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Mormonism.

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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 bear record that these things are true; and it is marvellous 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 eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God.—Amen.

OLIVER COWDERY,

DAVID WHITMER,

MARTIN HARRIS.”

To know how much this testimony is worth I will state one fact. A gentleman in Palmyra, bred to the law, a professor of religion, and of undoubted veracity, told me that on one occasion, he appealed to Harris and asked him directly,—“Did you see those plates?” Harris replied, he did. “Did you see the plates, and the engravings on them with your bodily eyes?” Harris replied, “Yes, I saw them with my eyes,—they were shown unto me by the power of God and not of man.” “But did you see them with your natural,—your bodily eyes, just as you see this pencil-case in my hand? Now say *no* or *yes* to this.” Harris replied,—“Why I did not see them as I do that pencil-case, yet I saw them with the

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eye of faith; I saw them just as distinctly as I see any thing around me,—though at the time they were covered over with a cloth.” ✓

This was the way that Harris saw the plates, Cowdery, another of the witnesses, was one of the prime actors in getting up this “cunningly devised fable.” Whether Whitmer, the third witness, was a deceiver, or one of the deceived, I am unable to say, but he and four of his brothers were among the earliest avowed converts to Mormonism. And as he was thus privileged because he assisted to bring forth the work, there can be but little doubt that he bore the same relation to it that Cowdery did. The declaration in the testimony ‘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,’ show but too well what sort of jugglery to blind people’s eyes, this certificate is. They seem themselves not to have been satisfied with the testimony; and therefore, although it was expressly revealed that only three should see the plates, and that it should be established by the witness of three,\* yet they immediately subjoin the testimony of eight additional witnesses in the following words: “Be it known unto all nations, kindreds and tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that Joseph Smith Jr., the author and proprietor of this work has shewn 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 has 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

\*See Book of Mormon, page 548.