

ing of the 21st of September, A. D. 1824, while I was praying unto God and endeavoring to exercise faith in the precious promises of Scripture, on a sudden a light like that of day, only of a far purer and more glorious appearance, burst into the room; indeed, the first sight was as though the house was filled with consuming fire. The appearance produced a shock, that affected the whole body. In a moment a personage stood before me with a glory greater than that with which I was already surrounded. The messenger proclaimed himself to be an angel of God, sent to bring the joyful tidings that the covenant which God made to ancient Israel was at hand to be fulfilled; that the preparatory work for the second coming of the Messiah was speedily to commence.

* * * I also was told where there were deposited some plates, on which were engraven an abridgement of the records of the ancient prophets that had existed on this continent. The angel appeared to me three times the same night, and unfolded the same things. After having received many visits from the angels of God, unfolding the majesty and glory of the events that should transpire in the last days, on the morning of the 22nd of September, 1827, the angel of the Lord delivered the records into my hands.

"These records were engraven on plates which had the appearance of gold; each plate was six inches wide and eight inches long, and not quite so thick as common tin. They were filled with engravings in Egyptian characters, and bound together in a volume, as the leaves of a book, with three rings running through the whole. The volume was something near six inches in thickness, a part of which was sealed. The characters on the unsealed part were small and beautifully engraved. The whole book exhibited many marks of antiquity in its construction, and much skill in the art of engraving. With the records was found a curious instrument which the ancients called 'Urim and Thummim,' which consisted of two transparent stones set in the rim on a bow fastened to a breastplate. Through the medium of the Urim and Thummim I translated the record by the gift and power of God."

Such is Mr. Joseph Smith's own account of the sources from which he derived the Book of Mormon and the means by which he rendered it into English. It is not my purpose now to deal with the contents of that curious book or Bible, but to note the external evidence in its favor.

1. The story told above is thoroughly consistent with itself, and in perfect keeping with the leading doctrines of the Bible. No Christian can consistently refuse to credit it.

2. It is quite as likely that God should reveal himself on plates of metal as on tablets of stone; to Joseph Smith as to Moses; in America as in Western Asia. Here the plates are described; the stones Moses received are nowhere described. Here dates are given; in the Bible important and necessary dates are never given.

3. As no one knows what the Urim and Thummim was, no one can prove that Joseph Smith's description and use of it are incorrect or improbable. To his positive and detailed statement, what can the Christian oppose?

4. It must be admitted that the world

required a divine revelation in Smith's day quite as much as it ever did; and therefore a compassionate God was as likely to reveal himself to Mr. Smith as to Mr. Moses, Mr. Isaiah, etc.

In the next place, let us see what others relate as to Mr. Smith's book. The Book of Mormon was published in 1830. Here is "The Testimony of Three Witnesses," prefixed to the Book of Mormon:

"Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record of the people of Nephli, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken; and we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for His voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety, that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bare record of these things as true; and it is marvelous in our eyes, nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment seat of Christ, and shall dwell with Him in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

OLIVER COWDERY,
DAVID WHITMER,
MARTIN HARRIS."

Here is another testimony signed by eight witnesses:—

"Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that Joseph Smith, Junr., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith hath translated, we did handle with our hands; and we also saw the engraving thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted,* and know of a surety, that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world to witness unto the world that which we have seen; and we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

CHRISTIAN WHITMER,
JACOB WHITMER,
PETER WHITMER, Junr.
JOHN WHITMER,
HIRAM PAGE,
JOSEPH SMITH, Sen.
HYRUM SMITH,
SAMUEL H. SMITH."

I ask, what would the Jew or the Christian not give to have his Bible attested in the above manner? Of course, the impartial sceptic attaches no importance whatever to religious testimony or to Spiritistic testimony or to Theosophic testimony. We know the value of such evidence too well to be imposed upon by it. But what can the

* The words heft and hefted were common in England in my early days, though not in classical writings. They are from the same root as to heave, heavy etc., and mean to lift, lifted, with the implication of mentally weighing.

Christians say? His Bible has no attestation whatsoever, and its parts will not bear honest investigation, or such investigation as the Christian brings to bear upon the Book of Mormon.

But here we find a number of men as illiterate as Jesus and His disciples, who produce and publish a wonderful book; the publication of which is followed by cruel persecution against Smith, and his friends, and the most astounding social and commercial development of our century. This is not a tale of past ages the records of which have gone through many vicissitudes, and were written we know not when, where or by whom; but a contemporary development. Men are yet living who were born before Joseph Smith; scores possibly still live who remember him. His work and that of his followers remain in full life and vigor in Utah; and the Mormon missionaries are in many lands.

In a lecture by Elder James H. Anderson we are informed that the first three witnesses quoted above afterwards left the Latter-day Saints, "but nothing could induce them to change their statement. It was true, and they knew it." David Whitmer died at Richmond, Missouri, January, 1888. "When on his death-bed, he called his family and friends around him, and made to them a solemn declaration that he knew the Book of Mormon, and his testimony thereto, to be true." This witness never returned to the Latter-day Church, but still persisted to the last, it seems, in his testimony. The other eight witnesses remained to the last firm and unflinching in their testimony. Religious Systems of the World. (2nd. Ed. London. Swan and Sonnenschein, 1892.)

I need not prolong my remarks. I am no friend to Mormonism—except in so far as it is a system of industry and progress. But I submit, The Book of Mormon is the best attested Bible in the world, that the Jewish-Christian Bible has no evidence at all in comparison with it. JOSEPH SYMES.

A SILVER ADDRESS.

DENVER, Colo., July 20.—Senator Teller and six of his associates who left the national Republican convention, this evening made public an address to the silver Republicans of the country, setting forth their view of the situation. The silver Republican congressmen and senators have been in conference at Manitou for several days over their statement. In addition to those signing the address, Senator Pettigrew of South Dakota, and Senator Cannon of Utah are declared to be in sympathy with it, although Senator Cannon was not present at the conference, owing to business engagements in Boston.

The address is as follows:

We deem it fitting that we, who have heretofore affiliated with the national Republican party and who have rejected the financial plank of the platform adopted at St. Louis, and refused to support the nominees of the convention, should state our position in the presidential campaign and give briefly our reasons in support thereof.

When certain delegates to the national Republican convention repudiated the financial plank of the platform and withdrew from the convention, we determined that we would give our support to such candidates as