

20 times. I have read it carefully three times⁴ within a year, and made many notes on it. It must be that a man does not love purity when he finds fa[u]lt with the Book of Mormon!! Fight the wrongs of L.D.S.ism as much as you please, but let that unique, that inimitable book alone. I have but little confidence in the purity of a man's life or in his principles of action after becoming acquainted with that Book, and then fight or oppose its divine excellency! Hence, you may know what I think of your course!!

When I first joined the church in 1831, soon I became acquainted with all the Smith family and the Whitmer family, and I heard all their testimonies, which agreed in the main points; and I believed them then and I believe them yet. But I don't believe the many stories (contradictory) got up since, for I individually know many of them are false.

My advice to you is cease Your opposition and strife against the Book, and fight against wrong doing in **professors**: for you might just as well fight against the rocky mountains as the Book!

David Whitmer has lost his thumb of his right hand several years ago, and cannot write. And he would not be willing to write much to a man who fights the Book of M. which he knows to be true. I saw him June 1879, and heard him bear his solemn testimony to the truth of the book—as sincerely and solemnly as when he bore it to me in Paris, Ill. in July 1831.⁵ I believed him then and still believe him. You seem to think he and I ought to come out and tell something—some darkness relative to that book. We should lie if we did, for we know nothing against its credibility or divine truth.

I can but hope you will alter your course and use your talents ~~and~~ energy and all your exertions in behalf of the truthfulness of that glorious volume!!

With profound respect for truth, purity & holiness I subscribe myself a lover of all that is true and wholesome.

I as ever. W. E. McLellan M.D.

P.S. Like you I want to add a few words. I never had but one letter from you until this one. You seem to think S. Rigdon the bottom of all

4. Porter has "through" instead of "three times" ("McLellan's Testimony," 486; "McLellan Expresses Feelings," 6).

5. In the first entry of his earliest journal, McLellan wrote: "D[avid] Whitmer then arose and bore testimony to having seen an Holy Angel who had made known the truth of this record [Book of Mormon] to him" (Jan Shippis and John W. Welch, eds. *The Journals of William E. McLellan, 1831-1836* [Provo and Urbana: BYU Studies and University of Illinois Press, 1994], 29).