

favor of shooting. The "Mormon" idea is that a murderer's blood should be shed in expiation, as far as possible, of his deadly crime, which we regard as "a sin unto death." This is the "blood atonement" about which so much noise and nonsense has been made by our unscrupulous opponents. We do not believe in that death-bed or gallows repentance which is preached by those "blind leaders of the blind" who pretend to fit blood-stained villains in five minutes for the society of the spotless Christ. It is an invention of gospel-mongers and unauthorized priests of man-made religions. There are sinners whom it is impossible to renew by repentance, and the decree is that "whoso sheddeth man's blood, of him also shall man's blood be shed." This is the only personal atonement that a murderer can offer for his irreparable crime. How far it will answer remains for the Judge of all the earth to determine, in the light of all the facts and a comprehension of all the motives.

The *Herald* in another article makes reference to the statement of Hon. George Q. Cannon on this subject, and casts doubt upon it. That gentleman explained to a reporter the doctrine of "blood atonement" believed in by the "Mormon" people, as the lawful shedding of the blood of persons convicted of capital crime. The *Herald* claims that,

Concisely stated, it is that Mormons are authorized as a religious duty to assassinate anybody indicated by the Church leaders as an apostate against whom they have decreed that fate.

In support of this charge an isolated passage is quoted from one of President Young's discourses, in which he states that he has known men who had left this church "for whom there was no chance whatever of exaltation; but if their blood had been shed it would have been better for them." Such quotations, mingled with remarks intended to wrest them from their true intent have often been published. But, they only serve to show the malice of the persons who make such charges as that we clip from the *New York Herald*.

The truth is that the Latter-day Saints or "Mormons" do not hold any such bloody and murderous doctrine as that couched in the above sentence. They never did entertain such a monstrous idea. It is utterly opposed to the doctrines of the Church laid down in the published standards of the faith. Neither can it be legitimately deduced from the discourses of President Young or any other Church leader. We will go further than that. If such a doctrine could be drawn from those discourses it would make no difference to the position. It would not be and could not be a doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, because it would be in diametrical opposition to the principles and tenets established as Church doctrine by direct revelation from God. No man's opinions are equal to those revelations. The Church is not governed by the views of any individual. The revelations of God are a law unto the Church. Nothing less than a revelation from the same source can supersede that which has been accepted by the Church as the word of the Lord.

The Latter-day Saints are not "tossed to and fro and carried about with every kind of doctrine." They have that "unction from above which teacheth all things, which judgeth all things," and which "guides into all truth," and the word of man is not enough for them on any point. This is not and cannot be understood by those unacquainted with our faith, the order of the Church of Christ, the authority of the Holy Priesthood, and the general inspiration of the Holy Ghost, by which every man who does the will of the Father may himself know of the doctrine taught, whether it be of God or uttered by the wisdom, folly or personal whims of the speaker. It has been represented that our leaders claim and are accorded infallibility; that everything they say is taken for God's word; that their orders are sufficient to condemn a person to death; and other such absurd powers are imputed to them as Church authorities. These ideas are altogether foreign to the very genius of our faith, and never entered into the framework of our creed or constitution of our system. They are purely the manufacture of our enemies who demonstrate the weakness of their cause by never contenting themselves with the truth in any of their assaults.

"Blood atonement," as believed in by the "Mormons," is that doctrine of vicarious sacrifice to the sinless voluntary victim of which all the offerings of the Mosaic law and of the patriarchal period pointed as the substance of which they were but the shadow. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin." And for that sin which is unto death, that the most loving and merciful of the Apostles could not advise praying for, knowing that it was past forgiveness, the only valid offering that the criminal can make is his own life's blood poured out upon the ground in willing expiation. Let anti-"Mormons" make of this what they please. But let no man who values the truth, ever repeat the falsehood uttered by the *New York Herald*, for it is not, and never has been, a doctrine practiced or believed in by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

### "BLOOD ATONEMENT."

THE execution of Sindram, the cool and deliberate murderer, who met his death with brute courage corresponding to the brute ferocity that characterized his crime, gave occasion to the *New York Herald* to comment upon the horrible method of executing criminals convicted of capital offences, adopted in this enlightened and "Christian" country. A physician who witnessed the hanging declared that Sindram's neck was not broken, and that he had never seen a man's neck broken by hanging. The *Herald* remarks:

"That is equivalent to saying that we strangle our murderers to death instead of killing them outright, and no one who has noted physicians' reports on executed criminals will doubt this horrible statement is true. The modern world shivers all over at the mention of burnings of criminals and martyrs, although a man surrounded by flame cannot live more than three or four minutes; what, then, can be said in favor of a nation so barbarous that its criminals are executed by a system of torture so deliberate that life lingers for ten, fifteen, twenty or even thirty minutes after the choking process begins?"

In Utah a condemned murderer has the choice of his method of death, and it is generally made in