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Internal Evidences—The Book of Mormon, in Style and Language, is Consistent with the Theory of its Construction

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CHAPTER XXXVII.

INTERNAL EVIDENCES.—THE BOOK OF MORMON, IN STYLE AND LANGUAGE, IS CONSISTENT WITH THE THEORY OF ITS CONSTRUCTION.

I.

Of the Unity and Diversity of Style.

As already set forth in previous pages, the Book of Mormon, with reference to the original documents from which it was translated, is made up of two classes of writings:

1. Original, unabridged Nephite records;
2. Mormon and Moroni's abridgment of Nephite and Jaredite records.

The translation of the unabridged Nephite records comprises the first 157 pages of current editions of the Book of Mormon. The rest of the 623 pages—except where we have the words of Mormon and Moroni at first hand, or here and there direct quotations by them from older records—are Mormon's abridgment of other Nephite records, and Moroni's abridgment of a Jaredite record. It is quite evident that there would be a marked difference in the construction of these two divisions of the book. How there came to be unabridged and abridged records in Mormon's collection of plates has been explained at length in previous pages,^a so that it is now only necessary to say that when Joseph Smith lost his translation of the first part of Mormon's abridgment of the Nephite records, comprised in the 116 pages of manu-

^aVol. II., chapter vi.i.

script which he entrusted to Martin Harris, he replaced the lost part by translating the smaller plates of Nephi which make up the first 157 pages of the Book of Mormon before referred to. Now, if there is no difference in the style between this part of the Book of Mormon translated from the small plates of Nephi, and Mormon's abridgment of the larger plates, that fact would constitute very strong evidence against the claims of the Book of Mormon. On the other hand, if one finds the necessary change in style between these two divisions of the book, it will be important incidental evidence in its support. Especially will this be conceded when the likelihood that neither Joseph Smith nor his associates would have sufficient knowledge of things literary to appreciate the importance of the difference of style demanded in the two parts of the record. Fortunately the evidence on this point is all that can be desired. The writers whose works were engraven on the smaller plates of Nephi employ the most direct style, and state what they have to say in the first person, without explanation or interpolations by editors or commentators or any evidence of abridgment whatsoever, though, of course, they now and then make quotations from the Hebrew scriptures which the Nephite colony brought with them from Jerusalem. The following passages illustrate their style.

THE FIRST BOOK OF NEPHI.

CHAPTER I.

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 a great knowledge of the goodness and the mysteries of God, therefore I make a record of my proceedings in my days.

2. Yea, I make a record in the language of my father, which

consists of the learning of the Jews, and the language of the Egyptians.

3. And I know that the record which I make is true; and I make it with mine own hand; and I make it according to my knowledge. etc.

THE BOOK OF JACOB.

[The brother of Nephi.]

CHAPTER I.

1. For behold, it came to pass that fifty and five years had passed away, from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem; wherefore, Nephi gave me, Jacob, a commandment concerning the small plates, upon which these things are engraven.

2. And he gave me, Jacob, a commandment that I should write upon these plates, a few of the things which I considered to be most precious; that I should not touch, save it were lightly, concerning the history of this people which are called the people of Nephi, etc.

THE BOOK OF ENOS.

CHAPTER I.

1. Behold, it came to pass that I, Enos, knowing my father that he was a just man: for he taught me in his language, and also in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And blessed be the name of God for it.

2. And I will tell you of the wrestle which I had before God, before I received a remission of my sins:

3. Behold, I went to hunt beasts in the forest; and the words which I had often heard my father speak concerning eternal life, and the joy of the saints, sunk deep into my heart, etc.

And so it continues with each of the nine writers in this division of the Book of Mormon. But now note how marked the difference is when we come to Mormon's abridgment of the Nephite record which begins with the book of Mosiah:

THE BOOK OF MOSIAH.

CHAPTER I.

1. And now there was no more contention in all the land of Zarahemla, among all the people who belonged to King Benjamin, so that king Benjamin had continual peace all the remainder of his days.

2. And it came to pass that he had three sons; and he called their names Mosiah, and Helorum, and Helaman. And he caused that they should be taught in all the language of his fathers, that thereby they might become men of understanding; and that they might know concerning the prophecies which had been spoken by the mouths of their fathers, which were delivered them by the hand of the Lord.

So also in the abridgment of the book of Alma :

THE BOOK OF ALMA.

CHAPTER I.

1. Now it came to pass that in the first year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi, from this time forward, king Mosiah having gone the way of all the earth, having warred a good warfare, walking uprightly before God, leaving none to reign in his stead; nevertheless he established laws, and they were acknowledged by the people; therefore they were obliged to abide by the laws he had made.

2. And it came to pass that in the first year of the reign of Alma in the judgment seat, there was a man brought before him to be judged; a man who was large, and was noted for his much strength, etc.

And so throughout the abridgment this style continues as pointed out in chapter IX of this work. Had the style which is followed in the abridgment found its way into the translation of the unabridged part of the record, the reader can readily see how strong an objection it would have constituted against the claims of the Book of Mormon. As to style in other respects there is marked uniformity in the

translation. I have already pointed out the fact that the style of the translation of the Book of Mormon is influenced, of course, by the translator; the statements and ideas of the Nephite writers being set forth in such English and in such literary style as Joseph Smith, with his limited knowledge of language, could command; he, in his turn, of course, being influenced in his expressions by the facts and ideas made known to him from the Nephite record through Urim and Thummim, and the inspiration of God under which he worked. It is useless to assert a diversity of style where it does not exist, and that it does not exist in the Book of Mormon except as to the matter of a distinction between Jaredite and Nephite proper names, hereafter to be noted, and the distinction between the abridged records and those unabridged—to the extent just pointed out—it would be easy, though unnecessary, to demonstrate; since any one may satisfy himself by even a casual inspection of the Book of Mormon itself.

The demand for diversity of style in the various parts of the translation of the Book of Mormon is urged too strongly. It is sometimes represented, even by believers in the Book of Mormon, that the volume contains the compiled writings of a long line of inspired scribes extending through a thousand years, written not only at different times but under varying conditions, and that unity of style under such circumstances is not to be expected, and did it occur it would be fatal to the claims made for the Book of Mormon! Now, as a matter of fact, there is great unity of style in the translation of the Book of Mormon which any one can verify who will read it; and properly so, I insist; for the reason that general unity of style is not incompatible with the theory of the work's construction and translation. First of all this long line of inspired writers that should give to us diver-

sity of style in their writings is reduced really to a very small matter when the facts in the case are considered. We have already seen, in chapter IX, that all told there are but eleven writers in the Book of Mormon. The work of nine of these runs through only 400 years of Nephite history—from the time Lehi's colony left Jerusalem to the time when the Nephites, under Mosiah I., joined the people of Mulek, some 200 years B. C. Then we have the works of no Nephite writer until we come to Mormon, who makes his abridgment of the Nephite records in the closing years of the 4th century A. D. So that 600 years of the 1,000 through which the long line of Nephite writers is supposed to run is lifted bodily from the "time range." I say we have no Nephite writings between the works of the first group of nine Nephite writers (600-200 B. C.) to the writings of Mormon (400 A. D.) I should say, we have no such writings except where here and there Mormon, in his abridgment, makes a direct quotation from some intervening writer between those two periods. Such quotations, however, are neither numerous nor long, and in many instances one is left in doubt as to whether supposed quotations are verbatim or merely the substance of the original documents given by Mormon. What has led to confusion in these matters is that the books of "Mosiah," "Alma," "Helaman," "III Nephi," etc., are not really the books of these men whose names respectively they bear, but are Mormon's abridgment of those books to which abridgment he has given the name of the book he abridged. Then, again, of these eleven writers we have already shown (chapter IX) that the first group of nine writers supplied but 157 pages of the book. Of these Nephi writes $127\frac{1}{2}$ pages; and his brother, Jacob, $21\frac{1}{2}$; making in all 149 of the 157; leaving but 8 pages for the other seven writers; and as Enos, who follows Jacob, writes $2\frac{1}{2}$

pages of the remaining 8, there is left but $5\frac{1}{2}$ pages for the remaining six writers. It should be kept in mind, too, that the whole nine authors were writing in the first 400 years of Nephite times; that Jacob and Nephi lived much of their lives together, therefore, in the same period of time, under similar conditions, with the same little colony of people. Hence there was not much to give diversity of style to their writings, and the few paragraphs left for the remaining seven writers could not be sufficient to develop very much diversity of style in composition. So that the diversity of style clamored for, so far as this group of nine writers is concerned, is not very insistent.

Turning now to the writers of the Book of Mormon who come six hundred years later, Mormon and Moroni, they are contemporaries, father and son. They lived in the same age. One abridged the history of the Nephites, the other a brief history of the Jaredites. So that their work is similar in character, is wrought in the same age, and hence great diversity of style is not to be expected.

Another factor in the question of style is that in the "time range" of 1,000 years through which it is assumed the Book of Mormon is being composed, there is not much change in the manners or customs of the people—not very widely varying conditions. It must be remembered that the colonies which came to America in the sixth century B. C. were made up of men and women who were civilized. They brought with them a knowledge of the civilization in the midst of which they had lived. They also had some Hebrew literature with them, although written in Egyptian characters; also the Hebrews ideas of government and law, and these ideas were promulgated among the people as they increased in numbers and grew into a nation. The before mentioned "time range" of 1,000 years was a

period in the world's history when there was no such revolutions taking place in manners, customs, and progress in civilization as is known to our own age. In the western world, as in the eastern, in the period under consideration, human affairs in the matter of developing civilization, were well nigh stationary. The same methods and implements of warfare were employed at the close of the period as were used at its beginning. So in agriculture, commerce, and in the sciences and arts. Not nearly so many changes took place in that thousand years as have taken place within the last hundred years. Hence, so far as changing conditions affecting style of composition during the time limit of 1,000 years is concerned, there is nothing which demands great diversity of style.

Another item at this point should be considered with reference to a misapprehension of the character of the Book of Mormon. It has been frequently urged by writers against the Book of Mormon that it pretends to be the national or racial literature of the peoples of the western hemisphere, and that in the light of such pretensions it is utterly contemptible. Such a conception of the Book of Mormon, however, is entirely unwarranted, since no such claims are made for it by those at all acquainted with its character. No one acquainted with the book could for a moment hold it up as the national literature of either the Jaredite empire or of the Nephite monarchy or republic, any more than he could regard the single work of Josephus on the "Antiquities of the Jews" as the national literature of the Hebrew race or nation; or Doctor William Smith's "Condensed History of England" (less than four hundred pages) as the national literature of the British empire.

The Book of Mormon was constructed in this manner: Let us suppose that a writer has before him the national lit-

erature of the old Roman empire; the works of Livy, Sallust, Virgil, Caesar, Terrence, Cicero, and the rest. The account of the chief events mentioned in these several volumes he condenses in his own style into a single volume. Coming to the annals of Tacitus, however, he is so well pleased with some portions of them that notwithstanding the events Tacitus narrates parallel some parts of his own abridgment of the history, he places them, without editing or changing them in the least, with his own writings. This work, upon his death, falls into the hands of his son, who is also a writer. In the course of the second writer's researches he accidentally, or providentially, as you will, discovers the works of the Greek historian, Xenophon. He considers this writer's history of Greece of such importance—especially his history of the "Retreat of the Ten Thousand"—that he condenses into a few pages the events related by Xenophon and binds them in with his father's work, with such comments of his own as he considers necessary. As the first writer's abridgment of some of the Roman books would not be the national literature of Rome, so also the abridgment of Xenophon's writings would not be the national literature of Greece; and as this supposed case exactly illustrates the manner in which the Book of Mormon was constructed by Mormon and Moroni, the absurdity of regarding the book so produced as the national or racial literature of the peoples who have inhabited the western world, will be apparent.

II.

Characteristics of an Abridgment.

In addition to the changes from the first to the third person already noted between the first group of Nephite authors, whose writings are unabridged, and Mormon and Moroni's abridgment, there is one other item which further

exhibits the consistency between the style and language of the book with the theory of its construction, viz: The style of Mormon and Moroni's part of the work is pronouncedly the style of an abridgment. Its general characteristics have already been considered in chapter ix., and it only remains here to say that the body of the work is Mormon's abridgment of the chief events from the Nephite annals, with occasional verbatim quotations from those works, and his own running comments upon the same. In the progress of the work one may almost see the writer with a number of the Nephite records about him engaged at his task. . He has just recorded the thrilling events of a few years rich in historical instances, and in closing says :

“And thus endeth the 5th year of the reign of the Judges.”

Then he strikes a period where there are but few important events in the annals, so he passes over them lightly in this manner :

Now it came to pass in the sixth year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi, there were no contentions nor wars in the land of Zarahemla. * * * * * And it came to pass in the seventh year of the reign of the Judges, there were about three thousand five hundred souls that united themselves to the Church of God, and were baptized. And thus endeth the seventh year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi; and there was continual peace in all that time.^b

He closes another eventful period, in a similar manner :

But behold there never was a happier time among the people of Nephi, since the days of Nephi, than in the days of Moroni; yea, even at this time, in the twenty and first year of the reign of the Judges. And it came to pass that the twenty and second year of the reign of the Judges also ended in peace; yea, and also the twenty and third year.^c

^bAlma iv: 1-5.

^cAlma i: 23, 24.

The following is a similar example:

And it came to pass that there was peace and exceeding great joy in the remainder of the forty and ninth year; yea, and also there was continual peace and great joy in the fiftieth year of the reign of the Judges. And in the fifty and first year of the reign of the Judges there was peace also, save it were the pride which began to enter into the church.^d

Again in Helaman:

And it came to pass that the seventy and sixth year did end in peace. And the seventy and seventh year began in peace; and the church did spread throughout the face of all the land; and the more part of the people, both the Nephites and the Lamanites, did belong to the church; and they did have exceeding great peace in the land, and thus ended the seventy and seventh year. And also they had peace in the seventy and eighth year, save it were a few contentions concerning the points of doctrine which had been laid down by the prophets.^e
* * * * * And thus ended the eighty and first year of the reign of the Judges. And in the eighty and second year, they began again to forget the Lord their God. And in the eighty and third year they began to wax strong in iniquity. And the eighty and fourth year, they did not mend their ways. And it came to pass in the eighty and fifth year, they did wax stronger and stronger in their pride, and in their wickedness; and thus they were ripened again for destruction. And thus ended the eighty and fifth year.^f

Moroni's abridgment of the Jaredite record—the Book of Ether—fails to exhibit this particular characteristic of an abridgment, owing doubtless to the brevity of the original record he abridged—there were but twenty-four plates in the record of Ether, and “the hundredth part,” says Moroni, “I have not written;”^g but otherwise that book of Ether bears all the marks of being an abridgment that the

^dHelaman iii: 32, 33.

^eHelaman iii: 32, 33.

^fHelaman xi: 21-24.

^gEther xiv: 33.

work of Mormon does, except perhaps that the running comments of Moroni are more frequent than Mormon's.

III.

Originality in Book of Mormon Names.

There is another gratifying distinction between Mormon's abridgment of the Nephite record and Moroni's abridgment of the Jaredite record that is also of first rate importance as an evidence of consistency in the work. That is the quite marked distinction between Nephite and Jaredite proper names as given in these respective parts of the record. Take for instance the list of names of Jaredite leaders and kings and compare it with a list of prominent Nephite leaders.

JAREDITE NAMES.		NEPHITE NAMES.	
Jared	Lib	Nephi	Helaman
Pagag	Hearthom	Lehi	Limhi
Jacom	Aaron	Laman	Heloram
Gilgah	Amnigaddah	Zoram	Mormon
Mahah	Shiblom	Chemish	Moroni
Oriah	Seth	Abinadom	Aminadab
Esrom	Ahah	Amaleki	Moronihah
Corihor	Ethem	Mosiah	Ammoron
Shim	Moron	Benjamin	Pacumeni
Cohor	Coriantor	Ammon	Gadianton
Corom	Shared	Alma	Kishkumen
Noah	Gilead	Amlici	Shiblon
Nimrah	Shiz	Nephihah	Pahoran
Nimrod	Ether	Gideon	Paanchi
Kib		Amulek	Pachus
Shule		Giddonah	Cezoram
Omer		Giddianhi	Limher
Coriantumr		Aminadi	Limhah
Emer		Zeniff	Mathoni
Com		Zeezrom	Mathoni
Heth		Laoni	Mathonihah
Shez		Aaron	Lehonti

JAREDITE NAMES.	NEPHITE NAMES.	
Riplakish	Gidgiddonah	Zemnaridah
Morianton	Muloki	Hagoth
Kim	Abinadi	Helam
Levi	Corihor	Hearthom
Corum	Gidgiddon	Sherrizab
Kish	Amalickiah	

An inspection of these two lists of names discloses the fact that the Jaredite names, with the single exception of "Shule" and "Levi," end in consonants, while very many of the Nephite names end in a vowel; and while many of the Nephite names also end in consonants, yet the preponderance of Nephite names that end in vowels over Jaredite names is considerable. I am not able to say what value attaches to this distinction, I can only point it out as a marked distinction, and it may be an important one.

Another distinction may be discerned in the fact that there are more simple, and evidently root-words among the Jaredite names than among the Nephite names; that is, there are not so many derivatives in the former as in the latter, though in the former there are a few. "Corihor," may have come from "Cohor;" "Coriantumr," from "Coriantor," though it may be merely a variation of the more ancient name "Moriancumer." "Nimrah" may have come from "Nimrod;" and "Akish" from "Kish." But this about exhausts the derivatives among the Jaredite names. As illustrations merely of the Nephite derivatives, and not with a view of exhausting the list, I give the following: "Nephihah," evidently comes from "Nephi," "Amalickiah," from "Amal-eki," "Gidgiddoni," "Gidgiddonah," "Giddonah," and "Gideon," from "Gid," "Helaman" from "Helam;" "Ammoron," from "Ammon;" "Moronihah," from "Moroni;" "Mathoni-hah," from "Mathoni." This is enough for illustration, and

inspection will show the percentage of derivatives in the Nephite names of the Book of Mormon to be not only greatly but very greatly in excess of derivatives in the Jaredite names. And this is what consistency demands of the Book of Mormon. The more ancient people the simpler and fewer compound names—more root names, fewer derivatives. William A. Wright, M. A., Librarian of Trinity College, Cambridge, writing for the Hackett edition of Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, says:

Glancing a moment at the history of names and name-giving among the Hebrews, we readily distinguish many of those changes which characterize popular customs and habits in this particular among all peoples. In their first or ruder age their names are simple and "smell of nature." In the period of their highest national and religious development we find more compound and more allusions to artificial refinements.^h

That law is found operating at least between the more ancient people of the Book of Mormon, the Jaredites, and the more modern people, the Nephites. While the list of names obtainable from the abridgment of the very small fragment of a Jaredite record of the Book of Mormon does not give sufficient data to warrant a positive conclusion, yet I think there is discernable a tendency even in that list from the more simple to derivative names;ⁱ while as between the earlier and later Nephite times the translation from the

^hSmith's Dictionary of the Bible, Hackett edition Vol. III., p. 2062.

ⁱIn the first chapter of Ether there is given a list of names of Jaredite kings, twenty-six in all. In the first thirteen names—half of the number—representing the most ancient Jaredite times, there are only four that could possibly be derivatives; these are Oriah, Coriantumr, Riplakish, Morianton, while in the latter half of the list of names there are at least six derivatives. Beginning with the most ancient they are—Hearthom, Amnigad-dah, Coriantumr, Shiblön, Ethem, Coriantor.

simple to an increase of compound names is quite marked.^j I do not mean by this that the simpler names are not found throughout the whole Nephite period, but that the percentage of derivative names greatly increase in the latter times.

Referring again to the marked distinction between Jaredite and Nephite names, I desire to call attention to the fact that the demands for this distinction are imperative, since these peoples though they occupied the same continent did so successively and at periods of time widely separated. The Jaredites occupied the north continent from soon after the dispersion of mankind from Babel until the opening of the 6th century B. C. About the time the Jaredites were destroyed the Nephite colony arrived in South America, and Mulek's colony in North America. But the only person connecting the two peoples was Coriantumr (the last of the Jaredites) through some nine months of association with the colony of Mulek. Whether or not his race was perpetuated by marriage into Mulek's colony is merely a matter of conjecture.^k So far as the Nephite connection with the Jaredites

^jIt is not until we reach the middle and later period of Nephite times that we meet with such names as Amlici, Antiomno, Amalickiah, Nephiah, Moronihah, Kishkuman, Pecumeni, Lachoneus, Giddianhi, Gidgiddoni, Zemnarihah, Ammaron, Ammonihah, and many others that are plainly derivative names.

^kWhile there can be no more than conjecture upon this point the likelihood of the thing, I am inclined to believe, is all on the side of his marriage and the perpetuation of his race. Coriantumr had doubtless every reason to believe that he was the sole survivor of his people, and he could have no greater anxiety than that his race should be perpetuated. In support of this theory it may be urged that in the Nephite history, about 41 B. C., we learn of a very strong and mighty leader in war, bearing the name "Coriantumr," who was a descendant of Zarahemla (Helaman i: 15: 32), the leader of the descendants of Mulek's colony when discovered by Mosiah I, about 200 B. C. It was Mulek's colony, it will be remembered, who found Coriantumr, the Jaredite, and with whom he lived some nine months. May it not be reasonably supposed that this noted man among the Nephites, bearing the name of the old Jaredite chieftain was a descendant of his, since

is concerned it exists only through the Jaredite records discovered by the people of Zeniff (B. C. 123), and translated soon afterwards by Mosiah II. This translation of the Jaredite record making known, in outline merely, the history of the Jaredites to the Nephites, might give to the Nephites some Jaredite names, as in the case of the noted warrior among the Nephites bearing the name Coriantumr.¹ Still from the fact that the connection between the Nephites and the Jaredites is so slight, and the occupancy of the North Continent by the respective peoples separated by so long a period of time, it could not be otherwise than that there would be a marked distinction in proper names between the two peoples, a distinction that will be quite apparent to the reader when he compares the respective lists of Jaredite and Nephite names here presented at random; and which, had it been wanting, would have been a serious objection to the consistency, and consequently to the claims, of the Book of Mormon.

When the general unity of style found in the Book of Mormon is taken into account, this distinction in proper names becomes all the more remarkable. But it is a case where the circumstances emphatically demand a distinction; just as the circumstances emphatically demand a marked distinction at the transition from the unabridged writings of the Nephite authors—written in the first person, and in so

we find that chieftain's name strangely appearing among the Nephites? And may it not be urged that here we have one of those obscure instances in the history of a great people unlikely to be provided for by conspirators constructing a book to be imposed up the world as a revelation from God?

¹It is quite possible also that the word Shiblon among the Nephites came from the Jaredites. Unfortunately the orthography of this name is given in two ways in the translation of the Jaredite abridgment, "Shiblom" and "Shiblon;" but if the Jaredite name is Shiblon, it may be that the name among the Nephites was taken from the Jaredites as suggested.

simple and direct a style—to the abridged record of Mormon—written in the third person and in so complex, not to say confusing, a style. Had the Prophet Joseph's translation of the Book of Mormon failed to have shown the distinctions at these points where such distinctions are so imperatively demanded—in a word, had the style and language of the book failed to be consistent with the theory of its construction—how serious an objection the failure would have been considered! But since the consistency of the style and language of the book with the theory of the work's construction is established, how strong the evidence is which that fact constitutes! And more especially when it is remembered that neither Joseph Smith nor his associates had sufficient knowledge of literature, to cause them to appreciate the importance of such a consistency. The evidence that they were unconscious of the point here made is to be found in the fact that they never alluded to it in their life time, nor was the foregoing argument ever made by any one else within their life time.

IV.

*Of the Nephite Custom in Naming Cities and Provinces
Being Ancient.*

It should be remarked that both Jaredites and Nephites named cities, plains, valleys, mountains and provinces after the names of prominent men, especially the men who were identified in some way with the settlement or history of said places; so that it often happens that names of places take on the names of men or some variation of their names; and hence the frequent identity and more frequently the likeness between the names of places and the names of men. Both people also followed the custom of ancient nations, not only in

naming cities after the men who founded them or who were prominently connected with their history, but also in giving the district of country surrounding a city the same name as the city. Thus among the Jaredites there is Nehor the city, and "the land [or province] of Nehor," meaning the district of country surrounding the city of Nehor.^m I believe also that there was a Jaredite city of Moron, as well as a land of Moron, although there is no specific reference to a city of that name, but frequent references to the "land of Moron,"ⁿ which I take to mean the district of country surrounding the city of Moron.^o That this custom obtained among the Nephites is so commonly understood that illustration is scarcely necessary, yet by way of illustration I instance the following: The city of Bountiful,^p and the land of Bountiful;^q the city of Zarahemla,^r and the land of Zarahemla;^s the city of Moroni;^t and the land of Moroni;^u the city of Nephihah,^v and the land of Nephihah;^w the city of Manti, and the land of Manti.^x

That the customs here referred to are in harmony with the customs of ancient nations I cite the following as illustrations of my statement: Nineveh takes its name from Ninus, the son of Nimrod. Nimrod founded the city and gave to it a variation of his son's name.^a M. Rollin also

^mEther vii: 4-9.

ⁿEther vii: 6, 16, 17; also xiv: 6-11.

^oHelaman v: 14.

^pAlma li: 30.

^qHelaman i: 22.

^rHelaman i: 23.

^sAlma 1: 14.

^tAlma lxii: 32.

^uAlma lxii: 30.

^vAlma lxii: 30.

^wAlma lvi: 14.

^xAlma lvi: 14.

^aRollin's Ancient History, Vol. I., pp. 266, 227.

identifies Nimrod with Belus, the first king whom the "people deified for his great actions," and after whom, some authorities affirm, the noted temple of Belus within the city of Babylon was named; and from which the city itself, as some affirm, took its name.^b Of course we have the statement of holy writ that Babylon received its name from the circumstances of the Lord confounding the language of the builders of the city,^c "Babel" in the Hebrew meaning confusion. Professor Hackett, however, in his contribution on the subject to Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, while noting the statement in Genesis, says: "But the native (i. e. Chaldean) etymology is Ba-il 'the gate of the god 'Il:' or perhaps more simple, 'the gate of god;' and this no doubt was the original intention of the appellation as given by Nimrod, though the other sense (i. e. the Bible sense) came to be attached to it after the confusion of tongues." Hence one may say that "Babylon" has taken its name from both circumstances. That is, from the "Nimrod" of the Chaldeans it takes its name from its founder, "Belus," who is Nimrod, while to the Hebrew mind it owes its name to the circumstance of the confusion of languages.

Professor Campbell, according to Osborn, thinks that the name "Jebez," of Chronicles ii: 55, is "Thebes;" which originally was "Tei Jabez," the city named from "Jabez," and which is written without the "T" in the hieroglyphics, that letter being only the article.^d

Plato in his Timaeus, where he introduces the story of Atlantis, says: "At the head of the Egyptian Delta, where the river Nile divides, there is a certain district which is

^bIbid.

^cGenesis xi: 9.

^dOsborn, Ancient Egypt and the light of Modern Discoveries, p. 205.

called the district of Sais, and the great city of the district is also called Sais, and is the city from which Amasis the king was sprung.^e This is an incident where the district of country takes its name from the city. Other instances in support of the ancient custom here referred to will be found in the case of "Rome," so called after "Romulus;" "Alexandria;" after Alexander;" "Constantinople," after "Constantine." "The names of countries and sections of country," says Professor W. A. Wright, "are almost universally derived from the name of their first settlers or earliest historic populations."^f

V.

Of the Nephites, Like the Jews Being a Mononymous People.

Still another singular and fortunate circumstance for the claims of the Book of Mormon with reference to names should be noted. "Unlike the Romans," says Professor Wright, already quoted, "but like the Greeks, the Hebrews were a mononymous people. That is, each person received but a single name.^g The Nephites, it must be remembered, were Hebrews, and therefore would very likely follow the custom of their race with reference to this practice of giving but one name to a person. This they did; for throughout the Nephite part of the Book of Mormon, there is not a single instance where a person receives more than one name. In other words, the Nephites, like the whole Hebrew race, were a mononymous people. So, too, the Jaredites, a more ancient branch of the same race, are a mononymous people.

^ePlato (Jowett), Vol. II., p. 517.

^fSmith's Dictionary of the Bible, Hackett Ed., Vol. III., p. 2060.

^gIbid.

Now, as neither Joseph Smith nor his associates would likely be acquainted with this singular custom of the Hebrew race, I take the fact of agreement of Nephite practice with this Hebrew custom, as an incidental evidence of some weight in favor of the claims of the Book of Mormon. To appreciate the value of it, I will ask the reader to think what importance would be given to an objection based upon the violation of this custom by a branch of the Hebrew race. That is, suppose the Book of Mormon had been full of double names, applied to the same person, what then? Could it not be claimed with some force that here would be the violation of a very universal custom of the Hebrew people? I think such a claim, if the facts warranted it, would be both forceful and consistent. Instead of the violation of the Hebrew custom, however, there is a singular accordance with it; and the fact of agreement, I suggest, is entitled to as much weight in favor of the book as the supposed disagreement would have been against it.

This circumstance also sustains the claims of the Book of Mormon to being an ancient record; for if it was of modern origin, having for its authors Joseph Smith and his associates, it would not very likely have followed so absolutely this ancient Hebrew custom, since Joseph Smith and his associates lived in a time and among a people where it was common at least, if not actually customary, to give to persons double names, a custom that would likely have influenced them in any creation of names which they would have attempted.

But very few Jaredite and Nephite proper names with their interpretation, and but few original common names, with their interpretation have found their way into the translation of the Jaredite and Nephite records. Of the first class—proper names with interpretations—I instance

the Jaredite word "Ripliancum,"ⁱ which by interpretation means "large," or "to exceed all." It is employed in connection with describing the arrival of the army of Coriantumr in the region of the great lakes, between the present countries of Canada and the United States. It is most probably a proper name carrying with it the signification equivalent to the phrase we use in describing the same waters, viz: "the Great Lakes," or, as the implied Book of Mormon interpretation stands, bodies of water that exceed in size all others of their kind.

Then there is the Jaredite common name "deseret," meaning honey bee.^j In passing I call attention to the fact that the Hebrew proper name, "Deborah" also means "bee," that is, honey bee;^k and it is quite likely that the proper name "Deborah" is derived from the same root whence comes "Deseret." The only other common names from the Jaredites are the words "cureloms" and "cumoms."^l These are the names of domestic animals said to have been especially useful to the Jaredites, hence most likely used either for draft or pack animals, or perhaps both.

Turning to the Nephite record we have the name of "Irreantum,"^m meaning the sea, or "many waters." Also the word "Liahona,"ⁿ meaning "compass," or perhaps more properly, "director," since, unlike the modern compass, it indicated a variant direction rather than a permanent one; and was made useful to the person possessing it through the principle of faith rather than the magnetic polar force;

ⁱEther xv: 8.

^jEther ii: 3.

^kSmith's Dictionary of the Bible, article "Names," Vol. III., p. 2061.

^lEther ix: 19.

^mI. Nephi xvii: 5.

ⁿAlma xxxvii: 38-40. I. Nephi xvi: 10-30. I. Nephi xviii: 12-21. II. Nephi v: 12.

hence it could only be explained by the term "compass" in that it was an "indicator," or "director." The word "Gazel-em" is also a Nephite word, meaning "a stone," that is, a seer stone, since it is spoken of as a means of ascertaining knowledge through it by revelation.^o In addition to these words we have also a number of names of Nephite coins and the names of fractional values of coins, as follows:

The names of the gold coins, commencing with the one of lowest value, are: a senine, a seon, a shum and a limnah.

A seon was twice the value of a senine; a shum was twice the value of a seon; and a limnah was equal to the value of all the other gold coins.

The silver coins were, a senum, an amnor, an ezrom and an onti.

Their relative value is stated as follows: an amnor of silver was twice the value of a senum; an ezrom four times the value of a senum; an onti was equal in value to all the other silver coins.

The fractional values are represented as follows: A shiblom is half a senum; a shiblum is one half a shiblom; a Leah is one half of a shiblum.

We have no means of obtaining specifically the value of these coins in modern terms, nor am I interested in that matter here. I only desire to call attention to the fact that these are Nephite names brought over into our language by the translation of the Nephite records, though reference to the passage^p where the tables are given will plainly indicate to the interested enquirer that there is stated a system of relative values in these coins that bears evidence of its being genuine.

Alluding to this matter of names in a general way I

^oAlma xxxvii: 23.

^pAlma xi.

suggest that there is nothing more difficult in literature than to originate new names. As a matter of fact names do not suggest things, but things suggest names. Men do not bring into existence names and then fasten them upon things, but they see an object, they hear a sound, or become acquainted with an idea, and the object, the sound or the idea suggests a name. So that names, speaking generally, arise from things already existing and are not formed arbitrarily. The names in the Book of Mormon could come into existence in one of two ways only. Either Joseph Smith arbitrarily created them, or else he found them in the Nephite record. Since originating new names is so extremely difficult, the probability in the case lies on the side of Joseph Smith finding them in the Nephite record. If any one should doubt of the difficulty of originating new names I would invite him to make the experiment. In this connection I remember with what ease an old teacher of mine in English put down a somewhat presumptuous class mate. The teacher had expatiated on the excellence of the Proverbs of Solomon, when the aforesaid class mate expressed his contempt of things so simple. "Proverbs," exclaimed he, to those sitting near him, "why, it's easy enough to write proverbs." The good Doctor who was our teacher happened to overhear the remark and said to the speaker, "Suppose you write us a few." My class mate tried; and the more he tried the farther from proverbs he got. He had not learned that proverbs were the "pure literature of reason;" the statement of "absolute truths without qualification;" "the sanctuary of the intuitions of humanity." And so with this matter of originating names. It may seem a simple thing, but those who entertain such an idea let them give us a few new names. Now, the Book of Mormon has a number of proper names that are not new. These are chiefly Bible names and

are found in Nephite writings because the Nephites brought with them to the western hemisphere copies of so many of the sacred books of the Jews as were in existence at the time of their departure from Judea, 600 B. C., parts of which were multiplied by copying and helped form part of the Nephite literature; hence they sometimes used Bible names. But the Book of Mormon also gives us a long list of absolutely new names, both of men and of places, though in many instances, as already pointed out, the names of cities and the districts or country surrounding them took the name of some noted person in some way or other prominently connected with the history of the place. I have already pointed out that a marked distinction exists between Nephite names and Jaredite names, so that we may see that the Book of Mormon gives us two lists of new names, one Jaredite, the other Nephite, which fact, when coupled with the well recognized difficulty of originating names, renders the performance all the more remarkable. It not only demonstrates the originality of the Book of Mormon, but must be admitted to be either a striking demonstration of wonderful genius on the part of the Prophet Joseph Smith, or else a very strong evidence in support of the claims of the Book of Mormon. And since the list of new names is quite too large to refer to the genius of one single writer for their origin, I think the latter conclusion represents the truth in the case.