

of uncle Joseph, had discovered, by the revelations of the Almighty, some gold plates, and that these gold plates contained a record of great worth.

It was generally ridiculed and laughed at. A short time after this, another letter came, written by Joseph himself, and this letter bore testimony of the wickedness and the fallen condition of the Christian world. My father read the letter, and I well remember the remark he made about it. "Why," said he, "he writes like a prophet."

Some time in August 1830, my uncle Joseph Smith and Don Carlos Smith came some two hundred and fifty miles from where the Prophet was residing in Ontario County, New York, and they brought a Book of Mormon with them. I had never seen them before, and I felt astonished at their sayings.

Uncle Joseph and Don Carlos were anxious to get to Stockholm to see grandfather. Accordingly they started, and my father went to carry them. I and my mother spent the whole of Saturday, all day Sunday, and Sunday night in reading the Book of Mormon; and I believe I read and studied it more than I have done ever since. I studied it attentively and penned down what I considered to be serious objections. Although I was but thirteen years of age, yet I considered the objections I had discovered to be sufficient to overthrow it.

About five o'clock in the evening the neighbors came in and wanted to see the book. They took hold of the book, and some of them were professors of religion, and they began to raise their objections, to find fault with and ridicule the book, and there was no one to defend it; so I thought I would try. I commenced to argue in favor of the book, and answered one objection after another, until I came off victoriously and got the compliment of being a very smart boy. No one brought the objections to the

book that I had: mine were geographical objections. I had studied geography a few weeks, but that few weeks' study made me think that I knew a good deal about it.

It is like a man that studies the Hebrew language; he has to drink deep before he can do much with it, and I thought I could confound them. In a few days I saw my uncle and talked with him, and in about half-an-hour all my learned objections to the Book of Mormon were dispensed with, and I found myself in the same position as my neighbors; and from that day to this I have been an advocate of the Book of Mormon, and have never suffered it to be slandered nor spoken against without saying something in its favor, with one exception, and then I said something.

I had been the favorite of my uncle Jesse, and he was a religious man—a "Covenanter;" and I thought what he did not know was not worth knowing. He came out with all his strength against it, and exerted the most cruel tyranny over his family, prohibited my uncle Joseph from talking in his house, and threatened to hew down with his broad axe any who dared to preach such nonsense in his presence.

I went to visit him, and he abused me because I had become favorable, and because uncle Joseph had a private conversation with me. I had always treated him with the greatest respect, and entertained a very high opinion of him. He was a man of good education, and had considerable display; and, being the elder of the family, he naturally elicited from us more or less respect.

Finally, in conversation upon various subjects, he turned and talked about that private conversation, and he said, "Joe dare not talk in my presence." Then says he, "the Devil never shut my mouth." I replied, "Perhaps he opened it, uncle." I thought I should have lost my iden-