



Type: Magazine Article

The Book Will Prove Itself

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Source: *The Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, Vol. 111, No. 9 (Sept. 1949)

Published by: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Page(s): 282–283

Abstract: This article discusses attempts to discredit the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith. Darling refers to Alexander Campbell, the Spaulding theory, and the Woodbridge Riley Theory. The best evidences of the divinity of the Book of Mormon are found within its own pages.

The Book will Prove Itself

EDITOR'S NOTE: Joseph W. Darling is a member of the South London Branch and has for some time taught the Gospel Doctrine Sunday School Class there. He has served as a missionary in Ireland.

By Joseph W. Darling

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THE BOOK OF MORMON has been before the world for almost 120 years. It has been vilified and assailed by learned and unlearned alike, but in spite of this adverse criticism no generally accepted theory as to its origin is to be found amongst those who reject the statement that it has a divine origin.

Many futile attempts have been made to discredit the Book. Amongst others, an Alexander Campbell was the author of the idea that Joseph Smith wrote the book on his own initiative and without inspiration. This theory was nullified by the Prophet's youthfulness and inexperience and by a self-acknowledged lack of education.

Then there was the Spaulding Manuscript Theory in which the claim was made that the Book of Mormon was a replica of a romance written by one Solomon Spaulding. In 1885 the

Spaulding manuscript was uncovered, and on comparison found to have no similarity to the writings of the Book of Mormon.

There was also the Woodbridge Riley Theory, stating that Joseph Smith wrote the book under the influence of hallucinations and that he was in effect an epileptic. This theory utterly fails when noting the wonderful accomplishments of the youthful Prophet and the consistency and soundness of the doctrines and organisation which he, by divine guidance, set up.

In addition to the above mentioned, many other "theories" have been advanced from time to time; however, not one of these has thus far established any reasonable or substantial evidence to prove that the Book of Mormon is other than that which it purports to be—a divinely inspired record of God's dealings with His ancient people on the western hemisphere and a new witness for Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints earnestly invites all men to investigate the Book's claim to divine origin.

The best evidence that the Book of Mormon is the inspired word of God is to be found within its covers. The book will prove itself to any and all who are sincere in their intent and genuinely desire to gain a knowledge of the truth. In this respect also the book is an aid in itself, for in the closing chapter these significant words are recorded: "And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost."

Could a more honest or straight forward invitation be made to any



**Monument to the Three Witnesses
of the Book of Mormon on Temple
Square**

enquiring person who is willing to submit to the requirements of "asking with a sincere heart, with real intent"?

There is further evidence that the Book of Mormon is an important part of the "marvellous work and a wonder" prophesied by Isaiah, for the book given to the world by the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1830 is in the year 1949 accepted by over one million people as divine revelation. The very fact that so many people have accepted the book in this category is itself a prophecy fulfilled from within its own pages. In II Nephi, 30: 3, these words are recorded, "And now, I would prophecy somewhat more concerning the Jews and the Gentiles. For after the book of which I have spoken shall come forth, and be written unto the Gentiles, and sealed up again unto the Lord, there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed."

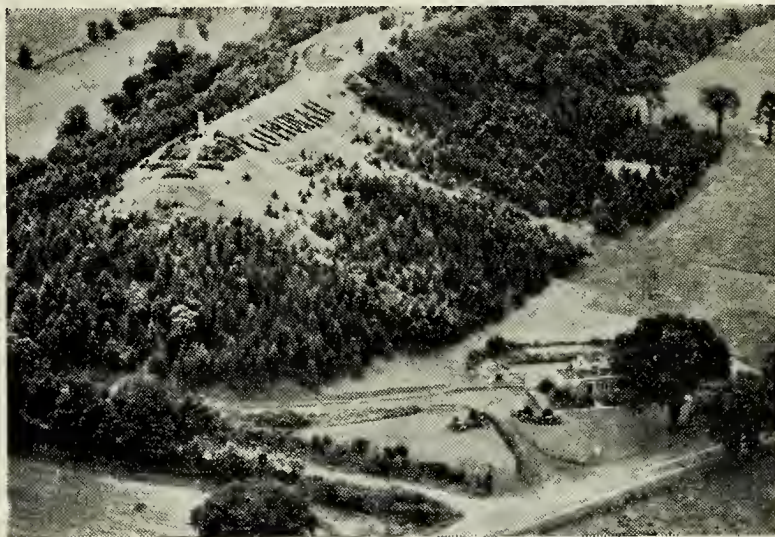
In 1830 when Joseph Smith, who was unlearned, financially poor and at that time unpopular, published the book, how could he possibly foretell that "there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written" and furthermore that "they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed." This would be tantamount to a writer declaring that his writings would take a place among the world's classics or a doctor of medicine declaring that a treatise which he had written would eventually become a standard text book on the subject.

The latter part of the quotation mentioned above, that (many) "shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed," is perhaps even more remarkable than the rest. How could Joseph Smith possibly have foretold that a vast number of people signified

by the word "many," would, of their own volition, have a desire to carry the words forth unto the world? This prophecy has been amply fulfilled and will continue to be so until the "time of the restitution of all things."

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a missionary church with a divine commission to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and to declare that the Book of Mormon is a divinely inspired record given as a tangible witness to God's people in these last days.

Tens of thousands of men and women



Hill Cumorah as seen today

have voluntarily gone out into the world at their own or their parents' expense to herald to the world the "dawning of a brighter day." The Book of Mormon has inspired a missionary zeal which has not been equalled since Paul preached the Gospel on his momentous travels. The simple, earnest testimonies borne by these young men and women have touched thousands of souls whose spirits were drooping and have brought to these same souls a new and living faith in the Son of God.

The message of the Book of Mormon is for all men everywhere. Its simple, definite doctrines have turned many souls from error to truth. It has unfailingly led people to God. It has brought happiness and a sublime contentment into thousands of lives.