

statement that he is "a 'Mormon' of nearly sixty years' standing" is transparent and wilful fraud and deception.

This of itself should, in the eyes of all reasoning readers, vitiate his entire contribution to the literature of the day. But there are some statements artfully interwoven with the fabric of his story which require specific refutation. Others may be dismissed with a general denial. He puts remarks into the mouth of the late President Brigham Young and other Elders of the Church which they never uttered, attributes acts to them which they never performed, repeats stories that are taken from anti-"Mormon" works as though they were utterances of his own, and expresses sentiments as entertained by the "Mormons" which are entirely foreign to their belief and feelings and intentions. These all lead up to the main object of the articles. That is to deceive the American public and foster the latest scheme for the disfranchisement of the monogamic "Mormon" people, by conveying the idea that Polygamy is still taught and entered into in Utah, that the Church dominates the State, and that the "Mormons" are under military discipline and ready to fight against the Government. To this end the oft-refuted and spurious story of the Mountain Meadows Massacre is told, as fabricated by Utah romancers, and the Blood Atonement fiction is reproduced after the style of the dime novelist. As to the former, while the general public believe that the tragedy was perpetrated under the sanction, if not by the direction, of Brigham Young, the evidence elicited at the trial which resulted in the conviction of John D. Lee, demonstrated the entire disconnection of President Young and the Church over which he presided with the awful occurrence that has been so widely misrepresented for evil purposes. The United States District Attorney officially and publicly announced this at the trial. He declared he had received all the aid he could ask for from the Church authorities to get at the root of the matter and the accused was convicted of murder by a jury composed principally of members of the "Mormon" Church.

It is a fundamental doctrine of our creed that a murderer cannot be forgiven; that he "hath not eternal life abiding in him;" that if a member of our Church, having received the light of the Holy Spirit, commits this capital crime, he will not receive forgiveness in this world nor in the world to come. The revelations of God to the Church abound in commandments forbidding us to shed blood. There are no people living who have a greater horror of this offense against the law of God and of man than the Latter-day Saints, commonly, but erroneously called "Mormons." This Church was no more responsible for the massacre at Mountain Meadows than any Christian Church is for the atrocities that may be committed by persons professing to be its members. It is but just to the memory of President Brigham Young to say that the evidence against his complicity with this dreadful crime, as accessory either before or after the fact, is abundant, convincing and complete.

It is part of our faith that the only

atonement a murderer can make for his "sin unto death" is the shedding of his own blood, according to the fiat of the Almighty after the flood: "Who so sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed." But the law must be executed by the lawfully appointed officer. This is "blood atonement" so much perverted by maligners of our faith. We believe also in the atonement wrought by the shedding of Christ's blood on Calvary; that it is efficacious for all the race of Adam for the sin committed by Adam, and for the individual sins of all who believe, repent, are baptized by one having authority, and who receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of authorized hands. Capital crime committed by such an enlightened person cannot be condoned by the Redeemer's blood. For him there is "no more sacrifice for sin;" his life is forfeit, and he only can pay the penalty. There is no other blood atonement taught, practiced or made part of the creed of the Latter-day Saints.

We do not believe, as stated by the pretended "Mormon," that "divulging the secrets of the Endowment House, marital unfaithfulness on the part of the wife, leaving the "Mormon" Church," are unpardonable, or that "the only atonement that can be made for any of these offenses is the atonement of blood." The statement that "this doctrine is part of our duty" is another proof that the writer is not a "Mormon," and that he does not understand or else that he wilfully misrepresents the faith which he pretends to explain.

The connection drawn between this alleged doctrine and the murders committed at Mountain Meadows, also proves the falsity of the claim that the writer is a "Mormon," and demonstrates his misapprehension of his own subject. The company that fell victims to Indian ferocity and white vengeance and rapacity were not "Mormons." They had revealed no secrets, they had not left the Church, they had done nothing to justify their slaughter, even on the false theory of Blood Atonement copied by the writer in the *Illustrated American* from old newspaper fiction. This should be evident, even to the casual reader.

Another statement is equally absurd and obviously untrue. Speaking of the "Mormons" said to have participated in the massacre, he says: "Some of them are alive today. They nod to me familiarly on the streets of Salt Lake City, and I nod back to them. The United States government knows who they are, knows what they have done; and yet it has never dared to arrest them or interfere with them." This is as great a libel on the officers of the United States entrusted with the enforcement of the law as it is upon the "Mormon" people. The whole machinery of the courts—judges, juries, prosecutors and peace officers, also the municipal government and its police are in the hands of anti-"Mormons," who would all be eager to punish a participant in that crime, and most of whom would be glad to avail themselves of the opportunities for slander and excitement which a revival of this dead issue would afford. The nonsense of his statement, then, is only equalled by its falsehood, and in attempting once more to make it appear that he is

a "Mormon" he only affords one more proof of his imposture.

As to the power and disposition of the "Mormons" to fight and the necessity of a resort to arms he is equally ridiculous and erroneous. There has been no militia, "Mormon" or Gentile, in the Territory for more than twenty years. There are no "Mormons" under arms. There has been no drilling or military training. Peace and equal rights with other American citizens is all that the "Mormons" desire. They do not believe they will be required to handle the weapons of war. They have profound faith that God will fight their battles. There is not the slightest whisper of a carnal conflict among them. There is no pretext for a collision between the "Mormons" and the government. The only dispute that has arisen of late years between them was a question of law. That has been settled by the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States and the action of the Church in general conference. Plural marriage has been judicially decided to be unlawful. The Church has accepted the decision as legally final, and by my official advice as President of the Church, has in the most solemn and authoritative manner decided not to enter into any marriages in the future that are contrary to the laws of the land.

What folly then for this assumed "Mormon" to say: "We must fight or we must perish." "We would rather die than give up this article of our creed." And what absurdity to say, "In every endowment house in Utah plural marriages are being secretly celebrated today." There never was but one endowment house in Utah and that, by my orders, was taken down in 1889. If the temples are meant by that term, I say most emphatically the statement is false, and that no plural marriages are or have been celebrated in Utah to my knowledge or that of any of my associates for some years. And I cannot conceive how they could be performed without my sanction and official consent.

I object to the publication of the articles in the *Illustrated American* chiefly on the ground that they pretend to be written from a "Mormon" standpoint, and that thus the public are misled and the people whom I represent are correspondingly injured. For, while objection might reasonably be made to the many misrepresentations those articles contain, yet they are principally old stories retold and they have been often disproved. But when they are attributed to a "Mormon" source, their falsehood becomes doubly shameful and they can only be characterized as cowardly and contemptible.

The editorial remarks that have accompanied them follow the line and lead to the end they have in view. They credit the "Mormons" with lives which are "models of decorum." Yet they assert that the "Mormons" massacred men, women and children at Mountain Meadows. The same people who are held up to admiration for their honesty, truth and fidelity to their religion, are accused of "a policy of deception," and while yielding to the demands made upon them at a great sacrifice of feeling, they are charged with defying the government, "flinging down the gauntlet," and wanting and preparing to fight.