

nants by the impressive sign of baptism, extended throughout all the settlements of Utah, and to all the branches and conferences and missions of the church. That much good was accomplished; that a spiritual awakening in the church was effected may not be doubted. Also it must be admitted, as in nearly all such movements, and times of special manifestations of religious zeal, there were many extreme things suggested, and some unwarranted interpretations of the scriptures, and many ill-advised things said which, when measured by the spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ, are found wanting, especially on the side of patience, and forbearance, and mercy. In some of its aspects this "Reform" movement resembled more in spirit the severe justice and retribution of the old Mosaic law than the spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"BLOOD ATONEMENT"

Among the things to be regretted in connection with the "Reformation," and from which the church has suffered much, through misapprehension of her real attitude in respect of the matters involved, are certain extreme and unqualified utterances of some of the leading elders of the church on what it has become custom to call "*blood atonement*;" by which is meant, as commonly represented by anti-"Mormon" writers, a claimed right on the part of the church to shed the blood of men guilty of heinous crimes, such as murder, adultery, and apostasy; and which, since such acts may not be done openly, and by legal authority vested in the church, then secretly, by assassination.³⁰

That there are crimes for which the law of God prescribed capital punishment; and which, under the union of the spiritual and temporal power—under the blending of civil

30. See Linn's *Story of the Mormons*, 1902, book v, ch. ix. *Life in Utah, or the Mysteries and Crimes of Mormonism*, Beadle, 1870, ch. xii. Stenhouse's *Rocky Mountain Saints*, ch. xxxv. Stenhouse's chapter on the "Reformation" and "Blood Atonement," and constituting the most circumstantial narrative on the excesses of the "Reformation," is largely the contribution of an anonymous writer, a fact that goes far towards destroying the trustworthiness of the statements made. (Waite's *Mormon Prophet*, 1866, ch. ix. *Lights and Shadows of Mormonism*, Gibbs, 1909, ch. xxiv).

and religious authority in the old state-theocratic government of ancient Israel existed—may not be denied. As for example, in the case of murder, the law given to Noah and his posterity was: "At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of men. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."³¹ This law was carried over into the Mosaic polity; and the list of crimes enlarged to include capital punishment for assault of children upon parents; for stealing men and selling them into slavery; for witchcraft; for beastiality; for idolatry; for violating the Sabbath day; for adultery.³² Capital punishment, however, in ancient Israel, was not left to be executed by irresponsible individuals, and at their caprice. It was sternly regulated by law and executed by legally designated agencies. There are sins enumerated also in the *New Testament* for which it is said there is no forgiveness. "No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him," saith St. John.³³ "Who so speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."³⁴ "He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost *hath never forgiveness*," is the more impressive declaration of St. Mark, "but is in danger of eternal damnation."³⁵

"It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."³⁶

It is very clear that other *New Testament* writers recognized a "sin unto death:" "If any man," said St. John,

31. *Gen.*, ix:5, 6.

32. See *Exodus*, xx, xxi, xxxi; and *Leviticus*, xxiv. Also *Leviticus*, xx, cf. *Matt.*, xv:1-9; *St. John*, viii:3-12.

33. *I John*, iii:15.

34. *St. Matt.*, xii:32.

35. *St. Mark*, iii:28, 29.

36. *Heb.* vi:4-6.

“see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.”³⁷ “For,” as declares the writer to the Hebrews, “if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?”³⁸

It follows as logical conclusion in such cases as are here enumerated that the matter stands with them as if no atonement of the Christ had been made, and they themselves must pay the penalty of their sins. “The life of the flesh,” said Moses, is in the blood; “and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.”³⁹

It may, of course, be urged that reference is here made to the blood of beasts and birds appointed to be slain in sacrifice; and that their blood, typifying the blood of the Christ, which would be shed for remission of sin, was given to ancient Israel to make atonement for their souls; and it is true, as Paul said of the law, “almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without the shedding of blood is no remission.”⁴⁰ But if, as seems to be the case, from the foregoing considerations, there are certain limitations to vicarious atonement, even to the vicarious atonement of the Christ, then these ancient laws proclaiming that the life of the flesh is

37. *I John*, v:16.

38. *Heb.* x:26-29.

39. *Leviticus*, xvii:11.

40. *Heb.*, ix:22.

in the blood, and that “the blood maketh an atonement for the soul,” make plain what is needful for the salvation of the soul where one’s sins place him beyond the reach of vicarious means of salvation—then it is the shedding of the sinners own blood that must here be referred to.⁴¹ Paul evidently recognized such cases as these; for in referring to one who had been guilty of such sin as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, “that one should have his father’s wife,” he said:

“For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan *for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*”⁴²

Here then is the doctrine taught that by “destruction of the flesh,” there is hope that “the spirit might be saved, in the day of the Lord Jesus.” And no one can say that Brigham Young went beyond this when he said—and this is one

41. Not, however,—as I have already urged in preceding pages—by the church; certainly not by individuals taking it upon themselves to be the ministers of God’s vengeance; for then they themselves would become murderers. “To me belongeth vengeance and recompense,” saith the Lord (*Deut.*, xxxii: 35). “Vengeance is mine; I will repay,” saith the Lord (*Rom.*, xii); and therefore must this matter of retribution for sin be left with God and those agencies that he shall ordain to encompass it. These, in part, are the secular governments in whose polities capital punishments are provided for some of the more heinous crimes against society and government, such as murder in the first degree, etc. Therefore the church is commanded to give up those who kill to be dealt with *according to the law of the land*. And Latter-day Saints believe that where secular government prescribes capital punishment it is better that such form of execution be adopted as will shed the blood of the criminal; hence in Utah, when the Latter-day Saints, in their capacity as citizens of the state have made the laws, condemned criminals, subject to capital punishment, are permitted to choose their mode of execution either by being hung or shot, the latter mode, of course, resulting in the shedding of their blood, thus meeting the requirements of the law of God as well as the law of the state. It is quite erroneously supposed that this idea had its origin among Latter-day Saints with Brigham Young. That, however, is not the case. In the minutes of the Nauvoo city council for March 4th, 1843, occurs the following statement by Joseph Smith: “In debate, George A. Smith said imprisonment was better than hanging. I replied I was opposed to hanging, even if a man kill another, I will shoot him, [this does not mean that he would do so personally; see context of speech], or cut off his head, spill his blood on the ground, and let the smoke thereof ascend up to God; and if ever I have the privilege of making a law on that subject, I will have it so.” (*History of the Church*, Period I, vol. v, p. 296).

42. *I Cor.*, v:1-5.

of the offensive passages so frequently quoted against him by anti-“Mormon” writers:

“There are sins that men commit for which they cannot receive forgiveness in this world, or in that which is to come, and if they had their eyes open to see their true condition, they would be perfectly willing to have their blood spilt upon the ground, that the smoke thereof might ascend to heaven as an offering for their sins; and the smoking incense would atone for their sins, whereas, if such is not the case, they will stick to them and remain upon them in the spirit world.

I know, when you hear my brethren telling about cutting people off from the earth, that you consider it is strong doctrine; but it is to save them, not to destroy them. * * *

I do know that there are sins committed of such a nature that if the people did understand the doctrine of salvation, they would tremble because of their situation. And furthermore, I know that there are transgressors, who, if they knew themselves and the only condition upon which they can obtain forgiveness, would beg of their brethren to shed their blood, that the smoke thereof might ascend to God as an offering to appease the wrath that is kindled against them, and that the law might have its course. I will say further; I have had men come to me and offer their lives to atone for their sins. It is true that the blood of the Son of God was shed for sins through the fall, and those committed by men, yet men can commit sins which it can never remit.”⁴³

The doctrine of “blood atonement,” then, is based upon the scriptural laws considered in the foregoing paragraphs. The only point at which complaint may be justly laid in the teaching of the “Reformation” period is in the unfortunate implication that the Church of the Latter-day Saints, or individuals in that church, may execute this law of retribution.⁴⁴ Fortunately, however, the suggestions seemingly made in the overzealous words of some of these leading elders were never acted upon. The church never incorporated them into her polity. Indeed, it would have been a violation of divine instruction given in the New Dispensation had the church attempted to establish such procedure. As early as 1831 the law of the Lord was given to the church as follows:

43. Discourse Sept. 21st, 1856, *Deseret News* of Oct. 1st, 1856; also *Journal of Discourses*, vol. iv, p. 53.

44. The passages that warrant the remarks of the text are to be found in a discourse of Jedediah M. Grant on March 12th, 1854, *Deseret News*, July 27th, 1854; also a discourse on the 21st of September, 1856, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. iv, p. 49, et seq. Also a discourse delivered by Brigham Young on Feb. 8th, 1857, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. iv, pp. 219-220.

“And now, behold, I speak unto the church: Thou shalt not kill; and he that kills shall not have forgiveness in this world, nor in the world to come.

And again, I say, thou shalt not kill; but he that killeth shall die. * * * And it shall come to pass, that if any persons among you shall kill, *they shall be delivered up and dealt with according to the laws of the land; for remember that he hath no forgiveness, and it shall be proven according to the laws of the land.*”⁴⁵

The same disposition was directed to be made with reference to those who should rob, steal, or lie, that is, they should be delivered up to be dealt with “according to the laws of the land.”⁴⁶ Those who committed adultery, and repented not, were to be cast out.

A few months later, August, 1831, the Lord said in connection with the purchase of lands in Jackson county:

“Satan putteth it into their hearts [i. e., the hearts of the Missourians] to anger against you, and to the shedding of blood; wherefore the land of Zion, shall not be obtained but by purchase or by blood, otherwise there is none inheritance for you. And if by purchase, behold you are blessed; and if by blood, *as you are forbidden to shed blood*, lo, your enemies are upon you, and ye shall be scourged from city to city, and from synagogue to synagogue, and but few shall stand to receive an inheritance.”⁴⁷

Moreover, in the very discourse, most frequently quoted by anti-“Mormon” writers against the church on this point—*ante* this chapter—Brigham Young very clearly indicates that neither the church nor individual members of it had any right to execute the law of retribution he had been discussing. He could refer to “plenty of instances where men have been righteously slain in order to atone for their sins,” doubtless having in mind the many such instances named in the scriptures under the law and polity received through Moses; and the legal executions in those nations and states that give sanction to capital punishment for some of these offenses; he had “seen scores and hundreds of people for whom there would

45. *Doctrine and Covenants*, sec. xlii:18, 19, 79.

46. *Ibid*, verses 84-86.

47. *Doctrine and Covenants*, sec. lxiii. For fuller exposition see this *History*, ch. xxi.

have been a chance [in the last resurrection there would be] if their lives had been taken and their blood spilled on the ground as a smoking incense to the Almighty;" he "had known a great many men who have left this church [i. e. of the Latter-day Saints] for whom there is no chance whatever for exaltation; but if their blood had been spilled, [for their crimes, not because they left the church] it would have been better for them;"—yet "*the wickedness and ignorance of the nations forbid this principle's being in full force, but the time will come when the law of God will be in full force.*"⁴⁸

All which is but recognition of the fact that said law of God is not now in force, and the "ignorance" of the nations now in power will not permit it to go into force. Under these circumstances, then, what is to be done? On the one hand is God's law of retribution that would destroy certain sinners in the flesh for their crimes, that "the spirit," to use the language of Paul, "might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus;"⁴⁹ on the other hand are the "ignorant nations" who will not authorize the penalties affixed to some divine laws, nor prescribe the methods of execution that the law of God anciently ordained; and the church, as an organization, and the individuals comprising it, are forbidden to inflict the physical punishment of death, or any other physical punishment. Under these circumstances, I ask again, what is to be done? Just what Brigham Young did, issue the declaration he made in the very discourse here under consideration, the discourse of February 8th, 1857, but which declaration has never received consideration by anti-"Mormon" writers, nor allowed its place in modifying the spirit of the whole discourse quoted,—often misquoted, and always in some fashion garbled—namely:

"The time has been in Israel under the law of God * * * that if a man was found guilty of adultery, he must have his blood shed; * * * but now, I say, in the name of the Lord, that if this people will sin no

48. Discourse of Feb. 8th, 1857, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. iv, p. 220.

49. *I Cor.*, v:3-5.

more, but faithfully live their religion, their sins will be forgiven them without taking life."⁵⁰

And that was and is the course and policy followed by the church. If there has been departure in any degree from that policy, and the positive, divine injunction to the church and its individual members—"Thou shalt not kill"—if this injunction has been violated, the responsibility for such departure rests wholly upon the guilty individuals and not upon the church.

It should be noted in this connection that in the individual cases of "blood atonement" charged, the allegations rest upon the word of men who are themselves self-confessed murderers and outlaw desperadoes; or else the charge rests upon the word of anonymous writers; or the cases specified are not such as fall under the category of so-called "blood atonement."

Of the first class the accounts of "blood atonement" are by such characters as John D. Lee, of the "Mountain Meadows" horror,⁵¹ and of William A. Hickman, commonly known as "Bill," Hickman—a typical western desperado;⁵² these, *et al*, loosely ascribe responsibility for their crimes to leading "Mormon" church officials, especially to alleged orders or to the veiled suggestions of President Brigham Young. It would violate all the canons of standard historical writing to consider seriously charges made by such characters.⁵³

50. *Journal of Discourses*, vol. iv, p. 219.

51. See *Mormonism Unveiled*, Life and Confession of John D. Lee, especially ch. xix. This book—M. E. Mason, publisher, St. Louis, Mo., 1891—is edited by Wm. W. Bishop, Lee's attorney, at his second trial, 1876.

52. *Brigham's Destroying Angel*, Life, Confession and Startling Disclosures of Bill Hickman, the 'Danite Chief' of Utah, edited by J. H. Beadle, 1870. Beadle is also the author of *Life in Utah; Mysteries and Crimes of Mormonism*, etc., etc., *ad nauseam*.

53. Speaking of such charges the late President John Taylor, in a series of five letters to the *Deseret News* in which he was counseling the people of Utah to patience in the midst of a judicial crusade that gave entertainment of charges made by such characters as are referred to in the text, said: "But they are accusing some of our best and most honorable men of murder! What of that? Who have they suborned as their accusers? They themselves call them by the mild name of *assassins*—these are their fellow-pirates with whom they hob-nob and associate." (*Life of John Taylor*, Roberts, p. 316. The series of Taylor's Letters will be found in *Deseret News*, impressions of Oct. 16, 20, and 30; and Nov. 6 and 15, 1871).

Of the second class, *viz.*, anonymous persons, usually apostate "Mormons," who kept their identity concealed, it is alleged, through fear of assassination should they be identified with their disclosures, and whose tales of blood and cruelty and of oppression struggle out of obscurity to public attention through sensational writers. These are represented by such anonymous persons as those whose statements are admitted into the pages of Stenhouse, in his *Rocky Mountain Saints*;⁵⁴ by Beadle, in his *Mysteries and Crimes of Mormonism*;⁵⁵ by Reverend (!) C. P. Lyford, in his *Mormon Problem*;⁵⁶ and by many others who from one pretense or another conceal the identity of their alleged informers. And yet, as remarked in an official document signed by the first presidency of the church and the twelve apostles, in 1889, there seems to have been no danger to such characters either from open or secret church agencies. "Notwithstanding all the stories told about the killing of apostates," says the document referred to, no case of this kind has ever occurred, and of course has never been established against the church we represent. Hundreds of seceders from the church have continuously resided and now live in this territory, many of whom have amassed considerable wealth, though bitterly opposed to the "Mormon" faith and people. Even those who made it their business to fabricate the vilest falsehoods, and to render them plausible by culling isolated passages from old sermons without the explanatory context, and have suffered no opportunity to escape them of vilifying and blackening the characters of the people, *have remained among those whom they have thus persistently calumniated until the present day, without receiving the slightest personal injury.*⁵⁷

54. See the long communication of an anonymous writer to Stenhouse, *Rocky Mountain Saints*, detailing long list of crimes of the "Reformation" period, ch. xxxvi, *et passim*, and more especial in his chapter on the Mountain Meadows Massacre, ch. xliii.

55. See *Rocky Mountain Saints*, chapters vi, viii, x, xii.

56. *The Mormon Problem*, Rev. C. P. Lyford, 1886. More especially his four chapters constituting the Appendix of his book.

57. *The History of the Mormons: Their Persecutions and Travels*, a brochure of 20 pages by the late George Q. Cannon, 1891, p. 17.

Of the third class of cases, *viz.*, those that do not properly come within the category of alleged "blood atonement" cases, such as where a father or brother personally avenges the outraged chastity of a daughter or sister; or a wronged husband slays the despoiler of his domestic peace and home. Such cases are not peculiar to communities of Latter-day Saints in the United States, they are recognized as appeals to the "*unwritten law of the land*;" and trial juries quite generally in the United States refuse to convict, either for manslaughter or murder those who take the law into their own hands in such cases. Granting that the severity of the denunciations against violations of chastity and the purity of the home encouraged appeals to "the unwritten law," and hence that such appeals were made more frequently in Utah than elsewhere,—if they were more frequent than elsewhere in western America—it still remains to be determined whether or not that is a reproach to the community, or a tribute to the high sense of honor, the virility, the strength, and the courage of the community's manhood.⁵⁸

58. All such cases as these, however, are charged up to "blood atonement" by anti-"Mormon" writers. (See all the authorities cited in notes 50 to 59 inclusive). In the case of the United States *vs.* Howard Egan for the murder of James Monroe, appeal to "the unwritten law" was first reviewed before a court in Utah, 1851. Briefly stated the facts in the case were that Monroe seduced the wife of Egan while the husband was absent in California; an illegitimate child was born; returning to his home Egan sought out its despoiler, and shot him to death. For this he was arraigned before Hon. Z. Snow, judge of the first judicial district court of the United States for the territory of Utah. Counsel for the defense pleaded:

"I argue that in this territory it is a principle of mountain common law that no man can seduce the wife of another without endangering his own life. * * * What is natural justice with this people? Does a civil suit for damages answer the purpose, not with an isolated individual, but with this whole community? No! It does not! The principle, the only one that beats and throbs through the heart of the entire population of this territory, is simply this: The man who seduces his neighbor's wife must die, and her nearest relative must kill him! * * * If Howard Egan did kill James Monroe, it was in accordance with the established principles of justice known in these mountains. That the people of this territory would have regarded him [Egan] as an accessory to the crimes of that creature [Monroe], had he not done it, is also a plain case. Every man knew the style of old Israel, that the nearest relation would be at his heels to fulfill the requirements of justice." (*Deseret News* for Nov. 15, 1851). Judge Snow in his charge to the jury said: "We have no right to punish a person for a real or imaginary wrong, except with the authority of law. The safety of ourselves individually, and of society, depends on the correct and faithful administration of good and wholesome laws. No one ought to be punished unless that act has been declared to be penal by the law

But this whole question of "blood atonement," so much iterated and reiterated by anti-"Mormon" writers, is put at rest, so far as the church's relationship to it is concerned, by an official proclamation upon the subject, in addition to the divine instructions to the church already cited in this chapter. I give the title and formal introduction to the proclamation, and so much of the document as deals with the subject in hand, and the signatures:

MANIFESTO OF THE PRESIDENCY AND APOSTLES

"SALT LAKE CITY, Dec. 12th, 1889.

To Whom It May Concern:

In consequence of gross misrepresentations of the doctrines, aims and practices of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly called the 'Mormon' church, which have been promulgated for years, and have recently been revived for political purposes and to prevent all aliens, otherwise qualified, who are members of the 'Mormon' church from acquiring citizenship, we deem it proper on behalf of said church to publicly deny these calumnies and enter our protest against them.

We solemnly make the following declarations, *viz.*:

That this church views the shedding of human blood with the utmost abhorrence. That we regard the killing of a human being, except in conformity with the civil law, as a capital crime, which should be punished by shedding the blood of the criminal after a public trial before a legally constituted court of the land. * * *

We denounce as entirely untrue the allegation which has been made, that our church favors or believes in the killing of persons who leave the church or apostatize from its doctrines. We would view a punishment of this character for such an act with the utmost horror; it is abhorrent to us and is in direct opposition to the fundamental principles of our creed.

The revelations of God to this church make death the penalty of capital crime, and require that offenders against life and property shall be delivered up and tried by the laws of the land.

We declare that no bishop's or other court in this church claims or exercises civil or judicial functions, or the right to supercede, annul or modify a judgment of any civil court. Such courts, while established to regulate Christian conduct, are purely ecclesiastical, and their punitive

of the land, and the punishment directed; nor until he has had an opportunity of having a fair and impartial trial; for, peradventure, he may not be guilty as alleged against him." (*Ibid*). This instruction, however correct and formal, was vain, as such instructions have quite generally been in the United States, and especially in the western part of that country. The jury's verdict in the above case was "not guilty."

powers go no further than the suspension or excommunication of members from church fellowship. * * *

[Signed]:

"WILFORD WOODRUFF, GEORGE Q. CANNON, JOSEPH F. SMITH,
Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

LORENZO SNOW,
FRANKLIN D. RICHARDS,
BRIGHAM YOUNG,
MOSES THATCHER,
FRANCIS M. LYMAN,
JOHN HENRY SMITH,

GEORGE TEASDALE,
HEBER J. GRANT,
JOHN W. TAYLOR,
W. W. MERRILL,
A. H. LUND,
ABRAHAM H. CANNON,

Members of the Council of the Apostles.

JOHN W. YOUNG, DANIEL H. WELLS, Counselors."⁵⁹

NOTE

THE FAST DAY OF THE CHURCH

The fast day mentioned in the regular text of this *History*, usually extends from the evening of Saturday—the day of preparation for the Lord's day—to the afternoon of Sunday. Special services are held upon that day, the "fast day meeting, when right of speaking briefly, —usually in praise of God for his providences, or in testimony of the truth, or praying, or of singing, is granted to all present. And at this meeting the saints are admonished to remember the poor and contribute means, food or money, for their benefit; *which in value should at least equal the amount saved by the person or family so fasting.*" * * * "All such funds," says the instructions to the church, "should be applied exclusively for the purpose of assisting the worthy poor as, in the judgment of the bishopric, may be necessary." The limitation of the charity to the "worthy poor," is made in order not to foster the vicious in preying upon the industrious, and to prevent the creation of a pauper class. It is no part of the church's polity to burden the industrious with the wilfully idle, the law is that "the idler shall not eat the bread, nor wear the garments of the laborer."⁶⁰ Even in the cases of the "worthy poor," "who," says the instructions of the church in directing the uses of the fast charity, "should always have our sympathy and aid," it is suggested that "wherever a person drawing assistance is able to do something towards his or her support, however small, the bishopric should endeavor to provide such employment suited to their capacity and condition."

The possibilities of this fast provision is tremendous. It requires giving up two meals in a month and consecrating what would otherwise be consumed to the charity proposed. It is an act in which all may equally participate; and in their sacrifice be equal. And what is better

59. *The History of the Mormons*, by the late President Geo. Q. Cannon, a brochure, 1891, pp. 17, 18. The omitted parts between the first marks of elipsis above may be found in a previous quotation from the document in this chapter, see note 57.

60. *Doctrine and Covenants*, sec. xlii.

yet, those who may have never felt the gnawing and the weakness from hunger before,—especially the children of the rich—by this means may be given the experience with each recurring month, and thus be put into sharper sympathetic relations with their less fortunate fellow Christians and fellow citizens than could otherwise exist. Suppose such a plan was faithfully carried out in the city of New York—all responding to it as a Christian duty—it would provide ample means to feed and clothe and lodge the worthy poor of the city; the cry of hunger need not ascend into the ears of God who has provided in his earth an abundance for all. The same would be true of our nation if it became a national institution in the land. It would constitute a permanent resource, an emergency fund, from which could be instantly met the requirements of such calamities as overtake our land at times by fire and flood, by tempest and earthquake, by famine and pestilence in which all would participate equally by an equal sacrifice. And what would result from a great city, or of a nation adopting such a noble means of charity, would equally result from all nations adopting it—it has in it the elements of a noble, world-wide charity, sufficient to the constantly recurring needs of the worthy poor, and the unavoidable calamities which intermittently visit every nation and people.

CHAPTER C

THE MOUNTAIN MEADOWS MASSACRE

HERE, in these chapters dealing with calamitous events of the period of 1851-7, may as well be considered that event which is the most lamentable episode in Utah history, and in the history of the church. I refer to the *Mountain Meadows Massacre*. The writer recognizes it as the most difficult of all the many subjects with which he has to deal in this *History*. Difficult because it is well-nigh impossible to sift out the absolute truth of the matter from the mass of conflicting statements made by witnesses and near witnesses of the affair; and equally difficult to reconcile the differences of contending partisans. Anti-“Mormon” writers have been determined to fasten the crime upon the Church of the Latter-day Saints, or at least upon her leaders; and also, as a rule, holding that in some way “Mormon” doctrine and “Mormon” church polity was responsible for the crime. On the other hand, church people who in all good conscience, and justly, resent this imputation against their church and its leaders, have been naturally slow to admit all the facts that history may insist upon as inevitable.

One of the most pathetic things connected with the case is that none of the Arkansas company of emigrants survived who were competent to relate the events as they saw them take place, since all were killed who could have had any certain memory of the circumstances, and it follows that the emigrants’ story must be pieced together from the admissions and confessions of their murderers, Indians and white men, told at different times and under varying circumstances; prompted sometimes by self-interest, admissions and confessions alike, made in the hope of escaping censure, sometimes in the hope of avoiding the just consequences of participation in the crime; sometimes told in despair; and then again in the bitter-