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## The Spalding Argument

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**Abstract:** This article answers F. S. Spalding's allegations that the Book of Mormon is not true and Spalding's claims that the Book of Abraham was falsely translated and therefore both documents are fraudulent.

have been excusable, but now it is astounding. At Tel-el-Amarna a number of letters were found, many of them dating back 1300 years before our era. And this correspondence was carried on, not in the Egyptian hieroglyphics, but in the Babylonian cuneiform letters. It would be interesting to have the learned doctor's opinion as to whether the Chinese had learned American, or the American Chinese.

At all events, some of these letters passed between the courts of Egypt and Babylonia. They show that the Egyptian king, Aken-Aten, had married a sister of the Babylonian king, and that his mother and grandmother were of the Babylonian royal house. They also show that a daughter of the Egyptian king had been sent to Babylonia to become the wife of the king there. They show that the Egyptian king asked for a daughter of the Babylonian monarch, for wife, in addition to the sister, and that his Babylonian majesty diplomatically refused on the ground that he did not know how his sister liked Egypt, or what treatment she had received, whereupon the Egyptian king asked him to send a trusted representative to investigate and report. All this looks like a "hopeless mixture" between

Babylonia and Egypt, but it is historical.

The fact is that even scientists did hardly realize the close relations between the great empires of the ancient world, until these old documents were recovered. But the Book of Abraham indicates these relations. But that is, we are told, "amusing." The Tel el-Amarna letters are still more "amusing," but we cannot reject them on that account.

Bishop Spalding's effort is not new to Latter-day Saints who have followed the history of the Church. His argument is one that has been heard before, without disturbing in the least the faith that rests on solid foundations. It has been fairly and squarely met in the past, and will be answered again, whenever occasion requires, with increasing clearness as the researches continue to reveal further data.

The Latter-day Saints court inquiry, such as this. They want to know the truth, and only the truth. There is no important issue they are not glad to face, whether presented by friend or foe. Their religion has stood every test to which it has been submitted, and it will remain unshaken for ever, because it is founded upon the Rock, and its origin is the Source of all Truth.

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## The Spalding Argument

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BY DR. FREDERICK J. PACK, DESERET PROFESSOR OF GEOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

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[This article appeared in the *Deseret News*, Dec. 21, 1912, and is reproduced in the ERA by permission of the author.—THE EDITORS.]

An article bearing the title "Joseph Smith, Jr., as a Translator," written by Dr. F. S. Spalding, bishop in Utah of the Episcopal church, has recently received a limited circulation among the Latter-day Saints. The manifest fairness of the inquiry and the apparently well founded conclusions came as some-

what of a surprise to the "Mormon" people. The Latter-day Saints are accustomed to criticism of a malicious and rancorous sort. Fairness and breadth have rarely characterized the investigations of the past. And consequently the apparent fairness shown by Dr. Spalding made far into the ranks

of the Latter-day Saints a well prepared path along which the conclusions of his article might readily follow. And, so, for a moment, blinded as we were by the nature of his argument, some may have thought that the claims of the Latter-day Saints, had been seriously shocked. A little distance, however, lends perspective to the whole matter. But before an examination of the value of the article is made we shall endeavor to give a synopsis of his argument.

In the opening paragraph of the article the writer states that "If the Book of Mormon is true, it is, next to the Bible, the most important book in the world." He then goes on to state that the world's knowledge would be greatly enriched if the claims of the Book of Mormon can be proved. (The present writer, however, does not share the opinion of Dr. Spalding that scientific theories would need serious readjustment because of it.) He gives credit for fairness on the part of the Latter-day Saints and mentions the names of a few individuals whom he regards as especially frank and intelligent. He deprecates the methods employed by the anti-"Mormon" investigator. He quotes extensively from "Mormon" publications, evidently for the purpose of instructing his readers in the nature of certain church records and the esteem in which they are held by the Later-day Saints.

He then turns to what appears to be the objective point of his argument, "Was the translation of the Book of Mormon correct?" He presents the testimony of Professor Anthon of New York as received from Martin Harris and published in the Pearl of Great Price. He gives the testimony of the Three Witnesses and also of the Eight Witnesses. He gives Joseph Smith credit for being logical in presenting the testimony of these witnesses instead of carrying the original records to learned men because of their inability at that time to decipher the Egyptian hieroglyphics. He quotes from the Articles of Faith in which it is implied that the Latter-day Saints place the Book of Mormon upon a higher plane, from the standpoint of trans-

lation, than the Bible. In this, he says, they are not illogical. He has attempted to make it "clear to the reader that the correctness of the translation of the Book of Mormon is a most important question." He then affirms that "If the Book of Mormon was not a correct translation, and yet Joseph Smith thought that it came to him by inspiration and revelation from God, all thoughtful men cannot be asked to accept other revelations which Joseph Smith, Jr., asserted were also given to him by Deity." (The logic of this conclusion will receive attention later.)

He again asks this question, "Is the translation of the Book of Mormon correct?" He makes the statement that "Joseph Smith's competency as a translator of ancient languages can be ascertained in but one way. The original texts, together with their interpretations, must be submitted to competent scholars." (There is room for difference of opinion here. Let our friend tell us whether he considers that even the most intelligent human beings are always competent to sit in judgment upon God's work. There are individuals who feel that the analysis of Deity's plans cannot always be made by the use of acid, fire and the microscope. My friend Spalding, your logic may lead you into difficulties.)

He speaks of the unavailability of the original Book of Mormon records, and concludes by stating, "Our purpose will be served equally well if the other translations of the Prophet referred to can be examined, and fortunately one of these translations, together with the original manuscript, is available." He presents evidence relating to the nature and origin of the Book of Abraham, and for this purpose quotes extensively from the Church records. He then concludes by stating, "It is now clear that in the translation of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, known as the Book of Abraham, we have just the test we need of Joseph Smith's accuracy as a translator. The original text and the Prophet's translation are available for our investigation."

Dr. Spalding here very astutely expands his argument to include the whole Book of Abraham. His state-

ment that "The original text with the Prophet's translation are now available for our investigation," is a very misleading one. In the first place, we do not have the original text, at most only three small fragments of it, in fact only the fac-similes of these fragments. In the second place these fragments cannot be considered as forming part of the text of the Book of Abraham.

He finally concludes that "If, in the judgment of competent scholars, this translation is correct, then the probabilities are all in favor of the Book of Mormon. If, however, the translation of the Book of Abraham is incorrect, 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 and upon the reputation its publication gave to its author."

He next presents from the Book of Abraham the fac-similes and their translation. Appended to the article are the statements of eight eminent Egyptologists. These authorities are almost a unit in declaring that the hieroglyphics reproduced in the Book of Abraham were not correctly translated by Joseph Smith, and that the fac-similes themselves are very poor copies of the original records. They disagree somewhat in their descriptions of details, but in the main their testimonies at first appear to present a rather formidable argument.

The reverend gentleman's argument, in a word, is this: Was the translation of the Book of Mormon correct? This can be answered only by submitting the original records to scientific men. In this case the records are not available. Joseph Smith claimed to have translated the Book of Abraham. Three fac-similes of this record are available. If scientists declare that Joseph Smith incorrectly translated these characters, not only the Book of Abraham, but also the Book of Mormon and the "whole body of be-

lief" must be repudiated. To Dr. Spalding the testimony of the scientists is complete, and in consequence "Mormonism" must fall.

Now, I am quite sure that Dr. Spalding will concede to the Latter-day Saints a time for inquiry equal to that consumed by his investigation. Fairness would demand this. He has evidently written for opinions to a large number of scholars, and as a result has published eight statements, some of which disagree with respect to details. Without intentionally questioning the gentleman's integrity, it might be asked as to whether any disharmonious statements may have been received and not published. The Latter-day Saints have been forced to be skeptical because of the unfair methods employed in most of the so-called investigations of the past. But at any rate the Latter-day Saints themselves would like the privilege of obtaining the opinions of eminent scholars. But before conceding that the characters are not correctly translated they should like to see the Egyptologists much more united than they are at present.

They insist that it be constantly kept in mind that the conditions attending the translation of the Book of Abraham were far different from those attending the translation of the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith had these Egyptian records in his possession for many years, and throughout that period he undoubtedly spent much time in STUDYING them. Following efforts to work out an Egyptian alphabet, he announced to his associates that he had been able to decipher some of the characters. It is evident that the translation came to him very largely as the result of persistent study, conditions far different from those attending the translation of the Book of Mormon. It is very important that we ascertain the extent to which Joseph Smith himself claimed divine inspiration in the translation of the Book of Abraham.

In a word, the Latter-day Saints insist that a thorough and compre-

hensive investigation of the claims of "Mormonism" be conducted, in which every possible obstacle will be removed. It is not the purpose of this paper, however, to undertake this inquiry or to analyze the testimonies of the eminent scholars—that would require much time and study. The article will be examined from quite another point of view.

In order to clear the field of any possible objections, the reader is asked to imagine that a most comprehensive and exhaustive inquiry has already been completed. Suppose that not only eight but that scores of scholars were united to a word in discrediting the claims of Joseph Smith as a translator of these Egyptian characters. Suppose that the scholars had become fully acquainted with the Egyptian language and could read the hieroglyphics with ease. Suppose that they had even found the identical manuscript employed by Joseph Smith. Suppose that it had been established to the entire satisfaction of all parties concerned that the characters were incorrectly translated. What then?

The analysis of Dr. Spalding's article was at this point interrupted by other demands upon the present writer's time. Criticism of a large packet of examination papers has just been completed. In order that no injustice be done, each answer has been carefully read and re-read, and as a result, in the judgment of the examiner, proper credit has been allowed. The test, of which these papers are the result, consisted of ten questions, each more or less independent, but all pertaining to the same general subject. At the close of the test period the students left the room affirming that the questions were proper ones, and that the information for which they called had been fully considered in class discussions. Several of the students were emphatic in the statement of their beliefs that in every detail they had correctly answered the questions.

And now the papers have been "corrected," and record has been made of the evidence upon which the standing

of the various students is based. The results are interesting. Three out of a class of twenty-four have failed, and of the remainder four are graded "a", ten are graded "b," four are graded "c," and three are graded "d," Not a single student, in the judgment of the examiner, gave complete answers to all of the questions. Even those who were positive in the belief that they had met all of the requirements were found to have failed, in some things. Some students were deficient in one thing and some in another—no two were alike. Some did well in the early part of the test and weakened later, while others began poorly and braced later, and still others were more or less flighty and erratic throughout.

An examiner, in order to be just, must read each question and give due credit for every detail. His opinion as to the student's grade must not be formed until the ten answers have been examined and the summaries made. If the first answer be found perfect the examiner is not by this justified in so marking the remaining nine, and if the first answer be found wrong the examiner proves himself unworthy of his position, if, at this stage, he pronounces the verdict of failure.

And so if our examiner be fair and unbiased he will read carefully every paragraph, every sentence and every line, and his conclusion will be based upon the evidence submitted. This custom follows the individual from the school room into the field of life. He is rated by those who know him according to what he is and the things he can do. In order to be adjudged great his successes must overshadow his failures. But sorry would be his condition in life if a single failure on his part would cause the repudiation of every one of his successes.

And yet, under what is termed the spirit of fairness, this is what Dr. Spaulding asks of the Latter-day Saints with respect to Joseph Smith.

It will be remembered that, for sake of argument, we have conceded to Dr. Spalding that his inquiry has con-

clusively shown that the fac-similies reproduced in the Pearl of Great Price were grossly misunderstood and mistranslated by Joseph Smith. In fact we have imagined that the inquiry was so perfect that no question could be raised concerning the conclusion that Joseph Smith had incorrectly translated the Egyptian characters. With this condition very far from being established Dr. Spalding states that "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 and upon the reputation its publication gave to its author."

The reasoning employed by Dr. Spalding would require every Christian denomination to repudiate the translators of the Bible, and consequently the Bible itself. It seems now to be pretty well agreed that errors, at times more or less grave, were occasionally made during the work of translation. The translators were scholars and probably relied largely upon their linguistic attainments. But because they here and there made mistakes shall we deny that they possessed any knowledge of ancient languages? Let the reader say as to whether, because of this imperfection, we shall be justified in casting out the Bible and the "whole body of belief which has been built upon it." And shall we brand all those who will not repudiate it as ignorant and dishonest?

The jury in the box, following the method advanced by Dr. Spalding, would convict one accused of murder if it could be shown that he had been guilty of theft—because once guilty always guilty. The method would call upon the friends of the accused to believe in his guilt and to repudiate whatever good he had done. Those who would not join in this denunciation would be classed among the ignorant and dishonest.

This method would require the Great Judge whom we all expect some day to meet, to brand every human being with-

out an exception, as a failure, and not worthy of the least consideration—because once wrong always wrong. Nay, it would require him to repudiate the work of his own hands and to cast all into outer darkness. The reader will undoubtedly turn with considerable relief from the consideration of a policy so completely lacking in the first elements of justice.

It would be interesting to apply Dr. Spalding's method of reasoning to the results of an inquiry in which it had been shown that Joseph Smith was right. Let us suppose the case of a prophecy. The prediction with all of its essential details had been made many years before the occurrence of any of the events involved. The prophecy had been placed on record and the attention of the world called to it. It was of such a nature that an individual possessing even the keenest foresight could not have made it, unless he was inspired. Its fulfilment or lack of fulfilment would constitute a test of the prophet's claims.

Let it further be supposed that as years pass the events enumerated in the prediction actually occur and in the manner detailed in the prophecy. The events do not appear in a spectacular fashion, but rather as the result of the operation and development of things temporal. The events are well known and of sufficient importance to be recorded in important places in history. Then let it be supposed that the followers of the prophet call the attention of the world to the prediction and its fulfilment. In a word, suppose that they supply ample proof for every claim made.

And now our question, "What shall be the duty of the world with respect to this matter?" The reasoning adopted by Dr. Spalding would demand that "no thoughtful person can be asked to deny any prophecy made by this individual, but, on the other hand, honesty will require him, with whatever personal regret, to accept his prophecies and the whole body of belief which has been built upon them and upon

the reputation their publication gave to their author."\* It may be a question in the minds of some whether Dr. Spalding would be willing to permit his rule to operate both ways. Perhaps some day he will inform us.

It might be interesting to make further suppositions with respect to this man Joseph Smith. Let us suppose that as far back as 1833 he claimed to have received through revelation what is termed a Word of Wisdom. Suppose that this Word of Wisdom counselled against the use of alcoholic liquors, tobacco and hot drinks (interpreted to mean caffein-bearing beverages), and against the use of meat, other than in "sparing" quantities, and that only in times of cold or excessive hunger. Suppose that this Word of Wisdom gave promise to all who complied with its teachings, and the other commandments, the blessings of stronger minds and healthier bodies, all of which would be accompanied by a marked reduction in the death rate. Suppose that this Word of Wisdom was given to the Church and published long before any serious scientific work had been done along the lines suggested. And further suppose that now for 80 years the members of the Church have fairly well complied with its teachings.

And then again let it be supposed that now some years after the appearance of the Word of Wisdom, temperance organizations begin to increase throughout the land having for their purpose abstinence from alcoholic beverages. Suppose that civic organizations and betterment leagues seriously discussed the matter. Suppose that the problem becomes so vital that the various states and cities throughout the United States find it necessary to enact more and more stringent laws pertaining to the sale and use of these alcoholic liquors. Suppose that several of the states enact absolutely prohibitory laws. Suppose that medical men al-

most as a unit decide that hereafter alcohol must not be used in the treatment of disease, except occasionally for external use. Suppose that criminologists recognize it as one of the chief causes of crime. Suppose that leaders in commercial activity avoid the employment of habitual users. Suppose that life insurance companies report an increased death rate of 25 per cent among non-abstiners.

Suppose further that a few years after the publication of The Word of Wisdom scientists contemporaneously discover a poisonous alkaloid present in these so-called hot drinks. Suppose that it becomes known that an astringent substance is also present. Suppose that scientists declare that these hot drinks give rise to numerous ailments including constipation and kidney trouble. Suppose that the chief chemist in the employ of the United States, in an article written for a trade journal, state that if these beverages are not used in greater moderation the time will soon come when the people of the nation will rise up and legislate against them.

And again let it be supposed that the nicotine present in tobacco is recognized as a deadly poison and powerful depressant. Suppose that the use of tobacco is recognized by scientists as responsible for the presence of a multitude of physiological disorders. Suppose that coaches absolutely prohibit its use among athletes. Suppose that its use by students is invariably associated with low scholarship. Suppose that among athletes of the most perfect type its use is associated with loss in lung capacity of practically 10 per cent. Suppose that judges in juvenile courts everywhere recognize it as the chief cause of juvenile delinquency.

And finally let it be supposed that many years after the publication of the Word of Wisdom the science of dietetics is recognized. Suppose that interest centers around the food requirements of the body. Suppose that scientists discover that in the large intestine proteids undergo pronounced

(\*Slightly paraphrased by the present writer.)

purification. Suppose that it is recognized that autointoxication may result from intestinal putrifaction. Suppose that scientists insist that the proteids contained in meat give rise to this autointoxication. Suppose that it is quite generally agreed among scientists that the American people are eating altogether too much meat. Suppose that it is shown that the ingestion of large quantities of meat is responsible for numerous ailments. Suppose that it is declared by authorities that meat is more obnoxious in warm weather than in cold. Suppose that is shown in the experience of the United States army that the death rate among soldiers is very greatly increased through eating much meat in warm weather. Suppose that it is announced by the acknowledged greatest bacteriologist in the world that putrifaction in the intestines is largely responsible for old age and that through the elimination of this intestinal putrifaction old age may very materially be deferred.

In a word let it be assumed that scientists have completely vindicated the claims of the Word of Wisdom. What then will be the duty of the world with respect to Joseph Smith? The method employed by Dr. Spalding would require that mankind not only accept the Word of Wisdom but everything else which Joseph Smith claimed to have received through revelation. And, furthermore, those who did not join in this general acceptance would, by him, be classed among the thoughtless and dishonest.

With this singular reasoning adopted by our reverend friend the Latter-day Saints are forced to disagree. They have nothing inground into their natures more deeply than the statement of the Apostle Paul, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," "Mormonism" does not feel that in justice it can ask the world to accept all of its claims because a single point has been demonstrated. Some individuals require more evidence than others. All that "Mormonism" can ask is an unbiased investigation. It does not want

to be finally adjudged upon the outcome of only one point. It asks, it demands, a complete investigation.

Anything short of this would result unfairly. To illustrate. Suppose that the first inquiry result in proving that Joseph Smith was, in that instance, wrong. Or suppose that chance designed that in the first instance he was found to be right. These facts prove two things only; in the first instance he was wrong, and in the second instance he was right, nothing more. They prove absolutely nothing with respect to other of his operations. It is true, however, that if he be found wrong in instance after instance, inferential evidence would lead one to believe that he was wrong in the majority of cases. (This rule will work both ways). But in order to prove that he was entirely wrong and that the "whole body of belief" should be repudiated, every case must be examined upon its own merits.

In the opinion of the writer, the Latter-day Saints should not, and for that matter do not, maintain that Joseph Smith was infallible. He was human and possessed human weaknesses and human faults. Being such, he was undoubtedly here and there mistaken. His followers claim, however, that his weaknesses were few and his virtues many. According to Christian belief, the Son of God was the only perfect man to grace the earth by his presence. If then, because of his weaknesses, we dismiss Joseph Smith, the prophets of ancient times must likewise go.

Shall it be argued that because a man receives divine help at one time that he is always inspired? or the converse, that because he may at one time have been led by Satanic influences that he is always evil? If so, the virtues of Christianity are at an end. Does it follow that because a man thinks that he is right at one time, and so proclaims himself, but is later shown to be wrong, that he is invariably wrong? We do not judge temporal things in that manner. No Christian ever lived who was guided in every act of his life by divine effulgence. And



occasionally he was wrong when he thought that he was right.

If through future investigation, therefore, it can be shown that Joseph Smith was absolutely wrong in his translation of the characters reproduced in the Pearl of Great Price, shall we say that his other works of translation are wholly wrong? Or shall we be justified in going so far as to state that the remaining part of the Book of Abraham is wrong? In the judgment of the writer, reason scoffs at the intimation of an affirmative reply.

The best men the world has ever known have here and there made mistakes. There have been no exceptions. Scientists, philosophers and religionists alike have all erred. Would it not be suicidal to repudiate the work of mankind because of these occasional mistakes? Yet the method of sweeping denunciation advanced by Dr. Spalding would require that it be done, and that all who would refuse to follow in this senseless slaughter would be branded as ignorant and dishonest.

From the writer's point of view it is not only probable but possible that the world's greatest prophets have now and again made mistakes. Prophets are human beings whose minds are illuminated by divine intelligence, the degree of illumination varying with the responsiveness of the human spirit. Some prophets have approached perfection much closer than others, but absolute perfection for a life time is never realized in the flesh.

And so it should not only be conceded but urged that Joseph Smith may have made mistakes. (Whether mistakes were made in the translation of the Egyptian characters as reproduced in the Pearl of Great Price is not under discussion here.) Any other attitude would argue for his infallibility, a condition which the present writer does not accept, either for Joseph Smith or for the prophets of old. If the works of Joseph Smith were being investigated with fairness equal to that employed by the examiner in the college, or the jury in the court, he would not be adjudged a failure or convicted because a single error might have been found.

And so we ask the question, "What has Dr. Spalding's inquiry shown?" The incompleteness of the inquiry was pointed out early in this paper, but if the argument be accepted as complete and final, what then does it show? It gives an illustration of ONE case in which Joseph Smith was wrong. It shows that he was not infallible, a condition long held by the Latter-day Saints. He was mortal and his followers knew it. They asserted, however, that his strength very greatly predominated over his weaknesses. If this case proves to be one in which Joseph Smith was mistaken the Latter-day Saints want to know it, and furthermore they will assist in investigating it. They have not thought of this particular instance as being a mistake, but if final investigation so proves it, they can accept the conclusion without in any way disturbing their confidence in the multitude of cases in which they know that he was right. They have appealed to the world to investigate the claims of their religion, and stand ready to accept the results. But, mark you, these results must not be based upon the kind of reasoning employed by Dr. Spalding.

The inquiry ends, therefore, with the case in hand. It cannot be considered as applying to the text of the Book of Abraham, to say nothing of the Book of Moses also contained in the Pearl of Great Price. The absurdity of making sweeping conclusions has already been pointed out. The hope of testing the translation of the Book of Mormon by this particular inquiry has led Dr. Spalding far afield.

It would be a very great source of pleasure to the Latter-day Saints if the world would appoint a committee consisting of wise and honest men whose duty would be prayerfully and impartially to investigate the claims of "Mormonism." The committee could pass on each claim independently, until the list was exhausted. Then summaries could be made and the verdict rendered. The Latter-day Saints, I am convinced, would be more than willing to submit their religion to such a test. They would not, how-

ever, be willing to have it declared wholly wrong because of a very small number of errors. (Exists there a religious body who would?) No just and impartial judge would require it of them. They themselves do not look upon it as being faultless. It has come from God through human hands. They claim that it came as a revelation of God to man, and that here and there within it there are probably the finger prints of mortality. If man, the medium through which it came, had been perfect, the religion would have been perfect. The Latter-day Saints do claim, however, that "Mormonism" is the most nearly perfect religion upon the face of the earth, far from excepting that espoused by the writer of the pamphlet under question.

The reader is now asked to imagine the publication of a pamphlet bearing the title "Napoleon Bonaparte, as a General; an Inquiry." The first pages told of the sincerity of the general and the devotion of his followers. It also spoke of their fairness and integrity. And near the close of the argument

the author stated that if it could be shown that Napoleon had made a mistake in one battle all other claims relating to his generalship would thereby be destroyed. To the pamphlet were appended the statements of a number of competent officers to the effect that Napoleon had made a mistake at Waterloo. The author then called upon all men to repudiate Napoleon not only at Waterloo but elsewhere, and finally branded all who would not do so as ignorant and dishonest.

Reader, what would be the nature of the reception of this pamphlet? Would the reasoning of its author convince mankind that Napoleon was not a general in any sense of the term and should be repudiated, or would the author of the pamphlet be regarded with some degree of pity and quickly forgotten?

(Note: The present writer is by no means convinced that Joseph Smith incorrectly translated the Book of Abraham. An article dealing with this phase of the subject will follow later.)

## Scholars Disagree.

BY JUNIUS F. WELLS

[On December 19 the following appeared in the *Deseret News*, which the author has permitted the ERA to reprint.—THE EDITORS.]

Editor *Deseret News*:

Dear Sir—I read with deep interest the editorial review in Tuesday's paper of Bishop Spalding's treatise upon the cuts of the original drawings of the Book of Abraham and was particularly pleased with your wise and clever comments upon the discrepancies and differences of the world's eminent savants in their respective interpretations of the Egyptian hieroglyphics and hypocephali that have been so variously and learnedly deciphered by them.

It reminded me of an inquiry I had the opportunity of instituting while in London in 1903. Through the favor of Hon. James W. Barclay, M.P., a publicist of considerable note and friend of many of England's foremost inves-

tigators in the field of archaeological research, and who took a keen interest in the matter, I had the Pearl of Great Price, containing these cuts and Joseph Smith, the Prophet's interpretation of them sent first to Sir Flinders Petrie, who, however, being away from London, could not then be reached, and secondly to Dr. Henry Woodward, F.R.S., who, after examining it himself, passed it on to the very celebrated Dr. E. A. W. Budge, head of the Department of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities of the British Museum for many years; the author of a voluminous History of Egypt; of the Dictionary of the Book of the Dead, and of numerous works upon the language, religion, poetry and