

MORMON MURDERS.

A Recital of the Horrors of the Mountain Meadows Massacre.

A Remarkable Body of Arkansas Emigrants.

Forbidden to Enter Salt Lake City -- Followed Two Hundred and Fifty Miles.

Heart rending Scenes and Incidents -- Major Lee's Militia.

[From the San Francisco Chronicle, 233.]

The late arrest in Utah, of John D. Lee, for participation in what is known throughout the country as the "Mountain Meadows massacre," may be the means of laying bare all the secrets of that most damaging blot on the record of the Mormons. That upwards of a hundred men, women and children were attacked, betrayed and murdered, is well known, and that the butchers were members of the so-called "Church of Latter-day Saints," has also been established, but the cause of the massacre, and the power or authority that directed it, are yet matters of dispute. The dark story, as far as it is known, is as follows: Among the many emigrant trains from the States that were traversing the plains in 1857, bound for the Pacific coast, was one from Arkansas, that was remarkable in several particulars. In addition to the ordinary wagons used by the emigrants of the day, there were with this body many substantial and expensive carriages. The men were armed and equipped in the most complete style possible at that time, and the women and children were arrayed in a manner that betokened their protectors and natural guardians were not only persons of

CULTURE AND REFINEMENT,

but possessed of a fair share of this world's goods. The horses and oxen that drew the full wagons gave evidence that they had been well selected for the long and arduous trip across the plains. But the great distinguishing feature of this company of emigrants was the observance of their religious duties. Although far from the busy haunts of man, as they pursued their way towards the setting sun, day after day and week after week, they allowed nothing to interfere with their worship of the Most High. Neither fatigue at the close of the day's journey, nor haste to take advantage of the morning's coolness, prevented this little company of men and women from gathering around the improvised altar, and uniting in thanksgiving for the preservation of their lives thus far, and petitions that their pilgrimage might continue to receive the blessings of God. Each Sunday they scrupulously observed as a day of rest, for themselves and animals, and the elder ones occupied the time in teaching to the many young children who were of the party the religious precepts which they were striving to obey.

About the 1st of September, 1857, this company, numbering 140, reached the Jordan river, near the capital of Utah. The picturesque

GRANDEUR OF THE WASATCH MOUNTAINS

was already subdued by the evening shadows before they pitched their camp, and as they gathered around their altar that night they returned thanks for the Providence that had brought them within sight of the many twinkling lights of the City of the Saints. There were many little comforts and necessities that they were in want of, and they had chosen this route that they might replenish their stores here. They had money sufficient to purchase all that they required, and they had not overloaded their wagons, depending on reloading their stock of provisions at Salt Lake City.

That night their camp was visited by several men from the city. The next morning as they were preparing to enter it they were met by a deputation, who notified them that they would not be allowed to approach any nearer to the town, but that the Governor of Utah, Brigham Young, had issued a peremptory order that they should move on. They heard this command with dismay; for, while their provisions were not utterly exhausted, there was not enough to carry them very much farther toward their destination. But

SUPPLICATIONS AND REMONSTRANCES were alike in vain. They were ordered to move on, and with—for the first time—heavy hearts, they slowly wended their way south, hoping and expecting that at some or all of the smaller Mormon settlements along the line of their route, they might find and be permitted to purchase the desired provisions.

September 6th they reached Cedar City, having been treated with coldness or unkindness in the Mormon settlements through which they had passed. There they stopped for one day, but were unable to trade with the inhabitants, who had received their orders from Salt Lake. On the 10th they reached Mountain Meadows, 300 miles southwest of Salt Lake City, and there, with all the bright hopes and anticipations of the future that had inspired their journey and cheered them on their way, they died. The complete history of the tragical fate of those Arkansians is not yet known. Their dismay at

THE FIRST DEADLY ATTACK

upon them, their hope in the assistance of the Almighty whom they worshiped, their joy at the intervention of apparent friends, and the utterness of their despair as they fell, dying, by the hands of their murderers, can only be conjectured, for not one lived to tell the tale.

Four days after the ill-fated emigrants left Cedar City they were attacked by a party of Piedra Indians, under the command of one "Kaneb." Making a defensive circle of their wagons, and placing their beloved ones, the non-combatants, in the midst, farthest from danger, they made a successful fight for two days. On the third day their enemies received large reinforcement, and it is no longer a matter of dispute that the additional force was composed of Mormons, although it is not so certain that some, if not all, their original assailants were not whites disguised as Indians. Still the beleaguered Arkansians fought well and bravely, but at this time, on the third day of the battle, the pangs of unassuaged thirst drove them almost to the verge of despair. Hoping, praying that the men who sought their lives would spare their innocent children, they appealed

TWO GIRLS IN SPOTLESS WHITE, and sent them to a spring of water beyond their fortifications, only to see them fall riddled by the bullets of their remorseless enemies.

Before the dawn of September 11th the whole company assembled in their camp, and again, and for the last time, with hearts bleeding over the memory of the innocents so ruthlessly murdered on the previous day, they knelt in supplication to God for deliverance from their imminent peril, and as they spoke they believed that at least their prayers had been heard and answered, for among their Indian enemies they now saw a larger body of white men. No idea

that the enemy they had been defending themselves from were of their own race had occurred to them, and when the commander of the whites,

MAJOR JOHN D. LEE,

sent to them under a flag of truce a message, "If you will lay down your arms I will protect you," they gladly acceded to his proposition and unhesitatingly bade him and his followers enter their camp.

The arms of the emigrants were gathered together and placed in charge of a squad of the Mormons, who told their prisoners it would be necessary for them to return to Cedar City. Soon after they had started, Lee ordered that the women should be separated from the men, and this was done, the men being ahead.

An eye witness, if not participant in the affair, one Philip K. Smith, an ex-Mormon Bishop, has told what followed. The prisoners and their guards had not gone half a mile from their camp before Lee, from the head of the column, gave an order which must have been well considered and understood before, for it consisted of but one word, "Fire!" when instantly

THE GUNS OF THE MORMONS

were turned upon their unarmed, defenseless prisoners, and in a few moments of all that band of 140 persons, but seventeen children were left alive. Not only were men slain, but the women were murdered, the old and the young all, indeed, who had reached an age to understand the hideous crime which was being perpetrated. The knife and sword and bayonet completed the work commenced by the bullet, and into the unprotected breasts of the wounded men and women, crying, pleading, praying for mercy, those fiends plunged their bloody weapons. The slaughtered emigrants fell upon and among one another in piles, and as a convulsive movement in one or the other of the ghastly heaps indicated that therein was a life not yet extinct, the bayonets and swords of the butchers again and again pierced the struggling heap of dying humanity.

YOUNG MOTHERS CLASPED THEIR BABES

to their bosoms and turned to flee as the first shot fell on their startled ears, only to take a step before their infants were torn from their grasp, and their maternal bosoms penetrated by the cruel bullet. An order had been given to save the children, and when in several instances the mother was momentarily spared that her child might not be injured, the most indescribably heart-rending scenes occurred, and in more than one case the clinging babe died with its mother. Two women who fell together, wounded, in each other's arms, were slain by one sword thrust. One young girl sprung from the wounded and dead beside her and fell upon her knees before one of the murderers, a young man, who, touched by a momentary compassion, or other feeling, raised her to her feet and declared he would save her, when his father, one of the leaders in the massacre, and believed by many to have been Lee, stabbed her to the heart in his son's arms.

After the work of death was accomplished, and the surviving children gathered together,

THE BODIES OF THE SLAIN

Arkansians were searched, and not only was every article of value appropriated, but in many cases every article of clothing was removed, and the perfectly nude bodies of both male and female victims left unburied on the plains. Everything in the desolated camp was, of course, appropriated by the murderers; and it is said that while many of the Mormon women in and about Cedar City wore the clothing of which the dead were despoiled, one or more of the carriages of the emigrants were sent to Salt Lake City, where they were used for a long time by some prominent members of the Priesthood. The hapless little innocents who were orphaned on that bloody day, were distributed among various Mormon families, where they remained until Brigham Young was removed from the gubernatorial chair, when, at the expense of the United States Government, the then survivors were sent to St. Louis, where they found kind homes. A rough monument, which still stands, was erected to mark the scene of the murder.

THE PERPETRATORS OF THIS MASSACRE

were a regiment of Mormon militia, the Colonel of which was W. H. Dame, President of the Church of Latter-day Saints, in Parowan, Iron county. The Lieutenant Colonel, Isaac O. Haight, said, in the hearing of ex-Bishop Smith, that he had orders to kill all but the little children, and the direct commander was the John D. Lee, who was recently arrested at Beaver. Some time after the murder he told Smith that he had "reported to the President." It is true that he was shortly after openly expelled from the Church by Brigham Young for his participation in the slaughter, but while there may not now be sufficient legal evidence to convict and punish the Mormon Hierarchy for this most cruel massacre, there is enough known to convict the Church leaders at the bar of public opinion.