

WHITWASHING LEE.

Wells Spicer, in the Salt Lake Herald, devotes two columns and a-half to a biographical sketch of the butcher Lee, and ingeniously contrives to tell the reader nothing that he wants to know. Without mentioning the Mountain Meadows Massacre, he says the chief participator "asserts that he can show his innocence, and says he has lived under the imputation and reproach of this crime long enough. Heretofore he has been fearful of persecution and fraud, and not of justice; now he is willing to submit his case to a jury made up entirely of non-Mormons."

If this statement is true, he is the victim of a most annoying instance of mistaken identity. Two of the children rescued from the butchery, named John Calvin and Myron Tickett, who were committed to the care of a lady in this city, used to tell in their childish prattle of the part taken by Major Lee in the massacre of their parents. One of them would say to his playfellows: "When I get to be a man I will go to the President and ask him for a regiment of soldiers, and I will bring them here to kill all the men who murdered my father and mother and brothers and sisters. But Lee I will kill myself. I saw him shoot my sister through the body, and if I don't kill that man I shall not die happy."

On the field, the murdered victims believed that John D. Lee led the assassins who sent them to their bloody graves. When the appalling deed was perpetrated, it was whispered among the terrified followers of the Church throughout Zion that this man had directed and borne a conspicuous part in the bloody deed. And the Grand Jury of the Second Judicial District heard evidence of a sufficiently convincing character to satisfy them that in reporting Major Lee for arrest they were securing a man against whom the crime of participating in the Mountain Meadows Massacre could be clearly proved.

This is not the first attempt of the corrupt and slavish Mormon press to divert the ends of justice by enlisting sympathy in behalf of the worst criminals. Some months ago a letter writer in the Desert News detailed a horseback ride he had taken with this ~~and his~~ murderer through some of the southern settlements. He described Lee very much as the Herald correspondent does, a man of eminent piety, correct habits of life, a good talker and "one of our most respected citizens." Byron's description of Lambro would fit this more infamous land pirate to a hair--

The mildest mannered man

That ever scuttled ship or cut a throat.

The News writer, like the Herald writer, received the assurance from the murderer's lips of his innocence, and both are convinced that this "respected citizen" is the victim of conspiracy and Gentile hate. It is not a little significant that the sympathies of these Church scribes are with all the murderers and lechers who have made the annals of this Territory so harrowing. Of course, what may be said in the papers on either side, will not influence Courts or juries, when the solemn issues of life and death are pending before them. But an honest and fearless press would certainly not lend itself to the disgraceful task of exculpating these criminals, vaunting their imaginary virtues, and setting them forth as suffering and wronged citizens. Fortunately for the cause of justice, the evidence of Lee's damning crime is too irrefragable to admit of his longer escape.