

Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

OLIVER COWDERY,
DAVID WHITMER,
MARTIN HARRIS."

Oliver Cowdery, the chief scribe for the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the leading witness here, fell by the wayside. Not only did God reveal to him and declare by His voice that this is a correct record, translated by the power of God, but this same man, Oliver Cowdery, in connection with the Prophet Joseph Smith, had bestowed upon him the Aaronic Priesthood by John the Baptist, the man who baptized our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He also had bestowed upon him the Melchisedek or Higher Priesthood by Peter, James and John, the three Apostles of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And although he turned away from the Church, he never failed, to the day of his death, to bear witness of these things.

An incident recently came to my notice through Elder C. M. Nielsen of this city. Brother Nielsen was on a mission in the Eastern States. After trying in vain at several places to secure entertainment, he asked a man who was just stepping into his wagon, to take him for a ride. The man turned around and asked him a number of questions. Finally he asked him where he was from, and he told him he was from Utah, and that he was a Mormon. The man invited him to get into his wagon and go home with him. When he got home the man related the following incident in the life of Oliver Cowdery, after he had left the Church: This man one day was at the county seat (as I remember, it was Springfield, Illinois), and there was a trial for murder going on. He dropped in just as the attorney for the defense was making his plea. This attorney, instead of defending the prisoner, took it upon himself to ridicule the county prosecuting attorney, who was none other than Oliver Cowdery. He asked Oliver Cowdery to tell the jury what he knew about the "Mormon Bible," about the "golden plates," about "old Joe Smith," and about the lie he had signed his name to regarding the divinity of the Book of Mormon. After the attorney had finished, Oliver Cowdery arose, and in the presence of the court and the assembled multitude (the courthouse being full) he declared in the most solemn manner that every word written in this testimony to the divinity of the Book of Mormon was true. He declared that upon his head Peter, James and John, the Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, had laid their hands, and he had received from them the Melchisedek Priesthood; that upon his head John the Baptist also had laid his hands and ordained him to the Aaronic Priesthood. Said he, "I bear witness before the court and the assembled multitude that the only reason that I today am not in Utah with the body of the people called Mormons is because I have committed sin, and I have fallen by the wayside; but the one ambition of my life is that I may before I die regain my standing in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." This man testified to Elder Nielsen that that testimony had made such a vivid impression upon his mind, although it had been some twenty or thirty years before, that he had never been able to get away from it, and from that day until the day he met Elder Nielsen he had desired to meet a Mormon Elder. He expressed delight at meeting Elder Nielsen, and he entertained him; and the result was that this man and all his family embraced the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Oliver Cowdery himself bears testimony in the following language with

reference to his receiving the Aaronic Priesthood:

"These were days never to be forgotten—to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the inspiration of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of this bosom! [This was when he was acting as scribe for the Prophet Joseph.] Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, to write from his mouth, as he translated with the Urim and Thummim, or, as the Nephites would have said, 'Interpreters,' the history or record called 'The Book of Mormon.'

"To notice, in even few words, the interesting account given by Mormon and his faithful son Moroni, of a people once beloved and favored of heaven, would supersede my present design; I shall therefore defer this to a future period, and as I said in the introduction, pass more directly to some few incidents immediately connected with the rise of this Church, which may be entertaining to some thousands who have stepped forward amid the frowns of bigots and the calumny of hypocrites, and embraced the Gospel of Christ.

"No men, in their sober senses, could translate and write the directions given to the Nephites from the mouth of the Savior, of the precise manner in which men should build up His Church, and especially when corruption had spread an uncertainty over all forms and systems practiced among men, without desiring a privilege of showing the willingness of the heart by being buried in the liquid grave, to answer a 'good conscience by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.'

"After writing the account given of the Savior's ministry to the remnant of the seed of Jacob, upon this continent, it was easily to be seen, as the Prophet said would be, that darkness covered the earth and gross darkness covered the minds of the people. On reflecting further it was easily to be seen, that amid the great strife and noise concerning religion, none had authority from God to administer the ordinances of the Gospel. For the question might be asked, Have men authority to administer in the name of Christ who deny revelations, when His testimony is no less than the Spirit of Prophecy, and His religion based, built and sustained by immediate revelations in all ages of the world, when He has had a people on earth? If these facts were buried, and carefully concealed by men whose craft would have been in danger if once permitted to shine in the faces of men, they were no longer to us; and we only waited for the commandment to be given, 'Arise and be baptized.'

"This was not long desired before it was realized. The Lord, who is rich in mercy, and ever willing to answer the consistent prayer of the humble, after we had called upon Him in a fervent manner, aside from the abodes of men, condescended to manifest to us His will. On a sudden, as from the midst of eternity, the voice of the Redeemer spake peace to us, while the veil was parted and the angel of God came down clothed with glory, and delivered the anxiously looked for message, and the keys of the Gospel of repentance! What joy! what wonder! what amazement! While the world was racked and distracted—while millions were groping as the blind for the wall, and while all men were resting upon uncertainty, as a general mass, our eyes beheld, our ears heard. As in the 'blaze of day,' yes, more—above the glitter of the May sunbeam, which then shed its brilliancy over the face of nature! Then his voice, though mild, pierced to the center, and his words, 'I am thy fellow-servant,' dispelled every fear. We listened we gazed, we admired!

"Twas the voice of an angel from glory, 'twas a message from the Most High! And as we heard we rejoiced, while His love enkindled upon our souls, and we were wrapt in the vision of the Almighty! Where was room for doubt? Nowhere; uncertainty had fled, doubt had sunk no more to rise, while fiction and deception had fled forever!

"But, dear brother, think, further think for a moment what joy filled our hearts, and with what surprise we must have bowed (for who would not have bowed the knee for such a blessing?) when we received under his hand the holy Priesthood as he said, 'Upon you my fellow-servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer this Priesthood and this authority, which shall remain upon earth, that the sons of Levi may yet offer an offering unto the Lord in righteousness!'

"I shall not attempt to paint to you the feelings of this heart, nor the majestic beauty and glory which surrounded us on this occasion; but you will believe me when I say, that earth, nor men, with the eloquence of time, cannot begin to clothe the language in as interesting and sublime a manner as this holy personage. No; nor has this earth power to give the joy, to bestow the peace, or comprehend the wisdom which was contained in each sentence as they were delivered by the power of the Holy Spirit! Man may deceive his fellowman, deception may follow deception, and the children of the wicked one may have power to seduce the foolish and untaught, till naught but fiction feeds the many, and the fruit of falsehood carries in its current 'the giddy to the grave; but one touch with the finger of His love, yes, one ray of glory from the upper world, or one word from the mouth of the Savior, from the bosom of eternity, strikes it all into insignificance, and blots it forever from the mind! The assurance that we were in the presence of an angel; the certainty that we heard the voice of Jesus, and the truth unsullied as it flowed from a pure personage, dictated by the will of God, is to me past description, and I shall ever look upon this expression of the Savior's goodness with wonder and thanksgiving while I am permitted to tarry; and in those mansions where perfection dwells and sin never comes, I hope to adore in that day which shall never cease!"

I find that it is wearying me to speak, and that it would not be wisdom in me to continue my remarks in the line I have started and as they are mapped out in my mind. But I rejoice that this man, Oliver Cowdery, did receive baptism and died a member of the Church. I rejoice in the gifts and the graces of the Gospel. I rejoice in knowing that the promises of God are true and faithful to those who believe. I do know that the gift of tongues exists among the Latter-day Saints. I do know that God hears and answers the prayers of those who lay their hands upon the sick, many of whom are given up to die by the doctors. I know that God healed my children when they were afflicted in Washington, through the faith and prayers of the Priesthood. I know, notwithstanding a spiritual medium told the lady in the house where I was stopping that she saw one of my daughters die, that by the power and authority of the Priesthood of God my little girl was raised up from her bed of affliction, and she is in the valleys of the mountains today enjoying good health. I know that in the hour of affliction God hears and answers our prayers and comforts our hearts. I have been through these things. I knew as well before I went to the hospital that I would return as I know it today. I knew by the inspiration of