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HISTORY OF JOSEPH SMITH.

MAY, 1843.

I have translated a portion of them, and find they contain the history of the person with whom they were found. He was a descendant of Ham, through the loins of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and that he received his kingdom from the ruler of heaven and earth.

I extract the following from the Times and Seasons:—

“When the Book of Mormon first made its appearance among men, it was looked upon by many as a wild speculation, and that it was dangerous to the interest and happiness of the religious world; but when it was found to teach virtue, honesty, integrity and pure religion, this objection was laid aside, as being untenable.

We were then told that the inhabitants of this continent were, and always had been, a rude, barbarous race, uncouth, unlettered, and without civilization. But when they were told of the various relics that have been found indicative of civilization, intelligence and learning, when they were told of the wealth, architecture and splendor of ancient Mexico; when recent developments proved beyond a doubt, that there are ancient ruins in Central America, which, in point of magnificence, beauty, strength, and architectural design, vie with any of the most splendid ruins on the Asiatic Continent; when they could trace the fine delineations of the sculptor's chisel on the beautiful statue, the mysterious hieroglyphic, and the unknown character, they began to believe that a wise, powerful, intelligent and scientific race had inhabited this continent; but still it was improbable, nay almost impossible, notwithstanding the testimony of history to the contrary, that anything like plates could have been used anciently, particularly among this people.

The following letter and certificate, will, perhaps, have a tendency to convince the sceptical that such things have been used, and that even the obnoxious Book of Mormon may be true; and as the people in Columbus' day were obliged to believe that there was such a place as America, so will the people in this day be obliged to believe, however reluctantly, that there may have been such plates as those from which the Book of Mormon was translated.

It will be seen by the annexed statement of the Quincy Whig, that there are more dreamers and money diggers than Joseph Smith in the world, and the worthy editor is obliged to acknowledge that this circumstance will go a good way to prove the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. He further states, that ‘If Joseph Smith can decipher the hieroglyphics on the plates, he will do more towards throwing light on the early history of this continent than any man living.’ We think that he has done that already in translating and publishing the Book of Mormon, and would advise the gentleman, and all interested, to read for themselves, and understand.”

“TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES AND SEASONS.

On the 16th of April last, a respectable merchant, by the name of Robert Wiley, commenced digging in a large mound near this place: he excavated to the depth of ten feet and came to rock; about that time the rain began to fall, and he abandoned the work.

On the 23rd he, and quite a number of the citizens, with myself, repaired to the mound, and after making ample opening, we found plenty of rock, the most of which appeared as though it had been strongly burned; and after removing full two feet of said rock, we found plenty of charcoal and ashes; also human bones that appeared as though they had been burned; and near the cephalon, a bundle was found that consisted of six plates of brass of a bell shape, each having a hole near the small end, and a ring through them all, and clasped with two clasps; the rings and clasps appeared to be iron very much oxydated; the plates appeared first to be copper, and had the appearance of being covered with characters.

It was agreed by the company that I should cleanse the plates: accordingly I took them to my house, washed them with soap and water, and a woollen cloth; but finding them not yet cleansed, I treated them with dilute sulphuric acid, which made them perfectly clean, on

which it appeared that they were completely covered with hieroglyphics that none as yet have been able to read.

Wishing that the world might know the hidden things as fast as they come to light, I was induced to state the facts, hoping that you would give it an insertion in your excellent paper, for we all feel anxious to know the true meaning of the plates, and publishing the facts might lead to the true translation.

They were found, I judged, more than twelve feet below the surface of the top of the mound.

I am, most respectfully,
A citizen of Kinderhook,
W. P. HARRIS, M.D.”

“We, the citizens of Kinderhook, whose names are annexed, do certify and declare that, on the 23rd of April, 1843, while excavating a large mound in this vicinity, Mr. R. Wiley took from said mound six brass plates of a bell shape, covered with ancient characters. Said plates were very much oxydated—the bands and rings on said plates mouldered into dust on a slight pressure.

“ROBERT WILEY, W. P. HARRIS,
G. W. F. WARD, W. LONGNECKER,
FAYETTE GRUBB, IRA S. CURTIS,
GEO. DECKENSON, W. FUGATE.”
J. R. SHARP,