

The Mountain Meadows Massacre.

(Glasgow (Scotland) Weekly Mail.)

Last autumn the Mormon bishop, John D. Lee, was tried for the murder of certain emigrants at Mountain Meadows, in the Territory of Utah, as far back as 1857, found guilty and condemned to be shot on the 26th of January of this year. To this sentence certain exceptions were taken by him, and this had the effect of delaying the execution. But his appeal was set aside, and on Friday last Bishop Lee was taken to the scene of the massacre and there shot. The murder was one of the most cool-blooded and atrocious, and has left a stain on Mormonism which that foul and filthy system can never wipe out. In their new home at Salt Lake, the Mormons were anxious that they should have a settlement from which the Gentiles should be excluded, and where, as they sang in their doggerel hymn, "no more should Jacob bow his neck," but be free to develop his peculiar "domestic institution." This extreme jealousy of the Gentiles, which their treatment at Nauvoo had done a good deal to foster, lay at the bottom of this massacre of Mountain Meadows, of which the main facts are these: In 1857, a band of emigrants, numbering about 150, found their way into Utah, their intention being not to settle there, but to proceed to California. When the Mormon authorities heard of their approach, they resolved that, if they could prevent it, they should find no resting place in their territory, and so when the poor emigrants arrived at Salt Lake City, worn out with fatigue, and with provisions almost exhausted, all help was cruelly and persistently denied them. With sad hearts, they continued their march westwards, but it was only to find the door of every Mormon settler closed against them. At last one of the Mormon authorities seemed to compassionate them, and they were instructed to encamp at Mountain Meadows, where there was abundance of pasture for their cattle, but this was merely a lure to their ruin. While encamped at this spot, they were attacked by the Indians, who were incited by Lee, but as the Indians were repulsed, Lee had recourse to other tactics. Taking with him a party of Mormon soldiers, he marched up to the camp of the emigrants, and assured them that if they would only confide in him he would ensure their protection. But it was an onerous condition that they should give up their arms and cattle, as it was alleged that otherwise the Indians were bent on their destruction. In their desperation, the emigrants assented to the proposals of Lee, who then marched them into an Indian ambush, where every man, woman and child were massacred by the Indians and Mormon soldiers. This is the horrid deed which the Mormon spirit prompted, which this cold-blooded bishop deliberately planned and cruelly executed, and which the Mormon community did their best afterwards to conceal. At that time, as it has been said, "except Tibet, there was, perhaps, no city in the world so difficult to reach as the metropolis of the Mormons." It was long, therefore, before anything was heard of the massacre; and when a judicial inquiry was made, it failed, the blame being thrown on the Indians. For nineteen years justice slumbered, and Lee must have imagined that there was little likelihood of his being convicted. But his crime at last found him out, and his case is another illustration of the adage that if punishment be late it is certain sooner or later to overtake the guilty. But are there no others surviving who were directly implicated in the massacre but Lee? Morally the whole Mormon community in Utah is more or less implicated; and if they would do something to atone for the foul deed, they will expose, and not screen as they have hitherto tried to do, its vile perpetrators.