

critical. The city was rapidly growing, and to allow the idea to go abroad that titles were insecure would check the progress of the city and cause incalculable mischief. Sound business policy overcame the desire to make a bitter fight, however, and the holders of the claims were induced to dispose of them at rates that were trivial. The specific claims were the Pretermitted Heirs' title, the Sisters' title, the Irving title, and the Cost title, and these comprised all general titles asserted by anybody to land within the City of Oakland. These titles were, by their several owners, conveyed to Henry Hillebrand, the City Clerk, who acted as a Trustee, and by him conveyance was made to the several property-holders. Nearly all the land in the city is now held by a perfect title, the Hillebrand deed removing all the clouds. These titles, except the Cost title, still cloud property outside of the old charter line. The principal ones, the Sisters and the Pretermitted Heirs, are virtually defeated, and the property-holders, to save trouble and annoyance, have quite generally purchased the other claims.

The Kate Hayes Title covers that portion of Oakland township outside of the "Encinal Line," as laid down on our map. The Supreme Court of the State has sustained a decision rendered by E. W. McKinstry, Judge of the Twelfth District Court, granting a new trial on the motion made by the defendants (the property-holders). That decision was fatal to the claim, which, in itself, was but for a trifling interest. A new trial has not yet been had, and the result is regarded as a foregone conclusion, the law of the case having been decided beyond appeal.

#### Water and Gas.

About one-third of the population of Oakland use water obtained from the Contra Costa Water Company, and the remainder procure it from wells. By digging to a depth of twenty feet a supply of pure fresh water can be obtained; but on account of the increased size of the city, and the prevalent fear that well water is becoming contaminated with sewage, many persons are abandoning their wells and using the water that is obtained from the mountain streams. The Contra Costa Water Company commenced operations in the latter part of the year 1866, and since that time about fifty miles of pipe have been laid. Water is obtained from the Temascal Creek. At its eastern branch, five miles from Oakland, a cañon has been dammed, and an artificial lake, six hundred feet wide and three-quarters of a mile long, has been created. The water is seventy feet deep in winter, and the capacity of the reservoir is two hundred million gallons. The daily consumption of water varies from half a million to a million of gallons per day, according to the extent to which people may irrigate their gardens. The company has also appropriated the water of the Fruit Vale Creek and built a reservoir there, with a capacity of one million gallons. In case the mountain streams run low, use is made of artesian wells in