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The Scholar and the Book of Mormon

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Abstract: Scholarly critics of the Book of Mormon, found in large numbers on college campuses, try to discredit the divine origin of the Book of Mormon.

existence; yet, so potent has the book become in the ninety-three years since its first publication, in 1830, that men of letters writing a history of the literature of the nation have been forced to include it, which means that University students, all over the land, will learn of the book as a literary product.

The Scholar and the Book of Mormon

The 21st of September of this year marks the centenary of the appearance of the Angel Moroni to the Prophet Joseph Smith; a visit which eventually resulted in the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. The first edition of the Book of Mormon was published in 1830. Since that time many persons have attempted to discredit the story of the Prophet Joseph concerning the origin of the Book. These critics have been very numerous in college circles. Whether the critic has appeared within the confines of the college, among those who are classed as learned or among those classed as the unlearned, they are all in the same predicament. They deny the story of the origin of the book as set forth by Joseph Smith and the witnesses; yet they fail utterly to establish any other origin.

With the attitude of many scholars in mind, we recall the admonition of an elderly gentleman who said to some people who were very greatly disturbed over what their opponents were saying about them, "Don't fear an opponent who changes front every day; it may be tremendously irritating, but it is an acknowledgment of the weakness of his position." This remark strikes home with singular force as it applies to the critics of the Book of Mormon.

Within the decade an incredibly large number of theses have been written by graduate students in American Universities, on the Book of Mormon, most of them having as their objects, first, the refutation of the story as told by Joseph Smith and the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, while their second aim has been to establish the origin of the book. Many and most ingenious have been the theories presented. The confusion found in the ranks of the skeptical must give comfort to those who know that the Book of Mormon is of divine origin.

This winter a story came to us from the University of California which is typical of attempts made by students in other colleges to explain the origin of the book. A student presented a thesis which, as usual, denied the story of the origin as maintained by the Latter-day Saints, and which also admitted that the idea that the book had any connection with the Solomon Spaulding Manuscripts had been exploded. The writer then proceeded to give Sidney Rigdon credit for the authorship of

the book. Very likely he established the thesis to his own satisfaction. His argument may have been as the case required—reasonably exhaustive.

At the close of the presentation, one of the Utah students asked the writer if he knew what Sidney Rigdon had said on this matter. He replied, he did not. He was then informed that Sidney Rigdon's testimony was to the effect that he became converted to the faith of the Latter-day Saints through reading the Book of Mormon.

What has the next century in store for us? Will students in our colleges and universities continue a work which has proved so futile in the past, or will they read the book in a spirit of truth-seeking and be converted to the fact that neither Joseph Smith or any other man of modern times is responsible for the origin of this book, but that it is what it purports to be—a story of the ancient inhabitants of this continent and God's dealing with them, even as the Jewish scripture is the story of the Israelitish people, and the dealing of the Lord with them?

Tapestries

Grace Ingles Frost

As to and fro my needle flies,
A canvas close to weave
With sheen of threads that harmonize,
My mind does oft achieve
The art more radiant in hue,
For it weaves tapestries of you.

No flower that ever blooms to fade,
Can vie with colors that are laid
Across the fibres of my heart,
With rhythmic touch and blend,
And when complete in every part,
I view my work, O Friend!
Fain would I find a thread more true,
To weave my tapestries of you.