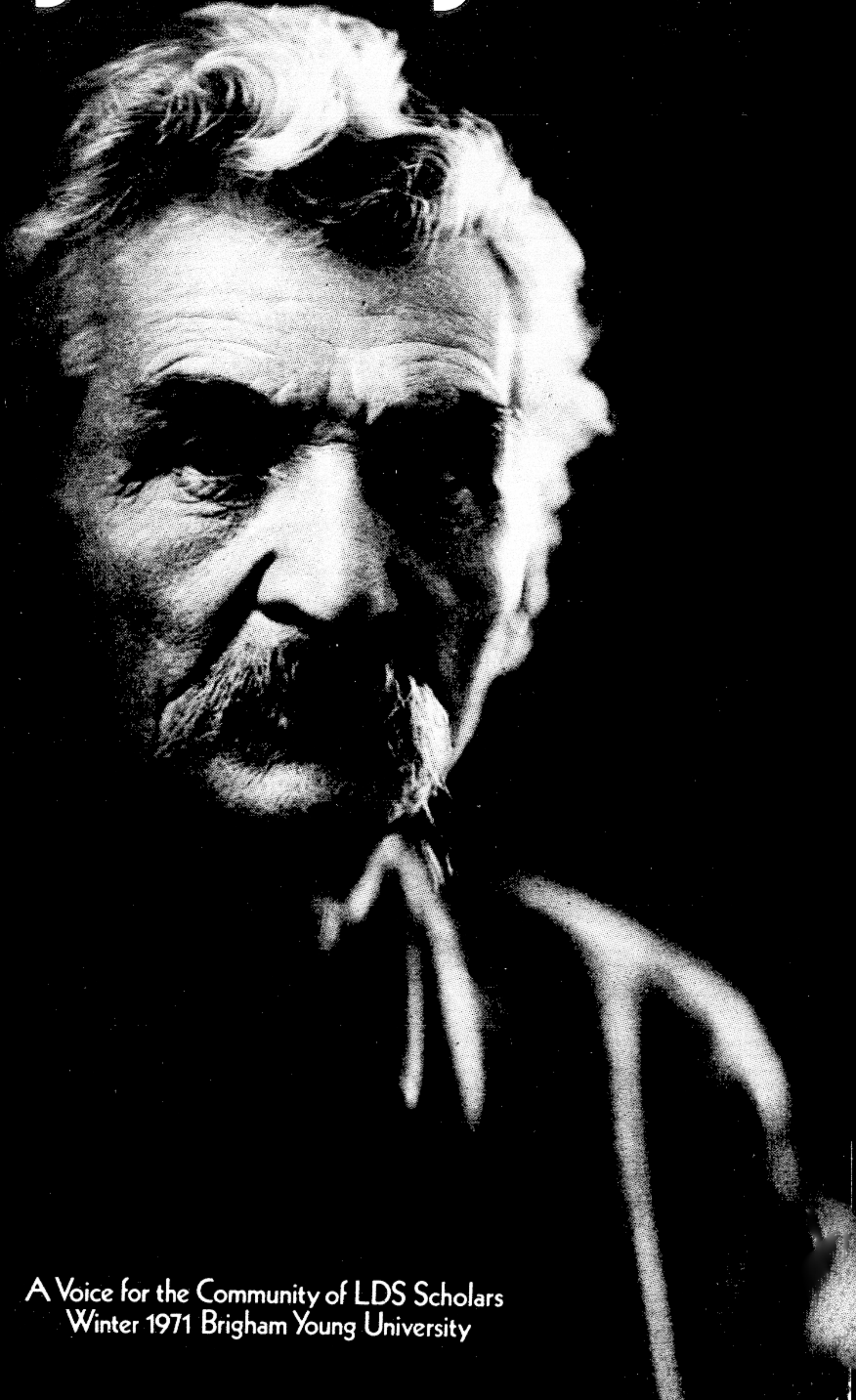


BYU studies



A Voice for the Community of LDS Scholars
Winter 1971 Brigham Young University

Cover: A photograph of Mark Twain in his later years by courtesy of George C. Bennion

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The Gentle Blasphemer: Mark Twain, Holy Scripture, and the Book of Mormon

RICHARD H. CRACROFT*

Chapter Sixteen of Mark Twain's *Roughing It* begins, "All men have heard of the Mormon Bible, but few except the 'elect' have seen it, or, at least, taken the trouble to read it."¹ Conversely, all Mormons have heard of Twain's caustic burlesque on the Book of Mormon, but none seems to have taken the trouble to demonstrate to Gentiles that Twain was obviously one of the multitude who had not read the book. Indeed, the four chapters in *Roughing It* (1872) devoted to the Mormons and their "golden Bible" continue to evoke hilarity from Latter-day Saints, not only because of the burlesque on sacred Mormon institutions, of which Twain was understandably but appallingly ignorant, but also because of the amusingly evident fact that if Twain read the Book of Mormon at all, it was in the same manner that Tom Sawyer won the Sunday School Bible contest—by cheating.

But it doesn't really matter—either the fact that Twain misunderstood Mormon life or the "Mormon Bible"—for Twain was, above all, a humorist and therefore dependent upon the immediate response of his generally American audience, an audience which had preformed and thus very exploitable judgments about the Mormons and their "peculiar institutions." He knew that irreverence, or at least a humor which, says Pascal Covici, presents "a solemn association in a context that

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¹*Roughing It* (New York, 1959), p. 110. Hereafter: *RI*.

is ridiculous and insignificant,"² is a dependable device for setting up that necessary and fruitful tension which Henry Nash Smith has called "two ways of viewing the world," the tension between the "genteel and the vernacular."³

This tension, a ridiculous and ridiculing mixture of the sublime and the profane, is the key to Mark Twain's treatment not only of the Book of Mormon, but other sacred writings as well. Twain reveled in treating the solemn, immutable splendor of the sacred books of the Western and Eastern worlds with a flippant and, for some, shocking earthiness. In dealing democratically with the Holy Bible, the Apochryphal New Testament, the Koran, the Institutes of Menu, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, and the Book of Mormon, Twain demonstrated that he was an iconoclast with a twinkle in his eye.

MARK TWAIN AND THE BIBLE

Mark Twain knew the sacred awe which Americans in general then held for the Holy Bible. As a youth he was, like Huck and Tom, thoroughly exposed to the Calvinistic interpretation of the Bible, a pious milieu, and devout friends—all of which vigorously cooperated to make young Sam Clemens familiar with God's Word. The effect of such early learning never wore off, and Twain's writings, notes Minnie Brashear, reveal a "knowledge of the Bible that would have come only from early and prolonged exposure to the Sacred Book."⁴ Professor Henry A. Pochamnn has counted 124 direct allusions to specific scriptures, and Professor Robert Rees, in his dissertation, claims that "there is scarcely a chapter, an essay, or sketch in Twain's writing that does not contain a Bible allusion."⁵

But Twain's love for the Holy Bible is enigmatic. Janet Brown, in *Mark Twain on the Damned Human Race*, claims that "since Bunyan, nobody in English letters has known or

²Pascal Covici, Jr., *Mark Twain's Humor* (Dallas, 1962), p. 118.

³Henry Nash Smith, *Mark Twain: The Development of a Writer* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), p. 2.

⁴Minnie M. Brashear, *Mark Twain, Son of Missouri* (Chapel Hill, 1934), p. 207.

⁵Robert A. Rees, "Mark Twain and the Bible: Characters Who Use the Bible and Biblical Characters" (unpubl. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1966), pp. vi-vii. Note that during the publication of this article a book, *Mark Twain and the Bible*, by Allison Ensor (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1969) appeared; the book explores Twain's treatment of the Bible in depth, affirming many of Rees' findings.

loved the Bible better than Mark Twain,"⁶ while Rees insists that "some of his later writing might tempt one to say that no one in English letters has hated the Bible more than Twain."⁷ It becomes apparent, on close reading, that Twain did both. He respected the Bible, yet increasingly, grew to disbelieve in its divinity. In *The Innocents Abroad*, for example, he clearly differentiated himself from the pilgrims or believers as they traveled about the Holy Land, and by the time he married Olivia Langdon he was outspoken in his disbelief. For a time he supported Livy in her desire to base their marriage on Christian principles, which included daily Bible readings—but this did not last long. A few months of regular Bible hours provided too much piety for Twain, and he told her:

You may keep this up . . . if you want to, but I must ask you to excuse me from it. It is making me a hypocrite. I don't believe in the Bible. It contradicts my reason. I can't sit here and listen to it, letting you feel I believe . . . it . . . [is] the word of God."⁸

As he grew older, Twain's philosophy of life became increasingly pessimistic, and he moved from simple disbelief to an unreserved waspishness. By 1887 he was writing in his notebook such statements as, "I believe that the Old and New Testament were imagined and written by man, that no line in them was authorized by God, much less inspired by him."⁹ And stronger: "God, so atrocious in the Old Testament and attractive in the New—the Jekyll and Hyde of sacred romance."¹⁰ This changed attitude is seen in his later works and notebooks: "The Bible absurdity of the Almighty's only six days building the Universe and then fooling away twenty-five years building a tow head on the Mississippi,"¹¹ is a typical example of the jabs the older Twain was taking at the sacred book of his youth. In *Letters from the Earth*, Twain's humanized Satan writes of the Bible to St. Michael and St. Gabriel: "It is full of interest. It has noble poetry in it; and some clever

⁶Janet Brown, ed. (New York, 1962), p. 32.

⁷Rees, p. 199.

⁸Albert Bigelow Paine, *Mark Twain, A Biography* (New York, 1912), I, 411.

⁹Quoted in Phillip S. Foner, *Mark Twain: Social Critic* (New York, 1958), p. 132.

¹⁰Quoted in William C.S. Pellowe, *Mark Twain, Pilgrim from Hannibal* (New York, 1945), p. 151.

¹¹Quoted in Pellowe, p. 161.

fables; and some blood-drenched history; and some good morals; and a wealth of obscenity; and upwards of a thousand lies."¹² Such antipathy is apparently a long distance from the good-natured irreverence of *The Innocents Abroad*.

Yet despite this steadily evolving change in attitude, Twain, Rees rightly insists, "never escaped the challenge of the Bible either in his life or in his art."¹³ But, after all, escape was unnecessary, for regardless of Twain's own attitude toward the Holy Bible, he recognized that the scripture was a touchstone of culture, and therefore a source of humor. For example, Twain's treatment of the Book of Mormon is prefigured in this passage from *The Innocents Abroad* (1869), written some three years before he published *Roughing It*. Twain tells of a pilgrim from the *Quaker City* telling Jack Van Nostrand, the salty Westerner-turned-traveler:

"Here are the Fords of the Jordan—a monumental place. At this very point . . . Moses brought the children of Israel through . . . the desert [after] forty years, and brought them to this spot safe and sound. There . . . is the scene of what Moses did."

And Jack said: "Moses who?"

"Oh," he says, "Jack, you ought not to ask that! Moses the great lawgiver! Moses, the great patriot! Moses, the great warrior! Moses, the great guide, who as I tell you, brought these people through these three hundred miles of sand in forty years, and landed them all safe and sound."

Jack said: "There's nothin' in that! Three hundred miles in 40 years! Ben Holliday [stage-coach driver] would have snaked 'em through in 36 hours."¹⁴

A similar instance is seen in the little known book *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, where Jim, Huck, and Tom visit Egypt:

And when Jim got so he could believe it *was* the land of Egypt he was looking at, he wouldn't enter it standing up, but got down on his knees and took off his hat, because he said it wasn't fittin' for a humble poor nigger to come any other way where such men had been as Moses and Joseph and Pharaoh and the other prophets. He was a Presbyterian

¹²*Letters from the Earth*, ed. Bernard DeVoto (New York, 1962), p. 20.

¹³Rees, p. 3.

¹⁴*Mark Twain's Speeches*, ed. Albert Bigelow Paine (New York, 1935), p. 273.

and had a most deep respect for Moses who was a Presbyterian, too, he said.¹⁵

Such humor depends heavily upon the reader's familiarity with the Holy Bible; and Twain knew his reader.

Thus Twain's works abound with humorous references to titles, phraseology, allusions, and characters, all vastly more appealing to the American public than the elevated language and material urged upon Twain by some of his sophisticated friends at Nook Farm. Such titles as "Daniel in the Lion's Den—And Out Again All Right," "Extracts from Methuselah's Diary," "Letter to Satan," "Eve's Diary," "Adam's Diary," and many others depend upon evoking serious images in the reader's mind, images which are immediately startled by their profane use in Twain's context. Likewise, his use of biblical phrases ranging from "supplication," "realms of bliss," and "noble souls" to "spiritual darkness," and "thousand fold"¹⁶ reveal his habit of "dropping into Biblical language and Biblical rhythms, a device he would use until the end of his days."¹⁷

As with the use of phrases and titles, Twain's biblical allusions are powerful because they create ludicrous incongruities between the humdrum and the sacred. This is evident in Twain's treatment of a stockbroker's chances of salvation—in "Daniel in the Lion's Den—And Out Again All Right":

I am of the opinion that a broker can be saved. . . . Lazarus was raised from the dead, the five thousand were fed with twelve loaves of bread, the water was turned into wine, the Israelites crossed the Red Sea dryshod, and a broker *can* be saved. True, the angel that accomplishes the task may require all eternity to rest himself in.¹⁸

He often turns to the ignorant blasphemer to enrich his allusions. The supposedly naive *persona* of *The Innocents Abroad* looks in vain for the pillar of salt which was once Lot's wife.¹⁹ And Jack Van Nostrand, in the same book, spends much of a scorching afternoon observing a turtle in order to

¹⁵*The Writings of Mark Twain*, in the Author's National Edition, 25 vols. (New York, 1869-1909), 20:116.

¹⁶*Letters from the Earth*, pp. 103-106, *passim*.

¹⁷Gladys C. Bellamy, *Mark Twain as a Literary Artist* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1950), p. 109.

¹⁸*Letters from the Earth*, pp. 103-106, *passim*.

¹⁹*Innocents Abroad*, in *The Writings of Mark Twain*, vol. 2, p. 345. Hereafter: *IA*.

hear "the voice of the turtle" in the land. And it is Van Nostrand who supposedly says, on learning the price of boat hire on the Sea of Galilee: "No wonder Jesus walked." Perhaps the most delightful of these ignorant blasphemers are the Negroes in Twain's works—the most memorable of which is Jim, whose argument about "Sollermun," loaded as it is with biblical allusions gone wild, is one of the comical high points in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

As is evident in Captain Stormfield's Gabriel, in *Report from Paradise*, and Satan, in *Letters from the Earth*, endowing hallowed biblical figures with unhallowed human traits is another of Twain's irreverent devices. Twain has his favorites—especially Adam and Eve, who figure in "A Monument to Adam," the well-known "Adam's Diary," "Eve's Diary," and the "Papers of the Adam Family." But his most beloved scriptural character—and predictably so—is Satan, for whom he once told his uncomfortable Sunday School teacher that he "had the highest respect."²⁰

Mark Twain, despite his shift from youthful belief to good-natured skepticism, and finally, to a bitter repudiation (but continued exploitation) of the Holy Bible, clearly recognized the Bible's impact upon American culture and himself, and he depended heavily upon his reader's familiarity with the book, and upon his own ability to jolt the acquired sensibilities of the reader by placing the conventional image of the biblical figure (or place) in comic relationship to an earthy or vernacular image. The result is the universal delight which led William Dean Howells to say that Twain, that master of the familiar and the homespun, was the "sole, incomparable, the Lincoln of our literature."²¹

²⁰In *What is Man and Other Essays* (New York, 1917), pp. 307-309.

²¹William Dean Howells, *My Mark Twain* (New York, 1910), p. 101. The importance of the Bible to Twain can be summarized in an anecdote told by an English friend. On a visit to Twain's hotel room in London, the visitor noticed an open Bible on the desk and asked Twain if he had taken up a study of the scriptures. "'That's a good Book,' Twain answered with his odd drawl. 'That's about the most interesting Book I ever read. Joe Twichell, a person over in Connecticut, recommended it to me, and I have been more interested in it than in any other book I have read for a long time. You better read it yourself. It beats any novel or history or work of science that I have ever tackled. It is full of good stories and philosophy. It suggests lots of ideas, and there's news in it. I find things that I never heard of before. Did you ever know that the English people were mentioned in the Bible? . . . I discovered today that Christ spoke of the British people in the sermon on the Mount.' And, reaching for the Book, he turned a page or two and read, 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth' " (quoted in Pellowe, p. 202).

In turning for humor to other scriptural works, including the Apochryphal New Testament, the Koran, and Mary Baker G. Eddy's *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, as well as the Book of Mormon, Twain and his audience are on less familiar ground. In dealing with these books he therefore assumes the mantle of spokesman for the majority, but his humor often becomes more heavy-handed, his incredulity more undisguised. Generally, he is speaking now to and for the confident, enlightened nineteenth-century American, each certain of the truthfulness and rightness of his own religious beliefs, and of the peculiarity and dubiousness of the claims of any minority religion. Yet Twain uses a number of the same humorous devices applied so effectively in his handling of biblical material. Again, the result is often a breath of fresh air blown through the pages of these writings, old and new.

HUMOROUS VIEWS ON OTHER SCRIPTURES

In the Apochryphal New Testament, for example, which he treats in the second half of *The Innocents Abroad*, Twain discusses such books as "The First Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ," and "The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians," writings which are little known, even today, among Christian laymen. In discussing these books, however, Twain is squeamish, aware that, regardless of how preposterous some of the tales surrounding Jesus' childhood may be, he is nevertheless on precarious ground. Still he has some fun. In discussing Clement's epistle he cites the passage, "They carry themselves high, and as prudent men; and though they are fools, yet would seem to be teachers," adding that this scripture should be canonized, as it "so evidently prophetically refers to the general run of Congresses of the United States." (IA, 274.) However, Twain exhibits a lapse in his humor which probably results from his hesitancy to step on ecclesiastical toes or kick sacred cows. Instead of ridiculing the apochryphal books he selects passages which tax the reader's credulity, such as the tale in which the young Jesus strikes a playmate dead for ridiculing his speech, or where Jesus helps Joseph in miraculously "stretching" a throne which has been custom built for Herod but is two inches too narrow.

With the Koran, however, he is less cautious, for he can capitalize on the widespread distaste for Islam throughout the

Western world and draw on the contrast between the idealized images concerning the exotic Near East and the unromantic realities which confronted him while traveling among the followers of Mohammed. When told, for example, that Muslims cannot drink from wells and streams which Christian visitors have used and thus defiled, Twain is solaced by a chance thought: "I knew that except these Mohammedans repented they would go straight to perdition, someday. And *they* never repent—they never forsake their paganism. This thought calmed me, cheered me." (*IA*, 375.) At another point he says, "The Koran does not permit Mohammedans to drink," and he cannot resist adding, and "Their natural instincts do not permit them to be moral." He then attacks the sultan's having eight hundred wives, which "almost amounts to bigamy. It makes our cheeks burn to see such a thing permitted here in Turkey. We do not mind it so much in Salt Lake, however." (*IA*, 77.)

As he will later do with Mormonism, Twain delights in shooting broadsides at sacred Muslim institutions. He has fun with Mohammed's famous remark, made upon turning away from ancient and revered Damascus, that man could enter but one paradise and "he preferred to go to the one above, . . . and then went away without entering its gates." Twain, after visiting the city, adds, "If I were to go to Damascus, again, I would camp on Mohammed's hill about a week, and then go away. There is no need to go inside the walls. The Prophet was wise without knowing it when he decided not to go down into the paradise of Damascus." (*IA*, 176.) He continues this playful irreverence in describing a visit to the stone from which Mohammed allegedly ascended to heaven. The Angel Gabriel, who "happened by the merest good luck to be there" (and who plays a key role in the Koran), seized it at the time of the ascension. Twain says, "Very few people have a grip like Gabriel—the prints of his monstrous fingers, two inches deep, are to be seen in that rock to-day." Twain also points out that Mohammed left his footprints in the solid stone: "I should judge that he wore about eighteens," he smirks.

His treatment of the Hindu faith and the Institutes of Menu (or Manu-Smriti) and the other writings of the Hindus, from the Rg-Veda to the Bhagavad-gita, is again, as with the Koran, less specifically oriented about the writings themselves as about the customs. In the second volume of *Following the*

Equator (1897) Twain mocks the endless Hindu pilgrimages around the sacred city of Benares, and concludes by noting that all of the steps to salvation are worthless if the pilgrim should die on the wrong side of the Ganges, for he would come to life again in the form of an ass. This sacred doctrine is irresistible for Twain, for the word *ass* was always a favorite of his, and he writes:

The Hindoo has a childish and unreasonable aversion to being turned into an ass. It is hard to tell why. One could properly expect an ass to have an aversion to being turned into a Hindoo. One could understand that he could lose dignity by it; also self-respect, and nine-tenths of his intelligence. But the Hindoo changed into an ass wouldn't lose anything, unless you count his religion. And he would gain much—release from his slavery to two million gods and twenty million priests, fakeers, holy mendicants, and other sacred bacilli; he would escape the Hindoo hell; he would also escape the Hindoo heaven. There are advantages which the Hindoo ought to consider; then he should go over and die on the other side of the Ganges.²²

However, Twain is full of qualified admiration for the Hindu faith, and he makes this clear. But admiration is not generally the basis of humor, and Twain typically transforms a serious discussion of a revered Swami into mirth when he obtains an interview with the Swami, who is, Twain stresses, a god. During the interview Twain gives the Swami a copy of *Huckleberry Finn*, for "I thought it might rest him up a little to mix it in along with his meditations on Brahma, for he looked tired, and I knew that if it didn't do him any good, it wouldn't do him any harm." (FE, 207-209.) Twain's sense of the comic properly gauges the reader's delight at the audacity of such a turnabout—the obsequious earthling giving the god something to read, to "rest him up." Thus Twain once again, despite his respect for the institution itself, finds a delightful area in which to loose his powerful wit.

VIEWS ON MRS. EDDY AND HER BOOK

Although a similar kind of respect is generally accorded Mrs. Mary Baker G. Eddy's *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (1875), Twain's close examination of Mrs.

²²Following the *Equator*, in *The Writings of Mark Twain*, vol. 6, p. 188. Hereafter: FE.

Eddy's book is too often hampered by his thinly veiled waspishness. Often funny, the book is nevertheless uneven in its approach, for Twain frequently strays from broad and delightful jabs into a mire of petty pickings, through which the reader soon grows weary of following. The resulting book, *Christian Science* (1907), is a loose and chaotic compilation of several articles which Twain wrote about the movement.²³ It deserves little serious attention, except in our present context of assessing Twain's comic devices in the treatment of holy writ, which the adherents of Christian Science claim *Science and Health* to be. Of especial interest is that the book echoes, in its uneven and often tasteless humor, many of the devices which Twain had used years earlier in his less extensive and somewhat less vitriolic treatment of the Book of Mormon.

He wrote the articles on Christian Science as a disappointed man who had turned hopefully to the movement in his search for a satisfying intellectual answer to the problem of faith. His book is the impatient result of his disillusionment. He predicts, however, that in Christian Science will rise another monolithic power comparable to the Catholic Church or Standard Oil, with all of their totalitarian evils, a prediction which today seems incredible. Twain is cynically critical of Mrs. Eddy's willingness to accept money for her church, a willingness which he refers to time after time in his half-serious, half-mocking analysis of *Science and Health*. Chuckling at the church's claim that the book is the one spoken of in the Book of Revelation, he typically mixes the profane and the sublime to speak in mock praise of

The "little book" exposed in the sky eighteen centuries ago by the flaming angel of the Apocalypse, and handed down in our day to Mrs. Mary Baker G. Eddy of New Hampshire, and translated by her, word for word, into English (with help of a polisher), and now published and distributed in hundreds of editions by her at a clear profit per volume, above cost, of seven hundred percent—a profit which distinctly belongs to the angel of the Apocalypse, and let him collect it if he can. (CS, 45-46.)

²³*Christian Science*, in *The Writings of Mark Twain*, vol. 15, p. 234. Hereafter: CS. The book is comprised mainly of articles written for *Cosmopolitan* ("Christian Science and the Book of Mrs. Eddy," 27 [Oct. 1889], 585-98, and *Harper's Weekly* (Mark Twain and Christian Science," 46 [Dec. 27, 1902], 2022; 47 [Jan. 27, 1903], 145. Note: Eddy's authorized edition of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (Boston, 1874, 1906) has been used in preparing this paper.

Twain's professed admiration for the book and predictions for its bright future are not in harmony with his feelings for Mrs. Eddy—so he spends a great many pages attempting to prove that a ghost writer and not Mrs. Eddy wrote the book, an original but dubious claim.

However, in trying with mock sincerity to ascertain whether God or Mrs. Eddy wrote the book, Twain cites Mrs. Eddy's statement of January, 1901, that

I should blush to write of *Science and Health*, [sic] with *Key to the Scriptures* as I have, were it of human origin, and I, apart from God, its author; but as I was only a scribe echoing the harmonies of Heaven in divine metaphysic, I cannot be supermodest of the Christian Science text-book. (CS, 42.)

After projecting Mrs. Eddy's evidence that the book was indeed written by God, Twain feigns confusion by showing that Mrs. Eddy herself frequently claimed to be the book's author. He quotes her as saying: "When the demand for this book increased . . . the copyright was infringed. I entered a suit at law, and my copyright was protected." Comments Twain: "Thus it is plain that she did not plead that the Deity was the (verbal) author; for if she had done that, she would have lost her case," as, he chuckles, "No Foreigner can acquire copyright in the United States." (CS, 140.) (Had Twain but known, he could earlier have made a similar case against Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet.)

Twain sums up his case in mock confusion, showing that Mrs. Eddy wrote the book but didn't write the book. After reviewing additional statements by her concerning the book's authorship, Twain again summarizes: "1. Mrs. Eddy furnished 'the ideas and the language.' 2. God furnished 'the ideas and the language.'" And he adds, "It is a great comfort to have the matter authoritatively settled." (CS, 143.) But, he groans, "Is that it? We shall never know. For Mrs. Eddy is liable to testify again at any time." (CS, 143.) This mock confusion, this exaggeration and tearing from context should not offend Christian Scientists, for such piling on of mock evidence merely amuses, though eventually wearies, the reader.

Twain then spends twenty-four pages weighing Mrs. Eddy's pre-*Science and Health* style in the balance and finds it wanting. Citing several instances of bad poetry, careless and am-

biguous sentences, dangling and misplaced modifiers, he concludes that "her proof-reader should have been shot." (CS, 119.) One of his many illustrations of such faulty writing is: "His spiritual noumenon and phenomenon silence portraiture." To this he responds:

I realize that noumenon is a daisy; and I will not deny that I shall use it whenever I am in the company which I think I can embarrass with it; but, at the same time, I think it is out of place among friends in an autobiography. . . . [And] you cannot silence portraiture with a noumenon; if portraiture should make a noise, a way could be found to silence it, but even then it could not be done with a noumenon. Not even with a brick, some authorities think. (CS, 119-121.)

Such humorous criticisms, then, are clear echoes of his treatment of the Book of Mormon, thirty-six years earlier. In *Christian Science*, however, Twain's humor is not the light-hearted irreverence of his youth. It is more Juvenalian, based more on the carefully contrived piling on of exaggeration, sneering, and pulling from context than on the quick, sharp, but good-humored jabs of his earlier writing, jabs which made his treatment of Mormons themselves so amusing; though, as shall be seen, his treatment of Mormon scripture was hardly more successful.

MARK TWAIN'S TREATMENT OF THE BOOK OF MORMON IN CONTEXT

Set in the context of his other assassinations of Holy Writ and religious customs, East and West, Mark Twain's humorous treatment of the Book of Mormon and the "peculiarities" of Latter-day Saint institutions becomes more meaningful.

Certainly the Mormons were not strangers to Twain. Hailing from Hannibal, Missouri, Samuel L. Clemens was but three years old when Governor Lilburn W. Boggs issued his infamous "extermination Order" of October 27, 1838; and, though he was then too young to understand the issues, young Sam must have heard a great deal about the Mormons throughout his youth, for the harassed saints settled in Nauvoo, Illinois, only fifty miles upstream from the Clemens' Hannibal home. The Mormon migration westward, along with mysterious tales of Danites, massacres, and polygamy, seem to have fired

Twain's imagination just as they fired the imaginations of most nineteenth-century Americans.

Thus, when he had occasion, while enroute to Carson City in 1862, to visit the Saints in their Mecca on the Great Salt Lake, Twain rejoiced at the opportunity to see the nefarious Saints at firsthand, and proposed, tongue-in-cheek, that he might even institute a "much-needed reform" among the poor, benighted souls. The brief visit, loosely recorded in chapters 12 through 17 in *Roughing It*, is a generally fictional account which purports to describe conditions among the Mormons at that time and to "analyze" the Book of Mormon, the sacred book of the Latter-day Saints. Having aroused the curiosity of the reader, Twain appends to his book a long excerpt from Mrs. C. V. Waite's "entertaining book," *The Mormon Prophet and His Harem*, a typical anti-Mormon "history" of the period in which Mrs. Waite charges Brigham Young with ordering, among other atrocities, the infamous Mountain Meadow Massacre of 1857.

Mark Twain's treatment of the Mormons and their institutions is delightful, and the anecdotes which he compiles concerning Brigham Young and polygamy continue to delight readers—Mormon and non-Mormon alike. As a closer look will demonstrate, however, his mock analysis of the Book of Mormon is much more heavy-handed and uneven, and Twain encounters many of the same difficulties which he would confront thirty years later in writing of *Science and Health*.

Readers of Twain's burlesque "analysis" of the Book of Mormon must constantly keep in mind, as must readers of *Christian Science*, *Innocents Abroad*, *Following the Equator*, or virtually any of Twain's works, that his intention is always to make people laugh. To achieve this end, he wrenches from context, exaggerates, misunderstands (intentionally or unintentionally), and distorts. All of this, in treating any scripture, but especially in treating the Book of Mormon, is to exploit for the sake of humor—and "The Mormon Question" was a popular topic replete with highly humorous potential. Twain's typically funny, irreverent, and pseudo-authoritative dismissal of the Book of Mormon as a non-vicious kind of hoax should therefore be appreciated for what it is, and not dismissed, as it is by some, as a maliciously misguided attempt to write off the Mormons and their book.

However, Twain's unfamiliarity with the Book of Mormon, his audience's unfamiliarity with the book, and his obvious strain in groping for humor in the book's content combined to thwart his usual humorous soaring by pinning him to a book which forced him, first, to educate his audience as to the nature of the book; then, second, to make fun of the material he had just introduced. This necessity of setting up his own target before he could fire at it caused Twain to be unsteady in his firing and uncertain in his aim; and more misses than hits occur. Twain would face a similar problem in writing *Christian Science*, but the main difference is that in treating the Mormons there is no veiled bitterness; there is only a sense of real or mock condescension.

Still, in treating the Book of Mormon, Twain applies many of his standard devices—the same mock-serious analysis, the same irreverent, naughty-boy, or belch-in-the-parlor kind of roughshod humor so popular in nineteenth century America. And, as was typical in his treatment of other sacred writings, in order to forestall coming to grips with the text of the book itself Twain spends four of the ten pages devoted to the Book of Mormon in discussing extraneous material—specifically, the non-scriptural introduction to the book. Strangely—or perhaps not-so-strangely—Twain fills the other six pages with two pages of quotation from one chapter in the Book of Ether, one page of commentary on the same chapter, one page of quotation and commentary on two chapters from 1 Nephi; and half a page on several well-discussed verses on polygamy from the Book of Jacob (2:23-26; 3:5). His haphazard use of four relatively unimportant passages from only five chapters of the Book, together with a complete lack of any controlling awareness of the Book's total content, as well as the glaring omission of many possible humorous passages combine with numerous errors to convince the man who has read the Book of Mormon that Twain has not—he is again perpetrating one of his choice literary hoaxes, this time at the expense of the Mormons.

As has been demonstrated, one of his favorite comic devices is sweeping a sentence from context and distorting it through picking at the wording. Twain got no further than the title page itself, which contains the statement, ". . . wherefore [The Book of Mormon] is an abridgement of the people of Nephi . . . hid up unto the Lord. . . ." " 'Hid up,' " says Twain

derisively, "is good. And so is 'wherefore'—though why 'wherefore'? Any other word would have answered as well—though in truth it would not have sounded so Scriptural." (*RI*, 111.) Such humorous quibbling prepares the innocent reader for further attacks—and falsely strengthens his confidence in Twain's seemingly close reading of the text. Twain then moves three or four pages further into the book—still in the introduction—and reproduces the complete "Testimony of the Three Witnesses," delightfully and irreverently mocking their claim that an angel appeared, showed them the plates, "and probably took [their] receipt for it." (*RI*, 111.) He follows this with the complete testimony of eight additional witnesses. He ridicules the wording of their declaration and lights perceptively on the fact that the document is signed by eight witnesses—comprised of four Whitmers, three Smiths and one lone outsider. Chuckles Twain, "I could not feel more satisfied and at rest if the entire Whitmer family had testified." (*RI*, 112-113.) This is good humor, regardless of the tenderness of one's toes.

Now established in the reader's mind as an authority on the book, Twain sets about undermining the book as "merely a prosy detail of imaginary history" (*RI*, 110) by "exposing" its faults. What follows is doubly funny to the Latter-day Saint, and at least funny to the non-Mormon reader, for Twain, in every instance, has purposely misread the book. The Mormon reader, like the Christian Science reader, is comforted by Twain's clear lack of expertise, so he is able to laugh, not only at Twain's humor, but at Twain's often bumbling distortions; the non-Mormon can enjoy the humor on the level at which Twain introduces it—as sheer burlesque.

A closer look at a few of the errors in Twain's gentle mocking of the book again reveals Twain's method in handling scripture. For example, he turns to the passage in 1 Nephi in which Nephi notes that the family of Lehi used an instrument called the "Liahona" in finding their directions while enroute from the Old World to the New. Twain seizes on this instrument as an anachronistic "compass," noting smugly that the travelers appear to "have had the advantage of Noah," all the while ignoring the text's explanation that the so-called compass was a miraculously powered ball—not a magnetic compass—which operated commensurate to the faith of the travelers—indeed, a kind of New World pillar of fire.

A similarly advantageous misreading occurs in his treatment of the Book of Ether (15:2). Twain introduces Coriantumr, an ancient general who experiences the *Götterdämmerung* of his people. Ether writes of Coriantumr at the end of the final battle, "'there had been slain two millions of mighty men, and also their wives and children,'—say 5,000,000 or 6,000,000 in all [adds Twain]—'and he began to sorrow in his heart.' " "Unquestionably it was time," Twain smirks. (*RI*, 117.) Here the author typically fails to note the facts that Coriantumr had been cursed by God through the prophet Ether to outlive his people *unless* he repented prior to the battle. Not until the long war has destroyed his people does Coriantumr belatedly recall the words of Ether and humble himself before God. The actual scripture reads:

He saw that there had been slain by the sword already nearly two millions of his people, and he began to sorrow in his heart; yea, there had been slain two millions of mighty men, and also their wives and their children [which I interpret to be included among the two million slain]. He began to repent of the evil which he had done; he began to remember the words which had been spoken by the mouth of all the prophets, and he saw then that they were filled thus far, every wit; and his soul mourned and refused to be comforted. (Ether 15:2-3.)

Unquestionably it *was* time—for Coriantumr to repent of his sins! But it is funnier the way Twain reads it—especially when he adds the devastating comment that he understands it was the "most remarkable [battle] set forth in history—except, perhaps, that of the Kilkenny cats, which it resembles in some respects." (*RI*, 117.)

In an often clumsy attempt to fill pages—typical of Twain at his worst—he then devotes nearly two pages to a transcription of the grand battle described in the Book of Ether, which ends with Ether's words: "And he went forth, and beheld that the words of the Lord had all been fulfilled; and he finished his record; and the hundredth part I have not written." Drawls Twain, whose taste was for more exciting stuff, "It seems a pity he did not finish, for after all his dreary former chapters of common place, he stopped just as he was in danger of becoming interesting." (*RI*, 119.) Twain's humor again triumphs over the facts, for in the few pages of this so-called "common-place" book, (1) God reveals himself physically to an ancient

prophet, (2) Jesus Christ appears (several hundred years before his birth), (3) the Jaredites (a pre-Nephite emigrant group) cross the ocean in *submarine-like* vessels, (4) two major wars are fought, (5) an important king loses and regains his throne, and (6) curious animals—the *cureloms* and *cumoms*—are introduced (surely Twain could have had fun with those!). These “commonplace” events culminate in the massive slaughter at the Hill Cumorah, described by Twain. Yet Twain calls the Book of Ether, which contains thirty-one of the most exciting pages in the Book of Mormon “dreary” and “common place”! He could have done better than that!

Another error for humor’s sake arises in his treatment of 1 Nephi, the first book in the Book of Mormon. Twain mistakenly claims Nephi finished his “Noah’s ark”—actually a very conventional ship—in a single day. The book contains no specific mention of the time lapse, but the textual implication is clearly that it took some time—at least enough for several incidents of insubordination and for the young and, sometimes at least, self-righteous Nephi to go frequently “into the mount” to receive architectural instructions from the Lord Himself (1 Nephi 17, 18), another event which Twain might have taken advantage of.

One of the grossest distortions, however, lies in Twain’s obviously insecure and ambiguous treatment of 3 Nephi (simply called the Book of Nephi by Twain). The book of 3 Nephi, wherein Jesus Christ appears to the Nephites following his resurrection, is perhaps the most important single book in the Book of Mormon. During his brief stay among the Nephites, Jesus repeats the same gospel preached earlier to his followers in Jerusalem. He organizes a church and bestows his priesthood upon twelve disciples. So unfamiliar is Twain with the Book that he seems uncertain as to whether or not the episodes are embellished recountings of Christ’s life in Jerusalem or new events among the Nephites—a serious misunderstanding unenhanced by any attempt at humor. To recapture his wavering confidence and evoke a bit of humor, he comments on the conclusion of the ministering angels’ passage, which reads, “and they were in number about two thousand and five hundred souls; and they did consist of men, women, and children.” “And what else would they be likely to consist of?” he chuckles. Of course even here he depends heavily upon the

reader's unfamiliarity with the text and upon his own superficial reading, for the original passage is clearly stressing that no one was excluded from Christ's blessing—a re-emphasis of the "suffer the little children" gesture of Jesus while in Jerusalem.

Though it doesn't really matter, other insignificant errors abound. For example, Twain enumerates the names of the fifteen books comprising the Book of Mormon and mistakenly includes among them the record of Zeniff, an account contained in the Book of Mosiah, while failing to include the Fourth Book of Nephi. Even his spoof on the Book's redundant and ubiquitous phrase, "And it came to pass," is a typically inaccurate though delightful exaggeration. Twain claims that if Smith "had left that out, his Bible would have been only a pamphlet." (*RI*, 110-111.) This is a bit of humor which survives the literalist's observation that foreign language editions of the book, printed without the repetitive phrase, still run to more than five hundred pages—pages filled, incidentally, with much more matter than Twain manages in his chapter on the Book of Mormon—but far less amusing.

So Twain's desire to spring aboard a popular bandwagon of anti-Mormon sentiment impels him to attack vigorously and humorously a book which he has apparently not read. But had his animosity towards the Latter-day Saints been really serious, he might have attempted a bonafide study of the book, as he did with Mrs. Eddy's book. In that case his chapter in *Roughing It* might have evolved into a more delightful and perhaps more authoritative work. But probably not, for his shallow and often clumsy gropings, while humorous, are too crude, too irrelevant. He misses too many opportunities for far more devastating jabs at the Book, opportunities which a competent humorist such as Twain must certainly have exploited had he enjoyed any degree of familiarity with the Book. For example, Twain accuses Joseph Smith of "smouching" (a word he attributes, in a footnote, to "Milton") the entire book from the New Testament "and no credit given" (*RI*, 119), and that 1 Nephi is somehow "a plagiarism of the Old Testament" (*RI*, 115); but he fails to present any specific evidence. His unfamiliarity with the Book causes him to overlook several chapters in 1 Nephi which have been literally "smouched" from Isaiah (although credit is given), as well as the meaty and

exciting book of Alma, wherein Alma and his companion have adventures which are strikingly parallel to those of Paul and Timothy; and his confused treatment of 3 Nephi ignores the fact that many of Christ's words to the Nephites are *verbatim* quotations from the New Testament (with no credit given). In addition, although he does include the standard note about the passages in Jacob in which the Lord forbids polygamy, Twain ignores too many of the major books and too many of the supposed flaws which critics who have read the Book of Mormon have regularly delighted in pointing out since its first publication in 1830.

Still, some of Twain's dogmatic assertions about the Book are widely appreciated by modern Mormon and Gentile readers alike. His pronouncement that the Book "is such a pretentious affair, and yet so 'slow,' so sleepy; such an insipid mess of inspiration. It is chloroform in print" (*RI*, 110), is universally quoted—and, some would claim, not totally wrong, and applicable, in fact, to any scripture.²⁴ And Twain's final assessment of the book, often quoted with obsequious condescension by well-meaning ministers (who themselves may not wish to read the book), is phrased so as not to offend anti-Mormon sentiments yet provide at the same time a kind of innocuous sop to the fair-minded reader or the Mormon deafened by Twain's loud, rattling wagon of delight: Says Twain, clothed in his spurious gown of authority, "The Mormon Bible is rather stupid and tiresome to read, but there is nothing vicious in its teachings. Its code of morals is unobjectionable." (*RI*, 119).

ON MORMONS AND THEIR "PECULIAR" INSTITUTIONS

Despite the author's distortions in treating the Book of Mormon, the reader cannot fail to appreciate Twain's genius for capitalizing upon the humor found in juxtaposing the profane and the sublime. And the reader must also appreciate, on close reading, that if Twain generally failed in his heavy-handed humorous treatment of the Book of Mormon, he succeeded admirably in his hilarious reporting on the Mormon people and their "peculiar" institutions.

In treating these institutions, Mark Twain is clearly more

²⁴Compare Twain's assessment of the Book of Mormon with Thomas Carlyle's dictum on the Koran: "It [the Koran] is as toilsome reading as I ever undertook, a wearisome, confused jumble, crude, incondite."

comfortable. He tells, for example, of taking supper with a "Destroying Angel," one of that band of saints "who are set apart by the Church to conduct permanent disappearances of obnoxious citizens." (*RI*, 91.) Although, as he tells us, he has his shudder ready, he was instead appalled at what he found:

But alas for all our romances, he [the "Destroying Angel"] was nothing but a loud, profane, offensive old blackguard! He was murderous enough, possibly, to fill the bill of a Destroyer, but would you have *any* kind of an Angel devoid of dignity? Could you abide an Angel in an unclean shirt and no suspenders? Could you respect an Angel with a horse-laugh and a swagger like a buccaneer? (*RI*, 91-2.)

Here Twain is more at home; he is up to his old tricks again—this time making light of an apparently mythical institution which had nonetheless evoked chills in the backbones of readers of nineteenth century anti-Mormon fiction.

A similar kind of exaggeration is used by Twain to point up the clean and healthy aspects of Mormondom, a fact which some would-be reformers sometimes chose to ignore. He insists that his acquaintances in Salt Lake City "declared that there was only one physician in the place and he was arrested every week regularly and held to answer under the vagrant act for having 'no visible means of support.' " (*RI*, 96.) But this, and most of the stories which Twain treats in *Roughing It*, must be considered as fiction. Twain was, as ever, out to tell a funny story, not relate history, for by the time he wrote the narrative his stagecoach ride across the plains was a dim memory.

Indeed, years later, when he came to write of his overland trip, he wrote to his older brother, Orion, with whom he had traveled from Missouri to Nevada: "Do you remember any of the scenes, names, incidents or adventures of the coach trip?—for I remember next to *nothing* about the matter. Jot down a foolscap page of items for me."²⁵ We can probably assume, then, that his "study" of the Book of Mormon and his "examination" of Mormon institutions emerged not from some basic irritation or anger, as did his articles on Christian Science, but from the need to fill his funny book about a tenderfoot out West with the kind of rollicking humor which his readers had come to expect. The implications of such a motivation are important.

²⁵Introduction to *RI*, p. xiii, by Henry Nash Smith.

The visit of Twain to Brigham Young as well as the hilarious stories which he recounts about Brigham's marital difficulties have become even more hilarious with the passage of time. Ranging from the breastpin which Brigham purchased for his "darling No. 6—excuse my calling her thus, as her other name has escaped me for the moment" (*RI*, 105), to Brigham's mighty power over his subjects, to the problem of keeping such a household in teething-rings, "papa's watches," and bedsteads, which Brigham finally solves by building a bedstead seven feet long and ninety-six feet wide, these anecdotes about Mormon folkways are enduring, classic examples of Twain's genius for exaggeration and the tall tale, and remain among the choicest gems of literature about the Mormons.

Yet perhaps none of these accounts reveals Twain so clearly as his comment on polygamy. Mocking this time the thousand would-be reformers of Mormon institutions, as well as the Saints, Twain regrets that his stay among the Saints was so short that "we had no time to make the customary inquisition into the works of polygamy and get up the usual statistics and deductions preparatory to calling the attention of the nation at large once more to the matter." Twain insists, in jest, that he

had the will to do it. With the gushing self-sufficiency of youth I was feverish to plunge in headlong and achieve a great reform here—until I saw the Mormon women. Then I was touched. My heart was wiser than my head. It warmed toward these poor, ungainly, and pathetically "homely" creatures, and as I turned to hide the generous moisture in my eyes, I said, "No—the man that marries one of them has done an act of Christian charity which entitles him to the kindly applause of mankind, not their harsh censure—and the man that marries sixty of them has done a deed of open-handed generosity so sublime that the nations should stand uncovered in his presence and worship in silence. (*RI*, 101.)

This kind of witty twist, in which Mark Twain not only tweaks the noses of the myriad critics of Mormondom but provides a complete turnabout of the standard recommendation by such "reformers" by suggesting, instead, an awful reverence for the polygamist, is typical, as we have seen, of his irreverent treatment of religious themes and holy scriptures in general.

Thus Twain crashes, scrapes, and blasts his way across the toes of many serious-minded Americans—and others—but few

are offended, for the familiarly blatant tall-tale exaggerations, distortions, and shocking juxtapositions strike home, not to inflict lasting pain but enduring humor. On reading Mark Twain's gentle blasphemies, whether concerning the Almighty or His foible-prone creations, everybody, including the victim, has a good time.

CONCLUSION

In the sunset of his life—if such a tranquil image can be rightfully applied to Mark Twain—an admiring lady said to him: “Oh, Mr. Clemens, how God must love you.” After she had left the room Twain remarked to his friends, “She evidently hasn’t heard of our strained relations.”²⁶ The strain was not wholly from Twain’s side, however, for the Almighty, that Inspirer of Holy Writ, may well have looked askance upon this bristling earthling, who, during a long career, had audaciously taken it upon himself to criticize several of the Almighty’s own writing endeavors—as well as those of the prophetic scribes who had served Him so well. So, though most readers, on reading Twain’s treatment of the scripture and customs of God’s people, early and late, learn to chuckle tolerantly at Twain’s amazing sense of humor, most of the same readers come to hope, for Twain’s sake (and their own), that the Almighty has a Sense of Humor proportionate to His greatness.

²⁶Quoted in Pellowe, p. 151.

Thomas L. Barnes: Coroner of Carthage

STANLEY B. KIMBALL*

During the latter part of the nineteenth century a one time Carthage, Illinois, physician, Thomas Langley Barnes, wrote two letters to his daughter which have recently come to light and which present some new, firsthand information about the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith.¹

Barnes (1812-1901, son of Michael and Elizabeth West Barnes), one of the earliest settlers of Hancock County, lived at Carthage, the county seat, and married a young widow (Laurinda Burbank) there. He practiced medicine in the Carthage area (although he did not receive his M.D. from the University of Missouri until 1851), and had a good-sized practice, extending across the Mississippi to the Iowa shore. He served for a time (at least during 1845) also as a Justice of the Peace. Sometime later he moved to Ukiah, California, where he practiced medicine until he died.²

He was living in Carthage in 1839 and 1840 when the Saints were driven from Missouri. In his first letter he states:

I was well acquainted with the Smith family, Jo, Hiram and Bill. I believe I have seen the old patriarch [Joseph Smith,

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¹The letters, to Mrs. Miranda Haskett, Ukiah, California, are dated November 1 and November 9, 1897. The original letters are now in the possession of Mrs. Donald E. Martin (a great-granddaughter of Barnes) of Santa Rosa, California. Copies are on file at the Huntington Library, Illinois State Historical Library, and at Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville. All but the final quotation from Barnes are taken from his letter.

²This information gleaned from Thomas Gregg, *History of Hancock Co., Illinois*, (Chicago, 1880) p. 688; correspondence with the Alumni Association of the University of Missouri; the Methodist Church, Ukiah, California; Mrs. Donald E. Martin of Santa Rosa, California, and the "Journal History," September 24, 1845 in the LDS Church Historian's Office.

Sr.], their father, as he was called. I knew Brigham Young, and most of the twelve apostils. I knew Sydney Rigdon, and I think I knew nearly all their prominent men. I was quite well acquainted with Daniel H. Wells, who joined them after they came to Nauvoo, and who came to be one of their prominent men. . . .

Although these letters reveal that he believed many of the malicious lies and rumors about the Mormons of that period, considering the general style and tone of contemporary anti-Mormon sentiment, Barnes was temperate and tried to be fair.³

He was both attending physician and probably the coroner after the mob attacked the Carthage jail and murdered Joseph and Hyrum. He remembered vividly this act of violence all his life, and most of what he writes about in his letters relates to this incident. He was most anxious to explain to his daughter Miranda that he had had nothing to do with the violence of that time and that he deplored it.

He first appears in Church history in connection with the destruction of the *Expositor* (an anti-Mormon newspaper published in Nauvoo) in June 1844. Barnes was one of several who on June 13 accompanied David Bettisworth, constable of Hancock County, to Nauvoo to aid in the arrest of Hyrum Smith, W.W. Phelps, John Taylor, and others for the destruction of the *Expositor*. By nine in the morning all those arrested were released by the Municipal Court of Nauvoo which drew its extraordinary powers from the unusually liberal Nauvoo City Charter. Later that day Barnes attended a mass meeting of the anti-Mormon citizens of Hancock County at Carthage and reported what had happened at Nauvoo.⁴

Five days later on June 18 it was alleged in an affidavit that Barnes "did not care for the Governor [Thomas Ford of Illinois], and had rather that the Governor would side with Smith; that they [the mob] were coming to Nauvoo with a sufficient force to take Smith; and if the people endeavored to prevent them, they should kill the people. . . ."⁵

³Frontier towns frequently became centers of refuge for various sorts of lawbreakers. It was the stealing of such elements in Missouri and Illinois who, claiming to be Mormons, brought much persecution to the Church.

⁴Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B.H. Roberts, Vol. 6 (Salt Lake City, 1950), pp. 460-61, 465.

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 502-503. This affidavit, concerning threats of invasion from Missouri, was sworn before Aaron Johnson, a Justice of the Peace in Hancock County, by two Mormons, Cyrus Canfield and Gilbert Belknap.

About a week later Joseph Smith voluntarily went to Carthage on June 24 to face charges of treason against the state and people of Illinois. On the morning of June 25 Joseph and Hyrum surrendered themselves to Constable Bettisworth. Barnes says that he accompanied Bettisworth when the writs were served and spent some time in conversation with Joseph Smith. Possibly because of this personal visit with the Prophet he modified his radical feelings for, in relation to the murder of Joseph and Hyrum on the twenty-seventh, he condemns the "brave guards" who were supposed to have protected the prisoners. "They fired blank cartridges over the heads of the mob. . . . My impression is that they were equally guilty as any one of the mob."

His account of the attack is as follows:

It appears that one of the balls in the commencement of the attack passed through a panel of the door and hit Hyram in his neck which probably broke his neck. He fell back and died, as I was informed, instantly. When I went into the room shortly afterwards his head was laying against the wall on the other side of the room from the door.

The attacking party forced the door open and commenced firing at Smith . . . as he staggered across the floor to the opposite side of the room where there was a window. It is said that there he gave the hailing sign of the distress of a Mason, but that it did him no good. In the room behind him were armed men, furious men, with murder in their hearts. Before him around the well under the window there was a crowd of desperate men, as he was receiving shots from behind, which he could not stand, in desperation he leaped or rather fell out of the window near the well where he breathed his last.⁶ When I found him soon afterwards he was laying in the hall at the foot of the stairs where his blood had as I believe left indelable stains on the floor.

These tragic reminiscences, which at the time of the writing of the letter were more than fifty years old, continue with a reference to John Taylor:

Shall I not try to describe the wounds that Taylor received and got over them. Well let me tell you where we found him, I cannot impress on your mind of his appearance

⁶This firsthand account by a non-Mormon can well be used to cancel out the impression which Gregg strains to give that the mob's only purpose was "to take the prisoners and run them into Missouri." (Gregg, *History of Hancock Co.*, pp. 324-325.) Whether or not Joseph Smith actually gave the Masonic distress call, however, is very debatable.

as he appeared to us when we were taken to him by the jailer.

We found him in a pile of straw. It appeared that a straw bed had been emptied in the cell where he was when we found him. He was very much frightened as well as severely wounded. It took strong persuading of the jailer, as well as our positive assurance that we meant him no harm. . . . When we examined him we found that he had been hit by four balls. One ball had hit him in his forearm and passed down and lodged in the hand between the phalanges [a finger bone] of his third and fourth fingers. Another hit him on the left side of the pelvis cutting through the skin . . . leaving a superficial wound that you could lay your hand in. A third ball passed through his thigh lodging in his noties [lymph nodes of the groin?]. A fourth ball hit his watch which he had in the fob in his pantaloons, which I suppose the Mormons have today, to show the precise time that their *great leader* was killed.⁷

The wounds had bled quite freely, the blood had had time to coagulate, . . . he was a pitiful looking sight. We took the best care of him we could till he left us. He got well but never paid us for skill or good wishes.⁸

His story continues with the following information about Willard Richards:⁹

You want to know what has become of Richards. He was not hurt. You will ask how did it happen that his comrades [were] so badly treated and he came off without receiving any damage whatever. It was in this way as I suppose. I think he told me so. The four braced themselves against the door to keep the mob out. He stood next to the hinges of the door so when the door opened it would turn back against the wall . . . [shutting] him up against the wall and he stood there and did not move till the affair was all over, so that they did not see him.

After we were through with Taylor I went to Richards and said to him, Richards what does all this mean, who done it. Said he, doctor I do not know, but I believe it was some

⁷This watch can be seen at the Bureau of Information on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah.

⁸Compare this with Taylor's own account in B.H. Roberts, *Life of John Taylor* (Salt Lake City, 1892), p. 139. Sixty-eight years later when Raymond Taylor of Provo, Utah, a grandson of John Taylor, learned of this he wanted retroactively to correct this. The Barnes family wrote him that they had quit-claimed the bill to me. I then suggested that Raymond Taylor close the matter by sending me a check for \$1.00, which was done. (See *Church News*, Feb. 22, 1965.)

⁹See the oft reprinted account by Richards himself. Among other places it is reprinted in E. Cecil McGavin's *Nauvoo the Beautiful*, (Salt Lake City, 1946), pp. 132-133.

Missourians that came over and have killed brothers Joseph and Hiram and wounded bro Taylor. Said I to him, do you believe that, He said I do, says I, will you write that down and send it to Nauvoo. He said he would if he could find any person to take it. I told him if he would write it I would send it.¹⁰

Shortly thereafter, perhaps that same day, Barnes went to Nauvoo. After leaving Nauvoo he reported to the anti-Mormon forces that the Mormons were defending themselves. "The result was that [that] brave body of Mormon exterminators struck camp and in a short time they were making better time to leave Nauvoo behind than they were the day before to reach the Mormons."¹¹ Persecution did not cease, however, with the murder of Joseph and Hyrum. It continued to break out intermittently and the church leaders finally agreed to leave Illinois in the Spring of 1846. Still sporadic violence continued, so the less violent anti-Mormons of Carthage and vicinity called a public meeting for the evening of November 18, 1845 in the Court House for the purpose of "rejecting and deprecating such acts . . . and perpetrations" against the Mormons. Thomas L. Barnes was appointed secretary of the meeting. The following resolution was made and unanimously adopted:¹²

THE RESOLUTION:

Whereas we have learned that outrages have recently been committed against the Mormons in Hancock County, by burning the house of one and taking the life of another wherefore resolved,—that we the anti-Mormon citizens of Carthage and vicinity reject and deprecate such acts, that we look upon these perpetrators, whoever they may be, not only as criminals, but as our enemies, and will use our endeavors to bring them to justice.

Resolved—that we approve of the course of Major [William B.] Warren and those under his command [the

¹⁰The note was as follows: "Carthage Jail. 8 o'clock, 5 min., p.m., June 27. Joseph and Hyrum are dead. Taylor wounded, not badly. I am well. Our guard was forced as we believe, by a band of Missourians from 100 to 200. The job was done in an instant, and the party fled towards Nauvoo instantly. This is as I believe it. The citizens here are afraid of the 'Mormons' attacking them; I promise them no. W. Richards. N.B.—The citizens promise us protection. Alarm guns have been fired. John Taylor." See B.H. Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of the Church* . . . , Vol. 2 (Salt Lake City, 1930), pp. 289-290.

¹¹Barnes' second letter, November 9.

¹²From the original resolution found among the Mayson Brayman papers at the Chicago Historical Society Library. Brayman was a lawyer appointed by Governor Ford to help arrange for the removal of the Mormons from Illinois.

Illinois Volunteers] in reference to the difficulties of this county, that we feel entirely satisfied to leave the management of the same solely with them; and will as the times exert our influence to prevent interference or interruption and aid them in preserving peace and good order in this community.

Resolved—that we prefer, and the history of our difficulties shows that we have ever preferred, to suffer wrong rather than become wrong doers; and that the public abroad would do great injustice to us, and to their own candor, to confound us with, or hold us in any way accountable for the violent acts of a few reckless individuals, such as civil commotions will always bring together for mischief.

Resolved—that inasmuch as the anti-Mormons of Hancock County have referred their grievances to the citizens of the surrounding counties, and they have resolved in a convention held in Carthage on the 1st and 2nd days of October last, that they will aid us in getting rid of the Mormons, and have fixed a time for their deportation [Spring 1846], and inasmuch as the Governor of the state has stationed a force here at our request to protect us and keep the peace till such time arrives; that it is the bounden duty of every anti-Mormon of this county, to keep the peace himself and to aid in seeing it kept by all, until the time fixed by said convention and the failure to do so on the part of any anti-Mormon is a breach of plighted faith to the citizens of surrounding counties, is an insult to the Commander and his forces stationed here and ought to be visited with its proper punishment.

Signed John W. Marsh
J.H. Sherman
O.C. Skinner

which report was unanimously adopted . . . a copy . . . furnished the Quincy papers and *Warsaw Signal* for publication.

Thomas L. Barnes, sec.

Elam S. Freeman, chairman

The mob elements did not completely keep this agreement and tension became so great that the Mormons were forced to commence their exodus in February 1846. The Carthage resolutions, however, were effective enough to give the saints a breathing spell and about ninety percent of them got out of the Nauvoo area before violence recommenced in July—violence which led to the Battle of Nauvoo in mid-September of that year.

Nothing more is known about Barnes' further involvement with the Mormons. As noted above, he later moved to Ukiah, California, attended the Methodist Church and practiced medicine there until he died in 1901.

These letters throw some valuable and interesting light on the greatest tragedy in Mormon history. Barnes' account of the murder should help set aside much of the material which has been written either to whitewash the murderers and the deed or to deprecate the Church.

Grief

Martha Haskins Hume*

Grief crawls on padded
elbows, crooking
the space of absence
in hollow arms.
The black cowl
hovers, empties
into air — a mask
to lisp the silences
of the heart.

*Dr. Hume is assistant professor of English at Radford College, Radford, Va.
Her poetry has been published widely.

DAY OF THE LAMANITE

An Oil Painting

by

Valoy Eaton

A NOTE ON "DAY OF THE LAMANITE"*

VALOY EATON**

I painted this painting because of my extreme interest in the Indian Placement Program of the Church. The boy on the left, the one kneeling, is my foster son, Jerry Plummer, a Navajo from Gallup, New Mexico. He has been part of our family for four years, during which time we have been amazed at the progress he has made as a priesthood holder in the Church and a potential leader of his people. The boy in the middle, Verdi Stone, from Arizona, was chosen for the painting because of his classic features and his fine spiritual attitude. The boy on the right, David Bona, is a friend of mine from my ward.

I have a love and respect for the Indian people, having been raised in eastern Utah near the Ute reservation and having spent the summer of 1964 living with and working with the youth in a recreation camp for the Ute tribe.

One of my most enjoyable duties was to load some of these young people into a bus and drive them to MIA on Tuesday evenings. It was most inspiring to watch them stand and recite the MIA theme that year which was the promise given to the Lamanites by Moroni in the Book of Mormon:

"And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true: and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost."

The Indian people in general have a simple spiritual outlook on life and seem to be very teachable and humble. I think it is obvious that they are starting to realize the great promises which the Lord has given them. This is the reason I chose the title of my painting to be "Day of the Lamanite."

*This painting won the purchase award at the 1970 Annual Festival of Mormon Arts at Brigham Young University.

**Valoy Eaton, a BYU graduate in Art, is on sabbatical leave from Granite School District in Salt Lake City, where he teaches art.



What is "The Book of Breathings"?*

HUGH NIBLEY**

MEET THE FAMILY

Upon their publication in 1967, the Joseph Smith Papyri Nos. X and XI were quickly and easily identified as pages from the Egyptian "Book of Breathings." The frequent occurrence of the word *snsn* provided a conspicuous clue, and, though the last page of the book (the one that usually contains the title) was missing, its contents closely matched that of other Egyptian writings bearing the title *sh'* (*sh'i*, *sh'.t*) *n snsn*, commonly translated "Book of Breathing(s)." A most welcome guide to the student was ready at hand in J. de Horrack's text, translation, and commentary on a longer and fuller version of the same work (Pap. Louvre 3284) which he published in 1878 along with another version of the text (Louvre No. 3291) and variant readings from a half dozen other Paris manuscripts.¹ Thanks to de Horrack, the experts found their work already done for them, and they showed their gratitude by consistently following the readings of the de Horrack's text and translation instead of the Joseph Smith text whenever the latter proved recalcitrant.

A Berlin manuscript of the Book of Breathings was published with a Latin translation, by H. Brugsch as early as 1851,²

*This article is to be, substantially, the second chapter of a forthcoming book to be published by Deseret Book Company. It will be devoted entirely to a study of the Joseph Smith Papyri X and XI.

**Dr. Nibley, professor of history and religion at Brigham Young University and well-known authority on ancient scriptures, has published widely on many Church subjects.

¹J. de Horrack, "Le livre des respirations," *Bibliothèque Égyptologique* 17 (1878), pp. 110-137, Plates vii-xiii.

²A recent summary of the literature may be found in G. Botti, "Il Libro del Respirare, etc," in *Jnl. of Egypt. Archaeology (JEA)*, 54 (1968), pp. 223-230; cf. Budge and Chassinat, below, notes 3 & 6.

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22. ਅੰਤਰਿ ਭਗਤੀ ਸਿਖਾਂ ਵਿਚਿ

Pap. du Louvre N° 3284.
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The above is Professor de Horrock's reproduction of the best-known manuscript of the "Book of Breathing" from *Bibliothèque Egyptologique* 17 (1878) Plates VII-XI. The portions underlined are virtually identical with the surviving parts of the Joseph Smith Egyptian Papyri X and XI and the glued sections on IV (see pp. 161, 169, and 173 below). The broken underline of line 6 on page 2 identifies synonymous wording of both texts. The contents of page 4 are entirely missing from the Joseph Smith Papyri having been either destroyed or never included in the original.

and within a decade of de Horrack's work E.A.W. Budge came out with a magnificent facsimile in color of the "Kerasher" Book of Breathings of the British Museum (No. 9995), accompanied by a transliteration into hieroglyphics and a translation.³ In 1935 and 1936 Georg Moeller published facsimiles of a Berlin "Buch von Atem" (Pap. 3135) as reading exercises for students,⁴ and recently J.-C. Goyon has brought together more exemplars.⁵

Along with our "Book of Breathings," another writing bearing the same name but sometimes designated by the Egyptians themselves as "The Second Book of Breathings," once gave rise to some confusion. It was published in 1895 by J. Lieblein under the mistaken title of *Que mon nom fleurisse*;⁶ at the time over one hundred copies of the work were available, and the most striking thing about it was the liberty displayed by the scribes. "The things reported," wrote Chassinat, "the conceptions presented are identical in all of them [the Mss], but the form in which they are expressed varies almost to infinity. . . . according to the caprice or personal beliefs of the scribe and the resources of the buyer . . ."⁷ The writers of the first Book of Breathings do not take such liberties, and yet the two writings are so closely associated that the ancient scribes "often made no distinction between the two books," giving both the same title,⁷ and G. Botti treats them as subdivisions of the same work.⁸ Just as these writings seem to blend into each other, so they fuse with still other works; like other Egyptian funerary writings, they everywhere betray their dependence on earlier texts as well as their contributions to later ones—Botti suggests that the two Rhind Papyri "are substantially derived from" the Breathing texts.⁸ The effect is that of a spectral

³In E.A.W. Budge, *Facsimile of the Papyri of Hunefer, Anhai, Kerasher and Net-Chemet*, (Br. Mus., 1899), pp. 33-43, and plates.

⁴G. Moeller, *Hieratische Lesestücke* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1935), p. 32, and *Hieratische Paläographie*, 3 (Leipzig, 1936), Taf. XI.

⁵J.-C. Goyon, *Le Papyrus du Louvre No. 3279* (Cairo, 1966, in *Bibliothèque d'Etude*, No. 42).

⁶Discussed by E. Chassinat, "Le Livre second des Respirations," in *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, 1895, pp. 312-314, who provides a translation of one of the texts, pp. 317ff; G. Botti, "Il Libro del Respirare," pp. 226-8, has given a transliteration and translation of another.

⁷Chassinat, p. 314.

⁸Botti, p. 224. After the Amarna Period appeared a spate of freely composed funerary texts, all using familiar materials, but in new forms and combinations. These are designated by A. Piankoff as "The Mythological Papyri," S. Schott, "Zum Weltbild der Jenseitsführer des neuen Reiches," *Goettinger Nachrichten*, 1965, No. 11, p. 168. In the 26th Dynasty the Egyptians "recher-

band of writings that blend imperceptibly into each other and so form an unbroken continuum that in the end embraces the entire funerary literature. Of course, some texts are more closely related than others, but if we attempt to run down everything in the Book of Breathings to its source, or to establish a priority or order of derivation we soon find ourselves going through *all* the funerary texts and finding them all quite relevant to our subject.

For the Book of Breathings is before all else, as Bonnet observes, a *composite*, made up of "compilations and excerpts from older funerary sources and mortuary formulas."⁹ From the Second Book of Breathings, hardly distinguishable from it, it blends off into such earlier writings as "The Book of Passing through the Eternities," the "Amduat," and the "Book of Gates," in which we recognize most of the ideas and even phrases of the "Sensen" Papyrus.¹⁰ Maspero's observation that "The Book of Breathings was a composition of the later period analogous to . . . the Book of Passing through Eternity, the Book of Transformations, and other writings which one finds on Greco-Roman mummies following the example or taking the place of the Book of the Dead,"¹¹ now finds support in E. Hornung's declaration that "The Book of the Dead was in Roman times supplanted by the shorter Books of Breathing."¹²

Since it would seem to be "just more of the same," one is surprised to hear Botti's ringing declaration that "the *Book of Breathing* is without doubt the most important exponent of the funerary literature which flourished especially at Thebes about the first and second centuries after Christ, or, according to Moeller, at the beginning of the first century before Christ."¹³

chaient avec passion" and reproduced accurately texts going back to the earliest times, P. Barguet, *Le Livre des Morts des anciens Egyptiens* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1967), p. 13. Hence though the texts conform to the "Zeitgeist" through the centuries, "der Grundtenor bleibt stets der gleiche," G. Thausing, *Das grosse ägyptische Totenbuch (Papyrus Reinisch)*, etc. (Cairo, 1969, in Schriften des österreichischen Kulturinstituts Kairo, Arch.-hist. Abt., Bd. 1), p. 3.

⁹H. Bonnet, *Reallexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte* (Berlin, 1952), p. 59.

¹⁰W. Wreszinski, "Das Buch von Durchwandern der Ewigkeit," *Aegyptische Zeitschrift (AZ)* 45 (1908), pp. 111ff; Chassinat, "Le Livre second des Respirationes," p. 315.

¹¹G. Maspero, "Le Livre des Respirationes," in *Bibliothèque Egyptologique* 2 (1893), p. 477; E. Hornung, *Einführung in die Aegyptologie* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1967), p. 71.

¹²Hornung, p. 71. The neglected *Demotic* family of "Breathing" texts is also "very close to the other texts of the Book of the Dead," Botti, p. 224.

¹³Botti, p. 223.

What makes it so important? Two things, principally, its timing and its packaging. The Book of Breathing is the great time-binder; it comes towards the end of Egyptian civilization and so wraps everything up, right back to the beginning. The same continuum that passes from one type of text to another without a break also passes from one age to another from the earliest to the latest times. ". . . the ideas and beliefs expressed in it are not new," Budge pointed out, "indeed, every one of them may be found repeated in several places in the religious works of the ancient Egyptians All the gods mentioned . . . are found in the oldest texts."¹⁴ From Thebes, where most of the manuscripts (including the Joseph Smith Papyri) were found, it can be traced back through Memphis (Botti's Turin Pap. Demot. N. 766 is Memphite) to Heliopolis and the beginnings of Egyptian civilization—and indeed the Joseph Smith Papyri, though Theban, refers constantly to Heliopolis. It contains material from every period: ". . . elements taken from the Pyramid Texts, the Book of the Dead, along with phrases and concepts already met with on the steles and sarcophagi of the Middle and New Kingdoms."¹⁵

The lateness of the "Breathing" documents, instead of detracting from their value actually enhances it. For it not only gives them a chance to embrace the entire funerary literature of the past, but places them in that crucial moment of transition in which they are able to transmit much ancient Egyptian lore to early Jewish and Christian circles. The first scholars to study it were impressed by its high moral tone and strong resemblance to the Bible, noting that it "bears the imprint of an essentially religious feeling, and contains moral maxims whose striking agreement with the precepts of the Jewish Lawgiver as with those of the Christ has already been pointed out by Egyptologists."¹⁶ And while its picture of the hereafter differs fundamentally from that of present day Christianity and Judaism, it is strikingly like that of the ancient Jewish

¹⁴Budge, *Facsimiles of the Papyri* . . . , p. 33; Chassinat, "Le Livre des Respirations," p. 315: ". . . this book existed, at least in one of its fundamental parts [i.e., that found in the Pyramid Texts], for long centuries before its complete diffusion." These texts are essentially static, betraying no sense of chronology and no interest in the past, H. Brunner, "Zum Verständnis der archaisierenden Tendenzen in der ägyptischen Spätzeit," *Saeculum*, 21 (1970), pp. 151-5. In the 26. Dyn. princes even made plaster casts of ancient inscriptions to use in their own tombs, *ibid.*, p. 154.

¹⁵Botti, p. 223.

¹⁶De Horrack, p. 134.

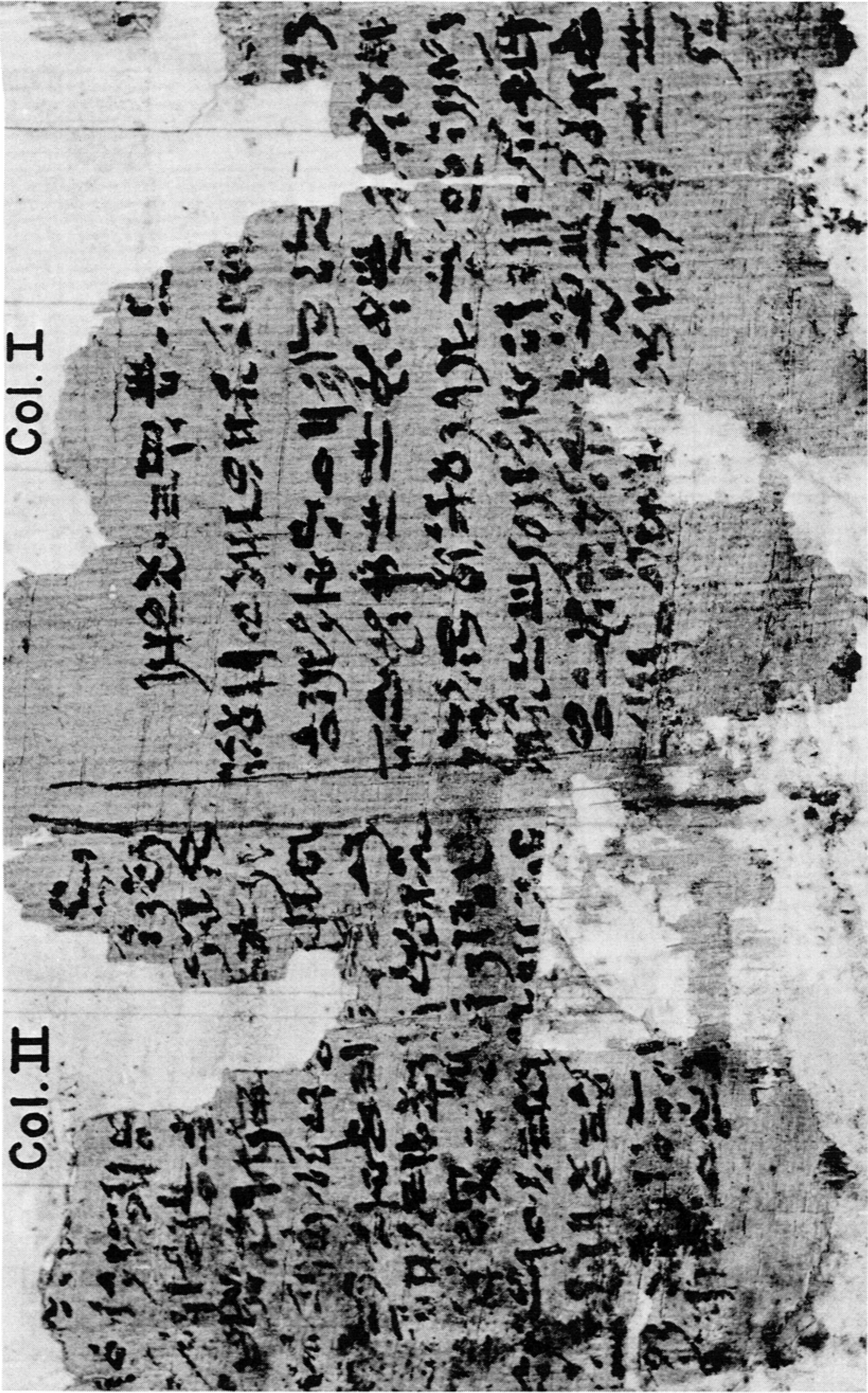
and Christian sectaries as newly-discovered documents are revealing them: "The next world is represented after the pattern of this one," wrote de Horrack, "the life of the spirit is so to speak just another step in human existence, the activities of the elect being analogous to those of men on earth. It is not an existence dedicated to eternal contemplation, a passive state of bliss, but an active and work-filled life, yet one, to make use of M. Chabas's expression, endowed with infinitely vaster scope than this one."¹⁶ Many recent studies confirm this judgment, showing not only that much authentic Egyptian matter was carried over into Judaism and Christianity, but that such Egyptian stuff instead of being the spoiled and rancid product of a late and degenerate age, represented the best and oldest the Egyptians had to offer.¹⁷ L. Kakosy, for example, bids us compare the classic Egyptian descriptions of heaven and hell with those found in an Egyptian Christian grave of the 8th or 9th century A.D., specifically in the Apocalypses of Enoch and Peter, to see for ourselves how little they have changed.¹⁸ Egyptologists can no longer brush such resemblances aside as coincidences, and nowhere are they more striking and more frequent than in the "Breathing" texts and their closest relatives.¹⁹

Of particular interest to us is the close association of the Book of Breathing with the *Facsimiles* of the Book of Abra-

¹⁶L. Kakosy, "Probleme der ägyptischen Jenseitsvorstellungen in der Ptolemäerzeit," in *Religions en Egypte Hellenistique et Romaine* (Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1969), pp. 59-68. Many others are referred to in our Commentary.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 68; also in *Oriens Antiquus*, 3 (1964), p. 19, where he notes how the 18th-dynasty Book of Amduat carries over into the Coptic Christian Pistis Sophia. M. Philonenko, in *Religions en Eg. Hellenist. et Rom.*, pp. 109-110, finds an Egyptian and Iranian background for the Jewish Secrets of Enoch.

¹⁸E.A.W. Budge, *Apocrypha in the Dialect of Upper Egypt* (London, 1913), pp. lxiff, lists twenty Coptic Christian borrowings from ancient Egyptian imagery; cf. O.H.E. Burmester, "Egyptian Mythology in the Coptic Apocrypha," *Orientalia*, 7 (1938), pp. 355-367; E. Hornung, *Altägyptische Höllenvorstellungen* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1968), p. 8, notes resemblances between the Coptic Christian texts and a number of Egyptian writings (Coffin Texts, Amduat, Book of Gates, Book of Quererts), which are all strongly reflected in the Book of Breathings. P. Barguet, *Livre des Morts*, p. 19, observes that Chap. 85 of the Book of the Dead (one of the sections included in the Jôseph Smith Papyri) finds earlier expression in Coffin Text No. 307, which contains "letter for letter almost the first sentence of the Gospel according to St. John"; and J.G. Griffith, in *Religion en Egypte*, etc. (above n. 17), p. 51, does not hesitate to compare allegorical expressions in the very ancient Ramesseum Papyrus with the Christian equating of bread with flesh and baptism with resurrection. S. Schott, *Die Deutung der Geheimnisse des Rituals für die Abwehr des Bösen* (Wiesbaden: Fr. Steiner, 1954), p. 6, notes parallels in this Egyptian text (which is closely related to the Book of Breathings) and the Christian sacraments.



Joseph Smith Egyptian Papyrus No. XI

ham. It can be easily shown by matching up the fibres of the papyri that the text of Joseph Smith Pap. No. XI was written on the same strip of material as Facsimile Number 1, the writing beginning immediately to the left of the "lion-couch" scene. The British Museum Book of Breathing, "the Kerasher Papyrus," has both the "lion-couch" scene (Budge, Vignette No. 2b), and a scene resembling our Facsimile Number 3, though representing a patently different situation albeit with the same props and characters (Vignette No. 1). This last stands at the head of the "Kerasher" text, and suggests that our Fac. No. 3 was originally attached at the other end of the Joseph Smith Papyrus, coming after the last column, which is missing.

But what about Facsimile Number 2, the well-known round hypocephalus? From special instructions written on other Books of Breathing it would appear that the written texts themselves, properly folded, could and did serve as hypocephali. Some copies are to placed "on the left hand near the heart" (the Joseph Smith Papyrus is one of these), or else if one chooses "under the head" of the deceased.²⁰ A Book of Breathings studied by Champollion, made for the child Soter, bore the inscription in Greek: *hypo ten kephalen*, "under the head," from which Champollion derived the word "hypocaphalus" by which such round head-cushions as our Facsimile No. 2 are now designated.²¹ As the concluding act of the Egyptian burial ceremony, a priest would read the Book of Breathings standing by the coffin, and then, just as the lid came down, he would deposit the book under the head of the dead person, exactly as if it were a hypocephalus.²² Thus our "Sensen" Papyrus is closely bound to all three facsimiles by physical contact, putting us under moral obligation to search out possible relationships between the *content* of the four documents.

As a "packaging job" the Book of Breathings is a most remarkable performance, "an attempt to include all essential elements of belief in a future life in a work shorter and more

²⁰So Pap. Florence 3662, H. Bonnet, *Reallexikon*, p. 59. Sometimes the instructions recommend having the Book of Breathings "under the feet," e.g. Louvre No. 3157, in Chassinat, "Livre des Respirations," p. 317.

²¹Chassinat, p. 317, n. 1.

²²S. Schott, "Nut spricht als Mutter und Sarg," *Revue d'Égyptologie* 17 (1965), p. 86. The text states that it is meant "to produce a flame under the head of the Ba" of the deceased, *ibid.*, p. 83, that being the well-known purpose of the hypocephali.

simple than the Book of the Dead."²³ It is, as Chassinat put it, "a sort of synthesis, bringing together in a limited space the current ideas relating to the human situation after death. There one finds just what is strictly necessary to know and say in order to be joined to the company of the gods . . . "²⁴ In short, "the ancient writer has brought together everything that his imagination could find most fitting to procure the means of achieving life after death."²⁵ Why this passion for brevity and compactness? Budge suggests that the Egyptians were fed up with the Book of the Dead "with its lengthy chapters and conflicting statements" that few people understood.²⁶ But since when were Egyptians repelled by long religious texts or contradictory statements, or since when does the process of high-pressure condensation render texts more understandable? Chassinat explains the condensing as an economy measure, to provide funeral texts for poor people who could not afford expensive rolls.²⁷ Why then is the Book of Breathings found on the mummies of important people, princes and priests, who could and did afford much better rolls? Why is it always the poor little breathing text, a few scribbled notes on a roll "about the size of a Tuscan cigar" (Botti), that they clutch to their breasts as their most treasured possession? Plainly it is a document of peculiar significance.

The Book of Breathings is the end-product of a long process of abbreviating and epitomizing which was characteristically Egyptian. From the beginning the Egyptians displayed a genius for attesting great accomplishments by little figures, and after the Amarna period they evinced a growing passion for synthesizing and condensing, of which the Book of the Dead is an excellent example.²⁸ The Book of the Dead itself is only "a supplementary aid," according to Barguet, confined, for all its impressive bulk to stating the absolute minimum and getting by with statements only long enough to be recognizable.²⁹ The progressive compression within the Book of the Dead is illustrated by the 64th chapter, entitled "a formula (chapter) for knowing the other formulas for going out by day in a single

²³Budge, *Papyrus of Hunefer*, etc., p. 33.

²⁴Chassinat, "Livre des Respirations," pp. 316-17.

²⁵Ibid., p. 319.

²⁶Budge, p. 33.

²⁷Chassinat, p. 316.

²⁸G. Thausing, *Das grosse ägyptische Totenbuch*, p. 19.

²⁹P. Barguet, *Livre des Morts*, pp. 11-12.

formula.”³⁰ The classic illustration of the process is provided by a writing which very closely resembles the Book of Breathings in content, the *Amduat*. A shortened version of this text, not an automatic condensation but an abbreviated restatement, is designated by the ancient scribes as *shwj*, that being the technical term for a list drawn up to present “a summary of essentials.”³¹ But that is only the beginning; S. Schott has shown how the entire book was recapitulated in a summary flanking the exit walls of the tombs in which the *Amduat* was inscribed, and how this summary in turn was followed by a Table of Contents which in time was accepted as a permanent substitute for the whole book, the mere table of contents becoming thereafter the official text of the *Amduat*.³² Such compound distillation reaches its culmination in the “Book of Journeying through Eternity,” a writing which has actually been identified with the Book of Breathings, and which ends with a desperate attempt to jam together in a few closing lines every conceivable good wish and every indispensable requirement for the dead in the next world.³³ The result is near chaos, but the Book of Breathings itself goes almost as far. In three or four pages it contains the essential elements of the Egyptian funerary rites from the earliest times; nothing essential is missing, so that the book assures us that a knowledge of its contents alone, no more and no less, is exactly what is needed by anyone who wishes to continue to live and progress in the hereafter. We begin at last to see why this brief and unimpressive little scroll is of such great importance to the ancient Egyptian and the modern scholar alike—indeed “a valuable discovery.”

THE MEANING OF “SNSN”

Almost any Egyptian funerary text could safely be called a “Book of Breathing,” since all deal with renewal of life and resurrection of the flesh, which for the Egyptian mean breath-

³⁰Ibid., p. 16.

³¹E. Hornung, *Das Amduat*, Teil 3 (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1967, in *Aegyptische Abhandlungen*, Bd. 13), p. 55; S. Schott, *Die Schrift der verborgenen Kammer* in *Göttinger Nachr.*, 1958, No. 4), pp. 341, 369. The cosmological inscriptions of Edfu “may be regarded as mere summaries or epitomes of the more important parts of the complete myths,” which “preserved only a restricted number of extracts which from the Egyptian point of view were considered as vital,” E.A.E. Reymond, *The Mythical Origin of the Egyptian Temple* (N.Y.: Barnes & Noble, 1969), p. 10.

³²Schott, “Nut spricht als Mutter,” pp. 344, 346f, 354, 365-370.

³³W. Wreszinski, in *AZ*, 45: 122.

ing first of all.³⁴ Some of the most important chapters of the Book of the Dead are entitled "For giving a Breeze to N. in the Realm of the Dead."³⁵ The Egyptian associated life, light, air, breath, and everything good in a single symbol, the *nfr*-sign, showing the heart and respiratory passages,³⁶ including the aesophagus, for the breathing pipes were also the way of nourishment: in a single intake one absorbs life, breath, nourishment, health, vigor—everything good.³⁷ The aim of the mysteries is "to give life and joy through the nose, and joy to the heart with the aroma of *ibr*-ointment, supplying the King with the fragrance of the mighty ones."³⁸ The commonest epithets of divinity depict the deity either as the provider of air, "who causes the heart (windpipe) to breathe," *sqr hty.t*, or as himself wind, air, breath of life.³⁹

The giving of breath is endowment with life in the widest sense. Thus the King is petitioned "to give the breath of life to him who suffocates" and spare the life of a servant, for he is "the creator of the air," whose own mouth "bears breath to humans."⁴⁰ Yet, Posener notes, there is no known representation of Pharaoh bestowing breath- or life-symbols on anyone, while there are thousands depicting gods doing the same. Why is that? Because in his breath-giving capacity the King is wholly divine, absorbed in the person of the life-giving god; he *is* the creator, "Chnum . . . who puts the breath of life in every man's nose,"⁴¹ Chnum, who "created the animals by the breath of his mouth, and breathed forth the flowers of the field . . ."⁴² As the Apis Bull he is also "the living breath" of Ptah the Creator;⁴³ he is Horus of Edfu "who puts breath into the nose of the dead";⁴⁴ he is Re who announces to them in the Underworld, "I bring light to the darkness . . . who sees me shall

³⁴E. Hornung, *Altäg. Höllenvorst.*, p. 11.

³⁵So chapters 54 to 59 inclusive.

³⁶E. Otto, *Gott und Mensch nach den ägyptischen Tempelinschriften der griechisch-römischen Zeit* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1964), p. 54.

³⁷J. Bergman, *Ich bin Isis* (Upsala, 1968, Acta Univ. Upsaliensis, Historia Religionum 3), pp. 186f.

³⁸H. Junker, *Die Stundenwachen in den Osirismysterien* (Vienna, 1910), p. 2.

³⁹Otto, *Gott und Mensch*, pp. 149ff, 159ff.

⁴⁰These and other pertinent quotations in G. Posener, *De la Divinite du Pharaon* (Paris, 1960, Cahiers de la Societe Asiatique, XV), p. 66.

⁴¹T. Hopfner, *Plutarch über Isis und Osiris, II Teil* (Prague: Orientalisches Institut, 1941), p. 111.

⁴²Ibid., p. 141.

⁴³E. Chassinat, in *Receuil de Travaux*, 38 (1938), pp. 44f.

⁴⁴W. Wreszinski, in *AZ* 45: 111, cf. 112, 115-7, 122.

breathe, let him breathe who exalts my appearance!"⁴⁵ To which they reply, "We breathe when we see him, the King N breathes when he sees him . . . we breathe, rejoicing in Sheol (Quererts)." ⁴⁶ Because as Osiris he was brought back to life "as he smells the air of Isis," who as she fans him with her wings says, "I put wind into his nose,"⁴⁷ he is able to restore others to life: ". . . your throats breathe when you hear the words of Osiris."⁴⁸ For he himself is the great breather: "Osiris breathes, Osiris breathes, in truth Osiris breathes, his members have truly been rejuvenated";⁴⁹ then he "breathes out the air that is in his throat into the noses of men. How divine is that from which mankind live! It is all united in thy nostrils, the tree and its foliage, the rushes . . . the grain, barley, fruit trees, etc. Thou art the father and mother of humanity, who live by thy breath."⁵⁰ The Book of Breathings is not to be dismissed, as it has been, as a mere talisman against stinking corpses; it is a sermon on breathing in every Egyptian sense of the word.

The Berlin Dictionary (usually called simply the *Wörterbuch*—Wb) IV, 171ff, gives a wealth of meanings for the word *snsn*, all of which fall under two related categories. *First* there is the idea of air and breath, No. 2 (in the WB list) being to smell, breathe; (3) to exude an odor; (4) to inhale air or the breath of life; (5) "der Odem," the breath of life itself; (16) the stench of a corpse. In charge of this department is the goddess Mert, identified with Maat, who enjoys considerable prominence in our Book of Breathings. Supervising the functions of aesophagus and windpipe, she supplies both nourishment and breath of life (one actually eats and breathes her), and in that capacity enjoys a relationship of peculiar intimacy with every individual, even as she hangs on the kingly and priestly breast as a pectoral that both embraces and is embraced by the royal person.⁵¹ In this sense "The son of Atum-Re says, He hath begotten me by his nose: I came forth from his nostrils. Place me upon his breast, that he might embrace me with his sister

⁴⁵A. Piankoff, "Le Livre de Quererts," *Bull. Inst. Français d'Archaeol. Or. (BIFAO)*, 43 (1945), pp. 10, 19.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 42 (1944), pp. 33-34.

⁴⁷Hopfner, *Plutarch über Isis und Osiris*, I Teil, pp. 81-85.

⁴⁸Piankoff, "Le Livre de Quererts," pp. 7ff, Tab. i.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁵⁰Hopfner, *Plutarch über Isis und Osiris*, I, 151.

⁵¹J. Bergman, *Ich bin Isis*, pp. 186, 190, treats this familiar theme.

Maat.”⁵² *Snsn* is the air that infuses and pervades: “Thy nostrils inhale (*snsn*) the air, thy nose breathes (*snsn*) the north wind, thy throat gulps in air, thou incorporatest life into thy body.”⁵³ Isis and Nephthys prevent decay and evil odor by fanning with their wings, but that is also the favorable wind which enables the dead to progress on his journey in the hereafter.⁵⁴

But breathing is only half the story. It is significant that the clear statement of the purpose of the “Sensen” Papyrus as given in its introductory lines makes no mention whatever of breathing! This bids us consider the broader and more venerable ritual background of the word. The rites set forth in the Shabako document, the earliest coronation drama and perhaps the oldest of all Egyptian ritual texts, culminate when the new king “unites himself with the royal court and mingles (*snsn*) with the gods of Ta-tenen.”⁵⁵ The expression for “mingle with,” *snsn r*, Sethe finds also in the Pyramid Texts, and means, according to him, “sich zu jemand gesellen.” He duly notes that “the writing is commonly used in later times for *snsn*, ‘inhale,’ being mistakenly regarded as a reduplication of *sn*, ‘to kiss.’”⁵⁶ Another document going back to the earliest times uses the same word in the same way, telling how “Maat came down from heaven in their times and united herself to those who dwell upon the earth”; (another version): “Maat came down to earth in their time and mingled with (*snsn hn*) the gods,” (and another): “Maat came from heaven to earth and mingled (*snsn.n.s*) with all the gods.”⁵⁷ The word “mingled” (both as *snsn.s* and *snsn.n.s*) Otto renders as “sie verbrüdete sich mit . . .” and indeed in the last sentence the word is written simply with the picture of two men shaking hands.⁵⁷

This picture of Maat mingling freely with mankind in the “Golden Age” before the fall forcibly brings to mind Ps. 85:11: “Truth (*emeth*, possibly cognate with the Eg. Maat) shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness (Maat is the Egyptian word for Righteousness) shall look down from heaven.” But even more relevant is the less familiar verse that pre-

⁵²A. De Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts* (Univ. of Chicago, 1938), II, 34-35, Spell 80.

⁵³From the Book of Passing through Eternity, W. Wreszinski, *AZ* 45: 115.

⁵⁴Bergman, *Ich bin Isis*, pp. 198-205.

⁵⁵K. Sethe, *Das Denkmal Memphitischer Theologie der Schabakosteine des Br. Mus.*, (Leipzig, 1929), p. 73, line 64.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p. 76.

⁵⁷E. Otto, “Das ‘Goldene Zeitalter,’ ” in *Religions en Egypte*, etc. (above, n. 17), p. 103.

cedes it: "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed." For *snsn*, as we have seen, means "kiss." There is nothing more intimate than breath, and one and the same Egyptian word can mean odor, nose, nostril, smell, sniff, breathe, perfume, caress, and love.⁵⁸ The queen of Egypt became pregnant "when the aroma of Amon penetrated all her members."⁵⁹ *Snsn*, then, is indicative of the closest and most intimate association. In the 13th Dynasty King Neferhotep prays "that I may associate (*snsn*) with all the gods . . . ,"⁶⁰ which is quite in order when one remembers that *sn* is the Egyptian word for "brother," and is written with the two-pronged harpoon or spear (Gardiner T 22), being also the common root for "two" in the Semitic languages (cf. our twain, twin, etc.; the one-pronged harpoon was always the sign for "one"). The reduplicate *snsn* makes a verb of it and also acts as an intensive, like the second form in Arabic. This idea of twinship or brotherhood is apparent when a god comes down to his temple and his Ba fuses(*snsn*) with his "form," i.e., his image in the temple.⁶¹

According to the *Wörterbuch*, *snsn*, written either with the "bolt-s" or the two-pronged harpoon, can mean (6) to join a company, unite with a group (formed by reduplicating the word *sn*, "brother"; (15) to unite, fraternize, become a friend of; hence, (7) to join the company of the gods (said of the dead), (12) to reach heaven and mingle with the stars; (13) to enter a bond of brotherhood, to marry with; (8) to unite oneself with the King, or (1) to praise or honor a king or god—hence praise, honor; (9) to unite oneself with one's image (said of a god coming to his temple); (10) to unite oneself with the light. The two main ideas of *snsn*, breathing and joining, meet and fuse in such meanings as (10) "fragrance, light, air, as joining themselves to something"; hence (11) adornment, things adorning the body; (15) to invest another object or fuse with it, as of a person with the stars, a god with his image, crowns or vestments; incense suffusing the body, or crowns joining together to make one. The Pyramid

⁵⁸The word *khn*, examined by V. Loret, in *Rec. Trav.*, 14 (1892), pp. 106-120.

⁵⁹Discussed by Hopfner, *Plutarch über Isis*, Pt. I, p. 46.

⁶⁰M. Pieper, *Die Grosse Inschrift des Königs Neferhotep in Abydos* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1929), p. 10.

⁶¹C. de Wit, "Inscriptions dedicatoires du temple d'Edfou," in *Chroniques d'Egypte*, 36 (1961), pp. 96-97.



Joseph Smith Egyptian Papyrus No. X

Text designation of *snsn* as a consuming fire calls forth the vivid image of the Pharaoh or the blessed spirit invested and suffused with flames which carry him up to heaven.⁶²

Snsn is thus seen to be a very flexible word which remains none the less remarkably true to its basic meaning. This can be seen in a passage from the Book of Wandering through Eternity (the companion-piece to the Book of Breathings, as we have noted): "Thy nose breathes (*snsn*) the Northwind . . . thou kissest (*snsn*) Osiris in the great Golden House, . . . thou passest the gates of the gods of the Qrtj.w (chambers of the Underworld) and unitest thyself to (*snsn m*) the company of the saved . . ." ⁶³ Here breathing, embracing, and fraternizing are all expressed by the same word.

How these concepts persisted down into Jewish and Christian times can be seen in the remarkable parallel between an episode from the Coffin Texts (cir. 2000 B.C.) and a Coptic Christian liturgy. In the former we read: "My *snsn* was with me in his nose, I came forth from his nostrils; he clasped (*dwd.n.f*) me to his bosom, he would not let me be separated from him. My name lives: Son of the Lord of the Preexistence. I live in the members (*bsn.w*, "purifying substances"?) of my father Atum. Created by Atum . . . when he sent me down to this earth . . . when my name was changed to Osiris son of Geb. My father Atum then embraced (*snsn*) me as he came forth from the eastern horizon; his heart was pleased (satisfied) when he saw me . . . He established me in the flesh and gave me dominion over it . . ." There follows (II, 42) a catalogue of birds, animals, and fishes including also the grain-eating human race, all of whom live "according to the command of Atum. I lead them, I cause them to thrive (live); the breath (*sn*) in my mouth is the life in their nostrils; I lead them while the breath of life is in their throats. I sustain them (lit. "tie on their heads") by the Hw (authoritative utterance) which is in my mouth; my father Atum has caused me to give life to the fishes and the worms upon the back of Geb (the earth)." ⁶⁴ The short spell that follows this one reads as if it came right out of the Book of Breathings (though 2000 years older/), but we wish to call attention here to Spell 80 be-

⁶²W. Barta, "Zum Goldnamen der ägyptischen Könige," in *AZ*, 95 (1969), p. 88.

⁶³W. Wreszinski, in *AZ* 45: 115, 119.

⁶⁴De Buck, *Coffin Texts* (C.T.), II, 40ff (Spell 80).

cause of its remarkable resemblance to the Coptic Christian text, which reads: "I adjure thee by the first seal placed upon the body of Adam . . . by the second seal placed upon the members of Adam; I adjure thee by the third seal, sealing the heart and loins of Adam, who lieth in the dust until Jesus Christ shall stand proxy for him between the arms of the Father. The Father hath raised him (Adam) up, he hath breathed upon his face, he hath filled him with a breath of life. Send to me thy breath of life, even to this believer (*pithos*)."⁶⁵ In this Christian Book of Breathings the initiate instead of being designated by the usual code-name of Osiris, is called Adam.

The whole funerary literature of the Egyptians has a strangely familiar ring to those Latter-day Saints who ever get around to looking at it, and it should be cause for much searching of monuments and documents. The whole picture is undergoing drastic alterations at the present moment, and this fact should not be overlooked, as it has been, by the critics of the Book of Abraham. Let us take a quick look at the situation.

ESCAPE FROM THE CATACOMBS

Professor Zandee begins his very useful book on the Egyptian view of death with the observation, "that the Egyptians have answered the question of the relation between life and death in two ways." The one concept is the natural human recoil before the fact of death as "the enemy of life"; the other looks upon death as the great moment of transition to greater things beyond, as nothing less than "the foundation of eternal life, life in its potential form."⁶⁶ But if the Egyptians themselves had two ways of looking at the hereafter, the Egyptologists until recently have had only one, and have tolerated no discussion that might challenge the views of natural science.⁶⁷

⁶⁵S.-P. Girard, in *An. Serv.*, 27 (1927), pp. 62-68.

⁶⁶J. Zandee, *Death as an Enemy* (Leiden: Brill, 1960), p. 1, citing especially Kirstensen as the champion of the optimistic view.

⁶⁷It is interesting that Zandee mentions only one meaning of *snsn*—to stink! *ibid.*, p. 59. After all is said, what the Egyptian felt towards death was only pessimism and terror, according to H. Kees, *Totenglauben u. Jenseitsvorstellungen der alten Aegypter* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1926), pp. 450ff; as early as the Heracleopolitan period the funerary literature takes on a "gloomy and eery character" which remains permanent, E. Lüddeckens, in *Mitteilungen der deutschen Inst. Kairo*, II (1943), p. 171; hence an Egyptian museum "gives the ordinary visitor an impression de tristesse et d'ennui," G. Maspero, in *Biblio-*

The easiest way to forestall any such speculation has been simply to refer everything to the necropolis. In Egyptian almost any word or expression designating a place or state not of this world *can* be equated with "necropolis," and so the disciples of Erman (who frankly confessed that he found the Egyptian religion as repellent as an Egyptian would find his)⁶⁸ have always had an easy time conducting their readers to the necropolis and leaving them there—that is the end of the trail, there is no more, and to look for more is to be guilty of the two things which Erman monotonously and automatically charges against all who disagree with him, "Romantik" and "Fantasie."

And so the general public has always thought of the Egyptians as people with a graveyard fixation. Nothing could be more misleading according to the newer studies that are now appearing faster than ever. Professor Brunner now assures us that "Erman is much too taken with his own times and their viewpoint" to serve us as a guide today.⁶⁹ Wherever the Egyptian character finds expression, according to Miss Thausing, one theme is always dominant: "Life! Life at any price, here and beyond! There is no death, no end, for death is only the birth into a new life."⁷⁰ As Barguet's recent work on the Book of the Dead shows, the funeral march to the graveyard was only a preliminary to an *immediate exit* from it, "the coming

theque Egyptol., I, 35f. But who arranged the exhibits? According to S. Morenz, *Aegyptische Religion* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1960), pp. 198-200, because the Egyptian desperately wanted life, he found death nothing but repellant; he loathed the "awesome and grizzly symbol of the mummy, the living corpse," and viewed the mortuary rites as "a very dubious Ersatz" for life; the euphemisms he used "only show his terror at the very name of death." He clung to the rituals as a drowning man to a straw with little enough confidence in them, A.H. Gardiner, *The Attitude of the Egyptians to Death and the Dead* (Cambridge Univ. 1935), pp. 7ff. On the other hand, Lüddeckens notes that this was not always so (*deutschen Inst. Kairo*), and Gardiner that the Egyptian still continued to hope that "if all the precautions taken should prove successful, then physical death might be a mere transition from one life to another," *ibid.*, p. 13. S. Schott, "*Das schöne Fest vom Wüstentale*," (Wiesbaden: Fr. Steiner, 1952), p. 91, finds that feast of the dead to be a truly gay affair, as witnessed by its modern survival. The consensus, however, has been that "the whole funerary literature of Egypt is a literature of fear of death . . . a limited, worried point of view," as "each newly formed security disintegrates by the apprehension of a new danger." H. Frankfort, *Ancient Egyptian Religion* (N.Y.: Columbia Univ., 1948), pp. 116-120.

⁶⁸A. Erman, *Mein Werden und mein Wirken* (Leipzig: Quelle u. Meyer, 1929), pp. 279f, 76.

⁶⁹H. Brunner, in *Saeculum*, 21 (1970), p. 156.

⁷⁰G. Thausing, *Der Auferstehungsgedanke in ägyptischen religiösen Texten* (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1943), p. 1.



Joseph Smith Egyptian Papyrus No. IV. The outlined sections which were glued onto this Papyrus fit into Papyri X and XI to supply substantial parts of the damaged lines.

out into the day; the rebirth as a triumphant Sun."⁷¹ One finds the very same situation way back in the Old Kingdom, as a number of recent studies makes clear.⁷² Not only are the cults of Egypt simply saturated with the idea of "a continuation of life elsewhere as it was lived on earth," as Dr. Speleers noted with strong disapproval,⁷³ but "separation between life and death," as W. Czermak puts it, "is altogether un-Egyptian."⁷⁴ "The ancient Egyptian," wrote Prof. Wilson, "saw the phenomena of his existence as being of a single substance, banded in one continuous spectrum of blending hues."⁷⁵ And he saw no reason why the band should not be extended beyond the limits of death and birth, his own existence being part of "a well-arranged and well-planned whole," in which nothing had been overlooked.⁷⁶ Hence the surprising fact, now being pointed out by Egyptologists, that the Egyptians really cared very little about the past, and in their writings concerning man's place in the universe are not concerned at all "with burial and life after death."⁷⁶ Passing from one state of existence to another is never without its terrifying aspects, and in the Egyptian initiation rites the candidate underwent a ritual death-experience which was altogether too realistic to be comfortable.⁷⁷ Terrified by the unknown, he was nonetheless sustained by the conviction that there was something there, a sense of possibilities which, as Whitehead put it, is the whole appeal and power of the Bible itself.

In all of Egyptian literature it would be hard if not impossible to find another document more thoroughly imbued with the positive, optimistic Egyptian view of death than our

⁷¹P. Barguet, *Livre des Morts*, pp. 55ff, and in *Rev. Hist. Religions*, 177 (1970), p. 67: "En fait, il semble bien que ce qui est un point d'arrivée est en même temps un point de départ."

⁷²Below, note 101.

⁷³L. Speleers, "La resurrection et la toilette du mort," *Rev. d'Egyptol.*, 3 (1938), p. 37; *Textes des Cercueils* (Brussels, 1946), pp. xlvii, lxxviii-lxxi.

⁷⁴W. Czermak, "Zur Gliederung des I. Kapitels des ägypt. Totenbuchs," in *AZ* 74 (1940), p. 11. "There is a doubt whether the Egyptian funerary stelae mean to speak of their possessors as still living or dead," A.H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar* (Oxford, 1957), p. 284, #367.

⁷⁵J.A. Wilson, *The Culture of Ancient Egypt* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 81.

⁷⁶E. Otto, *Gott u. Mensch*, p. 59; H. Brunner, in *Saeculum*, pp. 159, 161.

⁷⁷M. Eliade has shown that the idea behind all initiation is "a new birth of the individual initiate, preceded by a decomposition of his personality, its reimmersion into a state of chaos (disorganization), followed by its integration at a higher level of existence," according to A. Brelich, in C.J. Bleeker (Ed.), *Initiation* (Leiden: Brill, 1965, *Numen*, Suppl. No. X), p. 224. Cf. H. Nibley in *Improvement Era*, 72 (July, 1969), pp. 97ff.

Book of Breathings. Even de Horrack noted with wonder that there seemed to be nothing "funerary" about it, but that on the contrary it spoke only of resurrection and exaltation.⁷⁸ And yet it has been the fate of this remarkable book to be studied and criticized solely by the most dedicated disciples of Erman, the last people in the world to concede anything which the *école de Berlin* would not accept. Their most magnanimous concession to the Egyptians is an indulgent shrug of the shoulders as if to forgive those simple children of nature who know not what they do.

The standard procedure of investigation which has proven most fruitful in Egyptology has been the routine gathering together of all known examples of the object under study, and placing them side by side for comparison, to determine what is essential and what is merely incidental. Thus when scholars were puzzled by a growing category of texts which Champollion had designated as "The Ritual" and which Lepsius labeled the "Todtenbuch," they decided at the Congress of Orientalists meeting in London in 1874, to commission Eduard Naville to bring together and publish side by side all the main exemplars of that document, and as a result the nature of the Book of the Dead first became clear.⁷⁹ Later Sethe and others by the same method of collecting and comparing documents showed the true nature of the Pyramid Texts, and in the same way all the funerary books, from the Coffin Texts on, have been "discovered."

One would assume that so obvious and rational a procedure would by now have accounted for and neatly packaged every category of Egyptian document, but such is far from being the case. Only very recently did S. Schott for the first time examine and compare all versions of the important "Festival of the Valley" (1952); and those documents which make up the book of "The Repelling of Evil" (1954); did E. Otto bring together all the known examples of the controversial Opening of the Mouth ritual (1960); did P. Derchain gather up accounts of the early royal sacrifices (1962); did E. Hornung publish all the "Writings of the Hidden Chambers" which make up the book of Amduat (1963); did C. J. Bleeker run down all the accounts of the Sokar festival (1967); did W. Helck photo-

⁷⁸De Horrack, *Bibliothèque Egyptol.*, 17, 116.

⁷⁹Barguet, *Livre des Morts*, p. 13.

graph and publish all the ritual scenes from Ramses II's outer wall of the temple at Karnak (1968); did E. Winter do the same at the Philae (1970); did Mrs. Reymond bring together all the founding legends of the Egyptian temples (1969). All these sources and many more are now being studied thoroughly for the first time, though they have been well known to Egyptologists for over a hundred years. What interests us particularly is that all have direct bearing on the understanding of our Book of Breathings. Why have the experts neglected to give them the only treatment that pays off? Helck answers that question in the preface to his important study. The reliefs he examines have all been sketched, photographed and described countless times; yet "systematic publications even for the great Temple of Karnak are almost completely lacking."⁸⁰ Why?

In the first place, according to Helck, the ritual scenes in the reliefs didn't *look* particularly significant. Taken alone, each one looks perfectly ordinary and familiar—the student or tourist has seen that sort of thing a thousand times, so he yawns and moves on. Yet when the same scenes were brought together and the detailed photographs placed side by side "a recognizable order and meaning at once appeared," an order and meaning that had completely escaped generations of Egyptologists.⁸¹ Then again, Helck observes, they were ignored because they were *religious* compositions, and the experts were convinced that they had taken the measure of Egyptian religion and found it sorely wanting in the solid historic and scientific content they were looking for.⁸¹ But the greatest block of all was that "the numerous sacrificial scenes in the temples were regarded as stereotyped compositions . . . from which it was believed no really significant data were to be had."⁸¹ The fact is that they *are* stereotyped, and look enough alike to convince any casual observer that "when you've seen one you've seen 'em all." E. Winter has found the same situation at Philae, perhaps the most photographed and studied temple in Egypt, where the inscriptions "give the impression of being monotonous, tedious, and empty," in fact "almost as unattractive" as the reliefs, which the scholars find positively "repellent . . .

⁸⁰W. Helck, *Die Ritualszenen auf der Umfassungsmauer Rameses' II. in Karnak* (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1968, in *Aegyptologische Abhandlungen*, Bd. 8), p. 1.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, p. 2.

having nothing to say.”⁸² But upon closer examination at the present time “elements heretofore viewed as stereotypes of Ptolemaic temple decoration turn out . . . to be exceedingly important elements in understanding the ‘Grammar of the Temple.’ ”⁸² There it is again—important documents overlooked because they gave the impression of being mere stereotypes. It is the same thing with the texts: “Curiously enough,” Bleeker notes, “many Egyptologists do not seem to realize that well-known words must have had a sacral shade of meaning,” and so, disdaining further investigation, simply “deny the existence of certain religious notions or elements of religious truth,”—especially those of which they happen to disapprove.⁸³ Indeed Brunner notes that the late lamented Sigfried Morenz was one of very few Egyptologists “who took religious phenomena seriously”—and how many religious phenomena can be understood unless one does take them seriously?⁸⁴ Erman confessed at the end of his life that after studying Egyptian religion for fifty years he knew nothing whatever about it and had only a strong antipathy for it.⁸⁵ Today Egyptologists are beginning to see that there is no more serious obstacle to the progress of their science than the illusion that “well-known” objects are also well understood, simply because they are boringly familiar; they would not be boring or “repellent” if they were understood.

This digression has been necessary as a reminder to students of the Book of Breathings that the very same experts who contemptuously thrust aside the Joseph Smith Papyri and dismissed the Facsimiles after a glance, are the same men who overlook all the documents mentioned above, considering them mere shoddy, repetitious stereotypes “from which nothing significant is to be learned.” Only the last ten years have begun to show how wrong they were and are, and how much might be learned from an honest and thorough study of documents which they disdain to notice. But their delinquency does not excuse us, and we must not be intimidated by a haughty and authoritarian manner.

⁸²Reviewed by H. Brunner, in *Archiv für Orientforschung*, 23 (1970), pp. 118-9; Otto, *Gott u. Mensch*, p. 84, notes that highly stereotyped scenes and texts can be given a variety of interpretations and have rich “Anwendungsmöglichkeit.”

⁸³C.J. Bleeker, *Initiation*, p. 55.

⁸⁴Brunner, *Archiv für Orientforschung*, 23:223.

⁸⁵E. Erman, *Werden u. Wirken*, pp. 279f, cf. 292f.

Two of the most important new directions in Egyptology, according to Brunner, are (1) the study of the temple inscriptions, and (2) the examination of the nature and function of the Egyptian temple itself.⁸⁶ Surprisingly enough, to this day there has appeared no *complete* publication of the inscriptions of *any* Egyptian temple.⁸⁶ From the inscriptions, the reliefs, the structure of the temple itself and the written records in general, the meaning and function of the temple can be determined. The primary purpose of a temple, according to Bleeker, was to "serve for the celebration of a cultic mystery."⁸⁷ Or, says Brunner, to provide "a 'cultic stage' for daily and special services," while the architecture of the building conveyed "a mythical realisation of the Cosmos."⁸⁸ Built according to the cosmic pattern prescribed in a divine book sent down from heaven in the beginning,⁸⁹ it was at all times the center of every civilized and civilizing activity, the delightful resting-place of majesty and divinity, the throne of universal dominion, place of the heavenly Marriage and of the Great Council, monument of victory over the powers of chaos and darkness, the holy city, etc.⁹⁰ The dedication of the temple, periodically repeated forever afterward, was itself the repetition of the creation of the earth, and as such was celebrated simultaneously in the temple and in heaven.⁹¹ For "the basic theme of cult activity in Egypt," as Bergman puts it, was "the participation of the gods and the King in renewing and preserving the creation."⁹² Every Egyptian temple claimed to be "the first sacred place in which the Creator dwelt with his fellows before he had created the world," and thus to provide the proper setting for the creation drama that regularly took place there.⁹³ All time, like all space met at the temple, where the hourly rites were no mere fleeting reminders of the great events of human existence, but "contain in themselves," according to Junker, "the performance of all to which they refer."⁹⁴ "The vital element in the constitution

⁸⁶Brunner, *Arch. f. Orf.*, 23:118.

⁸⁷Bleeker, *Initiation*, p. 52.

⁸⁸Brunner, *Arch. f. Orf.*, 23:118.

⁸⁹A. Moret, *Du caractere religieux de la Royaute Pharaonique* (Paris, 1902), pp. 130ff; A. Blackman & A.H. Fairman, in *JEA*, 28 (1942), p. 36.

⁹⁰A good summary is given in the dedicatory inscription of the Temple of Edfu, C. de Wit, in *Chron. d'Egypte*, 36 (1961), pp. 96-97.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, pp. 84, 87, 277ff.

⁹²Bergman, *Ich bin Isis*, p. 165.

⁹³E.A.E. Reymond, *Mythical Origin of the Egyptian Temple*, p. 104.

⁹⁴H. Junker, *Stundenwache*, p. 6.

of the Temple," according to Mrs. Reymond, "was the preservation of the close link with the Ancestors and their cults."⁹⁵ In short, everything in the temple goes back to the beginning and everything is kept in the family.

The plurality of temples in Egypt bothered no one, since the ancient doctrine was that after the founding of the first temple, coinciding with the creation of the earth, its founders, special messengers commissioned by the great Creator to carry out certain phases of his work, "sailed away" to found other temples and create other worlds in the immensity of space.⁹⁶ Strictly speaking, what was dramatized and celebrated in the Temple was not *the* creation, but another creation, this world being organized, to use Mrs. Reymond's striking expression, "after the manner of what had been done in other worlds."⁹⁷ Our "Sensen" Papyrus often refers to four holy places, Heliopolis, Busiris, Abydos, and Hermopolis, the four great prehistoric centers of the Egyptian temple rites; and de Horrack already noted that in the Book of Breathings everything takes place in two spheres, one above and one below.⁹⁸ Which bids us ask before we go any farther, What has the Book of Breathings to do with the Temple?

TOMB AND TEMPLE

The answer is, Everything. Long ago, A. Moret noted that from all of Egypt's glorious past only two types of monument remain—tombs and temples,⁹⁹ and went on to demonstrate that in Egypt, tomb and temple in form and function are virtually identical.¹⁰⁰ Recently a number of independent studies have re-examined the well-documented rites performed in the chambers and passageways beneath the pyramid of Unas, the last king of the 5th Dynasty. The ceremonies were not exclusively mortuary, for the inscriptions that describe them on the walls of the rooms and corridors are often the same as those found in the temples, whose own rooms and corridors, moreover, correspond

⁹⁵Reymond, *Mythical Origin*, p. 277.

⁹⁶Ibid., pp. 180, 187-8; Bergman, *Ich bin Isis*, p. 89.

⁹⁷Reymond, p. 275. In all of this there is no allusion to the *Underworld*, p. 183.

⁹⁸De Horrack, *Bibliothèque Egyptol.*, p. 114; cf. Facsimile No. 2.

⁹⁹Moret, *Royaume Pharaonique*, p. 116.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., pp. 122-130.

to those in the tombs.¹⁰¹ Moreover, the King in his underground world was thought to be "participating in the rites of Heliopolis, which are transferred to heaven," the Temple at Heliopolis being the best-known link and common meeting-ground between the worlds above and below.¹⁰² In his remarkable studies on the royal washing and anointing, A. Blackman has shown how the funerary version corresponds exactly to the daily temple ordinances. In discussing a papyrus which scholars relate very closely to the Book of Breathings, he writes: "That representations of the lustration undergone by the dead should be approximated by those of the ceremonial sprinkling of Pharaoh in the temple-vestry is only to be expected; for both ceremonies were supposed to imitate the same performance, i.e., the sungod's daily matutinal ablutions."¹⁰³ The rites of awakening, washing, dressing, etc., of the king, carried out during the ceremonies of mumification by way of preparing the dead to arise refreshed in the next world, "closely resemble the *daily* service performed in *all* Egyptian temples in historic times."¹⁰⁴ A. Moret had already noted that there is "a perfect resemblance between the funeral rites, the temple rites, and the daily toilet of the Pharaoh,"¹⁰⁵ which Blackman proceeded to illustrate in detail, pointing out how "all five rites, viz. the daily temple liturgy, the ceremonial toilet in the House of the Morning, the preparation of the king's body for burial, the daily funeral liturgy, and the Opening of the Mouth resemble one another in their main features," all having in common a ritual washing, anointing, robing, bestowing of insignia, and sometimes a sacral meal.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹J. Spiegel, "Das Auferstehungsritual der Unaspyramide," *Annales du Service*, 53 (1956), p. 341: It is evident "dass die Themen, die in den einzelnen Abschnitten des Tempelkultes berührt wurden, in der Tat die gleichen waren wie in den entsprechenden Räumen des Pyramideninneren, und dass die im Tempelritual . . . verwendeten Sprüche . . . inhaltlich ähnlich und streckenweise gleichlautend waren." After Pepi I, the inscriptions of the entrance and so-called "Waiting-room" the (Annex) of royal tombs are definitely those of the temple-ritual, *ibid.*, p. 346.

¹⁰²H. Kees, *Totenglauben*, pp. 289f. The tomb of Osiris was originally in the Temple, according to Helck, *Ritualszenen . . . Ramses II.*, p. 108. The King was crowned and enthroned in the coffin-chamber before leaving the place to assume his throne in heaven, Spiegel, pp. 367-371.

¹⁰³A. Blackman, "The Skrine Funerary Papyrus," *JEA* 4 (1917), p. 124.

¹⁰⁴A. Blackman, "The House of the Morning," *JEA* 5 (1918), p. 162, *italics added*. Helck, *Ritualszenen*, p. 20, notes that the services in the Totentempel could also be performed in *non-funerary* temples.

¹⁰⁵A. Moret, *Le rituel du culte divin journalies . . .* (Paris, 1902), p. 78.

¹⁰⁶A. Blackman, "Sacramental Ideas and Usages in Ancient Egypt," *Rec. Trav.*, 39 (1921), p. 48.

Thus the information conveyed in funerary texts is by no means confined to the funeral situation; these particular documents happen to be preserved for us because they were carefully buried away in tombs, but they faithfully report what went on in the temples as well. Even the Coffin Texts were not all funerary; many contain formulas reserved for the living or of value to both the living and the dead, as their titles proclaim. The ordinances in tomb and temple were not only the same, but had the very same objective—eternal exaltation. The instant King Unas and his cortege reach the coffin chamber, the lowest point on their journey and the end of the road in the necropolis, a surprising thing happens: the sad and impressive funeral operation suddenly shifts into reverse, all at once everything is moving in the opposite direction and the thrust of the whole undertaking is to get the King *out* of the tomb and Pyramid and into the sky as quickly as possible.¹⁰⁷ This dramatic reversal of direction is demonstrated by the Sun at the solstice, whose miraculously abrupt turnabout can be most clearly witnessed and predicted from the shadows of those great standing stones (Benben, obelisk, pyramid, pylon) which, as Breasted discerned, attested the common prehistoric origin of tomb- and temple-cult in solar rites.¹⁰⁸ For the Pharaoh, from the earliest to the latest times, always goes through the same solar routine: “. . . at the beginning the king is born: he rises from the Watery Abyss of the Nun; he travels in the barge of Re (the Sun) in the sky, he is identified with the gods and leads a cosmic life in heaven.”¹⁰⁹ The purpose of the tomb is not to lock him in cold obstruction, but to help him on his way; the temple architecture, which requires that the ordinances be performed progressively from room to room until one reaches the roof, shows “a profound and essential association between the rites prescribed by the cult and the rhythm of the universe,” its structure being “inserted into the very order of the cosmos.”¹¹⁰ The stairways, ramps, passages, courts, and gates com-

¹⁰⁷Spiegel, *Annales du Service*, pp. 361ff.

¹⁰⁸Breasted's interpretation was assailed by L. Speleers, “La signification des Pyramides,” in *Melanges Maspero* (Vol. 66 of Mem. Inst.), pp. 603-621, and defended by A. Moret in the same volume, pp. 623-636.

¹⁰⁹A. Piankoff, cited by H. Altenmüller, in *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 26 (1970), p. 61; so also M. de Rochemonteix, in *Bibliothèque Egyptologique*, 3: 233ff; P. Barguet, in *RHR* 177 (1970), p. 67.

¹¹⁰F. Daumas, “Sur trois représentations de Nout a Dendera,” *An. Serv.*, 51 (1951), pp. 399-400.

mon to tomb and temple are reminders that the Egyptians in their endless rites are always on the move—the one thing that must never happen is the stopping of the royal progress.¹¹¹

THE CROWNING EVENT

In Egypt all eyes focused on the King, “the only point of contact between man and God.”¹¹² The mortal chosen for this awesome position had to be set apart from and recognized and acclaimed by his fellows on a special occasion and by a special procedure—the coronation, a drama presented at a very special time (the New Year, the day of Creation, the universal birthday) and place (the center of the universe, the Navel of the World, etc.).¹¹³ The regular Egyptian temple-rites were nothing but “a small concentrate of the Coronation ceremonies,”¹¹⁴ which were celebrated every year, every month, and every day in the temples, like the king’s birthday, marking “a complete new beginning for the universe.”¹¹⁵ What the temple reliefs of Karnak amount to, according to Helck, is “a symbolic repetition of the coronation,”¹¹⁶ for it is in the Temple that the coronation takes place, the royal party moving from chamber to chamber during the rites,¹¹⁷ thus inaugurating the “royal progress”—since prehistoric times “the central act of the assumption of rule, as P. Munro observes, was a ritual circumambulation performed by the King, having “the symbolism of taking possession of ‘the world’. . . .”¹¹⁸ In his beneficent and victorious progress through the world the King was following the example of his father the Sun,¹¹⁹ his appearance being everywhere hailed by his subjects as a joyful sunrise, a blessed parousia.¹²⁰ Foucart has pointed out that Egyptian kings and gods alike, far from maintaining a majestic repose, constantly “pass through their domains as if they wanted to in-

¹¹¹Thausing, *Das grosse Totenbuch*, pp. 19-22; see below, note 121.

¹¹²Wilson, *Culture of Anc. Egypt*, pp. 45-49, 69ff.

¹¹³For a recent study, J. Bergman, *Ich bin Isis*, pp. 92-120. We have treated this theme in a number of studies.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹¹⁵P. Munro, “Bemerkungen zu einem Sedfest-Relief . . .” *AZ* 86 (1961), p. 73.

¹¹⁶Helck, *Ritualszenen . . . Rameses’ II.*, p. 74.

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 77f.

¹¹⁸Munro, *AZ* 86, p. 71.

¹¹⁹C. de Wit, *Chron. d’Eg.*, 36: 78f, 81; on the victory motif, Munro, pp. 71-73.

¹²⁰Bergman, *Ich bin Isis*, pp. 101-2.

spect them or relax at some of their seats."¹²¹ It is the familiar royal progress, which we have discussed elsewhere,¹²² it is also the theme of the royal funeral rite, which carries on the drama of the royal progress into the next world. The classic presentation of the *descensus* of the Sungod to the underworld to bring light and relief to those who sit in darkness as he passes from chamber to chamber in his nocturnal journey, is found in the "Writings of the Secret Chambers" of the kings of the 18th and following dynasties, known as the Book of Amduat. And the Book of Breathings might well be described as a thumbnail version of the Amduat. Any serious study of our "Sensen" Papyrus must take this aspect of its teachings into account.

Also since the coronation, timed like the temple festivals to coincide with the beginnings and endings of cosmic cycles, solar, lunar, and astral, as well as the seasonal cycles of life and vegetation, also dramatized the creation,¹²³ we must recognize that the important rites and ordinances of the Egyptians can never be divorced from each other. If the creation story is, as Brunner has stated, the "perpetual source of vitality for Pharaonic Egypt,"¹²⁴ and if the purpose of the temple cult was "to preserve and renew the Creation and thereby secure and transmit the established order of the universe" through the co-operation of divinity and royalty, as Bergman sums it up,¹²⁵ it is not surprising that the study of one ritual text if conscientiously pursued leads us inexorably to the study of all the rest, for all tell the same story.

Moreover, everybody gets into the act. Though everybody knows that in Egypt the King was all-in-all, and that the temple and funeral rites alike were originally meant only for him,¹²⁶ yet even in the Old Kingdom Speleers finds "the door already half open" to let others in.¹²⁷ For one thing, the King had to have assistants, and could not always be present on the scene, and so we always find deputies and proxies taking his place.¹²⁸ During various rites for the living and the dead "persons or

¹²¹G. Foucart, in *BIFAO*, 24 (1924), p. 1.

¹²²H. Nibley, "Tenting, Tool, and Taxing," in *Western Polit. Quarterly*, 19, (1966), pp. 609-612.

¹²³P. Barguet, in *RHR*, 177: 67; Bergman, *Ich bin Isis*, pp. 88f.

¹²⁴H. Brunner, in *Saeculum*, 21 (1970), p. 159.

¹²⁵Bergman, *Ich bin Isis*, p. 165; Otto, *Gott u. Mensch*, p. 84.

¹²⁶S. Schott, in *Nachr. Ak. Wiss. Göttingen*, 1958, No. 4, pp. 350, 370.

¹²⁷L. Speleers, "La reurrection et la toilette du mort," *Revue d'Egyptologie*, 3 (1938), p. 37.

¹²⁸A. Blackman, in *JEA* 31: 512f.

properties of the cult during the changing phases of the ritual could take different roles."¹²⁹ As in nature, where a creature can completely change its form, from tadpole to frog or from caterpillar to butterfly, while remaining the same individual, so a human being could assume various forms or modes of being (*hprw*) in the next life, even as he does in passing through the "seven ages of man" in this one.¹³⁰ One might think that an Egyptian would draw the line at taking upon himself the very form and identity of Pharaoh, but if he could be Osiris there was no reason why he could not be the King as well: Thus we find a special honor bestowed by Amon upon Osiris being handed down from Osiris to the Pharaoh at his coronation, and then, wonder of wonders, resting upon the head of an ordinary citizen: "... this decree, laid away with the commoner Nesichonsu in his coffin was believed very literally now to apply to him."¹³¹ Another commoner identifies himself entering his tomb with Pharaoh entering the Temple of Heliopolis in majesty—showing how the rites of temple and tomb were identified in the priestly mind.¹³² Human presumption could go no farther, yet the Egyptians seem to take it for granted.¹³² One important document, "The Purification of Pharaoh," very closely related to the Book of Breathings, was originally a text instructing the Pharaoh in the manner of presiding over certain temple ceremonies, in which the King was to wash himself as the Creator washed himself after finishing the Creation;¹³³ and the same ritual of purification was to be performed in the temple, at the coronation, and at the funeral of the king.¹³⁴ As a funeral text it was adapted to general use, and we find one important exemplar after being used as a model for copyists in a shop, in the possession of an ordinary businessman, and finally thrown together into a mummy case with a lot of Greek

¹²⁹Bergman, *Ich bin Isis*, p. 83, n. 2.

¹³⁰L.V. Zabkar, "... on T.G. Allen's, Book of the Dead," *Jnl. of Near Eastern Studies*, 24 (1965), p. 83; G. Roeder, *Urkunden zur Religion des alten Aegypten* (Jena, 1915), pp. 220, 225: "... when he was thirsty he became the Nile; when he was cold he became fire ..."

¹³¹G. Daressy, "Un Décret d'Amon en faveur d'Osiris," *An. Serv.*, 18 (1919), pp. 218-224.

¹³²H. Kees, *Totenglauben*, p. 322. By the Middle Kingdom a noble could speak of himself as coming forth from *his* residence and going down to *his* cemetery, exactly as if he were the King, H. Goedicke, in *Orientalia*, N.S. 24 (1955), p. 239.

¹³³S. Schott, *Abwehr des Bösen*, pp. 13, 15, 18.

¹³⁴S. Schott, *Die Reinigung Pharaos in einem memphitischen Tempel* (Berlin P 13242), *Nachr. Ak. Wiss. Göttingen*, 1957, No. 3, p. 67.

documents.¹³⁵ Though the content of the text clearly shows that it was meant for the King alone, instead of bearing the name of a particular king it refers only to "Pharaoh," indicating that it was a stereotyped text that any old king could use,¹³⁶ or for that matter anybody else, since private owners of such texts sometimes put their own names right inside the cartouche reserved at all times for the king's name alone!¹³⁷

The gods of Egypt are now being studied in the light of this strangely fluid nature of individual identity. We find that divine epithets were freely passed around among the gods, who fused with each other just as easily as they fused with their earthly representatives.¹³⁸ With syncretism "a basic part of his (the Egyptian's) spiritual makeup" from the earliest times,¹³⁹ it would now appear that the gods of Egypt "were not unique personalities" at all, "but variously interpreted (*vieldeutige*) representatives of powers which stood in the closest relationship to each other and could be widely substituted for each other;"¹⁴⁰ they fuse and break up like colonies of cells, with "complete indifference" to maintaining their individual peculiarities.¹⁴¹ In fact, E. Winter maintains that the "Grundtypen" of the gods are so few and so colorless that without inscriptions to guide us we would be at a loss to identify various gods and kings in the temple reliefs, or to discover what they were supposed to be doing.¹⁴²

The best hold on such slippery stuff lies in the study of rites and ordinances, which are visible and tangible. It is remarkable, for example, how much Egyptian ritual can be treated under the heading of *initiation*. Miss Thausing has gone all out for the Book of the Dead as a guide (*Wegweiser*) to the Initiate, both in this world and the next, both in the temple and the grave, where everything is "but the symbol of the way of initiation."¹⁴³ As she puts it, "The way of the soul in the other world corresponds to the steps in an earthly initiation through

¹³⁶Cf. Schott, *Abwehr des Bösen*, p. 9.

¹³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹³⁷Schott, *Reinigung Pharaos*, p. 8.

¹³⁸Bergman, *Ich bin Isis*, pp. 166, 70, n. 2.

¹³⁹H. Bonnet, "Zum Verstandnis des Synkretismus," in *AZ* 75, (1939), p. 41.

¹⁴⁰E. Otto, *Gott und Mensch*, p. 87.

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.

¹⁴²E. Winter, "... ägypt. Tempelreliefs in der gr.-röm. Zeit," in *Religions en Egypte* (above n. 17), p. 121. All of this was noted by de Rochemonteix long ago, in *Bibliothèque Egyptologique*, 3: 211, 206, 208, etc.

¹⁴³Thausing, *Das grosse Totenbuch*, pp. 7f, 19, 21.

which the hierophant had to pass in the temple during the years of his training."¹⁴⁴ "How can a mortuary ritual be an initiatory ritual?" asks Prof. Brandon, and assures us in reply that "the paradox disappears on analysis," since "a mortuary ritual may serve to initiate . . . into a new form of life."¹⁴⁵ Whatever the reason, the Egyptian in his funeral rites was certainly treated as a candidate for initiation: He was tested for purity, had to stand judgment in a court, had to demonstrate special knowledge by answering specific questions, identifying objects and giving certain code words at a succession of gates or doors, etc. In fact, the Egyptian word for burial means "to initiate one into the mysteries."¹⁴⁶ As his ultimate objective, the dead requests "permission to enter into the Holy of Holies of the Temple of Heliopolis," on the grounds that as an "Elder" he has been "initiated into the deepest secrets of the Temple," and knows the stories that explain the various institutional aspects of the cult.¹⁴⁷

Barguet, defending the traditional view against the rising tide of "initiationism," insists that there is nothing in the Book of the Dead to indicate an initiation for the *living*.¹⁴⁸ Well, that is hardly where one would expect to find such, and yet Barguet himself is quick to add in a footnote, ". . . That is not to say that there was no initiation in Egypt; on the contrary, the formulas of Chapters 112-115 prove" that there was. He calls attention to chapters in the Book of the Dead plainly describing rites performed by the living and for the living,¹⁴⁹ but explains that the living initiates, since they were required to possess special knowledge (as all initiates are), must have been priests. But the question is not about the rank of the hierophants, but only whether the living were initiated into the ordinances. From the Egyptian and Mormon point of view of the question is an academic one, since all ordinances are meant to be of eternal validity and to apply both in this world and the next. After all, the fundamental purpose of ordinances is to bridge the gap between the worlds; all are in a

¹⁴⁴G. Thausing, in *Mel. Maspero*, I, 40.

¹⁴⁵S.G.F. Brandon, in C.J. Bleeker (Ed.), *Initiation*, p. 41.

¹⁴⁶Bergman, *Ich bin Isis*, p. 231; cf. C.J. Bleeker, *Egyptian Festivals* (Leiden: Brill, 1967), p. 45.

¹⁴⁷K. Sethe, "Sprüche für das Kennen der Seelen der heiligen Orte," *AZ* 57 (1922), p. 11; B.D. Ch. 114-6.

¹⁴⁸P. Barguet, *Livre des Morts*, p. 24; on the general opposition, Thausing, *Gr. Totenb.*, p. 6.

¹⁴⁹Barguet, p. 25, n. 47, citing B.D. Chapters 18, 19, 135, 163.

sense *rites de passage* with a foot in either camp. That the Egyptian rites were for the living as well as for the dead becomes clearer every day.

The purpose of this preliminary chapter is to prepare the reader to view the Book of Breathings with an uncommitted eye, feeling under no obligation to stake his eternal salvation on the Egyptology of another day, or of any day. These things are always changing. If our own Book of Breathing turns out to be something very different from Professor Baer's "Breathing Permit," it is not because we presume to question his work as far as it went, but because it is high time to point out, with all due respect, that students of the Joseph Smith papyri have necessarily overlooked a great deal of very important evidence, much if not most of which has come to light only since they did their work.¹⁵⁰

Today scholars are becoming aware of an elaborately interlacing mesh of ancient writings from various far-flung centers of culture and religion, which were formerly thought to be completely independent and disconnected productions. These support and explain each other in strange and surprising ways, and right in the center of the great complex is the Book of Breathings. The reality and significance of this phenomenon, the importance of which can not be over-estimated, we hope to make apparent in the commentary which follows.

¹⁵⁰Among others insisting that intensive study and reevaluation of these subjects is long overdue are P. Munro, in *AZ* 86:74; G. Thausing, *Gr. Totenb.*, p. 3; H. Brunner, in *Archiv f. Orientforschung*, 23: 118; W. Helck, *Ritualszenen*, etc., p. 1.

The Search for Love: Lessons from the Catholic Debate over Moral Philosophy

LOUIS MIDGLEY*

I

As is rather well-known, Catholic moral philosophers have traditionally held that biblical support for the idea of moral natural law is to be found in Romans 2:14-16. The passage reads:

For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another; In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

In the words of Heinrich Rommen, this passage is taken by Catholics to mean that Paul "declares that the natural law is inscribed in the hearts of the heathen, who do not have the Law (of Sinai), and is made known to them through their conscience. It is valid both for pagans and for Jews because it is grounded in nature, in the essence of man."¹

But in Romans 2:14-16 Paul does not really seem to say what Rommen wants him to say, for he does not speak of a moral natural law at all, nor does he attribute the law that the gentiles give to themselves to the conscience. The conscience for Paul is the power within man to judge whether he has done

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¹Heinrich Rommen, *The Natural Law* (St. Louis: Herder, 1947), p. 35.

what he believes he ought to do, whatever that may happen to be. The gentiles that Paul refers to, whoever they are, give themselves a law because they have not the law of God. There is no suggestion that the conscience reveals or is somehow the source of law. If it so happens that a man actually does what he believes he ought to do, then he will show "the work of the law" written on his heart and his conscience will vindicate him in the judgment; for, as Paul is attempting to show, it is the *doers* of the law who are justified and not merely the hearers (Roman 2:13). And this is true even of those gentiles who know nothing of God's law, but who still *do* (we might even say "naturally") what the law that *they give to themselves* requires of them. In addition, there is no reference in the text to a (natural) law "grounded in nature, in the essence of man." There is no mention at all of any "essence" or "nature" of man, whatever they may be. Finally, there is nothing in the text that could be construed to suggest that "reason" working on "nature" could uncover any equivalent of that which God reveals through his prophets.

Catholic scholars are not entirely unaware of the difficulties of attributing a doctrine of moral natural law to the New Testament. There is a big debate over the issue, and a number of Protestants have argued that there is no doctrine of natural law in the Bible.² In a review of a book in which Felix Flückiger,³ a prominent contemporary Protestant critic of the natural law tradition, argues against the position that Paul assimilates a natural law ethic, Anton-Herman Chroust, a Catholic jurist, made the following observations:

Since the Church in the first centuries was primarily a missionary Church the philosophical concept of natural law seems to have had little meaning for the first Christians. Flückiger is quite correct when he denies . . . that the famous passage in Romans 2:14ff . . . does refer to natural law as is commonly understood. Only during the second century A.D. did the concept of a natural law make its appearance in Christian literature, and then only by way of reception from

²The most significant marshalling of arguments for natural law in the New Testament has been done by C. H. Dodd in an essay in 1946 which has since been reprinted a number of times—see Dodd's *New Testament Studies* (Manchester, 1953), pp. 129-142. For a rejection of the idea that natural law is to be found in the New Testament, see Felix Flückiger, "Die Werke des Gesetzes bei den Heiden (nach Röm. 2:14 ff.)," *Theologische Zeitschrift*, 8 (1952), 17-42.

³Felix Flückiger, *Geschichte des Naturrecht*, I (Zollikon-Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1954).

essentially Stoic sources. The Gnostics (Valentinus and Basilides), on the other hand, tried to establish a natural law based on Scriptures or the 'New Law of Christ,' as well as on Greek philosophy. Philo of Alexandria, who attempted the first great synthesis of Old Testament and Greek philosophy, identified the Mosaic Law and natural law. H. Wolfson . . . is certainly right . . . when he maintains that Philo in many respects must be considered the forerunner and model of scholastic thinking. For Philo (who also influenced Clement of Alexandria and St. Ambrose of Milan) achieved a workable assimilation of Stoic and Biblical thought. With Clement of Alexandria Greek natural law ideas gradually gained acceptance in Christian literature. With the reception of Stoic ethical notions the whole of Christian ethics acquired a more scientific form: natural law became the law of right reason, that is of natural reason (Clement). . . .⁴

The standard view reported in the history of political philosophy handbooks concerning the possibility of moral natural law in the New Testament is derived from a famous study by the Carlyle brothers in which A. J. Carlyle began by granting that "references to this theory [of natural law] in the New Testament are very scanty—indeed we have not observed any distinct reference to the subject, except in one passage in St. Paul's letter to the Romans; but this reference is very clear and distinct, and may be taken as presenting a conception which is constantly assumed by St. Paul as true and important."⁵ What was A. J. Carlyle's evidence for this assertion? "There can be little doubt," he wrote, "that St. Paul's words imply some conception analogous to the 'natural law' in Cicero, a law written in men's hearts, recognized by man's reason, a law distinct from the positive law of any State, or from what St. Paul recognized as the revealed law of God. It is," Carlyle affirmed, "in this sense that St. Paul's words are taken by the Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries like St. Hilary of Poitiers, St. Ambrose, and St. Augustine, *and there seems no reason to doubt the correctness of their interpretation.*"⁶ Carlyle's opinion, supported by such flimsy arguments, passed into theological literature through Ernst Troeltsch's highly influential *Social Teachings of the Christian Church* and it was also appropriated di-

⁴Anton-Herman Chroust, review of Flückiger, *Geschichte des Naturrecht*, in *Natural Law Forum*, 2 (1956), 144f.

⁵A. J. Carlyle, *A History of Medieval Political Theory in the West*, Vol. 1, *The Second Century to the Ninth* (Edinburgh: Blackwood & Sons, 1903), 82f.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 83. (Italics supplied.)

rectly from A. J. Carlyle by numerous authors of textbooks on the history of political thought.⁷

Some Catholic authors, as the passage quoted from Chroust indicates, are now willing to concede that perhaps Paul was not advancing a Stoic social ethic or some form of moral natural law, and they offer a rather more accurate account of the assimilation by the Christian community of philosophical concepts from Stoic and other sources. Furthermore, Catholic scholars are now increasingly free to pursue the authentic teachings of the Bible. The urge to recover the teachings of the Bible is at least partly the result of the official relaxation of restrictions on biblical and other historical studies by Pope Pius XII in the 1940's. Roger Aubert has called attention to an important event following World War II: "the desire to draw fresh vigor from contact with the source material—chiefly the Bible, but also the writings of the Fathers of the Church and the documents of the liturgy. . . ."⁸ The fruit of this endeavor has been a full-scale "return to the sources"⁹ and therefore a rather dramatic renewal of interest in primitive Christianity. This constituted a genuine victory for scholarship over the suspicions and controls of the *magisterium*, and has certainly contributed to the *aggiornamento* (up-dating) of the church that was instituted by Pope John XXIII and which in the Second Vatican Council and even now continues unabated.

The best known feature of the current "Catholic crisis" is the dilemma posed by traditional Catholic moral philosophy, and especially by the official position on contraception and moral natural law. The popular press has exploited the more sensational aspects of the controversy, seemingly to embarrass Catholics, and obviously with considerable success. The widespread negative reaction to the promulgation of the Papal Encyclical *Humanae Vitae* on July 25, 1968, is unprecedented in recent times. Because the entire matter has become something

⁷See, e.g., C. H. McIlwain, *Growth of Political Thought in the West* (New York: Macmillan, 1932), pp. 149f.; G. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory*, 3d ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1961), pp. 180f.; F. J. C. Hearnshaw, *The Development of Political Ideas* (Garden City: Doubleday, Doran, 1928), p. 20; L. C. Wanlass, *Gettell's History of Political Thought*, 2d ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1953), p. 98; J. Harmon, *Political Thought* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 92.

⁸Roger Aubert, quoted by T. F. O'Dea, *The Catholic Crisis* (Boston: Beacon, 1968), p. 9.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 8; and G. Tavard, *The Pilgrim Church* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1967), pp. 22f.

of a public scandal, the deeper significance of the underlying issues is often somewhat obscured. The whole affair is interpreted (or, better, misinterpreted) as a battle between "liberals" and "conservatives." Such a characterization makes it easy for the public to take sides but does not assist them in understanding the issues. And, as a result, a number of rather significant trends in current Catholic thought are overlooked.

What I wish to show is that, behind the public controversy over *Humanae Vitae*, some vital issues are being discussed and some profound changes in Catholic doctrine are taking shape. Some of these changes suggest a new openness to the gospel, as well as the possibility of some radical changes in Catholic moral and political philosophy. The new freedom now enjoyed by Catholic scholars has made it possible for some of them to challenge many traditional Catholic moral teachings, including even the doctrine of moral natural law. The old idea that God and a moral natural law are both known by the light of human reason independently of divine revelation is now seriously eroded and compromised. Important Catholic theologians have recently shown considerable interest in the possibility of the prophetic transformation of the "tired old church" and even argue for something quite like what Mormons call continuing revelation and some have even gone so far as to *demand* prophets in the church.¹⁰ Coupled with the new interest in the possibility of postapostolic revelation and prophecy is a growing tendency to play down the old reliance on "natural revelation" or "natural theology" which is the belief that God may be known rationally through his creation because the creation manifests (reveals?) by analogy signs of the creator.¹¹ Catholic moral philosophy has long been made to rest on a direct corollary of natural theology; not only can God's existence (or reality) be demonstrated rationally on the basis of analogies in the natural (or created) world, but also an objective, absolute ethic can be known by the light of human reason, no revelation at all being necessary to provide guidance in the affairs of this world. The current radical, and sometimes passionate,

¹⁰Louis Midgley, "The Christian World Awakens to the Need for Prophets," *Improvement Era*, Aug. 1970, pp. 68-78.

¹¹Natural theology has been ably criticized by skeptical philosophers such as David Hume (see his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*), and by theologians such as Sören Kierkegaard: see, e.g., "The Absolute Paradox," in *Philosophical Fragments*, trans. by D. F. Swenson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1936).

public questioning of the concept of moral natural law by certain leading Catholic intellectuals is an event of singular importance, for it manifests a profound challenge to the work of generations of philosophers and theologians. It also, thereby, affords the possibility of a return to something more like the authentic teachings of the biblical witness.

The dramatic and impressive "return to the sources" which has taken place since World War II has affected Catholic moral teachings in two closely related ways. First, it has greatly improved the quality of Catholic biblical and historical studies. Secondly, it has permitted the publication of findings which run counter to received opinions within the Catholic Church and it has thereby generated support for alternative positions. A concrete instance of the rejection of moral natural law in the New Testament will now be examined.

II

In 1964 John L. McKenzie, an important Catholic biblical scholar, published an essay in which he challenged the view that Paul assimilated a concept of moral natural law in the form of Stoic ethical concepts. He did so by confronting the position of C. H. Dodd,¹² who is not Roman Catholic, which in itself offers an instructive model in such matters, for it is obvious that his real target is not Dodd at all, but traditional Catholic moral philosophy. Dodd has repeatedly maintained that the New Testament is filled with Stoic influences, including a natural law ethic. Hence, according to McKenzie, the doctrine of moral natural law that comes into the question in Romans 2:14-16 "is natural law as it was conceived in Stoicism. . . ."¹³ He then offers a rather standard interpretation of Stoic ethics, which he easily distinguishes from the teachings of Paul.¹⁴

The full details of McKenzie's argument need not concern us; his conclusions, however, demonstrate the kind of radical reconstruction which is now common in Catholic circles. Given Paul's position on the law (in Greek, *nomos*) of Moses,

¹²Dodd, *New Testament Studies*.

¹³John L. McKenzie, "Natural Law in the New Testament," *Biblical Research*, 9 (1964), 3.

¹⁴A better course would have been to follow the thesis developed by F. D. Wormuth in "Astraea and Diké: Ius Naturale in Roman Law," in *Essays in Legal History in Honor of Felix Frankfurter* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966), pp. 585-599.

McKenzie asks, "is there room for any idea of natural law? One would have to admit that if Paul accepted a Nomos of nature he would attribute to it no greater efficacy than he attributes to the Nomos of Moses; and it is difficult to see how he could attribute as much."¹⁵ McKenzie shows that a gentile morality or "natural morality," to which reference is presumably found in Romans 2:14 ff., "is by definition self-sufficient The Gentiles are their own Nomos; and Paul has spoken at some length to make it clear that the Nomos of the Gentiles is a greater failure in the war against Hamartia than the Nomos of Moses."¹⁶ Clearly Paul's theme is the justification of man and he argues that it is the doers of the law who are justified. And who can be classed as a doer of the law? It is he who loves his neighbor who has fulfilled the law, for ultimately "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:9-10). "If Jesus has communicated his victory over sin to man, the supplementing of the teaching of Jesus by natural morality would seem to have even less appeal to Paul than the supplementing of the teaching by the Nomos of Moses."¹⁷

In his conclusion McKenzie shifts his criticisms from the position of C. H. Dodd on the presence of Stoic ethical concepts in Paul and the New Testament, and directs them against Thomist formulations of Catholic moral philosophy. "I believe Paul's thought is correctly summarized if we say that he regarded a morality of reason and nature as a morality that fails."¹⁸ However, an important question still remains. "Whether we can construct a general principle of Christian moral thinking from his rejection of the Stoic morality of reason and nature is another than a purely exegetical or biblical-theological question. But I raise it," McKenzie writes, "because it seems to me that the ideas of Paul should be considered in any scheme of Christian morality. To put the question bluntly: can there be a Christian ethics?"¹⁹ By "Christian ethics" McKenzie means "a theory of moral obligation in general and a system of moral obligations in particular *based on a rational consideration of nature.*"²⁰ Clearly he has in mind traditional Thomist natural

¹⁵McKenzie, "Natural Law," pp. 10f.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid. (Italics supplied.)

law doctrines. "If we use the method and style of Thomas Aquinas, we should proceed thus; it seems that there can be a Christian ethics. First, Christian ethical systems exist and have long existed. Secondly, a Christian ethical system is needed to solve moral problems which are not solved in the New Testament, such as social problems, political problems, and economic problems."²¹ But McKenzie then emphatically rejects both of these arguments for a natural-law form of "Christian ethics," and it is at this point that his position becomes genuinely radical. "But on the contrary, Paul says that he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the Law. And so I answer that there cannot be a Christian ethics."²² At least there cannot be a natural-law "Christian ethics" as long as the position of the New Testament is taken into consideration. McKenzie rejects the argument that a Christian ethics based on moral natural law is possible merely because such systems "have long existed" by pointing out that the actual "existence of ethical systems proposed by Christians shows that they are ethical *but not that* they are Christian."²³ Against the argument that natural law is needed to solve difficult social, political and economic problems, McKenzie maintains "that the ethical solution of these problems will often prove to be a rational evasion of the full weight of the Christian duty of love. Christian love offers a solution to all these problems, but we find the solution impractical. One comes to realize that reason contemplating nature can never arrive at Christian love; it can arrive at enlightened self-preservation and no more. To live conformably to nature is not to live in Christ, nor to have Christ live in one; in fact, the one may render the other impossible."²⁴

McKenzie has thus radically broken with the Thomist natural law doctrine. "I think that Paul would say that Jesus did not live and die in order that men might live by a morality of reason and nature. This they had already."²⁵

As we have seen, McKenzie insists that the Christian duty of love renders unnecessary any reliance on a morality of reason and nature—the Great Commandment is thus made the ultimate and controlling norm, while moral natural law is rejected: (1)

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., p. 13. (Italics supplied.)

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

as an evasion of the law of love, (2) as an unnecessary addenda to Christian moral commitment—one that may even render Christian love impossible, and (3) as a false imitation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. A number of other Catholics have recently taken up similar positions. One of these, John C. Meagher, has argued that Catholic moral theology, “traditionally conservative in its deportment and legal in its methodology, has long been based on an inherited concept of [natural] justice—apparently on the grounds that justice can be enjoined more confidently than charity. . . .”²⁶ We should note that in many ways the word “charity” is rather unfortunate because it commonly implies merely almsgiving. The term employed in the New Testament is *agape*—(meaning love), and the word is far more inclusive in its meaning than almsgiving, though of course almsgiving is clearly included in its meaning (cf. 2 Nephi 27:30). Meagher examines the teachings on the necessity of almsgiving in traditional Catholic moral theology. He does so in order to contrast the biblical teaching on the necessity of love with the older insistence on a morality of reason and nature.

To illustrate the weakness of natural-law thinking on almsgiving, Meagher refers to “a fairly typical two-volume manual entitled *Moral Theology: A Complete Course . . .*,” which indicates that “the state of the giver requires him to give alms only when he has a superfluity of goods. . . . Superfluities are those goods that remain over and above what are necessary for life, or the maintenance of one’s state of life justly acquired and socially useful.”²⁷ The *Complete Course* employs the phrase “necessities of state” (rather than “necessities of life”) and these are defined as “the goods a person must have to keep up his position and that of his family according to the standard of living of his class. This includes provision for the education and advancement of one’s children, for hospitality, adornment of home, and the care and improvement of one’s business.” Meagher, indulging in a bit of irony, asks: “Is there anything, one wonders, that is excluded? Yes, the text continued: ‘it does not include provision for excessive pleasures or luxuries.’ That apparently settles *that*: calculate the income currently invested in your excessive pleasure and luxuries (being

²⁶John C. Meagher, “Law, Prophets, and the Development of Peoples,” *World Justice*, 10 (Sept. 1968), 74.

²⁷Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 75.

careful, of course, not to infringe upon those connected with hospitality and adornment of home, and those not inconsistent with the standard of living of your class) and you have the measure of your superfluity.”²⁸ One is obligated to the needy only for the superfluous portion of one’s net worth. “But even then,” Meagher adds, “you’re not left without protection, the *Complete Course* hastens to reassure you: ‘The mere fact that one has a superfluity does not oblige one to give alms.’ You are vulnerable only when ‘the proper conditions of time, place, person, etc. are present.’ With a little bit of luck. . . .”²⁹ The *Complete Course* even cautions that “a rich man who refused *on principle* to give anything to those in common necessity . . . should be advised, rather than reproofed, on this point.”³⁰ Such a view is radically opposed to the teachings of the scriptures; for example, to the great message of King Benjamin in Mosiah 4:9-30 or to admonitions of 2 Nephi 26:24-33. It is obvious why McKenzie can insist that the natural-law approach to ethical “problems will often prove to be a rational evasion of the full weight of the Christian duty of love. Christian love offers a solution . . . , but we find the solution impractical. One comes to realize that reason contemplating nature can never arrive at Christian love; it can arrive at enlightened self-preservation and no more.”³¹

Meagher suggests that the chief source of difficulty in the traditional natural-law teaching is the common tendency of moralists to turn to tradition and authority when reason fails to provide moral insight or where there is not a general consensus on what reason and nature teach, or when there is a sharp controversy over the content of the supposed natural law.³² Once church authority, that is, the *magisterium*, makes official pronouncements on the content of the moral law, the reputation of the church is placed on the line and it becomes next to impossible for the church to modify the teaching. Meagher points out that one faction of a recent Catholic commission believed that “to say the Church erred in teaching . . . for so long, and in resisting 20th-century pressure for change ‘would be tantamount to seriously suggesting that the assistance

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid., p. 76.

³¹McKenzie, “Natural Law,” pp. 10f.

³²Meagher, “Law, Prophets,” pp. 60-68.

of the Holy Spirit was lacking to her.' " Meagher continues: "To say that the ordinary magisterium had thus erred does indeed suggest that the Popes, the other Vatican leaders, and the hierarchy may have been insufficiently responsive to the assistance of the Holy Spirit, but that is quite another matter: and who of these would claim that he has always been fully receptive to all the movements of the Spirit's vivifying and enlightening presence?"³³ Meagher argues that quite often those who merely back tradition and precedent on moral issues are adopting a position which "is tantamount to seriously suggesting that the assistance of the Holy Spirit *no longer* guides the Church."³⁴ He hopes for prophets to arise within the church to provide the necessary moral enlightenment which is now so desperately needed. But "there is a serious danger of retarding or blocking the vivifying action of the Spirit" by rejecting the prophetic function.³⁵ The church needs desperately to change her ways, even, it seems, at the price of scandal. "The danger of scandal would be more grave than it is if such reversals in teaching had never occurred before in the history of the Church."³⁶ For Meagher, the classic exemplar of the prophetic function is Peter, who in the

Gospels and the Acts manages to retain his leadership and his effective influence despite spending half his time misunderstanding, blundering, and being rebuked by the prophetic voice which cries out to him in historical events, in the indignation of Paul, in visions, even in the crowing of a cock. And it is worth noting that in every case from the Resurrection on, what Peter needed was to be jarred loose from his jealousy for the law. Faithful to the law of his history, he refused to eat what the law had taught him were unclean foods, and it took three visions to convince him that the word of the Lord takes precedence over the received law. The law of his history forbade him to mix with gentiles; and only after a barrage of visions, angels, and evident manifestations of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost could he be made to understand that the Lord had called to his society those whom his law rejected. . . . Peter's education was difficult and slow, but his openness to voices other than that of the law which history had given him made it possible for him to grow out of the legal conservatism of those in Jerusalem who clamored

³³Ibid., p. 69.

³⁴Ibid. (Italics supplied.)

³⁵Ibid., p. 70.

³⁶Ibid.

for the blood of Paul, and to grow into the freedom and truth of Christ our Lord.³⁷

We live in a disconsolate world, or so it must appear to those without the gospel. The Catholic debate over moral philosophy is merely one manifestation of the challenges confronting old comfortable assurances. With many now realizing that they are without solid bearings and teetering on the rim of an abyss, is it any wonder that the churches are in ferment? Here and there in the Catholic world the search for love is beginning to replace the traditional rational bulwark of moral natural law. The goal is salutary, though the results are often very disappointing. However, it is encouraging that the law of love no longer appears unrelated to the human predicament.

³⁷Ibid.

Mormon Bibliography: 1970

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With the beginning of the new year, the demise of some old and venerated friends, *The Improvement Era*, *The Children's Friend*, *The Instructor*, *The Relief Society Magazine*, and *The Millennial Star*, has been accomplished. It has been explained (and for the present accepted) that it is an expeditious move and will result in better periodicals for the total Church membership. However, it is not without some sorrow that one closes out the runs of the old magazines.

The Children's Friend, begun in 1902, and changed to its present format in 1924, is probably the least affected by the change. *The Instructor*, long a house organ of the Sunday School, gives us more sorrow, not as it is now published (as a house organ it has had a limited appeal for some time), but for its colorful past. Begun as *The Juvenile Instructor* in 1866, it was a large, awkward folio volume. It changed to a regular quarto in 1867, an octavo in 1908, smaller octavo in 1944, and back to quarto in 1950; its name was changed in 1930. During the latter part of the 19th century it served as the literary and music periodical for the membership of the Church. During one period the rage for pseudonyms made its reading a delight. George D. Watt became "Uncle George," the staid J. L. Barefoot became "Beta" or "Beth," and Evan Stephens published music under the non-de-plume of "A flat." The text was equally charming. One issue told of a young girl who chewed gum so much that her mouth wouldn't stop despite all medicine could do; an example of what would happen if one pursued this distasteful practice.

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The Relief Society Magazine, I suspect, will be the most missed by current members of the Church. Begun in 1914 as *The Relief Society Bulletin*, a rather unpretentious publication, it was changed in 1915 to *The Relief Society Magazine*, heir of the prodigious magazine of woman's rights, *The Woman's Exponent* which had ceased publication in 1914, and assumed its present format at that time. It now contains, in addition to regular articles, the lessons for the Relief Society, which undoubtedly will now have to be published for the first time in manual form.

The history of *The Improvement Era* is more complex. Begun in 1897, as the organ of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association, it succeeded the long defunct *Contributor*, which stopped publication in 1886. In 1908 it became the organ of the seventies and the YMMIA; in 1909 the priesthood quorums and the YMMIA; in 1917 it added the schools of the Church; in 1925 it listed the Music Committee; and finally in 1929 it added the Young Ladies' [Woman's] Mutual Improvement Association after the demise of the *Young Woman's Journal* and changed its format. In 1970 it was listed as the official organ of the Priesthood Quorums, Mutual Improvement Associations, Home Teaching Committee, Music Committee, Church School System, and other agencies.

For the sentimental, however, it is the death of *The Millennial Star* which is the saddest. True, in the last years it has lacked the luster it had in the 19th century, but one must remember that it is the oldest Church magazine, beginning in Manchester, in 1840. Compare its continuous publishing history with other Church magazines of the period: *Times and Seasons* 6v., *Evening and Morning Star* 2v., *Messenger and Advocate* 3v., *Elder's Journal* 4 issues, *L'Etoile du Deseret* 1v., *Le Reflecteur* 1v., etc. Through the turbulent years of Illinois and 19th century Utah, it not only survived but was most distinguished as one can readily see by the list of its early editors and the worth of the material printed; also by the difficulty one encounters in trying to secure a set of them today.

Progress is progress, and we presume good. But it is always hard to tell old friends good-by.

As in the past, for the compilation of the *Mormon Bibliography*, I have relied heavily on *Mormon Americana*, Vol. 11, 1970.

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Book Reviews

REED C. DURHAM, JR., and STEVEN H. HEATH. *Succession in the Church*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, Inc., 1970. 207 pp. \$3.25.

(Reviewed by Duane E. Jeffery, assistant professor of zoology at Brigham Young University and specialist in general and human genetics.)

Succession! What must be one of the most critical issues in all the doctrine of the priesthood has also been the subject of rather slow development in the presiding councils of the Church, perpetual speculation among the Church members, unparalleled opportunity for outside aspirants to the Presidency, and less-than-exhaustive scholarship in Church literature. The truly comprehensive analysis of the entire issue in this dispensation has not yet been written, but this new book by Durham and Heath is a major step in that direction. Indeed, these authors appear well qualified to eventually produce the *magnum opus*, when and if a market for such ever develops.

Up to now, literature on succession has taken the form of short missionary tracts, small books aimed at defending LDS views against those of some splinter group, or introductory sections in the many gospel synopses on the market. Durham and Heath now set out to trace for the LDS member the entire history of priesthood succession in this dispensation, and strictly from the LDS point of view. It is an attempt to demonstrate the development and application of the current LDS doctrine, and spends little time with the many opposing interpretations and concepts that have been devised over the years. The existence of such interpretations and groups is covered in less than two pages, with a rather extensive footnote to guide the reader to further literature in the area.

The subject matter is very wisely broken down into 13 major historical periods, each of which constitutes a chapter.

Joseph's developing concepts of succession and successors prior to the calling of the Twelve Apostles in 1835 receive the best coverage available in Church literature. Following the consolidation of the Quorum of the Twelve, the next major conceptual developments revolved around the issue of seniority in the Quorum, and herein lies the major contribution of the book. Quorum seniority has sometimes in our history seemed to be based on the members' respective age at ordination to the apostleship, at other times on their respective *dates* of ordination. A third consideration was whether seniority was based on the date of one's ordination as an apostle, or on the date of his being called into the Quorum of the Twelve—and the existence of apostles who were not members of the quorum created some interesting problems which, when solved, afford some critical perspectives. Durham and Heath succeed admirably in showing a consistent pattern through all these details, a pattern which in spite of its consistency underwent progressive development and expansion all through the 19th Century. Shuffling of sometimes long-standing seniority patterns testify to this progressive refinement of the issues, and Durham and Heath document the matter meticulously.

The book's major shortcoming is the demanding self-discipline imposed by the authors to keep strictly to business, thus preventing the pursuit of subjects that are inevitably suggested to the critical reader. Such an approach has its unquestioned strengths, and many of the possible questions clearly lie outside the authors' aim. A few do seem legitimately the book's business, however, and not all of them are resolved. One reads on p. 5 of Oliver Cowdery's assertions in 1847 to David Whitmer that he and David hold the keys and authority to preside over the Church—even though they had both been excommunicated approximately nine years earlier. Did not their excommunication remove all such keys and authority? The answer of course is yes, but the point is nowhere discussed. Why did Oliver, a critical witness in things of priesthood, entertain such feelings? Where they still his feelings just a year later when he returned to the Church? If the reader peruses the article by Richard Lloyd Anderson cited on p. 14 on another point entirely, he will find the answers, but the book gives no such information.

Later on, we learn of concern in the governing quorums that Orson Hyde and Orson Pratt were not in proper sequence

of seniority; that their position ahead of John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and George A. Smith had been negated by their both having been estranged from the Quorum in earlier years. We learn of President Young's settling the question in 1875, and placing the two Orsons *behind* the three apostles above mentioned. One infers from the text that President Young just once-and-for-all came to grips with the issue in 1875, and that the 1875 story tells the whole matter. There is cogent evidence, however, that there were attempts to set this matter straight even before 1868, but for various reasons it was not resolved. Some have seen the move in 1875 as the result of personal differences between Orson Pratt and Brigham Young. That personal vindictiveness on the part of President Young was not involved in the matter has been argued by T. Edgar Lyon,¹ who discusses the situation both in the 1860s and in the 1875 resolvment, and avers that President Young defended Pratt's seniority. In fairness it must be asserted that Lyon does not make clear that Brigham Young *did* come to express the view central to the issue: that Pratt's earlier period of apostasy had modified his position of seniority. This is the point which Durham and Heath establish, and the omission of the pre-1875 activities are of concern only for historical, not doctrinal, accuracy.

Further discussion of the setting apart of the President would seem to be in order. We are informed that it is to be done by the Twelve, and on several pages are given leading statements from the brethren as to its purpose and propriety, but we are not given a discussion of it as a practice. Nor do we find any comment as to why the first president to be documentally set apart, Joseph F. Smith in 1901, requested that the Patriarch of the Church, not a member of the Twelve, act as mouth. There is good rationale for the request, but we are not given it. Similarly, we are convinced on p. 85 by a ringing speech from George Q. Cannon that a new Church president need not be *ordained* to that position; that ordination is, to say the least, superfluous. The word finds no further expression until p. 172, when we read the Deseret News report that President Joseph Fielding Smith was "ordained and set apart" Jan. 23, 1970. Is this merely newspaper rhetoric? Probably, but such

¹T. Edgar Lyon, *Orson Pratt—Early Mormon Leader*, Master's dissertation, Univ. of Chicago, 1932, pp. 159-162.

words in the past have been the turning point of major debates on succession; it would have been wise to clarify the situation.

But the faults are all minor. The book is a major and long-overdue contribution to the step-by-step detailment of this important subject. Due to its appearance shortly after the succession of President Joseph Fielding Smith to the Presidency, some Church members have been prone to dismiss it as a quickly-prepared volume to capitalize on a cresting wave of interest in things successional. Far from that, it is the product of several years' careful and responsible study and should deservedly become the touchstone for discussions of the topic. Indeed, the incontestable fact that this very fundamental doctrine has been progressively refined to its present state has implications that go far beyond succession; it applies with equal force to concepts of prophetic knowledge, revelation, and essentially the whole of our understanding of the gospel. That virtually all our gospel doctrines are best elucidated under this same developmental truth is a point that has not been appreciated by either Church members at large or many of our authors and commentators. It is to be hoped that Durham and Heath will contribute to the recognition of *that* concept as well as to an accurate understanding of succession. The book is highly recommended.

ALAN GERALD CHERRY. *It's You and Me, Lord!* Provo, Utah: Trilogy Arts, 1970. 64 pp. \$2.95.

STEPHEN G. TAGGART. *Mormonism's Negro Policy: Social and Historical Origins.* Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1970. XIII plus 82 pp. \$4.00.

(Reviewed by Reed N. Wilcox, a Junior majoring in economics and international relations at Brigham Young University. A National Merit Scholar and a Hinckley Scholar, Mr. Wilcox is presently serving as ASBYU Vice-president of Academics and as member of the BYU special committee on race relations.)

Most of his black brothers would call him an Uncle Tom. Many of his white brothers at BYU have showered him with

almost apologetic kindness and attention in an effort to somehow demonstrate to everyone—and themselves—that they are not racists, that they really like Al Cherry, black Al Cherry.

Having found himself a center of attention among other Mormon students, it is not surprising that Cherry should publish something like *It's You and Me, Lord!* The subtitle, "My Experience as a Black Mormon," will obviously make the book sell; it made the reviewer apprehensive of a focus on popular controversy rather than upon substance. But apprehension of mere controversial content are quickly stilled—even lulled to sleep—as the first two-thirds of the already short book pass quickly without any mention of the LDS Church. But with two strikes against him Cherry finally delivers something really meaningful. In a casual, friendly rendering of his feelings, he somehow manages to avoid the defensive sort of logical argumentation that tends to plague pro-Mormon publications on this subject. Rather than quoting stories of the pre-existence or dubious conclusions from questionable survey data, Cherry simply explains that for him, "the important thing in God's Kingdom will not be who leads us there, but simply who gets there." At the same time he delivers strong and well-deserved criticism of complacent Priesthood holders and of apologetic Mormons who have told him they would not have joined the Church had they been black.

Hopefully Cherry's book will signal some kind of change from the traditional "defense argument" approach by Mormons to this subject. Unfortunately, but almost inevitably, Latter-day Saints had to await a Black to begin to make this change.

It is ironic that while a black convert student was publishing *It's You and Me, Lord!* another student, a returned missionary who also sincerely "cared for the people of the Church and was committed to the Church's humanitarian and moral ideals," was publishing *Mormonism's Negro Policy: Social and Historical Origins*. Stephen Taggart's conclusion, quite different from Cherry's, is that "the weight of the evidence suggests that God didn't curse the black man—his white children did." Taggart's well-written and very readable little book carefully traces the development of the Mormon Negro policy, concluding that the policy stems from conciliatory efforts made by Joseph Smith and others in response to social

stress created by the Church's location in the 1830s in pro-slavery Missouri. Taggart's facts are generally well documented, although one key document, an "Extra" edition of *The Evening and Morning Star* which was printed in July of 1833, is summarized by Taggart rather than quoted directly, and is never footnoted. Many of his statements are carefully qualified in an effort to preserve historical accuracy, but most of the pivotal conclusions, and often the basic assumptions with which he examines many of the documented statements, are questionable at best. A policy statement printed in the revised edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* in 1835, which cautioned against disobedience or disrespect for the law—which at the time legitimized slavery—is interpreted by Taggart as having been a formal credential of the Church's "proslavery colors." His interpretations of the motives of Joseph Smith and others are usually couched in such phrases as "probably intended" or "apparently intended."

Taggart's documented evidence, in itself, positively relates the policy's first definition to the Missouri period, but establishes little beyond that. That the policy's definition was related to that period is only logical—social situations usually act to necessitate policy definition—but no evidence presented by Taggart substantiates his thesis that social stress determined the policy's content. The real core of his case is Taggart's own unsubstantiated conclusions—such as Joseph Smith's having conveniently added allusions to Priesthood denial to the first chapter of Abraham in the *Pearl of Great Price* in an effort to manufacture a theological justification for his Negro policy, which up to that point had rested only on reheated Southern Fundamentalist dogma. What Taggart presents, finally, is a new—and very good—adaptation of the old argument that Joseph Smith was a very good and resourceful man, that the Church is probably the "best," but that at least some of what is claimed to be revealed from God is of ordinary human origin.

Hopefully, before or after reading Taggart's interpretation of the revelatory significance of the policy, the reader will consider the official statement of the First Presidency reported in the February, 1970, *Priesthood Bulletin*, which restates "the position of the Church with regard to the Negro both in society and in the Church."

GILBERT SCHARFFS. *Mormonism in Germany: A History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Germany*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1970. 256 pp. \$5.50.

(The reviewer, Douglas F. Tobler, is an assistant professor of history at Brigham Young University. A specialist in modern German history and European intellectual history, Dr. Tobler has also published in *Proceedings of the Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters*.)

The recent laudable movement within the Church to discard a traditional parochialism for a more universal appeal is very much in evidence. Pronouncements and travels of Church leaders, the establishment of seminary and institute programs outside of North America and the expanded use of the mass media in the missionary effort all dramatize the new thrust. Undoubtedly, this worldwide emphasis has also been one of the stimuli behind the interest in exploring the history of Mormonism in foreign lands. An additional motive is that former missionaries sometimes take this route to express their affection for the areas and people of their service. The book by Gilbert Scharffs, *Mormonism in Germany: A History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Germany* falls into this category, attempting, in the author's words, ". . . to relate the dramatic, untold story of the growth and survival of the Church . . . in Germany. . . ." Such studies, if well done, should be welcomed by the Church membership, not only as a reflection of the vigor of the Church, but for their potential contribution toward a greater mutual understanding and brotherhood among Church members the world over.

Although the author has apparently labored diligently in researching the material for the present volume, especially in the manuscript histories of the several German missions, and has assembled a formidable body of statistical data on the rate and number of conversions, the presidents of the missions, the numbers of missionaries, the comparative productivity of Church missions, etc., it is doubtful that *Mormonism in Germany* will satisfy either the need for an acceptable history of the Church in that country or measurably enhance our understanding of the German Saints.

The primary obstacles to the book's success include the acceptance of an outdated concept of the nature of history, a

narrow research methodology, superficial knowledge of the history, culture, laws and institutions of Germany, and a tedious writing style, typical of Ph.D. dissertations, but no more conducive to being read by the Mormon, let alone, non-Mormon public. I should, therefore, like to consider these weaknesses in greater detail.

Unfortunately, there was a time once when the mere linking of historical facts into grammatical sentences to form a bloodless chronicle was accepted as history. But first the literate public, and, belatedly and ironically (or perhaps not so), the historians themselves discarded the form in favor of its more critical, interpretive and realistic successor. Contrary to the author's stated desire, the truly "dramatic" real-life story of accepting, living and defending the Church and its teachings in an often hostile environment fails completely to emerge into the narrative from the sanitized, uncritical reporting of the manuscript histories, and from the failure to analyze in some depth the possible explanations for the mercurial ups and downs of Mormonism's German experience. For example, what effect did the emigration of the German Saints to the United States have on the Church there, both over the short and long range? Why did these Saints continue to disregard the advice of Church leaders to remain in their homeland and help build up the Church there? What instructions did the Saints receive from Church authorities to guide them in their relationship to the Nazi State? How do we account for the pendulum-swing variations in the rate of conversion in Germany since World War II? (These range from 215 in 1951 to 2,457 in 1961). The citing of administrative changes, personalities of mission presidents or even welfare assistance hardly seem to suffice as adequate explanations for the conversion statistics. Finally, have not the German Saints contributed more to the Church than their numbers, certain mission presidents and Karl G. Maeser? These and other relevant questions require answers if a serious history is intended.

Secondly, this reviewer is puzzled by the author's research methodology. Why the excessive reliance upon the manuscript histories when other sources were available? As a suggestion, the author might easily have interviewed hundreds of active and disaffected former German Saints living in the Rocky Mountain area whose accounts might well have offered a dif-

ferent perspective and interpretation, and helped bring the narrative to life. Instead, recourse was had to the statements of former Mission Presidents and a very few native Germans. Mention has been made earlier of Karl G. Maeser. The author rightly esteems Brother Maeser's contributions to Mormonism; but, with the single exception of one quotation from Bro. Maeser in *Der Stern*, (p. 18), the author relies on secondary accounts. There is, indeed, no evidence that he considered Reinhard Maeser's biography of his father or the file of Bro. Maeser's letters, some of which date from the 1860s, available either at BYU or the Church Historian's Office. Moreover, the author notes that Bro. Maeser was "caught up with the materialistic philosophy that was becoming so popular among scholars of the day," but does not tell us where he found this idea. Parenthetically, it should be noted that the author often cites quotations (pp. 17, 18, 21, 37, etc.) without proper documentation.

The failure to fully exploit available Mormon sources and evaluate them critically is, however, only a part of the methodological problem. How is it possible to write a history of the confrontation of Mormonism with German society and institutions, as the author purports to do in the Preface, without a thorough knowledge of German history and a study of the relevant German documents? The author has not consulted even the standard secondary texts in German history, undoubtedly helping to account for some of the distortions and errors in factual material. The statement on page xi that "Otto von Bismarck led the German people to great economic heights, especially in the field of industrial production" is a distortion through oversimplification. Or, the assertion that "From 1815 to 1870 the German federations formed loose associations of states" (pp. x-xi) is blatantly garbled. So is the contention that "36,000,000 Germans reside in the territory, which is behind the Iron Curtain, now administered by the Soviet and Polish Governments." (P. xiii.) Recent German government statistics show less than 700,000 Germans now living in the areas under Soviet and Polish control with an additional 16,000,000 in the German Democratic Republic and East Berlin.

More important, however, than this lack of familiarity with German history and the inaccuracies is lack of concern for the German documents which might bear on the subject. What

were the laws of the various German states concerning religion in the 19th Century? (Apparently, the author was unaware that even after the unification in 1871, religious matters still rested in state, not federal hands.) What was the position of the Protestant State Church in the various states? Did Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* against the Catholics in Prussia in the 1870s have any effect upon the Church? What was the Nazi policy vis à vis religion in general and toward the Mormons in particular? Such questions cause one to wonder if Mormonism in Germany can be studied in a vacuum. To have failed to deal with them is to misunderstand the most fundamental axioms of the historian's profession.

Features in the SPRING 1971 Issue:

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