Recollections of Past Days
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EMIGRATION.—Although the principles of the Gospel as taught by the Latter-day Saints are ancient, having existed before the foundations of the earth were laid, and having been given to Adam as the only guide to Salvation, yet, strange to say, they are new to mankind at the present day. If the principles are strange, the events which must transpire to bring them into practice must be equally novel and wonderful, and calculated to arrest the attention not only of those who feel directly interested, but of those who gape like the fool without knowing why, and wonder while they perish.

When the Perpetual Emigrating Fund Company was first organized its success elicited the deepest interest of those who sought the welfare of Zion. Its first operations in 1852, were looked upon by many as events which would decide its success or failure. The trials it has passed through have proved its utility and the wisdom displayed in its organization, and laid the foundation for more extensive operations. The plan about to be adopted by the P. E. Fund Company, of substituting handcarts for ox-teams in crossing the plains, has been under consideration for several years. The plan proposed is novel, and, when we allow our imaginations to wander into the future and paint the scenes that will transpire on the prairies next summer, they partake largely of the romantic. The plan is the device of inspiration, and the Lord will own it and bless it. Those who are ready to adopt it in faith and confidence will find that many supposed obstacles will disappear, and real ones be readily overcome.

In years that have passed, many predictions have been uttered by the servants of God, that the time would come when thousands would flee to Zion, and rejoice to get there with nothing but their lives, and not only Saints, but honourable men of the earth, would seek refuge there from the desolations which would sweep over the nations.
And why has this been prophesied? Because it was revealed that it must come to pass in the natural course of events, in the great work of restoration in the last days. Shall those prophecies be fulfilled, and thereby add another lasting testimony that these men were Prophets of the Most High? Yes, we believe is the echo from the thousands of Israel scattered in the midst of the nations, who are longing for redemption from the perils that are gathering around them.

We do not doubt but that a multitude of the faithful are ready to do anything, or gather to the Mountains in any way that may be opened before them, and that will best subserve the interests of this work. The sacrifices and exertions they are willing to make are the constant measure of their faith and appreciation of the blessings of salvation. Those who are willing to do anything required of them to get to Zion are the very ones most likely to obey counsel after they arrive there. And every difficulty which the increase of the work and the perils of the times throws in the path of the emigrating Saints, is another guarantee that fewer hypocrites and apostate spirits will be mixed up with the Saints in Utah, to work iniquity and prove enemies in the day of trouble.

Important, and, to the Saints, long expected events are coming to pass with a rapidity that keeps one’s mind on the stretch to comprehend. It will not do for them to be behind the times. More speedy measures must be devised for strengthening Zion, and preparing for the important events of an immediate future. The system of ox-trains is too slow and expensive, and must give way to the telegraph line of handcarts and wheel-barrows. In a short time emigrants will look back and wonder how they could have clung so long to their heretofore slow and laborious system of crossing the plains. It would be much more economical both in time, labour, and expense, if, instead of spending several weeks to obtain, and accustom to the yoke, a lot of wild, ungovernable cattle, impairing the health of many of the brethren by excessive labour and fatigue, and bringing disease and death into the camps by long delays on the miasmatic banks of the Missouri river, on the arrival of a company of Saints on the frontier they could have the necessary hand-carts ready, and load them, and be 200 or 300 miles on their journey, with the same time and labour that would otherwise be expended in getting started. It is only to those who have traveled the plains with ox teams, that the advantages of doing without them will appear in all their force. They alone can realize what it is to get up on a sultry morning—spend an hour or two in driving up and yoking unruly cattle, and while impatiently waiting to start on the dusty, wearisome road, in order to accomplish the labours of the day in due time, hear the word passed around that some brother has an ox missing, then another hour, or perhaps half of the day, is wasted, and finally, when ready to start, the pleasantest time for travelling has passed,
during which a company with hand-carts would have performed the
greater part of an ordinary day’s journey. There being but few animals
in a hand-cart company, there will be less to tempt the cupidity of the
Indians—a large share of that most laborious and harassing duty—guard-
ing—can be dispensed with, and the time occupied with sleep and
refreshment—with songs of rejoicing and prayer. The anxieties of mind
about losing cattle by stampedes, poisonous water, and exhaustion will
be avoided. It may be safely considered that the extra time and labour of
a company that will be required to get started with an ox train, and take
care of the cattle, aside from that spent in actual travelling, will enable
the same company with a hand-cart to every five persons, loaded with
five or six hundred pounds, on starting, to accomplish two-thirds of the
journey, and besides, it will reduce the cost of emigration from Britain to
two-thirds of what it is at present at most, and after the first year probably
to one half. This greatly decreased amount of indebtedness on the part
of the emigrating Saints will be much to their pecuniary advantage after
their arrival in Utah.

In adopting the plan proposed, instead of using ox-teams for cross-
ing the plains, two or three months of valuable time may be saved to the
emigrant. Taking 15 miles as the average rate per day at which a com-
pany with hand-carts would travel, the journey would be performed in
70 days. This is about two weeks less than the time usually occupied by
ox-trains. Companies starting from England in February or March, gener-
ally arrive on the Frontier about the first of May. Instead of waiting there
for the grass to grow, and to purchase cattle, and being delayed until the
middle of June, or late in July, they might start immediately and arrive
in the Valley by the middle or last of that month, and thus save two or
three months of the most valuable season of the year. They would then
be in time to assist in gathering in the crops, and provide themselves with
bread and necessaries for the winter. Where a man has no family this will
save sufficient time to pay for his emigration. If the companies average
twenty miles per day on the last half of the journey, it will reduce the time
to sixty days, or two-thirds of that occupied by heavily loaded ox trains. We
believe that experience will prove sixty days to be about the medium time
that it will require to cross the plains.

When it is taken into consideration that three persons can in future
be emigrated in the place of two under the previous system, the advan-
tages of the plan now proposed cannot be calculated, and will only be
made manifest in the developments of the future. They will then only be
realized by those who enjoy the spirit of revelation, and watch closely the
great chain of cause and effect in the progress of the Kingdom of God.

The question will perhaps be asked, “Why has not this plan been
adopted before?” Some of the reasons are obvious. The route to Utah
is becoming more generally known, and there are many men who are familiar with its advantages and disadvantages, and capable of judging what can be done, and able to assist in carrying out new plans in a safe and judicious manner. For some distance on the first part of the road the country is being settled by the whites, which will soon save the emigration the trouble of hauling all their provisions from the Missouri river. The Saints in Utah are becoming every year more abundantly able to assist the emigration with teams and provisions on the latter part of the journey—of this, President Young gives the most cheering assurance—and last, but greatest of all, the faith of the Saints and the spirit of gathering has increased, and thousands now see the necessity of emigrating, and are willing to make any sacrifices for its accomplishment, who have heretofore felt quite indifferent, and as though, if they could not go pretty comfortably, they would rather not go at all.

One object of the P. E. Fund Company from the commencement of its operations has been to bring the expenses of the emigration down to the means of the greatest possible number. Another has been, to a considerable extent, to select mechanics and persons best calculated to build up and strengthen new settlements, and also those who could mostly help themselves, until the Saints were firmly established in their new home, and able to effectually carry out the ultimate design of the Company. Now the time has arrived when the funds of the Company can be applied to their legitimate object, and the faithful, long suffering poor are the special objects of regard. Plans are being devised to effect the deliverance of the greatest possible number of these with the means at the disposal of the Company. This is the great object to be attained, and for which hand-carts are to take the place of ox-teams.

Every year the way opens up in proportion as the spirit of gathering increases, and the faith of the Saints enables them to overcome the increased difficulties and trials of the journey. The difficulties of gathering, and the amount of toil and hardship which the Saints will be willing to endure to get to Zion, have only begun to be developed. As there are no doubt many who years ago might have gone comfortably on their own means, but now would rejoice in the opportunity of getting there with hand-carts, so there will be thousands in years to come who will be glad to flee there on foot, ragged and destitute, with a bundle under their arms, and nothing but a crust of bread to eat. Many who read this will live to see that time, and be overtaken in those scenes, unless they use all possible diligence.

Many men have travelled the long and weary journey of 2000 miles from the Missouri river to California on foot, and destitute, in order to obtain a little of the shining dust—to worship at the shrine of Mammon.
Who that appreciates the blessings of the Gospel would not be willing to endure as much and more, if necessary, in order to dwell with the righteous and reap the riches of eternal life? The Mahomedan will perform a long and weary pilgrimage of months and even years, and make every sacrifice that human nature can endure, to kiss the tomb of his prophet, and bring away a relict from the holy city of Mecca. The Roman Catholic will endure severe penance with the hope of saving his soul from purgatory. The Hindoo devotee will suffer self-inflicted tortures of the most excruciating nature, to obtain the favour of his imaginary deity. And modern Christians, who trust to the frail bubble of a hope for salvation, will often endure much to prove their honesty or purpose. Then shall not Saints, who have the revelations of heaven—the testimony of Jesus—the preludes of eternal joys—and can partake of the powers of the world to come—be ready to prove by their works that their faith is worth more than the life of the body—the riches of the world—the phantoms of paganism—the creed of the false prophet, or the imaginary fantasies of modern sectarianism.

Although we are unable at this time to present our readers with the plan of our operations the ensuing season, we will endeavour to give a few facts which will enable them to answer some of the daily questions arising in their minds on that important subject.

All orders for persons to emigrate, by the P. E. Fund, to insure our attention, must come from the President of the Company. The funds of the Company can only be applied to aid those who go directly through to Utah, under the direction of its agents, and cannot be applied to aid any going only to the United States.

The Company cannot, as it did last year, lend indiscriminately those who have ten, eleven, or twelve pounds sufficient to go through with teams, as the funds of the Company must be appropriated to aid those who have proven themselves worthy by long-continued faithfulness in the Church, whether they can raise any means of their own or not. These must be brought, so long as we can act within the means of the Company, no matter if they have not a sixpence in the world.

Last year, in order to accommodate the feelings of the Saints, and enable them to cross the sea with their friends and acquaintances, we sent Fund passengers with others on the same ship, but experience proved that the trouble and inconveniences arising therefrom more than counterbalanced the advantages. Therefore this season the P. E. Fund passengers will go in companies by themselves from here to the frontier.

Persons ordered out through the President of the P. E. Fund Company, and who decline going, are reported back to him annually, with their reasons why. As on the arrival of such reasons the funds are
liable to be otherwise appropriated, we do not feel authorized to forward the parties afterwards unless the order for them has been renewed.

THE POOR. ——— The season of the year has now arrived when hunger and want press heavily upon the poor. Many of the Saints we are aware are in very destitute circumstances, and have to suffer in common with the multitudes that surround them. The Pastors and Presidents are specially required to see that arrangements are made in all the Conferences and Branches to prevent the diligent Saints from suffering in this inclement season from hunger and cold. “But whoso has this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” Let the Saints who have impart to those who have not, and remember that he that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord, who in due time will repay him with increase.

DEPARTURE. ——— The ship John J. Boyd cleared on the 10th inst. for New York with 508 souls of the Saints on board, of whom 437 were from Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, 30 from Piedmont, and 41 from Great Britain.

The prices of passage on the Emerald Isle and the John J. Boyd were £4 5s. for adults, £3 5s. for children, and 10s. for infants. . . .