

## Correspondence.

## UTAH AND THE MORMONS.

LETTER VI.

SALT LAKE CITY,  
April 10, 1874.

Editor Deseret News:

As I have exposed a good many of the acts and doings of individuals and courts, it may not be improper, now, to examine some of the allegations made against us as Latter-day Saints, or "Mormons." For if our system will not stand the most searching and scathing investigation, it is not worth having or adhering to. Attrition has a tendency to brighten metals, and the most intense application of fire only tends to purify gold.

I have been asked by parties, "Do you believe in the doctrine of 'Blood Atonement,' as quoted from some discourses delivered by Presidents Young and Grant in the Tabernacle, and as represented by a clique of memorialists here?" I do most assuredly believe in the doctrine as preached by our Presidency, but not as applied by these said memorialists. The doctrine enunciated there is a part of our faith, and is made no secret of. These discourses were proclaimed in public to assembled thousands, and were afterwards published to the world. We believe, with other peoples and nations, that there are crimes for which men ought to die. We believe, moreover, that when Saints commit certain crimes, and are convicted thereof before a proper tribunal, the right way to do it is by the shedding of their blood; and that it is much better for them thus to atone, or expiate their guilt, for their sins in this world, than to rush into the eternal world without. But we do not propose to be their executioners; and hence our Legislature passed a law, predicated upon this idea, giving a convicted criminal, adjudged worthy of death, the choice of being beheaded, shot or hung. Sec. 124, p. 61, *Laws of Utah*.

Men have different ideas about punishment; in this country and in England, men adjudged worthy of death are strangled by hanging. In France they use the guillotine. In China they chop off their heads as they formerly did to political offenders in England; the latter class of men in Japan have the privilege of committing *hari-kari*.

As citizens of the United States, we submit to the laws of the land. In the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, page 129, we have the following: "And it shall come to pass, that if any person among you shall kill, they shall be delivered up and dealt with according to the laws of the land; and if a man or woman shall rob, he or she shall be delivered up unto the laws of the land; and if he or she shall steal, he or she shall be delivered up to the laws of the land."

It would be better for some convicted criminals thus to die; to others it would be of no benefit. Jesus speaks of some "that have no forgiveness, neither in this world nor in the world which is to come." They have conspired to shed innocent blood, or consented thereto. These men know what it means; they carry it about with them, and feel it in their bones. They cannot repent. Paul says it is "impossible to renew them again to repentance." They would like to gloss it over with the denial of the atonement, infidelity, spiritualism, or anything else; but the spirit won't stay laid; it haunts them, as the ghost did Hamlet; like the Buddhists—the Chinese worshippers of the god Fo, their greatest hope would be annihilation, nonentity, or eternal oblivion; but they can't get it. The worm has commenced to gnaw; it is making its ravages; it "never dies." They cannot shake off the eternity. It is written in living words as of fire, "neither in this world, neither in the world to come." It would have been better that "a millstone had been hanged about their necks, and that they were drowned in the depths of the sea." The execution of the law by killing would do them no good; that can't atone; they are not meant. Jude speaks of such as being "clouds without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." (Jude I, 12, 13.) Peter calls them

"wells without water; clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever." (2 Pet. II, 17.)

Let me here say to my brethren, as did Peter and Jude to those characters in their day: "Beware of them!" for while they speak "great swellings words of vanity, and promise liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption."

I am asked, "Have you not secrets among you that you do not tell?" Yes. There are many principles that I believe in that I cannot tell, not because they are wrong, unjust, wicked or oppressive, but simply because it is forbidden. There is nothing new in this. States have their secrets. Our own Senate and Cabinet have their secret sessions. As a believer in Freemasonry I could not divulge some things; as a "Mormon" I could not divulge some others. Diplomats, police, corporations, merchants, manufacturers, companies, families, doctors, lawyers, etc., all have their secrets; are the above-mentioned all rascals? Why does not everybody tell everybody else all they know? God and his church have their secrets, and he says, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him."—Psalms XXV, 14. Daniel says, "And the vision of the morning and of the evening is true, wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days."—Daniel VIII, 26. And again, "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end."—Daniel XII, 4. Again, "Seal up these things which the seven thunders have uttered, and write them not."—Revelations X, 4. Paul tells us that "he saw things which were not lawful for men to utter." "Well, why don't you tell them?" Ask the same questions of the Freemasons, the Oddfellows, the Druids, the Grangers and others. I should say, go to the Lord and ask him for the reasons; you have the same chance that I have. "Why did you not answer distinctly and categorically some questions put by some priests in Boulogne, France, and tell them all you knew?" Simply because I did not think proper.

I now come to the investigation of a subject that has been harped upon for the last seventeen years, viz.: The Mountain Meadow massacre. That bloody tragedy has been the chief stock in trade for the above named time, for penny-aliners, the press and pulpit, who have gloated, in turns and by chorus, over the sickening details. Do you deny it? No. Do you excuse it? No. There is no excuse for such a relentless, diabolical, sanguinary deed. That outrageous infamy is looked upon with as much abhorrence by our people as by any other parties in this nation or in the world; and at its first announcements it loathing recital chilled the marrow and sent a thrill of horror through the breasts of the listeners. It was most certainly a horrible deed; and like many other defenceless tragedies, it is one of those things that cannot be undone. The world is full of deeds of crime and darkness; and a question often arises, who is responsible therefor? It is usual to blame the perpetrators. It does not seem fair to accuse nations, States and communities for deeds perpetrated by some of their citizens, unless they uphold it. The British nation, to-day, abhor and revolt at the idea of their commander in India tying Sepoys to the mouths of their cannon and firing them off. The French nation shudder at the refined cruelty and barbarity of their military commander, in Algiers, in smoking to death, in caves, large numbers of their enemies, including men, women and children. All honorable Americans repudiate with disdain the horrible butchery of "Mormon men," women and children at Haun's Mill in Missouri, as the present governor does the desperate outlawry, the murder and anarchy that exist, and which he confesses himself unable to control. The Bender case is a horrible affair; who is responsible? The cold-blooded murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith in Carthage jail, Illinois, under the pledge of protection from Governor Ford for their safety, was an outrage upon civilization. I know myself what it is to be riddled with balls, in the last named case. Who among these were brought to justice? Mr. Seward, in speaking of Japanese warfare, says, "Do not the records of war on our own soil contain a melancholy catalogue of similar crimes?" Are not the pages which

record Napoleon's great campaigns, sullied by deeds alike unworthy of our race?" Page 90, *W. H. Seward's Travels*.

It is said that the victims of the Mountain Meadow massacre committed every kind of outrage in their travels through the settlements; that they robbed hen roosts, stole cattle and sheep, poisoned wells, and that they threatened to take their women and children some distance, and then return and spoil and destroy the Mormons. This I only have from statements made by men living on their line of travel. It is said that ten or twelve Indians were killed by eating beef poisoned by them; that this and other acts enraged the Indians, who followed them for nearly 100 miles, increasing their forces as they went, and eventually it culminated in their attack upon them and their massacre. That any white man could be found to embark in it is a disgrace to humanity. I do not know it; but am afraid that some did; but being done, what then? who is responsible? Why say some, "The Mormon community." Not quite so fast; by the same reason England, France, Missouri, Illinois and the United States must be held amenable for the acts above stated. Let us calmly and deliberately examine the facts in the case. This horrid butchery took place on the then extreme limits of our Territory, in fact outside of all our then settlements, upwards of three hundred miles from Salt Lake city. It was commenced and almost exclusively carried out by Indians, according to the best information we can get. It must also be remembered that this horrid butchery took place at the time of what is known as the "Mormon war." Governor Young, it is true, was then in office, but before that difficulty was adjusted President Buchanan sent out two peace commissioners, viz.: Ex-Governor Powell of Kentucky, and Major Ben. McCullough of Texas, accompanied by Governor Cumming, who superseded Governor Young, and was installed in his office before the difficulties which then agitated the Territory were settled. Situated as Governor Young was then, with a threatening army on our frontier, it was an impossibility for him to attend to an affair distant three hundred miles in another direction. It was very evident, therefore, that Gov. Cumming was the proper administrative officer to attend to this matter. I have frequently asked, as others have, why was it not done? Why was such an infamy permitted to go unpunished? In a conversation with Hon. George Peacock, of San Pete County, he, in presence of several others, informed me that the prosecuting attorney had told him, in answer to a similar question, that he "had written to the Attorney-General of the United States for instructions on this point and had been told not to move in the matter." Proceedings were instituted at Provo, and were progressing favorably when that mad-cap, Judge Cradlebaugh, broke them up by calling for a military posse; and whose ill-advised proceedings and extra judicial acts entirely frustrated the ends of justice. The following letter from President Young, to a prominent Cabinet officer, under date of May 21, 1872, will throw light on this subject:

"In 1858, when Alfred Cumming was Governor of Utah Territory, I pledged myself to lend him and the court every assistance in my power, in men and means, to thoroughly investigate the Mountain Meadow massacre and bring, if possible, the guilty parties to justice. That offer I have made again and again and, although it has not yet been accepted, I have neither doubt nor fear that the perpetrators of that tragedy will meet their just reward. But sending an armed force is not the best means of furthering the ends of justice, although it may serve an excellent purpose in exciting popular clamor against the 'Mormons.'"

"In 1859 Judge Cradlebaugh employed a military force to attempt the arrest of those alleged criminals. He engaged in all about four hundred men, some one hundred of whom were civilians, reputed gamblers, thieves, and other camp followers, who were doubtless intended for jurors; (as his Associate Judge Eccles had just done in another district;) but these accomplished absolutely nothing, further than plundering hen-roosts, and rendering themselves obnoxious to the citizens on their line of march. Had Judge Cradlebaugh, instead

of peremptorily dismissing his grand jury and calling for that military posse, allowed the investigation into the Mountain Meadow massacre to proceed, I have the authority of Mr. Wilson, U. S. prosecuting attorney, for saying the investigation was proceeding satisfactorily, and I firmly believe, if the county sheriffs, whose legal duty it was to make arrests, had been lawfully directed to serve the processes, that they would have performed their duty and the accused would have been brought to trial. Instead of honoring the law, Judge Cradlebaugh took a course to screen offenders, who could easily hide from such a posse, under the justification of avoiding a trial by a court martial.

"It is now fourteen years since the tragedy was enacted, and the courts have never tried to prosecute the accused; although some of the judges, like Judge Hawley, have used every opportunity to charge the crime upon prominent men in Utah and influence public opinion against our community."

As stated above, this thing has passed on from year to year, until, in view of this and other things, it has become the settled opinion of nine-tenths of this community, that some of the officers are not how much crime is perpetrated, and that they will not prosecute it, provided they cannot fasten it upon President Young and other innocent men. Again I ask, who is responsible? Gov. Doty, a very amiable gentleman, followed Gov. Cumming; then came Gov's Hardin, Durkee, Shaffer and Woods. These men have all had their Attorneys, Marshals, Judges, and all the paraphernalia of justice. Why, I ask again, have they done nothing in this matter? President Young, as shown, was not in a position to do anything as governor; he could do nothing, only in the capacity of President of the church and by moral suasion; this he has offered to do, as above stated, without effect. It is with poor grace that our present very moral reformers accuse President Young of dereliction of duty. What of all those other Governors, who possessed the power and the right? What of all the Attorneys, Marshals and Judges from that time to the present? Is there no responsibility resting upon them? Are they not sent here to see the laws executed? If not, what did they come for? The general idea is held out that Territories are not supposed to have among them persons capable to administer law and justice, and therefore wiser, better and more capable men are sent. Why don't these men do their duty?

We frequently hear of Isaac Potter and Dr. Robinson. The first was a notorious criminal, who had seven or eight times been convicted of crime, and at last met his death, as alleged, at the hands of outraged citizens, not because he was a dissenting "Mormon," as alleged by certain memorialists, but a pestilent horse thief. And the case of the latter has been most rigidly examined by federal judges, and the most disreputable means resorted to, as before stated, to implicate innocent "Mormons in the murder," but without effect.

We are again told of the Morrisite affair. What have the "Mormons" to do with this? They were killed by a posse summoned by the then acting Governor of Utah, Frank Fuller, while serving a writ of *habeas corpus* issued by Chief Justice Kinney. These men had resisted the officers for three days, firing upon them from a fort during that time, and killing two of the posse, one named Jared Smith. What is the object of making such statements? What about the horrid tragedy and violence perpetrated on Mrs. —, whose death was caused by the revolting acts of a gang of miserable hounds? There were, as reported, from fifteen to twenty who participated in this inhuman infamy, and only two arrested. There is nothing done with the others, while Hawkins could be placed in a military prison for sleeping with his own wife, and Sheriff Burton, an honorable gentleman, another "Mormon," could be indicted by a packed jury of Gentiles for the killing of a man in self-defence, while performing an official duty, under the direction, as above stated, of the Governor and Chief Justice of the Territory. Such is life in Utah.

Permit me here to thank gentlemen for furnishing me so much additional evidence, confirmatory of the authenticated statements made and for their propositions to furnish

more. But let me say that I care nothing for the personalities of the parties concerned, most of whom I don't know nor care to know, and that while I have been obliged to open public records that I would rather have remained closed, and to give unimpeachable testimony, in regard to the acts and doings of men, it has simply been in defense of an insulted and outraged public, against the plottings and calumnies of an unscrupulous ring; and, furthermore, while I am aware that it is not pleasant for parties implicated to have their records unfolded, I do not propose to argue with recorded felons, nor to bandy words with men who, while they make the most mendacious and unsupported assertions, are afraid or ashamed to give their names.

Respectfully, etc.,  
JOHN TAYLOR.

## The Utah Contested Election Case.

Gen. H. E. Paine closed his argument yesterday before the House Committee on Elections in favor of Mr. Cannon, the sitting member. The points he submitted for the consideration of the committee were:—That the question to be decided by the committee was, which, if either, of the claimants was lawfully elected to, and at the same time legally qualified for, the office of Delegate for the Territory of Utah to the House of Representatives of the 43d Congress. And first he showed that the contestant was not returned or elected. He received only 1,942 votes out of 22,913 votes. Whatever might be the rights, qualifications, or the fate of the sitting member, the claimant has no valid claim to the seat in dispute. His qualifications for the office are, therefore, not material to the controversy. Second. The sitting member was lawfully elected. The vote was 20,969 for George Q. Cannon and 1,942 for the contestant. Third. The sitting member possesses the necessary qualifications. Only two objections are raised to his qualifications for the office. It is alleged that he is a polygamist and has taken the so-called endowment oath. But, Gen. P. argued, polygamy, if proved or admitted, is not a disqualification to be considered by the committee or the House in judging of the election returns, or qualification of its members. Whether it would or would not be a valid ground for an expulsion by a two-thirds vote, under the clause of the constitution relating to that subject, was not material to the present inquiry. There is however, no proof or admission of polygamy in the record of this case, even if all the depositions taken be admitted. In this connection Gen. P. argued that polygamy is not a constitutional disqualification; that neither the States nor Territories can prescribe or change the qualifications of representatives or delegates in Congress; that, of course, the legislature of Utah had not made polygamy a disqualification to the office of delegate to Congress; that if polygamy could be made a disqualification by statute, it could only be so made as a punishment for crime, upon trial, conviction, and sentence according to law; that no statute makes polygamy, whether with or without trial, conviction and sentence, a disqualification for the office of delegate in Congress, or for any other office; that the House alone cannot prescribe a qualification for membership, its power being to judge of, not to create, such qualifications. As to the so-called endowment oath—even if taken by the sitting member, of which there is no proof—the testimony clearly shows that it does not disqualify those who have taken it for holding office; that there is nothing in it in the least inconsistent with perfect loyalty to the government of the United States. Gen. Paine said he had argued this case, and referred to depositions taken by the contestant as if they were admissible. But they were not. Not a single deposition taken by the contestant in this case is competent evidence. The depositions he had taken were taken without lawful notice, and objection was duly made. All the contestant's charges, therefore, were wholly unproved. — *Washington Star*, April 4.

MR. A. G. RIDDLE, of this city, made an argument before the House Committee on Elections this morning in favor of General Maxwell's claim to the seat in Congress now occupied by Delegate G. Q. Cannon, of Utah. — *Washington Star*, April 6th.