Book of Mormon Central

Towards a Critical Edition of the Book of Mormon

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper is not only to review the FARMS Book of Mormon Critical Text, but also to discuss some of the general problems that arise when trying to establish a critical text of the Book of Mormon. In this review article I will discuss the need for a critical edition of the Book of Mormon, consider the issue of Joseph Smith's "bad grammar," review the FARMS Book of Mormon Critical Text, and propose an alternative critical edition for the Book of Mormon.

Towards a Critical Edition
of the Book of Mormon

Royal Skousen

Over the past few years the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (hereafter referred to as FARMS) has published a critical edition of the Book of Mormon in three volumes: 1 (1 Nephi–Words of Mormon, 1984), 2 (Mosiah–Alma, 1986), and 3 (Helaman–Moroni, 1987).[1] During 1986–87 a second three-volume (corrected) edition was published. The purpose of this paper is not only to review the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text,* but also to discuss some of the general problems that arise when trying to establish a critical text of the Book of Mormon. In this review article I will discuss the need for a critical edition of the Book of Mormon, consider the issue of Joseph Smith's "bad grammar," review the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text,* and propose an alternative critical edition for the Book of Mormon.

Before considering these issues, I will first address the question of exactly what a critical edition is.[2] Simply put, a critical edition is composed of two main parts, the critical text itself and an apparatus (consisting of notes at the bottom of the page, below the critical text). Usually the critical text attempts to represent the original form of the text,[3] while the apparatus shows the textual variants and their sources. The editors of the critical edition decide which textual variant best represents the original and put that in the critical text. The apparatus shows all the (significant) variants of the text and the sources for those variants (manuscripts, published texts, and conjectures). The apparatus thus allows the reader to evaluate the decisions of the editors.

This kind of critical text is said to be eclectic because the text itself is derived from a number of different sources. The critical text for the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament is of this eclectic type.[4]

Another possibility is to have the critical text represent a single textual source, even though that source may contain textual errors or less preferred textual variants. In this case the apparatus will note other readings, some of which may be preferred over the reading in the text. The Stuttgart Hebrew Bible is an example of this second type of critical text; its text is based on a single Hebrew manuscript, the Leningrad manuscript (c. A.D. 1008 or 1009).[5]

THE NEED FOR A CRITICAL EDITION

In establishing the text of the Book of Mormon, we have two manuscripts as well as a number of important printed editions. Joseph Smith dictated the Book of Mormon to several scribes, chiefly Oliver Cowdery, and the resulting manuscript is usually referred to as the original manuscript (O). Oliver Cowdery then made a copy of the original manuscript.[6] This second manuscript is usually referred to as the printer's manuscript (P) since this copy was used by the printing firm of E. B. Grandin to set the type for the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon. Unfortunately, only about a fourth of the original manuscript exists, but the printer's manuscript is virtually extant.[7] Since the printer's manuscript is not an exact copy of the original manuscript, a critical edition of the Book of Mormon will undoubtedly have an eclectic text.

There are several reasons for creating a critical edition of the Book of Mormon. For one, a good deal of statistical work has been done in trying to identify the characteristic style of various authors in the Book of Mormon.[8] The goal of such work has been to demonstrate that the Book of Mormon truly represents the work of multiple authors. The validity of such statistical analyses may well depend on the text the analyses are based on. For example, a good many occurrences of the phrase "and it came to pass that" have been reduced to simply "and" in later editions of the Book of Mormon.[9] This deletion distorts the original frequency of occurrence for this phrase, thus making it a less reliable indicator of stylistic differences than if one uses a critical text as a basis for statistical analyses.

Another reason for having a critical edition of the Book of Mormon is to facilitate studies of linguistic influences. Numerous studies have been made on the question of Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon.[10] Yet it turns out that the original text actually contained a number of potential Hebraisms that have been removed by later editing. Consider, for instance, the use of *and* after a conditional clause and before the main clause, as in Moroni 10:4 (according to the printer's manuscript and the 1830 edition):

"and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, *and* he will manifest the truth of it unto you." (In quotations, italics are added to help identify the words in question.) In the 1837 and all later editions, this *and* has been deleted. Yet this use of *and* is possibly a Hebraism, as in Judges 4:20:

'im	'îš	yābō'	ûšě'ēlēk	wě'āmar
if	anyone	comes	and asks	and says

hăyēš	pōh	'îš
is there	there	anyone

wě'āmart	'āyin
and you will say	there isn't

In other words, "If anyone comes and says, 'Is anyone there?' you will say, 'No, there isn't.' "

Another possible example of a removed Hebraism occurs in 1 Nephi 3:17, where the original and printer's manuscripts (as well as most early printings of the Book of Mormon) have the phrase "for he *knowing* that Jerusalem must be destroyed." The use of the present participle *knowing* rather than *knows* can be interpreted as a Hebraism. Consider a similar expression in Genesis 3:5:

kî	yōdēa'	'elōhîm	kî
for	*knowing*	God	that

The present participle form *yōdēa'* is tenseless and can be literally translated as either "is knowing" (that is, "knows") or "was knowing" (that is, "knew"). Given the context of Genesis 3, this expression should be translated into standard English as "for God knows that." Similarly in 1 Nephi 3:17, the context implies that if *knowing* is to be rendered in standard English, it should be *knows* rather than *knew*. Yet later editing of the Book of Mormon has replaced the original *knowing* by the past tense *knew* rather than the present tense *knows:*

> And all this he hath done because of the commandments of the Lord. For he *knew* that Jerusalem must be destroyed, because of the wickedness of the people. For behold, they have rejected the words of the prophets. (1 Ne. 3:16–18, 1981 ed.)

This emendation leads to a strange shift of tenses, from the present perfect ("hath done") to the simple past ("knew"), then back to the present perfect ("have rejected"). Moreover, Nephi is speaking here to his brothers long before Jerusalem was ever destroyed. By replacing the original *knowing* with *knows,* the passage (as determined by the original manuscript) reads exactly right:

> And all this he hath done because of the commandment of the Lord, for he *knows* that Jerusalem must be destroyed because of the wickedness of the people. For behold, they have rejected the words of the prophets.
>
> **knows** *conjecture*] **knowing** O P 1830 1837 1841 1849 1852, **knew** 1840 1879&

(In the above apparatus, I first give the form as it appears in the proposed emended text—that is, *knows*—followed by its evidence. The right bracket is used to separate the text form from other variants. In this example there are two variants. The first one, *knowing*, is found in the original manuscript O, the printer's manuscript P, and in most of the earlier printings. The second variant, *knew*, is first found in the 1840 printing, then later in the 1879 printing and in all subsequent printings, which is represented by *1879* followed by an ampersand.)

When we compare the biblical quotes in the Book of Mormon with the King James Version (KJV) as well as ancient biblical texts, our conclusions are affected by which Book of Mormon text is chosen. For example, in a number of cases later editors of the Book of Mormon have made changes in the Isaiah passages in order to attain better agreement with the KJV text of Isaiah. Some examples:

2 Nephi 13:18	+ their	1837
16:8	+ am	1837
17:1	and > that	1837
19:5	+ is	1920
19:9	the > ø	1837

(Here the plus + refers to an addition, > refers to a replacement, and ø stands for the null symbol—that is, the sequence "> ø" refers to a deletion.) Or the opposite has occurred: later editors have made changes in the Book of Mormon text that make the current text differ from the KJV:

2 Nephi 16:6	seraphims > seraphim	1920
16:9	understand > understood	1837
16:10	convert > be converted	1837
16:13	in it > ø	1837

A critical edition of the Book of Mormon is needed, further, because there are still textual errors that have thus far escaped correction. For example, consider an error that occurred in producing the printer's manuscript from the original manuscript.[11] In 1 Nephi 8:31 the original manuscript reads *prssing* (that is, *pressing*), but this was mistakingly copied as *feeling* in the printer's manuscript:

> And he also saw other multitudes *pressing* their way towards that great and spacious building.

pressing O <**prssing**>] **feeling** P 1830&

In all other passages in this chapter the text has *press* or *pressing* and not *feel* or *feeling,* as in verse 30: "he saw other multitudes *pressing* forward . . . and they did *press* their way forward continually." Similar uses of *press* and *pressing* occur in verses 21 and 24. This use of *press* parallels New Testament usage, as in Philippians 3:14 (KJV): "I *press* toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." As in Lehi's dream, numerous New Testament passages also use the word *press* to describe individuals trying to work their way through crowds (for example, Mark 2:4; Luke 8:19, 19:3). In fact, except for this textual error in 1 Nephi 8:31, there is no scriptural use of the phrase "to *feel* one's way."

Yet another reason for a critical edition of the Book of Mormon is that there has been considerable editing throughout its many printings, and sometimes this editing has introduced errors into the text. In addition to the example of interpreting *knowing* as *knew* in 1 Nephi 3:17, consider the following emendation in Mormon 8:28 (1981 edition):

> Yea, it shall come in a day when the power of God shall be denied, and churches become defiled and be lifted up in the pride of their hearts; yea, even in a day when leaders of churches and teachers *shall rise* in the pride of their hearts, even to the envying of them who belong to their churches.

Earlier this passage read as follows (based on the printer's manuscript):

> yea, it shall come in a day when the power of God shall be denied, and churches become defiled and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts; yea, even in a day when leaders of churches and teachers ^ in the pride of their hearts, even to the envying of them who belong to their church . . .

(The caret ^ refers the reader to the place in the text where a variant has been later inserted.) In order to eliminate the sentence fragment, the phrase "shall rise" was added in the 1911 edition. Yet a more appropriate emendation would be to insert the parallel "shall be lifted up," which occurs in the previous sentence: "and churches become defiled and *shall be lifted up* in the pride of their hearts."

The editing of the Book of Mormon has been fairly extensive. A more accurate critical edition will allow the reader to note not only the grammatical and other changes that have been made in the text but also when they were first introduced. Many of the changes have eliminated archaic language that is typical of the KJV:

shew > show:

> which the Lord had *shewn* unto him (1 Ne. 1:15) > *shown* (1911)
>
> compare: which thou hast *shewed* unto me (Gen. 19:19)

which > who(m) (when the referent is human):

> and my elder brethren, *which* were Laman, Lemuel, and Sam (1 Ne. 2:5) > *who* (1837)
>
> compare: and Lot also, *which* went with Abram, had flocks (Gen. 13:5)

exceeding > exceedingly (adverb preceding adjective):

> it was *exceeding* great (1 Ne. 3:25) > *exceedingly* (1981)
>
> compare: thy *exceeding* great reward (Gen. 15:1)

do > ø (nonemphatic modal in positive declarative sentences):

> they *did do* as he commanded them (1 Ne. 2:14) > *did* (1837)
>
> compare: and *did* wipe them (Luke 7:38)

a > ø (preverbal prepositional *a*):

> the armies of the Lamanites are *a* marching towards the city of Cumeni (Alma 57:31) > ø (1837)
>
> compare: I go *a* fishing (John 21:3)

that > ø (preceded by a subordinate conjunction):

> because *that* he was a visionary man (1 Ne. 2:11) > ø (1837)
>
> compare: because *that* in it he had rested (Gen. 2:3)
>
> after *that* I have abridged the record of my father (1 Ne. 1:17) > ø (1837)
>
> compare: then his lord, after *that* he had called him, said unto him (Matt. 18:32)

how > what (relative pronoun preceding adjective):

> how is it that ye have forgotten *how* great things the Lord hath done for us (1 Ne. 7:11) > *what* (1837)
>
> compare: tell them *how* great things the Lord hath done for thee (Mark 5:19)

sayeth, saith > said (historical present occurring in the Greek New Testament and the KJV):

> the Lord spake unto my father . . . and *sayeth* unto him (1 Ne. 2:1) > *said* (1837)
>
> compare: immediately his leprosy was cleansed and Jesus *saith* unto him (Matt. 8:3–4)

change in preposition:

> let us be faithful *in* him (1 Ne. 7:12) > *to* (1837)
>
> compare: for this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son and faithful *in* the Lord (1 Cor. 4:17, KJV)

removing mixup of *sit* and *set:*

> upon which I never had before *sat* my foot (1 Ne. 11:1) > *set* (1849)
>
> compare: when he was *set* down on the judgment seat (Matt. 27:19, KJV)
>
> the king *sat* him down to eat meat (1 Sam. 20:24, KJV)

for > ø (preceding the infinitive marker):

> after their many struggles *for to* destroy them (Alma 27:1) > *to* (1837)
>
> compare: all their works they do *for to* be seen of men (Matt. 23:5)

Of course, some (but not all) of these expressions can be found in Joseph Smith's colloquial language. For instance, in his 1832 statement on how he translated the Book of Mormon he wrote: "but the Lord had prepared spectacles *for to* read the Book."[12]

The Book of Mormon also contains numerous switches between the traditionally singular *thou* and *thee* and the traditionally plural *ye* and *you,* as in Alma 37:37:

> Counsel the Lord in all *thy* doings, and he will direct *thee* for good; yea, when *thou* liest down at night, lie down unto the Lord, that he may watch over *you* in *your* sleep; and when *thou* risest in the morning, let *thy* heart be full of thanks unto God; and if *ye* always do these things, *ye* shall be lifted up at the last day.[13]

But this mixing of the second person pronouns should not be interpreted as ungrammatical. Rather, pronominal variation is a characteristic of many writers from Middle English through Early Modern English. Lyle Fletcher has emphasized this point. In chapters 3 and 4 of his thesis, he identifies many examples of such variation:[14]

> *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (c. 1370–90)
>
> > Bot *ge* schal be in *yowre* bed, burne, at *thyn* ese!
> >
> >   (line 1071)[15]
>
> Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales* ("Wife of Bath's Prologue") (c. 1390)
>
> > Com neer, my spouse, lat me ba *thy* cheke!
> > *Ye* sholde been al pacient and meke . . .
> >
> >   (lines 433–34)[16]

Shakespeare also has examples of pronominal mixing:[17]

> Artemidorus: If *thou* beest not immortal, look about *you.*
>   (*Julius Caesar,* act 2, sc. 3, line 7 [1599])[18]

In fact, the Bible itself contains many examples of switching between the singular and plural forms, even in the original Hebrew

and Greek texts. This variation is reflected, for example, in the King James translation of the following two passages:

> When *thou* shalt beget children, and children's children, and *ye* shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt *yourselves,* and make a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, and shall do evil in the sight of the Lord *thy* God, to provoke him to anger . . . (Deut. 4:25)

> O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto *thee,* how often would I have gathered *thy* children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and *ye* would not! (Matt. 23:37)

Moreover, the original King James Version itself had "errors" in the use of the second person pronouns; these "errors" were removed in later printings of the KJV (mainly in the 1760s), long after *thou, thee,* and *ye* had dropped out of standard English.[19]

Despite the prevalence of pronominal variation in the Bible and English literature, editors of the Book of Mormon have altered some of these pronouns, as in these examples from 1 Nephi:

> 3:29   *thou shalt* go up to Jerusalem again and the Lord will deliver Laban into your hands > *ye shall* (1837)
>
> 7:8   *thou art* mine elder brethren > *ye are* (1840)

An analysis of the grammatical changes that various editors have introduced into the Book of Mormon text shows that most of the changes eliminate language characteristic of the King James Version of the Bible. Yet few would criticize the "bad grammar" of the KJV or suggest that the KJV should be "cleaned up" grammatically or stylistically in the same way. One suspects that later editors have unknowingly removed King James expressions from the Book of Mormon under the mistaken idea that they were simply correcting grammatical errors.

Of course, some of these "errors" are not found in the King James Bible, but are representative of Joseph Smith's language. And, of course, editors have worked to eliminate these "errors" as well. Consider, for instance, the many attempts to make the archaic pronouns and verbal endings conform to their original historical usage:

> because of the most plain and precious parts of the gospel of the lamb which *hath* been kept back (1 Ne. 13:34) > *has* (1837) > *have* (1841)

> Nephi's brethren *rebelleth* against him (1 Ne. introductory summary) > *rebel* (1920)

Other types of grammatical "errors" have also been removed from the Book of Mormon text:

changes in the use of the irregular *be* verb:

> thy power and goodness and mercy *is* over all the inhabitants of the earth (1 Ne. 1:14) > *are* (1837)
>
> they *was* yet wroth (1 Ne. 4:4) > *were* (1830)

simple past tense forms replaced by past participle forms:

> I had *smote* (1 Ne. 4:19) > *smitten* (1830)
>
> I had *slew* (1 Ne. 4:26) > *slain* (1830)
>
> my father had read and *saw* (1 Ne. 1:14) > *seen* (1920)
>
> the Lord hath protected my sons and delivered them out of the hands of Laban and *gave* them power (1 Ne. 5:8) > *given* (1920)

them > *those* (in modifying position):

> the tender mercies of the Lord is over all *them* whom he hath chosen (1 Ne. 1:20) > *those* (1837)
>
> this shall be your language in *them* days (Hel. 13:37) > *those* (1837)

number agreement:

> we had obtained the *record* which the Lord had commanded us and searched them (1 Ne. 5:21) > *records* (1852)

word change:

> it was *desirous* above all other fruit (1 Ne. 8:12) > *desirable* (1837)
>
> *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED):
>
> > *desirous* (definition 5) = 'desirable'
>
> sample OED citation (from John Gay, *The Beggar's Opera,* first performed in 1728): "Wine inspires us, And fires us . . . Women and Wine should Life employ. Is there ought else on Earth *desirous*?" (act 2, sc. 1)[20]

Of course, this process of "cleaning up" a text is a never-ending one, since there are differences over what is acceptable usage. For the overly prescriptive, there are still grammatical "errors" in the Book of Mormon:

sentence ends in a preposition:

> God is mindful of every people *in* whatsoever land they may be in (Alma 26:37) > ø (1840)
>
> (The 1840 deletion of the first *in* eliminates the original repeated preposition, but still allows the sentence to end in a preposition.)

split infinitive (not yet removed):

> it is that same being who put it into the heart of Gadianton *to still carry on* the work of darkness (Hel. 6:29)

Besides grammatical editing, there has been a good deal of stylistic editing:

attempt to remove potential ambiguity:

> he pitched his tent in a valley *beside* a river of water (1 Ne. 2:6)
> > *by the side of* (1837)

agreement of modals:

> that we *might* preserve unto our children the language of our fathers and also that we may preserve unto them the words which have been spoken (1 Ne. 3:19) > *may* (1837)

count nouns changed to mass nouns:

> and also of the seeds of *fruits* of every kind (1 Ne. 8:1) > *fruit* (1840)

avoiding a (potential) multiple negative:

> and I have *not* written but a small part of the things which I saw (1 Ne. 14:28) > ø (1920)

avoiding the subjunctive *were* when referring to future time:

> he spake unto them concerning the Jews how that after they *were* destroyed (1 Ne. 10:2–3) > *should be* (1837)

Finally, there are examples of direct addition to the text:

avoiding potential misunderstandings:

> me thought I saw ^ a dark and dreary wilderness (1 Ne. 8:4) > *in my dream* (1837)

clarifying doctrinal issues:

> the virgin which thou seest is the mother of ^ God (1 Ne. 11:18) > *the Son of* (1837)

editorial comments:

> and are come forth out of the waters of Judah ^ (1 Ne. 20:1) > *(or out of the waters of baptism)* (1840)

"TIGHT" OR "LOOSE" CONTROL
OVER THE TRANSLATION?

This supposed problem of grammatical "errors" leads directly to the question of whether the Book of Mormon text represents the Lord's actual language to Joseph Smith or simply Joseph Smith's own translation using his own language. In other words, does the Book of Mormon represent a direct and exact revelation from the Lord, or did the ideas come into Joseph's mind and then he put them into his own words? If the revelation was specific and exact, then there would definitely be some value in

having a text that would directly represent the original language. Of course, from a linguistic point of view, a reader might adopt the second position—that the specific language of the Book of Mormon is not directly from the Lord—but still wish to have the text in Joseph Smith's own "impure" and "ungrammatical" language.

It might be worthwhile to consider in more detail the question of loose versus tight control over the translation. There is evidence both for and against the idea of tight control.

EVIDENCE FOR TIGHT CONTROL

Statements on how the translation proceeded. Unfortunately, neither Joseph Smith nor Oliver Cowdery have told us much on how the translation took place. But four firsthand statements by observers and participants show remarkable agreement:[21]

> *Joseph Knight* (between 1833 and 1847): Now the way he translated was he put the urim and thummim into his hat and Darkned his Eyes then he would take a sentance and it would apper in Brite Roman Letters. Then he would tell the writer and he would write it. Then that would go away the next sentance would Come and so on. But if it was not Spelt rite it would not go away till it was rite, so we see it was marvelous. Thus was the hol translated.[22]

> *Emma Smith* (1879): In writing for your father I frequently wrote day after day, often sitting at the table close by him, he sitting with his face buried in his hat, with the stone in it, and dictating hour after hour with nothing between us. Q. Had he not a book or manuscript from which he read, or dictated to you? A. He had neither manuscript nor book to read from. Q. Could he not have had, and you not know it? A. If he had anything of the kind he could not have concealed it from me. Q. Are you sure that he had the plates at the time you were writing for him? A. The plates often lay on the table without any attempt at concealment, wrapped in a small linen table cloth, which I had given him to fold them in. I once felt of the plates, as they thus lay on the table, tracing their outline and shape. They seemed to be pliable like thick paper, and would rustle with a metalic sound when the edges were moved by the thumb, as one does sometimes thumb the edges of a book. Q. Where did father and Oliver Cowdery write? A. Oliver Cowdery and your father wrote in the room where I was at work. Q. Could not father have dictated the Book of Mormon to you, Oliver Cowdery and the others who wrote for him, after having first written it, or having first read it out of some book? A. Joseph Smith could neither write nor dictate a coherent and well-worded letter; let alone dictating a book like the Book of Mormon. And, though I was an active participant in the scenes that transpired, and was present during the translation of the plates, and had cognizance of things as they transpired, it is marvelous to me, "a marvel and a wonder," as much so as to any one else.[23]

David Whitmer (1887): Joseph Smith would put the seer stone into a hat, and put his face in the hat, drawing it closely around his face to exclude the light; and in the darkness the spiritual light would shine. A piece of something resembling parchment would appear, and on that appeared the writing. One character at a time would appear, and under it was the interpretation in English. Brother Joseph would read off the English to Oliver Cowdery, who was his principal scribe, and when it was written down and repeated to Brother Joseph to see if it was correct, then it would disappear, and another character with the interpretation would appear.[24]

Elizabeth Anne Whitmer Cowdery Johnson (David Whitmer's sister, Oliver Cowdery's wife; 1870): I cheerfully certify that I was familiar with the manner of Joseph Smith's translating the book of Mormon. He translated the most of it at my Father's house. And I often sat by and saw and heard them translate and write for hours together. Joseph never had a curtain drawn between him and his scribe while he was translating.[25] He would place the director in his hat, and then place his face in his hat, so as to exclude the light, and then . . . [26]

All four accounts mention an instrument of translation in a hat. All refer to Joseph Smith's ability to dictate extensively without using the gold plates or any other physical text. On the other hand, we cannot automatically accept everything in these statements. The testimonies of these witnesses are only valid with respect to what they actually witnessed. They obviously saw Joseph Smith translating, but they could not actually know what Joseph himself saw in the hat since they themselves did not translate.

Spelling of names. David Whitmer and Joseph Knight both refer to control over the spelling, but this seems to be only true for the spelling of names in the Book of Mormon. In an 1875 interview, Whitmer said that Joseph Smith's spelling out words was restricted to names, that Joseph "was utterly unable to pronounce many of the names which the magic power of the Urim and Thummim revealed and therefore spelled them out in syllables, and the more erudite scribe put them together."[27] Actually, Joseph Smith probably spelled out names letter by letter rather than syllable by syllable (although it is quite possible that David Whitmer used the term "syllable" to mean "letter," the smallest unit of writing).[28]

This spelling out of names is also supported by Emma Smith in an 1856 interview:

When my husband was translating the Book of Mormon, I wrote a part of it, as he dictated each sentence, word for word, and when he came to proper names he could not pronounce, or long words, he spelled them out, and while I was writing them, if I made a mistake in spelling, he would stop me and correct my spelling, although it was

> impossible for him to see how I was writing them down at the time. Even the word Sarah he could not pronounce at first, but had to spell it, and I would pronounce it for him.[29]

This spelling out of names would explain, for example, why *Nephi* is spelled with *ph* and not *f,* or why so many names in the Book of Mormon end in the letter *i,* a rather rare spelling in English for a final vowel in multisyllabic words.

Nonetheless, it also appears that Joseph Smith did not continue to spell frequently occurring names, with the result that spelling variation of hard-to-spell names (like *Amalickiah*) does occur in the manuscripts. But for most names in the Book of Mormon there is little or no variation. It is obvious from the manuscripts that spelling variation of common words was allowed. But there does seem to be spelling control over at least the first occurrence of Book of Mormon names.

Semitic textual evidence. In a number of his books, Hugh Nibley has provided many examples of Semitic and other Near Eastern names and phrases in the Book of Mormon.[30] The phrases give evidence for control at the word level, while once more the names provide evidence for spelling control. As an example, Nibley argues that the *ph* spelling of the name *Nephi* shows an Egyptian influence.[31] We also have the work of John W. Welch on chiasmus in the Book of Mormon.[32] His examples demonstrate a tight control on the order of specific words and phrases.

In addition, there are some very interesting textual relationships between Book of Mormon passages and corresponding biblical passages. Consider, for instance, the case of the missing *the* in 2 Nephi 13:18–23:

> In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of tinkling ornaments, and cauls, and round tires like the moon; the chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers; the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings; the rings, and nose jewels; the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins; the glasses, and the fine linen, and ^ hoods, and the veils.

(Here the text is based on the printer's manuscript and the 1830 edition.) When we compare this passage with the corresponding verses in Isaiah 3 (KJV), we note that the occurrences and nonoccurrences of the little word *the* are identical, except that the Book of Mormon has *the* missing before *hoods* at the end of verse 23. Of course, this missing *the* does appear in the Masoretic text (the traditional Hebrew Bible), but interestingly it is missing in a number of textual sources: in the Vatican version of the

Septuagint[33] and (according to the apparatus in the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text*) in some of the catena quotations from the Septuagint, in the Syriac text, and in the Aramaic Targums. Of all the *the*'s that could have been "accidentally" deleted in this long list, Joseph Smith comes up with the one that is missing in part of the biblical textual tradition.

EVIDENCE FOR LOOSE CONTROL

The most common argument against tight control is that Joseph Smith's grammar is bad:

> *B. H. Roberts:* If the Book of Mormon is a real translation instead of a word-for-word bringing over from one language into another, and it is insisted that the divine instrument, Urim and Thummim, did all, and the prophet nothing—at least nothing more than to read off the translation made by Urim and Thummim—then the divine instrument is responsible for such errors in grammar and diction as occur. But this is to assign responsibility for errors in language to a divine instrumentality, which amounts to assigning such errors to God. But that is unthinkable, not to say blasphemous. Also, if it be contended that the language of the Book of Mormon, word for word, and letter for letter, was given to the prophet by direct inspiration of God, acting upon his mind, then again God is made responsible for the language errors in the Book of Mormon—a thing unthinkable.[34]

> *Richard L. Anderson:* But many anti-Mormons have seized on the implications of going further: that is, if Joseph Smith only dictated divinely given English from his viewing instrument, then God is the author of some bad grammar in the original.[35]

These arguments assume that the Lord speaks only "proper" English, not Joseph Smith's own language. But which variety of "proper" English does God speak? The King's English, Received Pronunciation, Network English, the English of some contemporary grammar guru, or according to the usage of Orson Pratt, James E. Talmage, or Bruce R. McConkie? There is no evidence that God himself prefers one variety of English over another (or, for that matter, one language over another). In fact, there is evidence that the Lord would have spoken to Joseph Smith in Joseph's own language:

> Behold, I am God and have spoken it; these commandments are of me, and were given unto my servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding. (D&C 1:24)

This same view was expressed by George A. Smith, first counselor to Brigham Young:

The Book of Mormon was denounced as ungrammatical. An argument was raised that if it had been translated by the gift and power of God it would have been strictly grammatical. . . . When the Lord reveals anything to men He reveals it in language that accords with their own. If any of you were to converse with an angel, and you used strictly grammatical language he would do the same. But if you used two negatives in a sentence the heavenly messenger would use language to correspond with your understanding, and this very objection to the Book of Mormon is an evidence in its favor.[36]

A number of writers have referred to D&C 9:8 in support of loose control:[37] "You must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right." But the phrases "study it out in your mind" and "you shall feel that it is right" do not necessarily imply a loose control over the text. Joseph Smith had to "study it out in his mind" till he got it right!

Related to this interpretation is the belief that Joseph Smith used his King James Bible to help him translate biblical passages.[38] Yet there is no direct evidence for this proposal; in fact, it is contradicted by Emma Smith's statement that Joseph "had neither manuscript nor book to read from." Given the statements of those who observed the translation, it seems more reasonable that it was the Lord himself who chose to quote from the King James Version when it agreed with the Book of Mormon.

Finally, we must recognize that Joseph Smith permitted editing of the Book of Mormon. In fact, he is probably directly responsible for many of the editorial changes that are found in the second and third editions. The title page of the 1837 edition states that this edition was "corrected by Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery." In addition, Parley P. Pratt and John Goodson, in the preface to this edition, explain: "the whole has been carefully reexamined and compared with the original manuscripts, by elder Joseph Smith, Jr. the translator of the book of Mormon, assisted by the present printer, brother O. Cowdery, who formerly wrote the greatest portion of the same, as dictated by brother Smith." And in the 1840 edition the title page indicates that the text has been "carefully revised by the translator."

But there is another way to interpret the grammatical editing of the Book of Mormon—namely, Joseph Smith allowed the Book of Mormon to be "translated" from its original language into standard English. In other words, Joseph Smith was perfectly willing to let the Book of Mormon appear in another variety of English (that is, standard English), just as the Church today is

willing to translate the scriptures into English-based pidgins and creoles (and numerous other languages) so that "every man shall hear the fulness of the gospel in his own tongue and in his own language" (D&C 90:11).

THE FARMS *BOOK OF MORMON CRITICAL TEXT*

The FARMS critical edition is an important accomplishment. It represents a tremendous amount of work, and we are indebted to FARMS and especially Robert F. Smith, the compiler and editor, for preparing it. Anyone who is interested in the original text of the Book of Mormon or in its editorial history can profit from the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text*. Most important, this critical edition marks the first time in the history of the Book of Mormon text that the general reader can find evidence for how the text has changed over time and evaluate alternative readings of the text.

The FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text* brings together a wealth of information important to any textual study of the Book of Mormon. Consider the sample reproduced as figure 1 on page 57.

The FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text* can be characterized as follows:

1. the text is completely capitalized;
2. each line of the text contains a single phrase (as in the Washburn Bible[39]), which implies some kind of punctuation or an indication of a clause or phrase ending;
3. no regular punctuation marks (or even apostrophes) occur in the text (which makes sense since the original and printer's manuscripts originally had virtually no punctuation);
4. the pagination and chapter headings from the 1830 edition are included in square brackets in the text; the symbol ¶ represents the original 1830 paragraphing;
5. the left margin refers to the standard chapter and verse numbers; the speaker is also identified;
6. the text contains raised footnote numbers that refer the reader to the apparatus;
7. the text contains special symbols (for example, *, @, #) that refer the reader to suggested dates listed at the bottom of the page;
8. the apparatus contains different kinds of notes (textual variants, scriptural cross-references, and commentary), sometimes combined in the same footnote;
9. textual variants from all major editions are referred to by means of a lemma system (that is, a reference system that repeats "the text in full in the apparatus before indicating the variant forms, each one in full"[40]).

```
                            I NEPHI                              4

1 01:01 a NEPHI:N1ST    ¶ I NEPHI HAVING BEEN BORN OF GOODLY PARENTS²⁷
                        THEREFORE I WAS TAUGHT SOMEWHAT
                        IN ALL THE LEARNING OF MY FATHER²⁸
1 01:01 b NEPHI:N1ST    AND HAVING SEEN MANY AFFLICTIONS
                        IN THE COURSE OF MY DAYS
                        NEVERTHELESS
                        HAVING BEEN HIGHLY FAVORED OF THE LORD²⁹
1 01:01 c NEPHI:N1ST    IN ALL MY DAYS
                        YEA HAVING HAD A GREAT KNOWLEDGE OF THE GOODNESS
1 01:01 d NEPHI:N1ST    AND THE³⁰ MYSTERIES OF GOD³¹
                        THEREFORE
                        I MAKE A RECORD OF MY PROCEEDINGS IN MY DAYS
1 01:02 a NEPHI:N1ST    YEA I MAKE A RECORD IN THE LANGUAGE OF MY FATHER
                        WHICH CONSISTS OF THE LEARNING OF THE JEWS
1 01:02 b NEPHI:N1ST    AND THE LANGUAGE OF THE EGYPTIANS³²
1 01:03 a NEPHI:N1ST    AND I KNOW THAT THE RECORD WHICH I MAKE
                        TO BE³³ TRUE³⁴
1 01:03 b NEPHI:N1ST    AND I MAKE IT WITH MINE OWN HAND³⁵
                        AND I MAKE IT ACCORDING TO MY KNOWLEDGE
1 01:04 a NEPHI:N1ST    ¶ FOR IT CAME TO PASS³⁶
                        IN THE ₅COMMENCEMENT OF THE [FIRST YEAR
1 01:04 b NEPHI:N1ST    OF THE]³⁷ REIGN OF ZEDEKIAH KING OF JUDAH
                        MY FATHER LEHI HAVING DWELT AT JERUSALEM
1 01:04 c NEPHI:N1ST    IN ALL HIS DAYS
```

27. cf Ps 16:6, Jer 3:19, "goodly heritage" (KJ marg rdg: "an heritage of glory," "...beauty").

28. cf Enos 1, Mosiah 9:1, Alma 5:3.

29. ||Lk 1:28, "highly favoured, the Lord is with thee"; **favored** P 1830 1837 1840 1841 1920 1981, RLDS 1908; **favoured** 1852 1879.

30. **the** P 1830 1837 1840 1852 1879 1920 1981, RLDS 1908; deleted 1911TCC typo.

31. ||I Cor 4:1, "the mysteries of God"; cf Rev 10:7.

32. cf Acts 7:22, "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians."

33. **to be** P 1830; **is** Pᶜ 1837 1840 1852 1879 1920 1981, RLDS 1874 1908.

34. ||III Ne 5:18; cf Jn 8:14, "my record is true"; 19:35, 21:24; III Jn 12, "and ye know that our record is true."

35. ||I Cor 16:21, Gal 6:11, II Thess 3:17, Phlm 19, "with mine own hand"; cf Book of Abraham, explanatory heading, "with his own hand"; Judg 7:2, I Sam 25:33.

36. **it came to pass** (1398 times in BofM/ 388 in OT/ 65 in NT); cf 14:1.

37. **first year of the** Pᶜ 1830 thru 1981, RLDS 1874 1908; not in P; cf II Ki 24:17-8.

*accession 10 Nisan (22 April) 597 B.C.

Fig. 1. 1 Nephi 1:1, reproduced from the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text*.

The FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text* is an important beginning; having the text before us with editorial decisions already made permits us to evaluate these editorial decisions and consider alternative ways of representing the critical text. But as in all critical editions of important documents, the first edition is in many respects preliminary. With this idea in mind, let us consider some aspects of the critical text that might be improved.

PROBLEMS WITH THE FARMS
BOOK OF MORMON CRITICAL TEXT

The text is sometimes difficult to read. The use of only capital letters in the text is the main cause of difficulty, making it look too much like old-fashioned computer printout. (In fact, the text was constructed from an early computer-based text of the 1830 edition; FARMS decided it was too difficult to convert the text into normal lower and upper case.)

Sometimes the lack of standard punctuation, especially the missing apostrophes, causes difficulty in reading the text. Consider the following example from Alma 46:24:

EVEN AS THIS REMNANT OF GARMENT OF MY SONS[261]

The modern reader readily interprets this as the plural *sons,* yet the context shows that Jacob is speaking of his son Joseph. So the correct form should be *son's.* (In fact, *sons* appears in both O and P, with the consequence that in printed editions before 1849, *sons* rather than *son's* occurred.)

Quoted passages are full of symbols that interfere with the readability of the text. Consider the page for 2 Nephi 13:6–10, which quotes from Isaiah 3 (see figure 2 on page 59).

The date system also interferes with the text, sometimes creating unintended "words," such as *aways* (see figure 3, a reproduction of 3 Nephi 1:26, on page 59).

Occasionally a raised footnote interferes with the preceding line. In the following example, a raised 730 footnote makes FULLFILED look like FULLEILED (see figure 4, a reproduction of 3 Nephi 20:12, on page 59).

Of course, these problems are trivial. But there is a very serious difficulty with the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text:* it relies heavily on secondary sources and not on a systematic examination of the original manuscript. The FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text* is based on John L. Hilton's and Kenneth D. Jenkins's computerized text of the Book of Mormon, a text constructed by comparing the 1830 edition with the printer's

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AND LET (NOT) THIS RUIN (COME)628 UNDER THY HAND
IN THAT DAY SHALL629 HE SWEAR SAYING630
I WILL NOT BE (A) HEALER
FOR IN MY HOUSE (THERE) IS NEITHER BREAD NOR CLOTHING
MAKE ME NOT A RULER OF THE PEOPLE
FOR JERUSALEM IS RUINED
AND JUDAH IS FALLEN
BECAUSE THEIR TONGUE(S)631
AND THEIR DOINGS
(HAVE BEEN)632 AGAINST THE LORD
TO PROVOKE THE EYES OF HIS GLORY633
¶ THE SHEW OF THEIR COUNTENANCE
DOTH WITNESS634 AGAINST THEM
AND (DOTH) DECLARE THEIR SIN636 (TO BE EVEN) AS SODOM
(AND)635 THEY (CAN)NOT~HIDE IT
WO637 UNTO THEIR SOUL(S)638
FOR639 THEY HAVE REWARDED EVIL UNTO.THEMSELVES
SAY (UN)TO640 THE RIGHTEOUS
THAT IT (IS)640 WELL WITH (THEM)641
FOR THEY SHALL EAT THE FRUIT OF THEIR DOINGS
```

Fig. 2. 2 Nephi 13:6–10, reproduced from the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text.*

```
AND THUS THE NINETY AND SECOND YEAR DID PASS AWAYS
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Fig. 3. 3 Nephi 1:26, reproduced from the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text.*

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WHEN THEY SHALL BE FULLFILLED
THEN IS THE FULLFILLING730 OF THE COVENANT
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Fig. 4. 3 Nephi 20:12, reproduced from the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text.*

manuscript. About a fourth of the original manuscript is extant, but unfortunately Hilton and Jenkins decided to ignore the original manuscript in constructing their text:

> For most accurate "wordprint" testing we would want Joseph's dictated Book of Mormon words. These are of course not available nor is the original written manuscript, since it was mostly destroyed. Therefore the "Printer's" manuscript, a hand written copy of the first written manuscript is presumed to be the next closest complete extant text.[41]

Of course, portions of the original manuscript are available. Nor can we assume that the printer's manuscript is an exact copy of the original manuscript. The printer's manuscript introduces many changes, although most of these differences deal with spelling and capitalization.[42] The FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text* does include evidence from the original manuscript, but this evidence is largely based on secondary sources, such as Stan Larson's master's thesis,[43] and a selective reading of the original manuscript.

A systematic comparison of the original manuscript with the printer's manuscript and the printed editions of the Book of Mormon provides a number of substantial differences that are completely missing from the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text*. In these examples the FARMS text follows the printer's manuscript and makes no mention of the original reading. Consider the following sampling from the small plates of Nephi—first the correct text based on the original manuscript and then the change that occurred in making the printer's manuscript:

First Nephi

2:11	and this they said *that* he had done > ø
2:16	wherefore I *cried* unto the Lord > *did cry*
7:1	the Lord spake unto him again ^ > *saying*
7:1	his sons should take daughters to wife that ^ might raise up seed > *they*
13:12	I looked and beheld a man among the Gentiles which *were* separated from the seed of my brethren > *was*
13:24	it contained the fulness of the gospel of the Lord of whom the twelve apostles *bore* record and they *bore* record according to the truth > *bear, bear*
13:26	which is the most abominable *of* all other churches > *above*
15:36	whose fruit is . . . most desirable *of* all other fruits > *above*
17:50	if he should command me that I should say unto this water be thou earth *and* it *shall* be earth > ø, *should*
18:11	the Lord *suffered* it > *did suffer*
20:6	thou hast *heard and seen* all this > *seen and heard*
22:8	it is likened unto the being *nursed* by the Gentiles > *nourished*[44]

Second Nephi

    1:5   the Lord hath *consecrated* this land unto me > *covenanted*
            (compare v. 7: "this land is consecrated unto him")

These changes, all scribal errors, entered the textual tradition when
Oliver Cowdery made the printer's manuscript, with the result that
these errors are found in every printed edition of the Book of
Mormon. These errors also occur in the FARMS *Book of Mormon
Critical Text* because it too does not rely on a systematic reading of
the original manuscript.[45]

PROBLEMS WITH THE APPARATUS

    The apparatus system in the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical
Text* is frequently confusing, especially when the lemma refer-
encing system combines variants to save space. The referencing
system needs to keep variants separate in order to facilitate the
counting of different types of variation. Consider this example
from Alma 47:34:

AND ALSO THEY WHICH[331] WERE WITH HIM

331. **also they which** O P 1830; **also they who** P^c; **all they who**
1837 thru 1911TCC, RLDS 1908; **all them who** 1920 1981 (**all**
typo).

Three separate changes are involved in this example:

which to *who* in the 1837 and all subsequent editions

also to *all,* a misreading that entered in the 1837 edition and is found
in all subsequent editions

they to *them,* a usage change in 1920 and in the subsequent 1981
edition

    Sometimes the lemma system in the apparatus is difficult to
decipher. For example, textual insertions can be misinterpreted as
cases of replacement, as in 1 Nephi 1:11:

AND BADE HIM THAT HE SHOULD READ[50]

50. **should read** P 1830 thru 1981, RLDS 1908; **it** P^c; cf Alma 56:48.

The word *it* is added after *should read; it* does not replace *should
read*.

    Finally, the apparatus needs to refer to possible variations in
punctuation. Consider Alma 42:16 from the second edition of the
FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text:*

NOW REPENTANCE COULD NOT COME UNTO MEN
EXCEPT THERE WERE A PUNISHMENT
WHICH ALSO WAS ETERNAL
AS THE LIFE OF THE SOUL SHOULD BE
AFFIXED OPPOSITE TO THE PLAN OF HAPPINESS
WHICH WAS AS ETERNAL ALSO
AS THE LIFE OF THE SOUL

The phrasing of the text implies the punctuation "as the life of the soul should be, affixed." This punctuation occurs in all printed editions of the Book of Mormon. On the other hand, the first edition of the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text* phrases this passage so that "should be" goes with "affixed" rather than "soul":

WHICH ALSO WAS ETERNAL AS THE LIFE OF THE SOUL
SHOULD BE AFFIXED OPPOSITE TO THE PLAN OF HAPPINESS

In other words, the text of the first FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text* implies a different punctuation: "soul, should be affixed." This is undoubtedly correct, especially in light of the last phrase in the verse: "which was as eternal also as the life of the soul." In any event, the critical edition must show important punctuation variants such as this one.[46]

But the most serious difficulty with the apparatus is that not all the variants are marked. The editing of the Book of Mormon has not been completely consistent, and therefore by only giving a sampling of the variants, the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text* makes it impossible to accurately study the language and textual development of the Book of Mormon. As an example of this problem, consider the massive 1837 change of nearly all cases of *which* to *who(m)* or *that* when the referent is a human being. One example that is marked in the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text* comes from the Sermon on the Mount in 3 Nephi 13:9 (compare Matt. 6:9):

OUR FATHER WHICH[447] ART IN HEAVEN

447. **which** P 1830 (=KJ); **who** P^c 1837 thru 1981, RLDS 1908.

But many other cases of changing *which* to *who(m)* or *that* are left unmarked in the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text*.[47] For example, in Alma 43:11 we have two examples of this:

YEA AND THEY ALSO KNEW
THE EXTREME HATRED OF THE LAMANITES
TOWARDS THEIR BRETHREN
WHICH WERE THE PEOPLE OF ANTI NEPHI LEHI
WHICH WERE CALLED THE PEOPLE OF AMMON

Correspondingly, in some cases the reader might think this change has been made, but in reality it hasn't. In the following example from Alma 22:1, the probable reason for leaving *which* unchanged is that editors have interpreted the referent to be "the house of the king" rather than "the king":

> HE WAS LED BY THE SPIRIT TO THE LAND OF NEPHI
> EVEN TO THE HOUSE OF THE KING
> WHICH WAS OVER ALL THE LAND
>
> <no apparatus>

Other confusing examples of unchanged and unmarked *which*'s can be found in Alma 46:27, 49:23; 3 Nephi 10:2.

Another example of confusion occurs in Alma 5:25. In this verse the original phrase "such an one" was simplified to "such" beginning in the 1837 edition, yet the same phrase was left untouched in verses 24, 28, 29, and 31 of the same chapter. The probable motivation for the change in verse 25 is the plural referent that occurs later on in that verse:

24 DO YE SUPPOSE THAT SUCH AN ONE CAN HAVE A PLACE
25 YE CANNOT SUPPOSE THAT SUCH AN ONE[269] CAN HAVE PLACE
    IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN[270]
    BUT THEY SHALL BE CAST OUT
28 AND SUCH AN ONE HATH NOT ETERNAL LIFE
29 FOR SUCH AN ONE IS NOT FOUND GUILTLESS
31 WO[279] UNTO SUCH AN ONE

To be consistent all examples of "such an one" should have been changed to "such." Unfortunately, the reader of the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text* cannot be confident that other examples of "such an one" were not also changed to "such."

The reader of a critical edition needs to be sure about the possible variants. The solution is to mark every change that can be considered a significant variant. (Since one of the main objectives of the proposed critical edition is to produce a text that represents as closely as possible what Joseph Smith dictated, a variant's significance will be determined by variance from what Joseph Smith dictated.) In this way, the reader can be sure that if the apparatus contains no indication of variance, then there is no significant variance in the text. Moreover, the marking of each variant allows for an accurate calculation (for example, by computer) of the frequency of different variants; it also permits the reader to locate all the places where a particular change has been made, as well as all the places where it hasn't.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A SECOND CRITICAL EDITION

I would submit the following goals for a critical edition of the Book of Mormon: first, readability of the text; second, establishment (to the degree possible) of the original text of the Book of Mormon as dictated by Joseph Smith; and third, an apparatus that contains all the significant variants in the manuscripts and the important editions. These goals lead to the following specific recommendations:

(1) The variants listed in the apparatus should be restricted to the manuscripts and major editions: (a) those that involved Joseph Smith (O, P, 1830, 1837, 1840); (b) subsequent printings for the LDS church which established readings that have persisted (1841, 1849, 1852, 1879, 1905, 1911, 1920, 1981), as well as the important RLDS 1908 edition (which relies heavily on the printer's manuscript). We can probably ignore insignificant and idiosyncratic textual variants (such as obvious typos) that have not persisted.

(2) The critical text should reflect Joseph Smith's language, as far as it can be determined. The major sources for determining Joseph Smith's language will, of course, be the original manuscript and the printer's manuscript. Generally, variants from the published editions (including later editorializing) will appear in the apparatus.

(3) There is a need for an accurate collation of textual evidence. Rather than relying on visual comparison, the collation should be established by use of a computer. First, both the original and printer's manuscripts should be transcribed independently by at least two different individuals, then the consistency of their transcriptions should be checked by computer. Second, the printed editions should be put into computable-readable form (by the Kurzweil or some other text-reading system). Finally, the computer should be used to find all the textual variants in the manuscripts and printed editions. (A transcript of each of the manuscripts should be published, and these and the major editions should be on computer for future detailed study, so the critical edition can be limited to textual variants of significance to avoid the tedious task of including every spelling variant or typographic error.)

(4) In order to establish the critical text, an important study will be to compare the printer's manuscript with what remains of the original manuscript. At least three main correctors (or editors) have worked on the printer's manuscript: Oliver Cowdery (the scribe), John H. Gilbert (the compositor for the 1830 printing), and

the editors of the 1837 edition. It is particularly important to know how frequently the corrections in P restore the text of O. A careful comparison will then allow us to determine the general reliability of corrections in P when O is lacking.

(5) Conjectures will normally appear in the apparatus. In a few cases, conjectures may appear in the text, but only when no reasonable explanation for the manuscript form can be maintained and the conjecture is well motivated.

(6) In order to improve the readability of the critical text, standard spellings should be used as long as those spellings make no difference in recovering Joseph Smith's language. Some spellings in the manuscripts which reflect no (perceived) pronunciation differences should occur in the apparatus. For instance, Alma 34:39 would read as follows:

<div align="center">

that ye may not be *led* away

led O1 P1 1830&] **lead** O P

</div>

(Numbers after O and P refer to the corrector. P1 refers to the first corrector of the printer's manuscript—that is, the corrector for the 1830 edition. On the other hand, P2 will refer to the correctors for the 1837 edition.)

(7) The text should reflect Joseph Smith's language. We should include his "bad" grammar and those spellings that might represent his (or possibly his scribes') pronunciation. Some examples of such spellings include the following:

GRIEVIOUS /gríviəs/ 'grievous' (Mosiah 7:15)
ARIVEN /ərívən/ 'arrived' (Mosiah 10:15)
FRAID /fréid/ 'afraid' (Alma 47:2)
MELCHESIDEK /mɛlkɛ́zədɪk/ (still pronounced this way in the LDS
        church) 'Melchizedek' (Alma 13:17)
TREMENDEEOUS [O] TREMENDIOUS [P] /trɪméndiəs/ 'tremen-
        dous' (Alma 28:2)
MASSACREED /mǽsəkrɪd/ 'massacred' (Alma 48:24)
ATTACKTED /ətǽktəd/ 'attacked' (Alma 59:5)
DROWNDED /dráundəd/ 'drowned' (1 Ne. 4:2)
GOVERMENT /gə́vərmənt/ 'government' (Alma 60:24)
HEIGHTH /háitθ/ 'height' (Hel. 14:23)

(The pronunciation symbols are based on the International Phonetic Alphabet.)

(8) The margins should contain the following helps: (a) biblical references when the Book of Mormon quotes directly from the Bible; (b) page numbers from the 1830 edition.

(9) In order to enhance readability, the text should be written in the standard text style of today. Both upper and lower case should

be used, with standard capitalization of names and sentence-initial words. The chapter and verse numbers of the current 1981 edition can be put in the margin (or perhaps in an unobtrusive form within the text). The text should be set in paragraphs (but not necessarily the paragraphing of the 1830 edition).

(10) Again for reasons of readability, the text should avoid the use of critical marks. Compared to the New Testament textual tradition, the textual variance in the Book of Mormon is not that extensive. The apparatus itself can refer directly to the text, as in Alfred Rahlfs's *Septuaginta*.[48]

(11) The 1920 and 1981 chapter descriptions should be ignored. Only the descriptions that Joseph Smith actually dictated should be included (for example, the summary that introduces 1 Nephi). The headings added to the top of the pages in the original manuscript can also be ignored.

(12) The punctuation should basically follow the 1981 punctuation except in cases where other punctuation may be more reasonable; the apparatus should refer to cases of punctuation that make a difference in meaning.

(13) There should be no commentary in the apparatus, except as it helps to establish the text. No dates should be listed since this is a form of commentary. Determining the critical text is a well-defined task, but providing commentary is an open-ended process and is continually subject to revision. Extensive biblical and scholarly references belong in commentaries, not in critical texts. Undoubtedly, a helpful companion to the critical edition would be a textual commentary, much like Bruce M. Metzger's one for the Greek New Testament of the United Bible Societies.[49]

(14) The text itself should contain no indication of how it compares to the King James Version. Instead, textual comparisons with the KJV should be restricted to the apparatus. In fact, I propose a separate apparatus for comparisons with the KJV and biblical manuscripts, especially since these sources play no direct role in determining the original text of the Book of Mormon.

In conclusion, I provide two examples of the proposed critical edition. First, we have the opening of 1 Nephi.

1:1   I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents, therefore
         I was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father;
         and having seen many afflictions in the course of my
         days, nevertheless, having been highly favored of the
         Lord in all my days; yea, having had a great knowledge
         of the goodness and the mysteries of God, therefore I
2   make a record of my proceedings in my days. Yea, I make
         a record in the language of my father, which consists of
         the learning of the Jew and the language of the Egyptians.
3   And I know that the record which I make *to be* true; and
         I make it with mine own hand; and I make it according to
         my knowledge.
4   For it came to pass in the commencement *of the first
         year* of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah (my father,
         Lehi, having dwelt at Jerusalem in all his days); and in
         that same year there came many prophets, prophesying
         unto the people that they must repent, or *the* great city
5   Jerusalem must be destroyed. Wherefore it came to pass
         that my father, Lehi, as he went forth prayed unto the
         Lord, yea, even with all his heart, in behalf of his people.
6   And it came to pass as he prayed unto the Lord, there
         came a pillar of fire and dwelt upon a rock before him;
         and he saw and heard much; and because of the things
         which he saw and heard he did quake and tremble
         exceedingly.

1:3 to be P 1830] is P2 1837& ‖ 4 of the first year P1 1830&]
ø P | the P1 1830&] that P

Second, we have a passage from 2 Nephi which quotes from Isaiah.
In this second example, I provide two apparatuses; the first gives
the textual evidence, the second the KJV comparison. In the
comparison I first list the Book of Mormon form, then the King
James form.

13:9   The *shew* of their countenance doth witness against
         them, and doth declare their sin to be even as Sodom, and
         they cannot hide it. *Woe* unto their souls, for they have
10   rewarded evil unto themselves! Say unto the righteous
         that it is well with them; for they shall eat the fruit of their
11   doings. *Woe* unto the wicked, for they shall perish; for the
         reward of their hands shall be upon them!

<textual apparatus>

13:9 shew P 1830 KJ] show P2 1837& | woe *spelling* KJ] wo
BM ‖ 11 woe *spelling* KJ] wo BM

<KJV comparison>

13:9 doth²] they | to be even] ø | and²] ø | cannot hide it] hide it
not | souls] soul ‖ 10 say] + ye | unto] to | is] shall be | them]
him ‖ 11 for they shall perish] it shall be ill with him | their]
his | them] him

NOTES

[1]*Book of Mormon Critical Text: A Tool for Scholarly Reference,* 3 vols. (Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1984–87).

[2]Incredible as it may seem, when FARMS first announced the publication of its critical text of the Book of Mormon, a national wire service reported that a text critical of the Book of Mormon had just been published (John W. Welch, personal communication).

[3]In producing a text, an author may go through a number of drafts and later revisions until a final version is obtained. In such a case, the "original" form of the critical text usually refers to this finished text, not the first draft.

[4]Kurt Aland et al., eds., *Novum Testamentum Graece,* 26th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1979).

[5]Karl Elliger and Wilhelm Rudolph, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1983), xi.

[6]Lucy Mack Smith, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, and His Progenitors for Many Generations* (Liverpool: S. W. Richards, 1853), 142–43. Nonetheless, there is evidence that others helped Oliver Cowdery in producing the printer's manuscript: not all of the printer's manuscript is in his hand (see Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development* [Independence, Mo.: Herald Publishing House, 1969], 27).

[7]The surviving portions of the original manuscript are from 1 Nephi 2 through 2 Nephi 1 and from Alma 22 through Helaman 3, all with lacunae. In addition there are fragments from 2 Nephi 4–5; Alma 10–13, 19; and 3 Nephi 19–20, 26–27. For a summary of the textual sources for the Book of Mormon, see Lyle L. Fletcher, "Pronouns of Address in the Book of Mormon" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1988), 233–51.

[8]See, for example, Wayne A. Larsen and Alvin C. Rencher, "Who Wrote the Book of Mormon? An Analysis of Wordprints," in Noel B. Reynolds, ed., *Book of Mormon Authorship: New Light on Ancient Origins* (Provo: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1982), 157–88.

[9]For example, in Mosiah 24, four out of eleven occurrences of this phrase have been removed (at the beginning of verses 11, 12, 20, and 25). See also Stanley R. Larson, "A Study of Some Textual Variations in the Book of Mormon Comparing the Original and the Printer's Manuscripts, and the 1830, the 1837, and the 1840 Editions" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1974), 267; and Howard, *Restoration Scriptures,* 38.

[10]See, for example, Sidney B. Sperry, "Hebrew Idioms in the Book of Mormon," *Improvement Era* 57 (October 1954): 703, 728–29; John A. Tvedtnes, "Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon," *Brigham Young University Studies* 11 (Autumn 1970): 50–60; Melvin Deloy Pack, "Possible Lexical Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1973); Angela Crowell, "Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon," *Zarahemla Record,* 17–18 (Summer and Fall 1982): 1–7, 16.

[11]See Fletcher, "Pronouns of Address," 249–51.

[12]Dean C. Jessee, comp. and ed., *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1984), 8.

[13]The text of this passage is based on the original and printer's manuscripts; later editors have not altered the switching between *thou* and *ye* in this passage.

[14]Fletcher, "Pronouns of Address," 61, 71.

[15]Ibid., 61.

[16]Ibid., 71.

[17]Ibid., 92–103.

[18]Ibid., 94.

[19]Ibid., 166–93.

[20]*The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary,* 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).

[21]For additional statements, mostly secondhand, see Richard S. Van Wagoner and Steven C. Walker, "Joseph Smith: 'The Gift of Seeing,' " *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 15 (Summer 1982): 48–68; Edward H. Ashment, "The Book of Mormon—A Literal Translation?" *Sunstone* 5 (March-April 1980): 10–14; and Frederick D. Archibald, "Observations on Translation," *Sunstone* 5 (July-August 1980): 3.

[22]Written between 1833 and 1847 (the year of Joseph Knight's death); Dean C. Jessee, "Joseph Knight's Recollection of Early Mormon History," *BYU Studies* 17 (Autumn 1976): 35.

[23]"Last Testimony of Sister Emma," *Saints' Herald* 26 (1 October 1879): 289–90.

[24]David Whitmer, *An Address to All Believers in Christ* (Richmond, Mo.: Privately printed, 1887), 12.

[25]Charles Anton, in two different letters (written in 1834 and 1841), discussed Martin Harris's visit to him in February 1828. He claims that Harris said Joseph Smith translated from behind a curtain. In 1842 the Reverend John Clark claimed that Martin Harris told him in the fall of 1827 that while translating Joseph Smith used a thick curtain or blanket to separate himself from Martin Harris, who was acting as scribe (see Milton V. Backman, Jr., *Eyewitness Accounts of the Restoration* [Orem, Utah:

Grandin Book Co., 1983], 209, 213, 215, 218). Early on in the translation, Joseph Smith quite probably used a curtain while translating, especially if he was translating directly from the gold plates, since at that time no one was permitted to see the plates.

²⁶The rest of this 1870 statement is missing. For the quote, see John W. Welch and Tim Rathbone, "The Translation of the Book of Mormon: Basic Historical Information," preliminary report (Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1986), 25.

²⁷Interview published in the *Chicago Times*, 11 August 1875; quoted in Richard Lloyd Anderson, "By the Gift and Power of God," *Ensign* 7 (September 1977): 81.

²⁸See the second definition of *syllable* in the *OED:* "the least portion or detail of speech or writing."

²⁹Welch and Rathbone, "The Translation of the Book of Mormon," 8. According to another account of this same interview, the name was *Sariah,* Lehi's wife (ibid., n. 22).

³⁰See, for example, *Lehi in the Desert; The World of the Jaredites; There Were Jaredites,* in *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley,* vol. 5 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co.; and Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1988), 13–42, 242–46; and *An Approach to the Book of Mormon,* 3d ed., in *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley,* vol. 6 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co.; and Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1988), 80–82, 281–94, and passim.

³¹Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert,* 27.

³²John W. Welch, "Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon," *BYU Studies* 10 (Autumn 1969): 69–84 (reprinted in Reynolds, *Book of Mormon Authorship,* 33–52); John W. Welch, "A Study Relating Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon to Chiasmus in the Old Testament, Ugaritic Epics, Homer, and Selected Greek and Latin Authors" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1970). On chiasmus in general see also John W. Welch, ed., *Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegesis* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1981).

³³See the note to Isaiah 3:23 in Alfred Rahlfs, *Septuaginta* (1935; reprint, Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979).

³⁴B. H. Roberts, "Translation of the Book of Mormon," *Improvement Era* 9 (April 1906): 428–29.

³⁵Anderson, "By the Gift and Power of God," 81.

³⁶George A. Smith, *Journal of Discourses* 12:335 (15 November 1863).

³⁷For example, Roberts, "Translation of the Book of Mormon," 429; Anderson, "By the Gift and Power of God," 83; and Stephen D. Ricks, "Joseph Smith's Means and Methods of Translating the Book of Mormon," preliminary report (Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1984), 4.

³⁸Daniel H. Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976), 141–42.

³⁹Holy Bible: King James Text, Modern Phrased Version, designed by Bradbury Thompson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

⁴⁰Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament,* trans. Erroll F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987), 38.

⁴¹John L. Hilton and Kenneth D. Jenkins, "Differences between the 1830 Edition and the 'Printers' Manuscript of the Book of Mormon: A Computer Analysis" (Berkeley, Calif.: N.p., 1982), 1.

⁴²See the comparison (albeit somewhat inaccurate) of the original and printer's manuscripts in Howard, *Restoration Scriptures,* 29–35.

⁴³See n. 9.

⁴⁴Here Nephi is referring to the Isaiah passage that he has just quoted (1 Ne. 21:23, Isa. 49:23): "and kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers."

⁴⁵This same criticism applies to Stan Larson's master's thesis. None of these errors are mentioned in Larson's thesis.

⁴⁶For another example, consider the possible punctuation for the word *continually* in 1 Nephi 8:30.

⁴⁷In the 1837 edition of the Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi alone contains 86 changes of *which* to *who(m)* or *that,* yet only 15 of these changes are noted in the FARMS *Book of Mormon Critical Text: who,* 13 out of 78; *whom,* 2 out of 6; *that,* 0 out of 2 (Lyle Fletcher, personal communication).

⁴⁸See n. 33.

⁴⁹Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1971).