

Deseret Sunday School Union Leaflets.

LESSON 55.—PROFESSOR ANTHON'S TESTIMONY.

TIME.—*February, 1828.*

PLACE.—*New York City.*

TEXT.—*Isaiuh, 29: 11, 12.*

And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed;

And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.

1. Daniel 12: 4, 9; Revelation, 5: 1, 9. [See also II. Nephi, Chap. 27.]

LESSON STATEMENT.

Having obtained the records, Joseph found that a very laborious undertaking was before him—that of translating them. His main difficulty lay, not so much in his lack of knowledge of the language in which they were written, (God supplied that deficiency) as in his lack of means to carry on his work. As has before been stated, Joseph was under the necessity of laboring daily for the support of his family and when he began the translation of the records, not only was this support taken away, but other expenses were necessarily incurred in the performance of the labor. In addition to this, persecution increased, and the Prophet saw that he must remove to another place where he could be practically undisturbed in his work.

Having made up his mind to move to the home of his wife's parents, he was thinking how he could procure money to accomplish the journey, when Martin Harris, a farmer, advanced the means,

and Joseph set out for Pennsylvania. Twice on the way his wagon was searched by evil men, endeavoring to find the plates, but they were unsuccessful.

Joseph now resumed the work of translation, by the aid of the Urim and Thummim, which made up the deficiency occasioned by his want of learning. Martin Harris again came to his assistance, but Martin's faith was not very strong, and he desired to make a test of the truthfulness of the record which Joseph had found. The Prophet had copied some of the characters from the plates on sheets of paper, some of them accompanied by the translation. Harris asked that he might take these, and his request was granted.

Proceeding to New York City, Martin Harris showed these writings to a learned linguist, Professor Charles Anthon, asking his opinion of them. Anthon stated that they were true Egyptian characters, and that as far as he could judge the translation was correct; he wrote a certificate to this effect and presented it to Martin. The Professor then asked where the writings were obtained, and who translated them. He was told that they had been delivered by an angel to a young man, and he had translated them by the gift and power of God. Anthon asked permis-

sion to see the certificate, when he immediately destroyed it, declaring that the day of angels was past.

He asked Martin to bring him the record itself, that he might see if it was genuine, but he was told that part of it was sealed, and God had forbidden that it should be exposed to the view of anyone whom he did not designate. This seems to have touched Professor Anthon's pride, for he said in a sneering manner, "I cannot read a sealed book." Thus he fulfilled, without knowing it, the prophecy contained in the first verse of our text.

This testimony was still farther confirmed by a Doctor Mitchell, another learned man; and, convinced by the statements of these men perhaps more than by the Spirit of God, Martin Harris offered to write from Joseph's dictation. This offer was accepted, and the work of translation continued.

NOTES.

MARTIN HARRIS.—See Leaflet, No. 41.

PROFESSOR CHARLES ANTHON.—One of the most learned of America's philologists, was born in the year 1797. He resided during the greater part of his life in New York City, where he was professor of languages in Columbia College. He died in the year 1867.

WHAT WE MAY LEARN FROM THIS LESSON.

1. That the Book of Mormon was translated by the power of God, and not by the wisdom of man. 2. That help will be given by God to men, whenever necessary. 3. That as the work of God progresses Satan increases his efforts to stop its progress. 4. That the hearts of men will be turned towards the servants of God in time of need. 5. That it is better to become convinced of the truth of this work by the Spirit of God than by the testimony of men. 6. That men sometimes fulfill prophecy without knowing it. 7. That some

men can be influenced to change their testimony under the temptation of Satan.

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

1. What is the subject of this lesson? 2. Who was Professor Anthon? 3. Tell what you know of his life. 4. What was the greatest difficulty in the way of Joseph's translating the records? 5. Where did he conclude to go? 6. How did he obtain the means? 7. What happened on the way? 8. How did Joseph translate the writings? 9. What copies did he make on sheets of paper? 10. What did Martin Harris do with these? 11. To whom did he show them? 12. What did Professor Anthon say concerning them? 13. What did he give to Martin Harris? 14. What question did the Professor ask? 15. What was Martin's answer? 16. What did Anthon then do with the certificate? 17. What remark did he make while doing so? 18. What did he request Martin to do? 19. What did Martin say? 20. What was Professor Anthon's reply? 21. What did he fulfill by this remark? 22. What was Dr. Mitchell's testimony? 23. How was Martin Harris influenced by this testimony? 24. What offer did he make to Joseph? 25. Tell what you know of Martin Harris.

ILLUSTRATIVE PASSAGES.

TESTIMONY.—And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth.—*John 3: 32.*

It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.—*John 8: 17*

WORLDLY WISDOM.—For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.—*I. Cor. 1: 19.*

For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.—*II. Cor. 1: 12.*

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.—*I. Cor. 2: 13.*