

Building Improvements.

Contrary to the almost universally accredited predictions at the opening of the building season of 1879, a smaller number of houses has been erected than for any year since 1873. The causes of this comparative quiet in building operations are plainly apparent. Social agitations in the metropolis, tended to render capital wary; the unusually light immigration limited the demand for houses; shrinkage of values and of rents rendered residence property less remunerative; and the lack of an extended system of manufacturing industries left numbers without regular employment and consequently without the incentive even when possessing the means for building homes. Great activity in building had prevailed for several years, hundred of stores and thousands of dwellings had been erected, a large part which were for rent or for sale on installments—hence with new comers arriving in but limited numbers the supply of houses of late has been nearly up to the demand, and the city has, in common parlance, “taken a rest.”

This term in Oakland does not mean absolute inactivity, but rather a gradual and healthy growth. Accurate reports have been made weekly by the city's statistician, which summarized show that five hundred and twelve houses of all classes were built during the year 1879 at an aggregate cost, as ascertained from the owners, builders or architects, of \$1,021,115. Citizens of Oakland can point with some degree of pride to even such a record of substantial progress during a period of doubt, depression and comparative stagnation.

BUSINESS HOUSES ERECTED.

One brick block, located on San Pablo Avenue, between Seventeenth and Eighteenth streets, was built by Remillard Bros., at a cost of \$12,000.

Eighty-five structures of wood, designed for business purposes, were erected at a cost in the aggregate of \$115,250. In this list are included stores, manufactories, shops, offices, etc. Among the more important may be mentioned the Clinton Flouring Mills, the East Oakland Planing Mills, the Grove-street Planing Mills, and May's Livery Stables and Depot of the Brooklyn and Fruit Vale Railroad Company, all rebuilt after destruction by fire, the Oakland Soap Works and Bettmann's Block on East Central Avenue.

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