

The Present and Future.

As great as was the growth of Oakland in 1876, appearances indicate that a larger number of houses will be built during the present year than last. In whatever direction we look we observe new structures springing up, not exactly as by magic in a night, but with a celerity that approaches it. The Watts' tract is becoming rapidly covered with cottages and shops. A large number of elegant residences are in course of construction in the vicinity of Eighteenth, Nineteenth, Jefferson and Grove streets, and improvements in the vicinity of all the stations of the local railway are exceedingly brisk. Not less than five hundred houses, of various classes, have been commenced since the opening of the year. The hard times generally complained of seems to stimulate the investment of surplus capital in property that cannot fail to be profitable, and is undeniably safe. It was asserted by a prominent house owner to the writer of this, that large buildings combining stores beneath, with ample and numerous rooms for residence, office or lodging purposes above, were remunerative even if all the stores remained unrented, such was the demand for and certainty of occupancy of the upper floors.

All the numerous architects of the city have their portfolios filled with plans for large business structures or costly residences, many of which are designed for San Francisco capitalists, who show the recognition of an undoubted faith in the future of Oakland by building here in preference to San Francisco. It is probable that some of these extensive contemplated improvements may be delayed by the present depreciation in mining shares, but the delay will be only temporary, and will tend in time to results much greater than if stocks had been held up to excessive and fabulous prices, subject to disastrous fluctuations. The solid business men of both cities are becoming fully aware that one of the most populous cities of the United States is to be builded, and very rapidly too, between the waters of San Francisco Bay and the San Pablo range of hills, and are governing themselves accordingly.

Among a few of the improvements contemplated and in progress at the present, are Kohler & Chase's three story brick block, on the corner of Washington and Ninth streets. This building will be fifty by one hundred feet, with basement, and will be constructed in the most substantial manner. The estimated cost is fifty thousand dollars.

Dr. Samuel Merritt is building, on the corner of Twelfth