

nesia, and iron. They have medicinal properties of great value. No place of resort can be more favorably recommended to the notice of our Eastern visitors, while the city man out of health will find them very conveniently situated." From Piedmont there are good roads running through the mountains, and there is a labyrinth of pleasant drives. The mountain scenery is very fine, and it is difficult to realize that so great a change can be found in a half-hour's ride from Oakland.

The drive-way on the eastern bank of Lake Merritt is also a fashionable resort. The system of roads in East Oakland is quite complete, and the visitor can follow any road that he may observe without danger of being led into an unpleasant or dangerous locality. The most important place of public resort, especially on Sundays, is Badger's Central Park, East Oakland, where there are highly ornamented grounds, a large pavilion for dancing, and all of the attractions ordinarily found at public gardens. That the excellent roads in and around Oakland are appreciated by visitors is attested by the fact that Oakland has six large livery stables, all of them doing a prosperous business.

#### Building Improvements.

The number of buildings erected in Oakland during the period July 1, 1872, to December 1, 1873, will bear a favorable comparison with that of previous years. East and West Oakland present very gratifying evidences of prosperity. One firm of contractors alone, Messrs. Power & Ough, estimate the amount of their engagements for the time referred to at \$500,000, included in which is the Grand Central Hotel, one of the most elegant and costly buildings in the city. It is a block in length, from Webster to Harrison streets, four stories high, and is covered with a Mansard roof, the only deviation from its prevailing style of Italian architecture. Three large towers embellish the structure, one at the center of the roof and one at each end. In each tower there is a tank, always kept full, containing 5,000 gallons of water. There are three front entrances, the main one in the center of the hotel, and the right and left half-way between the main entrance and the ends of the building. A porch extends from each entrance to the edge of the sidewalk, so that the guests may step from their carriages to the sidewalk, completely sheltered from the rain or the hot sun. The vestibule at the main entrance has a tessellated flooring of artificial marble. The ceiling rises eighteen feet in the clear. Laurel, oak, and walnut are represented in the graining, which has been executed with considerable care. Passing through a pair of swinging glass doors, the visitor enters the office at the right-hand side, whence he may ascend to the upper floor by the elevator. The reading-room and telegraph office are on the left-hand side of the vestibule, and can be reached directly from the street without passing through the hall.

Two flights of stairs from the street, one from the main hall and