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A Plea in Bar of Final Conclusions

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“Joseph Smith, Jr., as a Translator.”

[Early in December of last year, the Rt. Rev. F. S. Spalding, Episcopal Bishop of Utah, put forth a brochure entitled, “Joseph Smith, Jr., as a Translator.” In it he tried to prove, among other things which will be clearly shown in quotations from his writings in the articles following, that the Prophet Joseph failed as a translator of ancient Egyptian language, and therefore, also as a translator of the Book of Mormon, and as a Prophet of God. His document aroused considerable interest, and especially among some of the writers of the Church who then prepared answers to his arguments. By consent of the authors, the ERA is able to present these to its readers; and while other papers may appear hereafter, we believe that in the series here presented, the discriminating reader will not only be greatly interested but will discover sufficient to refute the Bishop’s argument and find a vindication once more of the work of the Prophet Joseph.—THE EDITORS.]

A Plea in Bar of Final Conclusions.

BY B. H. ROBERTS, OF THE FIRST COUNCIL OF SEVENTY

[This article was first printed in the Salt Lake *Tribune*, of Dec. 15, 1912, but has been enlarged and revised by the author for the IMPROVEMENT ERA. The reason for the publication of the article in the *Tribune*, Elder Roberts states, was that there appeared in that paper on the 8th of December, 1912, a very sympathetic not to say fulsome review of Bishop Spalding’s brochure, with predictions of its direful effects upon “Mormonism.” Elder Roberts was therefore anxious to obtain a hearing before the readers of that paper, and accordingly applied to the management of the *Tribune* for that privilege, which was very willingly and courteously granted, and for which he here makes acknowledgment and tenders his thanks.—THE EDITORS.]

I call what I have to say at present on Bishop Spalding’s pamphlet, “Joseph Smith, Jr., as a Translator,” a plea in bar of final conclusions, because I realize that my remarks may not properly be regarded as a complete answer to his very adroitly presented case, specifically against the Book of Abraham, and inferentially against the Book of Mormon, as genuine translations. And here let it be admitted that the bishop’s premises and argument are worthy of profounder consideration than it is possible for this writer under present circumstances to give them. But the number of inquiries, both verbal and

written, addressed to him as to whether or not the “case” which the bishop apparently makes against the Book of Abraham can be met, is the occasion for this immediate, and what may be considered, not without some reason, an inadequate reply.

My only object now is to call attention to such imperfections in the data on which the bishop bases his conclusions, as to indicate that they do not furnish sufficient grounds to warrant the deductions as being final, and that the inquiry conducted by him is not so formidable as at first glance it would appear.

As another item in the preliminary to my remarks upon the bishop's case against the Book of Abraham, permit me to acknowledge the courtesy and even generosity to "Mormon" writers he displays in conducting his inquiry; and to say that his method of discussion is entirely legitimate, and the spirit of it irreproachable. I am willing to accord to him all the courtesy and generosity he exhibits in debate that the reviewer of his pamphlet claims for him in last Sunday's Tribune.

THE BISHOP'S CASE.

Briefly stated, the case of the bishop against Joseph Smith as a translator is this:

The competency of the Prophet as a translator of ancient records can be ascertained in but one way. "The original texts, together with his interpretations, must be submitted to competent scholars, and if they declare his translations to be correct, then they must be accepted as true."

Conversely, if the "competent scholars" shall declare his translations to be incorrect, then, of course, his claims as a translator fall to the ground; and with that failure as a translator demonstrated, his claims to divine inspiration cannot be allowed; he is no prophet of God. If he was not a truly inspired translator then he had no right to the religious leadership which "earnest men" accorded him.

"However sincere he may have been in believing in his mission," the bishop argues, "if the translation he gave to mankind is false, he is shown to have been self-deceived." And if he was self-deceived in the matter of his translations, then those witnesses who testified to the correctness of his translation, by a supposed hearing of the voice of God, declaring the fact, were also self-deceived (pamphlet p. 11;) and the result must be a repudiation of "the whole body of belief," which has been built upon Joseph Smith's translations of ancient records—the Book of Mormon and the Book of Abraham.

As the bishop remarks, "these ques-

tions are most critical," and, I might add, most searching, since they lay the ax at the root of the whole "Mormon" tree. I allow the bishop all his claims to the dire results to "Mormonism" if he can, to the point of demonstration, make his case good against Joseph Smith as a translator.

How may this end be achieved? Confessedly, as the translator of the Book of Mormon, the Prophet is beyond the reach of the bishop, at least by direct means; for the reason that "the plates" of the Book of Mormon are "not available" for the above purpose, being in the keeping of the messenger to whom Joseph Smith returned them after the translation was completed. But in certain Egyptian papyrus rolls, found in a sarcophagus in Egypt, which came into Joseph Smith's possession in 1835, a translation of which he published in March, 1842 (Times and Seasons, vol. 3. Nos. 9 and 10.) the bishop finds something that will serve his purpose equally well; because with the Prophet's translation and explanation of some parts of this ancient record, which the translator called the Book of Abraham, is published three facsimiles of the original Egyptian text from the Book of Abraham. These facsimiles may be submitted to the learned Egyptologists, and as "today the Egyptian language is readily translated by many scholars, we have just the test we need," says the bishop, "of Joseph Smith's accuracy as a translator." (Pamphlet p. 18.)

The bishop has applied the test. That is to say, Bishop Spalding sent the facsimiles of the Egyptian records with Joseph Smith's translation of the Book of Abraham, with the Prophet's partial translation and explanations of these facsimiles, to certain American, English, and German Egyptologists for their opinion of the accuracy of the translation, with the result that they all—and there are eight of them—give judgment against the Prophet.

"THE JURY" IN THE CASE.

These scholars, world renowned, are: Dr. A. H. Sayce of Oxford, England;

Dr. W. M. Flinders Petrie, London university; James H. Breasted, Ph.D., Haskell Oriental museum, University of Chicago; Dr. Arthur C. Mace, assistant curator, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, department of Egyptian art; Dr. John Peters, University of Pennsylvania, in charge of expedition to Babylonia; 1888-1895; the Rev Prof. C. A. B. Mercer, Ph. D., Western Theological seminary, custodian Hibbard collection Egyptian reproductions; Dr. Edward Meyer, University of Berlin; Dr. Friedrich Freiheer Von Bissing, professor of Egyptology in the University of Munich.

Quite a formidable list of learned men, truly; and I give it, because I think the bishop is entitled to have it known by those reading these "remarks" how eminent is the jury pronouncing on the case against the "Mormon" Prophet.

VALE BISHOP.

At this point we may leave the bishop. He has done his duty; he has presented the case, and has received a verdict. From this on we are to deal with that verdict, and the jury rendering it.

One who can lay no claim to the learning of Egypt at first hand, by knowledge of original records, may well pause before such an array of Egyptologists as listed above, before undertaking to comment upon their conclusions. And truly it is in no spirit of arrogance or flippancy or self-sufficiency that I undertake to make my comments; neither as despising nor flouting their learning. In their presence it is becoming in me, and all others unschooled in ancient Egyptian lore, to speak with modesty and behave with becoming deference. But I ask that due attention at this point be given to the very limited scope of what I propose: I am making a plea only in bar of final conclusions upon this subject, and I think I can point out from the decisions of these learned men sufficient reasons to warrant that stay of final judgment for which I plead. And meantime I call the attention of the youth of my own people to the fact that these questions that

depend upon special scholarship are questions that require time and research and discovery, and there is no occasion for hurry in dealing with them, and the conclusions of the learned in such matters are not as unchangeable as they seem.

For instance, quite a remarkable revolution has occurred in Egyptology within recent years, within the period of Egyptian activities, indeed, of a number of Bishop Spalding's jury, especially of Dr. Petrie, whose activities are credited with beginning the revolution. "In the beginning of the year 1895," remarks Prof. George Steindorff, "with the assistance of his pupil Quibell, he (Petrie) discovered many cemeteries on the western bank of the Nile, between the districts of Naquada and Ballas, the contents of which differed considerably from those of other graves in Egypt, and which he therefore regarded not as Egyptian but as belonging probably to a Lybian race." One of the remarkable differences was the posture of the buried dead. With few exceptions up to this time the dead were found lying on their backs or on their sides at full length, the bodies found by Dr. Petrie in the districts named were "doubled up, the knees drawn up, the hands before the face, and lying on the left side . . . The funeral objects were peculiar." These considerations led Dr. Petrie to conclude that the race they represented was not Egyptian. A year later, however, the French Egyptologist Prof. E. Amelineau made discoveries of a similar character in the "rubbish mounds known as Umm el-Ga'ab, near the ancient, sacred city of Abydos." "The tombs of the kings of Abydos," remarks Prof. Steindorff, "being purely Egyptian (as the inscriptions found in them prove,) it naturally follows that the civilization brought to light through these tombs is also Egyptian, and does not belong to another people as Petrie at first assumed."

But what was more important in the discoveries of Amelineau, was the opening of several royal tombs; and "fortunately, three kings are mentioned by their birth names on two stone

fragments found at Abydos, and in these we recognize the kings Usaphais, Miebis, and Lememeses, mentioned in the native lists, as well as by Manetho. All three belong to the First Dynasty, that is, to the period before the builders of the great pyramids (i. e. prior to 4,000, B. C.) which therefore is also about the time when the tombs of Abydos were built, and the period to which belong the other similar cemeteries of Upper Egypt, a date which has been otherwise confirmed."

Among the discoveries at Abydos by Amelineau was the very tomb of Osiris! and in it the mummified remains of that ancient king. "Near the head were two hawks, and two more were at the feet: The dead was designated by the inscription: "Osiris, the Good Being." The hawks were labelled, Horus, the avenger of his father; and the Goddess Isis is also designated by her name" (From Amelineau's own description of his discovery.)

Previous to these discoveries-1896-Prof. Steindorff declares that "the earliest history and civilization of Egypt was, so to speak, terra incognita. For the period prior to the Fourth Dynasty we were dependent, to a great extent, on the information of Manetho, with a large mixture of mythical elements, on the royal lists of kings, taken from older sources, and on occasional passages in Egyptian texts of the Old Empire and of later times. From these, however, we learned little more than the names and probable order of the kings who ruled from Menes down to Snofru (Sephuris,) the predecessor of Cheops. Of the monuments of this period only the tomb pyramid of Zeser and a few remains of Mastabas of the Third Dynasty were known. In consequence of this paucity of information, it has often happened that serious scholars have considered the kings of this earliest period of Egyptian history as mythical personages, or at least have come to the opinion that the lists of the kings were nothing but artificial compilations." (The above quotation, and

information preceding it, is from the paper, Excavations in Egypt, by Prof. George Steindorff, published in Explorations in Bible Lands, During the 19th Century—1903—pp. 625-690.) "Little by little," he adds, "we are gaining more light upon this dark subject."

This is putting the results of the discovery into very conservative terms. Prof. Clifton Marby Levy, member of the Egyptian Exploration Fund, and American Oriental Society, was more enthusiastic in his comments on the result of the find about the time it occurred:

"The gods are men. That is the result of the latest discoveries in old Egypt. For Professor E. Amelineau, one of the most famous and trustworthy of the explorers in Egypt, announces positively that he has found the very tombs in which were buried the bodies of the Egyptian deities Osiris, Horus and Set. The discovery has made a tremendous sensation all over the world, for these names had been always supposed by modern scholars to be purely mythical.

"It would be impossible to exaggerate the importance of Professor Amelineau's discovery, for it is more radical and far-reaching than any of the many remarkable finds made in historic Egypt. Not one of the modern historians of that land of mystery from Flinders Petrie to Adolf Erman has expressed any belief in the actual existence of the first divine kings of Egypt. The names Osiris, Isis, Horus and Set have been supposed by every writer to be nothing more nor less than personifications of the powers of nature.

"But scholars are critical beings, readier with new theories to explain such stories than to accept them as containing the truth. It was incredible to them that such beings as Osiris and Horus ever lived, and in the legends of their adventures they saw nothing more than the personifying of the earth, the Nile, the sun and the stars. M. Amelineau, however, with his spade, upsets all of their theories, in so far as they deny the existence of these gods on earth, for he has found their

tombs." (Letter to the New York Sunday Journal, March 13th, 1898.)

Nor is this likely to be the last upsetting that new discoveries will bring concerning Egyptology. As remarked by Prof. Steindorff—"more, considerable more, still remains hidden, waiting for the fortunate discoverer; and the day is far remote when the cry of 'nothing new from Africa' will be heard by the civilized world."

And now to apply this recent revolution to the present case. Suppose Joseph Smith, previous to 1895, had announced that the mummies with which was found the Egyptian rolls of papyrus, here in question, were doubled up, the knees drawn up, the hands before the face and lying on the left side. In that event some "Prof. Sayce," doubtless, could have been found who would have said: "It is difficult to deal seriously with Joseph Smith's impudent fraud" (Pamphlet, p. 23); "every one knows," such a Sayce would doubtless have added, "that no Egyptians have been found so buried, the mummies must be of some other race. And some "Dr. Mace" could have been found to denounce such a declaration as "a farrago of nonsense" (Pamphlet p. 27)—so easy is it, even for dignified, learned men, to speak contemptuously. But since 1896—since the discoveries of Dr. Petrie and Prof. Amelineau—the whole list of Egyptologists would be in agreement with such a declaration, such virtue is there in the turning of a spade—the opening of a tomb.

Or had Joseph Smith announced that the mummies with which the rolls of papyrus were found contemporaneous with the ancient personages, Osiris, Isis, Horus, Set, then what a storm of impatient ridicule would have raged about the Prophet's head, and with what scorn the learned savants would have informed a listening world that, all this was "a farrago of nonsense," that the names Osiris, Isis, Horus and Set are "nothing more nor less than personifications of the powers of nature" (Prof. Levy). It was incredible that "such beings as Osiris and Horus ever lived." "and in the legends of their adventures" the

learned "saw nothing more than the personifying of earth, the Nile, the sun and the stars" (Levy). And doubtless some "Professor Breasted" could have been found who would have said—in the event of our supposition happening previous to 1896—The fact of these names being purely mythical, or representing only the natural elements—"This" our "Breasted" would have said, "was of course, unknown to Smith, but it is a fact not only of my own knowledge, but also a common place of the knowledge of every orientalist who works in the Egyptian field" (pamphlet, p. 25). But again the opening of a tomb, and all this "knowledge" vanishes, and the names that were "myths" yesterday, become the names of real personages today. Much virtue in the opening of a tomb; and the opening of tombs in Egypt is not ended yet, nor the results following the opening of tombs.

But, to the consideration of this verdict.

BAD COPY, ILLEGIBLE.

1. Of "bad copying" of the original documents, and what may come of it. Let it be observed in passing that the genuineness of the facsimiles is not in question, they are conceded to be Egyptian, though all of the jury, save one, insist that the attempt at reproduction has been badly executed.

"The hieroglyphics . . . have been copied so ignorantly that hardly one of them is correct."

The "hieroglyphics," again, "have been transformed into unintelligible lines. Hardly one of them is copied correctly."—Sayce.

This repetition in his letter in less than a dozen lines.

"The inscriptions are far too badly copied to be able to read them."—Petrie.

Commenting on figure "6," plate 3, Dr. Breasted says:

"The head. . . . should be that of a wolf, or jackal, but which is here badly drawn."

"Cut 1 and 3 are inaccurate copies of well-known scenes on funeral papyri."—Mace.

"The reproductions are very bad."—Meyer.

"The hieroglyphics are merely illegible scratches, the imitator not having the skill or intelligence to copy such a script."—Peters.

"It is impossible from Smith's bad facsimiles to make out any meaning of the inscriptions."—Bissing.

Question: If all this be true of the alleged facsimiles, how may the learned gentlemen pronounce judgment upon them with such certainty? May not the differences noted in these cuts from Egyptian documents with which they are compared and contrasted, and here assigned to bad copying, arise from a real difference in the documents themselves, due to production of a different age, or by a sojourner in Egypt, such as Abraham was? A layman's question, of course but I venture to press it. M. Theodore Deveria, a young savant of the Museum of the Louvre, Paris, when the same facsimiles were presented to him for translation by M. Jules Remey, in 1860—M. Remey was a French traveler who visited Utah in 1855-6 and afterward published his observations in two volumes, largely devoted to Utah and the "Mormons"—made the same complaint against the facsimiles, namely, that the reproduction was bad, that the hieroglyphics and figures in the copies submitted to him were in some cases dim and may not be deciphered. In other cases he insists that the figures should be different, and claims that others still have been purposely altered in copying.

This is substantially the claim of our present learned jury. M. Deveria, as well as they, obtained a different translation from that given by Joseph Smith; upon which, elsewhere, I have remarked: "If it is the facsimiles thus changed that M. Deveria has interpreted, then of course his interpretation would differ from the translation made by Joseph Smith, who doubtless followed strictly the papyrus text. (*Americana*, N. Y., April, 1911, p. 377, note.) I venture to make the same comment upon the work of the jury of savants now being considered.

HOW IT WAS ENGRAVED.

And now as to the "bad copying" and purposely altering figures in the "fac-

similes." The prophet describes the original documents as "beautifully written on papyrus, with black, and a small part red, ink or paint, in perfect preservation. The characters are such as you find upon the coffins of mummies—hieroglyphics, etc.—with many characters or letters like the present (though probably not quite so square) form of the Hebrew, without points." (*Hist. of the Ch.*, vol. II, p. 3 and 8.) That is, the most ancient form of the Hebrew. From this it would appear that the original was not defective. The wood engraving for the cuts published in *The Times and Seasons* (Vol. III, Nos. 9, 19), was done by Reuben Hedlock, an engraver from Canada. John Taylor, later President Taylor, also from Canada, and a worker in wood, was also present and working on *The Times and Seasons* at the date of the publication of the facsimiles, and there is little doubt but what the wood engraving was reasonably well done. As to purposely changing the figures or altering the text, that is out of the question, since that would have subjected the prophet to detection and exposure, as after the facsimiles and the Book of Abraham were both published, the mummies, with which the papyri were found, and the papyri, were on exhibition at the home of the Prophet's parents at Nauvoo, subject to the inspection of all who might choose to examine them. As late as May, "forty-three days before the death of the prophet", in 1844, they were examined by Josiah Quincy—the Josiah of "Figures of the Past" authorship. It is not, therefore, likely that Joseph Smith or his associates would designedly change any of the figures in their copy of these documents and run such risk of detection and exposure.

Again I say, such differences as are found to exist between these facsimiles and similar documents with which they are compared by our jury of savants, may not arise from "bad copying," but represent documents of different composition from those with which they are compared; of different ages, and executed by a sojourner in Egypt, as was Abraham.

A Facsimile from the Book of Abraham.



CUT NO. 1. EXPLANATION OF ABOVE.

Fig. 1, The Angel of the Lord. 2, Abraham fastened upon an altar. 3, the idolatrous priest of Elkenah attempting to offer up Abraham as a sacrifice. 4, The altar for sacrifice by the idolatrous priests, standing before the gods of Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmackrah, Korash, and Pharaoh. 5, the idolatrous god of Elkenah. 6, The idolatrous god of Libnah. 7, The idolatrous god of Mahmackrah. 8, The idolatrous god of Korash. 9, The idolatrous god of Pharaoh. 10, Abraham in Egypt. 11, Designed to represent the pillars of heaven, as understood by the Egyptians. 12, Raukeeyang, signifying expanse, or the firmament over our heads; but in this case, in relation to this subject, the Egyptians meant it to signify Shaumau, to be high, or the heavens, answering to the Hebrew word Shaumahyeem.

A Facsimile from the Book of Abraham.



CUT NO. 2. EXPLANATION OF THE FOREGOING CUT.

Fig. 1. Kolob, signifying the first creation, nearest to the celestial, or residence of God. First in government, the last pertaining to the measurement of time. The measurement according to celestial time, which celestial time signifies one day to a cubit. One day in Kolob is equal to a thousand years, according to the measurement of this earth, which is called by the Egyptians Jah-oh-eh.

Fig. 2. Stands next to Kolob, called by the Egyptians Oliblish, which is the next grand governing creation near to the celestial or the place where God resides; holding the key of power also, pertaining to other planets; as revealed from God to Abraham, as he offered sacrifice upon an altar, which he had built unto the Lord.

Fig. 3. Is made to represent God sitting upon his throne, clothed with power and authority; with a crown of eternal light upon his head; representing also the grand Key-Words of the Holy Priesthood, as revealed to Adam in the Garden of Eden, as also to Seth, Noah, Melchisedeck, Abraham, and all to whom the Priesthood was revealed.

Fig. 4. Answers to the Hebrew word Raukeeyang signifying expanse, or the firmament of the heavens; also a numerical figure, in Egyptian signifying one thousand; answering to the measuring of the time of Oliblish, which is equal with Kolob in its revolution and in its measuring of time.

Fig. 5. Is called in Egyptian Enish-go-on-dosh; this is one of the governing planets also, and is said by the Egyptians to be the Sun, and to borrow its light from Kolob through the medium of Kae-e-vanrash, which is the grand key, or in other words, the governing power, which governs 15 other fixed planets or stars, as also Floese or the Moon, the Earth and the Sun in their annual revolutions. This planet receives its power through the medium of Kli-flos-is-es, or Hah-ko-kau-beam, the stars represented by numbers 22 and 23, receiving light from the revolutions of Kolob.

Fig. 6. Represents the earth in its four quarters.

Fig. 7. Represents God sitting upon his throne revealing through the heavens the grand Key-Words of the Priesthood; as also, the sign of the Holy Ghost unto Abraham, in the form of a dove.

Fig. 8. Contains writing that cannot be revealed unto the world; but is to be had in the Holy Temple of God.

Fig. 9. Ought not to be revealed at the present time.

Fig. 10. Also.

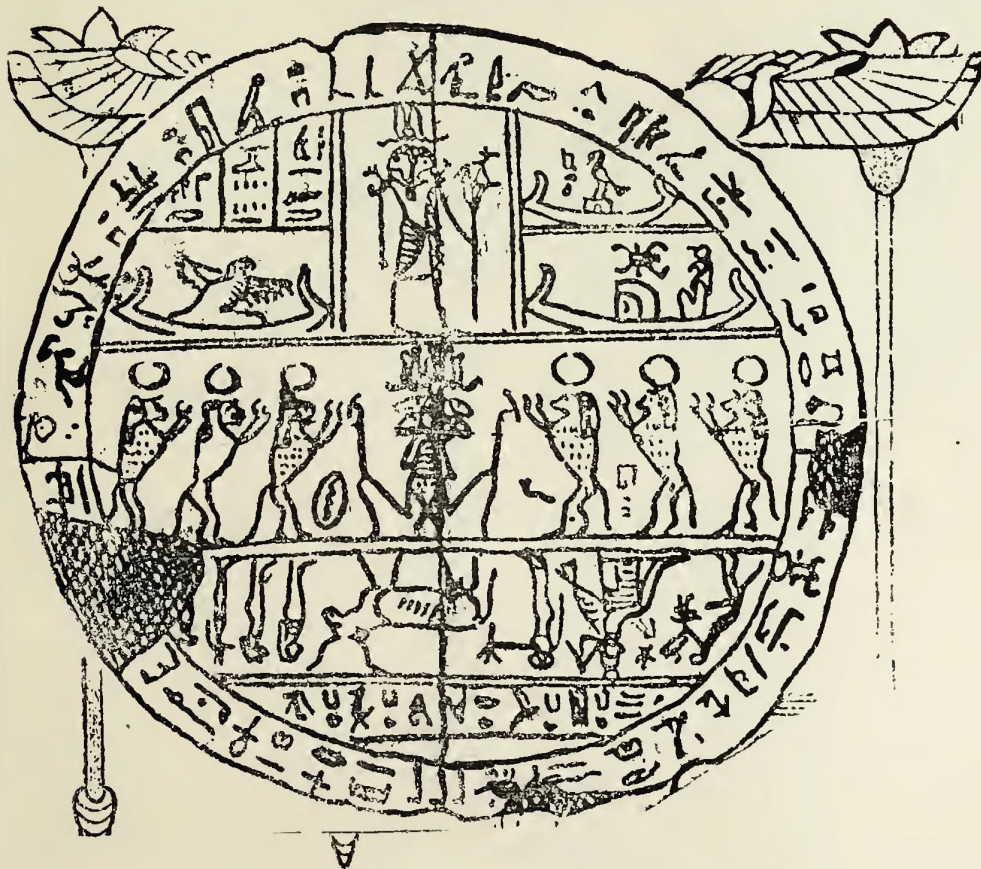
Fig. 11. Also. If the world can find out these numbers, so let it be. Amen.

Figs. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20, will be given in the own due time of the Lord.

The above translation is given as far as we have any right to give, at the present time.

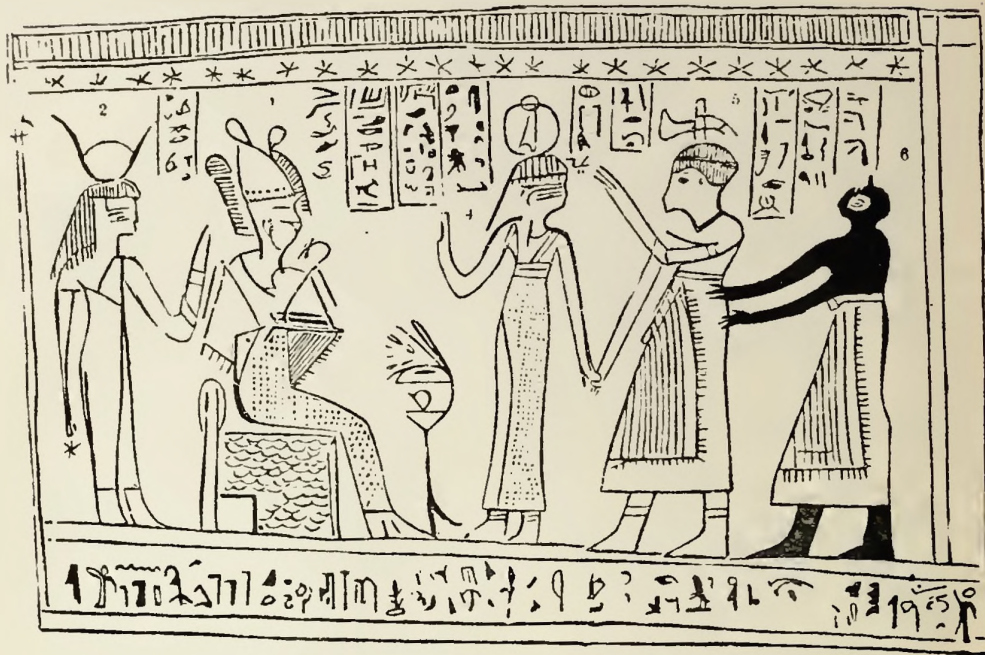
Plate from the Berlin Museum Collection,

In the New York Times of December 29th. 1912.



Magic Disk for use under mummy's head. Note similarity to Plate No. 4 (2) from "The Pearl of Grea Price."

A Facsimile from the Book of Abraham.



CUT N. 3. EXPLANATION OF THE ABOVE CUT.

1. Abraham sitting upon Pharaoh's throne, by the politeness of the king, with a crown upon his head, representing the Priesthood, as emblematical of the grand Presidency in Heaven; with the sceptre of justice and judgment in his hand.

2. King Pharaoh, whose name is given in the characters above his head.

3. Signifies Abraham in Egypt; referring to Abraham, as given in the ninth number of the Times and Seasons. (Also as given in the first fac-simile of this book).

4. Prince of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, as written above the hand.

5. Shulem, one of the king's principal waiters, as represented by the characters above his hand.

6. Olimlah, a slave belonging to the prince.

Abraham is reasoning upon the principles of astronomy, in the king's court.

And this, too, might have an important bearing upon the date of the documents which our jury insists "are all many centuries later than Abraham: . . . about 960 to 750 B. C."—Petrie. Such documents as facsimile No. 2, said by the jury to be a sort of funeral tablet, in common use, "did not appear in any Egyptian burials until over a thousand years after the time of Abraham."—Breasted. Of facsimile No. 3, also related to funeral uses—of which there are many of the kind—"yet it may be stated as certain that the scene was unknown until about 500 years after Abraham's day."—Breasted.

It is fortunate for Joseph Smith's claims that the learned jury did not decide that the documents were of more ancient date than Abraham, for that would have presented a real difficulty, but being this side of his day, he may have been the author of such documents, though copies of them may not have been multiplied until centuries later.

Since the above appeared in print, the New York Times has devoted a page and a half of its valuable space to this subject, and with sensational headlines announced how "Museum walls proclaim fraud of 'Mormon' Prophet." The tone of the Times article in general is in sympathy with Bishop Spalding's jury, and contributes its voice against the Prophet. The article is illustrated with cuts, one of the "Mormon" temple, the three facsimiles from the Book of Abraham, and a circular disc from the Berlin museum collection, and invites its readers to note similarity to plate No. 4 (the number it gives to circular plate No. 2 in the Pearl of Great Price). It is only reasonable to presume that after all the claims that are made of this circular disc of the Book of Abraham being practically identical with the funerary discs plentifully found in Egyptian tombs and modern museums, the one most nearly resembling the Book of Abraham disc was selected by the Times writer for reproduction, in fac-simile. That being granted as reasonable, I for one thank the Times writer for giving me

the opportunity of putting these two discs side by side in this article for comparison and contrast, and they are accordingly published herewith.

Two things are established by this opportunity for comparison and contrast; first that the fac-similes plate from the Book of Abraham is not unskillfully executed as charged. As a bit of art engraving it is in every way superior to the reproduction of the Times plate fac-simile from the Berlin Museum. There is nothing incongruous between detail and general plan, as there doubtless would be if any of the pictographs had been designedly changed as is charged in respect of this plate (Deveria), or "copied so ignorantly that hardly one of them is correct" (Sayce.) And I leave it to the reader to say if in those parts that are most nearly alike in the two fac-similes the artistic execution is not superior in the Book of Abraham disc.

The second thing established by publishing the fac-similes of these two plates side by side, is that they are not identical plates. That while there are certain similarities in the two, enough to show that they may in part treat of the same general subjects (and that is what is required by the circumstances as we shall later see); yet the similarity is not so marked as to the distinctive features between the two (and that is what is required by the circumstances as we shall presently see). To establish this distinction in the conviction of the reader, let him take the middle line of combined pictographs and hieroglyphics and consider them. While the central figure has enough similarity to indicate the same idea, yet in the Book of Abraham pictograph there is but one disced, dog-headed like animal on each side; and then four lines of closely written hieroglyphics on each side. In the Berlin plate there are three dog-like animals on each side, and no hieroglyphics, except two or three. In the central figure on the top line there is marked similarity; but in the Book of Abraham fac-simile there is a perpendicular line of hieroglyphics, and other details absent from the Berlin plate. Note also the difference

in the two plates as to the pictographs to the right of this central figure. A comparison of the hieroglyphics circling the rim of the plate will also show distinctiveness; and there are a number of others, but this is sufficient to start the reader in making his comparisons and contrasts.

Again, respecting these differences in the fac-similies from the Book of Abraham and the Egyptian documents of the museums, relating perhaps, at least, to similar subjects, and with which our jury of savants compare and contrast the fac-similies given out by Joseph Smith: I am of opinion that the Book of Abraham itself gives a key which may lead to a solution of the matter. In that record we are informed that the first Pharaoh, son of Egyptus, the daughter of Ham, was a righteous man, but being of the race, that was denied the right to the priesthood, which had obtained among the ancient patriarchs, he nevertheless established his kingdom and judged his people wisely and justly all his days, seeking earnestly to imitate that order (i. e. of the priesthood) established by the fathers in the first generations, in the days of the first patriarchal reign, "even in the reign of Adam, and also of Noah." Allowing this in the account, and it may not be denied its place, then we of the "Mormon" side of the controversy have the right to say: "Differences in these leaves form the Book of Abraham and the leaves from the Book of the Dead in your museums, and in the hands of your savants? Yes, certainly; for our fac-similies were written by one holding the true and legitimate order of the priesthood, and capable of representing in pictographs and hieroglyphics of his times its true signs and insignia, and history; what you find in the tombs of Egyptians kings and priests, and upon the walls of Egyptian temples, is but an imitation of that ancient order of things of which book our documents speak, but yours, doubtless, inaccurately from the first, being but an imitation, and that imitation (again doubtlessly) varied from, in the course of

years while our record has remained uncorrupted. Hence the differences.

II—DISAGREEMENTS AMONG THE JURY OF SAVANTS.

Plate I.—As to the whole plate:

"The well known scene of Anubis preparing the body of a dead man."—Petrie.

"Apparently the plate represents an embalmer [name evidently unknown—just a common undertaker, perhaps. R.] preparing a body for burial."—Peters.

"Parts of the well known Book of the Dead."—Meyer.

"This figure represents Osiris raising from the dead." (!)—Breasted.

Judging from the plate itself, if I were on the jury, I should vote with Breasted, for surely the whole scene is too animated for the embalming of the dead. The main figure on the bedstead-like altar, with both hands raised in protest, and one foot up, is evidently not ready for the supposed embalming process that Petrie and Peters think is under way. It should be observed, too, that the figure to be "embalmed" is clothed, and presumably in his right mind judging from the expression of the open and rather intelligent expression of the eye. It is more like a book of the living than of the "dead;" more like resistance to an assassin, as Joseph Smith depicts it, an attempt to offer the patriarch Abraham as a sacrifice to false gods—than either an embalming scene or a resurrection.

As to the separate figures on plat I: Figure 1—The hawk-like bird.

"The hawk of Horus."—Petrie.

"A bird in which form Isis is represented"—Breasted ("The hawk of Horus" and this alleged representation of Isis cannot be regarded as identical or as having anything in common, since Isis was the sister and wife of Osiris, and the mother of Horus; and Horus a solar deity, the avenger of his father—see Rawlinson and others. R.)

"The soul (Kos) is flying away in the form of a bird"—Peters.

"The soul in the shape of a bird is flying above it" (i. e. the body)—Meyer.

"The soul is leaving the body in the moment when the priest (3) is opening the body with a knife for mummification"—Bissing.

SOUL OF OSIRIS.

To these diverse interpretations of this figure 1, I add that of M. Deveria: "The soul of Osiris, under the form of a hawk." He also adds, in parenthesis, that the hawk "should have a human head." Yes, or the head of an ass, then it could be made to mean something else than what these other learned men describe it as meaning. Deveria also says that "figure 3"—which Breasted calls an "officiating priest;" Meyer "a priest approaching it" (i. e. the 'bier'); and Peters, an "embalmer"—Deveria, I say, calls "figure 3" "The God of Anubis." With this Petrie, of Bishop Spalding's jury, agrees; except that Deveria says he is "effecting the resurrection of Osiris," and Petrie that "he is the conductor of the souls of the dead." Petrie makes no complaint against the form of "figure 3," but Deveria insists that he "should have a jackal's head." Yes, or some other change might be suggested, and by such process some other meaning may be read into the plate and make it different from the translation of Joseph Smith.

Let us all stand together here a moment—this jury of savants, and M. Deveria, and also you and I, bishop, let us for a moment join the group, though we be no savants we need not be much abashed for the moment; and let the "mad Hamlet" instruct us:

Polonius, the tiresome old courtier, has been sent to bring Prince Hamlet to the presence of his mother, then—

"Hamlet: Do you see yonder cloud that's almost the shape of a camel?"

"Polonius: By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed."

"Hamlet: Methinks it is like a weasel."

"Polonius: It is backed like a weasel."

"Hamlet: Or like a whale?"

"Polonius: Very like a whale."

"Hamlet: Then I will come to my mother by and by."

All right, bishop, for one, I will change my belief in Joseph Smith's translation of these Egyptian plates, "by and by," perhaps, but it will not be until there is more harmony among your Egyptologists. After this digres-

sion let us proceed, for there is more to follow. I continue with plate No. 1, Figure 2:

"The dead person"—PETRIE.

"The body of the dead lying abas' (bier)"--MEYER.

"The dead man is lying abier"—BIS-SING.

"The reclining figure lifts one foot and both arms. This figure represents Osiris rising from the dead!"—BREASTED.

"Osiris coming to life on his funeral couch!"—DEVERIA.

Again, were I on the jury, I should in this case vote with Breasted and Deveria, for the figure discussed represents a very life-like attitude for a corpse. If Mark Twain was commenting on the alleged "dead man" he would doubtless say that the report of his being dead was "very much exaggerated."

If our good bishop was in any way responsible for all this confusion of interpretation of the plates, I should laugh outright, for he is no more of an Egyptologist than I am; but as it is a learned jury of savants that have each other by the ears, it will be becoming in me to place my hand over my mouth and stand demure, as I do now.

Explanations of plates 2 and 3 are not as extended as in the case of this plate No. 1, for which reason, I take it, there is less conflict and more general agreement among members of the jury than in the explanations of plate No. 1. But we have the dictum, on the high authority of Dr. Sayce of Oxford, that the hieroglyphics of plate No. 3 "have been transformed into unintelligible lines;" "that hardly one of them is copied correctly," and how what it stands for, under such circumstances, is to be made out is difficult for the lay mind to comprehend. It should also be remembered that these savants in their interpretation of the facsimiles are pointing out what they conceive to be the meaning of some few of the principal figures but give us no translation of what might be thought, by the layman, to be the "script" of the text, namely, the small characters around the bor-

der of the circular disc, as also around and within the main part of the other facsimiles. If, as one of the jury declares (Mace), "Egyptian characters can now be read almost as easily as Greek," one wonders how it is that one or other of the plates was not completely translated, and its story exhaustively told. Can it be that Egyptologists are not as sure of their knowledge of ancient Egyptian script as the above remark of Dr. Mace would lead us to think they are? Is not our knowledge of the Egyptian records still in its swaddling band of infancy? What is said of plate No. 2, however, is more important for another reason than for disagreements among our jury of savants, and which I now proceed to point out.

III.—IMPORTANT CONFIRMATION OF JOSEPH SMITH'S DECLARATIONS WITH REFERENCE TO PLATE NO. 2.

"No. 2 is one of the usual discs with magic inscriptions placed beneath the head of the dead."—PETRIE.

"Cut No. 2 is a copy of one of the magical discs which in the late Egyptian period were placed under the head of the mummies."—MACE.

"Facsimile No. 2 * * * is commonly called among Egyptologists a hypcephalus. It was placed under the head of the mummy, and the various representations upon it were of a magical power designed to assist the deceased in various ways, especially to prevent the loss of his head."—BREASTED.

It is proper to say that our "jury-man" adds: "These did not come into use until the late centuries, just before the Christian era." (For an explanation of which see the paragraph quoted from Reynolds later.)

Figure 1. in the Book of Abraham fac-simile plate no. 2, is interpreted by Deveria to be:

"The spirit of the four elements, or rather of the four winds, or the four cardinal points; the soul of the terrestrial world."

Figure 2, same plate; "Amon Ra with two human heads, meant probably to represent both the invisible or mysterious principle of Ammon, and the visible or luminous principle of Ra, the sun; or else the double and

simultaneous principle of father and son.

Figure 3: "The God Ra, the sun, with a hawk's head seated in his boat. In the field the two symbolical figures according to M. de Rouge, the fixed points of an astronomical period."

Figure 5; "The mystic cow, the great cow, symbolizing the inferior hemisphere of the heavens."

Joseph Smith's explanation of this No. 2 circular disc is that it deals with the science of astronomy, and with sacred mysteries. For the former see his explanations of figures 1, 2, 4, 5, 6; circular disc and for the latter, the sacred mysteries—see his explanation of figure 8—"contains writing that cannot be revealed unto the world but is to be had in the Holy Temple of God." "Figure 9 ought not to be revealed at the present time; figure 10 also. Figure 11 also; if the world can find out these numbers, so let it be. Amen." "Figures 12-20 will be given in the own due time of the Lord." "Figure 3," the prophet says, "is made to represent God, sitting upon his throne, clothed with power and authority, with a crown of eternal light upon his head; representing also the grand key words of the holy priesthood as revealed to Adam in the Garden of Eden, as also to Seth, Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham, and all to whom the priesthood was revealed."

"Figure 7," the Prophet also declares, "represents God sitting upon his throne revealing through the heavens the grand key words of the priesthood; as, also, the sign of the Holy Ghost unto Abraham, in the form of a dove."

To the idea of this plate being "sacred" or possessed of "magical" power "designed to assist the deceased in various ways, especially to prevent the loss of his head," and parts of it not to be revealed unto the world, and some of it only in holy places—to all this, several of our jury of savants give contributing evidence. But how came Joseph Smith by this knowledge, that this plate treated of these two things, Astronomy and sacred mysteries if not by "inspiration," for confessedly he did not obtain it by Egyptian

scholarship? Neither could he by searching find it out, as no means of interpreting the Egyptian hieroglyphics was at hand until the publication of Champollion's Elementary Egyptian Grammar was issued, which did not come from the press until 1841; and the Book of Abraham and these fac-similes were published in March, 1842. It is safe to say that Joseph Smith never saw Champollion's grammar, previous to the publication of the Book of Abraham if at all.

On this whole matter of fac-simile No. 2, the late George Reynolds has an enlightening passage:

"It has been urged as an argument against the veracity of the translation by the Prophet Joseph Smith, of the circular cut or disc, but why, we cannot comprehend, that numerous copies of it exist, scattered among museums of Europe. These copies have been found buried with numerous mummies in the same way as the one that fell into the Prophet's hands. Instead of being an argument against the truthfulness of the translation given by Joseph Smith, we consider it a very strong one in its favor. For this reason, Egyptologists acknowledge that some peculiar potency was ascribed to it by the ancient Egyptians, but their ideas are very vague as to in what that power consisted

"It was customary with the ancient inhabitants of Egypt to enshroud their dead in hieroglyphic wrappings, on which various facts relating to the life of the deceased were narrated. This writing was addressed to Osiris, the chief lord of Amenti, the land of the departed, and amongst other things it stated that the acts of the Osir, the deceased, had been scrutinized by the seven inquisitors appointed to investigate the lives of men, and that he was found worthy to pass by those who guarded the gates of the eternal worlds, and partake of the blessings of the saved.

"Accompanying the mummy is also often found this sacred disc, or hypocephalus, as the learned term it, which, if we mistake not, was usually placed under or near the head of the mummy. The translations given by the professedly learned convey no idea why this was so placed, but the revelations through our martyred prophet, that it contains the key words of the holy priesthood, at once makes the reason plain. The Egyptians buried this disc containing these sacred words with their dead, for very much the same reason that the Saints bury

their dead in the robes of the holy priesthood.

"No doubt the true meaning of these 'key words' was soon lost among the Egyptians, but they knew enough to understand something of their value, and as ages rolled on, their apostate priesthood doubtlessly invented some myth to take their place."—The Book of Abraham. Its Authenticity established as a Divine and Ancient Record, 1870, George Reynolds, pp. 21, 22.

In passing I would call attention to the fact that this book by Mr. Reynolds has been very much neglected by the Latter-day Saints. Bishop Spalding seems not to be aware of its existence, else I feel sure he would not have remarked that the "Mormons" had paid little attention to the claims of M. Deveria, referred to in M. Remy's books. And if Bishop Spalding's brochure shall result in attracting any general attention to this very able work of the late George Reynolds, the "Mormons" may forgive the bishop for the slight shock he may momentarily have given them by hurling at their heads the opinions of his jury of savants on the translations of their Prophet. I commend the book of Mr. Reynolds to all interested in the subject, especially for its careful and scholarly treatment of the internal evidences of this fragment of the "Mormon" Prophet's work. But to return now to our argument.

Of the value of this incidental confirmation of the Prophet Joseph's declaration concerning the general character of circular disc No. 2, especially in the significant passage of Dr. Breasted, we at least may say that we are more than compensated for what else of damage it may be thought has been inflicted upon the standing of Joseph Smith as a translator of ancient records by the testimony of this group of Egyptologists.

PURPOSE OF BISHOP SPALDING.

I have a mild, but at the same time, I trust, only a respectful curiosity, to know what interest Bishop Spalding can have in the question of Joseph Smith's accuracy as a translator, or the historicity of the Book of Mormon, or of the Book of Abraham. As I

understand his position, he follows those who go to the farthest frontiers of research in modern, or higher, criticism of the ancient Hebrew and Christian scriptures; and fearlessly accepts the results of that school of thought, up to the point of believing with many of its leaders that religion may be founded and become a reality in the world, notwithstanding defective historical origins.

If I am right in this opinion of his mental attitude in respect to this subject, and I should be sorry to mistake his position, then I might ask of what importance to him is the objective existence of the plates of which the Book of Mormon is said to be a translation; or the genuineness of the Egyptian rolls of papyrus, from which it is alleged Joseph Smith translated the Book of Abraham, or what matters it if Joseph Smith was or was not an accurate translator of ancient records, Egyptian or otherwise? If the recent deductions of higher criticism be accepted, and I understand the bishop to accept them, then these questions that concern themselves with objective existences, historicity, and even accuracy of translations, or any translation at all, are merely matters of minor importance, the mere scaffolding of realities and not the realities themselves, and really not vital. Allow me to explain: One of the most emphatic utterances of higher criticism says:

"The time has come when it seems necessary deliberately to raise the question whether the story which we have in the four gospels of the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of their central figure, was designed by their authors to be taken as literal history. The higher criticism, indeed, is forcing this question to the front, and the time does not seem far distant when all sections of the church will have to face it."

The result of the higher criticism on the New Testament he describes as follows:

"But the result has been to show in almost if not every part of scripture that what we have is not history proper; that the author's purpose was not to write history, but to edify, to teach some religious truth which he regarded as all-important. . . . As a result

of the work of the higher criticism, the four gospels are a complete wreck as historical records. * * * * As authorities for the life of Jesus they are hopelessly shattered by the assaults of the higher criticism. How little they tell us of an historic Jesus! * * * There is only one way in which Christianity can survive, and that is by the surrender of its claim of being a historical religion, and the placing of it on a purely spiritual foundation." *
Our author argues as follows for this position:

"Why not listen to the mystic who tells us that it is nothing less than idolatry to fix our thought and worship on a historical Jesus, who is supposed to have lived in Palestine two thousand years ago, that a flesh-and-blood Jesus is a contradiction in terms, and that what the gospel writers intended to give the world was not history or biography, but spiritual allegory or drama." (!) (Rev. K. C. Anderson, D. D., *Hibbert Journal*, January, 1911.)

Now, if I am right as to the bishop's attitude on the matter of higher criticism, why does he not treat Mormonism as such criticism treats Judaism and Christianity; not on the ground of its historicity, or the accuracy of its translated documents, but from the conception that Joseph Smith's purpose, as higher critics say the purpose of the New Testament writers was, "not to write history, but to edify," to teach some religious truth "which they regarded as all important;" not to give out correct translations of ancient documents, but to give the world some "spiritual allegory, or drama."

The above is written, not to seek to shift the basis of the argument, because I would escape the difficulties involved in the "Mormon" side of the controversy, but just to point out the fact to the respected bishop, that however much others may call in question the historical facts in which "Mormonism" had its origin; the objective existence of the plates, from which it is alleged the Book of Mormon was translated; or the accuracy of the Prophet Joseph as a translator of either the Book of Abraham or the Book of Mormon, it is not necessary to his school of thought to take us to task on these questions, since he must regard them as not at all vital to the maintenance of the real truth of "Mor-

monism." Hence for him, upon reflection, his performance in the adroitly prepared argument against Joseph Smith as a translator, must ever be apropos to nothing.

PLEA IN BAR.

I trust that without laying myself open to the charge of egotism, I may claim that the modest task proposed at the outset of this writing has been achieved, namely, that a successful plea has been made in bar of final conclusions upon the questions involved in Bishop Spalding's criticism of Joseph Smith as a translator; that the case against the "Mormon" Prophet is not quite so formidable as it at first appeared to be; and that my readers will find sufficient reasons herein set forth to cause them to suspend judgment until some more worthy consideration may be given to the bishop's brochure—until those more competent, both in scholarship, and in analytical power, and skill in such learned controversy, may find opportunity to give the subject the attention it deserves.

Meantime, I would suggest to my own people that they should remember that there is a wide difference between the thing that one may not be able to explain and the thing which overthrows his theory altogether. One may not always account fully for his truth, nor beat down successfully all objections that may be urged

against it; but it remains truth, just the same. And so in this case.

I believe that in the translations Joseph Smith has given to the world—confessedly not by scholarship but by inspiration, by his own spirit being quickened by contact with God's spirit—that in those translations are truths that are parts of a mighty system of truth, the like of which is not found elsewhere among men. And that system of truth, now being worked out in the experiences of both individual men and nations of men, will receive, ere the end, a splendid vindication both as a system and in all its parts.

And here I might paraphrase a passage from George Rawlinson employed in his "Historical Evidences of the Truth of the Scripture Records: If any new form of evidence shall hereafter be needed to meet new forms of attack, and authenticate afresh the word of truth, they will be found deposited somewhere, waiting for the fullness of time; and God will bring them forth in their season, from the dark hieroglyphics, or the desert sands, or the dusty manuscripts, to confound the adversaries of his word, and to magnify his name.

Secure in such a conviction, here let us stay ourselves, nothing daunted; and let the world's investigation of our truth be welcomed, confident, with the apostle of the Gentiles, that nothing can be done against the truth, but for the truth.