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On the Pearl of Great Price

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Summary:

Hugh Nibley discusses Reverend F. S. Spaulding's handling of the booklet *Joseph Smith as a Translator,* concluding that Spaulding was partial in his method of consulting the opinions of the great Egyptologists of 1912 concerning the book of Abraham. An examination of their comments reveals inadequacy and inconsistency. This paper anticipates the first section of the series A New Look at the Pearl of Great Price.

Paper
Pearl of Great Price, Abraham

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On the Pearl of Great Price
13 May 1965

Hugh Nibley

Well, we're going to talk about the Pearl of Great Price, but we won't have time to talk about very much of it, just a very little. We'll be lucky if we get to Facsimile Number 1. The big, important facsimilies are the two that follow, especially the second; we'll hardly have a chance to mention them, though. We'll just be talking about the critics of the Pearl of Great Price tonight, some of them. The earlier critics have to do with that second facsimile, not with the first; but we're going to start with the Spauldings critics here. So we'll refer them to the reissuance last year, in 1964, of the Right Reverend F. S. Spaulding's . . . It is an invitation to the world to reconsider the opinion of the experts of another day, and ask what half a century of progress in Egyptology has been able to add to them.

After dedicating his work to "my many Mormon friends," who are as honest searchers after truth as he hopes himself is, the author magnanimously declares that others have been impetuous, unscientific, and unfair in judging Mormonism. The time has come for a cool, detached, objective testing of the claims of Joseph Smith. And Bishop Spaulding actually does have at his disposal all the necessary resources for making such a test. He proposes, as he says, to test Joseph Smith's competence as a translator of certain ancient documents, that being the issue. And he had an obvious and classical precedent to follow; this would be a very easy test to make. When there was doubt as to the ability of scholars to read cuneiform, what did they do? The doubt was dispelled by having a number of scholars give their renditions of a single text, without any collusion between them. They just mailed the texts to these men, asked them to return their own translations; they didn't know who else was getting it, and when they got the envelopes, they opened them and compared them, and that was it. They saw there was a substantial agreement, and so, they said, these people must be able to read them.

Well, that, as we say, was the obvious way to test, in such a case. Joseph Smith has given us a beautifully simple and clear-cut solution to Spaulding's problem. He has given us his interpretation of three ancient Egyptian documents, and has actually challenged the world, notice the number of times, to give its own interpretation of the same. We have only to follow Smith's hint and do what was done in the cuneiform test. That is, to send the three facsimiles to various Egyptologists, without comment, without even telling him that others have been consulted, simply requesting each one to give his interpretation of the documents. Then we can open the envelopes and invite the world to compare the readings of the experts with each other, and with Joseph Smith's interpretation. Now isn't that very easy? This is exactly what Spaulding has not done. Joseph Smith put all the necessary equipment for a simple and foolproof test into his hands. As he says, here we have just the test we need. And Spaulding threw it away. He threw away to preclude any possible risk of Joseph Smith's being vindicated; for it's plain from the replies of the experts that he sent them all covering letters, and they all understood perfectly what the

Well

documents were and what the Mormons claimed for them, and also what would happen to the professional standing of any scholar mad enough to speak a word in Joseph Smith's favor. Of his four American consultants, three are Episcopal clergymen, like himself, and are not Egyptologists. The replies are quite emotional; the writers are all wrought up. Whether all the experts received the same form letter from Spaulding, or whether each got a different note we shall never know; for his little book, which consists almost entirely of letters written to him and his own commentaries on these letters, happens to omit the one important letter, the covering letter, that was sent out with these texts. That's what we'd like to know. For setting up the experiment, that's all-important, to know what prejudices, what pre-condition, what warning these men were given. They shouldn't have been given any warning or hint at all. Namely the letter that all of these professors got, which was bound to determine the state of mind with which all of them approached the problem. Whatever the letter was, whatever was said in it, completely destroyed the atmosphere of cool, detached impartiality which Bishop Spaulding professes himself to eager to achieve. He ruins his whole case by that.

But that isn't the worst at all. Not only did he go out of the way to influence and prejudice replies to his request. but the good Bishop, instead of supplying us with a much-needed copy of his own letter, writes pages and pages of explanation to put the reader of those replies in the right state of mind, in case there might still be something to say in Joseph Smith's favor. Plainly, Bishop Spaulding doesn't trust the facts to speak for themselves; he must always speak for them, lest somebody get the wrong ideas.

The opening words of his book should put us on guard. He starts out this way: "If the Book of Mormon is true, it is, next to the Bible, the most important book in the world." And we read through his book, and he's talking about nothing but the Book of Mormon--he doesn't mention the Pearl of Great Price. This is just an issue on the side. The whole purpose of this book, Joseph Smith as a Translator, is to discredit the translation of the Book of Mormon. That comes as a surprise. This opus is a blast, not at the Pearl of Great Price, but at the Book of Mormon. Again and again he reminds us that this is the subject of his study, Joseph Smith as the translator of the Book of Mormon, with never a mention of the Pearl of Great Price as such. This is strange for one who makes a great show of plain, simple, obvious scientific methods. If his intent is, as he tells us, to discredit the Book of Mormon, why doesn't he deal with it directly? In going about his work in such devious and contrived ways, our author has paid high tribute indeed to the Book of Mormon: A purportedly historical work of over 500 pages long, in which, it would seem, he can discover no decisive proof of fraud--he has to go somewhere else for it. He says, "If the translation of the Book of Abraham is correct," this is his conclusion, "then no thoughtful man can be asked to accept the Book of Mormon." But on the other hand, honesty will require him, with whatever personal regret, to repudiate it and the whole body of belief which has been built upon it." Note the typical emphasis on uncompromising honesty and integrity in this completely spurious proposition. It's spurious because the same reasoning would require the Bishop, when it was shown him that there are incorrect and unreliable passages in one book of the Bible, to reject all the other books of the Bible and "the whole body of belief which has been built upon it."

Showing that Joseph Smith missed the mark in the Pearl of Great Price may well be a necessary step to proving that the whole body of belief is fraudulent, you can't prove it's all fraudulent unless you have proven that this part of it is fraudulent, Too, but this is as far as it goes. His whole argument is that by showing that the Pearl of Great Price is incorrectly translated, it follows that the Book of Mormon is incorrectly translated. But it doesn't follow at all. It doesn't follow that because one has at times been mistaken, he has never been right. We are asked to believe that, because Joseph Smith at one time made a wrong translation, he never possessed at any time a true gift of translation. This does not follow. The Book of Mormon was translated 13 years before the Pearl of Great Price, and by a different method. The method has nothing to do with it, Spaulding argued, since all Smith's methods involved inspiration and revelation, the devices used being only secondary.

But at no time did Smith claim that his gift of translation was permanent ~~feet~~; on the contrary, the gifts of the Spirit are given when and where God wills, and men have no control over them. Joseph Smith stated publicly more than once that he had to study languages like anyone else, save for the brief time when he was actually receiving revelation. To say that his interpretation of one document proves or disproves that of another document made many years before, is to introduce one's own rules into the game.

So, in place of a clear-cut, direct, unequivocal test of the Book of Mormon, which he promises us, Spaulding gives us only his labored syllogysms, and awkward, indirect backdoor attack, a full-scale emotional preconditioning. But that isn't all. We have been talking about translating because the title of Bishop Spaulding's book is Joseph Smith, Jr., as a Translator. What are we to think, then, when we examine all the documents concerned in the Pearl of Great Price and discover them to contain not one word of translation? What they do contain is interpretation of symbolic drawings, a very different matter from translation of a text. Nay, not only has Joseph Smith not offered us a single word of translation, but all the critics who contribute to Spaulding's book fail to supply us with a single word of translation from the heiroglyphics in the plates. It is hiero rather funny, because they're not hard to read, some of them. And they confess they can't make heads or tails of them. What's the matter? Don't they know their business, or something? But they haven't supplied us with one word of translation, they haven't translated anything, they've just guessed at the meaning of these pictures. That isn't a translation. There is no translating at all on either side. There is only interpretation of pictures, and this is by no means the same thing as a translation of a straight, unillustrated, verbal text like the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon problem is a totally different thing here. Smith's performance has nothing, whatever to do with translation here, it's purely and simply interpretation of symbols. Symbols, we might note in advance, whose meaning is still largely a matter of dispute among scholars.

Here we should note that the world has been given ample opportunity to test Joseph Smith's ability as the translator of the Book of Mormon. He has quite a bit to say about this, Spaulding, too; that is, he makes much of this, of the Anthon episode. He says, after consulting Anthon and Chandler, the Mormons made no further attempt to contact competent

linguists on the subject. Well, after all, they consulted the two best in the country, why should they bother with the rest? This was silly, because he himself says there was no competent linguist in the world who could have interpreted the Book of Mormon. There wasn't, of course. What good would it do them to go on? But they did. This was an important thing. We know from Professor Anthon's own writings, which are cited here. He cites them in his book, by Spaulding, that characters from the plates of the Book of Mormon, whether those in the so-called Anthon transcript or not is beside the point, were shown to him, and he couldn't make sense of them. That's not surprising, because if the characters were anything like what they were purported to be, no scholar alive, then or now, could read them. Still, it was necessary that the best living experts should be given their inning, and Anthon was the best. Granted that no one in 1829 could read Egyptian, reformed Egyptian; in such demotic forms as Meriotic, it still presents almost insuperable obstacles to the translator. It was still very important to clear with the authorities; and it was only right that the best scholar in America be given the chance to inspect the texts and decide that he couldn't read them. Without that, it could have been possible for the world forever after to say that Joseph Smith never dared show his mythical manuscripts to real scholars; he never gave the experts a chance to express their opinion about it. Well, we have them every chance, as they gave him none, refusing even to read the Book of Mormon before passing judgement on it.

At the risk of offending the crystalline honesty of Spaulding, we must insist, then, that he's being disingenuous by assuring us that he can prove the translation of one book a fraud because the interpretation of some drawings in another and very different book made 13 years later are not in agreement with the interpretations offered by 8 men in 1912. But we're still a long way from proving even the second proposition, namely that Smith interpreted the drawings wrongly; for to decide that, we just first see the drawings. Spaulding recognized the difficulty, and evaded it with what we are now obliged to call a rather typical trick. He says, "The original texts, with the prophet's translation, are available for our investigation." They are nothing of the sort. The original texts have been missing for many years, as Spaulding must have known; and we don't have a translation of them anyway. And since the various experts claim to see anything from authentic Egyptian documents in the texts he gave them, to transparently clumsy imitations and even free-wheeling inventions in the printed facsimiles which Spaulding sent them. It is by no means a small matter to determine just what the original texts were like. Some of the experts charged Joseph Smith with having made drastic changes in the original drawings. Without the original, we can never test that; and that's a very important charge--it's a very serious thing to know, whether he changed them.

Even in the official printed copies the facsimilies change considerably from one edition to another. We can give you some examples here, a rather easy one? We'll refer to these later, but I'll show what happens in one case here. The second time the first facsimile was copied, the engraver's hand, as you notice, on the tail, here, he couldn't make that curve there, and cut it off. The second oldest text, the tail was rounded off like this. See, the tail is nicely rounded there. (We move the mountain to Mohammed here.) Well, that's difficult to get around the corner

with an engraver's instrument, and this man cut it so in 1851. In order to balance it up, the engraver made a neat and symmetrical (I'll get this right here) other side, and the result is you get a pointed tail. It looks rather exotic, rather sinister. It looks like Mephisto's tail in old illustrations of Faust, and so forth, but it wasn't in the original at all. And this is the one that's in our Pearl of Great Price today, and anyone looking at that says, well, there's something phony about this, look at that tail.

But notice in this one we just showed you, notice the crocodile down here, what happens to him in this second edition. He becomes a cat. You see, the tail changes, he becomes a cat. And notice, this is a human face, a very clearly drawn human head in the earlier ones, and by the time it gets to our own edition, it's unrecognizable; you don't see that it's a human face. So these things do change, from one engraver to another; and these things are really quite significant, if you are going to use them as symbols.

And unfortunately, the Spaulding manuscript that he sent out, we have that here, is the worst of all. That's really damaged, and this is the one he gave to these experts and said, this is the original text. Well, it wasn't the original, I can give you a good example of that. I'll see if I can find it. You'll notice in one of the earlier ones, you'll notice up at the top here the figure of Ammon is holding the Wepwawet scepter. He's holding a scepter with a jackal on it. It's a very important thing, a very significant thing. But in 1878, the bottom of the scepter, the bottom of the scepter was broken off, and then in 1909, the arm was withdrawn from the scepter; and so today, we get this in our Pearl of Great Price. Well, if you have a Pearl of Great Price, you'll know this is what you get. I'll use the one that Spaulding used, but this is so much worse that there's no comparison there. I'll show you what it is. Now here, notice what's happened to this scepter. It's an odd looking creature, an upside-down bird here. The arm supporting it has disappeared, there are the remains of a hand here, there is an *ardigen (?)*; but the rest of the staff isn't there any more. That fell out in later engravings. And since they didn't make sense later, they removed the arm; and today we have sort of an inverted bird here, which one of the authorities at Salt Lake confidently informed me, not a General Authority, but one in the historian's office, he informed me it was the Holy Ghost. It's the old *Wa* scepter, but the engraver has messed things so badly by now that you can't tell it. So it's very important to know what the original engraving was like. And I wanted to show you this one of Spaulding's here, hey, this is the one; notice the little doggy up here, the Wepwawet. You can't see it very well from there, I suppose; but here you see in Spaulding's reproduction here, it has no resemblance to a dog whatever--it's lost everything. None of our official Church reproductions are that bad. Any Egyptologist looking at that would say, that's a dreadful reproduction, it's nonsense anyway. But if he looked at one of the earlier ones, it makes very good sense, and he'd understand what it was. So we musn't judge these things hastily as this man wants us to.

Spaulding has overreached himself impardonably in calling the copies which he circulated the original text. He goes beyond that, too, in giving

us the worst reproduction of all. Wepwawet is an example of that. But if it had been the originals which the experts interpreted differently from Joseph Smith, would the Bishop then have proven his case? Not at all. The most he can hope to say is that after all his manipulation the experts disagree with Joseph Smith, not that Joseph Smith is wrong. This is no mere quibble. Ancient Egyptian symbolism has always been the subject of the widest possible latitude of interpretation, with the experts disagreeing far more often than they agree. It doesn't follow that Smith is wrong until it can be shown that the experts are right. And for that we have a long way to go. Again, Mr. Spaulding stretches things to the breaking point to make out a case against Smith, when he insists, in his final conclusion, there is practically complete agreement as to the real meaning of the heiroglyphs. But not only have the Doctors given us no opinion whatever as to the real meaning of the heiroglyphs, but there is serious disagreement in the interpretation of the pictures.

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So, the essential propositions of Spaulding's thesis, as he sums them up on page 13, are this, in his introduction: He makes a great protestation of perfect fairness and impartiality, but the test is loaded from the beginning. He approaches his hand-picked experts, and the list of experts is interesting. They aren't very good ones, actually. There are two genuine Egyptologists in the list. The others are personal friends of his and Episcopal ministers, and he could have found, in 1912, at least 25 really good Egyptologists who could have given him an opinion on it, and he didn't go to one of them. He did consult two that were good, but we'll refer to them presently. But, as I say, he approaches his hand-picked experts with broad, leading questions and powerfully framed conditions that powerfully condition their actions. It is a framed test.

Secondly, he claims to have provided a test of Joseph Smith as a translator. No such test is offered.

He claims, thirdly, to have supplied scholars and the general public with the original texts. He hasn't given the original texts at all. He does nothing of the sort. His reproductions are the farthest yet from the original.

Fourth, he claims that the experts are practically in complete agreement in their interpretation of, and this we must consider next. Do they agree? What do they say about these things? Well, imagine we have them all in a room, and they do agree on one thing. It seems that you have all agreed on one thing, namely that Joseph Smith was an imposter. But you were all agreed on that before you ever saw the facsimiles, I am sure. All that F. S. Spaulding has done is to ask you a blunt, leading question, that is, whether Joseph Smith is not an imposter, in this case as in others; and with your professional reputations at stake, you all answered yes. What else could you have done?

So, we go down the list. First is ~~Deveria~~ DEVERIA. Now " , the only long and serious study of this was written by " in 1860, it was published in 1860; and we have it here, the 1860 and later republications, and it was the best and fullest given. " was a young Egyptologist. He was the head of the Egyptian department of the

Louvre at that time, and he was 30 years old. He was very competent, and had done some very good work. He was quoted with great respect. The interesting thing is Spaulding won't have anything to do with him. He says an amusing thing about him. He says, "Mr. Devereaux is described as a young savant, and unquestionably this matter is far too important to depend on the opinion of a youthful amateur. Such an important matter deserves the thoughtful consideration of mature scholars and the world's ablest orientalists."

Well, we shouldn't rub it in, but since he's very proud of these men and he says they're all tops, we should point out who they are, the eight of them. One is, he called him immature, incidentally--he was thirty years old at this time. He appealed to Mercer as one of them, who was only thirty two at this time, and was never an Egyptologist, he was an Episcopal clergyman, too; and we have his collection here. He appealed to Brested, who was--incidentally, he never appeals to any of the experts in Egyptian language at the time, such as Gardner in England, or Lefevre in France, or Steindorf in Germany, he never bothers about them. Brested is sort of free-wheeling, as you know, he generalized, and he was an archaeologist, but he was a good man on Egypt, he was the best in the list here, he and Petrie. He appeals to Petrie, but Sais was an Assyriologist, another Episcopal clergyman. Mace was nothing at all. He has left no record, he was very young at this time. He was younger than Devereaux; notice he accepts men younger. Why did he leave " out? Well, of course, because ", who wrote much more about it than anybody else, tells a very different story from what the others tell. That's one of the reasons. We'll see how they agree among themselves. Edward Meyer, he included, who was an orientalist, primarily a classical scholar, an historian, as you know--he made a study of the Mormons. Von Bissing was thirty nine when he answered it. He was the other Egyptologist; and J. Peters was an Episcopal clergyman who wrote a text on modern politics, and wrote articles on modern political history and dabbled in archaeology. He knew very little or nothing at all about Egypt at all. He didn't pretend to. But another Episcopal clergyman. These he prefers to Devereaux as the top-ranking scholars he can get. Well, it isn't a very good list, actually, but since he's very proud of it, we'll hold him to it.

So let's go down and consult the brethren, here. Most of them aren't much older. They just summarize by saying this; this is what their summaries are. All their commentaries are very short, incidentally, just a few sentences. They don't have much to say about it. Devereaux says that if Mormons persist in believing that their prophet could not lie, they should at least admit that the divinatory powers of the Urim and Thummin are not infallible.

And now, we'll follow the order, Professor Sais of Oxford. He says, "It's difficult to deal seriously with Joseph Smith's impudent fraud." Petrie says, "It may be safely said that there is not one single word that is true in these explanations." And Brested says, "I have been greatly interested in the documents you have sent me. Joseph Smith's interpretation of them very clearly demonstrates that he was totally unacquainted with the significance of these

documents, and absolutely ignorant of the simplest fact of Egyptian writing and civilation." And Mace said, "The Book of Abraham, it is hardly necessary to say, is a pure fabrication. Joseph Smith's interpretation of these cuts is a perago of nonsense from beginning to end." But it's hardly necessary to say. Of course, he's been tipped off. Everybody would know that. Peters says, "The plates displayed in the Pearl of Great Price are rather comical, and the interpretation of the plates displays an amusing ignorance." And then Mercer says, "In general, it may be remarked that his explanations, from a scientific and scholarly standpoint are absurd. The explanatory notes to his facsimiles cannot be taken seriously by any scholar, as they seem to be undoubtedly the work of pure imagination. And now we come to our German authorities. Edward Meyer says, he dismissed the whole thing in three sentences, he said, "The Egyptian Papyrus, which Smith declares to be the Book of Abraham and translated to explain in his fantastical way. . ." Von Bissing says, "I have been interested, since a long time, in the Mormons," with a thick accent here, "and Joseph Smith's supposed translation of Egyptian texts. He has misinterpreted the signification of every one figure. Joseph Smith certainly never got a divine revelation in the meaning of the ancient Egyptian script, and he never deciphered ~~heiro~~hiero glyphic texts at all."

Well, here we have the opinions of our nine judges, their general reactions, as it were. But since it is obvious that none of them had ever considered Smith as anything but an imposter in the first place, it is unfortunate that they were all tipped off by Spaulding's communcation, rather than asked for their own interpretation of the facsimiles free of prejudice and forewarning. However, the case is not as hopeless as it may seem. It may not even be as open and shut as it seems. For though all of our scholars confine themselves to very short commentaries, each one of them has some original to contribute of his own on the subject. Before considering these, we should make it clear the position taken by the experts and by Spaulding is that the consultants are in a position to condemn Smith's interpretation as false because they know the true interpretation. This was the position taken by Devereaux in the beginning. " begins by saying, "We are asking science to give us its verdict as the true meaning of the three papyri which the Mormons regard as written by the hand of Abraham." Then it is assumed that science does know the answer, in this case, about the true nature of the documents. Brested says, "This was, of course, unknown to Smith (the true nature of the documents); but it is a fact not only known of my knowledge, but also a commonplace of every orientalist who world in the Egyptian field." So, we see, the answers are known to all scholars in the field. Peters says, (he goes much farther than that), "Five minutes study in a Egyptian gallery of any museum should be enough to convince any educated man of the clumsiness of the imposture." That's good news indeed. One doesn't need to be an orientalist to decide here. Surely no educated man can begrudge a mere five minutes to settle the matter, or even ten, perhaps. The point is that absolute certainty is readily and easily to hand. That is why all the experts confine their replies to a few brief sentences, as if more were not required. As Mercer says, "Criticism in his explanations could be made, but the explanatory notes to his facsimilies cannot be taken seriously. By comparing his notes to an elementary book on Egyptian and language

religion, this becomes unquestionably evident." Any elementary book, he says, on Egyptian language and religion. If I recall, all of the elementary books on Egyptian language and religion, all of which we have in our library here, available in 1912, were elementary indeed. That makes it clear that the discrediting of Smith should be a very quick and simple, do-it-yourself job. So this shouldn't take long. As a layman, an amateur interested in the Pearl of Great Price, we are pardonably curious to know what specific comments these men have to make about it. So far, we've been dealing strictly with generalities, and accepting the verdicts of the experts as authority. But unless I'm much mistaken, the very essence of scholarship, as David Starr Storr Jordan says, there are no authorities. What have they got to say? What makes a man an authority is not his confidence is not his confidence in giving an opinion, but his ability to supply us with proof that we can understand. And the better the authority, the clearer, the more understandable, the more conclusive the evidence he can give us.

So please excuse me if I ask questions about a few particulars. I suppose the best place to begin is with Facsimile number 1. I would like to ask each of the experts, in the above order, how he interprets it. First, Mr. Devereaux, I don't know. We have other copies of this, so we can go ahead and cook it. This is our Facsimile 1, now. Now, don't turn any more lights off, we don't need them off. We just want to gaze at this while we listen to these words of wisdom. Devereaux says, the first facsimile represent the soul of Osiris in the form of a hawk. That's the hawk you see there; Osiris reviving on the funeral couch. The god Anubis bringing about the resurrection of Osiris, Osiris being resurrected by the god. And this is the soul of Osiris, the bird.

Professor Sais has nothing to say of Facsimile 1, so we turn to Petrie. Professor Petrie says, "Number 1 is the well-known scene of Anubis preparing the body of a dead man. The hawk is Horus." It's not Osiris, but it's Horus, a very different person. Figure 2 is the dead person. Figure 3 is Anubis.

Brested says Number one depicts a figure reclining on a couch with a priest, not Anubis, officiating. The reclining figure represents Osiris, rising from the dead. Overhead is his bird, which is his sister Isis. We have Isis, we have Horus, we have Osiris in this bird.

Since Doctor Mace has nothing specific to say, we call on Peters. Peters says, "Apparently the plate represents an embalmer preparing a body for burial. At the head, the soul is flying away in for form of a bird. In the waters below, I see a crocodile waiting to seize and devour the dead if he be not properly protected by ritual embalming."

Mercer doesn't mention Facsimile 1, but our two German authorities do. You see it turning brown in a puff of smoke. We'll put the other one on. Edward Meyer says, "The three specimens are all parts of the well known Book of the Dead. One can easily recognize familiar scenes from this book: the body of the dead lying on a bier, a ba, the soul

in the shape of a bird, is leaving it, flying above it, and a priest is approaching it."

Von Bissing says, "The dead man is lying on the bier; the soul is leaving the body, in the moment when the priest is opening the body with a knife, for mummification.

Our experts haven't told us very much about the plate, but what they have told us is interesting. First, they have told us that it is a familiar and well-known scene, so that nobody has any excuse whatever for getting it wrong. This is, as it were, the very "ABC" of Egyptology. Yet, our experts don't seem to agree very well, even in their casual and brief comments. For one, the body on the couch is simply the body of a dead man. For others, it is no less a figure than the god Osiris himself. For Brested, Osiris is in the act of rising from the dead. Devereaux also sees that. But others see in it the preparation of a man for burial, the very opposite process. According, while for some the bird is leaving the body, for others it is coming to it. For Devereaux, the hawk is nothing less than the soul of Osiris. For Petrie, it is the hawk of Horus, a very different figure. For Brested, the same is the bird Isis, the sister of Osiris. For Peters, it is simply the soul of a dead man, flying away in the form of a bird. Von Bissing agrees with this, that it is flying away, Edward Meyer says that it is flying to it. Bissing says the soul is leaving the body in the moment when the priest cuts it open for mummification. Did the Egyptians believe the soul didn't leave the body until the incision was made. If so, our other expert seems to be unaware of the fact. Two of them identify the figure with the knife as the god Anubis, but for others he is simply a priest for embalming, or embalmer. Now, this is very odd. How does it happen that six experts, each commenting in a very brief sentence or two on what is supposed to be the commonest and best known representation of all Egyptian art disgree on what they see? Can it be that there is something unusual or peculiar about this particular document? After all, Bishop Spaulding rests his case on the concensus of the experts against Joseph Smith. Well, we have seen that they agreed perfectly among themselves, without collusion, in stating that Smith's interpretations were spurious and worthless. But we would expect that under any circumstances. Spaulding is more specific. He actually concludes his book with his own summing up of the case. "There is practically complete agreement as to the real meaning of the heiroglyphs." But nobody has given us the meaning of any heiroglyphs whatever. Here, they have interpreted a picture, and as soon as we get down to particulars they don't agree at all, even about the most elementary and simple that could be produced out of all funerary literature.

What can be wrong? Well, the experts all agree that there is something seriously out of line about these drawings. But again, they can't agree what it is. The first suspicion is that Joseph Smith or somebody else has been playing around with them. Of two things they all complain; not all of them, but nearly all of them mention these things: That the text had been very badly copied--well, they all mention that. And secondly, that they had been actually altered. Consider these charges in order. Sais says, "The heiroglyphs have been copied so ignorant that hardly one of them is correct. The heiroglyphs again," he says in Facsimile 3,

"have been transformed into unintelligible lines. Hardly one of them is copied correctly." If he can't read them, how can he know whether they are correct or not? Sais can't even begin to read the symbols, yet he complains that they are incorrect. He apparently knows what they should be.

Petrie says, "The inscriptions are far too badly copied to be able to read them." You see, there is no reading of the heiroglyphs at all, even by the best man on the list, Petrie here.

Brested says, "Though they have been much corrupted by copying," he says they have been corrupted, "the texts contain the usual explanatory inscriptions regularly found in such funerary documents.

Mace says Cuts 1 and 3 are inaccurate copies of well-known scenes. Peters says the heiroglyphs which should describe the scenes, however, are merely illegible scratches, the imitator not having the skill or intelligence to copy such a script.

Edward Meyer says, "Though the reproductions are very bad, one can easily recognize certain familiar scenes.

Von Bissing says it's impossible, from such bad facsimilies, to make out any meaning of the inscriptions. Notice the only real Egyptologists, the three, they all said they couldn't make out a word of the inscriptions. They're supposed to be testing the translation here, but there is no translation. And that's rather odd, because the inscription can be read, they aren't too difficult. It may be because of this awful text that Spaulding sent them.

Here is an interesting thing. Peters, Petrie, and Von Bissing agree that the heiroglyphic parts of the facsimile simple can't be read. Sais admits that they are unintelligible lines, that they are incorrect. How does he know, then, what the correct version should be? Brested explains that though the texts are much corrupted, they contain the usual explanatory inscriptions. How do these men know what the text should say, and what it does say, if they protest they can't read it? Sais says they're incorrect, and at the same time they are unintelligible. Mace says they are inaccurate copies of well known scenes, but they do not represent well known scenes as they should. Peters actually said, they should describe the scenes, but fail to do so.

Well, here's a serious misunderstanding. It almost look deliberate. Take Facsimile 2, by far the largest, most ambitious, and most significant of all three, for example. Well, we showed you the copy of Spaulding, and so forth, we don't need to go into this with other examples, but here is an important thing here. They all say they're badly copied. They were given to understand that what they received was the original copy from the hand of Joseph Smith, so we can forgive them if they charge Smith with incompetence, and even deception. But it's not so easy to forgive Spaulding. Actually, the earliest plates of the facsimilies were made by a professional engraver, whose name,

"R. Hadlock, Engraver," appears boldly on the 1842 edition. Here we are. You see, we just copied the corner on it. "Engraved by R. Hadlock," right by the solar boat there, with the only enigmatic part of the inscription; this is a secret writing here. The secret writing appears on a number of these hypocephali, this is the name. The rest of it around the rim can be read. But notice the engraving by R. Hadlock. Actually, he did a very good job. He was a professional engraver; it wasn't Joseph Smith that copied these things at all. They got a regular engraver to do it, he signed it; but this is never produced on any of the later ones, and so it leads to these common misunderstandings. It was not Smith at all who copied these things; and what's more, Hadlock did a beautiful job. If you don't believe it, compare Facsimile 1 with half a dozen other Egyptian hypocephali of the thirty-odd known--I have copies of about 26 of them here now--and see what they look like, if you think they look any better.

Well, we'll give you some of them, just quickly, if you think these are any clearer. Now, is that writing aroung the edge any better than that in the Pearl of Great Price? I assure you it isn't. Notice the same peculiar type; this you could call sloppy, too. Look at this--this is exactly the style in which our Pearl of Great Price one is done. This is upside down or rightside up, it doesn't make much difference with these. You notice it's the same writing around the rim; the rest are the same figures, and they are done in the same sloppy way. Here's one that's rather faint. Here's another one, a rather important one; but nobody can make much of it, notice again, because of the same type of drawing entirely. None of these are very good. Here's one. Notice this one has the inscription around the edge, too, and it's considerably worse than our Pearl of Great Price. These are ancient texts. So, our Pearl of Great Price is done better than most of these. It's not bad, at all. The sloppiness is out of the original scribe, the person who wrote it. It has nothing to do with a "bad copy;" it wasn't badly copied. It was very well copied--it's as clear as these others.

But after all allowances have been made for bad copying, the figures in the Pearl of Great Price are still unorthodox enough to cause considerable disturbance. Consider what Devereaux, the most thorough if by no means adequate commentator has to say. He says of Facsimile 1, the soul of Osiris should have a human head. The god Anubis, the embalmer, should have the head of a jackal. This should not be a human head, he says, this should be the head of a jackal. This should be the head of a human being. Well, it isn't. Somebody's deliberately changed it, he says. Why do they do things like that to us? Well, apparently it isn't a typical funerary scene at all. If it was, it would have those, that's what he's telling us. But why doesn't it? They get so mad at him. This representation of Anubis, he notes, is quite unique. And incidentally, Masbaroah, who quotes Devereaux, he says, Monsieur Devereaux, with regard to this papyrus, says he's never seen the resurrection of the Anubis represented on any other manuscript. He believes that if it exists, it's very rare; and in any case, it has been altered, hence Anubis should have a jackal's head. In other words, this is a unique document.

In Facsimile 2, the central figure, instead of having two human faces, as in the Pearl of Great Price, is always represented, and Devereaux underlines always, is always represented with four ram's heads. And the picture "here has certainly been altered." Again, in Figure 2, he says, the sign

of the Holy Ghost to Abraham has certainly been altered on the hypocephalus of the Mormons. Summing up Facsimile 2, Devereux says, "It's plain to me that several of the figures which are found on various fragments of other Egyptian manuscripts have been intentionally altered." Speaking of Shulam, the servant, the black man in Number 3, he writer, "An unknown divinity, probably Anubis, but they have changed the head, which should have been that of a jackal." Brested agrees that the head of this figure probably should have been a wolf or a jackal, which is here badly drawn. According to Sais, the heiroglyphs have been transformed; hardly one of them is copied correctly.

Two conflicting charges are brought up against the Pearl of Great Price by the experts: One is that they are perfectly ordinary and familiar things; and the other, that they are not ordinary and familiar at all. The conflict is explained away as a matter of poor copying. But this will not do. We are not dealing here with illegible heiroglyphs, but with readily recognizable pictures. "We have an ordinary hypocephalus," says Sais, "but one copied so ignorantly that hardly one of the heiroglyphs is correct." "It's one of the usual discs," Petrie says. "The figures are well-known ones in Egyptian mythology. Number 3," he continues, "is a very common scene; but the goddess in it cannot be recognized, being too badly drawn." They bring that on. Brested rests the whole case on the insistence that the facsimiles are not unique objects at all." This is the whole point that Brested makes, and he labors it considerably. "They are to be found," he says, "in unnumbered thousands of Egyptian graves. Let it be understood," he intones, "that they were in universal use among the pagan Egyptians." To that, so that Joseph Smith is guilty of attributing to Abraham not three unique documents, but documents which were the common property of a whole nation of people who employed them in every human burial which they prepared.

Scene 1, in Facsimile 1, according to Brested, is depicted "unnumbered thousands of times. If desired, facsimiles of this resurrection scene could be furnished in indefinite numbers." Of Facsimile 3, he says, "This scene again is depicted innumerable times. The point I wish to make," he concludes, "is that Joseph Smith represents as portions of a unique revelation things which were commonplaces and to be found by many thousands in the everyday life of the Egyptians. We orientalists could publish scores of these facsimilies from the Book of Abraham taken from other sources."

Mace describes one of the three as "inaccurate copies of well-known scenes." Again the same charge: They are perfectly familiar things, but different. Well, they're inaccurate. But is it a matter of mere inaccuracy when all the major figures in the plate are given the wrong heads? It is as if we were to claim that the picture of Washington crossing the Delaware was really a picture of Colombus before Queen Isabela, and attribute the discrepancy to bad copying, or inaccuracy, or even deliberate falsification. The point is that we cannot contemptuously say, this is just exactly like ten thousand other drawings, and then rant and scold because the artist has failed to make it like any other drawing; and then complain that even the

main figures are not drawn as they should be. Nothing is as it should be here. What they keep telling us is that if these drawings were as they should be, they would be just ordinary drawings. But, since they are by no means ordinary, that shows they are not as they should be.

Listen to Mr. Peters: "The plates contained in the Pearl of Great Price are rather comical, and a very poor imitation of Egyptian originals, apparently not of any one original, but of Egyptian originals in general." Now, try to get that! This is a remarkable statement: It's not the copying, but rather the plates themselves that are comical. They are so different they are funny; so different that Peters comes up with the daring theory that they must have been put together from a number of authentic Egyptian documents. The first thing Professor Mercer notices, in fact, is "that the author of the notes on the three facsimiles had before him genuine Egyptian inscriptions." He was copying from originals. "This is shown," Mercer observes, "in the fact that in another Egyptian hypocephalus, an elaborate object published by Petrie, but commented on by Vigal, sections exactly corresponding to sections in this facsimile are found." Petrie mentioned that, but he didn't mention the correspondences. Actually, they are plain and striking, and show that the copyist of the Pearl of Great Price was quite capable of doing a good job. The two they are referring to are these: It is a very good one. This is the one published by. . . and you know ours; well, this is the one that Petrie published and Vigal commented on. And the interesting comment of Vigal--we won't have a chance to refer to it tonight--was that it was a complete mystery and that he was unable to read anything on it. He says it was so badly copied, and he couldn't make heads of tails of anything on it. So this was supposed to refute Joseph Smith. It's not identical, but you notice it's very much like it. It's a very good one. This is the one he's referring to. Well, this was published from the Abidos, the first volume of Abidos, where Vigal commented on it in 1902.

Actually, the correspondence and the resemblance of this to our text is very plain--you can see that; and what we show this for is that our Pearl of Great Price man was doing a very good job. His copy is as good as this one, and this one is a very good one. So it's obvious that he's being conscientious, that things aren't being just thrown together hodge-podge, or just in any conceivable order. "Of all the facsimiles," Edward Meyer writes, "although the reproductions are very bad, one can easily recognize familiar scenes." From these remarks, a number of conclusions are suggested. Our plates from the Pearl of Great Price <u>are</u> different. However much the experts may first deny it, they represent something. And they resent it. They cannot have it both ways. Either the plates are different, not as they should be--and therefore original--or else they are just ordinary funeral texts, in which case even the worst copy should make no difference at all. Why not? Well, one cannot explain away their uniqueness and originality in terms of bad copying. If the documents were typical, as is claimed, of untold thousands of documents, they our experts would have a very easy job. They could just pick out one of those others, make it correspond with this one, and see where there were differences, and fill out the gaps and correct the Pearl of Great Price. Why don't they do that? Here we have untold thousands

of identical texts; yet there is absolutely nothing unique about all those things. In that case, no scholar should experience the slightest difficulty in furnishing us with a complete and correct version of the facsimiles, and then he could read it. Assume that a student is confronted with a copy of the Gettysburg Address. It's very sloppily and bady copied, but he recognizes what it is. He says, there are thousands of these copies of the address; I'll go over to the library and get the original and show you what this should be, and then we can complete it. Well, that's what they could have done with this, if they had thousands of others like it. Of course, if the copy shown him was so badly damaged that he couldn't recognize it as the Gettysburg Address, then there wouldn't be anything to say about it at all. But the point is, that our experts claim that they can recognize exactly what our facsimiles are, where they came from; they can even tell us when they are incorrect and what they should contain. They can put their hands of thousands of texts just like them. In that case, why don't they give us the original corrected version? Because it's not worth the time and effort? But nothing could be easier for Dr. Brested than to produce just one of those untold thousands of documents which he says is identically like those in the Pearl of Great Price, and he protests that he has been greatly interested in the subject. In that case, the least he could do is take five minutes off and give us the irrefutable proof he hints at but never produces.

Admitting really serious alterations in the Pearl of Great Price facsimiles, we must, with Devereaux, insist that they can only be deliberate. Someone has shifted a lot of things around. Was it Joseph Smith? There's good reason for believing that it was not. In the first place, what possible reason could he have had for doing so? Brested makes much of the fact that it would "have been impossible for any American scholar to know enough Egyptian inscriptions to read them before the publication of Champollion's grammar, a work beginning in 1836, and reaching completion in 1841. In a world in which nobody knew anything at all about Egyptian, what possible point or advantage could there be to jumbling up a lot of perfectly meaningless symbols, instead of simply copying them off, and then giving them your own interpretation? Mercer says the most apparent thing about the facsimiles is that they are obviously taken from genuine Egyptian documents. And Peters, the most hostile of the critics, says that the plates are apparently made up of genuine Egyptian elements, brought together from a number of Egyptian documents in general, and all mixed up. Why would anyone go to all that work, when all he would have to do to produce a completely mysterious text would be to have the engraver copy off any one of the available Egyptian texts, in general, exactly as it was? Certainly the mystification could not be any greater by scrambling a lot of unknown symbols, any more than one could make a Chinese text more impressive or baffling to a person completely ignorant of Chinese by rearranging the characters in meaningless combinations. Would that make it look any more mysterious to you? Well, the world of Joseph Smith was perfectly ignorant of Egyptian, and there could be no point whatever to altering the already senseless text. It is significant that if the text were indeed altered by a modern hand, it is assumed that Smith did the altering or directed it; hence the idea that Smith drew the plates.

We know definitely that he did not; and so our first question is to ask, whether the strange alterations that annoy the experts are the work of a modern hand, or of the ancient scribes. Or in other words, have the facsimiles been honestly and skillfully copied? We have seen originally that the engraving was rather skillful. But isn't it possible that Joseph Smith order things altered to make the pictures fit the interpretation he gave them? It's safe to answer that question in the negative. It is protested, for example, that the central figure in Facsimile Number 2 has been altered from what should have been a four-headed ram to a two-headed man. Which of these two phenomenae are more commonly met with in nature? Since they are both purely symbolic, there is no reason whatever for preferring one to the other. Deveriaugh charges Joseph Smith with having produced a hawk-headed hawk, instead of the usual human-headed hawk, to represent what Smith calls an angel. But wouldn't the human head be far more suggestive of an angel? Remembering that in 1835 all Egyptian documents were equally unintelligible to anyone in America, and that Smith, as several of our scholars insist, was totally unacquainted with Egyptian funerary literature or any other kind, wouldn't it be infinitely easier to invent with impunity any kind perfect of interpretation one pleased for these things, than painfully, laboriously, and riskily to rearrange the nonsense images and then give them an interpretation?

There are other checks on the honesty of our copyist. To unacquainted with Egyptian art, the spacing of characters is quite as important as the drawing of them; and any wanton jumbling of motifs by the ignorant amateur would be instantly discernible to the practiced eye in the spacing and grouping of the figures alone. The fact that most of our experts agree that these are actually copies, however bad, of real and readily recognizable Egyptian documents, and not arbitrary recomposition, is enough to show the experienced viewer receives no such admonitory shock. The figures are not jumbled or rearranged, as would instantly be apparent. Any design by a non-Egyptian would infallibly convey. More to the point, there are sections of the heiroglyphic in Facsimile 2 which can be read today without much difficulty. Since these passages are found to be legible quite correct and in perfect Egyptian, it's perfectly plain that nobody falsified or jumbled them. That is, so far as the text can be checked, everything is in order. Moreover, in each of the facsimiles, the drawing is consistently Egyptian throughout. That is, the parts that are supposed to have been altered are as Egyptian as the rest; as is witnessed in Peters' strange theory that the plates are very poor imitations of Egyptian originals--apparently not of one original, but or Egyptian originals in general. That is, Smith was pasting together a lot of badly copied stuff, but all the elements were taken from Egyptian originals. Couldn't the rascal who substituted a human head for a jackal's head in Figure 5 of Facsimile 3 have drawn a better head than that? No one in Joseph Smith's day would have objected to or recognized a well-drawn head as un-Egyptian. When our imposter drew a hawk's head instead of a human head, he drew the whole hawk exactly as Egyptians do, and not as Americans draw hawks. And when he drew human heads instead of rams' head, they were the kind of heads that Egyptians, human and not Americans or Dutchmen, or Greeks of Frenchmen draw. If Pharaoh and the prince of Pharaoh were drawn to order in Facsimile 3, why on

earth were they not drawn as princes, or at least men, instead of very obvious women? And while the artist was at it, why not make an altar that looks like an altar? It's plain that the pictures are by no means self-explanatory, and no attempt has been made to draw them or re-draw them to match Smith's very odd explanations. As they stand, these designs are far from proving or even suggesting Smith's interpretation, as any other Egyptian text would have been.

There's another indication that no changes have been introduced to our plates, that the copies are honest copies of the original. This calls for a story. In 1942, President George Albert Smith, accompanied by Preston Nibley, was taken by the banker Salisbury Smith, of Carthage, Illinois, to visit the 83-year-old Aunt Clara, the youngest granddaughter of Lucy Mack Smith. In her possession was a portrait of Lucy Mack Smith which the old lady had received from her mother, who in turn inherited it from Lucy Mack herself. The brethren were allowed to photograph this portrait, and the photograph now hangs in the Church Historian's office. Lucy Mack Smith personally sat for the portrait, which was made at Nauvoo. In the background is seen hanging on the wall, nicely framed, the original of the manuscript of Facsimile Number 1 of the Pearl of Great Price. The artist has taken some care in presenting it, so a good idea of its size and nature can be obtained. In other words, a professional artist, who knew nothing about it, used this for the background, he copied this carefully framed picture of Facsimile 1, and it is exactly like ours, by this impartial artist from outside, and this was after the death of Joseph Smith, actually, that this was made. It has been examined by a competent, and even an eminent Egyptologist, this portrait hanging on the wall, this picture hanging on the wall, the background of the portrait, who considers it a good copy of an Egyptian original. The point is that this original is identical in every detail with the reproduction printed in the early Pearl of Great Price. The original Egyptian text has not been tampered with, so the changes were original, and they were ancient.

It has been necessary to go into this subject at some length, if we are to understand to documents in question, because if the copies were honestly made, which they were, then the disturbing irregularities of the drawings, which cannot be denied, much be ancient and have to be explained. Right off they suggest, without any explaining at all, that these are no ordinary documents. Taken as they stand, they are unique. But why, then, are they composed of obvious and familiar elements? Who recognized the obvious funeral couch, the obvious funeral figures, and so forth, why is that so? This brings us to a matter on which a great deal of light has been thrown in recent years, but about which very little was know, and very little had been thought or written in 1912. At least a hundred articles have appeared on this in the last few years. This is the subject of the canons of Egyptians; and I think art this gives us the key to the enigma of these odd facsimiles. We refer to the subject of the canons, or rules, of Egyptian art. First we should note that these rules apply equally to drawing and writing. Today, in fact, scholars maintain that the Egyptians made no distinction between drawing and writing. When they drew, they were writing; when they wrote, they were drawing, as a means of conveying ideas and images. Egyptian pictures, according to Von Rechenhausen, "had nothing to do with a

picture in the modern sense, but were meant to describe, rather than depict. Accordingly, they are meant not to be viewed, but to be read," he says. When you look at an Egyptian picture you don't view it, when you look at an Egyptian picture, you read it. "Egyptian drawing doesn't follow the laws of nature," Herbert Saint concludes, "but rather, arbitrary and artificial rules, according to which each concept or image has a fixed conventional symbol to represent it. Any other figure would be improper and unacceptable to represent that idea, so that a picture is a drawing, and a drawing is a picture."

"It is not only the drawing of heiroglyphs, but the entire Egyptian art of draftsmanship," says von Rechenhausen, "that confines its mode of expression entirely to a certain set, standard. grouped form, basic forms or basic types." The question is, he says, "the question whether any given representation of an object is possible in Egyptian acutally can't be answered." According to Heinrich Schaefer, who maintains that aside from the set and standard basic form, no intelligible art exists in Egypt. That is, if an Egyptian wanted to drawing something different, just for kicks, just as he saw it, without using the standard figures he learned in the school, we would not be able to interpret what he had drawn at all. We couldn't say that that's a picture of a lion, because it's not correctly drawn. We don't know what he had in mind. We would not be free to interpret his drawing as it impresses us. Since we cannot understand, he says, any Egyptian drawing of a complex body without knowing what the Vorbild is, what its basic school form is. So an Egyptian artist and scribe, learning to express himself only in set forms, and by drawing conventional and strictly formalized figures. But as the artist was obliged by custom, and the famously inflexible Egyptian conservatism, to express himself with stock figures, he could still, at times, employ those stock figures in unusual combinations. Zaek says that the strict proportionality could be altered at any time for special reasons, and Spiegelberg tells us a self-taught scribe of the new kingdom who developed his own canons of writing and drawing.

Now, from what we have just said about the alterations in the facsimiles of the Pearl of Great Price, two remarkable facts emerge: number one, that Joseph Smith plainly does not think of these things as being pictures of anything. In fact, as we have seen, some of the alterations definitely detract from their value as pictures. They would have been better pictures to leave then in the other form. The explanations in the Pearl of Great Price clearly state the case, where we are told, if you read along with the facsimilies, "this is designed to represent;" "this signifies;" "signifying so and so;" "this is made to represent;" "this answers to" a number or figure or name, "this represents," and so on and so forth. This is exactly in keeping with Rechenhausen's observation that Egyptian pictures do not depict, but represent. They signify, they answer to, which is a very different thing. There can be no doubt about this in the Pearl of Great Price, where aside from these specific statements the explanations are not obvious, and do not by any means follow from looking at the pictures.

The second basic fact to emerge is that the alterations are ancient. The facsimilies were drawn by a professional, or at least a trained hand, familiar with the canons of the art, which you had to be before you could

write Egyptian at all, and trained in the production of funerary texts, which at all times were mass produced in Egypt, and represent the standard, stock-in-trade of artists' repertoire. Rooted in this tradition, the artist attempts to carry out orders in depicting new and unfamiliar scenes. This he can only do by using this familiar root form and basic form in new and therefore disturbing combinations, and this is what disturbs them. We see our familiar pictures, but they're all mixed up. That is why modern Egyptologists immediately recognize old friends when these plates are placed before them, only to do a quick double-take on second look and protest that there are all sorts of incorrect things in them, which are not as they should be. Instead of recognizing that the artist was trying to convey something else in his awkward way, the experts first take him to take him to task for being utterly commonplace, and then scold him for flaunting all the usual conventions.

That this is the right explanation for the riddle of the facsimilies will readily appear if one considers some features of them for a moment or two. Take Plate 1, for example. The first problem that faced the artist/scribe, what was the first problem that faces the artist/scribe, according to the Book of Abraham? It was how to represent a man who was both bound to an altar and praying. Nobody ever had to do that before. He had to present a man bound to the altar and praying. He solves this problem with strict obedience to the canons of his art. The man is supine to indicate his incapability. This is the sedger position. Anything that means incapacitated, helpless, is placed on its back. Not on its front, or its side: on its side it means getting up, recovering. On its back it means utterly helpless. So he puts him on his back in the sedger position. At the same time, he is in the correct conventional attitude of prayer. In Louisa Clebbs' Catalog of the Formal Gestures of the Egyptians, the gesture of prayer has the honor of being number 1. Right foot forward, hands before the face, right arm forward, in this fashion. This is a man in the correct attitude of prayer, Gesture Number 1, in Louisa Clebbs' catalog of Egyptian gestures. From the point of view of a graphic presentation of what happened, the resulting figure is, of course "rather comical," to quote Professor Peters. But as a representation, it is flawless--the only correct solution to this unique problem. Incidentally, among several hundred reproductions of scenes like this which we have in the library here, you won't find one like this. This is unique.

As to the angel of the Lord, and it's an interesting thing: None of the experts mention the most obvious thing in the whole picture. The whole thing is utterly different, because both the figures are fully clothed in garments you find nowhere in Egyptian drawing. That's why it is so important to show that this is the ancient way of showing it, that Joseph Smith himself hasn't played us tricks, so that when we see these clothes, they are significant. You don't cut a man open for embalming if he is fully clothed, and even has shoes on. You can't make an incision for disemboweling until the body is ready for it. This is not an embalming scene, obviously. And the man is not wearing the ephod. He is not wearing the costume of an Egyptian embalming priest or of Anubis, at all. They are both very odd pictures. And nobody ever mentions that fact, that these men are fully clothed. If they want to make fun of something, there is something to make fun of. Obviously, it disturbs them; there is something very out of the ordinary here, and so they just pass it by. Not one of them mentions it.

Well, as to the angel of the Lord, Deveria was right to protest that it was not the correct way to show the soul, it should have been the head of a bird, he says. But instead of concluding that the Egyptian who drew the picture knew at least that much and therefore obviously did not want to represent the soul, he berated the artist for playing tricks. He might have known also that if Joseph Smith or any rational American had his choice between a human-headed angel and an ordinary hawk to represent an angel, he would use a human. What Joseph Smith could not possibly have known is that the Egyptian use as their basic symbol of a heavenly messenger simply applying a hawk. Of all birds, the only one able to fly to heaven, out of sight in the rays of the sun.

A number of critics point out that what Joseph Smith designated as an altar was simply the usual funeral couch. But this, we are told, was a special type of altar, "made after the form of a bedstead, such as was had among the Chaldeans." That admits that it was a couch, a bedstead, but what about this funny type? Here we are plainly told that for once, the artist is drawing more than a symbolic representation. Here he says, I'm drawing you a picture now. This is actually the way the altar looked, according to our informant, who here shows himself fully aware of the difference between a picture and a representation. The familiar lion couch shown here is the form actually taken by (forget the pointed tail there) by a late dynastic embalmer's couch, even more surprising in the discovery of King Necho's altar of sacrifice, which actually takes the same form, a form of altar which Ursula Schweitzer has traced back to pre-dynastic times in Egypt. The royal sacrificial altar always took this form in Egypt, is what we're pointing out here. For all its antiquity, it is still not of native origin, since, according to Schweitzer, it seems to have come from Babylonia: it's Chaldean. The Pearl of Great Price, it will be noted, says that it is of Chaldean origin. Schweitzer gives reason for concluding that these ~~particular~~ altars were made exclusively for the use of kings, who personally sacrificed on them; and further indicates that the original and proper offerings to the gods, made on such altars were very probably human sacrifices, all of which scores nicely for the Pearl of Great Price. An important feature of this lion couch, also, was that it had to face in the four directions. I should have brought some photographs of this lion couch, there are two of them, in which they are criss-cross so that the lions face in all four directions. That is important, but it's awfully difficult to show in drawings, so this is the way it is depicted by these four kanopic jars underneath. You'll notice in drawing number 2 these identical figures are shown in the Pearl of Great Price, and designated as representing the four points of the compass. It had to face in the four directions. This idea was conveyed, among other ways, by placing four figures under or beside the lion table, they call it a lion table, these being the same figures shown in the Pearl of Great Price, and designated as "representing the earth and its four quarters." Here we are back to representation; these four pictures certainly are not pictures of the four directions, and did not suggest such to our observant scholars, but Joseph Smith knew what they were.

The crocodile, Figure 9, underneath, here, in the waters, is designated as the idolatrous god of Pharaoh, and this, too, has amused the authorities. We shall see the crocodile was indeed a peculiar and an exclusive personal god of Pharaoh. There is nothing whatever in the form of the

beast, to suggest such an idea. Of all the animals, only the crocodile, from the fifth dynasty onward, appears wearing the royal crown. In the twelfth dynasty, Sobec became the god of the residents, according to Bonet, and as such became very close to the royal house in the twelfth dynasty, which is the time that Windlock says that Abraham came to Egypt. This was very true, the time when Abraham came to Egypt, but the kings also of the 13th to 17th dynasties prefer names containing homage to the crocodile. The king names very popular of those dynasties following Abraham's stay in Egypt. This strange reverence for the crocodile continued down to the latest times, when it is attested, according to Bonet, by the association of the crocodile with the royal image on monuments and annals; and no other animal is ever connected with Pharaoh, except the crocodile, who is the ancestor of the royal family, and of nobody else's family. So it was that even the Ptolemies reverence the crocodile as their ancestor. Even Horus, the exclusive incarnation of the king as the hawk, fused with Sobec. Thus Sobec, the crocodile, absorbed the god of Pharoah, says Bonet in his study. " Sobec nimmt also den Königsgott in sich auf." Sobec, the crocodile, absorbed the god of Pharaoh, the king's god, into himself. Hence, he says, the hymns of praise to the king and his crown can be addressed directly to the crocodile, and to no one else. No other animal or fetish shared this honor.

The unique and exalted status of the crocodile is no late development, however. Already in the pyramid texts, he says, we find its identity with the rising sun god, who of course is Re, the sun god par excellance, the god of Pharaoh. According to Bonet, this identity with Re remains fundamental for understanding the nature of the crocodile at all times. The Egyptians, he says, were fond of designating Sobec, that's the crocodile, as the living image of Pharaoh, or even more popular, the Ka or spirit of Re. Finally, Sobec ends up being nothing less than the universal god. And all this, as Bonet points out, in spite of the fact that the Egyptians always hated, feared and detested the nasty things, yet they used this in this connection. Plainly, there is nothing in the figure of the crocodile to suggest his unique status at the god of Pharaoh. Here is another case of the purist symbolism, and another case in which Joseph Smith calls his shots very nicely.

Again, in Facsimile 1, Figure 10, a lotus flower on a stand is given the oddest interpretation you can imagine--this here, that's your lotus flower--Abraham in Egypt. It's repeated in Facsimile 3, Figure 3, and given the same explanation. No one could ask for a clearer demonstration of the purely symbolic nature of these designs. If you think that looks like a picture of Abraham, or that Joseph Smith thought it did, how on earth could a lotus be Abraham in Egypt? There has been a good deal of speculation of the lotus in Egyptian art, but one thing is sure, it can represent the land of Egypt. It does, for example, when all the Kinnus, north, south, east, and west, are represented as standing on a huge lotus. Or when one type of lotus stands for Upper Egypt, and another type of lotus stands for Lower Egypt, and the two are twined together to represent the uniting of the two lands in one. Or when the plants of the North and South combine in a single plant, symbolizing the whole land united in a single land. Or when the children of Horus, representing the cardinal points, stand on the lotus of primordial time, or creation,

which lotus was daily offered at Olerheliopolis, which is the subject of the second facsimile, incidentally, at the primordial mountain of Heliopolis, originally the perennial sacred center and meeting point of the land. Or, when prisoners are shown bound with lotuses, signifying that they are subject to the powers of Egypt. In short, "the lotus is the flower par excellance, it is also the symbol of lower Egypt." Thus the lotus can represent the land of Egypt, geographically, politically, and ritually. For the Egyptians, the lotus was not only a symbolic flower, it was the symbolic flower. Some Egyptologists believe that the lotus was the only symbolic flower. Time has shown that many ~~symbolic~~ flowers, usually interpreted otherwise, really are lotuses; and it has long been noted that the really two symbolic flowers of Egypt, and lotus of the north and the sedge of the south, are both lotuses. But what does it symbolize? For all the well-known and world-wide associations of the sacred lotus, Egyptologists recognize that it can signify a number of things, and confess its real significance escapes them. The lotus design is one of the most fixed and rigid in the Egyptian canon, and one of the most ancient. It was the great Egyptologist Naville who finally came to grips with the problem in 1929.

hieroglyphic lot...

Let's summarize his findings. He says, "The lotus of the god Neferti is the supernatural thing, and no mere useful or ornamental motif. It is a celestial plant, described as the great one who comes out of the earth, the lotus that comes from heaven, the great power that Geb caused to be born. In most representations, the god Nefertum is shown wearing the lotus on his head, for the lotus is not only an attribute of the god ?, it is also the form of the god himself; the lotus is Nefertum. Now, Nefertum is the guardian of the northeast corner of Egypt, the frontier. Just as in funeral scenes, the dead man himself takes the form of a lotus," quoting Naville again. "And in the Book of the Dead, a lotus crowned by a human head indicates that it is actually the dead person. So, often in funerary texts, the lotus can be identified with a person, or with a god, or with any particular person, living or dead." So that when we are told twice in the Pearl of Great Price that the lotus represents Abraham, we may smile, but an Egyptian would not. But does this not mean that plates 1 and 3 are indeed funeral scenes, since the lotus signifies a dead person? Not necessarily, for the lotus symbol is remarkably plastic, as Naville shows. Sometimes it represents the deified king, as in very ancient texts, this Wiris? of the fifth dynasty is the lotus who arises in the holy land. But most often, by far, the lotus is Nefertum. Not of funerary or eschatological at all, but a very concrete geographical and historical one. A recent study by Hermann Case, after noting that only the papyrus and lotus of all the Egyptian plants, have their own significance to the Egyptians, he says, "the lotus god Nefertum is peculiarly hostile toward foreigners, particularly those that come from the East, since this lotus god shared at an early time in synchrotistic relations with those gods whose business it was to protect the eastern boundary of the delta. Septu the northeast corner, the Asiatics came in. In his capacity of eastern delta watchman, the lotus god becomes identified with the lion god Maiesis, the guardian of the gate, who hates the enemies of Egypt. The lotus, to return to Naville, is Noperatum,

content

who stops Set in his fury, before whose terrible countenance the strangers from the East are put to flight. Montay has recently shown who these strangers from the East were, namely, migrants from Syria, Canaan, and Palestine. The lotus turns them back at the border. Neville shows that the lotus represent specifically the eastern side of Egypt. Noteradomy says he is a god who inspires terror. He is one of the companions and guardians of Soptu. There were two such guardians, and Soptu is the extreme northeast boundary of the land. At the county seat of this district, as he calls it, the Nome of Arabia, Nefertum is shown with a lion's head crowned by a lotus, surmounted by two feathers. In this capacity he is called the terrible lion, and is sometimes actually depicted with a lion's body devouring the skulls of his enemies. He is naturally associated with a lion-headed warrior, divinities Bast and Sekhet, he is the guardian par excellance. We see, then, Neville concluded, that the lotus of Nefertum is a redoubtable object. Not only does the sight of it make the mountains, the Asiatics flee, but he is also the protector of other divinities. Whenever his lotus symbol appears, on baggage, on the walls of tombs, on the sides of houses, on anything, it means you're protecting it. Accordingly, it has a magical purpose of guarding persons, places, or objects; thus the funerary setting, the most likely to survive, it protects the corpse or the tomb, or the funerary furniture, or the offering. But it's not originally designed for funerary purposes, we only have it there because it usually survives in graves. The others have disappeared. Its explicit geographical setting and strict limitation to certain situations makes that clear; it didn't begin as a funeral motif at all. Why should, in the sign of the lotus, the two lords of the eastern land wrap their arms around one? The translation is that of Hermann Case, and Neville says it makes no sense to him, but Case explains that it's not an ordinary funerary motif. These two gods are giving their protection. They are putting the person under their protection by wrapping their arms around him. Neville himself gives us the clue when he discusses the quite unique representation of the dead without arms. Now here is the lotus, and the dead person is represented without arms. Then the lotus gives him arms, and this is the explanation of it: This represents the complete (and you don't find any of these unarmed pictures anywhere else, except when the lotus endows them with arms) inability of the dead to help himself, and this condition he is rescued by the lotus, with the reassuring declaration, "Behold, thou art led forth entirely complete, completely supplied with arms," meaning that the dead person is now able to defend himself and fend for himself. "He is now a complete being, who has been entirely reconstituted. Before he had no hands, but the gods of the eastern boundary gave him their arms." That is, he is under their protection. Neville reaches the final conclusion that the proper business of the lotus is to protect any individual against anyone who might do him harm. From this basic principle, all the specialized applications of the lotus symbol are derived. Thus, when it is carved or painted on the wall of a tomb or the side of a sarcophagus, "it serves as a reassuring talisman," he says, "an efficacious protection against one's enemies, guarding either the person of the dead, or the coffin or the tomb, or simply guarding the offering. Its prominence in funerary contexts is attributable to the fact that funerary contexts are about all that have survived from Egyptian. But we do know that the protective offices of

lotus were greatly prized by the Egyptians at all times and in other departments of life. But notice that it functions just on the northeast border at the control house, at the toll; they had a big white castle up there, and there you had to have your baggage stamped with a lotus to show you were now under the protection of the government and could enter Egypt. It was like having your passport stamped now. Where the ordinary Egyptian would pronounce cabalistic words over a lotus to provide himself with its protection.

Now in the Bibical account of Abraham in Egypt, but especially in the story as told in the Genesis apocryphon of the Dead Sea Scrolls, great emphasis is placed on the extreme danger in which Abraham was at the moment he entered Egypt. He had this terrible dream; he woke up in a cold sweat. He is actually paralyzed with fear. He sees himself in great danger. He is the seeder coming into the land of the palm, and he must have the protection of the palm in order to survive, or he will be put to death; he's scared stiff. And this is the theme of Abraham's entering into Egypt. And remember, according to the Bible he tells that Sarah is his sister in order to get the protection of Pharaoh. He entered Egypt, as we know, by the northeast gate: the Bible tells us that. And there he had to meet the challenge and gain the approval of the border guard, whose patron was Nefertum, and whose symbol was always the lotus. The lotus can, as we have seen, represent the land of Egypt, at the same time any supplient needing protection. The idea of Abraham in Egypt, receiving an official stamp and protection of the Egyptian government, and finally the personal hospitality of Pharoah himself could not be better expressed that in that of the lotus. An Egyptian would recognize that, of all things.

He has to have protection.

Note that even in funerary contexts the peculiar characteristic of the lotus as the northeastern border guard is not lost sight of, which shows plainly that that was where the true origin was to be found, that it was adopted into very synchrotistic funeral rites from the outside.

Well, since we are involved with facsimile one, we might as well go on. It would now be perfectly clear that we are dealing with representations, and not with pictures. The lotus for Abraham in Egypt is about as far out as one can get symbolically. We have considered figures 1, 2, 9, and 10, the particular and the peculiar altar in the figure. The last name introduces us to a number of strange names. The four figures under the couch, the idolatrous god of Elkenah, well, we have pointed him out already. Of Elkenah, the god of Libnah, the idolatrous god of Mahmackrah, and the idolatrous god of Korash. Figure 9. And the idolatrous god of Pharaoh. He's in the middle. He's number 5. It must be with reference to this one. And this is rather an interesting thing, I think. This gives us a clue. The idolatrous god of Pharoah, using the same formula, gives us a clue as to how these are to be understood. The crocodile was indeed the family god, the fetish, the ancestor, the totem of the Egyptian royal family. Hence we can assume here that the four creatures here show figures in a like relationship to other royal lines in other lands. They all have foreign, non-Egyptian names, you notice, and they must refer to like fetishes in other lands. The names are indeed outlandish, but one is readily recognizable. That is, whether we treat it as Semitic or Indoeuropean,

and a good deal has been written on this particular word, Libnah means "white," apparently white land, because of the feminine ending. Lands of the mothers of their inhabitants; it is a rule you have in Hebrew. That's why names of lands and places are always considered in the feminine, because they are the mothers of their inhabitants. But Libnah would mean white land, to judge by its feminine ending. One thinks at once of Lebanon, which means "white mountain," and Libya, but the ancient forms of both names admonish against flights of philological speculation. Libnah, as it stands, cannot be identified directly with either.

Contenting ourselves with the normal assurance that Libnah means "white," we next know that the idolatrous god of Libnah has the jackal's head. Is the jackal's head the deity Anubis? Anubis has two classic epithets. The oldest of these, as Hermann Case has shown, is "lord of the white land." And the second is "chief of the west." The first had a definite geographical connotation, this white land. Case says we don't know where it was, but he concludes that it is not necessarily upper Egypt. It cannot be located at this late date, but it probably is a euphemism for the land of the dead, wherever that was. Well, that is the west, as far as the Egyptians were concerned, and Anubis is called the lord of the westerners, the two titles the ~~chief~~ lord of the white land and the ~~lord~~ chief of the westerners; he who is at the head of the western ones, and so forth. So our guess is that the god of Libnah was at home in the west, where our documents were written. But it's not a guess that the idol shown is Anubis, and that Anubis was the lord of the white land, and that Libnah can mean white. Must Libnah be a place? According to explanation of Figure 6 of Facsimile 2, it would be a place, where the identical four images are shown and designated as this earth and its four quarters. These recognize the four different regions.

Well, the fifth region, the god of Pharaoh, would be the one in the middle. The other three names are not as clear cut as . . . But here's an interesting thing, this Elkenah. It certainly suggests El-Kenah, which would mean in Canaanitish the god of Kenah. Now Kenah was the land, the Kenites were not Canaanites, or Cain, that's not that, but these are the Mitani, and the Hurians which called themselves the Kenites, or the Kenah people. So it could be up there in the north. This would be up there, who in Abraham's day were closely associated with the Canaanites, and with Abraham. He lived up there; he came from there.

Korah, of course, suggests the pride of Korash, or Koraish, well, we have some speculations about that. There are more interesting things along here, and since our time is wasted. Well, here; this is interesting just the same. We should go on with this. This leaves, the origin of the mane is unknown. Koraish was due east of Heliopolis, the Koraish family, of course, the famous family of Mohammed. But that leaves Mahmackrah for the south, and the hippo's head would seem to confirm it. Mahmackrah is either the hippopotamus head, that third one, that Mahmackrah, it turns out that the only direction left is south, and it turns out to be that one. But again, we're just guessing. This is too bad, because the north is Mah. And Resh, Korash, you see, is the Egyptian word for south. Also, Mah and Mack both recall Sumerian words for great and exalted god.

Let's stop before this goes too far, and ask what we can be sure of here. It is that Abraham somehow had contact with various regions of the world, and with idolatrous gods, as he calls them, with outlandish names. It is only recently that the rediscovery of the patrichar-chal world in general and of Abraham in particular has led us into the picture. Abraham, indeed, did have dealings with many people and their gods, being not an isolated immigrant, but part of a larger movement from Ur of the Chaldees and similar communities, into Canaan. This is a quotation from Cyrus Gordon. At the time, these migrants were taking their idolatrous gods with them. Thus, the Mesopotamian moon cult moved from Sumerian Ur to the northern Urs, and hence into Canaan, and even into Egypt, with its strange names, according to Cyrus Gordon. And it is for this reason, he says, that Nital, who was Ningal back in Sumeria, was worshipped at Ugarit on the Syrian coast, and even in Egypt. It penetrated through Canaan into Egypt. All this, be it understood, in the days of Abraham. Then it was due to Abraham and men like him that idolatrous gods from distant ~~lands~~, having exotic names turn up in new and strange combinations in the great cult centers in the east. It is significant that in the Pearl of Great Price, it insists that the four thereomorphic gods here, these four shown here, these vases, all represent non-Egyptian gods, since Frankfort has shown that such vases are not Egyptian, but are found all over the Near East, and "can be traced in their origin to northern Syria," where, Haran, where Abraham came from. So these aren't Egyptian figures, actually, originally, although they're very old.

regions

Abraham's time was a time of synchretism, uniquely so; and the Pearl of Great Price labors this point with uncompromising vigor, everything being mixed together. Recently, Kreyling has noted how the gods of the Greeks and the Phoenicians and their stories got all mixed up with each other, and with the gods of northwestern Mesopotamia, and with Syria in the time of Abraham. They are, he observes, strange idols with the greatest intermixture of names, but a remarable uniformity of type. "These strange idols," a quotation from Kreyling at Yale, "with a great intermixture of names but a remarkable uniformity of type, and peculiar to Abraham's time." Remember, Abraham was the great wanderer, who went through all these countries and picked up all this stuff with him. What could better describe the situation in Facsimile 1? Let us recall what out experts said in 1912, even though they would probably not care to repeat it. This is a quotation: "The interpretation of the plates displays an amusing ignorance. Chaldeans and Egyptians are hopelessly mixed together, although as dissimilar in language, religion and locality, as our today Americans and Chinese. We need not go into the very large and growing literature dealing with the essential identity of Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilization during the first dynasties. The first thorough study was that of Jacque deMorgan, which appeared in 1926 under the title "The Chaldean Origin of the Pharoanic Culture of Egypt." "The Chaldean Origin of the Pharoanic Culture of Egypt" was a great classic work, and it has been nothing but confirmed since then. The two civilizations have often been tracked back to a common meeting ground. We refer here to, it was Albright's theory that Naram Sin was actually Menese; the founder of the first Egyptian dynasty was actually the founder of the great dynasty of Sumer, and so forth. But quite recently Yadin, we quote him here, has said that, well, W. B. Emery says that the similarity

Kröhling?

and remote

between the Egyptian and the Chaldean cultures is beyond dispute, but there are also great differences. Well, we'll grant you that. The point is that it is now recognized by everybody that Chaldean and Egyptian culture come from a single mold; and the farther back you go, the closer they are together, recognizably so. So that Yadin at Jerusalem very recently has claimed that the predynastic Palate of Narmar, the first written document we have from Egypt, actually commemorates nothing other than the king's conquest of Palestine, France, Jordan, and Mesopotamia. The oldest Egyptian text we have is a memorial of the King of Egypt's conquest of Mesopotamia. So they had the same culture, the same king. For the later period, the same thing.

Well, this odd mixture of gods and peoples is faithfully reflected in ancient legends of Abraham's expulsion from Ur, a very old version. Now here we get into these lost apocrypha, as you know, and here is an apocryphon of Abraham, and it's a beauty. It was first published in 1919; it was translated into Arabic in the 17th century. It may cast some light on the subject. This is the story that the Jews used to tell. When Abraham was 20, we are told, his father instructed him to go into the city markets and sell the family idols in order to raise money for household expenses. In the process of peddling the idols Abraham, the young merchant, realized what a sham they were, and began to preach to the people in the streets and convert them. So the king, who was none other than the sinister Nimrod, Abraham's classic enemy in the old Jewish stories, ordered Abraham to be put to death. But first the king's courtesans, in the sly manner of the daughter of Jared, in the book of Ether, persuaded the king to make a splendid ritual affair of the occacion, which was to be the great year rite of the Babylonians. Terah takes the royal invitation to the party to his his son Abraham who, however, declines to attend on the grounds that he is too ill to go. While the family is away at the celebration, Abraham stays home and smashes all the idols left. For this he is formally accused by the people and sentenced by the king to be shut up in prison and starved to death. But in prison the angel Gabriel brings him, by God's command, a meal which lasts him for a year. For the next year feast, the king and the courtesans are all ready to make Abraham a big sacrificial scene, and they spend 40 days preparing a very special bronze altar for the occasion, an immense brazier with a bonfire underneath it. When time for the sacrifice came, it wasn't fire at all, but the priest approached him with a sword, but the sword broke in the priest's hand as it touched Abraham's neck. Then all the servants tried to throw Abraham on the fire, but only got themselves burned up. So Satan appeared as a man, with wood, nails, and a rope, and placed Abraham on a ballista , tightly bound. The parallel to the crucifixion has been commented on here, it would lead us too far astray; but we should notice that Abraham, tightly bound, was laid on the ballista, and at that moment, to quote out text, Abraham raised his eyes toward heaven and prayed, saying, Oh God, thou seest what this evil man is doing to me. At the same time, the angels interceded with God, who promised them that Abraham would be saved. Satan then appeared in the form of a man, and said to Abraham, if you want to be saved from the fire of Nimrod, bow down and worship me; whereupon Abraham recognized the devil and denounced him, refused to worship him. Well, when all was finally ready, Abraham's mother offered to submit to the orders of Nimrod instead, but Abraham absolutely said nothing doing; he absolutely rejected all terms. And so the sacrifice, at the moment of fulfillment, when the

angel suddenly appeared to Abraham, and said, "Must I save you?" to which the prophet replied, "God, in whom I put my faith, will save me." Then God orders the fire out, the faggots bear the leaves and blossoms. Nimrod protests that it is all only magic, and here the Hebrew version ends. The Arabic version goes on to tell of a well-known story about Nimrod flying through the air, a popular version.

Now, here is the usual mixture of popular folk motifs, and some of them very old--they go back to Babylonian parallels. This "ultimate test of faith" is one of the main themes of Abraham's history. The patriarch's whole career is one long series of test of the faith. But there are some non-Bibical elements here which may be significant, since they are confirmed by very old traditions. One of them is Abraham's opposition to the idols, which his good father worshipped (well, the Pearl of Great Price), and their opposition to him, conspicuously shown in the Pearl of Great Price. Another is the attempted ritual offering of Abraham; this is strictly a ritual offering going on here, in which the leading spirits, the persons who took the main part of it, were the courtesans, who persuaded the king to do it. This is very interesting, there are the courtesans, the famous Babylonian Hiridules, which is a touch of authenticity, too. This last is interesting, because we are told specifically in the book of Abraham, 1:11, of three virgins sacrificed for refusing to go along with these rites. The special mention of their virginity and their stubbornness shows that they were virgins because they refused to be ritual hiridules. They were not courtesans. But notice the girls play an important part in this rite, and he mentions the case of three who refused to, who remained virgins, and were put to death therefore. They were worth mentioning. Well, here it's the courtesans who were at the center of this sacrificial shindig here.

Then Abraham is tightly bound on a ~~specially made~~ special kind of altar, and the priest tries to dispatch him with a sword, while he prays to God. This is how we find him in the Pearl of Great Price, as well. Finally, and the very most striking of all, an angel appears at the very moment of sacrifice and offers to save Abraham, who, however, explains that his appeal is to God; he has been praying and confidently expecting deliverance. Well, we are told in the Pearl of Great Price that the angel was sent by God to deliver him. The angel had been asking for that privilege.

Well, all this is only an old and confused tradition. But where could Joseph Smith have found out about it? We are told that Joseph Smith known nothing at all about it, and it completely, grossly, utterly ignorant--amusingly ignorant. He hasn't the vaguest idea of what it's all about, and here he gives the old, authentic Jewish version of the sacrifice of Abraham. It just comes out in these old Jewish apocrypha that are just being dug up now, in our own time.

Next we have a series of vertical and horizontal lines at the bottom here, which represent--I see we will have to cut this short in righteousness--this, badly drawn here, represent the pillars of heaven. Well, next we have a series of vertical and horizontal lines at the bottom, looking like long, thin doors and windows, it's down here. Now this is important in the copying, let me see if I have an earlier version.

In ours, this is practically no good at all; but in the earlier ones, it's very clearly a series of--yes, here's a series of pylons. Here's one of the earlier drawings, and the earlier back you get, the better. See, there are a series of doors or pylons along there. They're not just like the meaningless lines we have that go up and down, just some jiggles that don't fit. And in the earlier ones, these don't go beyond the line. They are all in the line in perfect order as a series of pylons. And they are called here "the pillars of heaven." That's worthy of notice, too--looking like long, thin doors and windows, some fitting inside others, which according to the interpretations are "designed to represent the pillars of heaven as understood by the Egyptians." Again, the clear statement that this is not a picture of anything, but something designed to represent one people's idea of the pillars of heaven.

Deveria condemns Joseph Smith for giving any interpretation at all for giving any interpretation at all to this, what he calls "characteristic ornament in Egyptian art, having no known significance." Well, in the original engravings, this meaningless and untidy lines are plainly a series of pylons, the pylons of heaven. The earliest royal tombs of Egypt represent the identical recessed paneling around all the outer walls that are found in the earliest palaces and tombs of Mesopotamia. This is very characteristic. It is represented on the archaic seals in both countries. The earliest Egyptian royalties, even the predynastic ones, give a prominent place (I should have brought the pictures from Kapart) to the Serik motif, this is called the Serik, of the gate flanked by such paneled and buttressed walls and pylons, representing both the palace, the tomb, and the temple. From the beginning, those places were identical as places where heaven and earth met. An essential part of a temple decor, writes Meler, was the elaborate system of niches and reveals which appears to have been a mark of religious, as opposed to secular, architecture. This motif, as Herman Baltsch has shown, is carried over into the decoration of coffins, and chests ~~made~~ meant to contain sacred objects. It becomes a regular design for borders; but it always means this. In the pyramid texts it is first described, an old kingdom text, where it says, "its pylons reach to heaven, and its flagstones to the stars of heaven, while it, itself, the temple, shines like heaven, illuminating the two lands." It is talking about the temple and the tomb. Its pylons reached to heaven. These are the pylons of heaven, is what they are. Even in their original form, of simple wooden poles both the pillars and the poles, a recent study by Elizabeth Tomisonmat represent as the furniture of heaven the glory of the world above.

Well, the furniture, and the clothing . . . Well, we might as well go ahead here, we'll be through in a minute. Then he indulges in some Hebrew words here. Most of the words are non-Egyptian, that he uses in explaining these things. This is a thing they overlook, too. The attempt at phonetically transcribing Hebrew words, in Figure 12, furnishes a clue as to the pronunciation of the others. Plainly the long "a" is rendered "au," as in talk and fraught, and words like that, which comes as close to rendering the long aleph, the sound of Hebrew which is "ah," as spoken by a Rabbi, which makes a rather ugly sound, "ah," and the ong. His pronunciation was given him by my great-grandfather, Alexander Niber, just exactly the way you pronounce it, and this Raukeeyang, the only way you could write it. It's actually very well written, pronounced, the way these things are written in the Pearl of Great Price, where he says,

"heavens are called Raukeeyang, and Shaumayeem, that's exactly the way you would say them, that's the best way they could possibly have been written. They look funny, of course, but you pronounce them and it's all right. The use of Hebrew words by way of explanation is perfectly in order for the sort of international guide-book that this is supposed to represent, where four non-Egyptian and non-Hebraic words have already appeared, not Egyptian, and not Hebrew, either. Here again, we are far from anything like a pictorial representation. This is called the firmament over our heads. We are talking about these lines now. The firmament over our heads, appearing below on the ground, of all things. Without any warning, the writer confronts us with a Hebrew word to make his meaning clear to his readers, who are obviously assumed to be Hebrew-speaking. The explanation takes great care to make clear that what is being conveyed here is a special limited idea in a special, limited context. This signifies, he tells us, the equivalent of the Hebrew firmament. "but in this case," in relation to this subject, notice, in this case, in relation to this subject, it has a special meaning for the Egyptians, who meant it to signify, he said, "Shaumah," or high, as he would call it. He doesn't say that Shaumah is the Egyptian word at all; Shaumah is the universal Semitic word for "high." Shaumah, Shaumayeem, Shaumaz, the regular Arabic word for "sky," anyway; that word being not in their language, but in ours, supplied by the explanation to make things clear to the non-Egyptian reader. "Shaumah" is the old Semitic word for "high;" "Shaumayeem," written here with great phonetic care as Shaumah-yeem, Shau-mah-YEEM, very clearly pronounced, you should do it that way, is probably derived from it. Well, it certainly is. There are no Egyptian words here, and yet Deveria protests that the word "Shaumah" is not Egyptian, and the Hebrew "Shaumahyeem" is very badly transcribed. "Shaumah" is not supposed to be Egyptian, and "Shaumahyeem" is not badly transcribed. It's as accurately transcribed as our nightmare English alphabet allows, as also is Raukeeyang.

Mercer objects that "Rangeeyang," as he calls it, is far from accurate. It's only right to point out that either he or someone else has changed the word. He misspells it, and says, that's a very bad representation. Well, it certainly is, the say he writes it. He writes it Rang; instead of Rau-, he writes it Rang. So, and then after setting up that straw man, he then attacks it.

There is nothing out of order in representing the high heavens at the bottom of the scene, from an Egyptian point of view, not from ours nor from the Jewish point of view. One of the recentest studies on Egyptian religion, they lay great stress on this fact, the heavens can be represented below, as well as above.

In Plate 1, Figure 3, Elkenah is really the idolatrous god of the Kenites, then Cyrus Gordon is right. And Ur, where Abraham grew up, was one of the northern Urs in the Kenite land. The clothing worn by Abraham and his priest is entirely without parallel on hundreds of embalming scenes, as we have here. For one thing, you would not embalm a person if he was fully dressed, neither would you disembowel him, that being part of the embalming process. But ~~them~~ Then our Jewish story says that the sword broke when it touched the neck of Abraham. That's what he's going to do, he's going to cut his throat, in which the clothing would be no hindrance to the rite. That certainly indicates the Jewish

version. This facsimile demonstrates the caution which should be taken, but which our experts, certainly Mr. Spaulding, did not take in handling the matter. It's very important to use only the original engraving, and even then, one must make due allowances. In this cut alone, the copy appearing in our present-day Pearl of Great Price, is introduced a serious alteration. The line of pylons has become a line of meaningless marks. The human head of Figure 8 has become quite unrecognizable. The lion has a fourth tail, which it doesn't have here, very un-Egyptian. In the earlier reproductions, the sacred crocodile is actually a cat, as in this one. The forked tail, which even as a child, we found very unconvincing, came about very simply, we explained that. The engraver tried to atone for it. But the experts were eager to minimize any peculiarities of the text in order to condemn them as ordinary, mass-produced funerary texts, is very apparent in their ignoring of Deveria, and from the failure of them and even from the most strikingly and instantly apparent peculiarity of Plate 1, namely that both human figures are full and most unusually clothed. If they wanted to make fun of them, that was the place to begin. Deveria's insistent observation that all three plates have been deliberately altered was not repeated. Why not? This is a good place to look for fraud. Was it because a little study would show that the alterations are undoubtedly ancient, that these are not just ordinary funeral scenes? Hawk-headed instead of human-headed hawks, the prayer gesture, a figure on a couch, the odd attire of the two human figures certainly demand explanation. But the only explanation we get is that somebody has copied things badly. However, it's Facsimile #2 that really puts the conscientious critic on his mettle. And that's the one we're not going to turn to now, because this would be a good place to end this without getting into the big round one. You can really get your teeth into that, because it has readable text on it, and it has been treated far more, and it's far more peculiar than any of the others. Less than forty of those exist, actually, so they couldn't be called ordinary funerary documents, existing by thousands. They are very rare, and ___2___, and so forth.

Now, are there any questions? We'll just confine this to the number 1, which is the easiest of them, I mean the least damning of them. Numbers 2 and 3 have a lot more connected with them, and Joseph Smith is much clearer, more lucid, and can be more clearly vindicated on them. But this isn't bad, you know. This isn't bad, what he's got here. What ~~out~~ authors have told about him certainly has to be changed. Well, before we burn up here. . . Now, do we have any questions? Or if we don't, we can break it up and go home. Incidentally, it was noted by some of those, Peters noted, and I think this is significant, that these three facsimilies do belong together; and this is peculiar in that case because the round one, if it belongs with the others, is anything but a typical funerary document. It's a very rare and unusual document. Of the thirty that exist, as I say, I have a copy of 25 of them here. No two of them are alike, and they are cosmic representations, they do represent the basic ideas that Joseph Smith talked about, but here's the control there, and this is an interesting thing. In 1884, in the Journal of the Society of Bibical Archaeology in England, they published ~~all existing~~ all existing hypocephali, that is the round ones, in the British Museum, they published them in an issue there, and then they got a Frenchman, De Horac, to supply them with examples from the Louvre, and they got them together, and they gave their interpretations, back in 1884, that was forty

years before Spaulding published his work. And they interpreted these other hypocephali that look so much like the one in the Pearl of Great Price, they had the interpretation. You notice none of these men in 1912 mention that, even though some of them had a hand in that interpretation. None of them mention ~~that~~ those interpretations, or that these are familiar documents that had already been interpreted, and we know what their interpretations are. They don't even mention the fact that this thing had all been settled forty hears before; because if you read those interpretations, they say exactly what Joseph Smith said. They were not given the Pearl of Great Price to interpret. They were given these other hypocephali, and without any prejudice at all, simply asked, what do you make of this? So, they gave their interpretations, and you don't have time for them tonight, of course, they go on and on; and you put them together, and lo and behold, they say what Joseph Smith said they meant, talking about things in general, all the generalities, the time, the creation motif, the eternal rounds, God, the creation that is so very important there. and the stars giving light to each other, the handing down of light, the transmitting of power throughout the universe, from one celestial body to another, all that they brought out, way back in 1884, completely forgot about it when they were faced, forty years later, with this. They said, no, no, this is a product of _____. And Petrie himself, who interpreted some of the things, and showed some of the things exactly as Joseph Smith showed them before, conveniently forgot about that. So you see, this is by no means the open-and-shut case some people seem to think it is. You have to go _____, we have here, because one of the eight men, who made this contribution, his conscience must have hurt him, because we have his library here now. He collected it at Yale University over many, many years, incidentally, when he made his interpretation, he was never an Egyptologist, He collected the stuff, but he specialized in Assyriology. He was an Episcopal clergyman, he is still alive, retired now, but he was only 32. He was as young as Deveria. He wasn't nearly the scholar that Deveria was. Spaulding didn't even consider Deveria, because he was a youthful amateur, he said, we won't bother about him. Because if you bring him into the picture, then you have a lot of explaining to do.

Is the which? No, I say, it's unique. You won't find it anywhere else. This is why they should have whooped and hollered the minute they saw that. Both the clothed man on the couch, who wears his long, tight underwear and his slippers, and the man who is making the sacrifice, now, Brested is right. There are thousands of pictures of a priest going to cut upon a mummy, and he always wears the official costume he must, namely, a straight, white apron, and nothing above. He has to wear that. And naturally, the embalmed figure has to be completely unclothed. He just lies there, he's going to be cut up. And that's the way it is. You have all the innards removed, and everything else. Well, obviously you can't do that to this. Both men are clothed, but they are dressed in a way that you can't find in any other Egyptian setting you can find. So they should have immediately called attention to that, and the fact that none of them mention it shows that they are sweeping it under the rug. This is a thing they don't want to have bother them, because they are going to take the position that this is absolutely typical. Well, the minute you look at it, it hits you in the face that you never saw anything less typical in your life. So they just don't mention it. We just leave that out, and this out, and this out, and if you can't leave it out, then you get mad

and say, well, why didn't he draw it right? Why didn't he do it the way he should do it, instead of doing it this way? We see why he didn't, because that wasn't what he wanted to do. I reminds us a story of a woman in a market place down in a Mexican village, an American Tourist, a schoolteacher, and she pointed out to the artist, she said, "Look, you've made the bird as big as the church." And the artist said, "But lady, you don't understand. This is a painted bird. This isn't a real bird, I just made the bird. I can make it as big as a church if I want to."

But you notice the insight to begin with, that Joseph Smith recognized that he had to do with representations here, symbols, and nothing else. He never tried to identify them as pictures. I mean, Abraham as a lotus and this sort of thing, you're not going to have that at all; the angel as a hawk. These are symbols, and symbols as they would be interpreted by Egypt. An Egyptian would interpret a lotus that way; he would interpret a hawk that way, not as a sole bird, and so on. How would he see that man on the couch? Well, when he got to there, because it was a unique picture, the Abraham or the scribe that drew it for him, and remember, whenever a great man did anything, he dictated it and had it done for him, and he was given credit, he may have done it with his own hand, or it may have been another that was copied, oh, we didn't go into that, incidentally, the aspects of the manuscript. Joseph Smith never claimed that this was written by the hand of Abraham and the hand of Joseph. He never claimed that, well, he didn't draw it himself, either, and he never claimed that this was actually the original, or that it was found in the tomb of the person that made it, or that it belonged to, or that the mummy was the mummy of Joseph, that it was found with. Now, some of these that are found in tombs, there's one, a very important one, that was found in the tomb of a man who lived 200 years after the drawing was made. It had been handed down with his family and buried with him. Very recently, in 1951, not very recently, a new hypocephalus was found, another one of these was found, I have it here, and it was found rolled up, it was rolled up in a manuscript that a person was clutching here, it was a woman, she was clutching it on her breast, and it was another document that had been handed down for hundreds of years. Now, this could have been the old Abraham document, handed down in the family, to come forth at a later time, or be used, or this sort of thing, and all sorts of explanations are possible there. There's no difficulty there, actually. But they took Joseph Smith. . .see, these men were given the impression that Joseph Smith personally drew these things, and he said that Abraham personally drew them, and this was the very document that Abraham drew. That you cannot establish at all, you don't have to. But as far as the general interpretation was concerned, he had a pretty good idea. So let's bear our testimony and call it a night, shall we? The time is drawing nigh, and urge you to go home and read this. But don't speculate too much, please, suspend judgment until you find out. You have to hold back on these things until we have enough ammunition, because to go off half-cocked would be disastrous, wouldn't it? It would spoil everything. But now that we have such a large collection of stuff, and we can commit the important people on the subject, later, you see, we're dealing here with just the Spaulding criticisms and so forth, the earlier ones, later on we have to consider some of those that are being made today. They are being made in a

different spirit, in a different way, but here I think we can take them to task, too, just as well, because the approach is a little different. And yet they have made surprisingly little progress since then. These things are still symbols, they are still utterly baffling, we know less about them; and yet they can be read, they can be better understood, and they are viewed with more respect today. So you're not going to get unanimous opinion on this subject, any more than you did then. So let us realize we have were one of the most interesting contributions of the prophet Joseph Smith, and let us withhold judgement if we feel inclined to damn him as a complete fraud.

Let's get back to the original subject of the Book of Mormon. The editor took this whole thing to discredit the translation of the Book of Mormon.