

with various curious characters which probably had among them conventional significance." (Geografia y Compendio Historico del Estado Antioquia en Columbia, Paris, 1885, p. 517.)

Although most of the articles of gold have found their way into the melting pot, there are still some which have been preserved to the present time, as for example, in the Field Museum, Chicago, and the British Museum, London. Elder Melvin J. Ballard describes some plates he saw thus: "Brother Pratt and myself saw in a museum in Lima, Peru, a stack of gold sheets almost identical with the size of the Book of Mormon sheets, approximately eight inches long and seven inches wide, as thin as paper. The whole stack was nearly an inch thick, not a thing upon either side but just gold sheets, prepared for just such work as the plates of the Book of Mormon." (Deseret News, April 30, 1932.)

2. Weight of the Plates. The plates upon which the Book of Mormon was engraved were made of gold and have been described as being about six inches wide by eight inches long by six inches thick. A cube of solid gold of that size, if the gold were pure, would weigh two hundred pounds, which would be a heavy weight for a man to carry, even though he were of the athletic type of Joseph Smith. This has been urged as an evidence against the truth of the Book of Mormon, since it is known that on several occasions the Prophet carried the plates in his arms. It is very unlikely, however, that the plates were made of pure gold. They would have been too soft and in danger of destruction by distortion. For the purpose of record keeping, plates made of gold mixed with a certain amount of copper would be better, for such plates would be firmer, more durable and generally more suitable for the work in hand. If

the plates were made of eight karat gold, which is gold frequently used in present-day jewelry, and allowing a 10 percent space between the leaves, the total weight of the plates would not be above one hundred and seventeen pounds—a weight easily carried by a man as strong as was Joseph Smith. Elder J. M. Sjodahl basing his conclusions on an experiment with gold coins, comes to the conclusion that the plates weighed less than one hundred pounds. The probable weight of the plates also appears as an evidence of the truth of the Book of Mormon.

3. Capacity of the Plates. At first sight, one unfamiliar with the subject questions the possibility of writing the whole of the five hundred and twenty-two pages of the Book of Mormon upon a series of gold plates with a total thickness of about two inches (one-third of the whole volume of plates). This subject has been thoroughly investigated and Joseph Smith's claims proved to be true.

“The question before us is, Could one-third (two-thirds being sealed) of a volume of metal leaves six by eight by six (the Prophet Joseph), or eight by seven by four inches (Martin Harris), or eight by seven by six inches (Orson Pratt) contain a sufficient number of plates, each as thick as parchment or tin, to yield the necessary space for the entire text of the Book of Mormon? If so, what about their immense weight?” Upon “a sheet of paper, eight by seven inches, a Hebrew translation of fourteen pages of the American text of the Book of Mormon has been written in modern, square Hebrew letters in common use. * * * It is demonstrated on this sheet that the entire text of the Book of Mormon, as the American readers have it, could have been written in He-