

# San Francisco the Great Port of the Pacific Coast

By David H. Walker

WHETHER shall tell the story of the harbor and bay of San Francisco shall fall short of the truth in the long run. Take a map of the Pacific ocean countries and survey their coast lines, estimate their vast populations and consider not only their present wants, but their prospective needs, and the latter will be much greater than the former; foresee the full significance that will attend the operation of the Panama canal, which shall bring and carry unbroken bulks and through passengers by sea between San Francisco and the densely inhabited lands of Europe, and then forsake the merely commercial aspect for an instant and consider the strategic position of San Francisco from a military and naval point of view, and the great outlines of the future shall dawn, albeit somewhat dimly, upon the apprehension.

\$85,000,000 was literally picked up in the auriferous gravels of this state from the placers enormous mineral wealth has been known to exist.

When the great fleet of American warships steamed in through the Golden Gate, bringing its impressive lesson of strength, the facts cannot be overlooked that the visitation is significant of something vastly more important than mere force. The president of the United States has seen that the time is at hand when full recognition of the Pacific coast of the United States is logical and cannot be escaped. With broad view he has contemplated the importance of the fortified western frontier of Uncle Sam's generous domain. Will that lesson ever be lost in succeeding generations? The answer, in the negative, is obvious.

Knowledge of what is to come is based on what has been. Progress resting on foundations is always predicting itself and those signs are visible to whomsoever shall see fit to look.

cially valuable. The products of the Mediterranean countries, their citrus fruits, their nuts, their wines—these had been of commercial rank for long years before the cross was raised by the followers of Junipero Serra in what is now California. The padres transplanted the vines and the oranges and the olives and samples of other vegetation, and, behold, they found a soil and climate more favorable than that from which they had been taken!

Consider also the commercial aspect of the coming of the first of the great fleets that sailed the waters of the Pacific ocean with San Francisco as their destination. Gold had been picked up at Coloma. In the waters of a soap boiler its rich identity had been established. The sturdy and adventurous of all lands, but mainly of the United States, set out after the forthright manner of miners all over the world to gather in their share of the treasure that was here. Their adventures on the plains, their privations and heroisms,

American, with his inherited tenacity for land tenure, got his grip firmly planted on some acreage or town lot of California soil.

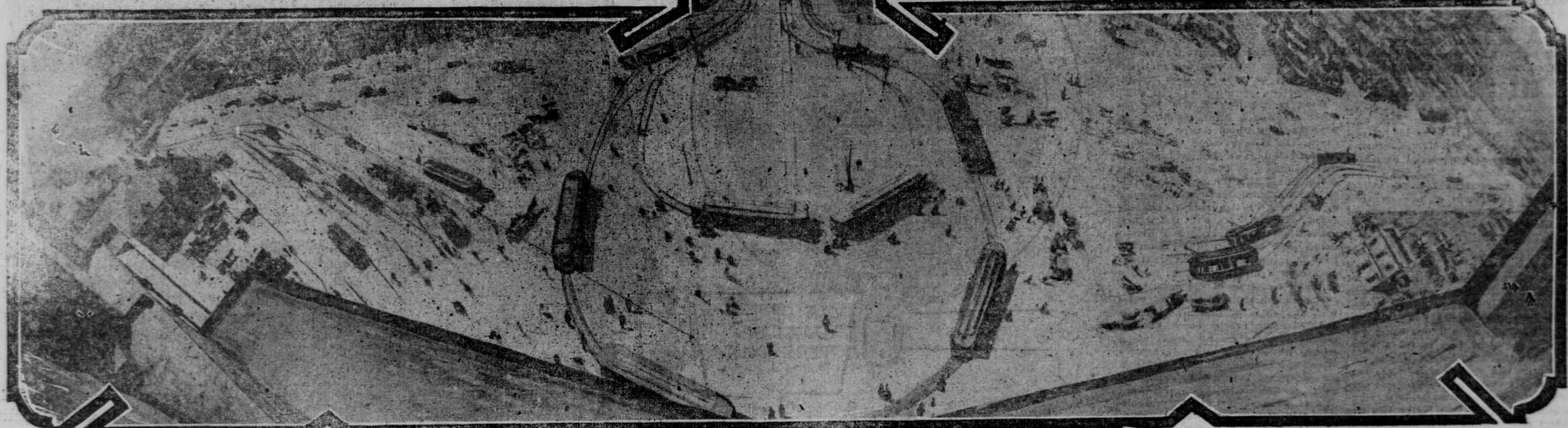
What has succeeded the small and few ships of the padres? What has followed the great ships of the clipper era? Where are the vessels of the transitory period of many classes? Last year more than one thousand large vessels propelled by steam passed in and out of the Golden Gate, inclusive of the coasting trade. More than 500 sailing craft of large size journeyed through the same portal of commerce. The steam and sail vessels inward bound, not including the coasting trade, represented a tonnage in total that is represented by the figures 4,423,002. The outbound tonnage was 4,028,729, or more than 8,500,000 tons in grand total. They carried merchandise between San Francisco and foreign countries, the Atlantic states and noncontiguous countries that was valued at \$46,571,790 for the exports and \$54,207,011 for

that it would take six months to clear the debris from the streets before any building of importance could be done. They had also said that the large bank clearings of the summer and fall months of 1906 were caused by the heavy insurance payments and that they would surely decrease. They were amazed with the fact that the streets, while sadly wrecked with the heavy teaming, were in fact cleared of debris before the end of the year; and were astonished that the bank clearings for 1906 were larger than for any year in our history.

The situation today is equally astonishing; building has progressed to an incredible extent, approximately ninety millions of dollars having been expended since the fire. The bank clearings for the year 1907 are the largest in the history of our city, \$2,132,583,628.50, exceeding the record figure of 1906 by over \$135,000,000, and this in spite of the financial stringency and the heavy falling off in the clear-

ing, 9,500,000 cents; corn, 1,000,000 cents; oats, 4,200,000 cents; honey, 6,500,000 pounds; raisins, 140,000,000 pounds; almonds, 1,800,000 pounds; walnuts, 14,000,000 pounds; prunes, 72,000,000 pounds; deciduous fruits, 7,048 carloads; canned fruits, 5,500,000 cases; dried fruits—peaches 24,000,000 pounds; apricots, 3,000,000 pounds; apples, 3,600,000 pounds; pears, 1,000,000 pounds; plums, 1,500,000 pounds; dried grapes, 375,000 pounds; figs, 6,000,000 pounds; butter, 33,873,129 pounds; cheese, 8,514,200 pounds; hops, 32,000 bales; wool, 15,000,000 bales.

The first asset that is suggested in the foregoing estimates by C. H. Bentley is the manhood of the people emerged triumphantly out of the unparalleled disaster of 1906. The second is indicated by the character of the state products that show the inalienable resources of climate and soil. The third, also of vast importance, is the showing that the banks made in a year when the financial institutions of



EAST STREET, THE LOOP AND MARKET STREET AS SEEN FROM THE GOLDEN GATE TOWER

wise men have known for half a century, in fact, even when the gold fever was at its height, that there was to be the financial center of a dense population. In less than three years after California became American territory the forecasting ones began to ask congress to consider the establishment of lighthouses, the destruction of rocks that were found to be dangerous obstacles to navigation and appealed for an intelligent and comprehensive system of defenses.

A century earlier the mission padres, stout of heart and sagacious, had proved that from San Diego far northward the products of the Mediterranean littoral would grow in California. The sign of peculiarity was early placed on the land. In that glittering year when

While the Atlantic squadron brings in the "big stick" and introduces the land to thousands of the hardest sons of Neptune that sail the seas, this is not the first armada that has come to the Golden Gate, and having passed in dropped anchor in the placid and sheltered waters in the shade of San Francisco's imposing hills.

their tragedies and successes have been rich material for the romancers and for the chroniclers of the history of half a century. More significant, if not more heroic, was the movement of the hordes that swooped down on the land of destiny by the sea routes.

Sailing at first in any sort of craft that was considered to be sufficiently seaworthy to carry men who were willing to take large chances around Cape Horn, or to take them to and bring them from the isthmian lines of travel, they made a demand for materials, for provisions, for implements, for all things men want who have the money and are willing to pay, and then came the era of the merchant marine, as typified by the fast, yachtlike clippers that sped over the salt wastes with

the fleetness of birds. Commerce had at once grown out of the love of adventure and the mad search for treasure. It had sprung, full fledged, from the emergency. Permanency of enterprises in a few years changed the aspect of what appeared to be primarily temporary. The commerce of the orient, which is destined annually to acquire greater significance in connection with this port, loomed up, and regular lines of steamships were established to China. While imports grew, the state of California after a comparatively short period became an extensive exporter, not only of treasure but also of the products of her soil, a commerce that was presaged when the first vine and the first fruit tree were planted by a padre, and when the first

the imports, or \$110,778,800 in total. That amount beat the merchandise record of 1906 by \$12,024,019.

What was back of that record? What is back of the much greater records to be made in the future? Here are some choice extracts from the annual address of Charles H. Bentley, as president of the chamber of commerce of San Francisco, that reveal not only the current transactions but also the bases of very large expectations for the future: "Our pessimists were in full flight during January, 1907. Some had said

ings of November and December. The banking institutions of San Francisco with one exception have weathered a most trying financial storm which has prevailed throughout the country. The great wealth and prosperity of the territory tributary to San Francisco make it the metropolis of the Pacific coast despite all adverse conditions. Some productions of California for the year 1907 are estimated as follows:

"Gold, \$17,350,000; silver, \$975,000; oranges, 24,500 carloads; lemons, 4,200 carloads; beet sugar, 163,800,000 pounds; wheat, 6,500,000 cents; bar-

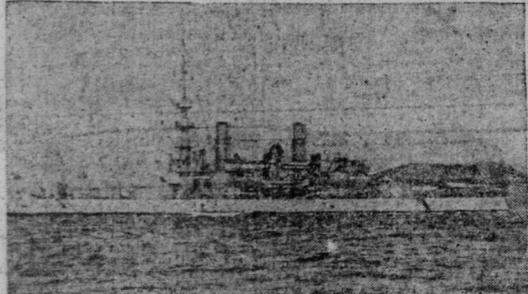
the entire United States were seriously troubled for a time. The combined showing goes far to explain the large figures of exports and imports combined.

In the totals of exports of merchandise, commodities and supplies on United States transports from San Francisco, which amount to more than \$1,250,000 a year, are not included. The mineral production of the state, including the gold and silver, undoubtedly

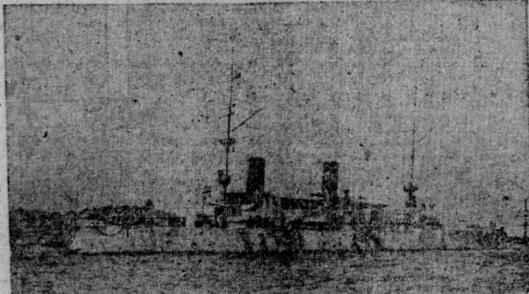
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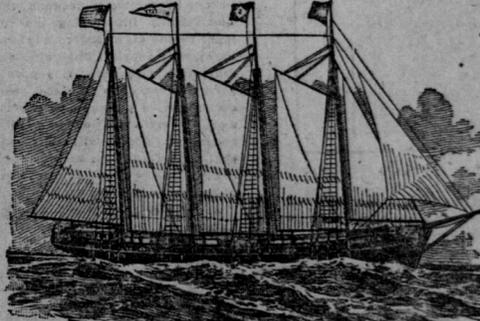
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