

ANNIVERSARY COGITATIONS

Open Letter to Ex-Governor Brigham Young.

The Days of Massacre and Martial Law Rehearsed.

The Blood of the Saints Calls from the Ground for Vengeance.

SIR: To-day is the seventeenth anniversary of the massacre at Mountain Meadows; and also of your declaration of war against the United States by the proclamation of martial law over the Territory of Utah. It is just seventeen years ago to-day since you published the following:

"Therefore, I, Brigham Young, Governor and Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the Territory of Utah, in the name of the people of the United States in the Territory of Utah:

1st. Forbid all armed forces of every description from coming into this Territory under any pretext whatever.

2d. That all the forces in said Territory hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's notice to, repel any, and all such invasions.

3d. Martial law is hereby declared to exist in this Territory from and after the publication of this proclamation, and no person shall be allowed to pass or re-pass into or through or from the Territory, without a permit from the proper officers.

Given under my hand and seal at Great Salt Lake City, Territory of Utah, this 15th day of September, A. D. 1857, and of the Independence of the United States of America the 62d.

(Signed) BRIGHAM YOUNG.

Upon the following day (Sunday), you, before the great congregation of Saints, were

NO LONGER WITH TREASON against the national authority, an authority which had neither wronged nor oppressed you, but had generously given you a Territorial government, and commissioned you as Governor. You there declared that the "bow should not be slipped on [old] Bright's neck again," meaning thereby that your fealty to that Government was ended forever; and Heber C. Kimball averred that "now the thread is cut between them and us, and we will never give again—no never, world without end!"

This treason, however, was forgiven by a generous Government—forgiven unasked, and I only introduce a notice of it, here, to show your animus at that time toward the United States,

AND ESPECIALLY TOWARD AMERICAN

EMIGRANTS, who might be within, and passing through the Territory.

It is important to understand that this Proclamation was an apparent action, and subsequent to certain real actions of the Governor of "Deseret." A quasi-martial law had, substantially, already been in force for months, as is proven by the killing at Springville of the Parrishes for attempting to leave the Territory without your permission; and it was on the 24th of July, just seven weeks before the butchery at Mountain Meadows, that you were at Big Cottonwood Lake uttering treason against the United States; and then and there, in the presence of assembled thousands, substantially declaring the independence of Deseret. Apropos of this, do it ever remembered that the first action of the "Legion," subsequent to that declaration, was the

INDISCRIMINATE SLAUGHTER

of one hundred and twenty men, women and children, none of whom were in arms against your authority.

At that time you were the supreme and absolute ruler of Utah in all things spiritual and temporal. No man's rule ever before so fully reached and subserved all the actions of the governed. No ruler ever before so fully and completely supervised all the actions of all men within his jurisdiction. You were acquainted with nearly every man in the Territory. Your supervision of the thing would bring every man's name to your notice at least once a year; and the custom of selecting individuals for colonizing purposes, enabled you to know generally where every man was, and what he was about. "This was particularly true of Southern Utah, and

MORE ESPECIALLY OF CEDAR CITY, where you had established iron smelting works, and was preparing to make iron on a scale commensurate with the wants of the Territory. Cedar had been incorporated, and had, in a church sense, been established as a first-class "Stake," with its high council, its President and counselors, and its Bishop and counselors. These, with the Mayor and City Council, formed a numerous body of civil and ecclesiastical officials; with each of whom you were unquestionably acquainted; and as is universally known in the South, and emphatically by the testimony of Bishop Klein-smith; nearly every one of whom was compromised in the massacre at the Meadows.

This horrid butchery was undeniably committed by these men, assisted by the populace of Cedar, Harmony, Pinto, Washington and Santa Clara, the last two places nearly within cannon shot of the Temple now building at St. George; and where red handed

"MOUNTAIN MEADOWS DOGS," lay all along presided and ruled in authority. This formidable body of men was not a mob acting from impulse and without a purpose; it was a part of the militia of Utah, regularly called out, armed and equipped, properly officered, and professed to be acting under "orders from headquarters." It was commanded by Major John D. Lee, of Harmony, a High Priest by your anointment; Bishop by your consecration; Indian Agent by your appointment, Major by your commission, and withal, a man sufficiently under your influence to at once execute any order you might choose to give him regardless of consequences; and of sufficient independence of character to refuse to execute any order to take human life, not coming from you.

Seventeen years ago to-day, this

FITILESS SLAUGHTER WAS COMMITTED.

After the victims had given up their arms, relying upon the promised protection of Major Lee, the women and children were started on ahead toward Cedar City, the men following after in single file, by Lee's orders. I have this, sir, from the mouth of an eye witness, and one whose testimony is reliable. When the assault was made, nearly every man was killed or wounded by the first discharge; twenty-seven women were also stretched upon the ground at the same time, then the flight of the remainder, the pursuit, and the consummation of the treachery. The last two women died in each other's arms; there was one noble fellow among the victims, who escaping the first volley, ran to a woman with a child in her arms, snatched the child away from her, told the woman to hold to him; then drawing a concealed bow-knife, he charged upon the troops, and actually drove them.

OF COURSE HE WAS KILLED.

The woman fell with a ball through her brains, and the same shot killed the man, the child also. The troops said they "hated to kill the child."

Seventeen years ago to-day, that bloody scene occurred in Utah—occurred within your jurisdiction.

You had an abundance of time to arrest, try and execute each and every one of those murderers by court martial, if they as a military force had been acting without the necessary orders. Besides, there was the Probate Court with undisputed and criminal jurisdiction, ready to try these men if they had committed that slaughter on their own responsibility, and not as a military force. You did not surrender your office to Governor Cumming until the 12th of April, nearly seven months after the massacre; a time quite sufficient in which to have fully investigated the affair, and to have dealt out ample retributive justice to the parties—deserving the same. Justice, truth, honor, your high ecclesiastical position, your oath of office, an imperative duty to protect the reputation of innocent parties, all these and more demanded of Governor Young a prompt and complete official action in this matter.

YOU DID NOTHING!

The reason for this non-action, as given to the undersigned by your friends was, that the fatal order to exterminate the Arkansas emigrants did issue from the office of a certain high militia officer, who seems to have had a penchant for giving exterminating orders who also held a high position in the Church, and that the Church would suffer in reputation by the prosecution of that man. The excuse is not a good one. The fact is, that the public knew the intimate, confidential and official relations which existed between you; they also know your habit of

"MIGRATING IN ALL THINGS,"

and they would hardly have been persuaded that you were not very badly compromised in the issuing of that order.

Seventeen years ago to-day the most cold-blooded and inhuman massacre that ever occurred in the United States took place in Utah. From the powerful and peculiar position you occupied at that time and to a great extent still occupy, the question of prosecuting and punishing the guilty parties rested, entirely and still remains with you. There has never been a time since that in which any one of them could have been tried against your will and pleasure; and there has never been a time since then in which they could not have been tried had you but said the word. This may seem incredible to strangers who know but little of the practical workings of your system of government; but to the initiated it is clear enough. By shrewd legislative action you had made it very easy to paralyze the District Courts whenever you should see proper to do so, and it has manifestly been very desirable upon the part of "President Young" that the blood-atonement assassination and the Mountain Meadows massacre should not be dragged before the Courts for judicial inquiry. For that reason judicial inquiry has hitherto been impossible. It is clear, and beyond cavil or contradiction, that if the many murders committed by your disciples have not received judicial investigation, it is because it has been your pleasure that they should not be looked into.

From present appearances, it is doubtful whether John D. Lee and others will ever be tried for what they did to the unfortunate Arkansas emigrants. If this be so, you will say

WHY LONGER AGITATE THE SUBJECT?

Why not let the whole matter quietly die out and pass from remembrance? And let brethren Daniel, and George, and John D., and Isaac C., and Col. Dame, and all the rest be assured that they will be troubled no more, at least by pen and ink; and also let Brother Brigham have one terror less to haunt him during his few remaining years? I answer, because

ETERNAL JUSTICE FORBIDS IT!

Murders sometimes occur, the perpetrators of which are quite unknown. In such instances, justice may sleep perhaps for years; occasionally the guilty parties are never discovered. Such cases may in time be forgotten. But in this horrid massacre at Mountain Meadows the parties deep-seated in guilt are nearly all living, and are well known; living within the easy reach of the officers of the law, and have been so living for the last seventeen years. And this remembrance is but a feeble voice from the grave a wail from several rivulets of human blood, shed in obelisks to "ordres from headquarters"—a cry from the shades of a hundred and twenty men, women and children, sacrificed at Mountain Meadows; victims to the treasonable ambition of the Governor of "Deseret!" No, sir; stern justice will never cease its demand for retribution so long as John D. Lee and his "superiors in the priesthood and in the military" (that is Lee's language) walk upon the earth.

With an abiding faith that the Almighty will, in his own time, mete out full and complete justice to all destroyers of human life.

I am yours, etc., VERITAS.

SALT LAKE, Sept. 15, 1874.