

MARTIN HARRIS...ONE OF THE WITNESSES OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

Considerable interest has been felt by our people in the arrival in this city, of Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses of the Book of Mormon. He arrived here at 7,30, p. m. yesterday, in the company of Elder Edward Stevenson, who left this city on the 19th of last July for the purpose of bringing him out from Kirkland, Ohio, where he has been living since the Saints first moved there—1831—thirty-nine years ago. Bro. Stevenson has had a strong desire to have Martin Harris brought here. But he himself has thought for years that his mission was in Kirkland, he feeling that the Lord required him to stay there and bear testimony to the Book of Mormon and the first principles, which he has been earnest in doing, and he has felt reluctant to leave. But when Bro. Stevenson corresponded with him about coming out to the Valley, he replied that the spirit testified to him that he should come here, and in every letter that he afterwards received from him he expressed a still stronger desire to come. Bro. Stevenson made a collection, and after raising sufficient means, went to Kirkland and brought him on.

Martin Harris is in his 88th year. He is remarkably vigorous for one of his years, and still retains the use of his faculties, his memory being very good, and his sight, though his eyes appear to have failed, being so acute that he can see to pick a pin off the ground. He has experienced many changes and vicissitudes; but on one point, so far as we have heard, he has never changed:—he has never failed to bear testimony to the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon. He says it is not a matter of belief on his part, but of knowledge. He, with the other two witnesses, declared—and their testimony has accompanied every copy of the book—"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." This declaration he has not varied from in forty-one years; and it is a remarkable fact that, though away from the Church, and not maintaining their connection with the Prophet Joseph Smith, not one of the three witnesses has ever failed, so far as known, to bear testimony to the truth of their united declaration contained in the preface of the Book of Mormon! Deny whatever they might of other points of doctrine,

of Joseph's authority or of his management, they never have denied the testimony which they have given to the world concerning the Book of Mormon.

We are glad to see Martin Harris once more in the midst of the Saints. He feels that this people are led by God, that they are a happy and a blessed people and have the appearance of enjoying God's favor. They are doing the very work which the Book of Mormon said should be done, and are the only people, who as a people, believe in that Book.

The history of this veteran member of the Mormon church would no doubt be as interesting, if written, as his course, since the severance of his connection with the Prophet Joseph at the early rise of the church, has been singular. One of the original witnesses of the Book of Mormon, he saw the angel, and handled the plates from which that book was translated. In relation to this, his testimony has never wavered, yet he, for some cause or other, has kept himself aloof from the church for many years, and has taken no part in carrying on the great work, of which he, in connection with Joseph and others, laid the foundation. No greater proof could be given, than the history and course of this man, that the work of God is not dependent upon any man, however great, talented, illustrious or favored he may be. Martin Harris having seen that which few in the flesh are favored to behold, and having received a testimony of the divinity of this work, and of the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon that it was utterly impossible to destroy, one might have supposed, viewing things from a merely human standpoint, that the progress and prosperity of the work would have depended to some considerable extent on his co-operation, and that, lacking that, it would have been retarded. But such is not the case, and in this fact human pride, vanity and talent may learn a salutary lesson if it will.

Mr. Harris saw fit to withdraw himself from the cause, but its course, owing to the workings of Divinity through faithful agents, has been onward to a most remarkable degree. The Saints, by thousands, have been gathered from the nations, a territory has been peopled and the foundation of a kingdom laid which will never again be uprooted from the earth; and Martin Harris, no longer able to resist the conviction that God still guides and controls the destinies of His kingdom and people gladly returns to share in their blessings and privileges of that kingdom.

There is still one other of the "original witnesses" living—namely, Mr. David Whitmer. He now resides in Missouri. We would not be surprised if the yearnings of his heart should yet lead him to follow the course of Mr. Harris, and again throw in his lot with the Saints, and close his earthly career in their midst.