

# THE SUCCESS ACHIEVED BY THE LOCAL IMPROVEMENT CLUBS

Conducted by C. F. Adams

## MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION PUBLISHES LARGE PROJECTS

### New Beale Street Grade to Be Brought About by Its Efforts--First to Propose Panama Exposition--Other Enterprises

Last Saturday this page of the Call contained a short outline of some of the improvements brought about through the efforts of the Merchants' association.

In this issue is sketched a few of the projects that the association is now handling. It would be difficult to say which are the most important. One very important matter now being urged by the Merchants' association is the lowering of the grade of Beale street.

The significance of this improvement lies in the fact that it affords an easy, level and through route for teaming from the north end to the new south seawall and docks. At present the grade upon Beale street from Polson to Bryant (which level teaming and thus cuts off this section of the city from the north of Market manufacturing district. The same thing is true of Main street and other parallel streets.

Realizing the importance of this improvement the association had its engineer prepare plans and estimates for this work. The proposition was then presented to the various property owners that would be affected by the change. It met with the immediate approval of nearly all of them. The last vestige of hesitation was swept away last Monday, and now the road is clear for the consummation of this work. Already a movement has been started to have the Main street grade also lowered.

**HANDBOOK OF MANUFACTURERS**

Recently the association issued a Handbook of Manufacturers in and about San Francisco. It is a book for some such book is urgent. Great quantities of goods are ordered from abroad because people are not aware of the fact that they can be manufactured here.

At a great expense the association gathered data for and published this book. The 4,000 copies that were published have been exhausted. The book is a combined strength of 7,700 members. The Merchants' exchange building is one very important asset about which it is found difficult to make arrangements.

**TEN YEAR ASSESSMENT BONDS**

Another very important matter which the association has initiated is legislation permitting the issuance of 10 year assessment bonds for street, sewer, tunnel, or other work. This system has been adopted in Seattle with wonderful success. Miles and miles of street work have been done by this system that could not have been done if the owners were required to pay cash. The result has been increased valuation and greater building activity. The property owner profiting by this is thereby enabled to pay for his street work and contribute to a matter of idle capital finds a safe investment in the purchase of these bonds, which are a first lien upon the property benefited. The proposed amendment provides a method of assessing the cost of the work. The importance of such a plan can not be overestimated.

**TUNNEL CONSTRUCTION**

Another important amendment to the charter proposed by the association is making the property owners in whole or in part for the improvement of accepted streets. It has been found that very often property owners are anxious to have a grade cut down, or a tunnel or a tunnel constructed. This is a matter affecting them more than anyone else. There is so much work of this nature that the city cannot undertake it. It is a very grave danger to the right of the city to lay out an assessment district and assess the property owners for the improvement of an accepted street. Hence the need for an amendment to the charter. The power of the city is now before the courts in the matter of the Stockton street tunnel.

**THE STOCKTON STREET TUNNEL**

The matter of putting through the Stockton street tunnel was taken up by Dr. Hartland of the Merchants' association. He and those associated with him in this matter are determined that a way will be found. With the construction of this tunnel the whole North beach district will be improved. It will mean development for both ends of Stockton street.

**THE TWIN PEAKS TUNNEL**

The association has also taken an active part in the agitation for the construction of the twin peaks tunnel. For the last five years it has advocated this matter. It is at the present time taking a decidedly active part in the twin peaks tunnel convention, organized for the purpose of constructing the tunnel. This dream of the last twenty years seems nearer to realization now than ever before.

The convention has adopted a report recommending a tunnel. The improvement clubs, the press and the people in general seem to be solidly behind this proposition. When the work shall be organized a tunnel. The improvement clubs, the press and the people in general seem to be solidly behind this proposition. When the work shall be organized a tunnel.

**STREET RAILWAY EXTENSIONS**

Another important matter in which the association has interested itself is the matter of street railway extensions. The association organizes a joint committee on street railroad extensions in which 27 improvement clubs are represented. This committee enlisted the aid of William Barclay Parsons, railway expert of New York, to submit a report upon the best possible street railroad system adapted to the city's conditions.

The committee has also prepared a comprehensive plan of needed street railway extensions and cross town car lines and has been and is trying hard to induce the United Railroads to adopt this plan and make the needed improvements.

It induced the United Railroads to agree to build the Hunters' Point, the Army street and the University Mound district extensions and also to extend the Masonic and H street lines. For these latter projects, however, the railroad company requires the property owners to contribute a portion of the cost.

**ISLAIS CREEK AND RINCOLN HILL**

The contest in regard to the Islais creek and inland harbor has been serious during the last six years. The association has been in the midst of that fight. It has renewed the fight by offering a new solution of the problem. It has strongly urged that an agreement be reached on the proposition of filling in five blocks of the Islais creek harbor and the purchase of 63 blocks of land for \$1,000,000, which would mean the beginning of extensive industrial developments in that section of the Mission

district and also start the removal of Rincoln Hill.

**PANAMA-PACIFIC EXPOSITION**

The greatest project floated by the Merchants' association is the holding in San Francisco of a world's fair to celebrate the completion of the Panama canal. This proposition was first brought forth by Marshall E. Hale at one of the banquets of the Merchants' association long before any other city dreamed of such a thing.

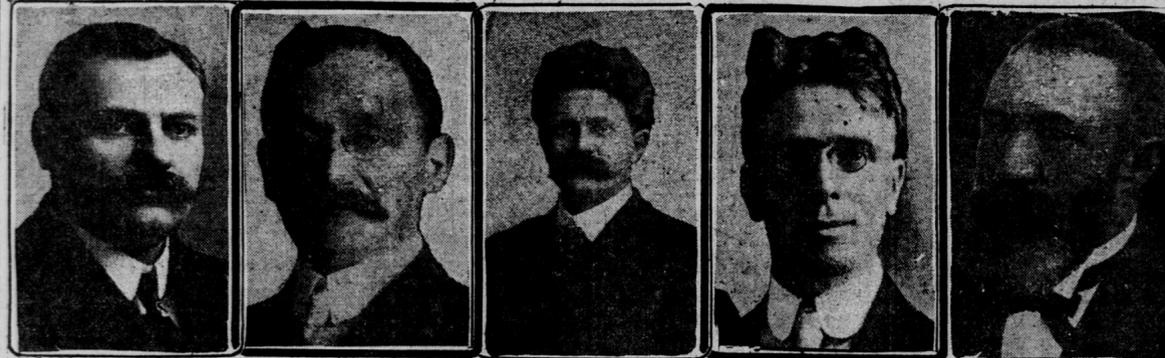
The proposition has grown in magnitude until now it occupies the attention of the whole country. It will be to San Francisco the greatest blessing it has received in recent years.

**INNUMERABLE IMPROVEMENTS**

Space does not permit of a discussion of the great number of improvements inaugurated through the Merchants' association. All that can be done is to refer to a catalog of the greatest blessing it has received in recent years.

So well has it succeeded that many of the improvement clubs of that day have fallen by the wayside, while the North Central continues to grow in strength and usefulness.

### Prominent officers of the Merchants' association and Eureka Valley improvement association.



HENRY BECKER, President Eureka Valley Improvement Association. ANDREW M. DAVIS, Past President Merchants' Association. A. W. SCOTT JR., Chairman Publicity and Promotion Committee, Merchants' Association. M. J. MELVIN, Secretary Eureka Valley Improvement Association. F. W. DOHRMANN, First President of Merchants' Association.

consisting in securing new subtreasury building; securing reduction of insurance rates; agitation for forestation of islands in San Francisco bay; assisting the convention league; advocating public auditorium; investigating the water problem; inducing the director of census at Washington to feature large associations long before any other city dreamed of such a thing.

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**CONSOLIDATION PROJECTS**

A plan is now under consideration for consolidating the Merchants' association, the Merchants' exchange, the Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown association into one body. Very valuable property rights would have to be adjusted before this object can be effected. The various organizations have a combined strength of 2,700 members. The Merchants' exchange building is one very important asset about which it is found difficult to make arrangements.

**MANY SALES REPORTED**  
BY G. H. UMBSEN & CO.

The following recent sales are reported by G. H. Umbesen & Co.:

For A. O'Leary, improvement and lot 25x100 feet, situate southeast corner of Sheridan street, 105 feet northeast of Teuthi terms private.

For Spring estate company, lot of land east line of Broadway street, 100 feet of 81st street, 27x117; terms private.

For Kate Landers, lot 27x120 feet, west line of Dolores street, 100 feet south of L street; \$1,750.

For Mrs. J. Bell, lot of land, west line of 22nd street, 100 feet of land, west line of Ninth avenue, 125 feet north of I street, 23x120; \$3,300.

For Charles A. Hall, lot of land, 25x55 feet, situate southeast corner of Judah and Sixth avenues, 51x52 1/2; irregular terms private.

For Robert McMillan, lot of land, 50x114 feet, south line of Broadway street, 100 feet of Noe; terms private.

For Spring estate company, lot of land, 27x117; 30 feet of land, west line of Dolores street, 127 feet North of Sixteenth; terms private.

For E. J. Ashlin, lot of land, 25x50 feet, west line of Fifth avenue, 25 feet south of J street; \$2,500.

For W. P. Brett, lot of land, 25x110 feet, west line of Twenty-third street, 75 feet south of A street; \$700.

For Charles A. Hall, lot of land, west line of Ninth avenue, 125 feet north of I street, 23x120; \$3,300.

For Charles A. Hall, lot of land, 25x55 feet, situate southeast corner of Judah and Sixth avenues, 51x52 1/2; irregular terms private.

For H. P. Beckett, lot 25x120 feet, east line of Fifth avenue, 100 feet south of Panamas street; \$400.

For Margaret A. Barry, lot of land, 25x120 feet, west line of Thirty-seventh street, 250 feet south of L street; \$1,250.

For Charles Mayle, improvements and lot, east line of Sixth avenue, 150 feet south of J street, 25x120; \$5,450.

For L. Goddetti estate company, southeast line of Ellington street, 80 feet southwest of Foots avenue, 51x52 1/2; irregular terms private.

For Phillip J. McManus, lot 50x101 irregular, situate northwest corner of Forester street and Melrose avenue; \$400.

For C. J. Hauser, improvements and lot 25x114 feet, south line of Broadway street, 300 feet west of Sanchez; \$2,800.

For William Greenwald, lot of land, 25x120 feet, east line of Fifth avenue, 246 feet north of Panamas avenue; \$2,200.

## IMPROVEMENT CLUB DOES GOOD WORK

### North Central Association Secures Many Betterments in Business District

In January, 1899, a number of the largest property owners in the district north of Market street and east of Kearny came together and formed the North Central Improvement association. The purpose of the association was to secure for this district of the city some consideration from the board of supervisors. Previous to that time few improvements were made in that section of the town.

By persistent effort and representation before the supervisors a number of improvements have been secured for the city were securing financial benefits far in excess of what the members of this association thought they were entitled to, considering the taxable value of the property they represented.

So well has it succeeded that many of the improvement clubs of that day have fallen by the wayside, while the North Central continues to grow in strength and usefulness.

**STREET PAVING**

When the North Central Improvement

association came into the field most of the streets in its district were notoriously bad. Most of the streets were paved with cobblestones, which were injurious to horse wagons, and good in course of transportation. Under these conditions enterprises were slow to locate in this district.

By incessant work the association secured basic pavements for practically all of this vast territory north of Market street and east of Kearny street. This section has developed wonderfully during the last 10 years as a whole and business district, a fact which is well known to every resident of San Francisco.

The association has insisted upon basic blocks being laid on a foundation of concrete and grouted with asphaltic cement, instead of in the old and now obsolete manner of laying the blocks upon a foundation of sand.

**WHARF IMPROVEMENTS**

Through the efforts of the association four new wharves and two new car ferry slips were secured for the northern section of the water front.

It also secured the removal of the fisherman's wharf to the North beach district.

The wharf was badly needed for larger shipping. A less central location would serve the purposes of the fishermen just as well.

The association secured the extension of the belt line railroad, thereby facilitating the loading and unloading of vessels and operated a street car line and operated a street car line and operated a street car line.

Other projects advocated by the association are: The retention of the ferry postoffice, also a postoffice near the laying of electric lines, the construction of tunnels under Telegraph Hill at Kearny and at Montgomery streets to give these streets frontages on the bay; the erection of an auditorium and automobile mail service and large first class hotel buildings for the downtown district.

The association has permanent and commodious offices in the Kohl building, employing stenographic and clerical help and owns and operates a street sprinkling plant. The officers of the association are: H. H. Taylor, president; C. F. Kohl, first vice president; Edgar Palmer, secretary. The executive committee consists of F. B. Anderson, Charles E. Green, George Tourneur, B. Heathcote, John D. McKee, Leon Sloss, J. Henry Meyer, R. M. Hotelling, Henry Val, Edward Alfred J. Marcus and E. G. Schmiedel.

**SHIPPING FACILITIES**

The association sent a representative to Washington who worked assiduously for and secured from the United States government the right to extend the distance of 800 feet into the bay, instead of only 600 feet, which the former limit. By this extension the wharves can now accommodate four large, modern steamships, where formerly the capacity of each wharf was only two medium ships.

Another improvement along the water front which the association has been strongly advocating and which is being accomplished is the extension of the belt line railroad across Market street so as to serve the entire water front of the city. With the construction of the south seawall and the new docks at Bryant street, the city would be connected by the Southern Pacific and the extension will become absolutely necessary. To carry out this plan it will be necessary to construct a viaduct across Market street.

**FERRY VIADUCT**

The association has contended for such a viaduct for some time. It so far succeeded as to get the harbor commissioners to agree to bear one-half the expense if the city would bear the other half. The city also agreed to the proposition, but found that there was no money available for the purpose, and the matter is now held in abeyance. It is estimated that this viaduct will cost \$25,000. Besides extending the belt line it will have the effect of relieving Market street of traffic congestion and leaving the street clear for the electric cars.

To still further promote rapid transit and safety it would be an easy matter to extend an ornamental viaduct from the ferry building to the west line of East street. This plan has in fact been proposed and is urged by the Downtown Association.

**PUBLIC BUILDINGS**

The North Central association has taken an active part in securing appropriations for public buildings in its

## EVENTS OF WEEK AMONG THE CLUBS

### Merchants' Association Persuades Supervisors to Approve Beale Street Cut

The board of supervisors overruled the protest of the Finley heirs to the grading of Beale street and thus removed, apparently, the last obstacle to the consummation of this work proposed by the Merchants' association.

The association has proposed an amendment to the charter, by which the tax limit of \$1 is preserved, but special taxes may be levied for certain specified permanent improvements, the money raised by this special tax to be used for no other purpose, and if any surplus exists it is to be reappropriated for the same or similar purposes.

The Civic league proposed a charter amendment somewhat similar to that of the Merchants' association except that it fixed the maximum tax at \$1.30 and did not specify the particular purposes for which the extra tax should be appropriated.

**FUNDS FOR PARKS**

At its meeting Monday evening the Mission promotion association unanimously passed a resolution that the

charter be amended so as to provide 10 per cent instead of 7 per cent for park purposes, and that half of this sum be applied to parks other than Golden Gate park. The resolution was passed at the request of the parks and playgrounds committees. Speeches were made in favor of securing larger appropriations for the Mission parks by Rev. D. O. Crowley, James Rolph Jr., George Walcom and Walker C. Graves.

President Rolph announced that the Federated Harbor association favored the India basin inland harbor project and would work for its success. The Federated Harbor Improvement association is composed of representatives from the merchants' exchange, chamber of commerce, Merchants' association, the Adornment and Improvement association, the water front federation, the labor council, the San Francisco real estate board, the Ship Owners' association of the Pacific coast, the California Promotion committee, the board of trade, the Commonwealth club and the building trades council. With the indorsement of this powerful organization it is generally believed that the India basin act will carry. Rolph also announced that work would soon commence upon the new army.

Resolutions were passed commending patrolmen Rudolph Maier and James A. Gelyea for their bravery in capturing the two thugs who disarmed Maier last week in a vacant lot at the corner of Ninth and Howard streets.

**ADDITIONAL LIGHTS**

The Mission merchants met Wednesday evening at Excelsior hall, 2337 Mission street. The high committee reported that in response to the petition of the association the supervisors agreed to install five arc lights in each block in Mission street between Fourth and Twenty-eighth streets.

**SUTRO HEIGHTS CLUB**

The Sutro Heights Improvement club met Sunday at the Cairns hotel and reviewed the work of the district. The bond issue sewer being built in Fulton street from Thirtieth to Forty-eighth avenue is rapidly nearing completion. The work is being carefully inspected by the association.

Upon the completion of this work the McAllister street cars will run through to the beach upon Fulton, thus opening up this territory. The tracks have already been laid and the poles erected.

Much grading and sewerage is now being done in the district. What was formerly the sand dunes is being transformed into beautiful villa tracts.

**PETITION LIBRARY TRUSTEES**

The residents of Holly park want a library in their district instead of having to go a mile and a half or two miles to Twenty-second and Valencia streets, and their improvement association has petitioned the library trustees to this effect.

**SOUTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION**

Proponents and opponents of the In-llia basin act appeared before the South central improvement association at its meeting Wednesday evening and argued the respective sides of this question. No vote was taken on the matter.

## MANY IMPROVEMENTS FOR EUREKA VALLEY

### Club Has Done Much for Upper Market Street in Five Years Since Organized Large District Built Up

Extensive improvements for upper Market street are being worked out by the Eureka Valley improvement association. This club was organized September 3, 1905. Thirty-five men signed the roll. The organization was started for the purpose of securing for the district better car service, better streets and better lighting facilities in the territory west of Church street to the hills and south of Market to Twenty-second street. Recently the territory of the association was enlarged to include the district north of Market street to Duboce avenue.

Five years ago, when the association began its work, this territory was but sparsely settled. There was little street or sewer work. The few sidewalks that were down were wooden. The association set about interesting the property owners in improving the streets and sidewalks. It appealed to the supervisors for better lighting and other facilities. It made the district more inviting. Development became rapid.

**PART IN RELIEF WORK**

The value of the association was shown in an unusual way in the fire of April, 1906. While the fire raged fiercely at Dolores street and tried desperately to cross the street, the association's fire brigade, organized and equipped by the association, was in the path of the flames and by wetting those in the west side of the street with buckets of water and wet blankets, the flames were conquered and this portion of the city saved.

One never to be forgotten sight was the saving of the church in the corner of Dolores and Fourteenth streets. The members of the association, armed with buckets of water and wet blankets, the flames were conquered and this portion of the city saved.

For the three years following the fire the association did little more than meet regularly, give banquets and attend to the more urgent needs of the district. One thing that the association prides itself on is that it never asks for more than it believes it is justly entitled to. There were other things that the association asks for less than probably any other district, although the mayor and four of the supervisors live in Eureka Valley.

After the fire the district rapidly filled up with residences and business houses, until today it is settled thickly clear back to the foothills. It is now reputed to be about the heaviest voting district in the city.

It is estimated that between 10,000 and 15,000 persons pass the corner of Eighteenth and Castro streets in getting on and off cars each day. It is certain that the cars do not afford adequate accommodations for the busy parts of the day. The association has repeatedly called the attention of the United Railroads to this fact, but has so far received only promises, and there is no ordinance or franchise authorizing a better service.

During the last year the association has taken on renewed life. Other portions of the city are being well provided for, while this section is being somewhat neglected.

**RECENT IMPROVEMENTS**

About a year ago the association secured an appropriation of \$2,500 for the resurvey of the Market street homestead tract, which lies west of Douglas street and south of Nineteenth, and will furnish additional homesites. At present there are probably fewer vacant houses in this district than in any other part of the city.

There is an eight acre tract of land

**NEW IMPROVEMENT CLUB IS ORGANIZED**

A property owners' association was organized in Ocean View August 3, with the following officers: President, M. F. Taylor; first vice president, William Edminster; second vice president, A. J. Crawford; recording secretary, Orin O. Mathews; financial secretary, J. L. Taylor; treasurer, David Hughes.

This organization was formed for the sole purpose of benefiting the property owners and protecting them against any attempt to deprive them of the right to improve their own property in their own time without detriment to the public. It is expected that it will make such improvements as will benefit themselves and the whole community.

The association will meet regularly every Wednesday night at 255 Broadway street and a cordial invitation is extended to all property owners of Ocean View to join.

If you would enjoy life, make up your mind to let the other fellow do all the worrying.

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