

Probably no city in the United States has done less for its own adornment, and has taken less forethought for its future beauty, well being or the pleasure of its citizens, than Portland. Parks, boulevards, fountains, etc., are to be seen almost everywhere save in this city, which might, if it would, rival them all. To be sure, we have a city park in the rough, which, even if beautified as it should be, will be woefully inadequate to our needs ten years hence, and we have one fountain, the gift of a departed citizen, but we have no grand avenue, though possessing facilities for making one of surpassing magnificence. Through the heart of the city, from the hills on the south to H street on the north, a distance of one and one half miles, runs a tract one hundred feet wide, dedicated to the public as a park. For the purpose to which it is devoted it is practically useless, as a long, narrow strip of that kind can never be utilized as a park, but for a grand avenue it is most eminently fitted, and at a comparatively small expense Portland could make here one of the grandest driveways in the world, lined on either hand by beautiful shade trees, flowers, foliage plants and ornamental shrubs. The greatest difficulty to be encountered is a legal one, since a diversion of the property from the uses for which it was dedicated to the public can only be done by obtaining the consent of the heirs of the original donors, and by securing title to those blocks between Taylor and A streets, which, owing to legal complications, failed to finally become the property of the public. These latter must be purchased, and to secure a fund for this purpose an idea has been suggested by a prominent attorney who has given much thought to the subject. On either side of the blocks runs a street, and if a strip twenty-five feet wide were vacated by the city council, title to that strip would vest in the owners of the abutting property. Before the vacation ordinance is passed, an agreement could be procured from such property owners to pay into a fund an agreed sum, such fund to be applied upon the purchase of the blocks mentioned. The scheme is perfectly practicable, but would require much patient and zealous effort on the part of some one taking a deep interest in its success. Initial proceedings might be taken by the board of trade, in the appointment of a special committee to take charge of the matter and put it in shape for action by the city council. A better source from which action in this matter could spring would be an improvement association of business men and property owners formed for the special purpose of promoting the improvement of the city, and such a society could find ample scope for its efforts in Portland. The outlines of this scheme have been but suggested here with the hope that some of our enterprising and patriotic citizens will take hold of the matter and see what can be accomplished. That such an ave-

nue would be most desirable, that such a purpose is the best to which the park blocks can be devoted and that this can be done much more cheaply now than at any time in the future, are three considerations that suggest the advisability of immediate action.

The alarming frequency of accidents on the railroads of the northwest because of the efforts of cattle to drive locomotives from the track has become a question of deep public concern. Nearly every state in the union has a statute compelling railroads to fence their right of way and build cattle guards at all crossings, and it is time such a law found its place on our statute books. At common law the railroad company has just the same responsibilities as an individual in the use of its property, and is not only not required to fence its road but is not liable for damages by reason of accidents caused by cattle straying upon the track unless gross carelessness is shown in the management of the train. It was early recognized, however, that a locomotive rushing at great speed along on iron track was a mighty engine of destruction which could not in any way be compared to anything ordinary individuals employed in using their property, and in most states, as in Oregon, statutes were enacted rendering a company liable for all damages resulting from a neglect to fence the track. But most states have gone a step beyond this, and the time has come when this step must also be taken here. Behind the rushing locomotive and completely at the mercy of him who controls the iron horse, are millions of human beings annually, whose lives are too precious to be placed in jeopardy simply to save a railroad company the expense of building a fence along its track. It is not enough that the companies be compelled to pay for all damages inflicted; the chief thing is to render as secure as possible the lives of those who entrust their persons to their care, and so long as the track is open to the approach of cattle, those lives are placed in needless jeopardy. It is a question whether these accidents are not more expensive than would be the construction and maintenance of a fence, and realizing this, the companies may do as a measure of economy what ought to be required of them as a simple matter of public safety. At all events the duty of all legislatures is plain in the matter, and the most rigid laws should be passed and supported with adequate penalties to secure their enforcement.

It is unlawful for cattle, horses, sheep or swine to roam at large through the streets of Portland. The restraint of these creatures within the city limits is demanded as a matter of public and individual safety and convenience and the law is generally observed. A wholesome attempt is being made beyond the Willamette to abate the Salvation Army nuisance, from