

"MURDERED BY MORMONS."

THE Philadelphia *Press* of August 11th contained a blood-curdling special dispatch from St. George, Utah, in which particulars were given of an alleged wholesale murder. A rancher named Richard Bell, living with his wife and two sons six miles from St. George, were said to have been found dead in their beds and evidently murdered in their sleep, the man and his wife with their heads crushed, and the boys with their throats cut from ear to ear.

The veracious dispatcher related several particulars with a view to show that Bell was an anti-"Mormon," that several threats had been made by the "Mormons" and two attacks had been made upon him on which his assailants were worsted. From this the *Press* was led to publish the account, with the flaming headlines: "Murdered by Mormons," and "A whole family put out of the way while asleep for their anti-"Mormon" views."

We should probably have taken no notice of this sanguinary but stale and "fishy" tale except for the fact that we have received letters asking whether there is any foundation for it. We have made diligent inquiries and can learn nothing but that the general opinion is it is a hoax. The attaches of the United States Marshal's office regard it in this light, and knew nothing about it but what has found its way into the papers.

Such stories are occasionally furnished to the eastern press, and are circulated with evil intent. They are concocted by malicious "Liberals," who have been encouraged in their vile work by the local common receptacle for such effusions. And when the chances are that detection would soon follow, if their falsehoods found place in the Salt Lake budget of slander, they are forwarded to some paper at a distance.

The *Press*, in its sensational headlines, has jumped to a conclusion drawn only from inference. The statement was not made in the body of the dispatch that the murder was committed by "Mormons," but the circumstances were so related that this idea might rationally arise from them.

It is not very likely that the Philadelphia *Press* will make any contradiction of this canard, or take any pains to trace out and expose its libellous informant. That is not usually the way with such papers. But, nevertheless, we consider it the duty of a respectable journal to frankly acknowledge an error when it is pointed out, and to rebuke—in private if not in a public way, the inventor of falsehood who seeks to

vent his spleen upon an innocent community.

We will say for the information of the press of the United States, that there are no people living who are more averse to the shedding of human blood than the Latter-day Saints, commonly called "Mormons," and that in their faith the crime of murder committed by one of their number is unpardonable. The stories that have been invented by their enemies are numerous and atrocious, and the sensational accounts of their complicity in crime, which are believed by many people, are in most instances as destitute of foundation as the canard "Murdered by Mormons" which appeared in the Philadelphia *Press*. The Bell of the St. George sensation is nothing more than a "chestnut" bell.

A LESSON IN POLITICS.

In the preface to the Von Moltke memoirs which are attracting much attention through the press at this moment the Prussian general observes that, "generally speaking it is no longer the ambition of monarchs which endangers the peace. It is the passions of the people, the strife of parties and the intrigues of their leaders which cause a declaration of war."

As an apology for the ancient fashion of setting up a hereditary title for the fountain head of political authority this may or may not be acceptable argument. Its logic or the want of it on that point is not relevant to the conditions of this continent. Whether a hereditary monarch might or might not be more dreadful than partisan passion and intrigue as a promoter of war does not affect the problems that rise up in the path of seekers after liberty, because they have passed upon the question of political authority by right of birth, and the decision is final so far as they are concerned.

There is notwithstanding a principle of truth in the citation which freemen have as great occasion to reflect upon as the subjects of the Emperor. Because at every step which the friends of liberty have taken in the establishing of a people's government they have encountered these very objects of terror—the passions of the people and the intrigues of their partisan leaders.

It is a melancholy fact that the people of this great republic who are undoubtedly farther advanced in the principles of freedom than any people living, are still far from comprehending the danger of popular passion and the intrigues of partisanship. They do not yet begin

to realize that the passport of the partisan intriguer into the places of authority which he craves only for personal ends is his power over the passions of the unthinking masses. And so are they continually training at the heels of chronic candidates for office, who are the last men in the nation that ought to be entrusted with power.

People in a passion are not, as a rule, the very best judges of patriotism. They mistake too often the candidate's lung power and audacity for patriotism.

It is the machinations of this sort of candidates that Von Moltke alludes to as the "intrigues of party leaders which cause a declaration of war."

Through the power of personal calumny, ridicule and the low witticisms of political campaigns which are particularly taking with crowds, a class of men are working their way into the highest offices of the country who have not an atom of patriotism in their hearts. Their purposes are thoroughly selfish and their methods thoroughly corrupt and degrading to the public trust that is given them. As a rule they would not hesitate to sacrifice the dearest rights and interests of a community, or the most sacred institutions of their country, for the promotion of their private ambitions. Such men would not hesitate, if their was a private gain in the transaction to involve the country in any calamity, and all in the name of the people and their country.

As a rule, therefore, the best blood of the nation is not in office. It spurns the degrading ordeal of slander and low vituperation to which the gauntlet of "running for office" subjects them. If the people should thrust summarily aside every man that raises his voice in the pursuit of office, they might deprive themselves of the services of some good men, and in seeking out from the unaspiring throng the men to whom they shall entrust the cares of State, they might make some serious mistakes; but mistakes would not be near so common or so grave, and State and national disasters so frequent if the latter were the absolute rule.

It is rarely that a man will thrust himself into the face of the people as a candidate unless he has some selfish motive in doing so, and selfishness in office is the poison of free government.

GENERAL AND SPECIAL INSPIRATION

WE GIVE space today to another communication from Mr. Charles Ellis, on the subject of freethinkers, infidels and agnostics. However, it contains nothing that we care to comment upon, except this sentence: