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Cumorah Monument Significant

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Abstract: This article remarks on the new monument on the Hill Cumorah, which commemorates the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, a most significant book.

EDITORIAL

1935—A Summer of Progress

UNUSUAL activity in Church matters has marked the summer of 1935. It seems that the "mustard seed" planted in these deserts has taken on rapid growth.

The summer has seen stakes organized in New York and in Hawaii, the latter being the first to be established outside of the continent of North America. In addition, other stakes have been organized at home and in California.

The erection and dedication of the monument on the Hill Cumorah was an event of note and received a more favorable press than the Church has regularly enjoyed.

Over in Europe several very successful M. I. A. conventions have been held patterned after that held in Salt Lake City in June. Andrew Jenson, Assistant Church Historian, and his covered wagon were well received in Denmark. The elders of the British Mission participated in and won the national championships of the British baseball association.

All of these activities and many more set the summer of 1935 apart as being unique in Church history. Participating in nearly every event was Heber J. Grant, the venerable President of the Church. He has been able to give to the work his personal and active attention, blessing many occasions with his presence.—*H. R. M.*

Cumorah Monument Significant

PERHAPS the most remarkable monument in all America was dedicated on Sunday, July 21, 1935. This was on the Hill Cumorah, located in Ontario county in the western part of the state of New York. It was dedicated by President Heber J. Grant of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This monument commemorates the coming forth of the Book of Mormon through the instrumentality of a heavenly being, the Angel Moroni, and the power of God.

The story of what the Book of Mormon is and the miraculous manner of how it came forth into the English language is known, at least in outline, by everyone who has heard the message of Mormonism. This story is exceedingly strange and fascinating. It is so miraculous that this critical, unbelieving world refuses to accept it. But the truth or falsity of the claim is not dependent upon its popular acceptance or rejection. Men rejected Kepler's explanation of the solar system and Columbus' claim that the earth is round. Nevertheless the explanation and the claim were correct. Through a misunderstanding of scripture, learned men taught that it was fallacious to believe in the rotundity of the earth. Thus the minds of men were darkened to the truth.

Similarly, learned men taught in Joseph Smith's day and they teach in this that the canon of

scripture is full and the heavens are closed to further revelations of God's will to men on the earth. Heavenly visions and revelations and holy angels ceased to function with the crucifixion of Jesus and the death of His apostles. In these matters the minds of modern men have been and are still darkened. That is why the marvelous story associated with the Book of Mormon is rejected. Nevertheless this story is true and its rejection will yet rise to condemn those who do not receive it. Such is the justice of God, for the book itself gives a simple test by which, if applied, anyone may know whether the book is genuine or spurious. (Book of Mormon, p. 520, verse 4.)

We said Cumorah's monument is the most remarkable one in America. Why? Because it commemorates the appearance of the most marvelous book in the English language—marvelous because of its miraculous associations. So far as we know, no claims of the miraculous are made for the coming forth of any other book in the language. These claims put the Book of Mormon in a class by itself. And what of these claims? This can be truthfully said: they are either true or false. If false, the monument publishes far and wide the child-like credulity of the Mormon people; but if they are true, then what?

This period in human history is sometimes called the age of science. One characteristic of the spirit of science is that of the open-mind—a refusal to pass judgment until all the evidence is in, until all the witnesses have been examined. Further, even then the doors remain open for the admission of any new evidence that may be discovered. Open-mindedness is largely responsible for the progress of modern science. But there is no assertion that all scientists are open-minded. In fact, some of them are narrow and dogmatic in their views, just as some Christians are dishonest and intolerant. It is apparent that there is but one proper attitude for the world to take relative to the claims of genuineness of the Book of Mormon—the attitude of the open mind.

The monument is perhaps one of the finest publicity achievements of the Church. Like a sentinel it crowns the noble hill on which it was erected and stands as an enduring challenge to all the world to examine the story of the Book of Mormon. It proclaims the confidence of the Church in the genuineness of the Book and, in effect, asserts the willingness of the Church to stand or fall on the question of genuineness. It will receive an increasing amount of attention with the passing of the years. Modest in proportions, its publicity will far outrank its size. It is one of the newer means that the Church is developing of proclaiming its message. Will it not also be one of the most effective? Is the Book of Mormon not destined to be one of the most widely read books of modern times? No one engaged in proclaiming the message of Mormonism should fail to call to his aid the help of this wonderful book.

—*Joseph F. Merrill, in The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star, Thursday, August 8, 1935.*