

purity of a child's mind, listen to a public address, delivered before a mixed assemblage, dealing with the subjects here alluded to, and in the manner suggested? The same query applies, though possibly with slightly diminished force, to a son of similar age and condition. Obviously the proper way for young people to receive the warning and instruction they need upon these lines is for parents, in the love and confidence which grow out of the relations of parent and child, and with becoming discretion, to impart it. Or the religious instructor, when the occasion is appropriate, and the spirit of his calling so directs, may speak with a degree of plainness.

When an American becomes awakened to the necessity of correcting an evil, his first impulse is to call a mass meeting and raise a hullabaloo. But in some cases a still hunt is better. Would a mass meeting be called for the purpose of pointing out to the assemblage the persons present who were spreading smallpox or leprosy? Every one can understand that such a gathering would be likely to do far more towards spreading than towards curtailing the contagion; and the simile applies, at least in some degree, to miscellaneous congregations assembled for the purpose of listening to a discussion, too free and unguarded, of certain forms of vice.

For reclaiming the abandoned, there is no form of effort so effective as personal interview and persuasion, coupled with quiet and private methods of extending help and encouragement in the way of refuge and employment that will place the lost one in a new and pure atmosphere, where self-respect and reputation may be regained. For warning those who have come under the shadow of temptation, there is no agency so effective as the solemn and affectionate admonition of the parent, privately communicated. If there be no parent that can or will perform this office, then some one else may do it, but the parental method and spirit should be retained. For those who are both ignorant and innocent, nothing is required.

It is not intended here to object to select meetings, either of the sexes separately or together, provided those who attend them are of mature age and fixed habits of morality, and proper methods and limits are observed in discussing vice and in enlisting public sentiment for its suppression. But the "News" insists that the whole subject and its proper manipulation call for sound judgment, conscientious discretion and cautious conservatism.

#### RUSSIAN FARMERS.

Official reports from Russia show that the past year's harvest was to a great extent a failure. The shortage was felt mostly in the districts similarly stricken in 1891, and still struggling under their heavy indebtedness to the government for supplies of food, and it became a veritable disaster, crushing out energy and hope for the future. According to a statement of Acting Consul Smith, the rural population of twenty-one provinces, carrying a debt of \$26,000,000 are now under the necessity of making further loans to meet the deficiency of last year's harvest. The situation is depressing, but is believed to indicate that the Russian farmers cannot for a long time to come reach the financial independence needed for a successful competition with the American farmers.

The Russian tiller of the ground is still virtually a serf. His land is owned by the commune, and it is at intervals redistributed to the families in proportion to the men and women capable of working it. This condition is due to the decree of Alexander II. abolishing

slavery but recognizing that the 20,000,000 serfs owed some compensation to their former masters, and providing the ransom should be paid in labor extending over a period of forty-nine years, or until 1910. To aid the farmers, the government issued to the landlords bonds representing four-fifths of the total payment, leaving the remainder, together with interest at five per cent on the government bonds, to be paid by the people. The commune is responsible for these payments, as well as for all other taxes and dues and levies assessments on the people. With crop failures and the necessity of making new loans, the heavy burdens cannot decrease very rapidly. The Russian tiller of the ground pays heavy for his liberty and remains in the bondage of indebtedness.

#### PIONEER SQUARE.

The initiatory steps have been taken toward making Pioneer square a permanent public park—that is, the matter has been broached in the City Council. This is a most commendable movement and it ought to be carried out as soon as the financial status of the city will permit. At present the square is an unsightly object, being criss-crossed with thoroughfares, stuccoed with cheap structures, bearded with decayed trees and scarified with last year's circus rings; besides which it is a mudhole in wet weather or immediately and for sometime after a thaw, while at no time of the year does it present anything but a disagreeable spectacle. It is historic ground, such a spot as appeals to a feeling deeper and more lasting than mere sympathy, and could with the utmost propriety be set apart as a perpetual memento of the discovery and occupation of the soil upon which a metropolis has grown whose greatness has but just begun.

If the plan is carried out, it would be an excellent idea to reproduce out of the same materials as nearly as possible the identical cabin which gave the first shelter apart from tents to the vanguard of the Pioneers, and upon the self-same spot where the original structure stood, this to be surrounded for a limited extent by sagebrush, a patch of scrub oakbrush and a few specimens of the cactus family. Here would be a standing reminder of the condition of things prevailing in 1847, and its picturesqueness would make it a great attraction to the city besides. All outside of this little space should be laid off in the most approved fashion and ornamented to the fullest extent of good taste and feasibility.

It has been hoped on several occasions, and the hope still lingers in some breasts no doubt, that Pioneer Square would be devoted to railroad purposes. It being thought that its dedication to that end would be an impetus toward the creation of a line to the west such as could not be long resisted. Although the dedication has been made, or at least tendered, more than once, nothing of a practical nature has yet come of it. If there is anything under the infinite azure vault for which the people could afford to let that choice piece of ground go, apart from that first herein set out, and come anywhere near justifying themselves for so doing it would be the turning of it over to those who would cause a real railroad to emanate from the square headed for Deep Creek and the coast. Material progress, especially that class of it relating to natural development and commerce, would be by that project immensely encouraged and stimulated. But if the use thus suggested is not to be made of the land in the near future, the city owes to its birthplace and foundation at least so much respect

and consideration as will redeem it from its present disgraceful appearance.

#### HOME OPERA.

This city and several of the other larger cities in the State have recently had a treat in the form of operatic performances by home talent. The public has enjoyed them immensely, but the expense attending them has been too great to admit of any pecuniary compensation to speak of for those who have taken part in them. In fact about all the pay the singers have received has been the training and experience they have gained.

While the air of the amateur has been a marked feature of these entertainments, it has heightened their charm. The sweet, fresh faces of the chorus girls, so expressive of maidenly pleasure and innocence, and the traces of timidity in their voices that all the training they have received has not removed, more than compensate for any defects that may be shown by comparison with the average traveling opera company.

In the highest sense, the pleasure the public derives from the rendition of opera by home talent is legitimate, and it would be a good thing to gratify the public wish in this direction as often as possible. Among the results would be a training and practice imparted to young people that would do much to develop talent among them. The managers and conductors of this class of entertainments deserve the cordial thanks and recognition and the most generous patronage of the public; for they rarely realize from the box office any adequate remuneration for their time and efforts.

#### TO PREST. WILFORD WOODRUFF

On His Ninety-First Birthday, March 1st, 1898.

With measured and unerring tread  
Old Father Time appears  
With garland for thy honored head,  
Marked one and ninety years;  
To place that garland on thy brow  
Time comes with spirits bright,  
Companions of thy life, who now  
All hail thee with delight.

The giant Faith comes first in view;  
His great and mighty power  
Bath born thee up and led thee through  
The darkest evil hour.  
When Satan filled thy soul with doubt,  
With visions dark and drear,  
Then Faith arose to cast them out  
And banished every fear

When deep distress or troubles great  
Oft bowed thy heart with care;  
When burdens of this mortal state  
Seemed more than man could bear,  
Bright Hope sprang forth with outstretched hand  
To ease thy burden sore.  
With whispers of that better land,  
The bright celestial shore.

When enemies have done thee wrong  
By wicked word or deed;  
Wrongs calling loud for vengeance strong,  
That call thou didst not heed.  
Sweet Charity spake to thy heart  
With love divine and true.  
"Forgive them, 'tis the better part."  
They know not what they do."

Thus oft times when thy path was dark,  
And dangers lurked unknown,  
Some guardian spirit struck the spark,  
Which soon with radiance shone  
The mists and shadows then would flee,  
Thy soul exulting feel  
That light divine was given thee,  
Thy pathway to reveal.

From east, from west, from south and north,  
From islands of the sea,  
Where servants of the Lord go forth,  
Glad greetings come to thee;  
While to the throne of grace ascend  
Sweet sounds of prayer and praise,  
That blessings great may still attend  
To comfort all thy days.

CHARLES STEWART.