

Happily for California the day is never when her prosperity is dependent upon lucky mining strikes. The mineral output of the State for 1900 was over thirty-two million dollars, no inconsiderable sum even in comparison with the great yields of the past, but to-day the State relies upon such a diversity of products that the vicissitudes of mining cannot shake her. In 1900 the value of the cured fruit crop was eleven million dollars, only four million less than the gold output for the same year, and this is but an index of the productiveness in other horticultural and pastoral lines. Wheat, wool, oil, borax, beet-sugar, lumber, and building stone are among the many products which contribute to the wealth of California.

**A BEAUTIFUL CITY.**

Coming back to the city as it stood last week. Occupying as it does the end of a peninsula flanked by ocean and bay, San Francisco is built in a large part upon the hills, which look one way towards the ocean and the other towards the glorious bay of San Francisco, an almost land-locked stretch of water averaging 100ft deep with a bar having a depth of about 30ft. Mud flats formerly ran out from the shifting sand hills, which occupied the water front. The sand hills were cut down and dumped upon the mud flats, and on this made ground the wholesale section of the city has been built. Ships were dismantled, hauled ashore and used as foundations for huge buildings. It is not improbable that it was this section which suffered most severely, since buildings on made ground are always less stable than those built on a natural foundation. In architecture the city is in a transition period, the evolution from canvas to brick and steel through wood still going on. The tents of '49 reluctantly gave place to tents, and the wood has been slow to make way for brick, steel and stone. Wood being plentiful, and the

climate mild, a large number of residences and business places were constructed of timber.

**FEAR OF EARTHQUAKES.**

After the earthquake of 1863, and the minor succeeding shocks, fear of earthquakes was developed, and many low wooden structures were built as being best suited to withstand the shocks. Consequently, San Francisco is of a squat order of architecture with the exception of a number of recently-constructed buildings of wood, brick, steel and stone. The earthquake fear was beginning to die out as the result of the 40 years' immunity from accident. It was noted that in all the city's history the casualties from earthquakes had not been as many as the deaths from sunstroke in a single hour in a city of similar size in other States, and the damage to buildings was not great. A "little jiggle," as the inhabitants were wont to term it, set the nerves tingling at times, but San Franciscans grew to regard these little disturbances with a mild complacency, "We'll keep our earthquakes and let other cities have their sunstrokes and thunderbolts," was the satisfied comment of the citizens; and just when the sense of security was firmly established, it has been uprooted by this severest of all shocks.

Consequent on the dissipation of the earthquake fear a marked betterment has been noticeable in the character of the architecture.

**A MANUFACTURING CENTRE.**

San Francisco is the financial, trade, and educational centre of the entire Pacific Coast, its business being 78 per cent. of the imports and 53 of the exports of the Coast. It is the third port in commercial importance in the States. Its taxable property amounts to four hundred million dollars, and its factories produced 134 million dollars worth of material every year. Wheat forms one of the largest items of export, about a million tons being exported annually. San Francisco's life as a city is but a little more than 50

years, but the growth has been steady and remarkably rapid, enormous increases in population being noted at every census.

**THE WATER-FRONT.**

There was no more cosmopolitan water-front in the world than that of San Francisco. Schooners with five masts all of a size, and with scanty upper rigging, discharged pine from Puget Sound alongside English steel ships deep-laden with coal. Rakish brigs from the South Seas were wont to crowd beside stumpy green flat-bottom sloops which plied in the bay. Clumsy old stern paddle river steamers crossed the tracks of the most up-to-date ferry steamers in the world. Huge wharves and docks run out from the ends of a score and a-half of streets, and the great ferry building, with its many jetties, fills up no small portion of the water line. The most picturesque spot on the harbour is Fishermen's Wharf, where the Greek fishers moor their little decked boats, rigged with graceful lateen sails. Their brown three-cornered sails dot the bay at all hours, returning at sundown like a fleet of seabirds scudding before the wind to their roost, throwing a spell of the Mediterranean over this far haen. The bigger shipping companies have their accustomed wharves, while the usual shipping offices and stores line the harbour front.

**SAN FRANCISCO BUILDINGS.**

During the course of a conversation with a "Post" representative, Mr. Frank Coffee, of Sydney, who is at present on a visit to Wellington, and who was a resident of San Francisco for several years, said that San Francisco had fewer skyscraping buildings than any other city in the United States. It was only of late that the many-storied edifice was being erected in California's capital. The Palace Hotel, which is also amongst the buildings destroyed, was the favourite place of residence of

Australians and New Zealanders, and was a fine structure. St. Frances' Hotel comprises two buildings each thirteen stories high, one of which has just been completed. There are 325,000 people residing inside the city limits, and of these not a few are Italians, Portuguese and Chinese.

**"NEWSPAPER ANGLE."**

Just where the busiest life of San Francisco centres, in Market-street, at the corner of Third Kearny-street and Geary-street, the holocaust has been awful in its completeness. Here were clustered the three morning papers, the "Call," the "Chronicle," and the "Examiner," and close beside stood the Palace Hotel, while the Grand Opera House was within striking distance of the "Call" tower. All these buildings, the costliest and most striking in San Francisco, lie in one confused general ruin, and "Newspaper Angle," the finest architectural feature of the business district, after being levelled by earthquake, has gone up in smoke. The "Chronicle" building was a fine structure of red sandstone and brick, surmounted by a high clock tower. It was ten storeys high, and formed a well-known city landmark. It occupied a commanding, corner position, overlapping its nearest neighbours by many storeys. The "Examiner" building, owned by Mr Wm. Hearst, was built in the Spanish style with simple plaster walls, and deep-recessed portico at the top. It was nine storeys high, and was fitted up in the most up-to-date manner possible. The "Call" building was described yesterday. It stood 19 storeys high, the height to the top of the dome being 310ft, while the main cornice was 210ft above the street level. Its daily population was about 500 souls.

**THE MINT.**

The U.S. Branch Mint, at Fifth and Mission streets, in the business quarter, was a substantial three-storied building, its architecture being a combination

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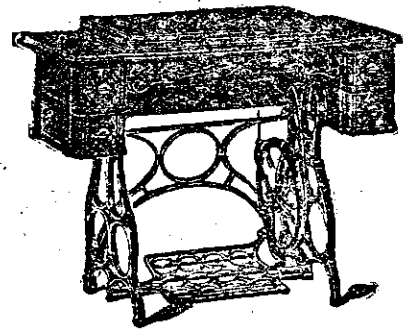
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