilt was of pure gold," and "the blade thereof was of the most precious steel."

Nephi and his brother's, had bows "of fine steel."

Nephi took the sword of Laban, for a pattern, and made many swords like it.

The Nephites in later years were armed with swords and "cimeters."

While it is acknowledged that there are some antiquarians who maintain that the aborigines of America were slightly acquainted with iron and its uses, it is conceded by all that their cutting instruments were made of bronze.

Especially is this true in respect to the Mayas of Central America, and the Incas of Peru. The anachronism, the misplacement of a thing as to time, does not lie against the assertion that iron was known to the Nephites, since it was known to the Jews, but in the fact that it is represented as being manufactured by them in quantities and in its highest modern development as swords and cimeters.

Steel is not mentioned in the Bible, for the four times the word is used in our English Bible, it is mistranslated, and should be "copper" or bronze.

**b. Animals.**

**Ms.** The Ohans, were given credit with using both the horse and the elephant, in 350 or 400 A. D. This needs no denial, it is so contradicted by all known facts.

**B. M.** The Jaredites also had horses and elephants. And when the Nephites came to South America, 600 B. C., they found the horse in the forests, but no mention is made of elephants. In after times, about 100 B. C., they had "horses and chariots."

The proof that the horse disappeared from America, many ages ago, is left to the chapter on **Anachronisms**. What we are concerned with here is the fact that the **Ms.** and **B. M.** both agree in mis placing the horse in America, thousands of years out of time.

The same mistake indicates the same man as the author of both.

c. An Odd but Illuminating Coincidence, is found in the strange animals, named in the two books.

**Ms.** The Ohans possessed animals larger than the elephant, called "Mammoons" and "Mammouths." It is not clear whether the author had two kinds of animals, in mind, with separate names, or one animal with two names. They are represented as being domesticated, for they were herded and they were used in traveling and transporting goods.

**B. M.** The Jaredites also had two strange animals, useful to them also, which they called "cureloms" and "cummoms."

Note the oddity and the disguised similarity. The coincidence is the distinctive mark of a peculiar mind which sought to introduce the unknown, the strange and unusual, into the record.

The historical evidence of the existence in America, in the 4th century, of domestic animals larger than the elephant, is nil. Nor is there any better evidence that the Jaredites found cureloms and cumoms, so large as to be classed with elephants, abounding in America since the flood.

These four strange, unknown animals are the invention of the same brain.

**d. Astronomy.** Both the **B. M.** and the **Ms.** to be consistent with the knowledge of astronomy of their day, should have supported the then prevalent Ptolemaic theory of our universe; on the contrary

they both advocate the modern, the Copernican, theory, and argue it. Their arguments are good, but modern. The agreement, however, indicates strongly the same author, a man of modern times.

(10) Both books betray great ignorance on the part of the writer, of military strategy.

**Ms.** The tactics described are chiefly marching away secretly in the night to attack at an unexpected point, placing an ambush to attack on flank or rear, in the midst of battle.

**B. M.** The tactics of the Nephites consisted chiefly in retreating into the wilderness, placing an ambuscade to make an attack on side, or rear, and surrounding the enemy. Again and again, they performed the trick of Joshua at Ai, by concealing one army, and coaxing the defending army to abandon the city and pursue another and inferior force, while the concealed army marched in and took possession of the city. Joshua did that once, with the Canaanites, but with the Nephites and Lamanites the trick never played out.

11. Both stories are blood-red with slaughter.

**Ms.** This story was only begun, but the author succeeds well, for a maiden effort. In the beginning the author says:

"On the ground where thou now treadest, many a bloody battle has been fought, and heroes by the thousand made to bite the dust."

The result of five hours' conflict in the last battle,—broken off in the midst by abrupt casting aside of his story,—was, "near one hundred thousand were extended breathless on the field."

"The ground was strewed thick with the slain. The battle raged for two or three more days, and the author leaves it, without counting those who fell afterwards."

**B. M.** After this trial effort, the author does better, in ridding the earth of men. At first only 3,043 of the enemy are slain. In the next, he gets away with 12,532. After that, figures fail.

"There was a tremendous battle. . . . Tens of thousands of the Lamanites were slain, and the slaughter among the Nephites was tremendous."

But this is still better: "The number of their dead was not numbered because of the greatness of their number; yea the number of their dead was exceeding great, both on the Nephites and the Lamanites."

One would think that even hyperboles were exhausted; but no! afterwards, "there never was known so great a slaughter among all the people of Lehi, since he left Jerusalem."

"It is impossible to describe the horrible scene of blood and carnage." But the last battle was more than terrific. 230,000 armed Nephites fell at Cumorah, and with them their aged fathers and mothers, young men and maidens, boys and girls and sweet infants—for the Nephites were exterminated by the Lamanites.

One shudders at the barbarity, even of the mental picture; and then he remembers with a sigh of relief, that such a crime is impossible to man. All this was done, on paper, and the weapon with which the millions were put out of life, was only the writer's bloodless pen. These nations were slaughtered to make—a Mormon Bible.

(12) **The defensive armor described in both was the same.**

**Ms.** "On their breasts down to their hips and on their thighs they wore pieces of mamouth skin to guard them from arrows and weapons of death."

**B. M.** "The Nephites had prepared themselves with garments of skins, very thick garments to cover their nakedness."

(13) **The defenses of their forts and cities was the same.**

**Ms.** "The ramparts were formed of dirt which was taken in front of the fort. A deep trench or canal would likewise be formed." In addition to this they inserted a piece of timber on top of this rampart—"these pieces were about seven feet in length from the ground to the top which was sharpened."

**B. M.** The Nephites "dug up heaps of earth round about all their cities." "On the tops of these ridges of earth, . . . works of timbers built up to the hight of a man. . . . Upon these works of timbers a frame of pickets,"

In one instance in each book, the walls were represented as being double, a wall enclosed in wall, at least in a part of it.

In the **Ms.** the walls were said to run "parallel with each other;" in the **B. M.** one wall was back of the other, for Gideon told the king the whole people might escape by "the back pass through the back wall on the backside of the city."

#### **Other Minor Correspondences.**

(1) **The arms were the same;**—swords, spears, bows and arrows, except the Nephites were armed with cimeters,—1000 years before the Turks and Persians used them.

(2) Both books present a kind of communism. "Property was in common."

(3) Prominent men disappear from the history mysteriously.

**Ms.** Labaska, having reorganized the two empires lying on opposite sides of the Ohio, "at the age of 80, bade an affectionate 'adu' to the two empires and left them to lament in tears his exit."

**B. M.** Alma departed out of the land of Zarahemla. "And it came to pass that he was never heard of more; as to his death or burial, we know not of."

(4) In both books the word "adieu," is used. Twice in the **Ms.** and in the **B. M.** Jacobb ends his book with, "Brethren, adieu." A French word appearing many hundreds of years before the French language was spoken.

(5) In the **Ms.** and **B. M.** we find prophets, priests, high priests, counsellors and teachers. And finally we discover, in the **Ms.** some things which are held by Mormons, as points of accepted doctrine:

The eternity of matter;

"The divine hierarchy;"

"polygamy" permitted to a few chosen ones. Here are three things written into the **Ms.**, and most probably into the **Ms. Found**, of which Mr. Spaulding was the undoubted author, which Joseph Smith incorporated into his scheme.

(7) The writer of both books had a knowledge of both Latin and Greek.

**Ms.** In this story, these words are appropriate, as both Latin and Greek were spoken by Romans.

**B. M.** But it puzzles the antiquarian to explain how these languages appear in the **B. M.**

The Greek *anti* is used repeatedly, as *Anti-pas*, that is over or opposite to the pass; *Anti-Christ*, a New Testament word; *Anti-Nephi-Lehi*, that is people neutral as between the Nephites and Lehi-Lamanites; but richest of all is Timothy, a Nephite disciple of Jesus. Then for Latin we have *Omni*—plural of *omnis*, all, as the title of a book that includes other books, all that were needed to fill the gap of history from Enos to Benjamin,—a kind of *Omni-bus* book.

(8) **The Names of Women:** The author of the two books, exhibits considerable ingenuity in inventing names for men, but an inability to create female characters, and find names for them.

**Ms.** In this story we have only two women visualized and named,—

Lamesa and Heliza. Dropping the first letter of the last name, gives us Eliza, which has a familiar look to modern eyes.

**B. M.** In the history of a thousand years three women only appear by name:—Sariah, Abish and Isabel. All of them have a familiar appearance, and sound. Sariah came from Jerusalem. It is merely Sarah, with “i” inserted. Abish appears in composition with other letters and syllables, in half a dozen Bible names. And Isabel looks perfectly natural.

Note the coincidences, 1st, the same paucity of names of women, and 2nd, their poorly concealed origin,—being either Biblical or modern.

## CONCLUSION.

The impossibility of two books agreeing in so many particulars, unless created by the same mind may be better understood by a simple illustration.

Criminals, or persons charged with criminal offenses, are identified by the Bertillon system of measurements.

The general and external appearance may be so disguised as to deceive the keenest detective. But the several measurements taken of the body, can not be changed materially. Hence, when these measurements are once taken and recorded, they furnish an infallible proof of identity. But, recently, a simpler and equally certain identification is found in the impress of the fingers, principally of the thumb.

There are no two thumbs among the ninety millions, that agree in these imprints. Each one has an individuality solely his own.

A negro was convicted of murder, recently, in Chicago, simply on the silent testimony of his thumb-prints.

The minds of men differ as widely as do their bodies. Each has as distinctive a mental character, as a physical. We find these mental marks in every literary work. They stamp it with the author's signature.

We have compared the mental signature of the **Ms.**, its literary finger marks with those of the **B. M.**, and find them the same. In scores of instances, the lines and whorls agree. And the testimony is conclusive and unimpeachable, that Spaulding, the author of the **Ms.**, is also the author of the history part of the **B. M.**



### Another Rule.

If we apply the scientific Law of Probabilities to the case in hand, it makes mathematically certain, billions to one, that whoever wrote the *Ms.* wrote the history part of the *B. M.* also. Here is the law.

"The theory of chances consists in reducing all events of the same kind to a certain number of cases equally possible; and in determining the number of these cases which are favorable to the event, of which the probability is sought. The ratio of that number to the number of possible cases, is the measure of probability.

Illustration: If we take two letters on separate cards, say A and B and lay them down without knowing their positions, they will spell out AB, or BA. Hence the chance of its being AB, is as one to two. Add C, and perform the same test the chances are as one to six that the word will be CAB. Add S and the chances are only 1 to 24 that the word will be CABS. That is, the probability varies in geometric ratio.

Applying this rule to the correspondences between the *Ms.* and the *B. M.*, the degree of probability that the two books are the product of one mind as the number of possible coincidences or agreements is to the geometric series of actual agreements.

There are nearly 40,000 words in the *Ms.* Admitting that there might be one agreement possible in every four words, if we find one actual agreement, the probability is only 10,000 to 1, that the *Ms.* and *B. M.* were written by one man. If two agreement, the ratio is 10,000 to 2; if three, 10,000 to 6; if five, 10,000 to 120; if seven, 10,000 to 5,040, or 2 to 1; if ten, the ratio is 10,000 to 3,628,880, or 1 to 362, that one mind produced both.

But we have 50 correspondences, mental finger marks; let us divide that in half,—reduce it still more, and if we can show 16, it is 200 millions to one, that when we have found the author of the *Ms.* we have also discovered the author of the *B. M.*

These common literary mental marks are there, positive proof that Mr. Spaulding, whom we know is the author of the *Ms.*, also wrote the history part of the *B. M.*