

THE MORMON CHURCH.

Participation of its Leaders in the Mountain Meadows Butchery.

[From the Record-Union.]

The conviction of John D. Lee, of participation in the Mountain Meadows Massacre, is an event of more than common interest and importance. The jury that brought in a verdict of murder in the first degree was composed principally of Mormons, and it is therefore certain that this result had been prearranged, and that the Mormon Church has either determined to sacrifice Lee, or has promised to save him eventually. The Mormon press indeed has practically surrendered Lee, fairly admitting his guilt, and only endeavoring to clear the skirts of the leaders of complicity in the crime. It happened that there was quite enough evidence to prove Lee's personal participation in the massacre, and therefore there was no difficulty in bringing the charge home to him. It seems, however, scarcely probable that the Church would abandon him to his fate under such circumstances knowing his ability to make the most damaging revelations. There has never been any doubt among those who are familiar with the history of the case that Brigham Young was accessory to the Mountain Meadows Massacre, and that in fact it was part of a clear-cut policy then being pursued by the Church. John D. Lee was a cold blooded murderer and ruffian, but nobody ever believed that he would have carried out the massacre without having been ordered to do so, and nobody ever doubted that his orders came from the head of the Church. Even should he die without telling all he knows, the Mormons are deceived if they imagine that his removal will exonerate them from blood-guiltiness in this connection. At present, however, it becomes probable that the condemned man, believing himself betrayed, may disclose the awful secrets he has carried in his breast these many years, and this probability should point the necessity of guarding him with incessant vigilance, for the Mormons would think nothing of killing him for the purpose of silencing an awkward witness. If he swings alone, the massacre will not have been adequately punished. The surrender of one wretch as scapegoat by a community whose heads are certainly responsible for the atrocity, is at the bottom little better than a farce. John D. Lee no doubt deserves hanging, but the rope should also and first be twisted for those under whose instructions he acted at the bloody Mountain Meadows.

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