

mento and Montgomery streets, attempting to save it, when it took fire. They were unable to force open the doors, and all perished in the flames. Quite a number of lives were lost in other parts, and many persons were badly burnt in rushing through the flames to make their escape. Three men were subsequently crushed to death by the falling of a wall in Montgomery street. Upwards of one thousand houses were consumed, mostly large store houses, filled with valuable merchandize. The amount of property destroyed was variously estimated at from seven to twelve millions of dollars. This fire, though by some ascribed, as usual, to design, is now generally charged to accident or carelessness.

On the morning of the 22d of June was the sixth great fire, which commenced about 11 o'clock, in Pacific street below Powell, during a high gale of wind from the west. It extended from Broadway on one side to Washington on the other, crossing the latter street below Kearny, and reaching to Clay. Its eastern limit was Montgomery street. A portion of this district had just been rebuilt. Four or five hundred houses were burnt, the larger proportion of which were small wooden tenements. Among the larger buildings destroyed were the City Hall, on the corner of Pacific and Kearny streets, the City Hospital, the Presbyterian Church in Stockton street, the Alta California printing office, and the Jenny Lind Theatre. The old adobe building on the plaza, lately occupied as offices, also succumbed to this fire. It was formerly used as the Government House, and continued to be employed for public uses, after the occupancy of the country by the Americans. It was once a favorite resort of large flocks of black birds, which retired to the Presidio on the increase of the human population. The last important event witnessed by the old adobe was the hanging of Jenkins by the Vigilance Committee, from the beam at the end of its portico, on the night of the 10th of June.

The fire of June destroyed about four hundred and fifty houses, and property valued at over two million dollars. Seven persons lost their lives—three of whom were burnt to death, two were shot by an officer while in the act of robbing, and two were beaten to death by a mob, on the charge of incendiarism and stealing. One of the latter was an honest man who was assisting a friend to save his property.

The extraordinary energies of the people were fully developed by these ruinous visitations. In a surprisingly brief period the burnt district was covered with new edifices, many of which were really fire-proof. The efficacy of such buildings was fully tested in the last fire, which occurred on the ninth of November, 1852, originating on the fatal spot which had already given rise to two conflagrations—Kearny street fronting the plaza. But for the intervention of the brick walls which hemmed it in towards Montgomery and Washington streets, this would have proved as destructive as the former fires. About thirty wooden buildings were destroyed on Merchant and Clay streets, with a loss of property not much exceeding \$100,000.

In the summer of 1851, the work of filling in the docks was carried on with great activity. The wharves had stretched out a great distance into the Bay, and hundreds of wooden buildings had been erected on piles, in places lately occupied