

REMINISCENCES AND TESTIMONY OF PARLEY P. PRATT.

A DISCOURSE BY ELDER PARLEY P. PRATT, DELIVERED IN THE BOWERY, GREAT SALT LAKE CITY, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1856.

REPORTED BY G. D. WATT, J. V. LONG.

Beloved brethren and sisters—Being about to depart from this Territory and from the "home mission" to which I was appointed among you, and to journey to the States on a mission, I rise to express my feelings and my faith, and to leave my testimony with you.

There are some, I presume, in this congregation, who personally have been strangers to me, and who have not heard my testimony. I have been acquainted in this Church and connected with it from the first year of its organization in the wilderness of western New York. It was organized on the 6th day of April, 1830, and I was baptized into it about the 1st of the September following.

When I first became a member of this Church, one small room could have contained all the members there then were in the world, and that, too, without being crowded; for at times, I presume, there were not fifty.

The first thing that attracted my attention towards this work was the Book of Mormon. I happened to see a copy of it. Some man, nearly a stranger to it, and not particularly a believer in it, happened to get hold of a copy: he made mention of it to me, and gave me the privilege of coming to his house and reading it. This was at a place about a day's journey from the residence of Joseph Smith the Prophet and his father, and while I was returning to the work of my ministry; for I was then traveling and preaching, being connected with

a society of people sometimes called Campbellites or Reformed Baptists.

I had diligently searched the Scriptures, and prayed to God to open my mind that I might understand them; and he had poured his Spirit and understanding into my heart, so that I did understand the Scriptures in a good degree, the letter of the Gospel, its forms and first principles in their truth, as they are written in the Bible. These things were opened to my mind; but the power, the gifts, and the authority of the Gospel I knew were lacking, and did really expect that they would be restored, because I knew that the things that were predicted could never be fulfilled until that power and that authority were restored. I also had an understanding of the literal fulfillment of the prophecies in the Bible, so that I really did believe in and hope for the literal restoration of Israel, the cutting off of wickedness, the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the triumph of his kingdom on the earth. All this I was looking for; and the Spirit seemed to whisper to my mind that I should see it in my day.

Under these circumstances, I was traveling to impart the light which I had to others; and while doing this, I found, as I before stated, the Book of Mormon. I read it carefully and diligently, a great share of it, without knowing that the Priesthood had been restored—without ever having heard of anything called "Mormon-