REMARKS

                                                                                    By President Brigham Young, delivered to a company of emigrants on the

                            Public Square, G. S. L. City, Tuesday Evening, June 30, 1863.

                                                           Reported by J. V. Long

According to the request of a couple of gentlemen that were at my office, I have come down for the purpose of saying a few words to the emigration now upon this square.  In probability I am an entire stranger to you in person, but not in character; you are strangers to me.  No doubt you have heard much of me and of this people that reside here in these valleys of the Mountains.

I have traveled far to talk to people, thousands and thousands of miles I have traveled on foot to speak to congregations.  I have traveled by sea and by land, by railroads, by rivers and in all the various methods of travel expressly for the purpose <of>  and to have the privilege of talking to a congregation such as I have before me, finding them at their homes and me from mind.  I have done this to lay before the inhabitants of the earth the principles of life and salvation, for which I and my brethren are here in these mountains, not that we could have remained strangers to these valleys, or that it was our choice to come here, but it was a place apparently that no person would trouble us in, but that we should be let alone to enjoy our opinions without molestation.

We are here on the high way to the pacific ocean.  When we came here there was no track to travel; we did not know that there ever would be; we expected to be isolated, but really since the opening of the gold mines we have been in the centre of travel.  We have supplied the travelers with what they wanted; a great many of them have become acquainted with the settlers of these valleys.  We are here because it seemed to be the only place for us to settle in peace.  We still live here; we wish to enjoy peace and quietness.  It is our desire to take that course that will ensure to ourselves and to all the human family peace on earth, good will to the people.

I do not know what you have heard about us and our people generally, neither do I care.  I am as careless probably about the sayings of the people as any man that lives.  If I can manage to live with and near our friends and neighbors so that my conscience will be void of offence and I can serve my God according to the revelations given to man in former and in latter days, and enjoy ourselves unmolested.  This is what we desire.  I have many times assisted the emigration by my advice and counsel, and from the time men commenced to travel to the gold mines many have called upon me for my counsel, many difficulties have been brought to me and my friends for adjustment, and we have always done the best we could to aid and assist them in the settlement of their difficulty and troubles.

I know no difference with regard to politics and the social enjoyments of communications of the people generally.  although the religion that I believe in is strange to many upon the earth, but I have never urged any person to receive it.  That is not the object of the creator; we are our own agents before our Father in heaven; we have the privilege of doing good, of extending the hand of charity to our fellow beings, or of withholding that hand and of enduring the remorse of conscience consequent upon our conduct.

The emigration in previous years have traveled as the people do this year, in danger, not particularly from the red man but from one another.  We have had companies that have come through here that have hung up one another; we have had wounded men come through here, and many have been killed, others have suffered with sickness; we have treated them kindly.  In many instances we have had to guide and direct them so that they might go free of the red man.  This year is a season that you are in danger, but I can promise you one thing.  Some of you may have crossed this continent and you may some little about traveling among Indians.  But you take the Indians, become acquainted with them and know their feelings and spirits and you will find as large a proportion that have good feelings and spirits as among the whites.  I am acquainted with many of them, and this community have endeavored to use an influence with them, to teach not to shed blood, but to live at peace with each other and with the whites.  We have done this so that you in the east and those in the west might be able to travel without molestation, without one man preying upon another.

Where have we had an instance of any settlements being made as peaceably as these have here?  We have come here and striven to live in peace.  Look at the difficulties that attended the settling of the early colonies; then look upon the western shore, and see the contrast.  If you had before you the history of the doings of the first settlers of Sacremento and San Francisco it would present a horrid picture.  Then there is one town that has become so notorious for its deeds of blood, and the enormous waste of human life that it is called hang town.  This name was given to it because the people hung so many without Judge or jury, and in other respects taken the law into their own hands.  We have had nothing of this kind to contend with in the settlements of these valleys.

Now if you are cautious and careful, always on your guard you will have no trouble on your journey.  We have traveled over the whole of this western mountainous country.  I have been over these mountains on the east, I have traveled over those on the west<ern>, on north and on the south.  I have been north as far as Salmon river, in Oregon, and many times through the extent of this Territory south, and I have no trouble with the lndians. no difficulty at all.  How do we avoid the difficulties that others get into?  We travel in companies with proper organizations, and we do not permit Indians to run into our camp when they please, but we treat them kindly, and thereby make friends of them.  You do likewise, have your organization; keep your horses under a strong guard and then you will be safe.  It appears that you have traveled thus far without molestation; you may continue to travel so.  My counsel <is> to you is travel in peace and in quietness.  Let every man have a feeling to secure the rights of his neighbor, and when a difficulty springs up among persons interpose with feelings of kindness; bind yourselves together with that filial feeling that should bind men to each other.

My opinion I will freely give you with regard to the inhabitants of the earth.  They do not understand their own existence.  I do not think that man was created to rise up and kill his fellow being; it is contrary to the character of Him that created us and that controls this earth.  We have our agency, but my opinion is that that is not according to the character of human beings that stand erect as you and I do, and if we believe the Bible, though there are but few who do believe it, we must believe that it is his character to do all things for the good of his creatures, and we must believe that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and of our spirits is such a person that we are created in his express image. <and this> Jesus said to his disciples "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." It is also said of Jesus that he is the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person.  And in short we are all created in the image of our Heavenly Father, and war and strife are not pleasing to him.

Now you are going right into an Indian country, if you act wisely you will have no difficulty.  Appoint your Captains of hundreds, of fifties and of tens, as the circumstances may require; have a strong police or guard with each company; guard your stock and your camp.  If you see an Indian give him a biscuit instead of half an ounce of lead, then they will be your friends.  I should not be a particle afraid.

When we first came to this valley we were surrounded with a company of Indians; we found them in a state of nudity.  We did not kill them; we delt justly with them, and we have always been kind to them.  On account of our kindness they were ready to drive up our horses for us and they felt kindly disposed.  Still they have those bad men with them that will kill and steal, yes they will kill one another; but if we make friends with the good we shall succeed.  If we do that which is right, actly with the whole human family we think that notwithstanding the wickedness that is in the world we shall live to see the good overcome the evil, and then wars and bloodshed will cease for ever from troubling and afflicting the human race.

Now if you will recollect and carry out what I say to you I will warrant you through safe, and I say that not a man, woman or child will be lost, neither will you lose any animals.  I will tell you of one thing, it may be improper but it is but days since the Indians killed a couple of mail drivers.  What was it for?  The Indians say it was the whites who caused and gave the first provocation.  It is now said, however, that peace has been made, and if those persons that we generally denominate soldiers will let the Indians alone the red men say that they will steal no more, and that they will not kill any more.  The Indians say this from the east and west, from the north and south.  Now I say there has been an influence used with some of the Indians by wicked white men which has caused them to do many things which they would not otherwise have done.  And there are a few Indians that are wickedly disposed, just as it is among all white settlements.  There is one Indian called San Pitch, they call him chief, well, he is the chief of robbers.  We have tried to use a good and wholesome influence with the Indians to prevent them committing depredations on the traveling whites, and we have done good, but we never could use or obtain any influence with him and some few others; but the majority have manifested a willingness to cease their depredations.

Now, gentlemen, you can do just as you please, in regard to your treatment to these Indians, but when you see those poor, wretched, degraded beings think, and ask yourselves these questions: Do they not stand erect as we do?  Whose children are they?  Where do they belong?  Will you treat them as so many animals?  This is not my feeling.  See if they do not stand as well and do.  Do they belong to the brute creation?  to the reptiles?  No, they do not.  Then treat them as human beings; treat them as friends, and if you treat them as friends you will find them to be friendly to you, and you will have no trouble with them.

I do not know what you find here; there are plenty of persons visit this camp ground, and I suppose they will furnish you all you need of grain, hay, flour, and such articles as you require to make yourselves comfortable, and I think they will do this at reasonable prices.  I trust they will act as gentlemen.  I may here say, however, that we have both men and women, and in fact there are a great many such in the world, and there are a few that are mormons, not saints, that will cheat you if they can.  I cannot say positively, but I suppose you have some that are not as they should be.  We have some few that infest this community that will steal your horses, if they get a good opportunity, at least if we have not it is a blessing that they are gone out of the country.  We have been plagued with the worst characters that disgrace the footstool of the Almighty, and we have some that have come here and joined the Church and professed to be saints; by and bye we hear of them in California with a drove of horses which they have stolen from our citizens.  Men residing here find that their horses are gone, no trace can be found of them.  We have always had such characters and we expect always to have them while there are any such beings permitted to disgrace this earth.

Now, gentlemen and ladies I have not imposed any of my religion upon you, but I will say live as gentlemen and ladies.  I will also say to you with regard to the influence that I have with the Latter Day Saints, for I can let you into the secret and show you how any man can gain an influence of this kind over people.  Tell the people to do right, teach them what right is, and point out to them the advantage of doing right, teach them how to govern and control themselves in a manner that will produce good to themselves and to their fellow creatures.  This is the whole secret.  I have no influence outside of this.  Deal justly with one another, teach men and women the propriety of doing that which is right to each other, of respecting the rights of others.  The whole secret consists in teaching the people correct principles, for then they will govern themselves.

I do not ask you to be Latter Day Saints, but I will tell you what I would like you to do when you leave here, if you see any good don't be afraid of speaking of it; don't say as some have done that we are all cut throats.  There are just as good people here as there are in the world, and there are a few of these miserable cut throats such as infest all communities.  I also know that there are thousands of good, moral people in the world, just as good as there are here, so far as their morality is concerned, but we have the oracles of God, the principles of divine truth, and we expect to find favor in the eyes of the good.  But we do not ask you to embrace what we have embraced, but embrace and carry out what is wholesome -- a good moral religion, and if you will do this you will do first rate; it goes a great deal further than most people of.  I could tell the whole inhabitants of the earth, if they were before me, that they will be judged according to what they do.  I could tell the world that when they commit sin of an heinous nature they will be called to an account for that.  If they are murders they will be judged for that according to the law which says that "No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." How many times you and I have been notified of the deeds of such characters by the newspapers and by pamphlets, setting forth that such a man had murdered such an individual, had repented in his last moments of life and got forgiveness!  It is all nonsense; such men will be judged according to the deeds done in the body; they must pay the debt.  If such a man confess his sin it is so far well, but he must pay the debt, for wherein the inhabitants of the earth commit sin they will be punished for it; if they confess their guilt they will be so far justified before God.

This is a good moral religion that I am advising you to observe.  When you get over to where you are going you will settle down, some upon farms, others will go to various branches of mechanism, and what a good thing it will be for you to have so conducted yourselves on your journey as to make everlasting friends of each other.  With this in view treat each other right, be kind to one another; then when you settle down you wilI visit each other for years and years, and your children after you with the affection of brothers and sisters.  In this way seek each other's welfare; help each other all you can, and in this way you will become a band of brethren.

This does not make you Methodists, members of the Church of England, Baptists, or any thing of this kind, but simply good citizens of the world.

You and I help to compose and form part of the inhabitants of the earth.  We are here to act as human beings.  By doing so we avoid trouble, we make friends of and for each other for ever.

Now I am not going to talk much more to you; I do not want to preach to you; this is not my object nor design.

The inhabitants of these valleys are here from necessity; you can read our history, if you have not already done so; but suffice it to say that we are here and calculate to stay here.  We have an abundance of grain and vegetables; no country that I ever saw or became acquainted with that is so natural as this is for producing almost every variety of fruit.  I was raised in one of the best fruit countries there is in America, and I have been accustomed to eat as good fruit as the New York Markets afforded, and the flavor of the fruit here is superior to any that I ever tasted before.

Well, we hope we shall be able to supply you with fruit and grain when you go back.  Many of you, I am told, are leaving your farms and other property behind you.  Can't you sympathyze with us a little?  (Laughter and nods of assent.) I have a large amount of property in the State of New York, also in Missouri and Illinois, but I was obliged to leave it, and I suppose you can now sympathyze with me and others in like circumstances.  When you want <you> to go back you will be able to get supplies here I expect.  We are going back one of these    days,but we are not going to vacate this place; we shall leave a larger settlement than there is nere now.

It is a good deal like the old story that is told about Noah. When he was building the Ark he saw a friend going by and invited him to stay and go into the Ark for there was going to be flood.  O, his friend said he guessed it was only going to be a little shower.  After a while he came along again, Noah  <hollor> called to him and asked him if he did not see the rain coming. O no, says the old man, it is only a light shower.  By and bye the water <it> got up to knees, and still it was only a shower.  When the water got up to his neck he came along and, just panting for breath, said Mr. Noah can't you take me in?  No, says Noah, the doors are all shut, it is too late.  Well by and bye it will be too late for many in this nation.  It is and will be sorrow, sorrow, sorrow.  To avoid this let us live in peace, and all will be well with us.

I do not know whether I am right, but I suppose that the emigration of the present season is composed of men that wish to raise their own grain, to live in peace.  You may ask if we are for peace.  Yes, we are, and we have good peace here; and I rather think that the people that want to go away from the scenes of war in the east are not bloodthirsty, but I think they would like to get a farm each and settle down in peace, or go to work at some mechanical profession.  You must be the judges, but I rather think it is so.

Well, gentlemen and ladies, may the blessings of peace attend you; may you have a safe journey, and when you get through try to do right, and speak the truth when you are called upon to speak of this people; and in conclusion I will say God bless you with all that can be blessed. I have no more to say.