

## MISCELLANEOUS.

## ANOTHER TESTIMONY.

Some time ago the News contained a notice of the death of William Smith, the last surviving brother of the martyred Prophet, and also biographical notes on the career of this member of the celebrated family. The readers of the News will peruse with interest the following account of an interview with him some time before his death. It is written for *Zion's Ensign*, a paper published at Independence, Mo.

BRADTVILLE, Wis.—I am under promise to Bro. E. C. Briggs and others, to send to your paper a transcript of an interview between Uncle Wm. B. Smith and E. C. Briggs. I herewith submit the following taken from notes and also from memory:

Bro. Briggs and I visited him next day after he returned from St. Paul being about two weeks before his death. We found him able to be about the house and quite willing to talk. After passing the time of day, etc., Bro. Briggs and he spoke of former meetings and finally drifted on to the subject of Bro. Smith's early boyhood and his knowledge of the rise of the Church, Book of Mormon, etc.

Bro. Briggs then handed me a pencil and asked Bro. Smith if he ever saw the plates his brother had had, from which the Book of Mormon was translated.

He replied, "I did not see them uncovered, but I handled them and hefted them while wrapped in a tow-frock and judged them to have weighed about sixty pounds. I could tell they were plates of some kind and that they were fastened together by rings running through the back. Their size was as described in mother's history."

Bro. Briggs then asked, "Did any others of the family see them?"

"Yes," said he; "Father and my brother Samuel saw them as I did while in the frock. So did Hyrum and others of the family."

Was this frock one that Joseph took with him especially to wrap the plates in?"

"No, it was his every day frock such as young men used to wear then."

"Didn't you want to remove the cloth and see the bare plates?" said Bro. B.

"No," he replied; "for father had just asked if he might not be permitted to do so, and Joseph, putting his hand on them said; 'No, I am instructed not to show them to any one. If I do, I will transgress and lose them again.' Besides we did not care to have him break the commandment and suffer as he did before."

"Did you not doubt Joseph's testimony sometimes?" said Bro. Briggs.

"No," was the reply. "We all had the most implicit confidence in what he said. He was a truthful boy. Father and mother believed him, why should not the children? I suppose if he had told crooked stories about other things we might have doubted his word about the plates, but Joseph was a truthful boy. That father and mother believed his report and suffered persecution for that belief shows that he was truthful. No sir, we never doubted his word for one minute."

"Well," said Bro. B. "It is said that Joseph and the rest of the family were lazy and indolent."

"We never heard of such a thing until after Joseph told his vision, and not then, by our friends. Whenever the neighbors wanted a good day's work done they knew where they could get a good hand and they were not particular to take any of the other boys before Joseph either. We cleared sixty acres of the heaviest timber I ever saw. We had a good place. We also had on it from twelve to fifteen hundred sugar trees, and to gather the sap and make sugar and molasses from that number of trees was no lazy job. We worked hard to clear our place and the neighbors were a little jealous. If you will figure up how much work it would take to clear sixty acres of heavy timber land, heavier than any here, trees you could not conveniently cut down, you can tell whether we were lazy or not, and Joseph did his share of the work with the rest of the boys."

"We never knew we were bad folks until Joseph told his vision. We were considered respectable till then, but at once people began to circulate falsehoods and stories in a wonderful way."

"Were your folks religiously inclined before Joseph saw the angel?" asked brother Briggs.

"Yes, we always had family prayers since I can remember. I well remember father used to carry his spectacles in his vest pocket, (feeling in his lower right hand pocket to show us how and where) and when us boys saw him feel for his specs, we knew that was a signal to get ready for prayer, and if we did not notice it mother would say, 'William,' or whoever was the negligent one, 'get ready for prayer.' After the prayer we had a song we would sing, I remember part of it yet."

Another day has passed and gone,  
We lay our garments by.

"Hyrum, Samuel, Katharine and mother were members of the Presbyterian church. My father would not join. He did not like it because a Rev. Stockton had preached my brother's funeral sermon and intimated very strongly that he had gone to hell, for Alvin was not a church member, but he was a good boy and my father did not like it."

"What caused Joseph to ask for guidance as to what church he ought to join," asked Bro. B.

"Why, there was a joint revival in the neighborhood between the Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians and they had succeeded in stirring up quite a feeling, and after the meeting the question arose which church should have the converts. Rev. Stockton was the president of the meeting and suggested that it was their meeting and under their care and they had a church there and they ought to join the Presbyterians, but as father did not like Rev. Stockton very well, our folks hesitated and the next evening a Rev. Mr. Lane of the Methodists preached a sermon on 'what church shall I join?' And the burden of his discourse was to ask God, using as a text, 'If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally.' And of course when Joseph went home and was looking over the text he was impressed to do just what the preacher had said, and going out in the woods with child-like, simple trusting faith believing that God meant just

what He said, he kneeled down and prayed; and the time having come for the reorganization of His church, God was pleased to show him that he should join none of these churches but if faithful he should be chosen to establish the true Church."

We also talked with him concerning his connection with the Church during the days of his brother, and after Bro. Briggs had gone to Minneapolis I succeeded in getting an affidavit from him on that subject which I will send in my next.

J. W. PETERSON.

Written for this Paper.

## MILLIONAIRES' TAXES.

The rich men of the United States will be hiding behind their wood piles during the next few months. The Democrats of the Congress are bound that we shall have an income tax, and they propose to collect two per cent on all incomes of more than \$4,000 per year. This will affect hundreds of thousands of men in the United States, and if human nature is the same today as it has been in the past not one-tenth of them will pay the taxes. It is laws like this which make it very difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. In 1868, when the United States was booming, we had an income tax on all persons who made over \$1,000 per year and less than 260,000 people paid taxes on their incomes. The number who received more than this and escaped taxation amounted to hundreds of thousands, and it was even worse when the limit was raised. It was not long after this before the amount of exemption was increased to \$2,000 and then the taxable incomes were returned to the number of 116,000 and this number fell right along until 1870, when Senator Sherman estimated that only 60,000 people were paying income taxes. At this time we had a population of about 40,000,000, and nine-tenths of the people and ninety-nine hundredths of the property holders of the country escaped taxation. At incomes of over \$4,000 it will be worse yet. The gold-plated liar and perjurer will be abroad in the land and the tax will to a certain extent be a premium on corruption.

If it could be justly collected it would bring in millions. I have been looking over the rich men of the United States and estimating what they will have to pay if they are taxed on the incomes that they ought to have in proportion to their supposed wealth. Every Congressman on his salary alone will have to drop \$20 a year into the treasury. The cabinet ministers will each fork over \$80 to Uncle Sam, and President Cleveland will have \$920 deducted from his White House income. Private Secretary Thurber will yield up \$20 and the justices of the Supreme Court will each have \$120 a year less to spend on the capons which line their fat, round bellies. If in addition to this they return the incomes that they should have, supposing their wealth brought them five per cent, Cleveland's two hundred odd thousand dollars would make him pay \$200 more of an income tax, and Secretary Lamont will have to plank down the same amount out of his profits of street railway investments. Every millionaire in the Senate ought at this rate to pay something like \$1,000 a year income tax, and if Don Cameron, Cal Brice and