

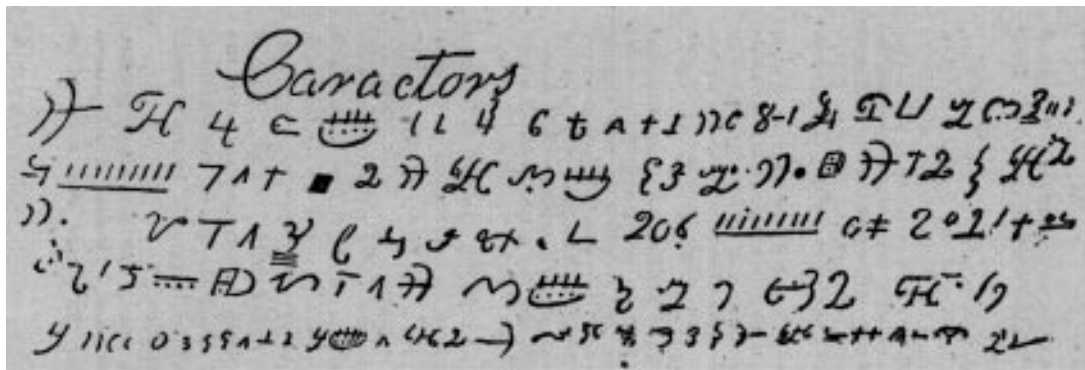
APPENDIX B. SOME TALL LYING.

The Modern Prophet, Seer and Revelator, Joseph Smith, relates the following:

“Some time in this month of February the afore-mentioned Mr. Martin Harris came to our place, got the characters which I had drawn off the plates, and started with them to the city of New York. For what took place relative to him and the characters, I refer to his own account of the circumstances, as he related them to me after his return, which was as follows: ‘I went to the city of New York and presented the characters, which had been translated, with the translation thereof, to Professor Nathan, a gentleman celebrated for his literary attainments. Professor Nathan stated that the translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian. I then showed him those which were not yet translated, and he said that they were Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyrian and Arabic and he said that they were true characters. He gave me a certificate certifying to the people of Palmyra that they were the true characters, and that the translation of such of them as had been translated was also correct . . . I left him and went to Dr. Mitchell, who sanctioned what Professor Anthon had said respecting both the characters and the translation.’”—See Pearl of Great Price, Liverpool Edition of 1851, p. 45.

The author regrets the necessity of stating that the above account by Martin Harris, so fully and decidedly endorsed by the prophet, Joseph Smith and made a part of the “Pearl of Great Price,” one of the four books accepted by the whole Mormon Church as inspired of God, is flatly contradicted, not only by Professor Anthon himself, but by at least two of the leading apostles and authors of the church, Orson Pratt and his brother, Parley P. Pratt.

“In a letter bearing date January 17, 1834, Professor Anthon distinctly denies having seen a translation of any kind, and asserts that the characters which Harris showed him *were anything but Egyptian*. Mr. Anthon says in this letter that the copy exhibited by Harris contained characters arranged in columns, imitating Greek and Hebrew letters, crosses, flourishes, Roman letters inverted, and that these perpendicular columns were terminated by a clumsily drawn circle, divided into several compartments, decked with various strange marks, evidently copied from the Mexican calendar given by Humboldt, but so copied as to conceal the source from which it was taken.” Remy & Brechesly, Vol. i, p. 245.



Mr. David Whitmer, the only living witness to “the Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon” is nearly 82 years of age, and resides in the town of Richmond, Mo. An enterprising Correspondent of the “Philadelphia Press” visited the old man at his home a little while ago, Oct. 9th. And besides gaining interesting information regarding the origin of the Book of Mormon, Smith’s early history etc., he secured two interesting cuts, one of which we have already presented to our readers (see p. 117). The other we take pleasure in presenting here, together with the following description by the above correspondent:

“At this particular stage of the recital an inspection of a copy of the hieroglyphics made from the first of the gold plates by Joseph Smith and preserved with the same solicitude that is thrown around the original manuscript, becomes of curious interest. The accompanying cut is a perfect facsimile of the little sheet which it took Joseph Smith a whole week to copy, so particular was he that the characters should be perfectly reproduced, and that the “reformed Egyptian” language should be shown up in all its native simplicity, for, it must not be forgotten, there was a singular significance in the errand which this scrap of paper was destined to perform.

“Martin Harris, who had received a similar ‘visitation’ to that recounted of the other two witnesses, was dispatched to New York with this copy of the gold plate, which he presented to Professor Anthon, with a request for the learned linguist to read it, in fulfillment of a prophecy of Isaiah, which is here literally applied and which reads:

“And the word of the Lord has become unto them as the leaves of a book which are sealed, and which is delivered unto him that is learned, saying: Read this, I pray thee, and he saith, I can not, for it is sealed, etc.”

The above cut is reduced to *two-thirds* the original size, and aside from this a comparison with the cut upon page 261 shows but little difference.

A few years later Professor Anthon wrote another letter, quoted by Apostle Orson Pratt in his "Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon," page 295, as follows:

"In the year 1841 Professor Anthon wrote a letter to an Episcopal minister, in New Rochelle, Westchester county, near New York, in answer to an inquiry made by the minister in reference to the words and characters said to have been presented to him. Professor Anthon's letter was written with permission to publish, its avowed object being to put a stop to the spread of the fullness of the gospel contained in the Book of Mormon. We here give a short extract from it, taken from a periodical entitled, 'The Church Record,' Vol. I, No. 22:

"Many years ago, the precise date I do not recollect, a plain looking countryman called upon me with a letter from Dr. Samuel L. Mitchell, requesting me to examine and give my opinion upon a certain paper, marked with various characters, which the Doctor confessed he could not decipher, and which the bearer of the note was very anxious to have explained.

"A brief examination convinced me that it was a mere *hoax*, and a very clumsy one, too. The characters were arranged in columns, like the Chinese mode of writing, and presented the most singular medley that I ever beheld. Greek, Hebrew and all sorts of letters, more or less distorted, either through unskilfulness or from actual design, were intermingled with sundry delineations of half moons, stars and other natural objects, and the whole ended in a rude representation of the Mexican Zodiac."

Apostle Orson Pratt evidently accepts this statement of Professor Anthon as a true recital of the facts, for he prefaces it by this statement, "After obtaining the Book of Mormon through the ministry of the angel, 'out of the ground,' Mr. Smith transcribed some of the original characters upon paper and sent them by the hands of Martin Harris, a farmer, to the city of New York, where they were presented to Professor Anthon, a man deeply learned in both ancient and modern languages. Mr. Harris very anxiously requested him to read it, *but he replied that he could not*. None of the learned have as yet been able to decipher the characters and hieroglyphics which are found among the ancient ruins in almost every part of America. The written language of ancient America is a sealed language to this generation."

On page 24 of the same book Apostle Pratt is still more positive. After quoting the prophecies of Isaiah, "Behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous

work, and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." He adds, "All this was fulfilled before Mr. Smith was aware that it had been so clearly predicted by Isaiah. He sent the 'words of a book' which he found, as before stated, to Professor Anthon. But *it was a sealed writing to the learned professor*—the aboriginal language of ancient America could not be deciphered by him. He was as much puzzled as the wise men of Babylon were to interpret the unknown writing upon the wall. Human wisdom and learning, in this case, were altogether insufficient. It required another Daniel, who was found in the person of Mr. Smith."

His brother, Parley P. Pratt, evidently takes the same view.

"In the meantime, a few of the original characters were accurately transcribed and translated by Mr. Smith, which, with the translation, were taken by a gentleman named Martin Harris to the city of New York, where they were presented to a learned gentleman named Anthon, who professed to be extensively acquainted with many languages, both ancient and modern. He examined them, *but was unable to decipher them correctly*."

We have still another testimony: Mr. David Whitmer, one of the *three witnesses*, who is yet living in Richmond, Missouri. In a recent interview, Dec. 15, 1885 (See *Deseret Evening News* of Thursday, Dec. 24, 1885), he said:

"In this connection, it might also be mentioned that Martin Harris, one of the witnesses to the transaction, a farmer in the same county, and a man of simple mind and taste, was sent by Smith with a copy of the characters to Professor Anthon, a professor of languages in Columbia College, and author of several well-known works, who pronounced the language inscribed on the plate *Reformed Egyptian*" (!)

Reader, here is a very clear case of disagreement, and it looks very like somebody has told a lie, for all these statements cannot be true. If Martin Harris, with the Prophet Joseph as his endorser, told the *truth*, then Professor Anthon and the two *Pratts* have told a falsehood. And if either of these parties told the truth, the old patriarch David Whitmer did not, for his statement agrees with neither. The reader must take his choice of the stories. However, a careful examination of the characters themselves, as exhibited on pages 261 and 342 will hardly leave a doubt as to whose statement is entitled to credence.

work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." He adds, "All this was fulfilled before Mr. Smith was