

Reference is had to a book entitled the "Wisdom of Solomon." It is a long and elevated poem in praise of wisdom. It professes to have been written by Solomon (9:7, and 8:10). Now, Solomon, the great king of Israel, lived 1,000 years before Christ, at a time when the Hebrew language was spoken in its purity. But this book is not found in the Hebrew at all. On the contrary, the best authorities agree that it was written in the later or Alexandrian Greek of the time of Philo, who flourished fifty years before Christ. The author had evidently received a Greek education—and refers to matters of history that transpired after Solomon's time, as well as uses words and advances ideas that betray the age and the origin of the book. It cannot be older than 150 years before Christ, and is, therefore, a fraud—a lie upon the face of it—an attempt to deceive the public, and gain for itself credit and influence, and perhaps divine authority by forging the name of that wisest and most illustrious of men, Solomon, as its author.

CHAPTER VII.

A MODERN COMPOSITION.

Suppose a man of today should write a book and attach to it the name of some noted author of two hundred years ago, and attempt to make the world believe that it really was the production of that old author, hidden from the public, for certain reasons, until now. How could the truth be ascertained? In several ways; one way would be this:

During the past 200 years our English language has been undergoing a great many changes; many old words have become obsolete and are no longer used, while thousands of new words have been coined from the various languages with which our language has come in contact, or have grown out of important events, or revolutions, or scientific discoveries that have during these 200 years occurred. Now, if upon examination, this book, purporting to be 200 years old, is found to be written in the current language of the present day, full of words and phrases and idiomatic expressions that were wholly unknown to the English language 200 years ago, this fact alone would furnish the most conclusive possible proof of the fraud. It could not have been written 200 years ago. It must have been written during the present age.

An actual illustration of this method of criticism, and the certainty of its results, may be of interest.

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In all the old copies of our Bible, there were found between the Old and the New Testaments, a number of books called the "*Apocrypha*." The time was, in the early ages of the Christian church, when a large majority of the Christians in the world believed those books were inspired of God, and therefore should have a place in the Bible. We have not space in this chapter to explain how this came about, though it is a very interesting page of history. We will simply select one of these books and show how easily careful students have ascertained, beyond the possibility of question, that it is *spurious*.

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In a similar way has been shown the spurious character of books written in the first, second and third centuries after Christ, as genuine letters of the apostles, with an apostle's name attached. They are either written in the current language of their day, and thus easily betray their real age, or else the attempt to imitate the apostles' style and language is too apparent to deceive the critical scholar. "Murder will out." In every attempt at fraud, the cloven foot will show itself somewhere, however careful and determined the effort to cover it up.

It is well known that the ancient Egyptian language had *only a few written words in it*. The Hebrew, as compared with some other ancient languages, is acknowledged to be exceedingly rich and comprehensive. And yet the total number of words in it is limited to a few thousand; and its primary words, its roots, the foundations of the language, are limited to a few hundred. And the same thing was true of all the earliest languages on the earth. Language is in part a growth. As different nations, and diverse peoples mingle with each other, or rub against each other, new ideas are formed, new facts discovered, new thoughts developed; and, therefore, *new words have to be coined* to express those new thoughts. Hence, the Greek and the Latin languages, being a later growth than either the Hebrew or the Egyptian, are found with a greatly *enlarged vocabulary*. The Latin, for instance, has several times as many words in it as the older Hebrew.

And even more rapid has been the change in modern times, keeping pace with the rapid strides in every branch of human learning, until our *English* language is fairly

loaded down with the wealth of all the past; it contains, probably, *twenty times* as many words as either the ancient Hebrew or the Egyptian. And thousands of these words are, of course, *new words*, made necessary to express new thoughts, new facts in science, new facts in human experience, new views of truth, enlarged conceptions of old truths that require new forms of expression. There are thousands of words, therefore, that express thoughts and facts and ideas that were never dreamed of in the earlier ages of the world and that no word or combination of words in the ancient Hebrew or Egyptian could express.

Well, now, the Book of Mormon professes to have been compiled about fifteen hundred years ago, by a man bearing the name of *Mormon*. It is an alleged abridgment of the records of the Nephites for a period of one thousand years before his day. And in fact the first part of the book up to page 140 is claimed to be *unabridged*. We have it just as it was first written by the elder Nephi, his brother Jacob, and others after him. If these pretensions, therefore, are accepted, the book is an *old book*, a very old book. It belongs wholly to the ancient past—part first being composed nearly twenty-five hundred years ago, and the remainder fifteen hundred years ago. It professes also to have been written in a language which might be called a sort of cross between the ancient Egyptian and Hebrew languages.

“I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of *the learning* of the Jews and the *language* of the Egyptians.”—(B. of M., page 1.)

The book, therefore, by its own acknowledgment,

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takes us back to the earlier history of those two ancient tongues—to a period when their vocabulary was limited, before the world’s literature had been enriched by the golden age of Greek and Roman scholarship, much less by the still more wonderful developments of modern research and investigation.

If, therefore, upon a careful examination, we find the Book of Mormon filled up with words and phrases and forms of expression that are known to be entirely *modern*—if it has allusions to modern discoveries, or to scientific facts wholly unknown to the ancient world—if in any way the author of the book is “caught napping,” and by word or thought or grammatical form betrays the modern origin of the book—then “counterfeit” must be written across its pages, and its author be held responsible for the sad results of a wicked imposture.

A. *Modern Words.*

There are a multitude of *modern words* found in the

Book of Mormon.

The first word that will probably attract the attention of an ordinary reader at the beginning of the book (page 4), is the name of Lehi’s third son; *Sam*.

Here is a boy six hundred years before Christ who has the unmistakable Yankee nickname for Samuel. There is certainly nothing *Hebraistic* about this name, nor does it sound like any Egyptian name we ever heard; possibly, however, by putting the Hebrew and the Egyptian languages together, or by adding to the Egyptian “the learning of the Jews,” this name, “Sam,” might be manufactured. This is not, of course, offered as conclusive evidence of the modern origin of the

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book. The writer, however, confesses that it started in his own mind a very grave *suspicion* in that direction.

But there are many words used in the book that have a *Greek* or a *Latin* origin *later* than six hundred years before Christ, and many others wholly *modern*. The following are only a few:

“Faculties,” “Popular,” “Priestcraft,” “State of dilemma,” “Synagogue,” “Bible,” “Jews,” “Gentiles,” “Church,” “Baptize,” “Barges,” “Immortal,” and others.

Of course it is easy enough to say that “the angel who translated those ancient plates for Joseph Smith would be apt to use words with which Joseph Smith was familiar; he would clothe the ancient thought in a modern dress, and use such simple modern expressions as Joseph Smith, who was an unlettered man, could readily understand.”

But some of the above words will not allow of such an explanation. For instance, the word “faculties.” “Arouse the *faculties* of your souls,” page 120 (N. Ed., 134). “I myself have labored with all the power of *faculties* which I have possessed,” page 206 (N. Ed., 230).

This use of the word is wholly *modern*. The ancients knew nothing of such a division of the mind or soul into faculties. And, hence there could have been no word found upon those ancient plates, that conveyed any such meaning.

It is true, we cannot certainly tell just how far the people upon this continent may have advanced. A good Mormon brother suggests that the Nephites were a *wonderful* people, and may have made discoveries here up-

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on this continent such as put to the blush all the Old World progress in science and art. This may be so, but the Book of

Mormon is entirely silent upon the subject of Rail Roads, Telegraphs, Telephones, steam power of any kind, or labor-saving inventions of any character—and even of Universities of learning, or colleges of any sort. On the contrary the general outline of Nephite and Lamanite history as presented to us, suggests rather a sort of *semi-civilized* people constantly vibrating between the “goody” Christian and the perverse savage—often changing from the one state to the other in a single year (see Chapter IV). And a still more damaging fact is, that no advancement or progress in civilization is presented to us during the one thousand years of Nephite history. Nephi himself was a greater prophet than any who came after him, and the nation during his life time attained at least as high, if not a higher degree of culture than it ever afterwards reached.*

We may therefore safely take the Jewish civilization of Zedekiah’s time, six hundred years B. C., as the highest civilization reached upon this western continent,

*The following is at the conclusion of one thousand years of Nephite civilization. After describing the barbarity of the Lamanites, who forced the Nephite women and children to eat the flesh of their own husbands and fathers! Mormon proceeds to say:

“And notwithstanding this great abomination of the Lamanites, it doth not exceed that of *our people* (Nephites) in Moriantum. For behold, many of the daughters of the Lamanites have they taken prisoners, and after depriving them of that which was most dear and precious above all things, which is chastity and virtue; and after they had done this thing, they did murder them in a most cruel manner, torturing their bodies even unto death; and after they have done this, *they devour their flesh like unto wild beasts(!)* because of the hardness of their hearts; and they do it for a token of bravery (?). O my beloved son, how can a people like this, *that are without civilization*; (and only a few years have passed away, and they were a civil and a delightful people), but O my son, how can a people like this, whose delight is in so much abomination, etc.” Could a better evidence of the unreal mythical, unnatural, character of the Book of Mormon and its alleged civilization be presented than the above *finale* of a professedly highly cultured and Christian people?

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according to the Book of Mormon; since the colony never reached a higher standard, than was attained when they left the City of Jerusalem. We, therefore, insist that the arguments of this chapter are valid against the Book of Mormon, and therefore that the existence of so many modern words, conveying thoughts and ideas wholly modern, and that *belong to a civilization never before attained upon this continent* is a clear proof of fraud.

But aside from this, there is at least one of the above words whose presence in the Book of Mormon in several places, p. 149 (N. Ed. 166), can by no possible special plead-

ing be reconciled with the idea that the book came from God. It is the word “*immortal*” joined to the word *soul*, “*immortal soul*.”

This expression is not only modern in its use, not found in any of the ancient languages, not found in either the Old or New Testament,—but is, in fact, directly at variance with the plain statements of the New Testament. It is a popular expression of modern invention, designed to express a solemn Bible truth, but unfortunately puts into the word immortal a meaning that does not belong to it. Immortal means, “not subject to death.” It is applied, in the Bible, to the *body after the resurrection*; but not applied to the soul here in this life, because the Bible expressly represents the soul of the sinner as *already dead* “in trespasses and in sins.” It has no spiritual life, which in Bible usage is the only real true life, until it has been regenerated by the Spirit of God or made alive in Christ. Hence the word *immortal* is not a proper word to describe the soul here, for instead of being

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“not subject to death,” it is in one sense already dead. The popular meaning of the word is that the soul will never cease to exist, which is true but the word immortal is not the right word to express that truth.

The use, then, of this word alone, as applied to the soul, in the Book of Mormon, would be an indisputable proof that the book is modern in its conception and make-up, and could not be from God, for God cannot contradict himself. He could not possibly be beguiled into the use of a word that would contradict the teachings of the Bible. Mr. Smith could use this expression, because it is a common everyday expression. But God could not use it, for He knows better—and hence He could not have inspired the Book of Mormon.

B. Modern Revival Scenes.

It is well known that in Western New York, *sixty or seventy* years ago, during the boyhood and youth of Joseph Smith, strangely exciting revival scenes were frequent, notably among the Methodists of that day, and in connection with *camp meetings*, and that in just such exciting revival scenes, Mr. Smith himself received his first and his strongest religious convictions.* Many a time he had witnessed men and women fall down under the influence of the truth, and remain apparently unconscious for hours, sometimes for a day, and in rare instances for three days together—and then suddenly reviving, rise up and break forth into the most extravagant expressions of joy and praise to the Saviour who

*See Mrs. Smith’s History of “Joseph Smith, the Prophet.”

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had redeemed them. Being somewhat ignorant of Bible truth and particularly of revival methods generally, he was easily led to suppose that these strange weird scenes were *models*, real models of a true conversion.

Hence when it became desirable to describe in the Book of Mormon a genuine revival or an individual conversion, nothing would be more natural than for him to *draw upon his own observations and experience for the model*. And accordingly we find that nearly every instance of a conversion related in the Book of Mormon is cast in this one particular mold. The man or the woman, under intense emotions falls down, and remains in an apparently unconscious state for periods varying from a few hours to three days, and then suddenly reviving, breaks forth into ecstatic expressions of joy and praise to the Saviour. A few instances may here be given:

Alma, one of the principal characters of the book, after being reproved by an angel for his great wickedness,

“. . . became dumb that he could not open his mouth; yea, and he became weak, even that he could not move his hands; therefore he was taken by those that were with him, and carried helpless even until he was laid before his father. . . and his father rejoiced, for he knew that it was the power of God.”

“And it came to pass after they (the people assembled) had fasted and prayed for the space of two days and two nights, the limbs of Alma received their strength and he stood up and began to speak unto them, bidding them to be of good comfort: for, said he, I have repented of my sins and have been redeemed of the Lord; behold, I am born of the Spirit.”—pp. 201—2 (N. Ed., 225)

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And he proceeded to preach a sermon that revealed as much maturity of thought and knowledge of the Scriptures as the oldest and wisest preacher described in the Book of Mormon.

On pages 262-265 (N. Ed., 290-293), we have an account of a large number of conversions, beginning with one of the kings of the Lamanites, named Lamoni:

“And it came to pass that after he (a prophet by the name of Ammon) had said all these things, and expounded them to the king, that the king believed all his words. And he began to cry unto the Lord, saying: O Lord, have mercy: according to thy abundant mercy which thou hast had upon the people of Nephi, have upon me and my people. And now, when he had said this, he fell unto the earth, as if he were dead. And it came to pass that his servants took him and carried him in unto his wife and laid him

upon a bed; and he lay as if he were dead for the space of two days and two nights.”

Preparations were made for his burial, but Ammon interfered and promised that *on the morrow* he should rise. And sure enough on the third day—

“It came to pass that he arose, according to the words of Ammon; and as he arose he stretched forth his hand unto the woman (his wife), and said: blessed be name of the Lord, and blessed art thou; for as sure as thou livest, behold, I have seen my Redeemer. . . . Now when he had said these words, his heart was swollen within him, and he sunk again with joy.”

Then his good wife followed suit:

“And the queen also sunk down, being overpowered by the Spirit.”

Then prophet Ammon began to pray, but “he was also overpowered with joy; and thus they all three had sunk to the earth.”

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Then the servants of the king, seeming what had taken place, seized with a great fear, began to cry unto God:

“And it came to pass that they did call on the name of the Lord, *in their might, even until they had all fallen to the earth.*”

After remaining thus for several hours the queen was the first to rise—for a certain woman was present who had been converted years before and fully understood the predicament.

“And it came to pass that she went and took the queen by the hand, that perhaps she might raise her from the ground; and as soon as she touched her hand she arose and stood upon her feet, and cried with a loud voice, saying, O blessed Jesus, who has saved me from an awful hell! O blessed God have mercy on this people. And when she had said this, she clasped her hands, being filled with joy, speaking many words which were not understood.”

Soon after this the most important personage upon the continent, the *father* of King Lamoni, king of all the Lamanites, was converted. After a long sermon by the prophet *Aaron*,

“The king did bow down before the Lord upon his knees; yea, even he did prostrate himself upon the earth, and cried mightily, saying, O God, Aaron hath told me that there is a God; and if there is a God, and if thou art God, wilt thou make thyself known unto me, and I will give away all my sins to know thee, and that I may be raised from the dead, and be saved at the last day. And now when the king had said these words, he was struck as if he were dead.”

He remains in this condition for a season, when Aaron takes him by the hand and lifts him up, and immediately he

begins to preach and so preaches

“That his whole household were converted unto the Lord.”

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Before he was “struck as if he were dead,” he did not know whether there “is a God.” As soon as he comes out of his swoon he is able to present the whole plan of salvation so that all his household are converted unto the Lord!

The fact is our angel so blindly copies those exciting camp-meeting experiences with which Mr. Smith had become familiar, that he falls into ridiculous blunders, so very evident as to give the whole thing away. For instance, when the queen above mentioned, came out of her swoon she cried with a loud voice, saying:

“O blessed Jesus, who has saved me from an awful hell! O blessed God have mercy upon this people.”

While the context shows conclusively that this woman had never so much as heard even the name Jesus, had no knowledge whatever of an awful hell, or that “this people” stood in need of the mercy of God. To see a woman in western New York, who had been reared from childhood under gospel influences, and therefore understood the meaning of every word she used—fall down under the influence of the truth, and by and by rise to her feet exclaiming, “O blessed Jesus, who has saved me from an awful hell,” and clasp her hands in unutterable delight and joy would awaken no surprise or question. Mr. Smith had undoubtedly heard many a woman do that very thing and use that identical form of expression. But to reproduce this scene in a *heathen* land, and ask us to believe that a woman used these words, when the context informs us positively that she had never heard the words she uses, and could know nothing whatever of their meaning—is imposing altogether

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too great a strain upon our credulity, and is *imitating copy* in a way that is amusingly queer.

But there are other indications that the religious experiences of the Book of Mormon were borrowed from the modern camp meeting. The book *abounds* in modern camp-meeting expressions. The following are a few out of a great number of illustrations which easily betray their parentage:

“Encircled about eternally in the arms of his love.” page 55 (N. Ed. 59).

“They are encircled about with the matchless bounty of his love.” p. 282 (N. Ed. 312).

“They were encircled about with everlasting darkness and

destruction.” (Idem).

“The chains of hell which encircled them about were loosed and their souls did expand, and they did sing redeeming love.” p. 221 (N. Ed. 246).

“My brethren, if ye have experienced a change of heart, and if ye have felt to sing the song of redeeming love.” p. 222 (N. Ed. 247).

“For the arms of mercy are extended towards them.” (Idem).

“Lay down the weapons of their rebellion.” p. 275 (N. Ed. 305).

“Behold, your days of probation are past; ye have procrastinated the day of your salvation *until it is everlastingly too late.*” p. 425 (N. Ed. 486).

“By the power of their words many were brought *before the altar* of God, to call on His name, and confess their sins.” p. 255 (N. Ed. 283).

C. Other Modern Ideas.

“And to the reader I bid farewell . . . Brethren, adieu.” p. 133 (N. Ed. 149).

“To the reader” sounds slightly modern, and so does the word “&c.”

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“And again he has reviled against our lawyers and our judges, &c.” p. 238 (N. Ed. 264).

“Shall he save his people *in* their sins?” p. 220 (N. Ed. 266).

is a modern theological question. While the following expression, if it is not modern, is at least silly and without meaning:

“The course of the Lord is one eternal round.” p. 18. See also pp. 229 and 311 (N. Ed. 20, 254 and 345).

On page 209 (N. Ed. 233) a certain mischief-maker is represented as going about among the people declaring:

“That every priest and teacher ought to become popular; and they ought not to labor with their hands, but that they ought to be supported by the people.”

It seems strange that the author of the above could have so far lost his wits as to allow his anxiety to slap clergymen of the present day in the face, to lead him into a blunder that proves his work a fraud beyond a possibility of question. For over and over again the Book of Mormon declares that *Lehi* and his descendants *kept the law of Moses*, with the greatest carefulness, until Christ came who set aside the law by fulfilling it. So exact were they in this observance that *Nephi* and his people built a magnificent temple,

patterned after the temple of Solomon, almost immediately upon their arrival in this country, and set apart their two youngest brothers as priests. Well, now, one of the first and plainest requirements of the law of Moses was the setting apart of the tribe of Levi to the work of the priesthood, and the provision for their *complete and abundant*

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support by a tax of one-tenth of all the income of the nation.

But here in this paragraph a man gets himself into trouble and finally suffers the penalty of death for publicly teaching that “priests ought not to labor with their hands, *but be supported by the people,*” precisely the thing that the law of Moses absolutely and unconditionally required. Surely the writer of the above could not have been an ancient writer, but a *modern* man with a *very* strong desire to hit hard the *modern* custom of a *salaried* ministry.

While Joseph Smith was yet a youth, before the Book of Mormon was given to the world, the whole country was strongly stirred up upon the subject of *secret societies*. A man by the name of Morgan had left the *Masons* and revealed their secrets. He was afterwards mysteriously put out of the way and his death publicly charged to that fraternity. Whether the charge had any foundation or not, the whole country became excited over it, and the subject of secret societies received an “airing,” such as it had never secured before—churches were divided, many of them rent in pieces on this account. The controversy became very bitter in many places and long continued.

The State of New York being the scene of the Morgan affair, became the centre of all this rancorous controversy. The Book of Mormon gave our redoubtable angel an excellent opportunity to “air” his views, which were of course exceedingly radical. Accordingly, we find the subject frequently mentioned—and so mentioned, that a person at all familiar with the character of the controversy, as it was carried on in the State of

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New York, will find no difficulty in identifying a large number of the pointed deliverances in the Book of Mormon.

The subject is first mentioned among the Jaredites, only a few hundred years after the flood, and traced back to Cain who killed his brother Abel

“And Akish did administer unto them the oaths which were given by them of old, who also sought power, which had been handed down even from Cain, who was a murderer from the be-

ginning. And they were kept up by the power of the devil to administer these oaths unto the people, to keep them in darkness, to help such as sought power to gain power, and to murder, and to plunder, and to lie and commit all manner of wickedness and whoredoms. . .

“And it came to pass that they formed a secret combination, even as they of old; which combination is most abominable and wicked, above all, in the sight of God; for the Lord worketh not in secret combinations, neither doth He will that man should shed blood, but in all things hath forbidden it from the beginning of man.”

“And now I, Mormon, do not write the manner of their oaths and combinations, for it hath been made known unto me that they are had among all people, and they are had among the Lamanites, and they have caused the destruction of this people of whom I am now speaking, and also the destruction of the people of Nephi; and whatsoever nation shall uphold such secret combinations, to get power and gain, until they shall spread over the nation, behold, they shall be destroyed.” pp. 530—I (N. Ed. 587—8).

The subject is often mentioned in other portions of the Book of Mormon, in such connection with robbers and cut-throats as to make the whole thing as odious as possible. Instance the following upon page 405 (N. Ed. 446).

“But, behold, Satan did stir up the hearts of the more parts of

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the Nephites, insomuch that they did unite with those bands of robbers and did enter into their covenants, and their oaths, that they would protect and preserve one another, in whatsoever difficult circumstances they should be placed, that they should not suffer for their murders and their plunderings, and their stealings.

“And it came to pass that they did have signs, yea, their secret signs, and their secret words; and this that they might distinguish a brother who had entered into the covenant, that whatsoever wickedness his brother should do he should not be injured by his brother, nor by those who did belong to his band, who had taken this covenant; and thus they might murder, and plunder and steal, and commit whoredom, and all manner of wickedness, contrary to the laws of their country and also the laws of their God; and whosoever of those who belonged to their band should reveal unto the world, of their wickedness and their abominations, should be tried, not according to the laws of their country, but according to the laws of their wickedness, which have been given by Gadianton and Kishkumen.”

The writer can remember well when almost all of the above accusations, and in almost the same language, were freely hurled against the Masonic Brotherhood by hot-headed and radical opponents. Hence, to him at least, the various utterances of the Book of Mormon upon the subject have a very modern and familiar tone.

Very much the same conclusions must be reached by a careful examination of the prophet Mormon’s declarations

upon the subject of *miracles and infant baptism*.

In his old age he is alleged to have written some fatherly letters to his son, Moroni—giving him advice as to how he shall preach the gospel, and how successfully to meet the errors which, as he thinks, are creeping into the flock. Among other things he bitterly and fiercely assails those who teach that the day of miracles

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had passed—and those who claimed that infants should be baptized. A careful examination of the previous history of the Nephites and of the doctrines taught in the Book of Mormon will make so clear the modern complexion of the whole matter as to give it almost the appearance of a burlesque, rather than a sober discussion.

For instance, read the following on page 513 (N. Ed. 567):

“And again I speak unto you who deny the revelations of God, and say that they are done away, that there are no revelations, nor prophecies, nor gifts, nor healing, nor speaking with tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. Behold I say unto you, he that denieth these things knoweth not the gospel of Christ; yea, he *has not read the scriptures*: if so, he does not understand them. *For do we not read* that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever; and in him there is no variableness neither shadow of changing? And now, if ye have imagined up unto yourselves a god who doth vary, and in him there is shadow of changing, then have ye imagined up unto yourselves a god who is not a God of miracles. But behold, I will show unto you a God of miracles. . .”

Upon the next page he continues the subject with some very convincing logic.

“And if there were miracles wrought then (by Christ and his apostles) why has God ceased to be a God of miracles and yet be an unchangeable being? And behold I say unto you he changeth not; if so he would cease to be God: and he ceaseth not to be God, *and is a God of miracles*.”

Much more of the same sort is said, not *forgetting* to quote verbatim the great commission as found in the gospel by Mark 16: 15-18. “For behold, thus saith Jesus Christ, the son of God, unto his disciples, in the

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hearing of the multitude, go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; and he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not, shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe, in

my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.” p. 514.

Now it needs but a moment’s thought to be convinced beyond a doubt of the *modern origin* of all this.

1. For a complete demonstration that the above quotation from Mark was quoted word for word from our present English version of the Bible, and not from the original language in which it was spoken, see farther on in this chapter.

2. We have already (Chapter IV, page 108) called attention to the utter folly of writing about speaking with tongues and interpreting languages—when there was but one language in use anywhere upon this continent according to the Book of Mormon.

3. The two other quotations from the Scriptures: “For do we not *read* that God is the same, yesterday, today and forever;” and “in Him is no variableness, neither shadow of changing,” are only found in Heb. 13:8, and Jas. 1: 17. As neither of these epistles was in circulation upon this continent fifteen hundred years ago—and as the words are quoted precisely as found today in our modern English version of the New Testament, the evidence is conclusive that the “*we*” in the above extract, (“do not *we* read,”) was a *modern we* and not an ancient prophet by the name of Mormon. For

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the ancient Mormon had no such Scriptures to “*read*,”—Joseph Smith and his angel *had*.

4. But still farther: the assumption is wholly gratuitous that any such question could have been raised in those early times. It is a modern question, brought forward prominently by the Mormon church of today. In fact, it is quite inconceivable that any doubts on the subject could ever have been entertained by a people who had for a thousand years enjoyed such instruction upon that subject as is found all through the Book of Mormon.

And the same things may be said of the arguments presented on pages 557—8, against *infant baptism*. It is true that the practice of baptizing infants prevailed from a very early period upon the *Eastern* continent. But here in this Western world during olden time, the *Latter Day Saints had things their own way from* the very beginning. The instructions upon the *mode* and the *subjects* of baptism were plain and unmistakable from Nephi down to Mormon. It is impossible to suppose after a thousand years of the clearest possible revelations, that any professing Christian could, for one moment, have seriously entertained the notion that

infants must be baptized.

The whole thing is *modern*. The arguments used against the practice are the arguments of today, and not such as would have been presented in any other age of the world.

The same modern “*we*,” who read from our King James’ version of the New Testament what the Apostle James and the author of the Hebrews wrote at least *thirty years* after Jesus Christ is represented to have left

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this Western continent—and who had in his possession a modern copy of the gospel by Mark, and read from its sixteenth chapter to prove that miracles should not cease—it is this same “*we*” who with *modern phrase* and *modern arguments* assails the practice of *infant baptism*.

The same redoubtable angel, who, to slap modern clergymen in the face for receiving salaries, could manufacture a man of straw, and cloth him in ancient garb, and give him an ancient date—has evidently done the same thing in these other instances—for the purpose of setting forth his opinions upon the subject of secret societies, infant baptism, and the question of the continuance of miracles.

D. *Modern Discoveries.*

The law of the *circulation of the blood* was first discovered by *Harvey* about the year 1619, A. D., and the fact that the skin has “*pores*” could not have been known in the very nature of the case until after the invention of the microscope. Therefore this passage professedly spoken by King Benjamin (125 B. C.), must be counted a fraud. See page 150 (N. Ed. 167.)

“And lo, He (the Lord Jesus Christ) shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for behold, *blood cometh from every pore*, so great shall be His anguish.”

The fact that the earth and the planets are *round*, and revolve around the sun, is also a *modern discovery*. Had it been known anciently either upon the old continent

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or this, it would have revolutionized or changed the whole past history of the globe. No civilized people could have been in possession of this great fact and not been incited to circumnavigate the globe.

But upon page 293 (N. Ed. 324), the prophet Alma, while laboring to convince the skeptic Korihor that there is

a God, proceeds in genuine modern style with his argument:

“The Scriptures are laid before thee, yea and all things denote there is a God; yea, even the earth and all things that are upon the face of it, yea, and *its motion*; yea, and also *all the planets which move in their regular form* doth witness that there is a Supreme Creator.”

Upon page 421 (N. Ed. 463), another pseudo writer (B. C. 10), while describing the power of God, gives himself completely away after this fashion:

“Yea, and if he say unto the earth, move, it is moved; yea, if He say unto the earth, thou shalt go back, that it lengthen out the day for many hours, it is done; and thus according to His word, the earth goeth back, and it *appeareth unto man* that the sun standeth still; yea, and behold, this is so, for sure it is the *earth that moveth and not the sun*.

A modern scientist attempting to *explain Joshua’s miracle*.

E. *Some Additional Self-betrayals.*

Upon page 55 (N. Ed. 59), *Shakespeare* is quoted by the old man Lehi, father of both the Nephites and the Lamanites:

“Awake and arise from the dust and hear the words of a

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trembling parent whose limbs ye must soon *lay down in the cold and silent grave, from whence no traveller can return.*”

Of course, it’s barely possible there may have been a Shakespeare in those early times—but from all we have learned of the mental make-up of the Book of Mormon it is *hardly probable*.

But the following quotations give the thing away beyond the possibility of explanation. In the heat and excitement of his speech, the author forgets himself for the moment, forgets the *ancient role* he is acting, and *tells the truth*:

“And now I, Nephi, declare unto you, that this prophet of whom Moses spake *was* the Holy one of Israel.” Page 52 (N. Ed. 56.)

Nephi professedly lived 600 B.C., but the author forgets this for the moment, and makes Nephi speak of the Lord Jesus in the *past tense* “*was* the Holy One of Israel.”

“And assuredly, as the Lord liveth for the Lord *hath spoken* it, and it is His eternal word, which cannot pass away, that they

who are righteous shall be righteous still, and they who are filthy shall be filthy still; wherefore, they who are filthy, are the devil and his angels; and they shall go away into everlasting fire prepared for them; and their torment is a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flame ascendeth up for ever and ever, and has no end.” p. 73 (N. Ed. 80.)

The first part of the above is quoted from Rev., 22:11, and the rest from the same book written nearly 700 years after Nephi’s time. But our angel tells the truth for once, and is very *positive* about it—

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“Assuredly, as the Lord liveth, for the Lord *hath spoken it* and *it is his eternal word*, which cannot pass away!

“Wherefore all those who are proud and that do wickedly, the day that cometh shall burn them up *saith the Lord*, for they shall be as stubble.” page 98 (N. Ed. 110).

This is also quoted by Nephi from Malachi, 4:1, who wrote the passage about 397 B. C.!

This same man Nephi quotes the Apostle Paul also in the *past tense* as follows:

“Behold, the Lord *hath forbidden* this thing; wherefore the Lord God *hath given* a commandment that all men should have charity, which charity is love. And except they should have charity they were nothing.” page 101 (N. Ed., 113).

The following “give-away” is credited to the same great prophet Nephi:

“And now, if the Lamb of God, he being holy, *should have need* to be baptised by water, to fulfill all righteousness, O then. how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water. And now, I would ask of you, my beloved brethren, wherein the Lamb of God *did fulfill* all righteousness in *being baptized* by water? Know ye not that *he was* holy? . . . Wherefore, after he *was baptized* with water, the Holy Ghost *descended* upon him in the form of a dove. And again: it sheweth unto the children of men the straightness of the path, and the narrowness of the gate, by which they should enter, he *having set* the example before them. And he *said* unto the children of men, follow thou me. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, can we follow Jesus, save we shall be willing to keep the commandments of the Father?” p. 110 (N. Ed. 124).

But Nephi is not the only man who is made to forget his ancient *role* and betray his modern origin by occasionally telling the truth. The mythical Alma has this:

“Now I would that ye should remember that *God has said* that the inward vessel shall be cleansed *first*, and then shall the outer vessel be cleansed also.” page 379 (N. Ed. 418).

Still another one says:

“But *we read* that in that great and last day, there are some who shall be cast out; yea, who shall be cast off from the presence of the Lord; yea, who shall be consigned to a state of endless misery, fulfilling the words which say they that have done good shall have everlasting life; and they that have done evil, shall have everlasting damnation. And thus it is, Amen.”—pp. 421-2 (N. Ed. 464).

The first of the above passages is quoted from Matt., 23:26, and the last one from Jno., 5:29.

There are many other similar “give-aways,” but these are sufficient. In fact *one such passage ought to be enough to settle the whole question of the modern origin of the book.*

F. King James Version.

But why need we specify words, single words, or now and then an isolated passage, when there are *sentences by the thousand, and whole chapters*, whose very presence in the Book of Mormon, in the form in which they are found, settles the question of the modern origin of the book beyond the possibility of dispute. Reference is had to all the quotations from the Bible, embracing, as has already been shown, so large a part of the book. They are every one of them, with scarcely an exception, *made verbatim from our modern English version*, the King James’ version of the Bible, made a little over 200 years ago.

Reader, if you are a Mormon you have known this

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fact, of course, ever since you first knew the Book of Mormon. But it is evident you have never carefully considered what that fact means, or you must have rejected the book at once as a fraud. We need only recall the manner of preparing the Book of Mormon as related by the eye witnesses.

David Whitmer states as follows:

“The tablets or plates were translated by Smith, who used a small oval or kidney-shaped stone, called Urim and Thummim*, that seemed endowed with the marvelous power of converting the characters on the plates, when used by Smith, into English, who would then dictate to Cowdry what to write. Frequently one character would make two lines of manuscript, while others made but a word or two words.”—Myth of the Manuscript Found, page 83.

Martin Harris explains the translation as follows:

“By the aid of the seer stone* sentences would appear and were

*Mr. Smith was blessed with two different instruments for translating these plates: the “Urim and Thummim,” and a stone called the “seer stone” in the above quotation from Martin Harris, and known by outsiders as the “peep stone,” because of the peculiar method of using it, to be explained farther on.

The Urim and Thummim is described as follows:

“The next error is that the seer stone which Joseph Smith used in the translation was called ‘Urim and ‘Thummim’. The instrument thus designated was *composed of two crystal stones set in the two rims of a bow*. The ‘seer stone’ was separate and distinct from the Urim and Thummim. The latter was delivered to the angel as well as the plates after the translation was completed; the former remained with the church and is now in the possession of the President.”—M. of M. F., page 85, quoted from “The Deseret Evening News.”

“Martin said farther that the seer stone differed in appearance entirely from the Urim and Thummim. That was obtained with the plates, which were two clear stones set in two rims, very much resembling spectacles, only they were larger.”—Testimony of Martin Harris in letter of Elder Stevenson. See M. of M. F., page 912.

“I took the article of which he spoke into my hands, and, upon examination, found that it consisted of two smooth three-cornered diamonds set in glass, and the glasses were set in silver bows, which were connected with each other in much the same way as old fashioned spectacles.”

“. . . That of which I spoke, which Joseph termed a key, was indeed nothing more nor less than the Urim and Thummim, and it was by this that the angel showed him many things which he saw in vision; by which

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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 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.”—Myth of the M. F., page 91.

“The translation of the characters appeared on the Urim and Thummim, sentence by sentence, and as soon as one was correctly transcribed the next appeared.”—M. of M. F., page 71.

In the *Deseret Evening News* of December 24, 1885, David Whitmer describes still more minutely the process:

“After affixing the magical spectacles to his eyes, Smith would take the plates and translate the characters one at a time. The graven characters would appear in succession to the seer, and directly under the character, when viewed through the glasses,

would be the translation in English.”

All these witnesses agree perfectly as to the method pursued by Mr. Smith. He has one of the golden plates before him, covered with the reformed Egyptian characters, the written language of the ancient Nephites. After adjusting these magical spectacles to his face he looks through them at the first character upon the plate, and behold the strange stones upon his face are endowed with the marvellous power of translating that character into the English language. “Directly under the character when viewed through the glasses would be the translation in English.” And thus the Egyptian characters are viewed one after another, while

he could also ascertain at any time the approach of danger, either to himself or the record, and on account of which he always kept the Urim and Thummim about his person.”—“Joseph Smith the Prophet,” by his Mother, pp. 101 and 106.

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underneath each appears its English equivalent, so that there can be no possible chance to mistake. Mr. Smith has simply to read the word or sentence as it appears through his magic spectacles; and Mr. Cowdry seated a short distance from Mr. Smith, with a blanket hung up between them, copies or writes each sentence as it falls from Mr. Smith’s lips. And to prevent the possibility of mistake, the sentence or word *remains in full view of Mr. Smith until Mr. Cowdry has had time to write it out in full*. And if Mr. Cowdry for any reason misunderstands Mr. Smith, and thus makes a mistake, the sentence *will not down*; it still persists in remaining there until the mistake has been corrected. Neither Mr. Smith nor Mr. Cowdry have any responsibility in the matter, except, simply, the one to announce and the other to write down whatever appears through the glasses of the former.

If the sentences are awkwardly expressed, or grammatically incorrect, or contain useless verbiage, unnecessary repetitions, or have errors of doctrine, or blunders of any kind, it is not at all the fault of Mr. Smith or Mr. Cowdry; it must be charged to the Urim and Thummim, or the angel that works it, or to the original writing. These earnest men have only to announce and write down what the spectacles record.

Whether the sentence that appears through the spectacles is really a translation of the characters upon the plate, they have no possible means of knowing. Both are uneducated men and know nothing whatever of the

*This is denied by some authorities, who stoutly insist that the blanket was only to hide Mr. Smith and his scribe from curi-

ous outside eyes.

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Egyptian characters they are translating. All they know about it, and all they claim to know about it, is that an angel, or some celestial personage that looked like an angel, as they supposed, appeared to them and told them that the words appearing underneath each character were a translation true and faithful of the characters.

It is asserted there are *eleven* witnesses to the credibility of the Book of Mormon. But it can be readily seen that not one of them is, or can be a credible witness. They saw the plates, some plates, and describe their size, general appearance, etc. But every witness fails, just at the point where an anxious world want information, that is, whether those plates contain an incongruous lot of characters that represented nothing whatever, or were a genuine record; and if a genuine record, whether they contained the whole or any part of the Book of Mormon. In other words, whether Joseph Smith was honest or playing upon their credulity, and if honest, whether he was not himself deceived, they had no possible means of knowing, farther than the statement of this redoubtable angel.

And now, reader, on the supposition that Joseph Smith was an honest, earnest man, it is proposed, by four plain and simple facts, to show you positively and conclusively *that this angel was a fraud*. That when he told Joseph Smith that the words which appeared to him through his spectacles were a translation true and faithful of the characters on the plates underneath, *he told a lie*.

1. As they proceed with their work of translating, behold there appears underneath an Egyptian character,

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a passage from our Bible; and it is in the language of our King James' version, precisely as it was translated by the English bishops 200 years ago.

Now that Bible passage appearing underneath those Egyptian characters, is either a *translation* of those characters, or it is not. If it is a translation made under the authority and by the direction of an angel of God, then we are confronted with this wonderful phenomenon, *that the angel should translate exactly as those English bishops*, not varying in a single word, although there are several thousand whole verses of this character, thus stamping, as you see, with heavens seal the work of those grand old bishops, proving that they were infallible, absolutely so, never having made a single mistake, the angel agreeing with them in every instance, even to the wording of their thoughts.*

But the scholarship of the world has over and over again declared that those men *were not infallible*; that they did make a large number of mistakes; no very serious ones it is true, nothing that changes any great doctrine of the Bible; but, nevertheless, faults enough to keep them humble, and show that they were only human. And if I mistake not, our Mormon friends, in their Articles of Faith, say, "We believe the Bible to

*And the wonder will only be increased when we learn that all the quotations from the Old Testament made prior to the appearance of Christ here upon this continent—that is, all the direct Bible quotations found in the book from the first to the 450th page—are translated from original *brass plates engraved in the pure Egyptian language*; plates brought by Nephi from the city of Jerusalem 600 years before Christ.

Just think of it! Those bishops, 200 years ago, translated from a Hebrew text that has been handed down to us from generation to generation, copied and recopied a thousand times over, perhaps; and their translation from such a Hebrew text is found to accord exactly, even to the minutest particular, with a translation made by an angel directly from Egyptian plates 2600 years old, less one single transcription, and that made by the inspired prophet Mormon—See pages 10, 11, 63 and 154.

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be the Word of God, *as far as it is translated correctly*," intimating that it was not altogether translated correctly; whereas, the testimony of spectacles and the angel is that the translation is absolutely perfect, without fault.

If, on the other hand, the passage appearing through those spectacles is not a translation of the characters above them, but is simply quoted word for word from our Bible, *then the whole claim is proven false, and the book must be pronounced a fraud*. For if in *one instance* the sentence appearing underneath does not represent perfectly and exactly the characters above—is not a bonafide *translation*, then the same thing might occur in a thousand instances; in fact, in every instance, so that the characters upon the plates need have no connection whatever with the words that appear underneath them. In other words, if Joseph Smith, in several thousand instances, went outside of the plates for his sentences, went directly to our Bible and quoted from it, *what proof have we that he did not go outside of the plates for every other sentence found in the book of Mormon?*

2. The *second* fact to be presented in proof of the deception practiced by the angel is this: According to the testimony of the eye-witness, there were only plates enough to furnish from *one-third* to *one-eighth* of the contents of the Book of Mormon *upon the most liberal estimate possible*.

Mr. Martin Harris describes the size of the plates—See

Myth of M. F., page 89:

“He pointed with one of the fingers of his left hand to the back

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of his right hand and said ‘I should think they were about so long or about eight inches.’”

The plates were then about eight inches long. Mr. Harris does not give their width, but they are understood to have been about *seven* inches wide.

It is a well-known fact, that the ancient Egyptian language, both its hieroglyphics and its written words, were in the majority of cases, large sprawling characters that occupy a great deal of space on a page. When engraved by hand, unless with the aid of a microscope, it would be impossible to get as much matter on a page as can be crowded into a page of fine printed matter, such as is found in the Book of Mormon.

The ancient Hebrew characters are capable of being written in a much smaller compass than the Egyptian. As printed from type the Hebrew may be compressed into about as small a compass as a printed page of English. Of course when written by hand or engraved with the engraver’s tool upon metal plates, it could hardly be put into so small a compass without the aid of a magnifying glass.

But for the sake of the argument, let us suppose that one page of Mr. Smith’s golden plates could furnish material for a full page of closely set small type, such as is found in the Book of Mormon.

There are five hundred and sixty-three (N. Ed. 623) pages in the Book of Mormon, which would therefore, require at least five hundred and sixty-three plates.

Let us now see if we can ascertain anything near the probable number of plates used. Mr. Harris is quoted as saying (See Myth of M. F., page 89):

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“He pointed with one of the fingers of his left hand to the back of his right hand and said, ‘I should think they were so long,’ or about eight inches, ‘and about so thick,’ or about four inches; and each of the plates was thicker than the thickest tin.”

This informs us that when these plates were laid together in a pile, they made a pile *about four inches thick*; and that each plate was *thicker than the thickest tin*.

It will require between forty and fifty plates of the *thick-*

est tin to measure one inch in thickness.

But Mr. Harris says that these plates were *thicker* than the *thickest* tin. (They would need to be thus thick to form a sufficient body for the work of the engraver.) It would then be a very liberal estimate to suppose there were *fifty* of these plates to the inch, or a total of two hundred plates in the pile of *four inches*—that is, plates enough to furnish material for two hundred pages of the Book of Mormon.

But here is a witness who lets in a little more light. Read from Myth of M. F., page 82:

“The plates which Mr. Whitmer saw were in the shape of a tablet, fastened with three rings, about one-third of which appeared to be loose in plates, the other solid, but with perceptible marks where the plates seemed to be sealed, and the guide that pointed it out to Smith very impressively reminded him that the loose plates alone were to be used, the sealed portion was not to be tampered with.”

Several other testimonies are to the same effect. Mr. Harris, for instance, says (Ibid, page 88):

“And as many of the plates as Joseph Smith translated I handled with my hands, plate after plate,”

Instead, then, of having all the plates which together

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make a pile *four inches thick*, there were actually used only about *one-third* of the plates, the balance, or *two-thirds*, remained sealed up for future use. *One-third* of two hundred plates would be sixty-six or sixty-seven plates; the total number, therefore, from which a book of five hundred and sixty-three pages of closely printed matter was derived. Sixty-seven,* instead of five hundred and sixty-three plates, the full number required!

3. But there are some other facts positively stated by the eye-witnesses, which showed that it mattered little whether Mr. Smith had *few* or *many* plates, or whether the characters upon those plates represented single words or long sentences. The plates at best were more ornamental than useful. They really played but an unimportant part in the composition of the Book of Mormon.

a. Mr. Smith’s *father-in-law*, Mr. Hale, in whose house a large portion of the translating was performed, tells us that sometimes the curiosity and occasionally the wrath of the outside world became so great, that Mr. Smith was obliged to carry his plates out into the

*We are aware that some Mormon writers, notably Apostle Orson Pratt evidently uneasy about the results of a too careful

measurement of those plates—tell their people that the pile altogether was *six* inches instead of four in thickness; that these plates were engraved upon both sides, which would of course double the number of pages, and what is still more to the point that these ancient reformed Egyptian characters for brevity and condensation greatly surpass any modern system of short-hand writing; a “single character frequently making two full lines of manuscript.”

But these statements are evidently “for effect”—are unsupported by the testimony of the eye-witnesses and are, especially the last one, amazingly untrue.

The Egyptian language, which professedly formed the basis of the Book of Mormon, is altogether *too* unwieldly to be thus reduced to little word-signs and have long sentences put into a half-moon or a figure 3 or 4 (see cut of Joseph Smith’s characters in the next chapter).

But, perhaps, we ought to accept all the above statements. A man who could read several thousand verses from the King James’ version of the Bible out of the characters on those plates could easily read *two lines* of manuscript, or a *dozen lines*, if desired, from one character.

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woods several miles distant, and hide them for days at a time—but the translation in the house *went right on all the same!*

b. Martin Harris testifies that the

“Prophet possessed a seer stone, by which he was enabled to translate as well as from the Urim and Thummim, and for convenience he then used the seer stone.”—Myth of the M. F., page 91.

This “seer stone” (called by the ungodly outside world the “peep stone,” and found years before in a neighbor’s well that was being dug) was placed by the dignified prophet in the bottom of his hat then drawing his hat over his face and looking down at the stone in the dark, he found that the English sentences would appear just the same as when looking through the Urim and Thummim. In this performance, as the reader can readily see, those ancient plates and the characters upon them had nothing whatever to do. Whenever he used this “seer stone” he could translate without looking at the plates at all!

c. But the following story told by one of the most reliable and trusty of the eye-witnesses, David Whitmer, caps the climax of absurdities, and settles the whole question as to the real relation these plates sustained to the Book of Mormon.

Mr. Smith, during the progress of the translation grievously offended the angel who was assisting him—and as a punishment the angel carried away into heaven both the plates and the Urim and Thummim—so that the work was for a time wholly suspended.

“The angel being in possession of the plates and

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spectacles, finally when Smith had fully repented of his rash conduct, he was forgiven. *The plates, however, were not returned*, but instead Smith was given by the angel a Urim and Thummim of another pattern, it being shaped in oval or kidney form. This seer’s stone he was instructed to place in his hat, and on covering his face with the hat the character and translation would appear on the stone.

“This worked just as satisfactorily as the old method, but at no time thereafter was the backsliding Joseph intrusted with the precious plates. However, the entire portion of the golden volume which the angel said might be translated, was reduced by the nimble amanuensis to readable manuscript.”

Statement of David Whitmer. See “*Deseret Evening News*,” Dec. 24, 1885.

So that when he used the “Urim and Thummim” he could translate with the plates hid in the woods, and when he used his “peep stone” the plates were of no use, as they could not be seen—while the entire closing portions of the book were translated (?) *with the plates in heaven !!*

4. Finally, according to the testimony of Martin Harris, Mr. Smith often used the “seer stone” in place of the Urim and Thummim, even while the latter remained in his possession—using it as a mere matter of convenience.

It seems almost too bad that he should thus inadvertently give the whole thing away. You must understand that the Urim and Thummim spoken of, and called throughout the Book of Mormon “the Interpreters,” had been provided with great care over 2500 years

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ago by God himself, for the express purpose of translating these plates. They are often mentioned in the Book of Mormon as exceedingly important. They were preserved with the greatest care, handed down from one generation to another with the plates, and buried with them in the hill Cumorah over 1400 years ago; as sacred as the plates themselves. So sacred that only one man was allowed to handle or use them, the highly favored prophet, Joseph Smith himself. But now, alas! after all this trouble and pains and care on the part of God, and on the part of so many holy men of old, this “Urim and Thummim” is found at last to be *altogether superfluous; not needed at all*. This “peep stone” found in a neighbor’s well will do the work *just as well*—and is *even more convenient*, “for convenience he used the seer stone.” So we are left to infer that when he used the Urim and Thummim at all, it was at *some inconvenience*.

And probably he only did it out of regard to the feelings of his God, who had spent so much time and anxiety in preparing it so long ago, and preserving it to the present day for his special use!

Reader: The evidences presented in this chapter are absolutely conclusive against the antiquity of the Book of Mormon. We do not doubt that Mr. Smith had plates; plates, too, that were covered with strange characters. We are unwilling to call in question the testimony of the eye-witnesses upon this point. They saw said plates, “hefted them,” &c. But that is as far as they knew, and, therefore, as far as we can accept their testimony. They were certainly deceived as to the

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character of those plates. *They were not ancient plates*—at least they contained no God-revealed ancient record. And whether Joseph Smith was equally deceived or was a wicked imposter is no part of our present purpose to decide. That the book he has presented to the world as the word of God is a miserable fraud, a book to be execrated and hated by all good men who love the truth, has been most abundantly proven—while the next chapter will present evidences that no sane mind can for a moment question, the *climax* of an argument that we believe has been gathering force and overwhelming power with each successive chapter.

With it we will close the discussion.