

A GREAT NEW SHOPPING DISTRICT

The Skyscrapers of Geary, Post and Sutter Street

LOOKING DOWN SUTTER STREET FROM KEARNY BEFORE THE FIRE

LOOKING INTO GEARY FROM MARKET STREET BEFORE THE FIRE



LOOKING DOWN SUTTER STREET FROM KEARNY TODAY

LOOKING INTO GEARY STREET FROM MARKET TODAY

AN April wind was blowing straight in from the Pacific. It gathered up the brick builders' dust and threw it into her eyes; tugged the short locks loose from their moorings behind her ears, and set her hat askew, but she came in from Pacific heights to the Western addition, entered a new big Post street store and saluted the clerk with a satisfied "O, I'm so glad your store has come downtown again!"

Why was she glad, and why is everybody glad that the retail shops are opening again in the old shopping district?

The merchants themselves first are glad, because of the lower insurance rates and the risk they are running in carrying their valuable stock in the flimsy temporary buildings of wood most of them now occupy along Van Ness avenue and its immediate cross streets.

But there are other diverse and sundry reasons why shoppers are glad. One is because the elegant new skyscrapers in Geary, Post and Sutter streets will cause business to become concentrated and thus enable the busy woman to accomplish much in a short space of time, saving both car fare and temper.

Shopping is a pleasing diversion, a sport, to a great many women and they enjoy it more if the shops are remote from their homes. For such ladies shopping is of sufficient importance to dress specially for it.

Then again, normal women like to go where there are men about, and for this reason the successful retail shops are always to be found in the vicinity of office buildings. This makes it easy for the wife to lunch with her husband or brother or for him to accompany her home after his day's work is done.

Out of town women folk always like to shop in the stores near their hotel. The St. Francis, the Fairmont, the Colonial, Stewart, Holland, Bellevue and a score of new family hotels within a radius of half a mile from the center of this district determine the question of where strangers will shop.

But, after all, the strongest loadstone which pulls San Francisco back to this old shopping region is old habit and association. Evidently these qualities of the mind have had more to do in determining where the different old time activities of the city were to be renewed than hard reason or new enterprise.

Just where is to be the center of the retail section is an indeterminate question; but all points thus far go to prove that Zoeth S. Eldridge, the banker, was near correct when he predicted over a year ago that the magnetic pole of San Francisco finance would be at the intersection of Stockton and O'Farrell streets.

New Shopping Center

The Orpheum is to be permanently located on O'Farrell street near Stockton and the Emporium is going back to its old location in Market street, a block from there; Roos Bros. have decided to locate at the corner of Stockton and Market streets, a stone's throw away, and the D. Samuels lace house company is putting up its own building on the northwest corner of Stockton and O'Farrell streets, and they purpose to move in as soon as the new building is finished. It is a three story building and basement covering a 50 vara lot and will be one of the largest exclusively dry goods stores in the city.

Besides the Emporium the stores which will soon be found "doing business at the same old stand," are Mackey's candy store, O'Connor, Moffatt & Co., Shreve & Co., Goldberg, Bowen & Co., H. Liebes & Co. and the Waldorf hair store. Sherman, Clay & Co. are already at the old location.

Geary street will share even honors with the three nearest streets paralleling it. Looking up toward Union square from Lotta's fountain Geary street is very impressive and makes the old San Francisco realize, as perhaps nothing else but looking at the First National bank building or the new California bank building, that the city by the Golden Gate has passed through its reawakening and is now wide awake and astir.

These skyscrapers represent the confidence of money. The financiers who put them up were sure of the future of this city and it is just this thought which should make every native son and every adopted son of California ever ready to spit on his hands and go to work.

I. Magnin & Co. are going to locate on the southeast corner of Geary and Grant avenue. Armand Callieau will be on the opposite corner north, with Gantner & Mattern company next street and Grant avenue.

Zobel has leased a six story building two doors south of Grant avenue, and north, next to Union Square avenue, George A. Moss is to have his glove house.

A new building for Wolfe & Hawley on the site of Marchand's restaurant has just been begun. Berteling optical company joins Wolfe & Hawley on the east, Wakelee's pharmacy comes

next, then Spaulding & Neff, the Vienna bakery and Robert Wallace, the furrier.

Crossing Stockton street the Butler building, which was begun before the fire for Newman & Levinson, looms large on the horizon. It is the home of Nathan-Dohmann company.

In the middle of the same block is the J. M. Rothfield building, where the Waldorf hair store is to be.

The Toy & Sonntag building on the southeast corner of Geary and Powell streets is already occupied by the McDonnell drug company.

Union square, opposite to this block, has resumed its park privileges. The lawn is green, flowers are blooming there and the park benches are full of people "taking the freshness." On the west side of the square the third L of the St. Francis hotel is nearing completion.

Over the way the steel frame of the Gunst building rises. When it is completed Strauss, Greenberg & Sachs will occupy the three lower floors.

Between the Gunst building and Hotel Stewart lies a sand lot, and across the street is Hotel Alexander.

The Columbia theater will probably be rebuilt on the southwest corner of Geary and Mason streets. This will go far toward putting Geary street back into commission. At the corner of Taylor and Geary is the beautiful Hotel Bellevue, in the last stages of completion. Beyond that stretches the desert of fire ruin,



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14th but few cases in the form of isolated buildings, all the way up to Polk street.

Problem of Fire Limit

How to bridge or to beautify this ash strewn region is the problem which the merchants have been trying to solve for a long time. The only way to help it to build up, according to Louis Samuels of the lace house and other merchants, would be to change the fire limits and allow property owners to put up low, temporary wooden buildings within this area, just as has been done on the other side of Pine street along California and Van Ness, or in the Mission and along North beach.

Before there will be use or demand for class A skyscrapers (and they are the only ones which would pay) these merchants say the town must acquire some millions of people.

It was this problem which made decision for the downtown locations so hard to render. Shopping is largely a pleasurable pastime to women and it takes away much of the joy of spring muslins and millinery to have to submit a fresh frock, starched petticoat or dainty hat and shoes to the ravages of the dust and ashes of this belt.

Post street at Market opens magnificently, with the Crocker building on one side and the new First National bank building on the other.

The next corner, where Kearny intersects Post, used to be the swellest street in San Francisco and the merchants who have already located there are preserving the tradition.

Bullock & Jones company have an attractive store on the southeast corner and the Koenig shoe company has leased the entire building on the southwest side. The upper floors are let for offices, while the entire ground floor is occupied by the shoe store.

Adjoining the Koenig building on the west are two good buildings ready for tenants and south of them O'Connor, Moffatt & Co. will locate; next to them will be H. Liebes & Co. The building which the California optical company will occupy on the corner of Grant avenue is completed.

On the opposite side of the street will be the Jewellers' building and the Hastings clothing company.

The Shreve building on the northwest corner of Post street and Grant avenue has been restored and is occupied by them. Next to them is the firm of Hirsch & Kalsar, opticians and photo supplies, who were formerly on Kearny street near Market. The interior of their store reconciles us to the loss of the old one. For in this, as in all the stores in these new buildings, everything has been made as beautiful as possible.

On the opposite corner the Head building rises head and shoulders above its neighbors. This magnificent 13 story building awaits tenants worthy of it.

In the middle of this block the Mercedes, a six story building, stands completed.

On the north side of Union square the Union Square building and the Union Square hotel are both nearly completed.

till Van Ness avenue is reached, across the stretch of ashes. The Bohemian club and the Sultan Turkish baths are the only oases in this desert.

Paul Elder's book shop, when it leaves its present artistic house, is going to move into new quarters in this new shopping district on Grant avenue and Stockton place.

Of these three streets—Sutter, Post and Geary—at present Sutter has the fewest buildings completed. But among the number of firms which will line this popular thoroughfare are some of the old standbys.

As now planned Sutter street directory will include, beginning at Sansome street: The London, Paris and American bank, the Donohoe-Kelly bank, the Central trust company, the Savings and Loan society and the French savings bank.

J. M. Jacoby is doing business in his new store on the southwest corner of Sutter and Montgomery streets. Robert S. Atkins is in his permanent place in the middle of the block. Pauson & Co. are to be housed on the northeast corner of Kearny and Sutter.

Sherman, Clay & Co. were the first to build their own building and occupy it in this district. Their well appointed store does credit to themselves and the city.

W. & J. Sloane & Co. are to locate on the north side of Sutter street, a little west from Kearny street. Goldberg, Bowen & Co. will join them on the west; Davis, Schonwasser & Co.'s store will extend from Goldberg, Bowen & Co.'s west wall to Grant avenue.

The White House, on the southeast corner of Sutter and Grant avenue, is outlined in steel. This is to be a four story building.

Hammersmith, the goldsmith, is over the way on the southwest corner, and is already located in a small but artistic building.

A six story building in the middle of this block has been leased by the Spring Valley water company.

On the corner of the block the B. Sheldeman company has erected the Galien, an office building for physicians and dentists only. This and the Schroth building on Stockton street and Union Square avenue are the only buildings in this new district which are exclusively for physicians' offices.

Buildings of this class are to be found in all the large eastern cities, but until now San Francisco has never had any.

The New Book store is open on the northwest corner of Stockton and Sutter streets. Above it are the offices and printing plant of the Argonaut.

Hotel Chantilly occupies the middle ground in the block between Grant avenue and Stockton street. The cafe and restaurant in the Chantilly has the elegance and the cooking of the better class French restaurants of old, and is the first of its class rears in the burnt district.

The synagogue above Stockton street is restored, and its handsome oriental lines of architecture come out magnificently against the background of gray ground and blue sky.

West of Stockton the land in Sutter street has not been filled in by business houses. Hotel Regent rules from its isolated position in the block between Powell and Masca streets.

After that there is nothing for bargain hunters or the leisurely shopper